

July 2022

Outcome of the Survey on the Use of the NI Poverty Bulletin, NI Households Below Average Income Report and the NI Family Resources Survey Report

1 Detail

On the 2nd March 2022, the Department for Communities (DfC) opened an online public survey on the use of three National Statistics publications:

1. The Northern Ireland Poverty Bulletin (NIPB);
2. The NI Households Below Average Income (HBAI) report; and
3. The NI Family Resources Survey (FRS) report.

A link to the survey was emailed to the FRS mailing list, and placed on the DfC webpage.

The survey closed on the 16th March 2022.

2 Survey Results

Response to the survey was low. Overall, nine users responded to the survey. Respondents were asked:

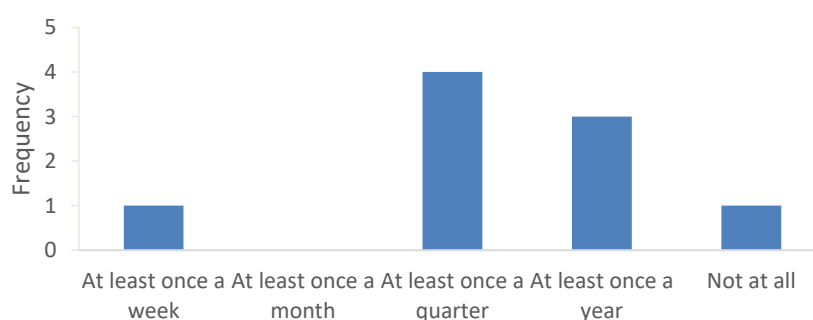
1. Whether they agreed to the sharing of their individual comments;
2. How often they consulted the publications;
3. What they used the publications for;
4. What tables they used from the publications;
5. If they used the tables relating to income quintiles in the HBAI report;
6. If they used the tables on the 50% and/or 70% measures in the NI Poverty Bulletin and the HBAI report;
7. If they would be content if the NI Poverty Bulletin and the HBAI report were combined into a single streamlined report; and
8. If the current publications and corresponding commentary met their needs.

The following is a summary of the results:

NI Poverty Bulletin

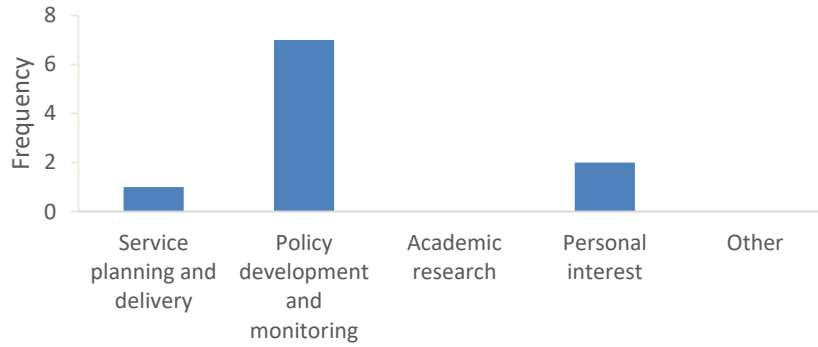
Q. How often do you use the NI Poverty Bulletin?

The NI Poverty Bulletin is used by 89% (8) of the respondents, with the most common frequency of use being at least once a quarter (4).



Q. What do you use the NI Poverty Bulletin for? (Note, multiple responses were permitted)

Most of the respondents (7 out of the 8 who answered this question) use the NI Poverty Bulletin for policy development and monitoring.



Q. What tables from the NI Poverty Bulletin do you currently use or anticipate using in the future?

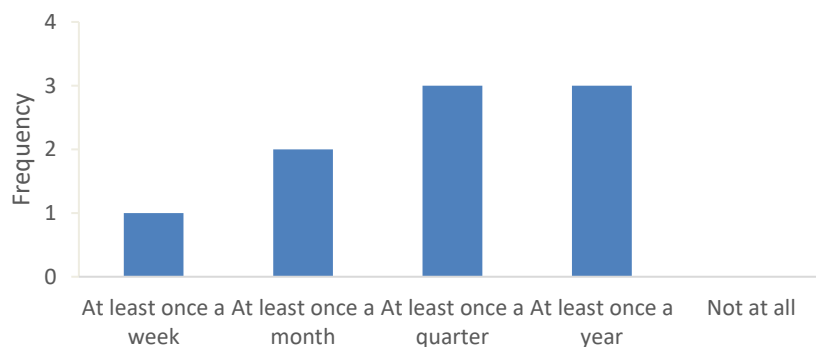
The 6 respondents who answered the question use or anticipate using a variety of the tables from the NI Poverty Bulletin as detailed in the responses below.

