Developing
Irish Social and Equality Statistics
to meet Policy Needs

Report of the Steering Group on
Social and Equality Statistics

National Statistics Board

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Abbreviations

CARS	CSO Classification and Related Standards Section
COP	Census of Population
CRS	Client Record System
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DAF	Department of Agriculture and Food
DCRGA	Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
DELG	Department of the Environment and Local Government
DES	Department of Education and Science
DETE	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
DHC	Department of Health and Children
DHSSPS	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Northern Ireland)
DJELR	Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
DoF	Department of Finance
DoT	Department of Transport
DSFA	Department of Social and Family Affairs
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
EU-SILC	EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions
FOI	Freedom of Information Act
HBS	Household Budget Survey
NAPS	National Anti-Poverty Strategy
NDP	National Development Plan
NESC	National Economic and Social Council
NESF	National Economic and Social Forum
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
NSB	National Statistics Board
ODTR	Office of the Director of Telecommunications Regulation
ONS	Office for National Statistics (UK)
PPF	Programme for Prosperity and Fairness
PPSN	Personal Public Service Number
QNHS	Quarterly National Household Survey
R/C	Office of the Revenue Commissioners
SGSES	Steering Group on Social and Equality Statistics
SOGSI	Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion
SPC	Social Protection Committee
TCD	Trinity College Dublin

Preface

This report brings together the key findings of the Steering Group on Social and Equality Statistics which met regularly between April and November 2002. The Steering Group was established to undertake a scoping study of what needed to be done to develop Irish social and equality statistics so that they could meet current and impending policy needs. There were two particular emphases in the Steering Group's work: identifying data within existing administrative records that could be used to build social statistics; and asking those directly involved in policy making in government departments and agencies to identify their precise data needs in the context of the growing importance of evidence-based policy making.

The National Statistics Board (NSB) is strongly committed to the development of Irish social statistics in a comprehensive and cost-effective manner. As chair of the NSB, I had the privilege of chairing the Steering Group which undertook this very complex exercise. The efforts put into both elements of the exercise on the part of departmental representatives (See Appendix B) were very considerable, especially given the pressures of time. The dedicated work of the Secretariat to the Steering Group (Gerry Brady, Brenda Boylan, Gillian Roche and Sharon Finegan) and of the CSO Director for Demographic and Social Statistics (Gerry O'Hanlon) ensured that the very large volume of information collected from departments could be coordinated and processed in a timely and efficient manner. While established primarily as an interdepartmental working group, the Steering Group was facilitated greatly by the addition of several "expert outsiders" who generously gave of their personal time to bring experience and "systems thinking" to scoping what needs to be done so that social statistics in Ireland can begin to match EU and OECD standards. In effect, because of the participation of Brian Nolan (ESRI), Eithne Fitzgerald (tasc), Laurence Bond (Equality Authority), and Tony McCashin (TCD), the exercise became much more than the sum of the contributions of individual departments. All members of the Steering Group also benefited from the astute observations of Dr Liz McWhirter, who brought her experience as a social statistician in a related exercise in Northern Ireland to confront us in a most positive manner. The contributions of all of those involved in the Steering Group, and of their departmental colleagues who cooperated so positively in providing information, made it feasible to achieve what many would have felt was impossible in this very short time-frame.

The challenges for the Irish public service posed by this report are considerable. Without coordinated action across departments, to deal with its challenges and to implement its major recommendations, policy makers in government departments will simply not have adequate empirical evidence to develop and monitor social policies in a manner which will stand up to public scrutiny and meet the efficiency and accountability standards that our society increasingly demands. Meeting these challenges will require further development of the Civil Service culture towards greater systems-wide planning, and some additional resources.

Frances Ruane
Chairperson

Executive Summary

The National Statistics Board is responsible to Government for setting priorities for the compilation and development of official statistics in Ireland and for guiding the strategic direction of the Central Statistics Office. In its Progress Report 2001[1], the Board formally recognised that a comprehensive long-term strategy was needed to develop the social statistics required to support policy formulation and to monitor progress on achieving agreed social and equality outcomes.

As a first step the Board, in consultation with the Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion, proposed that a study be undertaken to determine the scope of expected or likely requirements for social and equality statistics and the extent to which these are being met, or could be met, by existing statistical surveys and administrative records. To undertake the study, a Steering Group on Social and Equality Statistics was established comprising key policy and statistical staff in relevant government departments, CSO staff, and experts with experience in analysing social data in Ireland from a range of perspectives.

As a result of this scoping study, the Steering Group has made twelve specific recommendations on actions necessary to ensure that Ireland has the statistical information on social and equality issues required to plan policy and monitor progress on social inclusion. These recommendations are made in the pursuance of a vision for social statistics which includes:

◆ A collectively agreed national framework for social and equality statistics which delivers a comprehensive picture of Irish society and its diversity; *(Recommendations 1 and 2)*

◆ Systematic identification of the data required by the public sector and by society in order to track change, identify issues, plan policy, and monitor progress; *(Recommendations 3 and 4)*

◆ Methods which deliver the required statistics at high quality, least cost and with due regard for data protection; and *(Recommendations 5 to 9)*

◆ Effective use of social statistics to inform policy and assist planning. *(Recommendations 10 to 12)*

Recommendation 1   The CSO, under the guidance of the NSB, should set out a framework for social and equality statistics, the key social statistics and indicators in each domain, and the key disaggregations required of these statistics/indicators. The process for undertaking this should be set out in the Board's forthcoming 2003-2008 Strategy for Statistics.

Recommendation 2   The NSB together with the Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion should support progress on the implementation of this framework and in particular ensure that the production of data is informed by the evolving requirements of data users. This should be reported on annually to government in the progress reports of the National Statistics Board.

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[1]   National Statistics Board (2002), "*Implementation of Strategy for Statistics, 1998-2002: Progress Report 2001*", Stationery Office, Dublin.

Recommendation 3   Each department should establish an appropriate committee bringing together data users (including appropriate outside experts and data users) and data producers to design and deliver its statistics strategy. In departments which encompass several very distinct areas of policy (e.g. Justice, Equality and Law Reform), it may be appropriate to establish statistics subcommittees serving individual policy areas.   These departmental statistics committees should:

 a   Determine how, and to what extent, the department's data needs can be met within the department;

 b   Establish what information not internally available is required;

 c   Identify the data needs in respect of complex and cross-cutting issues with which the department is concerned; and

 d   Identify how the skills of its staff in using data as a tool for policy evaluation and development can be enhanced.

Recommendation 4   Arising from this exercise, a formal data/statistics strategy should be devised within each department as an integral part of its information strategy, and in turn this should be included within its formal Statement of Strategy and reported on in its annual report.

Recommendation 5   More standardisation, co-ordination and classification of data collection and maintenance are required, so that data banks across the public service can be interrogated using a common approach[2]. Such standardisation should be agreed interdepartmentally by those responsible for developing statistical strategies in each department. This should take place under the auspices of the CSO in conjunction with the Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion.

Recommendation 6   Investigation is required into the expanded use of a common identifier, such as the PPS Number, with a view to linking discrete datasets and to seeing how longitudinal datasets can be developed based on existing administrative data.

Recommendation 7   The CSO be asked to set out formally how its process of data integration and the subsequent treatment of statistics generated by data integration (including access for research) can be safely employed without data protection problems.

Recommendation 8   The NSB in conjunction with the SOGSI should be asked to set out formally how departments would use and protect individual data available to them for statistical purposes.

Recommendation 9   The documents, arising from recommendations 7 and 8, should be referred to the Data Protection Commissioner for confirmation that this process does not undermine the data protection rights of individuals.

Recommendation 10   The social and equality indicators derived should be disseminated widely, through the publication[3] (with associated web-based databanks) by the CSO of an annual publication similar to that produced by the ONS in the UK, namely, UK Social Trends. The data generated through this process would also meet the international requirements on Ireland to produce social statistics.

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[2]   The absence of any standardisation of categories such as age, occupation and geographic location dramatically reduces their potential contribution to statistics.

[3]   The need for key indicators is equally relevant to economic statistics. Accordingly, as a first step in the process of getting consensus on which indicators really determine whether target national economic and social outcomes are being achieved, the NSB has asked the CSO to prepare a preliminary national progress indicators report by summer 2003. This initial report will serve as a reference point for discussions between the main users and producers of key economic and social statistics.

Recommendation 11   In line with other countries, consideration should be given to the publication of a social report, prepared or commissioned by, say, the NESC. In it, progress, as measured by key social indicators, would be related to the objectives of social and equality policy, and be linked directly to similar measures for other countries[4].

Recommendation 12   The social and equality statistics derived from administrative data should be available in user-friendly form on the web, with links in both directions between the statistics sections of individual government department websites and the CSO website.

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[4]   As such it could be seen as playing an analogous role to that played for economic indicators by the Annual Competitiveness Report produced by the National Competitiveness Council.

Chapter

1

Background and Working Procedures

1.1   Introduction

In recent years, there have been moves towards evidence-based policy making and the acceptance of the need for greater transparency and accountability in decisions regarding the determination and delivery of public services. These developments apply not only at national level but are also increasingly evident at international, and most especially, at EU level.

At national level, the particular form of social partnership adopted in Ireland has brought policy making into a more public forum and has created increased pressure for accountability and measurement of the success of national programmes. Furthermore, recent legislation in the Freedom of Information and Equality areas, combined with ongoing developments in social inclusion policy, also create pressure for greater accountability and a need to benchmark and measure developments. Appendix A summarises some of the key issues regarding the need for social and equality indicators for Ireland that have been discussed in fora, such as the NESC[5] and the NESF, in the context of policies to deal with equality, poverty, disability, etc. It also sets out the progress to date on developing such indicators.

At an international level, membership of the EU has made demands on domestic policy in terms of measuring progress and of meeting new targets and obligations in the social and equality spheres. At EU and UN level, we are seeing an increasing importance being attached to social inclusion and social cohesion and a corresponding need to be able to measure progress in these areas.

These developments have substantially increased the demand for statistics and indicators relating to social and equality issues at all levels. Responding to this demand is a major challenge to public administrations as a whole and to national statistical offices in particular. The challenge is not only a question of resources, although this is of course a major issue, but is also one of finding methodologically sound and innovative means of producing relevant and accurate information. A particular feature of the increased demand, resulting from the cross-cutting nature of most social policy issues, is that policy makers must have access to a broad body of reliable data that covers not just their own specific policy area but also inter-related areas. The need for key indicators is equally relevant to economic statistics. Accordingly, as a first step in the process of getting consensus on which indicators really determine whether target national economic and social outcomes are being achieved, the NSB has asked the CSO to prepare a preliminary national progress indicators report by summer 2003. This initial report will serve as a reference point for discussions between the main users and producers of key economic and social statistics.

1.2   National Statistics Board

The NSB became increasingly concerned at the implications for the statistical system of the escalating demand for statistics to support social policy formulation and review. In response, it considered it essential for the proper development of the system to:

◆ *enunciate a framework* for the development of social statistics;

◆ *develop a programme* for the enhancement of existing data or the production of new data on the social situation; and

◆ *establish a schedule* for implementation of that programme of statistical development.

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[5]   See table of abbreviations on page 5.

As a first step the Board, in consultation with the Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion, proposed that a study be undertaken to determine the scope of expected or likely requirements for social and equality statistics and the extent to which these are being met, or could be met, by existing data holdings in administrative records. In the process, it was hoped that the study would seek to identify current gaps and to provide a basis for identifying priorities to be addressed in a medium term development programme for social and equality statistics.

To undertake the study, a Steering Group on Social and Equality Statistics was established, comprising key policy and statistical staff in relevant government departments, CSO staff, and expert users with experience in analysing social data in Ireland from a range of perspectives (see Appendix B)

1.3   Terms of Reference

The following Terms of Reference were assigned to the Steering Group:

1   To review existing and proposed social indicators and measures in terms of their content, data requirements and ability to meet current demands for social and equality statistics.

2   To identify and evaluate existing statistical surveys and administrative data in relation to their comprehensiveness, comparability with other sources, coverage, timeliness, accessibility, etc.

3   To determine what would be required to enhance the usefulness of data from different administrative sources in generating social and equality statistics.

4   To examine what would be required to allow integrated analyses of data from different statistical and administrative sources and how such new analyses could be best disseminated.

5   To identify current gaps in social and equality statistics and how these should be met, having regard to the priorities of, and resource implications for, stakeholders.

6   To develop a framework for social and equality statistics that can meet future policy needs arising from new social and equality policy developments.

The Steering Group met at monthly intervals between April and November 2002 and ongoing work was progressed through two sub-groups on data needs and data sources, respectively. Despite the intention that the study would merely attempt to scope the issues, the Steering Group determined at an early stage that it would have to conduct two extensive surveys of the Government Departments which play key roles in determining and implementing social policy, in order to determine needs for social statistics and potential sources of data for social statistics using administrative records. In addition, a wide range of relevant material on social indicators, data sources for social statistics and international publications were distributed at the meetings (see Appendix C). These documents ensured that the Steering Group was aware of recent relevant research in Ireland and could place its work in an international context.

1.4   Brief outline of the report

Chapter 2 of the report discusses the various concepts related to social and equality statistics and provides an overview of the sources of social statistics in Ireland. It also proposes a possible framework for the development of social and equality statistics in Ireland, and this framework provides a structure in the remainder of the report for considering social and equality data. Chapter 3 reports on the cross-departmental survey undertaken on the data needs of people engaged in policy making at departmental and agency level. Chapter 4 reports on the cross-departmental survey of data sources, which attempts to establish the nature of data

holdings which might provide suitable statistics for policy makers. Chapter 5 draws together the findings of the Steering Group and suggests what the next steps might be if Ireland is to take a systematic approach to developing the types of social and equality statistics which are required for international comparison purposes and to underpin social policy making throughout government.

Policy Requirements of Social and Equality Statistics

2.1   Introduction

This chapter discusses the demand for social and equality statistics using a wide interpretation of social indicators. The need for a consistent and integrated framework within which to develop statistics to support monitoring of progress on social and equality policy outcomes is outlined. An initial draft framework for Ireland, which is broadly in line with the types of frameworks adopted in other OECD countries, is proposed for the purposes of this study. Following this, more practical issues associated with meeting the demand are considered, including the issues of disaggregation and analysis. Some current practices in other countries are described in Appendix D. The chapter concludes with a short overview of statistical sources in Ireland.

