

Summary of usage of the Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry

The Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry (NIABI) is an integrated survey that provides information on the value of the economic activity that businesses generate and associated expenditure across the main industrial sectors in Northern Ireland. The NIABI provides a number of high level indicators of economic activity such as the total value of sales and work completed by businesses (Turnover) as well as the value of the purchase of goods, materials and services. The UK Annual Business Survey, carried out by the office for National Statistics (ONS), collects similar data on GB economic activity.

While the uses of the Annual Business Inquiry are diffuse, the central structure and periodicity of the ABI publication are driven by the legal requirement to provide data for the UK Annual Business Survey, UK National Accounts and the European Structural Business Statistics (SBS). Data from the ABI feed into the UK ABS which is in turn the primary source of data used in the compilation of the Input-Output Annual Supply and Use tables for National Accounts. ABS also provides a major contribution to the Blue Book which is produced by National Accounts. The UK ABS regional results can be accessed via the link below:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/abs/annual-business-survey/2010-provisional-regional-results/abs-2010---provisional-regional-results-statistical-bulletin--july-2012-.html>

Within government, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment rely upon ABI data to better inform their policy development; this includes conducting economic research, appraisals and evaluations; providing Ministerial briefings and economic commentary as well as responding to assembly questions. Below is a link to the DETI publication: A Comparison of Northern Ireland's Productivity and Efficiency across Services and Manufacturing.

http://www.detini.gov.uk/report_1_-_comparison_of_productivity_and_efficiency.pdf

The ABI is also used throughout the wider Northern Ireland Civil Service to inform research and policy. Below are links to publications by both DCAL and DARD which draw on the ABI data.

http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/creative_industries_economic_estimates_2011.pdf

<http://www.dardni.gov.uk/index/dard-statistics/food-statistics/northern-ireland-food-and-drinks-processing-sector.htm>

Invest NI use the data to better inform their decision making and investment processes and to enhance their own internal research. Please see below for a link to the report: Invest Northern Ireland Performance Information Report.

http://www.investni.com/performance_information_report_invest_ni_2002-2003_to_2007-2008_ci_march-2009.pdf

The data also provide a means of monitoring the progress of economic policy and to help set and measure economic targets. For example the 2012 Northern Ireland Executive Economic Strategy Indicators include 'Exports/External Sales to account for a growing proportion of GVA' and 'Private Sector GVA Growth to exceed the average for UK regions;' both of these are informed by ABI outputs in their measurement.

<http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/updated-indicators-table-final-document.pdf>

Outside government the data is used by a variety of different private sector and academic analysts to assist with industrial and investment decisions, provide economic appraisals and to inform economic commentary. The data is also used to inform the wider public about the condition of the Northern Ireland economy. Within academia the ABI is used to inform research and assist with empirical analysis, for example:

<http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/5118/>