

# Assessment of compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics

## Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation

*(produced by the Welsh Assembly  
Government)*

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### **About the UK Statistics Authority**

The UK Statistics Authority is an independent body operating at arm's length from government as a non-ministerial department, directly accountable to Parliament. It was established on 1 April 2008 by the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*.

The Authority's overall objective is to promote and safeguard the production and publication of official statistics that serve the public good. It is also required to promote and safeguard the quality and comprehensiveness of official statistics, and good practice in relation to official statistics.

The Statistics Authority has two main functions:

1. oversight of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) – the executive office of the Authority;
2. independent scrutiny (monitoring and assessment) of all official statistics produced in the UK.

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# **Assessment of compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics**

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## ASSESSMENT AND DESIGNATION

The *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007* gives the UK Statistics Authority a statutory power to assess sets of statistics against the *Code of Practice for Official Statistics*.

Assessment will determine whether it is appropriate for the statistics to be designated as National Statistics.

Designation as National Statistics means that the statistics comply with the *Code of Practice*. The *Code* is wide-ranging. Designation can be interpreted to mean that the statistics: meet identified user needs; are produced, managed and disseminated to high standards; and are explained well.

Designation as National Statistics should not be interpreted to mean that the statistics are always correct. For example, whilst the *Code* requires statistics to be produced to a level of accuracy that meets users' needs, it also recognises that errors can occur – in which case it requires them to be corrected and publicised.

Assessment Reports will not normally comment further on a set of statistics, for example on their validity as social or economic measures. However, Reports may point to such questions if the Authority believes that further research would be desirable.

Assessment Reports typically provide an overview of any noteworthy features of the methods used to produce the statistics, and will highlight substantial concerns about quality. Assessment Reports also describe aspects of the ways in which the producer addresses the 'sound methods and assured quality' principle of the *Code*, but do not themselves constitute a review of the methods used to produce the statistics. However the *Code* requires producers to "seek to achieve continuous improvement in statistical processes by, for example, undertaking regular reviews".

The Authority may grant designation on condition that the producer body takes steps, within a stated timeframe, to fully meet the *Code's* requirements. This is to avoid public confusion and does not reduce the obligation to comply with the *Code*.

The Authority grants designation on the basis of three main sources of information:

- i. factual evidence and assurances by senior statisticians in the producer body;
- ii. the views of users who we contact, or who contact us, and;
- iii. our own review activity.

Should further information come to light subsequently which changes the Authority's analysis, it may withdraw the Assessment Report and revise it as necessary.

It is a statutory requirement on the producer body to ensure that it continues to produce the set of statistics designated as National Statistics in compliance with the *Code of Practice*.

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# 1 Summary of findings

## 1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This is one of a series of reports<sup>1</sup> prepared under the provisions of the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*<sup>2</sup>. The report covers publications of the Welsh Index of Multiple deprivation produced by the Welsh Assembly Government, the most recent of which was *Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2008: Summary Report*<sup>3</sup> (WIMD 2008). Electronic versions of the summary report, user guidance, frequently asked questions and technical report, along with links to the data and the interactive mapping facility can all be found on the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) publications page<sup>4</sup>.

1.1.2 This report was prepared by the Authority's Assessment team, and approved by the Board of the Statistics Authority on the advice of the Head of Assessment.

## 1.2 Decision concerning designation as National Statistics

1.2.1 The Statistics Authority judges that the statistics covered by this report are readily accessible, produced according to sound methods and managed impartially and objectively in the public interest, subject to the caveats in this report. The Statistics Authority confirms that the statistics detailed in 1.1.1 are designated as National Statistics, subject to the Welsh Assembly Government implementing the enhancements listed in section 1.5 and reporting them to the Authority by April 2011.

## 1.3 Summary of strengths and weaknesses

1.3.1 The Welsh Assembly Government has undertaken extensive user consultation about both the content of WIMD and the format of the publications. Response to consultation informed the development of past indices and is being used in the development of WIMD 2011.

1.3.2 While the WIMD publication is comprehensive, information can be difficult to locate. Some aspects of how WIMD should and should not be used could be more clearly described.