2.2   Concepts of social indicators

Social indicators are statistics that seek to capture developments in areas of significant social concern. Most importantly, they aim to provide empirical, valid measurements of key dimensions of human well-being. Since well-being is itself a normative and culturally relative concept, such indicators typically draw their authority from a broad consensus in society about the information needs relating to what constitutes better or worse life circumstances. It may also sometimes be possible to link them more directly to the goals of public policy, although high-level societal goals often remain implicit or are stated at only a very high level of generality. Consequently, choices as to which indicators to use, and how to bring them together within a summary framework, often rely on judgments about how they relate to what are taken to be widely-shared social concerns. Necessarily more technical considerations about the type of statistics needed to track change consistently through time and allow comparisons across social categories of interest (e.g. by sex, age, social class, etc.) also play a major part.

An important distinction needs to be made between indicators focused on social outcomes, and statistics on policy interventions aimed at influencing those outcomes. Statistics on the latter are usually more readily available. An official US report noted over 30 years ago that the annual statistical report on education contained over a hundred pages, "yet has virtually no information on how much children have learned"[6] – the focus was on expenditure, staff numbers, and other details about the education system. This reflects *inter alia* the fact that statistics produced by administrative systems often relate to inputs, i.e. the operation of programmes and systems rather than to outcomes. Programme indicators – relating to specific policy interventions and their impact – however essential for policy evaluation, will not in themselves capture the key dimensions of social change. From a social reporting perspective it is critically important that the main emphasis be on social outcomes: it is these, ultimately, that allow us to judge the extent and nature of social progress.

Outcome indicators cannot be seen in isolation, and will be more informative if combined with both programme/policy indicators and with measures capturing key aspects of the context in which these outcomes are emerging. For example, a change in the proportion of elderly people in the population will not represent a social goal in itself, but may be critical in understanding other trends relating directly to specific goals associated with the well-being of the elderly. What constitutes "output" rather than "input" or "context" may not always be clear-cut, and one would not want to apply the distinction rigidly. For example, fertility is an objective of pro-natalist policies in some countries, but is an important feature of the social policy background in others. The priority in social reporting is nonetheless to aim for a comprehensive set of indicators of trends across the main dimensions of life, which will capture social progress or setback.

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[6]   Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, (1969) "*Towards a Social Report*", Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, US, p.66.

2.3   Framework for social and equality statistics

A key question that must be addressed is the identification of the most important areas of life to distinguish as domains for conceptualising social statistics. It is useful to look at some frameworks or categorisations in use elsewhere, taking Sweden, Germany, the UK and New Zealand as examples. In all these the areas of health, the labour market, education, income, and security are distinguished as distinct domains. Housing, family, social relationships including connectedness and participation, and the environment are also widely covered while transport is distinguished in the UK and Germany. There are also some interesting variations, with, for example, Sweden including political resources, Germany distinguishing leisure and media consumption, and New Zealand having domains covering 'human rights' and 'culture and identity'. Various categorisations are used in different countries and contexts both because what is appropriate depends on the purpose at hand and the underlying conceptual focus, and because judgments may differ across societies and over time about what areas and issues are most salient. This is illustrated by the increasing importance now widely assigned to the environment, or, yet more recently, to the emergence of social capital as a focus of attention.

To facilitate the work of the Steering Group, and to provide a first indication of an appropriate structure for Ireland, a draft framework was developed as a format in which we would conceptualise and develop social and equality data for Ireland (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1   Draft social and equality framework

Domain code	Domain name
1.00	Health and Access To Health Care
2.00	Labour Market and Working Conditions
3.00	Income, Wealth and Poverty
4.00	Education and Training
5.00	Households and Families
6.00	Housing
7.00	Safety and Security
8.00	Social Relationships and Integration
9.00	Environment
10.00	Transportation
11.00	Lifestyles and Consumer Expenditure
12.00	Population

An important point to note in regard to this framework is that the domains represent a generic set of areas of interest that are independent of institutional structures (e.g. government departments/agencies) at any given time. In this way the framework should be of benefit to users, particularly those in policy areas, in allowing them to identify and articulate their needs in a more integrated and comprehensive manner than heretofore. The framework also has the merit of ensuring that the development of social statistics is undertaken in a balanced way across all the domains of interest. Examples of the themes included under each of the twelve domains are given in Table 2.2 and applied in practice to the listing of data indicators and data sources given in Appendices E and F. These themes are derived from the subject matter of the returns in Appendices E and F and are, thus, not intended to be theoretically balanced or exhaustive.

Table 2.2   Illustration of domain themes

Domain name	Domain code	Domain name	Domain code
Health and Access to Health Care	**1.00**	**Safety and Security**	**7.00**
Births	1.01	Crime	7.01
Care	1.02	Police and courts	7.02
Deaths	1.03	Probation and prisons	7.03
Disability	1.04	Human rights	7.04
Health-related behaviour and prevention	1.05		
Illness	1.06	**Social Relationships and Integration**	**8.00**
Life expectancy	1.07	Culture and identity	8.01
Patients and waiting lists	1.08	Gender equality	8.02
Personal health expenses and refunds	1.09	Racism	8.03
		Social participation	8.04
Labour Market and Working Conditions	**2.00**	Refugees and asylum seekers	8.05
Employment	2.01	Travellers	8.06
Labour costs and wages	2.02	Drug abuse	8.07
Occupational accidents	2.03	Alcoholism	8.08
Retirement	2.04		
Unemployment	2.05	**Environment**	**9.00**
Work skills profile	2.06	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	9.01
		Air	9.02
Income, Wealth and Poverty	**3.00**	Chemical usage	9.03
Household and personal income	3.01	Energy	9.04
Income distribution	3.02	Greenhouse gases	9.05
Inflation	3.03	Noise	9.06
Low income and poverty	3.04	Protection expenditure	9.07
National Accounts	3.05	Wildlife and threatened species	9.08
Pensions	3.06	Waste	9.09
Taxation	3.07	Water	9.10
Economy	3.08	Soil	9.11
		Biodiversity	9.12
Education and Training	**4.00**		
First level education	4.01	**Transportation**	**10.00**
Continuing education	4.02	Transport safety	10.01
Expenditure on education	4.03	Travel	10.02
Literacy and numeracy	4.04		
Schools and staff	4.05	**Lifestyles and Consumer Expenditure**	**11.00**
School leavers	4.06	Communication and technology	11.01
Second level education	4.07	Household and personal expenditure	11.02
Special educational needs	4.08	Lifestyles at home	11.03
Higher and further education	4.09	Lifestyles outside the home	11.04
		Price levels	11.05
Households and Families	**5.00**	Time use	11.06
Households	5.01		
Lone parents	5.02	**Population**	**12.00**
Partnerships	5.03	Children	12.01
		Demographic trends	12.02
Housing	**6.00**	Elderly	12.03
Homeless	6.01	Migration	12.04
Housing stock	6.02	Population profile	12.05
Social housing needs	6.03		

2.4 Disaggregation and analysis

It is useful in the development of an effective statistical infrastructure to draw a distinction between the following three main categories of statistical information, namely:

◆ Indicators;

◆ Disaggregated statistics; and

◆ Analysis and integrated information.

In addition to capturing key social trends at an aggregate level, an important role for social indicators is to reflect what is happening to different groups in society. Tracking overall crime levels and feelings of personal insecurity, for example, will be of significant interest, but much more valuable if we can see whether the same trends are occurring in urban versus rural areas or among majority and minority ethnic groups. This means that the capacity to classify by various categories of interest is a crucial characteristic of the most useful social indicators and has grown in importance with ongoing developments in equality and social inclusion policy.

This has implications for the usefulness of data from different sources. Surveys can be designed to yield information on the characteristics by which one wishes to disaggregate, but administrative data are generally produced in a much less flexible way, and only the characteristics which are relevant to the operation of the programme in question will typically be included. There are ways of dealing with this problem, notably through linkage across different datasets. This can add greatly to the value of administrative data and to the scope of social reporting. Nevertheless, there are limits to which disaggregation can be taken in the formulation and presentation of indicators and in data collection more generally. These revolve around the balance between the needs of users and the demands that provision of disaggregated data place on data producers and respondents. Finding the right balance will undoubtedly require a process of screening and prioritisation involving detailed discussions between statisticians and a wide range of users.

Analysing the causes of social phenomena such as unemployment and its impact in a broader socio-economic context may require the development of complex models and statistical accounting frameworks that enable data from disparate sources to be analysed and integrated in a consistent and meaningful way. In effect, analysis and integration add value to basic data but are highly demanding on resources in that a high degree of expertise and subject matter knowledge is usually required. Often these resources are only partially available within statistical offices and, as a result, research institutes and universities amongst others sometimes play an important role as downstream statistical producers[7].

2.5 Sources of social statistics in Ireland

The major sources of data for social statistics are censuses, household surveys and information obtained as a by-product of administrative systems. In some countries, such as Norway and Sweden, where there are highly-developed registration systems, including population registers, administrative sources are a central part of the social statistics information system. In others, such as Ireland, where administrative sources are less developed and population registers do not exist, a much greater reliance is placed on censuses and surveys to meet social data needs.

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[7] This raises the issue, discussed in Chapter 5, of access by researchers and others to data held by statistical offices subject to statistical confidentiality constraints.

In terms of cost, the use of administrative sources is highly desirable as it represents a low direct cost to the statistical system although there can be a considerable cost involved in building up, or modifying, administrative systems so that they can be used to generate the required data. Censuses and household surveys are extremely expensive in the context of the statistical budget and often can only be taken infrequently. This reflects the fact that the full cost must be borne by the statistical budget and that the work is usually labour intensive, particularly where the information must be collected by personal interview. In Ireland the combined cost of the continuous Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS), the quinquennial Census of Population (COP) and the quinquennial Household Budget Survey (HBS) account for around one third of the CSO budget on an annualised basis.

From the point of view of statistical information value, censuses and surveys are usually to be preferred as they can be designed in order to meet more precisely the needs of users. However, in addition to resource limits there are other constraining factors such as the need to curtail the burden on respondents and the limited extent to which samples can be used to obtain useful information on small sub-populations. The latter is an important issue in the context of social and equality statistics where the focus of attention is often on obtaining reliable information on distinct groups such as the homeless, the disabled or ethnic minorities.

Administrative data can be a valuable additional source of statistical information. National and EU statistical law allows access by national statistical institutes to administrative data for statistical purposes. It is also accepted in data protection legislation that individual data may be used for valid statistical purposes provided that adequate safeguards exist to protect the subject's right to privacy. However, in Ireland such administrative sources tend to be under-exploited and suffer from a number of serious shortcomings. These largely arise from the fact that they have evolved on a patchwork basis where insufficient consideration has been given to their information potential at the planning and design stages. As a result, the statistics obtained tend to be incompatible with information obtained from other sources and generally fail to provide a comprehensive picture. Greater use of standardised concepts and the inclusion of a minimum set of common classification questions (e.g. age, sex, marital status, address) on application forms would go a long way towards addressing these problems (see Section 4.3).

Another important drawback is the effective absence in Ireland, up to now, of a means of linking different data sources. This is a particular feature of statistical work in countries that have a strong population registration tradition, where the ability to link individual data from different sources adds greatly to the informational utility of the end product. Such linkages can be made not only between different administrative sources but also between administrative sources and statistical surveys and censuses. The situation in Ireland is, however, changing with an increasing interest in using a unique identifier system, the Personal Public Service Number (PPS Number), in the delivery of a range of public services. This development is being driven by the priority being given to e-government initiatives and, if properly harnessed, has the potential to yield substantial improvements in the quality of policy-making through optimal use of the statistics obtained from administrative sources.

There is no doubt that the increasing policy demand for social and equality statistics will lead to pressure for more customised surveys to be undertaken. This will be particularly the case in areas of interest where no data currently exist. An example is the need for a Time Use Survey in the context of increasing demands for information on unwaged work (especially by women) and the emerging interest in measuring social capital. There is a limit on what can be introduced by way of new statistical instruments and thus it is important that we derive as much social data as possible from integrating existing sources, and particularly those based on administrative systems. The achievement of this objective will require a far greater degree of co-operation on statistical matters between relevant Public Authorities than heretofore.

Analysis of Data Needs Identified by Government Departments and in Policy Documents

3.1 Introduction

In the short to medium term there will be an increasing demand for social and equality statistics, driven by the growing need to be able to benchmark and measure progress in key social areas at both national and international level. While some of the needs for social statistics have been articulated at national fora (see Appendix A) and in user surveys by the National Statistics Board[8], there has not hitherto been any formal or systematic articulation of the general needs for social statistics at departmental level where policy formulation and development occurs. The greater need for accountability at this level necessitates policy formulation based on analyses that are increasingly based on statistics.

Where data systems are inadequate or non-existent, it is practically impossible to take an evidence-based approach to policy making. In areas of social policy where access to data is limited, and pressures of time are acute, policy decisions sometimes have to be made on the basis of anecdotal (rather than statistical) evidence and on the direct experience and knowledge of the policy maker. In a democracy, political realities and public opinion will ultimately always be factors in decision making, but the role of reliable data to allow the identification and description of problems is becoming ever more important as our society increasingly questions the basis for policy action or inaction.

In recent years much work has been done on the development of social and equality indicators both at an EU and national level. However, there is an increasing proliferation of such indicators and consequently there is an urgent need to agree which are the most appropriate indicators of progress in the different policy areas. Government commitments to equality-proofing and poverty-proofing of all government policies also require that the appropriate data are available.

In this chapter, we outline how the Steering Group sought to identify the data needs of policy makers. These needs are classified in terms of domain areas (using the structure in Table 2.1) and in terms of current usage and perceived priority. Following an analysis of the results of this data audit (with more detailed results set out in Appendix E) there is a brief discussion of the completeness of the audit and of some key new statistical initiatives being undertaken in departments.

3.2 Progress on identification of data needs

A part of the terms of reference for the Steering Group was to "review existing and proposed social indicators and measures in terms of their content, data requirements and ability to meet current demands for social and equality statistics". In order to progress this part of the agenda, the Steering Group issued a questionnaire on data needs to several government departments[9] (see Appendix G).

