
Mark Pont, Assessment Programme Lead

Paul McKillen
Senior Statistician, Department for Communities
(by email)

13 May 2021

Dear Paul

Assessment of Personal Independence Statistics for Northern Ireland as National Statistics

Thank you for inviting us to assess the [Personal Independence Payment \(PIP\) Statistics](#) for Northern Ireland against the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#). We have today published our Assessment Report and judge that these statistics should be designated as National Statistics once we have confirmed that the improvements set out in the report have been made by the Department for Communities (DfC).

We found that the statistics provide valuable insight into the roll-out of PIP in Northern Ireland and are used widely by the advice and charity sector. The statisticians working on PIP are well established and trusted. The users we spoke to have no concerns with the quality or methodology of the statistics, and we were pleased to find that the statistics team has carried out a self-assessment of its understanding of administrative data against our [Quality Assurance of Administrative Data \(QAAD\) framework](#).

We identified several ways in which DfC should develop the statistics in order to meet the highest standards of the Code of Practice for Statistics, including clearer signposting, direct engagement with users and greater coherence with the PIP statistics produced for Great Britain.

I would like to thank your team for its positive engagement throughout the assessment. I am copying this letter to Siobhan Carey (Chief Executive and Registrar General NISRA), Beverley Wall (Deputy Secretary, Strategic Policy & Professional Services Group, DfC) and Mickey Kelly (Assistant Director of Pensions, Disability and Carers Service, DfC).

Yours sincerely



Mark Pont

Assessment Programme Lead