

## DoF Departmental Census Target 2019/20

The Agency had one key departmental target, the Census, for the year 2019/20, which was achieved.

**Priority 4: Continue preparations for the successful delivery of the 2021 Census to ensure government policies, plans and services continue to be based on strong and accurate population evidence.**

Targets	Status	Comment
1. In Autumn 2019, undertake a large scale rehearsal of the Census systems and services	Green	Census Rehearsal Day was Sunday 13 October and follow-up work is ongoing. The public facing operational phase has (to date) worked well and stress tested the systems and services planned for the 2021 Census. The public facing phase was planned to close on Friday 15 November. A further statistical processing phase will be undertaken in the next few months. The Rehearsal will be fully evaluated and tweaks to the systems and services made to ensure that they are fit for purpose for 2021.
2. By March 2020, prepare secondary legislation to run a 2021 Census	Green	The Census Order (2020) was approved by the Minister and the Executive at its meeting on 10 March. The Order was considered and approved by the DoF Assembly Committee on 18 March, and by the TEO Committee on 25 March, the Order was laid before the Assembly at the start of April. Draft Regulations that follow the Order have been prepared and these will be put before the Minister shortly.

## Balanced Scorecard 2019/20

Quadrant	Objectives	Initiatives	Metrics	PfG Contribution
<b>Business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Agency will remain within allocated budget.</li> <li>The Agency will optimise its efficiency through revised working practices to meet customer demand.</li> <li>The Agency will deliver outputs and provide services that support customer business needs.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review organisational/ operational models.</li> <li>Review Agency Board remit and related structures.</li> <li>GDPR &amp; DEA compliance.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No overspend and underspend within 1.5% of baseline.</li> <li>% customers indicating they have used NISRA statistics in the policy/ decision making process.</li> <li>% general public that state they trust statistics produced by NISRA.</li> </ol>	

## Metrics

1	The Agency underspend was 2.2% of the allocated budget. This underspend exceeded the DoF limit due entirely too unnecessary restrictions placed on the Agency regarding recruitment of staff to specific posts.	Amber
2	In the Customer Survey (March 2020) 34% of customers indicated they have used NISRA statistics in the policy / decision making process. A new methodology was applied in this survey so there is no comparison with previous years. (Definition of customers for survey purposes: It was assumed that staff below a certain grade were less likely to utilise NISRA statistics. Therefore all NICS staff Grade 7 and above were invited to take part in the survey, staff at Deputy Principal (DP) and Staff Officer (SO) grades were sampled [to reduce the burden across the NICS] and staff at Executive Officer grade and below were not invited to participate.)	Green
3	Public Awareness of and Trust in Official Statistics was not produced, due to an 'irreparable issue with the source data ( <a href="https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/public-awareness-northern-ireland-statistics-and-research-agency-nisra-2018">https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/public-awareness-northern-ireland-statistics-and-research-agency-nisra-2018</a> )	Not Available

## Initiatives

1 & 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Structure Transformation Project PID has been developed; due to the complex nature and sensitivities of the project objectives this project will be taken forward by SMT and identified subject experts.</li> <li>The Legislation Transformation Project PID has been developed and a Project team selected.</li> <li>The Agency continues to monitor and react to workforce requirements. Competitions are called as soon as process allows and, in the absence of sufficient permanent staff NISRA, through NICSHR, sources appropriately qualified statistical officers to backfill vacancies.</li> <li>A Senior Management Team has been created to include the CEO and Directors, Business development Manager, Deputy Registrar, Head of Business Support, and HR and Finance Business Partners. The role of the SMT is to regularly review and assess corporate risks, review the deployment of Agency resources and develop strategic responses to emerging issues. The SMT meets monthly.</li> <li>The Collaboration Insight Project has created a peripatetic resource known as the Hub, to manage the commissioning of and response to new work requests, (including qualitative research) where existing resource is unable to meet customer requirements. This has proved extremely successful to date.</li> </ul>	Amber
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Branches have reported they are compliant with GDPR and DEA legislation, including the relevant online training, and no breaches have been reported to the ICO. Relevant DSAs and SLAs are in place.</li> <li>The NI Research Support Unit was the first in the UK to be accredited under DEA for enabling access to datasets by approved researchers.</li> </ul>	Green

