
Mark Pont, Assessment Programme Lead

Glyn Jones
Chief Statistician
Welsh Government
(by email)

16 July 2020

Dear Glyn

WELSH INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION 2019 STATISTICS

I am writing to you following our review of the Welsh Government's [Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 \(WIMD\)](#) statistics against the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#). The statistics were reviewed against the three pillars of the Code: trustworthiness, quality and value.

WIMD statistics are an important tool for identifying the most disadvantaged areas and for supporting decisions about addressing local needs. They are widely used by central and local government and community organisations to target their services. The statistics have been considered as part of a wider review of the indices of deprivation statistics in Great Britain, alongside our compliance checks of the statistics produced by the Scottish Government and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

I am pleased to confirm that these statistics should continue to be designated as National Statistics. We found several positive examples in the way that Welsh Government produces and presents these statistics:

- The team has a clear understanding of the uses and users of the statistics. Welsh Government ran a user consultation and timing survey ahead of WIMD 2019 and published its planned developments in response, which generates trust in the statistics. The frequency of WIMD is tailored to user need – the team told us that it can be a burden on local authorities and third sector organisations who use WIMD in their own analyses if WIMD is updated too regularly. Any methodological changes to the construction of WIMD between iterations are informed by an advisory group and other domain experts which the team said it had good relationships with. This further enhances the trustworthiness of the statistics.
- The [statistical bulletin](#) is engaging, clear and easy to follow. The pen pictures of areas in Wales are useful in drawing out insight from the statistics and help draw out the relevance to users. The [technical report](#) is comprehensive and sets out the process for constructing the WIMD in a clear and accessible way. The [guidance document](#) has been tailored to less-technical users and effectively summarises the key information from the technical report.
- The bulletin contains analysis of deep-rooted deprivation which looks at areas that have remained in the top 50 most deprived for all WIMD iterations in the past 15 years. The team told us that it took inspiration from the Scottish Government to adopt this concept. The analysis of deep-rooted deprivation draws out valuable insight from the statistics and addresses the limitation of not being able to compare small areas and ranks between iterations of WIMD.
- The team spoke highly of its relationship with the other nations. The 'four nations group' meets regularly and works collaboratively to make guidance and presentation across the

deprivation statistics more consistent. Welsh Government has been working with MHCLG, which extended its coverage for income and employment data to cover Wales in 2019, to develop new comparable analysis for these two domains.

We have identified one area where we consider that improvements could further enhance the public value of the statistics:

- The ability to combine and compare indices of deprivation across the devolved nations continues to be an area of interest for some users. Each of the producers we spoke to said they deal with queries relating to this on a regular basis, despite their joint effort to set out in the statistical releases how the statistics can and can't be used. Welsh Government, as part of the 'four nations group', should look to ensure that appropriate resource is devoted to developing updated UK-wide guidance and insight.

Our Labour Market and Welfare team will continue to engage with you and your team in the coming months to follow up on the area that has been highlighted for improvement. We would like to thank the team for its engagement and cooperation throughout the review process.

I am copying this letter to the responsible team: Nia Jones, Sue Leake and Samantha Collins.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Pont', with a horizontal line underneath.

Mark Pont

Assessment Programme Lead