This is the first time that departments have been asked to articulate their data needs in such a structured and comprehensive manner and it has proved to be a useful and instructive exercise. The data needs survey sought to capture the extent to which policy makers use indicators and their perceived need for the development of further indicators. It can be seen as an initial attempt to map the interface between data and the policy maker. While the survey did not ask policy makers *how* they use indicators, it provides a measure of whether or not they use them. While not all government departments were included in this scoping study, the ten key departments[9] with a major social policy remit were included, as well as some key agencies reporting to these departments.

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[8]   National Statistics Board (2003), "*Survey of CSO Users 2002",* Stationery Office, Dublin
[9]   Departments of: Agriculture & Food; Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs; Education & Science; Enterprise, Trade & Employment; Environment and Local Government; Finance; Health & Children; Justice, Equality & Law Reform; Social & Family Affairs; and Taoiseach.

Returns were received from all of the departments concerned. In addition, indicators that were identified in the NESC Report on National Progress Indicators[10], the National Anti-Poverty Strategy[11], EU Social Protection Policy and Laeken indicators were added to the survey returns if they had not already been included in the questionnaire returns.

To facilitate the presentation and analysis of the data needs returns, a categorisation was established which classified the indicators as follows:

First-level social and equality indicators – indicators of broad national or international concern, e.g. unemployment rate.

Second-level social and equality indicators - these are more specific indicators, e.g. teenage fertility.

Further disaggregation of first and second level indicators – while many first and second level indicators incorporate some disaggregation, this category reflects a demand for more detailed disaggregation, e.g. numbers of pre-school children with identified disabilities and/or special educational needs.

Programme and other indicators – indicators relating to specific policy interventions and their impact e.g. uptake and completion of all types of literacy training.

3.3   *Analysis of data needs indicators*

Table 3.1 classifies the data needs indicators by these four categories, using the twelve domains set out in Table 2.1. The table reflects the returns received from the departments included in the study and it is not necessarily an exhaustive or totally balanced list of all key social and equality indicator needs. Indicators in the domains of health and income were the most numerous among the first level indicators, accounting for around 42 per cent of the total and reflecting the basic importance of these domains in so many aspects of life. Indicators relating to health and social relationships accounted for around 39 per cent of the second level category. Environment and health indicators represented 40 per cent of the programme indicators. While the households and families and the lifestyles and consumer expenditure domains each represented only two per cent of the total number of data needs indicators, these two domains combined represent around eight per cent of the first level indicators.

[10] National Economic and Social Council (2002) *National Progress Indicators for Sustainable Economic, Social and Environmental Development*, , NESC, Dublin.
[11] Government of Ireland (1997), *Sharing in Progress, National Anti-Poverty Strategy*, Stationery Office, Dublin.

Table 3.1   Classification of data needs by domain

Domain	First level	Second level	Further disaggregation	Programme	Total
Health and access to health care	21	32	36	91	**180**
Labour market and working conditions	8	10	22	18	**58**
Income, wealth and poverty	17	15	27	21	**80**
Education and training	13	18	29	76	**136**
Households and families	4	3	7	4	**18**
Housing	7	10	12	51	**80**
Safety and security	-	12	7	25	**44**
Social relationships and integration	5	31	57	70	**163**
Environment	3	9	6	120	**138**
Transportation	-	12	4	34	**50**
Lifestyles and consumer expenditure	3	5	7	7	**22**
Population	9	7	26	14	**56**
Total	**90**	**164**	**240**	**531**	**1,025**

The data needs survey sought primarily to identify high-level social indicators in use across Departments, as well as those indicators which policy makers said that they needed for policy purposes. However, as evident from Table 3.1, Departments also identified a large number of programme-type indicators. Indeed, this category represented just over half of all indicators identified in this exercise. Programme indicators provide a measure of how a particular policy or scheme is working, while the high-level indicators involve measurement of the overall social condition of the population and are thus more relevant to the Steering Group's exercise. Table 3.1 highlights the importance of programme indicators to departments in carrying out, and measuring the effectiveness of, their day to day business. Their precise distribution by domain in Table 3.1 should be viewed with some caution as departments appear to have differed in the extent to which they listed their Programme indicators in responding to the survey.

There was a considerable demand for further disaggregation of first and second level indicators. Relative to their profile among the other types of indicators, there was significant demand for further disaggregation in the domains of population and labour market. For example, half of the population indicators fall into the further disaggregation category. While the study has not focussed on the disaggregation needed for programme indicators, this is obviously a key requirement for monitoring the effectiveness of Government policy programmes.

3.4   Use of statistics by policy makers

Table 3.2 cross-classifies the indicator types by the priority assigned to them by each Department. Around 68 per cent of the indicators were classified as high priority, 29 per cent as medium priority and just 3 per cent as low priority. Of the first and second level indicators, around 80 per cent were classified as high priority compared to around two-thirds of the further disaggregation and programme indicators.

Table 3.2   Classification of data needs by department priority

Department priority	First level	Second level	Further disaggregation	Programme	Total
High	74	129	171	326	**700**
Medium	16	32	55	187	**290**
Low	-	3	14	18	**35**
Total	**90**	**164**	**240**	**531**	**1,025**

Table 3.3 cross-classifies the indicator types by whether they are currently in use or need to be developed. Around 41 per cent of the indicators were classified as in use compared to 59 per cent to be developed. The proportion of first and second level indicators in use was only 52 per cent and 37 per cent respectively. This suggests a high level of awareness among policy makers regarding the inadequacy of the existing set of indicators which they see themselves as having available to underpin the development and evaluation of policy.

Table 3.3   Classification of data needs by usage and indicator type

Usage	First level	Second level	Further disaggregation	Programme	Total
Develop	43	103	147	307	**600**
In use	47	61	93	224	**425**
Total	**90**	**164**	**240**	**531**	**1,025**

Table 3.4 examines the relative priorities assigned to indicators in use and those requiring development. Around 82 per cent of the indicators in use were classified as of high priority compared to 58 per cent of the indicators to be developed. Tables 3.3 and 3.4 together suggest that approximately half of the first level and higher priority indicators identified are currently in use, with almost the same number requiring to be developed. The ratios for in use/develop are lower for all of the other categories, indicating considerable latent demand for the development of new indicators in these categories.

Chapter 3

Table 3.4	Classification of data needs by usage and department priority		
Department priority	**Develop**	**In use**	**Total**
High	350	350	**700**
Medium	219	71	**290**
Low	31	4	**35**
Total	**600**	**425**	**1,025**

3.5 *Perception of completeness of audit of data needs*

It is apparent from the extent of the returns received that policy makers across the system make use of quite a wide range of indicators and have identified a broad range of data needs. It is also clear that across Departments there is a wide variation in the nature and type of indicators that are needed, and in the extent to which indicators are used. To a considerable degree this variation is due to the different type of activities in which departments are involved. It is not known to what extent the variation is due to the capacity of individual departments to make use of statistics in policy analysis. The Steering Group discovered that some departments were already engaged in separate specific and ongoing exercises to identify data and statistical strategies for their policy areas, for example:

◆ As part of the National Health Strategy[12] (2001), the Department of Health and Children is commencing the development of a National Health Information Strategy.

◆ A data strategy is being developed by the Department of Social and Family Affairs as part of the Revised National Anti-Poverty Strategy, *Building an Inclusive Society*[13], in order to address gaps in the availability of relevant data on those not in permanent households (such as travellers), small population groups and vulnerable groups.

◆ The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform is establishing an expert group[14] to examine the methods of collation and presentation of crime statistics by the Garda Síochána and other organisations involved in criminal prosecution. The Department is also commissioning a biennial national crime victimisation survey[14].

◆ One of the three national goals set out by Government in the National Children's Strategy[15] (2000) involves better information, research and evaluation in relation to childhood. The measures proposed to achieve this goal include a new longitudinal study[15] of children, the development of a set of child wellbeing indicators, and a biennial State of the Nation's Children report; the National Children's Office has been charged with the task of overseeing this work.

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[12] Department of Health and Children (2001), *Quality and Fairness: A Health System For You*, Stationery Office, Dublin
[13] Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs (2002), *Building an Inclusive Society*, Stationery Office, Dublin
[14] National Crime Council (2002), Tackling the Underlying Causes of Crime – A Partnership Approach, Stationery Office, Dublin
[15] Department of Health and Children (2000), *Our Children, Their Lives: National Children's Strategy*, Stationery Office, Dublin

The data needs audit has been a broad but not an exhaustive exercise and, as such, does not represent a full inventory of data needs across departments. Although incomplete, the Steering Group is of the view that this survey gives a clear indication of the issues that must be addressed in the context of developing a national framework for social and equality statistics to support measurement of progress on social and equality policy outcomes.

3.6 *Commentary on what this scoping exercise has discovered*

The results of this exercise represent the first systematic attempt ever made in Ireland to determine what social data Irish policy makers need and use to support policy development[16]. The level and variety of data needs identified show that while use is made of data in the course of social policy development, there is considerable variation across departments in their engagement with and understanding of the potential for using data for policy analysis.

The survey results indicate that data needs are more readily identified in areas where there are already relatively high numbers of indicators in use. It is also notable that many of the data needs identified relate to the requirement to disaggregate existing data into appropriate categories.

The social policy process is a complex one that must take account of political realities and other pressures. There is a clear consensus that the demand for reliable, timely and relevant social and equality data to underpin this process is increasing. The challenge will be to ensure that the identification of policy priorities becomes more closely allied to the corresponding development of data strategies, so that the needs of policy makers for evidence-based policy making can be met.

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[16] There have been smaller scale attempts to identify needs through the five-yearly User Surveys undertaken by the National Statistics Board. Furthermore, through CSO liaison groups and occasional seminars there have been opportunities for users of social data to articulate their data needs. What is different on this occasion is that the survey was undertaken systematically within each department, so that the extent of coverage was significantly more comprehensive than anything attempted previously.

Chapter

4

Audit of Administrative and
Survey Data Sources

4.1   Introduction

This chapter discusses the range of data sources that are currently available through statistical surveys and administrative records. The data sources are classified by principal policy domain (as per Table 2.1) and by the extent to which they contain information on the nationally-identified nine grounds of unlawful discrimination and other key analytical variables. There is a brief discussion of the main statistical issues that would need to be considered for the further development of these data sources.

4.2   Analysis of data sources questionnaires

Two questionnaires were used to conduct the audit of data sources (see Appendices H and I). The initial inventory questionnaire was used to compile a list of all potentially relevant administrative sources and statistical surveys and to establish the following details relating to each source:

◆ Purpose;
◆ Year of introduction;
◆ Likely future continuity;
◆ Data collection format;
◆ Whether Personal Public Service Number was collected;
◆ Definition of the scheme/survey unit;
◆ Number of scheme/survey units covered; and
◆ Computer availability of raw data.

A second questionnaire was completed for those particular sources identified as being of direct relevance to this study. In practice, most first phase returns were included in the second phase, except data sources where the primary information was not person-oriented. Examples of these excluded data sources were agricultural premium schemes and some of the environment housing statistics. In both of these cases, the focus in the second phase was on the existence of registers containing applicant profiles, e.g. the farmer register rather than the individual schemes relating to ewe numbers, cereal acreage, etc. The second questionnaire had the following purposes:

◆ To obtain a copy of the application form and instructions relating to the scheme or survey;

◆ To identify whether key equality and classification variables were collected. These included the nine grounds of unlawful discrimination[17] and four extra classification variables (socio-economic status, income, geographical coding and nationality);

◆ To gather information on register maintenance procedures, particularly in relation to the handling of births, deaths and updating of the information relating to ongoing register records.

A summary analysis of the phase two returns classified by department and domain is given in Table 4.1. Not surprisingly, CSO surveys have the widest domain coverage. This broad coverage was mainly achieved through social modules attached to the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS), which was introduced in 1997.

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[17] Gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religious belief and membership of the traveller community.

The Revenue Commissioners (R/C) and the Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA) data sources also covered a wide spread of domains and both of these departments generally have the capability of linking individual records across schemes and years. In contrast, the data sources of the Departments of Education, Environment and Health were mostly classified to one dominant domain.

Table 4.1 Classification of data sources by department[18] and principal domain

Domain	DAF	CSO	DCRGA	DES	DETE	DELG	DHC	DJELR	R/C	DSFA	DoT	Total
1. Health and access to health care		6					19		8	8		**41**
2. Labour market and working conditions		4			4				1	11		**20**
3. Income, wealth and poverty		2		2			2		7	19		**32**
4. Education and training				30	1				1	1		**33**
5. Households and families		1						1		6		**8**
6. Housing		1				19		1	3			**24**
7. Safety and security		1						8				**9**
8. Social relationships and integration		1	1	2	1	3	1	4		1		**14**
9. Environment	1	2				1			1	1		**6**
10. Transportation		2				1		1			3	**7**
11. Lifestyles and consumer expenditure		2										**2**
12. Population		1					2		1	7		**11**
Data sources	**1**	**23**	**1**	**34**	**6**	**24**	**24**	**15**	**22**	**54**	**3**	**207**

The coverage and collection frequency of each data source varies widely and this variation has not been taken into account in Tables 4.1 and 4.2. For example, the QNHS is a continuous survey of 39,000 households every quarter, whereas the Housekeeper/Incapacitated taxpayer data source had 375 claimants in 1999/2000. These differences in sample size and survey/scheme frequency would obviously affect the broader value of each data source. This information was collected as part of the initial inventory questionnaire and will be of use in setting priorities for the further analysis and development of these data sources.

4.3 Disaggregation

Table 4.2 classifies the phase two returns by government department and classification or disaggregation variables. At an aggregate level, most data sources can be analysed according to age, gender, marital status and broad geographical area. Around half of the data sources had information on family status. It is important to note that these variables have not been harmonised in terms of question wording or computerisation. Thus a category such as geographical coding does not mean that the 187 sources with this classification are immediately comparable at any local or regional level. Similarly the age category may relate to date of birth, age when entering a scheme or an age group range.

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[18] Department of Agriculture and Food (DAF); Central Statistics Office (CSO); Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DCRGA); Department of Education and Science (DES); Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE); Department of Environment and Local Government (DELG); Department of Health and Children (DHC); Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (DJELR); Revenue Commissioners (R/C); Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA); Department of Transport (DoT).