1.3.3 Similar indices of multiple deprivation are produced across the four UK administrations and regular contact between the statisticians producing the indices helps ensure that all four administrations continue to use similar methods. The administrations also work together to solve common methodological problems.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment-reports/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.opsi.gov.uk/Acts/acts2007/pdf/ukpga\\_20070018\\_en.pdf](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/Acts/acts2007/pdf/ukpga_20070018_en.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/publications/wimdsun08/?lang=en>

<sup>4</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/wimd/?lang=en>

## 1.4 Detailed recommendations

1.4.1 The Assessment team identified some areas where it felt that the Welsh Assembly Government could strengthen its compliance with the Code. Those which the Assessment team considers essential to enable designation as National Statistics are listed in section 1.5. Other suggestions, which would improve the statistics and the service provided to users but which are not formally required for their designation, are listed at annex 1.

## 1.5 Requirements for designation as National Statistics

<b>Requirement 1</b>	Publish more information about how the domain weights are derived (para 3.9).
<b>Requirement 2</b>	Publish information about the quality of the domain indices and the overall index (para 3.10).
<b>Requirement 3</b>	Publish appropriate documentation to enable more re-use of the data (para 3.22).
<b>Requirement 4</b>	Publish the WIMD pre-release access list (para 3.26).
<b>Requirement 5</b>	Publish the name and contact details of the responsible statistician on all statistical releases (para 3.27).
<b>Requirement 6</b>	Review the Statement of Administrative Sources to ensure that it includes all administrative data sources used (para 3.28).



## 2 Subject of the assessment

- 2.1 The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation identifies the relative level of multiple deprivation in small areas across Wales in a consistent way. The first such index for Wales, the Index of Socio-economic Conditions, was based on the Townsend Deprivation Index<sup>5</sup> and constructed in the late 1980s. This index was census-based but also included other locally available data. Results were available only at the local authority level. Since the late 1990s, the methodology for producing deprivation indices has been significantly developed by the Department of Social Policy and Social Work, University of Oxford (now the Social Disadvantage Research Centre)<sup>6</sup>. A new index with results available for smaller geographic areas (ward level) was introduced in 2000 to support the objective targeting of resources. This version introduced administrative data from new sources. The index was updated in 2005, using similar methods to 2000 by the Welsh Assembly Government in partnership with the Local Government Data Unit. Lower-Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA)<sup>7</sup> replaced wards as the smallest geographical area.
- 2.2 WIMD 2008 was constructed from eight domains, representing different, but often linked, types, of deprivation, which are combined to produce a single overall ranking of multiple deprivation for each Welsh LSOA. These domains, constructed from 40 indicators, are:
- Income,
  - Employment
  - Health
  - Education
  - Housing
  - Community safety
  - Physical environment and
  - Access to services.
- 2.3 WIMD are produced from Census data and a range of administrative sources, including recorded crime, Incapacity Benefit claimant numbers, and number of people in households in receipt of Income Support (from the Department for Work and Pensions), and the number of people in households in receipt of Working and Child tax credit (from HM Revenue and Customs). The timing of updates is partly dependent on the availability of data. In future the Welsh Assembly Government plans to publish individual indicators and associated data annually, where appropriate, so that the underlying data are available to users.
- 2.4 In 2008, following user consultation, the Welsh Assembly Government produced an updated index. Changes included the addition of the community safety domain and a Child Index, which dealt with elements of deprivation relating only to children. The next update, using the same methods, is planned

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.geog.soton.ac.uk/geo-refer/go3\\_142\\_c15p19819999snew.html](http://www.geog.soton.ac.uk/geo-refer/go3_142_c15p19819999snew.html)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.spsw.ox.ac.uk/fileadmin/static/sdrc/media/OCSI.html>

<sup>7</sup> LSOAs were developed by the Office for National Statistics following the 2001 Census to improve the availability of data for small areas. LSOAs have a mean population of close to 1,500 and their boundaries do not change. There are 1,896 LSOAs in Wales.

for 2011 and a major update, using 2011 Census data, is planned for 2013.