Average income & low income levels most frequently but all others
Tables A1, A2, A4, A5, and A6
Tables A1, A2, A5 and A6
The proportion of people who are below the poverty thresholds and in relative/absolute poverty.
All tables
Tables A1-A7

NI Households Below Average Income Report

Q. How often do you use the NI Households Below Average Income report?

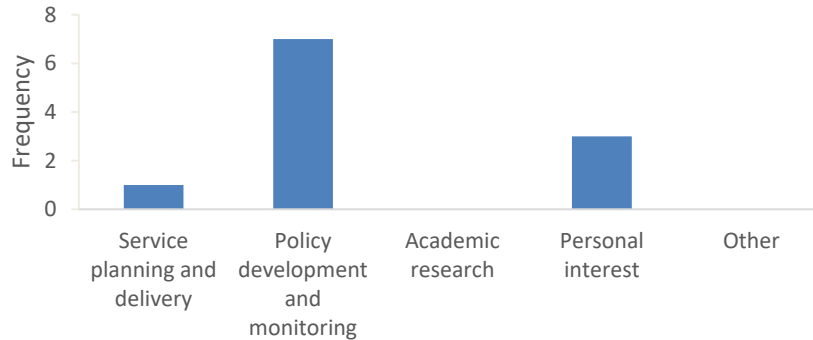
All 9 respondents use the NI Households Below Average Income report, with the most common frequencies of use being at least once a quarter and at least once a year (3 each).



Q. What do you use the NI Households Below Average Income report for? (Note,

multiple responses were permitted)

The NI Households Below Average Income report is mainly used for policy development and monitoring purposes with 7 out of the 9 respondents using it for this reason.



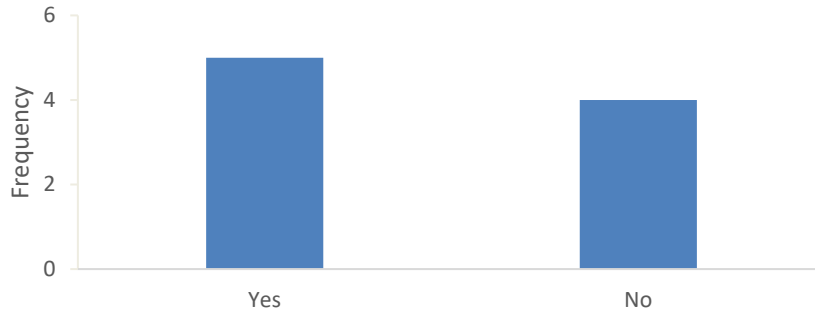
Q. What tables/sections from the NI Households Below Average Income report do you currently use or anticipate using in the future?

The 6 respondents who answered the question use or anticipate using a variety of the tables from the NI Households Below Income report as detailed in the responses below.

Housing costs and poverty
Headline figures and income distribution
Tables 1.2 and 1.5; 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8; 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4, 10.5 and 10.6
Tables in Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10
All tables would be considered - but not all tables would be used with the same level of frequency.
Chapter 1-Chapter 11

Q. In the Households Below Average Income report, we currently publish a number of tables based on income quintiles – do you use these tables?

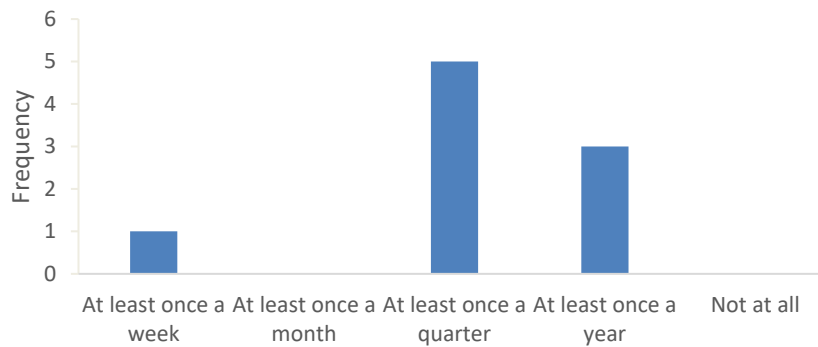
The tables relating to income quintiles are used by 56% (5) of the respondents. These tables show what percentage of households with certain characteristics fall into each of the five income quintiles.