Chapter 4

Table 4.2

Table 4.2 Classification of data sources by department[18] and classification variables

Disaggregation categories	DAF	CSO	DCRGA	DES	DETE	DELG	DHC	DJELR	R/C	DSFA	DoT	Total
PPS Number		1		3	2	12	3	1	21	54		97
Computerised		22	1	33	3	7	21	14	21	54	2	178
Nine grounds												
Gender		23	1	29	6	20	23	13	18	53	3	189
Marital status		20		6	2	19	11	11	21	54	1	145
Family status/Carer Responsibilities		15	1	11		18	5	8	6	53		117
Age		23		24	5	20	24	14	2	54	3	169
Disability		3	1	12	1	7	8	2	6	9		49
Race/Ethnicity[19]				2			2	3				7
Sexual orientation							2					2
Religious affiliation		2		2			1	3				8
Membership of the Traveller Community		1	1	9	1	4	1	1				18
Other variables												
Socio-economic status		7	1	18	3	17	12	6	2		1	67
Income		2		7	2	15	2	3	18	52	1	102
Geographical coding	1	23	1	26	5	22	23	10	21	54	1	187
Nationality	1	15		15	2	5	6	6		26		76
Data sources	**1**	**23**	**1**	**34**	**6**	**24**	**24**	**15**	**22**	**54**	**3**	**207**

The QNHS survey and its modules allow disaggregation by age, gender, marital status, geographical area, family status and nationality[20]. DSFA also has good coverage of these variables. Revenue has good coverage of gender, marital status, income and geographical coding. The position in other departments is more mixed. Education and Health have good coverage of age, gender and geographical coding while Justice has marital status in addition to these three characteristics.

At an individual data source level, there are many data sources missing key disaggregation variables. Most notable are the absence of age in the Revenue files and of age and marital status in the farm client register. Nationality is available in only one-third of the data sources, an absence which makes it difficult to analyse changes in Irish society arising from recent high levels of immigration.

The availability of disaggregation criteria, such as age and gender, in individual data files facilitates policies concerned with the promotion of equality of opportunity in Irish society particularly in relation to the nine grounds mentioned in Equality legislation[21]. Table 4.2 gives a summary analysis of the existence of various classification variables in different data sources. A large range of data sources have been identified that address some of the disaggregation needs of the Equal Status Act, 2000. However, the table also shows that there are currently very few data sources which have race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, or religious belief distinguished, and only a relatively small number with information on the traveller community or the disabled. There is good overall coverage of the remaining four grounds (gender, marital status, family status and age) even though certain departments have poor coverage even of these. While it is not necessary to collect all nine grounds for each data source, these classifications should be available where required.

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[19] Although the race ground under the equality legislation incorporates nationality, we have treated nationality as a separate category.
[20] Appendix F gives the key disaggregation possibilities for each data source.
[21] Employment Equality Act, 1998 and Equal Status Act, 2000.

Some level of geographical information is available in 90 per cent of the data sources. This would represent a considerable potential volume of regional information if the various data files held the information at the same geographical level (e.g. county) and if they also had standardised geographical coding. Unfortunately, this consistency does not exist in practice and would require a considerable statistical input even to harmonise the larger data sources.

4.4   Register issues

To facilitate statistical analysis that can fully contribute to our understanding of social and equality issues, the systematic development of national registers is essential. From a statistical point of view, the key register issues are: a unique reference number that is meaningful to the applicant as well as to the relevant government department or agency; high quality supplementary identification information such as date of birth, phone number and computer structured name and address; clear guidelines for adding, amending or deleting register records; timely identification of births (new records) and deaths; inclusion of classification variables such as marital status and gender; and the capacity to undertake cross-sectional or longitudinal analyses with related data sources.

The most advanced department in terms of register issues is DSFA where most schemes are linked, via the PPS Number, to a central Client Records System. This means that core register information, such as address and age, need not be independently collected for each scheme. An integrated department register considerably reduces the amount of work compared to the workload involved in maintaining separate, overlapping registers on a scheme-by-scheme basis. DAF is another department working towards having one single integrated register of all clients. A more structured address system using postcodes would have many advantages such as: identifying duplicate entries on registers; selecting geographically representative samples; and compiling local area statistics. Indeed such a debate is currently being conducted in Ireland[22] on the value of introducing postcodes.

In many cases, the data sources are operated on a stand-alone basis and, because of the absence of a central register or unique identification number, it is not possible to link repeat occurrences, such as stays in a hospital, or to link related registers, such as in the education system. For example, the creation of a primary pupil database using the PPS Number would allow, in time, linkage with the post-primary pupil database and the possibility to undertake longitudinal student performance studies.

In the pilot EU-SILC[23] survey, conducted during July-September 2002, interviewees were asked if they would provide their PPS Number in order for the CSO to access personal details from DSFA and Revenue records rather than completing the details through the questionnaire. There was a positive answer from around 80 per cent of interviewees who were asked if they would be willing to provide their PPS Number indicating that it may be possible to collect PPS Numbers in statistical surveys.

4.5   Computerisation

Around 85 per cent of the data sources were classified as being computerised. However, many of these are stand-alone systems that are incompatible with similar data sources, e.g. data in individual health boards or local authorities cannot be linked to data in other health boards or local authorities. In some cases, the schemes are partially computerised and partially paper based.

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[22]   Office of the Director of Telecommunications Regulation (2002*), Consultation Paper: Regulation of Postal Services – Universal Service Obligations, Tariff Principles and miscellaneous issues*, Office of the Director of Telecommunications Regulation, Dublin.
[23]   CSO survey of Statistics on Income and Living Conditions.

The level of computerisation in DELG is relatively low but a new IT strategy is currently being developed through a new integrated housing IT project, and this should enhance the future usability of data in this department.

The use of centralised registers requires a considerable financial, statistical, IT and intellectual input into their design and ongoing use. The extraction of more complex analyses can be limited by the absence of sufficient IT expertise available in a department. Similarly only specialist data handling organisations, such as the CSO, have the statistical capability and the IT capacity and expertise to undertake complex statistical analyses of large files, such as the Census of Population or Census of Agriculture. Collaborative projects between the CSO and various government departments may be required if the full value of some key administrative data sources is to be realised.

4.6   What further analysis requires to be done

A key objective of developing an integrated data system is to be able to combine related data sources so as to provide more complete statistical information. For example, the following data sources deal directly with disability:

CSO	COP 2002 disability questions
CSO	QNHS – employment of disabled persons module
DHC	National Intellectual Disability Database
DHC	National Physical and Sensory Disability Database
DSFA	Disability allowance
DSFA	Invalidity pension
DSFA	Disability benefit
R/C	Blind person
R/C	Housekeeper/Incapacitated taxpayer
R/C	Incapacitated child

However, it is not clear how representative and complete a picture of disability these data sources collectively represent, especially if they are combined with the other data sources in Table 4.2 which collect some information on disability. Further enhancement, by collecting similar classification categories or having individual record linkage possibilities among these data sources, may make them significantly more useful. More thorough analyses of the overlap and relationships between these data sources would be necessary to fully understand the completeness of these files. While this work is beyond the brief of this scoping study, a more detailed analysis of the content, coding practices, disaggregation variables and linkage possibilities with related data sources will need to be done before the full value of these data sources can be realised.

4.7   Cross-departmental issues

The scoping study identified around 200 separate data sources of relevance to social and equality statistics. Sections 15 and 16 of the Freedom of Information Act[24] provide a ready mechanism whereby each department is obliged to publish a list of all data sources within a department. These FOI sections are available on each department's website. They are a very useful reference source for social research and would provide an ongoing inventory of data sources if departments updated them regularly.

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[24] Department of Finance (1997), *Freedom of Information Act*, Stationery Office, Dublin

Traditionally Departments have collected all the information they need in relation to an administrative scheme by including a question on the Scheme application form. Another potentially more efficient possibility is that classification variables could be collected in a centralised register, such as the DSFA Central Records System. These classification variables could then be made available to other departments via formal inter-departmental PPS Number agreements. Using this approach, the Revenue Commissioners could obtain age from the CRS and use it to analyse income tax payments by age bands. The CSO is also in a position to link and analyse data sources from different departments but the output would be at an aggregated non-confidential level.

Stand-alone administrative data sources are insufficient by themselves to meet the complexity of cross-departmental policy data needs. The most flexible means of combining separate data sources is through the use of the PPS Number. However in adopting this approach, there are very serious issues regarding data privacy and transparent data handling procedures that need to be adequately and openly addressed (see Section 5.5).

It is essential that best practices are used in the computerisation of the various data sources. Each IT system should permit longitudinal analyses, allow multiple-variable tables to be produced and facilitate linking with related data sources. Consultations between Departments and the CSO, whenever existing IT systems are being reviewed or substantially updated, would help to ensure good practice.

The collection of key classification categories, and standardised coding of these, is essential if optimum use is to be made of administrative data sources. Good metadata describing each data source, coding systems, discontinuities, etc. need to be readily available to users. The CSO Classification and Standards Section is currently examining all the coding systems in use within the CSO with a view to agreeing standard coding for variables such as sex, age and marital status. Ideally over time, CARS standards would be adopted in administrative data sources also. The use of common definitions of disability and race/ethnicity would also greatly increase the comparability of different data sources. The development of common question instruments by the CSO, that could be used by other departments, would also add comparability value to the various data sources.

4.8   Commentary on what this scoping exercise has discovered

The scoping study has identified around 200 social and equality data sources that are currently providing, or could potentially be enhanced and developed to give, information on Irish society. For example, the number of taxpayers, and their tax contributions, in entry and pre-retirement age groups could be compared.

The type of social information available in each government department has been mapped against the domains constituting a social and equality statistics policy framework for Ireland.

A key benefit of the study has been to identify the amount of data available across the nine grounds of unlawful discrimination. The potential to extend this through the possible use of a common identification number has been explored.

Data management issues and the benefits of adopting best practice and consistency in question instruments and classifications have been discussed. This standardisation can only be achieved through regular and systematic cooperation between those responsible for managing data sources in government departments and the CSO.

A more detailed domain coding used to classify data sources by categories such as disability, elderly, literacy and low income was given in Table 2.2 and is applied in Appendix F. The difficulties still left after that exercise to understand how 'complete' a picture the data sources provide on a particular sub-domain were briefly discussed in relation to disability. A related

exercise, not discussed in this summary report, comparing data sources and data needs at the sub-domain level, proved that most of the administrative data sources in their current stand-alone format are not immediately sufficient to provide the statistical information required by policy-makers. Significant cross-departmental staff resources, together with a real commitment to develop system-wide statistics, will be required to begin to realise the potential benefits of these data sources.

The detailed returns in Appendix F contain a lot of information that has not yet been fully analysed. It can be expected that when this more detailed analysis has been completed, serious data and policy gaps will remain and priorities for addressing these gaps will have to be agreed.

Chapter 4

Chapter

5

Major Findings and Next Steps

5.1　　Introduction

Chapters 3 and 4 have documented the work undertaken by the Steering Group's two sub-groups in analysing the present situation with regard to the policy need for, and sources of, social and equality statistics in Ireland.

With regard to data needs, it became clear from the exercise that (i) there is an inadequate national framework to underpin the development of social policy in Ireland and (ii) the perspective of those data users and data producers within the system tends to be departmental or divisional. Consequently, such administratively sourced statistics as we have in Ireland are presently incapable of being of great value in addressing many social issues which cross-cut departments. The lack of both a national framework and strategy is reflected in the emphasis in questionnaire responses on programme rather than social indicators, suggesting that data requirements associated with social policy may tend to follow policy proposals rather than to underpin them. The process of inviting policy makers to list the data they use in developing policy and to identify their additional data requirements has been an important exercise in prompting them to think about social statistics in much broader terms than has traditionally been the case.

The study has clearly identified a wide-ranging variety of administrative data sources that can potentially generate social and equality statistics. However, a considerable amount of effort is required to produce useful statistics from these administrative records. Because different concepts or definitions are often used in the various databases, such as different geographical units, age bands or definitions of social group, it can be hard to compare or link the data on the systems of separate departments. Furthermore, some of the records may also be incomplete in so far as the applicant may not have completed all questions on the administrative form or not all of the information may have been computerised.

The Steering Group found it useful to bring together data users and data producers to discuss these issues, and recommends this way of working as a process going forward. A successful harvesting of these interactions in the future could facilitate the development of social and equality statistics without excessive recourse to additional national surveys that are extremely expensive[25]. Furthermore, the Steering Group recommends that departments consult with outside stakeholders, including their own agencies, independent commentators and representatives of the department's customers about the collection and development of key indicators.

The Steering Group set itself a six-month deadline within which to report back to the NSB and to the Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion. The actual time taken has been slightly longer, reflecting the view of the Steering Group that it was essential to survey both users and producers of social statistics across a wide range of government departments and agencies. Both the scale of endeavour of this task for the departments and its success are evident in the audits of data needs and sources identified in Appendices E and F. The Steering Group views the process as being as important as the product, namely, this final scoping report. This is the first time that information and opinion has been canvassed in such an intensive and focussed manner from both users and producers of statistics[26]. The exercise was informative, and has begun the process of establishing a much-needed dialogue between the two groups. While the audit is not fully complete in its coverage, our view is that the exercise has been more than adequate to allow the Steering Group to arrive at some general conclusions on the best way forward for Ireland in developing a strategy to ensure that social and equality statistics can provide the outcome indicators needed to measure progress on social inclusion.

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[25]　As noted in chapter 2, the major existing social surveys (the Census, the Quarterly National Household Survey and the SILC) account for around one-third of the annualised CSO budget on national statistics.

[26]　As noted earlier, the NSB has canvassed user views on data needs in the past, but the scale of this exercise goes far beyond what has been done previously in terms of coverage and completeness.

In this final chapter, the Steering Group sketches a vision for the development of social statistics in Ireland, which it believes will put us on the way to meeting the needs of the information age. It then identifies the key next steps to be taken in order to develop a modern programme of social statistics to track change and inform policy. These steps are set out under four headings:

◆ Meeting data needs of policy makers;

◆ Developing administrative datasets to yield useful statistics;

◆ Safeguarding privacy concerns and addressing data protection; and

◆ Making social and equality data widely available.

The Steering Group believes that this scoping study represents very significant progress in terms of the development of social and equality statistics in Ireland to meet policy needs. However, it also recognises that it has not achieved all that was hoped for in its original terms of reference (progress in terms of each of the identified Terms of Reference is set out in Appendix J). In particular, while it has set the scene for identifying gaps in our statistics, it has not actually identified, costed or prioritised the filling of those gaps. As the steps outlined in the next sections are undertaken, the final objectives of the exercise will become possible.