- 2.5 This index is used by a wide range of organisations including central and local government, the NHS, charitable trusts, academic researchers and community groups. Uses include: identifying areas to be included in the Communities First programme<sup>8</sup>; supporting bids for European funding; targeting local services; supporting funding bids to the Lottery Fund; public health research; and local area profiling.
- 2.6 Broadly equivalent indices are produced for England<sup>9</sup> by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), for Scotland<sup>10</sup> by the Scottish Government, and for Northern Ireland<sup>11</sup> by Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). The assessments of the Scottish and Northern Ireland indices were carried out in parallel with the Welsh assessment and the reports are available here<sup>12</sup>. The English index will be considered for assessment later, once the future plans for the English IMD are clearer.
- 2.7 The Welsh Assembly Government spends approximately £80,000 each year producing these statistics with data collection accounting for between £5,000 and £10,000 of this.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/grants/voluntary/community/cfp/?lang=en>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/indicesdeprivation07>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SIMD>

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.nisra.gov.uk/deprivation/nimdm\\_2010.htm](http://www.nisra.gov.uk/deprivation/nimdm_2010.htm)

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment-reports/index.html>

### 3 Assessment findings

#### Principle 1: Meeting user needs

**The production, management and dissemination of official statistics should meet the requirements of informed decision-making by government, public services, business, researchers and the public.**

- 3.1 The Welsh Assembly Government investigates users' needs via consultation exercises, the WIMD Advisory Group and WIMD Domain working groups<sup>13</sup>. Consultation documents and responses are published on the Welsh Assembly Government's website<sup>14</sup>, along with minutes from meetings of the working groups. The Advisory Group and the Domain working groups include representatives from the Welsh Assembly Government, the Local Government Association, local councils, police forces and academia.
- 3.2 The Welsh Assembly Government carried out a user consultation on future plans for the WIMD in 2009<sup>15</sup>. The response document to this consultation is published on the Welsh Assembly Government's website<sup>16</sup>. This document stated that there would be a WIMD update in 2011, and announced some further analysis which is planned in response to user demand.
- 3.3 The Welsh Assembly Government has recently revived the WIMD newsletter<sup>17</sup> and uses this to inform users of important WIMD information, such as planned consultations, notification of any errors and the WIMD timetable. This information is also disseminated to users of statistics about related areas, such as demography and equality.
- 3.4 The *WIMD Summary report*<sup>18</sup> documents users and uses. Uses are also documented in the *2009 consultation document*<sup>19</sup>, along with guidance about how the data should and should not be used.

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<sup>13</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/wimd/governance/?lang=en>

<sup>14</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/wimd/consultations/?lang=en>

<sup>15</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/statistics/consultation/090930wimden.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/statistics/consultation/100512wimden.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/wimd/newsletter/?lang=en>

<sup>18</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/publications/wimdsun08/?lang=en>

<sup>19</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/statistics/consultation/090930wimden.pdf>

## Principle 2: Impartiality and objectivity

**Official statistics, and information about statistical processes, should be managed impartially and objectively.**

- 3.5 WIMD is currently available in both hard copy and on the internet free of charge, via the National Statistics Publication Hub. The statistics are presented impartially and objectively. There are dedicated WIMD web pages on the Welsh Assembly Government's website<sup>20</sup>. Welsh Assembly Government statisticians told us that these web pages are being redesigned to enhance access to the underlying data, and to commentary and metadata. The first stage of the redesigned web pages is due to be rolled out in early 2011.
- 3.6 WIMD is not subject to regular revisions. However, when an error was found in the underlying data for the 2005 Index, and a further error found in the way that the index for the physical environment domain was calculated in July 2010, the Index was revised in accordance with the Welsh Assembly Government's Revisions Policy and users were informed via email. As a result of the 2005 error, data specification procedures were reviewed and updated. The *WIMD* error led to checks on the computer code used to produce the 2008 index. We suggest the Welsh Assembly Government review their quality assurance procedures to ensure they are adequate.
- 3.7 The *Compliance Statement*<sup>21</sup> published on the Welsh Assembly Government's website, refers to the (superseded) National Statistics Code of Practice. We suggest the Compliance Statement be updated to refer to the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

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<sup>20</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/wimd/?lang=en>

<sup>21</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/about/compliance/?lang=en>

### **Principle 3: Integrity**

**At all stages in the production, management and dissemination of official statistics, the public interest should prevail over organisational, political or personal interests.**

- 3.8 No incidents of political pressures, abuse of trust or complaints relating to professional integrity, quality or standards were reported to or identified by the Assessment team.