## Other activities in support of objectives

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSO's pharmaceutical margin survey is being reviewed in order to develop options for improving both the frequency and timeliness of reporting (note - this is a non-public survey of pharmacy contractors to assess their profit margins and is used by the HCSB and DoH).</li> <li>BSO has reviewed their operational models, BSO Information Unit is now organised into service area teams led at DP Statistician level and this has reduced risk of single point of failure on key projects.</li> <li>On behalf of Department of Communities, a review of Professional Services has been carried out. The recommendations of the review have been accepted by DfC's Senior Management Team and implementation has commenced.</li> <li>As a result of this review DfC Professional Services Unit (PSU) has been established (November 2019), bringing together previously separate statistical and economist functions into one unit. Work has commenced to develop an analytics strategy, including an operating model to ensure that the work carried out by PSU meets the analytical needs of the Department.</li> </ul>
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Quadrant	Objectives	Initiatives	Metrics	PfG Contribution
<b>Customer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Agency will respond effectively to requests for service.</li> <li>• The Agency will maintain or improve overall customer satisfaction with its services.</li> <li>• The Agency will engage and inform customers and stakeholders on the value of its services and strategic goals.</li> <li>• The Agency will improve its level of brand recognition.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish current/ future demand for NISRA products and services.</li> <li>2. Develop the NISRA brand.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. % customer satisfaction</li> <li>2. Agree/ disagree ratings (%):               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. NISRA staff are knowledgeable.</li> <li>b. NISRA staff respond to my query promptly.</li> <li>c. NISRA staff are helpful.</li> <li>d. It is easy to find/ locate NISRA report/ data.</li> <li>e. NISRA reports are easy to understand.</li> <li>f. NISRA staff are courteous and treat customers with respect.</li> <li>g. In my dealings with NISRA I am made to feel valued.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Likelihood to recommend NISRA products and/ or services to colleagues.</li> <li>4. % general public - awareness of NISRA.</li> <li>5. % NICS staff - awareness of NISRA.</li> </ol>	

## Metrics

1	The overall NISRA Customer survey satisfaction rate was 93%	Green
2	The NISRA Customer survey indicated customers have a very positive view of NISRA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NISRA staff are knowledgeable (92%)</li> <li>• NISRA staff respond to my query promptly (89%)</li> <li>• NISRA staff are helpful (92%)</li> <li>• It is easy to find/ locate NISRA report/ data (70%)</li> <li>• NISRA reports are easy to understand (84%)</li> <li>• NISRA staff are courteous and treat customers with respect (92%)</li> <li>• In my dealings with NISRA I am made to feel valued (78%)</li> </ul>	Green
3	Customers' likelihood to recommend NISRA products and/ or services to colleagues (96%)	Green
4	In the Public Awareness of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency Survey, 35% of respondents were aware of NISRA. ( <a href="https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/public-awareness-northern-ireland-statistics-and-research-agency-nisra-2018">https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/public-awareness-northern-ireland-statistics-and-research-agency-nisra-2018</a> ). Whilst this represents no change from the previous year, the Agency has plans to increase public awareness through future INSIGHT project work.	Green
5	The Customer Survey 2020 showed 95% of NICS staff were aware of NISRA.	Green

## Initiatives

1	The Work Programmes in several branches (BSO, DfC, DfI, DoH and DoJ) are reviewed annually to ensure that the work carried out by these branches meets the needs of key customers in the Department.	Green
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a first step to increasing brand awareness, a comprehensive brand refresh took place in the first half of 2019 which resulted in a suite of materials that have been deployed at outreach events and across NISRA publications.</li> </ul>	Green