5.2   *A vision for social data*

It is common for people to talk about the fact that we are going through an information revolution, whose impact on our society will be far greater than the industrial revolution was in its day. In the context of the public sector, meeting the needs of the information age means that we must have the information and statistical data on social issues that allow us to understand and track change, to plan policy and to monitor progress in this complex and changing world. A central feature of the information age is information sharing – among service providers, among service users, etc. In the context of the public service, this effectively involves moving from departmentally-centred thinking to whole-system thinking in regard to information, especially as important policy issues increasingly cut across traditional lines. It also means publishing comprehensive information on social and equality issues to meet public accountability needs. With international benchmarking increasingly becoming the reference point for decision making in many areas, it means that the information that we generate must be capable of cross-time and cross-country comparison.

Therefore in this context we need a vision for social statistics which includes:

◆ A collectively agreed national framework for social and equality statistics (such as the structure set out in Table 2.1) which delivers a comprehensive picture of Irish society and its diversity;

◆ Systematic identification of the data required by the public sector and by society in order to track change, identify issues, plan policy, and monitor progress;

◆ Methods which deliver the required statistics at high quality, least cost and with due regard for data protection; and

◆ Effective use of social statistics to inform policy and assist planning.

Each element of this vision is vital and should be recognised immediately even if it will take some time to implement. To deliver on it requires the cross-departmental co-operation and attention to cross-cutting issues envisaged in the Strategic Management Initiative. For example, agreed data management protocols across different departments can ensure that data can be readily linked to maximise potential information[27]. Each department needs now to put in place an information/data strategy which addresses the current and anticipated data needs of departmental policymakers and of the wider policy community. This information strategy should become an integral part of future departmental strategic plans. A well-developed information and data strategy is an essential ingredient of evidence-based policy-making, which is vital if Ireland is to achieve its economic and social potential.

The Steering Group believes that progress towards realising this vision will best be achieved by developing a networking solution which will best harness the interests of all of the stakeholders involved, and this view underpins the proposals made in the remainder of this chapter.

5.3   *Understanding and meeting the data needs of policy makers*

The process of surveying policy makers across departments has supported the general view that the "evidence-based" element of social policy making has typically been under-developed in the Irish system. In the absence of a developed statistical infrastructure that crosses the whole public sector system, many policy makers have found it difficult to articulate their data needs. Consequently, the exercise was challenging as many had to identify comprehensively for the first time just what data they required to meet their specific needs.

While central-government policy documents (PPF, NAPS, NDP and reports by NESC and NESF) articulate social objectives, which can in principle be measured, the appropriate statistics to support their measurement were often not available within departments. Furthermore, this articulation was not done within any comprehensive framework or with any clarity on the choice of a precise indicator and its relationship to other indicators.

In order to promote the development and use of relevant and appropriate indicators and to set limits on and rationalise the large numbers of social indicators currently being proposed, the Steering Group proposes a set of actions that encompass the public service and the individual departments and agencies:

Recommendation 1   The CSO, under the guidance of the NSB, should set out a framework for social and equality statistics, the key social statistics and indicators in each domain, and the key disaggregations required of these statistics/indicators. The process for undertaking this should be set out in the Board's forthcoming 2003-2008 Strategy for Statistics.

Recommendation 2   The NSB together with the Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion should support progress on the implementation of this framework and in particular ensure that the production of data is informed by the evolving requirements of data users. This should be reported on annually to government in the progress reports of the National Statistics Board.

Recommendation 3   Each department should establish an appropriate committee bringing together data users (including appropriate outside experts and data users) and data producers to design and deliver its statistics strategy. In departments which encompass several very distinct areas of policy (e.g. Justice, Equality and Law Reform), it may be appropriate to establish statistics subcommittees serving individual policy areas. These departmental statistics committees should:

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[27]   In effect, this would involve the IT and data managers across the public service department and agencies working over a period of time to develop and implement commonly agreed protocols as new systems are refined or introduced.

a   Determine how, and to what extent, the department's data needs can be met within the department;

b   Establish what information not internally available is required;

c   Identify the data needs in respect of complex and cross-cutting issues with which the department is concerned; and

d   Identify how the skills of its staff in using data as a tool for policy evaluation and development can be enhanced.

Recommendation 4   Arising from this exercise, a formal data/statistics strategy should be devised within each department as an integral part of its information strategy, and in turn this should be included within its formal Statement of Strategy and reported on in its annual report.

5.4   Developing the potential of administrative data

To tap into the potential data resources at both departmental and agency level, the Steering Group concluded that two actions are essential if these data are to provide a basis for developing social statistics in Ireland:

Recommendation 5   More standardisation, co-ordination and classification of data collection and maintenance are required, so that data banks across the public service can be interrogated using a common approach[28]. Such standardisation should be agreed interdepartmentally by those responsible for developing statistical strategies in each department. This should take place under the auspices of the CSO in conjunction with the Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion.

Recommendation 6   Investigation is required into the expanded use of a common identifier, such as the PPS Number, with a view to linking discrete datasets and to seeing how longitudinal datasets can be developed based on existing administrative data.

In addition, collaborative projects between the CSO and various government departments may be required if the full value of some key administrative data sources is to be realised.

It is essential that these arrangements do not give rise to data protection difficulties. In the next section we look at the issues which the use of the PPS Number gives rise to in the context of data protection.

5.5   Statistics and data protection

It is recognised under national and EU data protection legislation that personal data collected for administrative purposes may be used for statistical purposes provided adequate safeguards are in place to protect the privacy of the individual. Thus, subject to such safeguards being in place, individual departments and public authorities may use their own data holdings for statistical purposes. Under the provisions of the Statistics Act, 1993 the CSO has a general right of access for statistical purposes to administrative data held by public authorities. Accordingly, it is well placed to integrate databases across departments that use a common identifier such as the PPS Number.

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Chapter 5

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[28]   The absence of any standardisation of categories such as age, occupation and geographic location dramatically reduces their potential contribution to statistics.

Individual data obtained in this way by the CSO is treated no differently to any other data collected by the CSO in that the provisions in the Statistics Act regarding the protection of information must be adhered to in full. Long established procedures are in place to ensure that statistics published by the office (i.e. in tabular form) do not involve any risk of disclosure of individual information. Furthermore under the Act, anonymised individual information may be made available to researchers for statistical purposes at the discretion of the Director General of the CSO and subject to such conditions as he/she deems necessary to ensure that statistical confidentiality is maintained. This latter provision, which is actively supported by the CSO, was a new feature of the 1993 Act and is an important instrument for enabling greater use to be made of micro-data for policy and other research purposes.

At various points throughout this report, an emphasis has been placed on the use of a common identifier in order to cross-link different datasets generated from administrative records or to link them with datasets generated by CSO surveys. As pointed out already, the full potential for administrative records for generating statistics for policy analysis cannot be realised without such a linking. The previous paragraph indicates in general how this objective might be achieved. However, the Steering Group is concerned to ensure that any proposals in this regard do not give rise to individual data protection problems or to concerns of a "big brother" type. It therefore recommends that:

Recommendation 7   The CSO be asked to set out formally how its process of data integration and the subsequent treatment of statistics generated by data integration (including access for research) can be safely employed without data protection problems.

Recommendation 8   The NSB in conjunction with the SOGSI should be asked to set out formally how departments would use and protect individual data available to them for statistical purposes.

Recommendation 9   The documents, arising from recommendations 7 and 8, should be referred to the Data Protection Commissioner for confirmation that this process does not undermine the data protection rights of individuals.

5.6   *Disseminating social and equality data in Ireland*

As already noted, there has been a vast expansion in the range of social data being sought and used in Ireland. As part of the process of improving the framework for social and equality statistics, it is essential that these indicators and statistics are methodologically-sound, internationally-comparable, and widely and actively disseminated, so that both policy makers and interested members of the public understand the changes which are taking place in our society. For this to happen, the Steering Group recommends that:

Recommendation 10 The social and equality indicators derived should be disseminated widely, through the publication[29] (with associated web-based databanks) by the CSO of an annual publication similar to that produced by the ONS in the UK, namely, UK Social Trends. The data generated through this process would also meet the international requirements on Ireland to produce social statistics.

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[29] The need for key indicators is equally relevant to economic statistics. Accordingly, as a first step in the process of getting consensus on which indicators really determine whether target national economic and social outcomes are being achieved, the NSB has asked the CSO to prepare a preliminary national progress indicators report by summer 2003. This initial report will serve as a reference point for discussions between the main users and producers of key economic and social statistics.

Recommendation 11 In line with other countries, consideration should be given to the publication of a social report, prepared or commissioned by, say, the NESC. In it, progress, as measured by key social indicators, would be related to the objectives of social and equality policy, and be linked directly to similar measures for other countries[30].

Recommendation 12 The social and equality statistics derived from administrative data should be available in user-friendly form on the web, with links in both directions between the statistics sections of individual government department websites and the CSO website.

As the information society develops, the need for, and the potential benefits of, a sound national framework will serve to ensure that Ireland will have the basis for understanding social change and for clearly articulating and monitoring social policy and objectives.

5.7   *Social and equality statistics*

The future looks positive if what has been recommended in this report is implemented. The path which Ireland would be following is in line with our European partners and other developed countries which recognize the need for good social and equality statistics. There are resource costs (mostly one-off) but these will be small relative to: (a) the alternative of establishing new surveys; (b) the benefits to be gleaned from having meaningful and up-to-date social statistics; and (c) the costs of pursuing ineffective or inefficient policies[31]. Perhaps more significantly, there will be costs in terms of a changed culture as department staff must engage in a process of sharing data and amending systems to share such data. It is to be hoped that delays in realising these cultural changes do not stand in the way of progressing the development of social, or indeed economic, statistics from administrative records.

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[30]   As such it could be seen as playing an analogous role to that played for economic indicators by the Annual Competitiveness Report produced by the National Competitiveness Council.

[31]   Recent developments in local area statistics in the UK point to the huge benefits of having detailed data for social policy making, especially where issues are cross-cutting. They facilitated honing policies to meet targets and ending wasteful policies.

Appendices

Appendix A   Recent social and equality policy initiatives in Ireland

Equality and anti-poverty policies

At a national level, policy areas such as Equality and Poverty have gained in priority as evidenced by the enactment of equality legislation and the development of National Anti-Poverty Strategies. In these areas the issue of measuring implementation has become increasingly necessary but the collection and use of data is less well developed than, for example, in the areas of health and education.

It was identified during the review of the NAPS that data deficiencies existed and that they would need to be addressed as part of an overall data strategy. This would help to ensure that:

◆ Data on those not in permanent households, such as Travellers and homeless people, are gathered;

◆ Data on relatively small population groups, such as people with disabilities, are developed;

◆ The data collected will be disaggregated so that information on the vulnerable groups that have been identified within the strategy, including women and children, will be forthcoming;

◆ Relevant low income related data are obtained from administrative systems, such as, for example, in relation to housing waiting lists, health records, and educational attainment; and

◆ Spatially-based data are developed to inform the strategy at local and regional levels.

In relation to people with disabilities the NAPS notes that:

> "Few specific targets have been set at this time for people with disabilities. This is largely because of the lack of available baseline data for this group".

The Strategic Plan of the Equality Authority commits it to contributing to a capacity to measure progress on equality across the nine grounds covered by legislation and to engage with relevant bodies to enhance data collection in relation to those grounds

The Equality Authority's Opinion Report *Building the Picture, The Role of Data in Achieving Equality*[32] contends that "it is essential that a system of data collection be developed within the State, which would provide:

◆ Baseline social and economic data on the situation of those sectors of the population vulnerable to inequality and discrimination on the nine specified grounds;

◆ Data on systems, organisations and structures, which have an impact on progress towards greater equality in Irish society;

◆ Data on the way in which social attitudes are changing over time, particularly in relation to discrimination, prejudice and intolerance; and

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[32] Barry U (2000), *Building the Picture, The role of data in achieving equality*, Equality Authority, Dublin.

◆ Data on the development of resources and services within communities and sectors experiencing inequality and discrimination".

It is acknowledged that there are currently very significant data limitations constraining a true evaluation of progress across the nine grounds of equality.

All of these developments point not only to the need to develop new data sources but also to the necessity of greater exploitation of existing data through improved analysis and integration.

The importance of data for policy making is also recognised in the Agreed Programme for Government which contains a commitment to:

"…fund an ambitious programme of data gathering on social indicators, including consistent poverty and social capital, to ensure that policies are developed on the basis of sound information".

Development of indicators

In recent years much work has been done on the development of social and equality indicators both at an EU and a national level.

Nationally, the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) has produced reports on benchmarking the PPF and on national progress indicators to measure sustainable economic, social and environmental development. Some of the key issues that they highlight relate to the lack of availability of reliable data in the social areas.

Following the mandate from the Lisbon European Council, the Member States and the Commission sought to develop common approaches and compatibility in regard to indicators. The work was carried out by the Social Protection Committee (SPC) and its technical sub-group on indicators. In particular, the sub-group was concerned with improving indicators in the field of poverty and social exclusion. The Committee has agreed a range of both primary and secondary indicators of social exclusion.

The SPC has noted that the development of capacity to monitor progress on these and possible further indicators on a comparable basis is crucial. Full use should also be made of existing relevant data where appropriate.

Government commitments to equality and poverty proofing of all government policies also require that the appropriate data are available.

The NESC in its report on poverty proofing[33] made the following recommendations in relation to poverty data:

◆ The definition of poverty and how to measure it must be operationalised in a way that is usable by officials carrying out all levels of poverty proofing; and

◆ Data deficiencies must be addressed if evidence-based decision making, including poverty impact assessment, is to become a reality.

It must also be recognised that the cross-cutting nature of most social policy issues transcends existing traditional administrative boundaries. This requires that policy makers have access to a broad body of reliable data that covers not just their own specific policy area but also inter-related issues.

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[33] National Economic and Social Council (2001), *Review of the Poverty Proofing Process*, National Economic and Social Council, Dublin.

Recent social and equality policy initiatives in Ireland

Appendix B   Membership of Steering Group and sub-groups

The membership list refers to the principal nominees of each department. At some meetings, due to unavailability of the main nominees, other representatives attended.