## Principle 4: Sound methods and assured quality

**Statistical methods should be consistent with scientific principles and internationally recognised best practices, and be fully documented. Quality should be monitored and assured taking account of internationally agreed practices.**

- 3.9 Details of the methods used to derive WIMD are described in the *Technical Report*<sup>22</sup>. The *Technical Report* also discusses the development of measures of multiple deprivation, and describes the uses and limitations of these outputs. The weights used to combine the separate domains into a single index are included, but the way that the weights were derived is not clearly explained. As part of the designation as National Statistics, the Welsh Assembly Government should publish more information about how the domain weights are derived<sup>23</sup> (Requirement 1).
- 3.10 The *Technical Report* includes a description of each of the indicators<sup>24</sup> within the domains, with further discussion of the suitability of these included in the *Consultation document*<sup>25</sup>. Information is provided in a *Guidance Leaflet*<sup>26</sup> about how the index should and should not be used. However, no information is provided about the quality of either the domain indices<sup>27</sup> or the overall index. As part of the designation as National Statistics, the Welsh Assembly Government should publish information on the quality of the domain indices and the overall index<sup>28</sup> (Requirement 2).
- 3.11 Indices of multiple deprivation are published in the four UK administrations using similar methods. Any differences reflect policy priorities, legislative systems and data availability. The Welsh Assembly Government is a member the Four Nations IMD working group which is made up of representatives from each producer department. ONS also participates in the group in an advisory role. This group has discussed the need for a UK-wide index. It concluded that the development of a single UK measure was not appropriate due to insufficient demand and because it would be limited by the lack of data available at a consistent, UK-wide small area geography. The group has developed guidance for the use of IMDs in allocating resources consistently across the UK<sup>29</sup>. Some users who contacted us as part of this Assessment identified a need for a UK-wide index, and felt that even a partial UK-wide index would be a step forward from having no UK-wide index. We suggest that the Welsh Assembly Government work with NISRA, the Scottish Government and DCLG to

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<sup>22</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/publications/wimd2008tech/?lang=en>

<sup>23</sup> In relation to Principle 4 Practice 1 of the Code of Practice

<sup>24</sup> Indicators are statistics which measure aspects of deprivation and together make up the deprivation domains (for example, number of people in households in receipt of Income Support forms part of the income domain)

<sup>25</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/statistics/wimd2008/?lang=en>

<sup>26</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/publications/wimd2008leaflet/?lang=en>

<sup>27</sup> Domain scores are statistics which summarise the set of indicators within a domain. The domain scores are ordered to give each area a ranking, which is the domain index.

<sup>28</sup> In relation to Principle 4 Practice 2 of the Code of Practice

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/Info.do?page=analysisandguidance/analysisarticles/comparing-across-countries-indices-of-deprivation-guidance-paper.htm>

investigate and more fully explore the user need, data availability and options for a common geographical basis for an experimental UK-wide index.

- 3.12 ONS provides guidance on the use of small area statistics. It provides a page on its website<sup>30</sup> which summarises the four UK administrations' indices of multiple deprivation and provides links to their websites. The way in which the methods are described, the dissemination of the underlying data, and the methods used to summarise the deprivation within a local area, differ between administrations. This makes it difficult and time consuming for users who are interested in analysis of the indices from more than one administration. We suggest that the Welsh Assembly Government work with NISRA, the Scottish Government and DCLG to review the feasibility of providing documentation and data in a common format for each of the administrations' indices, liaising with ONS as appropriate.

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<sup>30</sup><http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/Info.do?page=analysisandguidance/articles/indices-of-deprivation.htm>

## Principle 5: Confidentiality

**Private information about individual persons (including bodies corporate) compiled in the production of official statistics is confidential, and should be used for statistical purposes only.**

- 3.13 The Welsh Assembly Government use confidential data from existing sources to produce WIMD. It has assured us that it takes all necessary steps to protect the confidentiality of the data it uses. It has published a statement of confidentiality and data access as part of the Compliance Statement<sup>31</sup> which follows the National Statistician's guidance on confidentiality of Official Statistics.
- 3.14 WIMD and its domains are published as ranks, and associated scores<sup>32</sup>, which are not disclosive. The accompanying publication of underlying indicators is of non-disclosive data, rounded using disclosure control rules set by the data providers and described in the service level agreements.