### Other activities in support of objectives

- NICS HR has established a Management Information (MI) transformation project to ensure the production and dissemination of more robust HR analysis for use by all levels of management within the NICS. The initial focus has been on absence management, performance management and sick absence management compliance. Similar analysis is planned for other issues such as vacancy management, staff demographics, learning and development etc.
- BSO has completed a user consultation on over its plans to release topic specific publications (separately covering dental, pharmacy, general medical and ophthalmic services) rather than continuing to release these as a single Family Practitioner Services compendium. This has demonstrated an overwhelming demand for these new publications.
- DfC's work Programme is reviewed annually to ensure that the work carried out by the branch meets the needs of key customers in the Department. Work has commenced to develop an analytics strategy to ensure that the work carried out meets the Departments analytical needs.
- DoH has met with policy colleagues from across the Department (November 2019) to establish the content of the Health Survey and associated work programme; further meetings have been held with key customers (early 2020) to agree the business plan for 2020/21.
- DoJ established a cross divisional Research and Analysis Group with G5 membership from across the Department. As well as providing a mechanism to agree ASGs work plan at the start of the year, quarterly meetings of the group aim to bring a more strategic approach to how evidence is gathered. The first meeting was held in January 2020 with subsequent meetings planned for 2020/21.

Quadrant	Objectives	Initiatives	Metrics	PfG Contribution
<b>Processes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Agency will seek ways to innovate and improve its service delivery and optimise efficiently.</li> <li>• The Agency will be fully compliant with all relevant legislation, NICS and DoF policy and procedure and technical good practice.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Optimise recruitment process.</li> <li>2. Review opportunity for flexible/ specialist work.</li> <li>3. Increase standardisation of NISRA's products &amp; services.</li> <li>4. Standardise the statistical toolset.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of publications with major corrections.</li> <li>2. Number of publications with minor errors.</li> <li>3. Number of official statistics publications.</li> <li>4. Number of national statistics publications.</li> <li>5. Number of social science research reports published.</li> <li>6. % of official statistical outputs with process documentation.</li> <li>7. % of official statistical outputs with a documented quality assurance process.</li> <li>8. % of staff vacancies.</li> <li>9. Number of breaches of the Code of Practice for Statistics.</li> <li>10. Number of breaches of DPA and GDPR.</li> <li>11. Number and % of FOI requests processed on time.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are an innovative, creative society, where people can fulfil their potential.</li> </ul>

## Metrics

1	In 2019/20 no publications were revised due to major corrections.	Green
2	In 2019/20 16 publications were re-issued due to minor errors.	Green
3	In 2019/20 NISRA published 248 official statistics outputs.	Green
4	Of the 248 official statistics outputs, 93 of these were National Statistics.	Green
5	In 2019/20 NISRA published 17 research reports. This excludes any research carried out for internal customers and research which was published as official statistics.	Green
6	67% of NISRA outputs published in 2019/20 had complete process documentation, with a further 28% of outputs having partial process documentation.	Green
7	95% of NISRA outputs published in 2019/20 had either fully or partially documented quality assurance processes.	Green
8	Current permanent staff vacancies at March 2020 was 6.4% of total permanent staff compliment.	Green
9	There were 12 reported breaches of the Code of Practice in 2019/20, including six release time breaches (T3.6), five pre-release access breaches (T3.3, T3.4) and one pre-announced release date breach (T3.1, T3.2). Details of all these breaches are published on the Authority's website ( <a href="https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publications-list/?type=breach-report">https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publications-list/?type=breach-report</a> ).	Green
10	NISRA: had no reported DPA and GDPR Breaches.	Green
11	All Fol requests were processed on time.	Green



## Initiatives

1	Relevant NISRA managers have met with NICSHR Resourcing in order to investigate a means to expedite the recruitment process. All strands of the process were looked at with a view to parallel running. NISRA has also consulted with experts with regard to optimisation and validation of the testing process and adoption of General Service online testing methodology. Current NICS shared services processes are limiting further improvement.	Amber
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The People Transformation Project PID has been developed and a Project team selected. Early work has commenced on the identification and recruitment of staff with complimentary skills sets in support of the Structure Project, and a revised recruitment testing solution has been initiated.</li> <li>NISRA are constantly seeking ways to innovate and improve service delivery by reviewing work.</li> </ul>	Green
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Sandpit Pilot has reported successfully on the provision of the standard platform and has now moved into phase II.</li> <li>The Collaboration project has delivered a peripatetic 'hub' team which is working on its business and charging model.</li> </ul>	Green
4	The Data Transformation Project PID has been developed and a Project team has been selected.	Amber