Chairperson - Steering Group	Professor Frances Ruane NSB
Chairperson - Data Needs sub-group	Brian Nolan ESRI
Chairperson - Data Sources sub-group	Gerry O'Hanlon CSO
Secretariat	Brenda Boylan and Sharon Finegan Department of the Taoiseach Gerry Brady and Gillian Roche CSO
Department of Agriculture and Food	Helen Murphy
Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs	Frank O'Donnell Evan Breen
Department of Education and Science	Grainne Dooher Muiris O'Connor
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment	Amy Hubbard
Department of the Environment and Local Government	Maria Graham Norita Griffin
Department of Finance	Dermot Quigley
Department of Health and Children	Charlie Hardy Hugh Magee Ciara O'Shea
Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform	Anne-Marie McGauran Mark Manto John O'Callaghan
Office of the Revenue Commissioners	Paddy Molloy
Department of Social and Family Affairs	Ciaran Lawlor Paul Morrin Patricia Murphy
Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism	Kathleen Stack
Social policy experts	Laurence Bond Eithne Fitzgerald Tony McCashin
NISRA and DHSSPS	Dr Liz McWhirter

Appendix C   Reference documents

Document	Author(s)
Equality Impact Assessment – Practical Guidance	Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency
DHSSPS/HPSS Equality data availability, quality and deficits (EISG 14-01), Revised Equality Information Action Plan (EISG 1-02)	Equality Information Steering Group (Northern Ireland)
Secondary data sources on Poverty, Part 2 A Guide to available records	Eithne Fitzgerald Jessica Bates Anne Matthews
Building the Picture, The Role of Data in achieving Equality	Ursula Barry (for Equality Authority)
Indicators for Social Inclusion in the European Union	Tony Atkinson Bea Cantillon Eric Marlier Brian Nolan
2001 Social Report, indicators of social well-being in New Zealand	Ministry of Social Policy
Social Trends report	UK Office for National Statistics
Guide to sources of data on poverty	Combat Poverty Agency

Appendix D   International experience in developing and reporting on social indicators

Introduction

There has been an upsurge of interest in social indicators in recent years both in a European Union context and in various countries and international organisations. Interest in social monitoring fell away for a time in the 1980s in the face of increased unemployment, slow economic growth and a focus on macroeconomic performance. Renewed interest in social reporting at EU level reflects a recognition not only that growth on its own may fail to meet social objectives and be environmentally unsustainable, but also that social policy broadly conceived has a vital role to play both in facilitating growth and meeting social goals. EU member states have recently agreed on common sets of indicators which will be used to monitor progress in the areas of employment, social inclusion and sustainability. This represents a major development, in that the same set of indicators, produced to a common technical specification, will now be the benchmarks on which policy formation in the European Union relies. Further indicators for adoption in areas not currently adequately covered (such as health and housing) are being developed and the role of social indicators both in tracking progress and informing policy is still growing.

Social indicators

The development of social indicators has also reached an advanced state in a number of countries. Organisations such as the UN, the World Bank and the OECD put considerable effort into the production of social indicators on a comparative cross-country basis. Various countries have sought to construct what one of the leading practitioners has described as "a parsimonious set of specific indices covering a broad range of social concerns"[34]. In Scandinavia, the desire to move beyond purely monetary indicators of well-being led to the development of the Swedish *Level of Living Surveys* and associated reports, going back to the late 1960s. The Nordic countries have, since the 1980s, co-ordinated such surveys and published common social reports. The German System of Social Indicators has been developed since the 1970s, and now includes almost 400 indicators. In the USA, recent interest in social indicators has been evidenced by the development of a regular federal report on *The State of America's Children*. In New Zealand, the first official *Social Report* has recently been produced. Many other countries produce compendia of social statistics, without necessarily attributing to them the status of "official" indicators of social progress – an example being the annual *Social Trends* publication produced by the UK Office for National Statistics.

The OECD was in the forefront of the development of social indicators in the 1960s and 1970s, publishing a list of social indicators (OECD, 1982) and, subsequently, a compendium of indicators (OECD, 1986). It has just returned to this subject and published an extensive report entitled *Society at a Glance: OECD Social Indicators* (2001). The World Bank publishes "Social Indicators of Development" and the World Development Report. Since 1990, the UNDP has published the *Human Development Report* which contains a great deal of information by country about the level of social development[35].

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[34] Vogel, J. (1997), "The Future Direction of Social Indicators Research", *Social Indicators Research*, *42*, 103-116.
[35] For a comprehensive review of the current state of social reporting, see Berger-Schmitt R. and Jankowitsch B. (1999), "Systems of Social Indicators and Social Reporting: The State of the Art", EuReporting Project Working Paper No. 14, ZUMA, Mannheim.

Social reporting

Naturally, the approaches taken towards social reporting vary somewhat across countries (and indeed international organisations). This reflects in some instances differences in the conceptual focus adopted. For example, the Scandinavian emphasis on what is termed "level of living" entails obtaining objective indicators of a very wide range of resources and conditions, whereas the German System of Social Accounts in seeking to capture "welfare" and individual "well-being" includes measures of subjective well-being. Differences in the type and extent of data available in different countries also have a major impact. Most obviously, those countries which have well-developed administrative register data on their populations are in a different position to those which have to rely much more on survey data, and the scope and comprehensiveness of survey-based data also varies a good deal across countries.

The manner in which social reporting is framed also varies across countries, in terms of the extent to which social indicators are presented as officially recognised progress indicators. This may be illustrated by taking two examples, at either end of the spectrum. The *Social Report* recently produced by the New Zealand government provides an example of direct linkage between explicit social goals and social indicators. It first sets out desired social goals to which indicators can be related, including for example:

> "All people have the opportunity to enjoy long and healthy lives. Avoidable deaths, disease and injuries are prevented. People have the ability to function, participate and live independently in society".

> "Everyone has access to an adequate income and enjoys a standard of living that means they can participate fully in society and have choice about how to live their lives".

> "People enjoy constructive relationships with others in their families, communities and workplaces. They are able to participate in society and have a sense of belonging".

While these goals are necessarily framed in rather general terms, they provide a more direct point of reference for individual indicators than is usually available, and the indicators then presented in the Report are aimed at capturing progress in relation to those goals. The crucial difference between this and the more usual approach to measuring progress against stated official objectives is that those objectives are much more often very specific and detailed, and the aim is to show how well a specific programme or intervention "worked". Relating indicators to more general goals is in many ways more challenging, seeking to capture overall social development vis-à-vis high-level fundamental goals.

In the UK, on the other hand, the main official publication in this area is the annual *Social Trends*. This presents what are quite often the same indicators as the New Zealand report – relating for example to life expectancy, unemployment, income, education – but does not set these in the context of the goals of government policy. Instead, it simply aims to "draw together statistics from a wide range of government departments and other organisations to paint a broad picture of British society today, and how it is changing"[36]. Both these approaches clearly have value and should perhaps best be seen as serving complementary purposes rather than as strict alternatives.

In the New Zealand case, since the aim is to relate observed outcomes to officially adopted goals, the Ministry of Social Policy produces the Report. In the UK, *Social Trends* with its broad range of social statistics is produced by the Office for National Statistics.

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[36]   Office for National Statistics (2001) *Social Trends No. 31* H.M.S.O.

Appendix E   Summary of inventory of data needs

The table below summarises the First and Second level social and equality indicators[37].

Dept / Source	Domain	Indicator category	Indicator	Dept priority	In Use / Develop
DHC	1.01	1st	Birth rates per 1,000 population	H	In use
DHC	1.01	1st	Total period fertility rates	H	In use
DHC	1.01	1st	Percentage of live births to females aged 15-19 per 1,000 population	H	In use
DJELR	1.01	1st	Fertility rates - All data to be gender disaggregated and available by county, region (BMW/SAE) as well as at national level	M	In use
DJELR	1.01	1st	Age of first pregnancy and marital status	M	Develop
DHC	1.02	1st	Children in care - Rate per 10,000 children under 18 by type of care (this is a census - i.e. point in time figure)	H	In use
DSFA	1.02	1st	No. of people receiving long-term care (both residential and informal care in the community) by age group	M	Develop
DHC	1.03	1st	Crude death rate	H	In use
DHC	1.03	1st	Percentage distribution of deaths by principal cause	H	In use
DSFA	1.04	1st	Disability prevalence rates by degree of disability and age group	M	Develop
DSFA	1.04	1st	The number of people with disabilities (by age, by nature and severity of disability)	M	Develop
DHC	1.05	1st	% of adults who are non-smokers	H	Develop
DHC	1.05	1st	% of 9-17 year olds reporting that they are current smokers by gender, age and social class	H	Develop
DHC	1.05	1st	Regularity of alcohol consumption by adults by gender and age	H	Develop
DJELR	1.05	1st	Smoking rates among women and men	H	Develop
EUSPC	1.05	1st	Self perceived health status	H	Develop
DJELR	1.07	1st	Life expectancy rates of women and men	H	Develop
NESC/NPI	1.07	1st	Disability–Adjusted Life Expectancy at Birth and at 60 Years	H	Develop
DHC	1.08	1st	Adults on in-patient waiting lists >12 mths for various specialities	H	In use
DHC	1.08	1st	Children on in-patient waiting lists >6 mths	H	In use
DHC	1.08	1st	Waiting times	H	Develop

[37] The following abbreviations have been used for Government departments: DAF = Department of Agriculture and Food, CSO = Central Statistics Office, DCRGA = Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, DES = Department of Education and Science, DELG = Department of the Environment and Local Government, DETE = Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, DoF = Department of Finance, DHC = Department of Health and Children, DJELR = Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, R/C = Office of the Revenue Commissioner, DSFA = Department of Social and Family Affairs, DTSCH = Department of the Taoiseach, DoT = Department of Transport.

The following abbreviations have been used to indicate national and international reports which were also used to identify relevant indicators: NESC/NPI = The NESC Report on National Progress Indicators, NESC/PPF = The NESC Report on Benchmarking The Programme For Prosperity And Fairness, NAPS = The National Anti-Poverty Strategy, EUIND = The Atkinson Report on EU Indicators, EUSPC = The EU Social Protection Committee.

Dept / Source	Domain	Indicator category	Indicator	Dept priority	In Use / Develop
DAF	2.00	1st	Total employment/unemployment/labour force	H	In use
DETE	2.01	1st	Employment Rate (ILO)	H	In use
DETE	2.01	1st	Labour Force Participation Rate (ILO)	H	In use
DSFA	2.01	1st	Longitudinal indicators of labour force participation and family circumstances	M	Develop
NESC/PPF	2.01	1st	Part-time employment as % of labour force: male and female	H	Develop
DETE	2.05	1st	Unemployment Rate (ILO)	H	In use
DETE	2.05	1st	Long-term Unemployment Rate	H	In use
DETE	2.05	1st	Live Register (Unadjusted and seasonally adjusted figures)	H	In use
DAF	3.01	1st	Average total household income & its components for state, urban and rural households	H	Develop
DETE	3.01	1st	Earnings	H	In use
DoF	3.01	1st	Average household disposable income per capita in household (to take account of numbers in the household) - and by region - or at least urban/rural	H	Develop
DAF	3.02	1st	Social welfare payments (by type) to farm, urban and rural households	H	Develop
DAF	3.02	1st	Ratio of income received by the highest earning 20% to the lowest earning 20% (urban, rural & state)	M	Develop
EUSPC	3.02	1st	Regional cohesion	H	Develop
DJELR	3.04	1st	Number of dependants (children and older persons) of women living in poverty	H	Develop
DJELR	3.04	1st	Percentage of women without an independent income (from employment or the State)	H	Develop
DJELR	3.04	1st	Percentage of women and men in receipt of State income support only	M	Develop
DSFA	3.04	1st	Number of people in consistent poverty	H	In use
DSFA	3.04	1st	Number of people below 60% median relative income line	H	In use
DSFA	3.04	1st	Numbers in deprivation (using the ESRI index)	H	In use
DSFA	3.04	1st	Numbers persistently on low income	H	In use
DAF	3.05	1st	GDP per capita	H	In use
DAF	3.05	1st	GNP per capita	H	In use
NESC/PPF	3.05	1st	Net Official Development Assistance (ODA) as a percentage of GDP	H	Develop
DSFA	3.06	1st	Social expenditure and pensions expenditure as a % of GDP and GNP	H	In use
DES	4.00	1st	Education Profile of Population: Highest level of education achieved among the population by gender, age-group, SES status, employment status, labour market participation, ethnicity, region, etc.	H	In use
DES	4.00	1st	Highest level of education achieved among the population by field of study	M	In use
DES	4.01	1st	Pupil Teacher Ratio in primary schools nationally and in schools with a high concentration of at-risk pupils, by standard (i.e. class level)	M	In use
DJELR	4.02	1st	Percentage of women and men re-entering training, education and employment-related training programmes	M	Develop
DES	4.04	1st	The proportion of pupils with serious literacy and numeracy difficulties in schools serving disadvantaged areas	H	Develop