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<sup>31</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/about/compliance/confidential/?lang=en>

<sup>32</sup> Domain scores are statistics which summarise the set of indicators within a domain



## **Principle 6: Proportionate burden**

**The cost burden on data suppliers should not be excessive and should be assessed relative to the benefits arising from the use of the statistics.**

- 3.15 WIMD is produced from data held in administrative systems. There is a cost to the Welsh Assembly Government in obtaining the data from other government departments' administrative systems which is estimated at between £5,000 and £10,000.

## Principle 7: Resources

**The resources made available for statistical activities should be sufficient to meet the requirements of this Code and should be used efficiently and effectively.**

- 3.16 Priorities for WIMD work are set by the Project Board<sup>33</sup>, made up of key stakeholders from the Welsh Assembly Government. User views, gathered during consultations, feed into this process.
- 3.17 In the past the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) provided data to the Welsh Assembly Government free of charge, but it no longer has the resources to undertake the analysis required to do this. The Welsh Assembly Government is exploring alternative solutions for obtaining this data from 2011 onwards, in collaboration with DCLG and the Scottish Government.
- 3.18 For future updates of WIMD, the Welsh Assembly Government is planning to produce the access to services domain in-house in order to reduce costs; this work is currently contracted out. The Welsh Assembly Government is currently piloting a method based on that used by the Scottish Government.
- 3.19 Appropriate recruitment and development policies are in place at the Welsh Assembly Government to ensure that suitably skilled people are employed in the statistical production process.

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<sup>33</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/wimd/governance/board/?lang=en>

## Principle 8: Frankness and accessibility

**Official statistics, accompanied by full and frank commentary, should be readily accessible to all users.**

- 3.20 WIMD includes comprehensive and easy to understand commentary, the full range of statistics, frequently asked questions (FAQs), a guidance leaflet and a technical report. However, locating these documents is not straightforward and they contain some repetition. We suggest the Welsh Assembly Government review the content and accessibility of all WIMD documents.
- 3.21 WIMD is a relative measure of deprivation and as such cannot be used to measure change over time or to describe absolute levels of deprivation. This is explained in the *Guidance leaflet* but some users commented that they needed more guidance to help them interpret the index, including change over time and the impact of adding new domains (for example, community safety was added to the 2008 index). We suggest that the Welsh Assembly Government work with colleagues in the other UK countries to develop consistent advice and guidance.
- 3.22 The data used to construct WIMD are available through the Welsh Assembly Government and Stats Wales<sup>34</sup> websites in a straightforward way and can be easily extracted and re-used. However, the metadata in the *Technical report* is insufficient, for example it does not provide detail of the impact of methodological decisions, and not enough metadata is provided on the Stats Wales website. As part of the designation as National Statistics the Welsh Assembly Government should publish appropriate documentation to enable more re-use of the data<sup>35</sup> (Requirement 3).
- 3.23 The 2009 consultation on WIMD sought users' views on the way that they would like graphs and tables to be used in the presentation of WIMD and the information that they most wanted included in the graphs and tables. These views have informed plans for the 2011 update.

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<sup>34</sup> <http://statswales.wales.gov.uk/index.htm>

<sup>35</sup> In relation to Principle 8 Practice 6 of the Code of Practice

## **Protocol 1: User engagement**

**Effective user engagement is fundamental both to trust in statistics and securing maximum public value. This Protocol draws together the relevant practices set out elsewhere in the Code and expands on the requirements in relation to consultation.**

3.24 The comments for this Protocol are covered elsewhere in this report.

## Protocol 2: Release practices

**Statistical reports should be released into the public domain in an orderly manner that promotes public confidence and gives equal access to all, subject to relevant legislation.**

- 3.25 The Welsh Assembly Government statisticians describe WIMD as an ‘ad hoc statistical output with the aim of updating on a three yearly cycle’.
- 3.26 The Welsh Assembly Government announces all its outputs on the National Statistics Publications Hub and outputs are published at 9.30 am on the day of release. The published pre-release access list is not specific to any output. As part of the designation as National Statistics, the Welsh Assembly Government should publish the WIMD pre-release access list<sup>36</sup> (Requirement 4).
- 3.27 The WIMD publications available on the web do not include the name of the responsible statistician. As part of the designation as National Statistics, the Welsh Assembly Government should publish the name and contact details of the responsible statistician on all statistical releases<sup>37</sup> (Requirement 5).