## Other activities in support of objectives

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSO has developed interactive dashboards, charts and GIS type analyses using R to increase the utility and appeal of its statistical outputs.</li> <li>BSO's ongoing programme of automation, with wide range of fraud / probity reports, has now been automated for customer in-year with supporting change control documentation.</li> </ul>
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Quadrant	Objectives	Initiatives	Metrics	PfG Contribution
<b>People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will strive to improve the level of our wellbeing.</li> <li>All Agency staff will receive relevant, identified training and skills development commensurate with their role and development needs.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify opportunities for collaboration.</li> <li>Develop our approach to recognising &amp; appreciating our people.</li> <li>Conduct a cultural survey &amp; action plan findings.</li> <li>Produce a new staff development strategy.</li> <li>Review role requirements across NISRA.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of collaborative<sup>1</sup> projects initiated.</li> <li>Number of collaborative projects completed.</li> <li>Number of days lost to sickness absence per staff member.</li> <li>% Overall staff satisfaction.</li> <li>% Employee Engagement.</li> <li>Number of staff training days per year per staff member.</li> <li>% of all NISRA staff indicating they have deployed training in their day to day work.</li> <li>% staff with PPA / PDP completed on time.</li> <li>% of staff exiting within one year of appointment.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are a shared, welcoming and confident society that respects diversity.</li> <li>We are an innovative, creative society, where people can fulfil their potential.</li> </ul>

### Metrics

1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Collaboration Transformation Project has delivered the key output of a peripatetic NISRA Hub Team, which was deployed in October 2019. The project will now consider how to promote broader collaboration across the Agency.</li> <li>Several Collaboration projects are reported in the Initiatives section below.</li> </ul>	Green
2	Several Collaboration Projects have been ongoing in NISRA throughout the financial year, several examples have been specified in the Initiative section, two of which have been reported as complete.	Green
3	Sickness absence days lost per person 2019/20 YTD – 7.5. Sickness absence days lost 2018/19 YTD (comparison) – 8.0.	Amber
4	A revised NISRA Induction process was developed and deployed in September 2019. The PID has been revised and a Project team selected to deliver on the wider objectives of the project.	Green

<sup>1</sup> The definition of collaborative is a project involving a project with participants outside the branch / department.

5	In the NICS People Survey, Employee Engagement for NISRA was 53% in 2019, in comparison to 55% in 2018.	Green
6	The 19/20 NISRA Training Plan was agreed by Agency Board in September 2019. Specialised / Technical statistical training accounted for 1.2 days of training per year per staff member	Green
7	In the NICS People Survey 2019 almost three quarters of NISRA Staff (2019: 74%, 2018: 73%) reported that they have received the training necessary to deliver their business objectives, and the majority of NISRA Staff (91%) reported they have the skills they need to do their job effectively, in comparison to 87% in 2018.	Green
8	At the end of the financial year 77.4% of NISRA staff, for whom we have information, had an agreed 19/20 PPA/PDP.	Amber
9	Organisational exit rate (NISRA statistical staff exiting as a percentage of all statistical staff) at 31st March 2019 was 9.07% (33 staff). Twenty-two of these 33 staff (two thirds) exited to pursue developmental opportunities such as promotion.	Green