Dept / Source	Domain	Indicator category	Indicator	Dept priority	In Use / Develop
DES	4.04	1st	Core skills attainment of the population (e.g. literacy, ICT literacy), gender, age-group, SES status, employment status, occupation, ethnicity, etc. (An update of the Adult Literacy Survey which was last carried out in the mid-90s)	H	Develop
DAF	4.06	1st	Early school leavers: Share of population aged 18-24 with only lower secondary education (urban, rural & state)	M	Develop
DES	4.06	1st	Data on the transfer rate from second level to third level education (i.e. % of School Leavers going to 3rd level)	H	In use
DES	4.07	1st	Number and proportion of young people who complete upper second level or equivalent (NAPS)	H	In use
DES	4.07	1st	Pupil Teacher Ratio in second-level schools nationally and in schools with a high concentration of at-risk pupils	M	In use
EUIND	4.07	1st	Proportion of the population aged 18-59(64) with only lower secondary education or less	H	Develop
NESC/PPF	4.07	1st	Percentage of population (25-64) that has attained at least upper second-level education and sub-groups within this	H	Develop
DES	4.09	1st	Number of places and numbers participating in further and continuing education & training	H	In use
DAF	5.00	1st	Jobless households: Share of households in which no member is employed (urban, rural & state)	M	Develop
EUIND	5.00	1st	Proportion of people living in households unable in an emergency to raise a specified sum	H	Develop
DAF	5.01	1st	Dependency ratios in urban/rural areas	H	Develop
DCRGA	5.02	1st	The percentage of lone parents	H	In use
DoF	6.00	1st	Increase in House Prices relative to increase in salaries (by region)	H	Develop
DoF	6.00	1st	Increase in rent relative to increase in salaries (by region)	H	Develop
EUIND	6.00	1st	Proportion of people living in households which lack specified housing amenities or have specified housing faults	H	Develop
DHC	6.01	1st	Number of children who appeared to the Health Boards to be homeless	H	In use
DELG	6.03	1st	Assessment of Social Housing Needs	H	In use
DoF	6.03	1st	Number of completions of Local Authority Housing relative to increase in waiting list per year (by region)	H	Develop
DoF	6.03	1st	Time on waiting list for Local Authority House	H	Develop
DJELR	8.01	1st	Numbers of people of each nationality or ethnic group (including Travellers) resident in Ireland	H	Develop
DJELR	8.01	1st	Numbers of people born in Ireland of different ethnic backgrounds	M	Develop
DJELR	8.02	1st	Percentage of women and men who vote in elections	H	Develop
DJELR	8.05	1st	Number of applications for asylum	H	In use
DJELR	8.05	1st	Nationality of asylum seekers	H	In use
DELG	9.05	1st	Data on Greenhouse Gas Emissions - EPA - To provide an assessment on the environment in Ireland through the use of key environmental indicators	H	In use
NESC/PPF	9.09	1st	Waste Management:- Recycling %, Landfill %	H	Develop
DELG	9.10	1st	Data on water quality - EPA	H	In use
DAF	11.02	1st	Consumer Price Index	H	In use
DAF	11.02	1st	Personal Consumption Expenditure for Ireland	H	In use

Dept / Source	Domain	Indicator category	Indicator	Dept priority	In Use / Develop
DSFA	11.02	1st	Average Weekly Household Equivalent Income	H	In use
DAF	12.00	1st	Population: urban, rural & total	H	In use
DAF	12.00	1st	Population density	H	In use
DSFA	12.01	1st	Proportion of children lacking selected necessities through inability of their parents to afford them; by marital and family status	M	Develop
DSFA	12.03	1st	Risk of poverty for people aged 60+, 65+ and 75+ (men/women/total, by household type, by home ownership)	H	In use
DSFA	12.03	1st	Development of estimates of effective average retirement age	H	Develop
DAF	12.04	1st	Migratory balance, urban, rural, total	H	In use
DETE	12.04	1st	Work Permits	H	In use
DCRGA	12.05	1st	The age dependency rate	H	In use
DSFA	12.05	1st	Demographic old age dependency ratio (current and projected): number of persons aged 60/65+ in relation to working age population	H	In use
DHC	1.00	2nd	Number of individuals presenting with para-suicide in Accident and Emergency Departments per 100,000 population	H	In use
DHC	1.00	2nd	Self perceived general health status of adults by gender and social class	H	Develop
NESC/PPF	1.00	2nd	Health Expenditure as % GNP & GDP: Public and Private	H	Develop
NESC/PPF	1.00	2nd	Percentage of Health Expenditure on Primary/Community Care	H	Develop
DHC	1.01	2nd	Birth Weight by socio-economic status of parents	H	In use
DHC	1.01	2nd	Percentage of Caesarian births	H	In use
DJELR	1.01	2nd	Teenage fertility	H	Develop
DSFA	1.01	2nd	Number of under-age pregnancies	H	In use
NAPS	1.01	2nd	Birth Weight rates of the lowest Socio-Economic Group	H	Develop
NAPS	1.01	2nd	Birth Weight rate of the highest Socio-Economic Group	H	Develop
DJELR	1.02	2nd	Educational attainment of women in full-time caring duties by age	M	Develop
DSFA	1.02	2nd	No. of persons aged 15 or over providing unpaid personal help for someone with a long term illness, health problem or disability, including problems due to old age (Census 2002)	H	In use
DSFA	1.02	2nd	Informal carers; by age, gender and income	H	Develop
DSFA	1.02	2nd	Number of children in care	H	In use
DHC	1.03	2nd	Age specific injury mortality in 0-19 age group	H	In use
DHC	1.03	2nd	Suicide rate per 100,000 of population by gender, age and county of residence	H	In use
NAPS	1.03	2nd	The percentage of premature mortality of the lowest and highest socio-economic groups for circulatory diseases, for cancers and for injuries and poisoning	H	Develop
DELG	1.04	2nd	Number of people with a disability	H	Develop
DJELR	1.04	2nd	3% Target for Employment of People with Disabilities in the Public Service	H	In use

Dept / Source	Domain	Indicator category	Indicator	Dept priority	In Use / Develop
DHC	1.05	2nd	% of 9-17 year olds who have had an alcoholic drink in the last month (current drinkers)	H	Develop
DHC	1.05	2nd	% of 9-17 year olds who have been "really drunk" by gender, age and social class	H	Develop
DHC	1.05	2nd	Body Mass Index of adults by gender, age and social class	H	Develop
DHC	1.05	2nd	% of adults doing no exercise at all in the week by gender, age and social class	H	Develop
DHC	1.05	2nd	% of adults who indicated that they had driven soon after consuming two or more alcoholic drinks	H	Develop
DHC	1.06	2nd	New cases of HIV per 100,000 population by route of transmission	H	In use
DHC	1.06	2nd	New cases of AIDS per 100,000 population by route of transmission	H	In use
DHC	1.06	2nd	Rate of new longstay mental health inpatients per 100,000 population and rate of new longstay mental health clients in community settings per 100,000 population	M	In use
DJELR	1.06	2nd	Rates for depressive illness among women and men	H	Develop
DJELR	1.06	2nd	Eating disorder rates among women by age and class	M	Develop
DHC	1.08	2nd	The number of patients, over 65 years on the waiting list for (a) Cataract surgery (b) ENT surgery (c) Orthopaedic surgery. The number of cataract procedures completed on (a) a day case basis (b) an in-patient basis	H	In use
DHC	1.08	2nd	Percentage of new patients seen in Out-Patient Department within 13 weeks of referral by GP	H	In use
DHC	1.08	2nd	Waiting times in Out-Patient Department (% seen in under 60 minutes)	H	In use
EUIND	2.00	2nd	Proportion of discouraged workers and proportion of the population non-employed (as a percentage of the total population aged 18-59 (or 64) excluding those in full-time education)	H	Develop
NESC/PPF	2.00	2nd	Percentage of workers in enterprises adopting family friendly policies such as job-sharing, work-sharing, part-time work, flexitime, flexi-place/teleworking and term-time working	H	Develop
DAF	2.01	2nd	No. of farmers and spouses with off-farm jobs	H	Develop
DAF	2.01	2nd	Earnings from off-farm employment (holder and spouse)	H	Develop
DSFA	2.01	2nd	Numbers working below minimum wage	H	Develop
NESC/PPF	2.01	2nd	Employment rate for men and women aged 20-44 with and without a child aged 0-5	H	Develop
DELG	2.05	2nd	% of population on the Live Register	H	In use
DETE	2.05	2nd	Economic Inactivity – reasons for	H	Develop
EUSPC	2.05	2nd	Very long-term unemployment rate	H	Develop
DES	2.06	2nd	Expenditure by companies on training	L	In use
DAF	3.01	2nd	Total household income and its components for farm, urban and other rural households	H	In use
DELG	3.01	2nd	Profile of borrowers, previous tenure of borrowers, marital status of borrowers, ranges of income of borrowers, occupation of borrowers	M	In use
EUIND	3.01	2nd	Value of 60% of median threshold in PPS for 1 and 4 person households	H	Develop
DAF	3.02	2nd	Regional convergence in living standards	L	In use
EUSPC	3.02	2nd	Dispersion around the 60% median low income threshold	H	Develop

Dept / Source	Domain	Indicator category	Indicator	Dept priority	In Use / Develop
EUSPC	3.02	2nd	Low income rate anchored at a point in time	H	Develop
EUSPC	3.02	2nd	Low income rate before transfers	H	Develop
EUSPC	3.02	2nd	Distribution of income (Gini coefficient)	H	Develop
NESC/PPF	3.02	2nd	Social Welfare Payments as a % of adequacy benchmark	H	Develop
DSFA	3.04	2nd	Numbers below thresholds (40%/50%/60%, mean/median)	H	In use
DSFA	3.04	2nd	Income at the Nth percentile, and the ratio between this and average incomes	M	In use
DSFA	3.04	2nd	Numbers lacking basket of necessities; lacking particular necessities; lacking access to particular essential services	H	In use
DSFA	3.04	2nd	Numbers in debt; numbers with self-reported financial difficulties	H	In use
DSFA	3.04	2nd	Number of people in mortgage arrears	M	Develop
EUIND	3.04	2nd	Mean and median equivalised poverty gap – for 60% of median	H	Develop
DAF	4.00	2nd	Education levels (male/female)	M	Develop
DCRGA	4.00	2nd	Level, fluency and use of Irish in the educational system at the various levels	M	Develop
DES	4.01	2nd	Percentage of new entrants to primary school that have attended some form of early childhood programme	M	Develop
DES	4.01	2nd	Average class size in primary schools nationally and in schools with a high concentration of at-risk pupils, by standard (i.e. class level)	M	In use
DES	4.01	2nd	Number of children who fail to transfer from primary to second-level education, with specific data for children from the traveller community and for asylum seeker and refugee children	H	Develop
DJELR	4.02	2nd	Percentage of women and men early school leavers who return to training/adult education	H	Develop
DES	4.03	2nd	Expenditure on education as a proportion of GDP/GNP, with comparative international data	H	In use
DES	4.03	2nd	Proportion of overall expenditure on education that is targetted specifically at addressing educational disadvantage	H	Develop
DES	4.04	2nd	Subsequent regular monitoring of literacy and numeracy difficulties among primary school pupils nationally including specific data on children from the traveller community and from other ethnic minorities	H	Develop
DES	4.04	2nd	Percentage of adults (16-65 years) at each of five proficiency levels in prose literacy, quantitative literacy and documents literacy, disaggregated by age (range), gender, socio-economic status (employment), location, ethnicity and 'native' vs. 'foreign born', with comparative international data. (IALS 1994)	H	In use
DES	4.05	2nd	Number and proportion of untrained teachers in schools and the number of teachers qualified in the subject areas in which they are teaching	M	In use
DES	4.06	2nd	Number of 18-24 year olds with only lower secondary level education who are not in further education and training	H	In use
DES	4.07	2nd	Second Level Destination data, including point of drop-out data	M	In use
DES	4.07	2nd	Average class size in second-level schools nationally and in schools with a high concentration of at-risk pupils	M	In use

Dept / Source	Domain	Indicator category	Indicator	Dept priority	In Use / Develop
DJELR	4.07	2nd	Educational attainment of girls and boys aged 15-19	M	Develop
DES	4.09	2nd	Data on the retention of students in each third level institution by gender, age, SES status, ethnic background - also by level of study, full/part-time provision, field of study	H	Develop
DES	4.09	2nd	Third level graduates by gender, age, SES status, country of origin, level of award, field of study	H	In use
NAPS	4.09	2nd	Participation by students with disabilities at third-level	H	Develop
DJELR	5.00	2nd	Percentage of teenage mothers in full-time education	H	Develop
DETE	5.03	2nd	Birth Parent but not actively parenting	M	Develop
DSFA	5.03	2nd	Number of children whose parents are divorced	M	Develop
DCRGA	6.00	2nd	The proportion of permanent private households which are Local Authority rented	H	In use
DELG	6.00	2nd	Location and brief description of dwelling/building affected by fire	H	In use
DELG	6.00	2nd	Affordability Index	H	In use
DoF	6.00	2nd	Repossessions of properties classified by the household income	H	Develop
EUIND	6.00	2nd	Proportion of the population living in overcrowded housing	H	Develop
EUIND	6.00	2nd	Proportion of people living in households that have been in arrears on rent or mortgage payments	H	Develop
DJELR	6.01	2nd	Girl and boy homelessness	H	Develop
DSFA	6.01	2nd	Number of people in temporary accommodation	M	Develop
DELG	6.02	2nd	Housing Activity, aggregate house (private, social and affordable) completions classified by area, new house guarantee registrations, new houses completed by type	H	In use
DoF	6.02	2nd	Total House building completions	H	Develop
DJELR	7.00	2nd	Percentage of female population whose economic and social activities are inhibited by fear of violence	M	Develop
DJELR	7.00	2nd	Percentage of sexual harassment reported and case outcomes	H	Develop
DJELR	7.00	2nd	Percentage of male perpetrators availing of anti-violence treatment programmes	H	Develop
DELG	7.01	2nd	Level of domestic violence	M	Develop
DHC	7.01	2nd	Number and outcome of abuse cases (2 tables - (i) outcome of cases reporting in current year (ii) outcomes on cases which were on-going from previous year)	H	In use
DJELR	7.01	2nd	Percentage of male and female victims who report violence	H	Develop
DJELR	7.01	2nd	Number of domestic violence orders in existence	H	Develop
DJELR	7.01	2nd	Percentage of rapes reported leading to conviction	H	Develop
DJELR	7.03	2nd	Number of prisoners on remand	H	In use
DJELR	7.03	2nd	Number of overall committals in a year	H	In use
DJELR	7.03	2nd	Rates of recidivism	H	Develop
DJELR	7.04	2nd	Percentage of Irish aid budget contributed to international aid funds	M	Develop