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<sup>36</sup> In relation to Protocol 2 Practice 7 of the Code of Practice

<sup>37</sup> In relation to Protocol 2 Practice 6 of the Code of Practice

### **Protocol 3: The use of administrative sources for statistical purposes**

**Administrative sources should be fully exploited for statistical purposes, subject to adherence to appropriate safeguards.**

3.28 The Welsh Assembly Government has published a Statement of Administrative Sources<sup>38</sup>. This is not complete as some of the data used in WIMD are derived from administrative sources not included in the Welsh Assembly Government's statement. As part of the designation as National Statistics, the Welsh Assembly Government should review the Statement to ensure that it includes all administrative data sources used<sup>39</sup> (Requirement 6).

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<sup>38</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/statistics/2010/100330adminen.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> In relation to Protocol 3 Practice 5a of the Code of Practice

## Annex 1: Suggestions for improvement

A1.1 This annex includes some suggestions for improvement to the Welsh Assembly Government's WIMD, in the interest of the public good. These are not formally required for designation, but the Assessment team considers that their implementation will improve public confidence in the production, management and dissemination of official statistics.

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>Suggestion 1</b> | Review the WIMD quality assurance procedures to ensure they are adequate (para 3.6).   |
| <b>Suggestion 2</b> | Update the Compliance Statement published on the Welsh Assembly Government website to refer to the UK Statistics Authority's current Code of Practice for Official Statistics (para 3.7).                              |
| <b>Suggestion 3</b> | Work with colleagues in the other UK administrations to investigate and more fully explore the user need, data availability and options for a common geographical basis for an experimental UK-wide index (para 3.11). |
| <b>Suggestion 4</b> | Work with colleagues in the other UK administrations to review the feasibility of providing documentation and data in a common format for each of the UK indices (para 3.12).  |
| <b>Suggestion 5</b> | Review the content and accessibility of all WIMD documents (para 3.20).  |
| <b>Suggestion 6</b> | Work with colleagues in the other UK administrations to develop consistent advice and guidance (para 3.21).  |

## **Annex 2: Summary of assessment process and users' views**

- A2.1 This assessment was conducted from April to August 2010. It was conducted in parallel with equivalent assessments of the Scottish and Northern Irish indices.
- A2.2 The Assessment team – Elspeth Maclean, Cecilia Macintyre, Ed Swires-Hennessey and Emma Bowditch – agreed the scope of and timetable for this assessment with representatives of the Welsh Assembly Government in April 2010. The Written Evidence for Assessment was provided in May 2010. The Assessment team subsequently met the Welsh Assembly Government in July 2010 to review compliance with the Code of Practice, taking account of the written evidence provided and other relevant sources of evidence.

### **Summary of users contacted, and issues raised**

- A2.3 Part of the assessment process involves our consideration of the views of users. We approach some known and potential users of the set of statistics, and we invite comments via an open note on the Authority's website. This process is not a statistical survey, but it enables us to gain some insights about the extent to which the statistics meet users' needs and the extent to which users feel that the producers of those statistics engage with them. We are aware that responses from users may not be representative of wider views, and we take account of this in the way that we prepare assessment reports.
- A2.4 The Assessment team received 17 WIMD specific responses and 12 responses for all four UK countries from the user consultation. The respondents were grouped as follows:
- |                              |    |
|------------------------------|----|
| Local government             | 5  |
| Welsh Assembly Government    | 3  |
| Central Government           | 1  |
| Other government departments | 2  |
| Academia                     | 10 |
| NHS                          | 3  |
| Other public sector          | 1  |
| Other                        | 4  |
- A2.5 Overall, the users who responded were satisfied with the statistics and the presentation of them. Users also reported good contact with the statisticians within the Welsh Assembly Government and considered them to be very helpful, commending the consultation exercises in particular. Some users commented they would like to be able to make UK comparisons and that this would be particularly useful for comparing cities of a similar size in the different UK countries, as well as for countries to bid for funding for their country. Other suggestions included presenting data at the geographic level of the area served by a community or town council and providing better assistance to local authorities in prioritising services geographically.

### **Key documents/links provided**

Written Evidence for Assessment document