NI Family Resources Survey Report

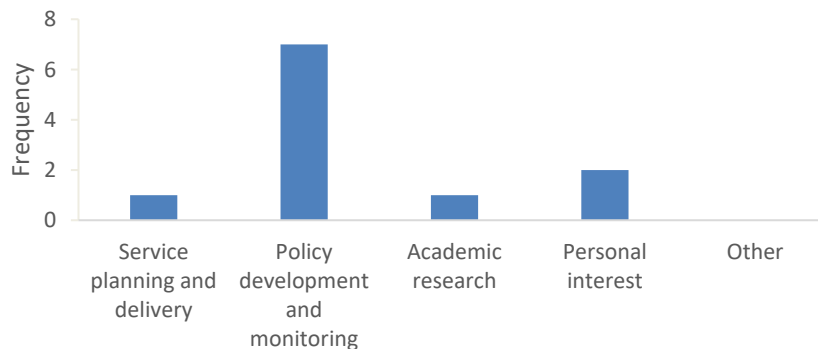
Q. How often do you use the NI Family Resources Survey report?

All 9 respondents use the NI Family Resources Survey report, with 56% (5) using it at least once a quarter.



Q. What do you use the NI Family Resources Survey report for? (Note, multiple responses were permitted)

The main use of the NI Family Resources Survey report is again for policy development and monitoring with 78% (7) of the respondents using it for this purpose.



Q. What tables/sections from the NI Family Resources Survey report do you currently use or anticipate using in the future?

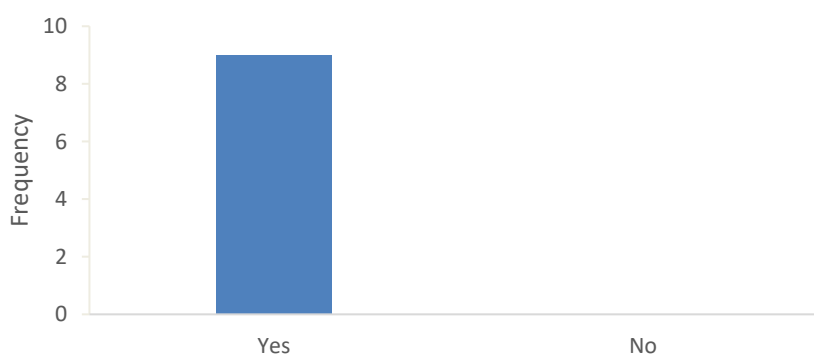
The 8 respondents who answered the question use or anticipate using a range of tables from the NI Family Resources Survey report as detailed in the responses below.

Income; Household characteristics
Use the overview
Income and State Support, Tenure, Carers and Disability S5.1, Household Characteristics, Household Food Security
Income and State Support, Tenure, Food Security
The proportion of households receiving various benefits and with a disability.
All tables would be used but with differing levels of frequency.
All chapters

NI Poverty Bulletin and NI Households Below Average Income Report

Q. At present, the NI Poverty Bulletin is published in the Spring to provide rapid high level poverty figures with the more detailed NI Households Below Average Income report following a few months later in the Summer. We are considering combining both these publications to produce a streamlined version of the NI Households Below Average Income report. It is envisaged that this streamlined report could be published in late Spring/early Summer. Would you be content with this approach?

All 9 respondents stated that they would be content if Professional Services Unit combined the NI Poverty Bulletin and the NI Households Below Average Income report into a single streamlined version of the NI Households Below Average Income report.

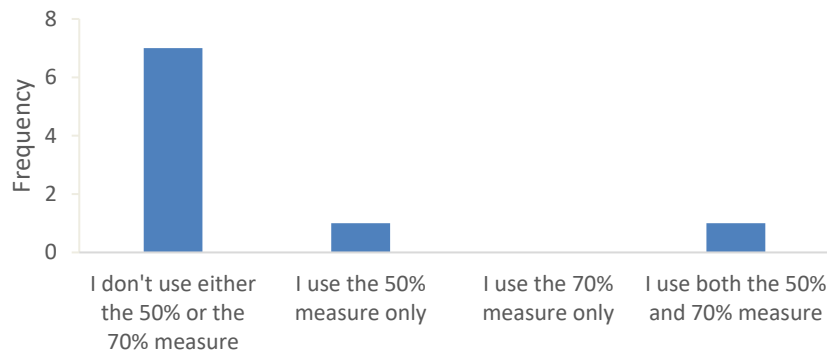


One respondent provided the following additional comment in support of their answer to the question.

Streamlining the two publications would be a good idea. Avoids repetition of information and allows the user to view the information within one document making it more accessible.

Q. In both the NI Poverty Bulletin and the NI Households Below Average Income report, the standard poverty rate is based on those with an income below 60% of the UK median. However, some breakdowns are also published based on 50% and 70% of the UK median income to provide a measure of the depth of poverty. Do you use either the 50% or 70% measure in addition to the standard 60% measure?