### Initiatives

1	Collaboration Projects Examples:	Green
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The Collaboration project has delivered the key output of a peripatetic NISRA Hub Team which was deployed in October 2019, aimed at promoting broader collaboration across the Agency. This is operational and has provided collaborative help to CSU, DoF Information Management Branch and others.</li> <li>2) BSO has been collaborating with Swansea University in a pilot of their Secure eResearch Platform (SeRP). If successful, this initiative has the potential to offer, for the first time in NI, secure remote access to de-identified patient level datasets for health related research studies.</li> <li>3) BSO has also collaborated with DoH to look at the effectiveness of prescribing in stroke patients and, more recently, to provide detailed datasets of “at risk” patients for use in new Covid-19 monitoring dashboard (due for release).</li> <li>4) Council statisticians have worked with the relevant council staff in improving the address register and supporting Census staff communications with Councils.</li> <li>5) CSU staff have also worked with the Census Address Team to improve the quality of the NISRA Address Register (NAR).</li> <li>6) Dissemination Branch has worked with the Equality Commission to produce guidance for access to Section 75 data</li> <li>7) Criminal Justice statisticians have collaborated on standardising offence codes across their respective organisations.</li> <li>8) DfC have worked with ADR on two collaborative projects, the first project is linking social security benefits and census data to understand the health and social needs of disability benefit claimants.</li> </ol>		

- 9) The second project used census data to provide detailed characteristics and circumstances of Irish language and Ulster Scots speakers in 2011, to assess the factors associated with changes in Irish language speaking from 2001 to 2011.
- 10) In DfC a pilot analytics project has been initiated, involving statisticians and economists working collaboratively together to help design analytics outputs providing better access to information for the department.
- 11) DfE has worked with DE, HMRC, DWP and DfC on the development of a Longitudinal Education Outcomes database; and collaborated with Census on the matching work.
- 12) DfE has worked with the Institute for Conflict Research producing a report on barriers to education for those affected by Paramilitarism.
- 13) DfE has produced an analysis of the Employer Skills Survey in collaboration with Economists within the Division.
- 14) DfE has collaborated with HMRC on linkage of earnings records to Apprenticeships data for National Minimum Wage campaign.
- 15) DfE and ELMS have worked together to develop a Better Jobs Index which is an Indicator in the draft PfG.
- 16) DfE has worked with LPS / ELMS / Invest NI on the Covid-19 25k scheme.
- 17) DfE, ONS, BEIS, Scotland and Wales, amongst others, have worked on the Low Carbon and Renewable Economy Survey.
- 18) A new data transmission process has been established between NISRA and DoH to ensure a legislative basis and protocol for data sharing with non-Departmental users.
- 19) DoJ worked with the NI Research Support Unit to develop a project linking mortality and offending data.
- 20) DoJ has been collaborating with the Causeway data team with an aim of producing dashboards to monitor court case performance. This has allowed DoJ to deliver dashboards to Criminal Justice board meetings on a quarterly basis.
- 21) The Management Information (MI) transformation project has been collaborating with HRCS, with the aim of producing more robust HR analysis for use by all levels of management within the NICS. This has allowed HRCS to deliver monthly dashboards to departmental Board meetings.
- 22) VARS: The Census ASHE project, a collaborative project between Census, ELMS and RSU has commenced (April 2019). They are working together to create a Census-ASHE themed dataset as part of the latest ESRC funding round.

<p>2, 3, 4, 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Transformation Project PIDs (Culture, People) have been developed and the People Project team selected. Work has commenced on the identification and recruitment of staff with complimentary skills sets in support of the Structure Project and a revised recruitment testing solution has been initiated.</li> <li>• The cultural survey did not happen, due to insufficient resources.</li> <li>• NISRA maintains a fully equipped training suite which is used in delivering bespoke in house training courses, enabling all staff to be fully trained in the requirements of their respective jobs.</li> <li>• BSO has begun a programme of training its staff in use of R suite of open source packages using Data Camp and other in-house training including awareness workshops.</li> <li>• During 2019/20 a number of wellbeing activities were promoted throughout NISRA. These have included early morning yoga sessions, relay teams entered in the Belfast marathon, free gym class sessions offered in Anytime Fitness and a number of Wellbeing messages and seminars issued to all staff throughout the year. Alongside this, fundraising activities have been organised to raise awareness and funds for charities including Macmillan and Jeans for Genes.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Amber</p>
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