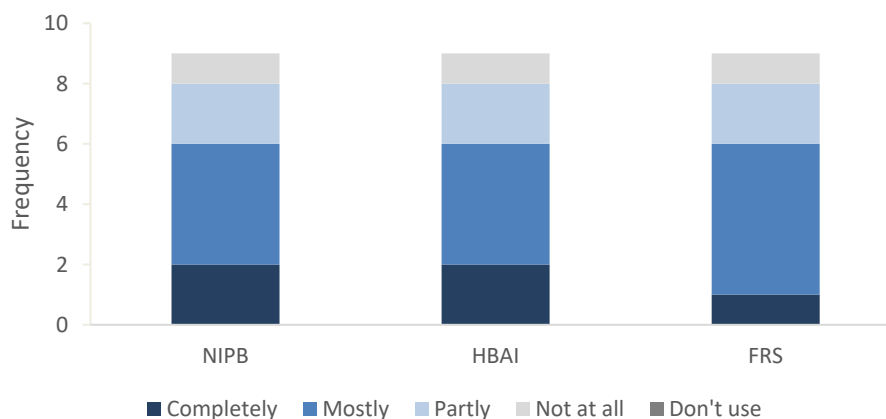
Only one respondent said they use the breakdowns, based on both 50% and 70% of the UK median income, which are published in addition to the standard 60% to provide a measure of the depth of poverty. A further respondent stated they only use the 50% measure and the remaining 78% (7) stated they do not use either measure.



Overview of Statistical Publications

Q. To what extent do the current statistical outputs meet your needs?

The three publications meet the needs of 8 out of the 9 respondents to at least a partial degree; with 2 respondents stating that the NI Poverty Bulletin and the NI Households Below Average Income report completely meet their needs and 1 respondent stating that the NI Family Resources Survey report completely meets their needs.



The following comments were provided by 4 respondents to explain why the publications did not fully meet their requirements.

There is a need to understand how much and how many households/people are spending on gambling products - evidence from elsewhere suggests the lowest /poorest households spend substantially higher proportion of income gambling - we need much wider and more frequent information on this issue

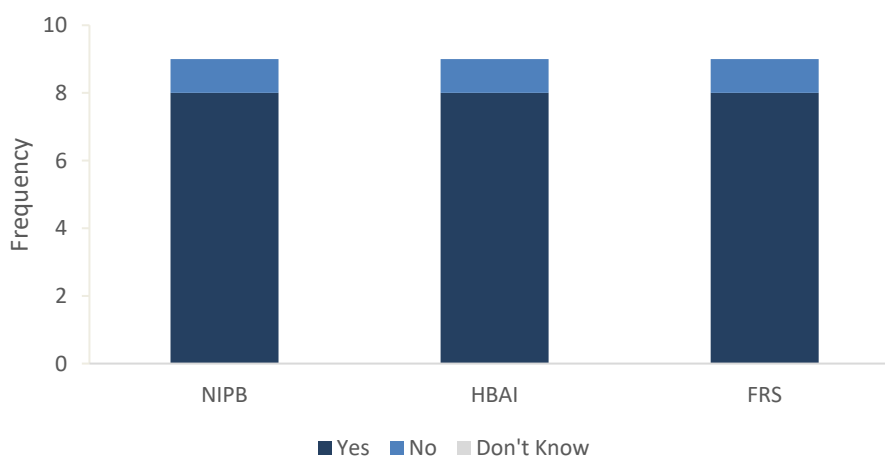
Availability of some more granular data on the households' essential expenses associated with housing costs (but not rent/rates) eg electricity/oil/gas, food, clothing etc (would cut across all 3 reports to varying extents)

The statistics largely meet our requirements. However, additional specific research will always be needed depending on current needs and social conditions.

All publications are in pdf format. The layout of the tables, charts and commentary within the publications can be a little confusing. Some pages seem to have a lot of information on, spacing out the content would be helpful.

Q. Is there sufficient commentary on the website or in the publications to assist you in understanding the statistics?

Overall, 89% (8) respondents feel that the commentary provided on the website and within the 3 publications is sufficient to assist them in understanding the statistics.



Q. Please provide details of any additional analysis, tables or charts that you feel would be useful to include within the publications.

Finally respondents were given the opportunity to provide details of anything they felt should be added to the publications with 2 respondents choosing to do so.

As above - need to include information on spend on gambling

Child Poverty Statistics by Local Government Districts

3 PSU Response

Professional Services Unit will consider the responses to the user survey that are detailed above and use the feedback provided to inform our future outputs, including the potential restructuring and amalgamation of the NI Poverty Bulletin and the NI Households Below Average Income report.

4 Contact us

Should you have any queries or require any further information on this consultation please contact:

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