Dept / Source	Domain	Indicator category	Indicator	Dept priority	In Use / Develop
DJELR	8.01	2nd	Numbers of people of other nationalities resident in Ireland who have Irish citizenship	M	Develop
DJELR	8.02	2nd	Percentage of women and men candidates at all elections	H	Develop
DJELR	8.02	2nd	Percentage of women and men winning seats at all elections	H	Develop
DJELR	8.02	2nd	Percentage of women and men in Government	H	Develop
DJELR	8.02	2nd	Ministerial portfolios held by women and men	H	Develop
DJELR	8.02	2nd	Percentage of women and men in local Government	M	Develop
DJELR	8.02	2nd	Percentage of women and men in senior decision-making positions in the public sector	H	Develop
DELG	8.03	2nd	Attitudes to racism	H	Develop
DSFA	8.04	2nd	Number of older people who lack social interaction with others, including relatives	H	Develop
DSFA	8.04	2nd	Levels of participation in civic society	H	Develop
DES	8.05	2nd	Monitoring participation, attendance levels, retention & performance among asylum seeker and refugee children in second-level schools	H	Develop
DJELR	8.05	2nd	Number of asylum seekers missing from Reception Centres by nationality	H	In use
DJELR	8.05	2nd	Deportations statistics (asylum seekers)	H	In use
DJELR	8.05	2nd	Details of asylum seekers granted refugee status	H	In use
DJELR	8.05	2nd	English Language literacy among refugees	M	Develop
DJELR	8.05	2nd	Qualifications (Trade or profession) among refugees	M	Develop
DELG	8.06	2nd	Traveller Families in local authority assisted accommodation, on the roadside or other private accommodation	H	In use
DES	8.06	2nd	Monitoring participation, attendance levels, retention & performance of traveller children in primary schools	H	Develop
DES	8.06	2nd	Monitoring participation, attendance levels, retention & performance among asylum seeker and refugee children in primary schools	H	Develop
DES	8.06	2nd	Monitoring participation, attendance levels, retention & performance of traveller children in second-level schools	H	Develop
DHC	8.06	2nd	Participation in Traveller Health Unit	H	Develop
DJELR	8.06	2nd	Percentage of Traveller women and men with access to adequate accommodation, running water and sanitation services	H	Develop
DCRGA	8.07	2nd	First Treatment Demand	H	In use
DCRGA	8.07	2nd	Drug related offences	H	In use
DCRGA	8.07	2nd	ESPAD survey of illicit drug use among school children	H	In use
DCRGA	8.07	2nd	Extent and pattern of drug use in the general population	H	Develop
DCRGA	8.07	2nd	Number of drug related deaths	H	Develop
DCRGA	8.07	2nd	Extent of drug related infectious diseases (HIV, Hepatitis)	H	Develop
DCRGA	8.07	2nd	Mortality rate among problem drug users	H	Develop
DCRGA	8.07	2nd	Treatment rate among problem drug users	H	Develop

Dept / Source	Domain	Indicator category	Indicator	Dept priority	In Use / Develop
DJELR	8.08	2nd	Alcoholism rates among women and men	H	Develop
DAF	9.01	2nd	No. of farmers	H	In use
DAF	9.01	2nd	No. of part-time farmers	H	In use
DAF	9.01	2nd	Average income per farm (farm income only)	H	In use
DAF	9.01	2nd	Average income per family work unit	H	In use
DAF	9.01	2nd	Average direct payment per farm	H	In use
DAF	9.01	2nd	Distribution of farm support direct payments by deciles of FFI	H	In use
DCRGA	9.01	2nd	The % of those at work engaged in small farming (under 30 acres)	H	In use
DELG	9.09	2nd	Data on Household and Commercial Waste - EPA	H	In use
DELG	9.10	2nd	Data on bathing water quality - EPA	H	In use
DCRGA	10.00	2nd	The proportion of households with two or more cars	H	In use
DSFA	10.00	2nd	Lack of car ownership; access to public transport	H	Develop
NESC/PPF	10.00	2nd	Road Infrastructure	H	Develop
NESC/PPF	10.00	2nd	Rail Infrastructure	H	Develop
DELG	10.01	2nd	Vehicle Owner/Driver/Pedestrian	H	In use
DELG	10.01	2nd	Alcohol related accidents (degree above limit)	H	Develop
DELG	10.01	2nd	Numbers hospitalised by gender/age group	H	Develop
DAF	10.02	2nd	No. of cars by farm, other rural and urban households	M	Develop
DoF	10.02	2nd	Households with regular use of car	M	Develop
DoF	10.02	2nd	Time taken to nearest bus stop/dart station	M	Develop
DSFA	10.02	2nd	No. of bus journeys undertaken using the free travel scheme of the DSFA by transport operator (CIE/private)	M	Develop
DSFA	10.02	2nd	No. of rail journeys undertaken using the free travel scheme of the DSFA by transport operator (CIE/private)	M	Develop
NESC/PPF	11.01	2nd	Internet host and on-line users per 1,000 population	H	Develop
DTSCH	11.02	2nd	Ownership of Bank account, Credit card, ATM card, Credit Union account, Post Office account	H	Develop
DAF	11.03	2nd	No. of farm, other rural and urban households with computers	M	Develop
DAF	11.03	2nd	No. of farm, other rural and urban households with internet access	M	Develop
DJELR	11.06	2nd	Percentage of boys and girls taking part in physical activity and organised sports	L	Develop
DAF	12.00	2nd	Regular estimates urban/rural population	H	Develop
DELG	12.01	2nd	Number of childcare places by area	H	Develop
DELG	12.02	2nd	Population (intercensal estimates) and income data at county level – to help local authorities improve their evaluation of needs when developing their housing strategies	H	Develop
DES	12.02	2nd	Projections of future enrolment at all levels of the education system	M	In use
DSFA	12.03	2nd	% of people aged 60/65/75+ living alone (men/women/total)	H	In use
DSFA	12.03	2nd	Risk of poverty for people whose main activity status is retired (men/women/total)	H	In use
DSFA	12.03	2nd	Relative income of people aged 60+, 65+ and 75+ relative to complementary groups and people aged 45-54 (men/women/total, by household type)	H	In use

Appendix F Summary of inventory of data sources

The table below summarises the data sources returns by disaggregation categories[38].

Dept[37]	Domain	Title of data source	Age	Gender	M/S	S/E	Income	G/C	F/S	Disability	Nationality	R/E	T/C	S/O	R/A
DAF	9.01	Client Registration Unit						X			X				
CSO	9.01	Census of Agriculture	X	X				X							
CSO	12.00	Census of Population	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X		X
CSO	3.00	EU-Statistics on Income and Living Conditions	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
CSO	11.02	Household Budget Survey	X	X	X	X	X	X							
CSO	10.02	Household Travel Survey	X	X				X							
CSO	2.05	Live Register	X	X				X							
CSO	2.00	Quarterly National Household Survey	X	X	X			X	X		X				
CSO	1.00	QNHS - Nursing Module	X	X	X			X	X		X				
CSO	2.03	QNHS - Occupational Illnesses and Injuries Module	X	X	X			X	X		X				
CSO	6.00	QNHS - Housing Module	X	X	X			X	X		X				
CSO	11.03	QNHS - Home Computers Module	X	X	X			X	X		X				
CSO	7.01	QNHS - Crime and Victimisation Module	X	X	X			X	X		X				
CSO	9.00	QNHS - Recycling and Energy Conservation Module	X	X	X			X	X		X				
CSO	10.02	QNHS - Travel to Work Module	X	X	X			X	X		X				
CSO	2.01	QNHS - Length and Pattern of Working Time Module	X	X	X			X	X		X				
CSO	1.00	QNHS - Health Module	X	X	X			X	X		X				
CSO	3.06	QNHS - Pension Provision Module	X	X	X			X	X		X				
CSO	1.04	QNHS - Employment of Disabled Persons Module	X	X	X			X	X	X	X				
CSO	8.04	QNHS - Voter Registration and Participation Module	X	X	X			X	X		X				
CSO	1.01	Vital Statistics - Births	X	X	X	X		X							
CSO	1.03	Vital Statistics - Deaths and Late Death Registration	X	X	X	X		X							
CSO	5.03	Vital Statistics - Marriages	X	X	X	X		X							X
CSO	1.03	Vital Statistics - Stillbirths	X	X	X	X		X							

[38] The following abbreviations have been used in this table for some of the disaggregation categories: M/S = Marital status; S/E = Socio-economic status; G/C = Geographical coding; F/S = Family status; R/E = Race/Ethnicity; T/C = Membership of the Traveller Community; S/O = Sexual orientation; R/A = Religious affiliation.

Dept[37]	Domain	Title of data source	Age	Gender	M/S	S/E	Income	G/C	F/S	Disability	Nationality	R/E	T/C	S/O	R/A
DCRGA	8.04	SCOPE Database and Research Strategy & Implementation Plan	X	X		X		X	X	X			X		
DES	4.01	Annual Census of Primary Schools	X	X				X		X			X		X
DES	8.04	European Social Survey	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X
DES	4.08	Annual Report (Psychologists)						X		X					
DES	8.06	Annual Report of Visiting Teacher Service for Travellers											X		
DES	4.06	Annual School Leavers Survey	X	X	X	X	X	X			X				
DES	4.08	Client Record Summary	X	X				X	X	X	X				
DES	4.07	Curriculum Provision and Integration among First Year Students	X	X		X		X	X		X		X		
DES	4.04	International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS, 1994)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X				
DES	3.00	Living In Ireland Survey	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
DES	4.04	National Assessment of English Reading	X	X		X		X							
DES	4.05	National Development Plan In-Career Development Unit element		X				X							
DES	4.04	National Survey of Mathematics Achievement (1999)	X	X		X		X	X	X			X		
DES	4.05	NCTE Census of Schools				X									
DES	4.07	Post-Primary Pupils Database	X	X				X			X				
DES	4.05	Post-Primary Teacher Payroll	X	X				X	X						
DES	4.05	Primary Teachers Salary Return Form	X	X	X		X	X							
DES	4.07	Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)	X	X		X			X		X	X			
DES	4.07	Statistical Section, Examinations Branch	X	X						X	X				
DES	4.08	Study of Remedial Education in Irish Primary Schools (1997)		X						X			X		
DES	4.01	Suirbhé Náisiúnta Inniúlachta sa Ghaeilge I Rang a Sé	X	X		X		X	X						
DES	4.08	Survey of disadvantage in primary schools				X		X	X			X	X		
DES	4.08	Survey of Reading Literacy in Designated Disadvantaged Schools (2003-2006)	X	X		X		X	X	X	X		X		
DES	4.09	Annual Returns (Higher Education Colleges)		X											
DES	4.09	HEA Annual Student Statistics Report	X	X		X		X			X				

Dept[37]	Domain	Title of data source	Age	Gender	M/S	S/E	Income	G/C	F/S	Disability	Nationality	R/E	T/C	S/O	R/A
DES	4.09	National Survey of Access to Higher Education	X	X		X		X							
DES	4.09	Higher Education Enrolments and Graduands Report		X											
DES	3.01	National Contributor to Eurostudent Survey - Social and Economic conditions of student life in Europe	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X				
DES	4.09	First Destination Report	X	X		X	X	X			X				
DES	4.09	SOCRATES - ERASMUS in Ireland	X	X				X		X	X				
DES	4.05	Staff returns for HEA designated Institutes		X											
DES	4.02	Second-level part-time census for vocational, community and comprehensive schools	X	X				X					X		
DES	4.02	Third-level part-time census for IoT's DIT, Tipperary Institute and Killybegs HTC	X	X				X					X		
DES	4.09	Annual Statistical Return of students in full-time 3rd level education for IoT's DIT, Tipperary Institute and Killybegs HTC	X	X		X		X			X				
DES	4.05	Weighting database				X		X		X					
DETE	4.02	Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS2)		X											
DETE	2.06	Follow-up survey of FÁS participants	X	X	X			X		X	X		X		
DETE	2.06	FÁS participation database	X	X		X		X							
DETE	2.06	FÁS client registration database	X	X		X		X							
DETE	2.05	Redundancy Payments	X	X			X	X							
DETE	8.05	Data on Work Permits	X	X	X	X	X	X			X				
DELG	6.03	Affordable Housing Scheme	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
DELG	6.03	Affordable Housing Scheme Loans (new houses only)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
DELG	6.00	Annual Bulletin of Fire Statistics	X	X				X							
DELG	6.03	Annual House Letting Survey	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		
DELG	6.03	Assessment of Need for Social Rented Housing Accommodation	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X		
DELG	6.01	Homeless (as part of triennial Housing Needs Assessment)	X	X	X			X	X	X					
DELG	6.03	House Purchase Loans	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
DELG	6.03	Housing Loan/early redemption/special payments	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						

Dept[37]	Domain	Title of data source	Age	Gender	M/S	S/E	Income	G/C	F/S	Disability	Nationality	R/E	T/C	S/O	R/A
DELG	6.03	House Price Information proposed to be supplied to Housing Policy and Supply, DELG by Mortgage Lenders	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
DELG	6.03	Mortgage Allowance Scheme	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
DELG	6.02	National House Condition Survey	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
DELG	6.00	Price (Houses and Apartments)													
DELG	6.03	Rental of LA dwellings	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
DELG	6.03	Sale of Local Authority Housing	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
DELG	6.03	Sale of Site scheme				X									
DELG	6.03	Shared Ownership Loans	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
DELG	6.03	Shared Ownership Scheme	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
DELG	6.03	Tenant Purchase Loans	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
DELG	6.03	Tenant Purchase Scheme - LA returns to Housing Policy and Supply, DELG	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
DELG	8.06	Traveller Accommodation (Annual Count)	X	X	X			X	X				X		
DELG	8.06	Traveller Accommodation Authorisation Certificate for first time buyers grant	X	X	X			X	X				X		
DELG	10.00	National Vehicle & Driver File	X	X	X			X		X	X				
DELG	8.04	Register of Electors				X		X		X					
DELG	9.00	Environment in Focus						X							
DHC	12.03	Annual Survey of Long Stay Units	X	X				X							
DHC	12.01	Child Care Interim Dataset 2002	X	X	X			X		X					
DHC	1.06	EUROCAT (ERHA Register of Congenital Anomalies)	X	X	X	X		X	X						
DHC	1.08	Hospital In-patient Enquiry (HIPE)	X	X	X			X							
DHC	1.08	Hospital Waiting Lists	X					X							
DHC	1.06	Notifiable Infectious Diseases Database	X	X				X							
DHC	1.06	HIV Case Reporting System	X	X							X			X	
DHC	1.06	National Tuberculosis Surveillance Database	X	X		X		X			X	X			
DHC	1.06	Sexually Transmitted Infections Database	X	X				X							
DHC	1.06	Enhanced Surveillance of Syphilis	X	X		X		X			X			X	
DHC	3.04	Medical Card Database of ERHA	X	X	X			X							
DHC	3.04	Medical Card Scheme	X	X				X							
DHC	1.06	National Cancer Registry	X	X	X	X		X							

Summary of inventory of data sources

Dept[37]	Domain	Title of data source	Age	Gender	M/S	S/E	Income	G/C	F/S	Disability	Nationality	R/E	T/C	S/O	R/A
DHC	8.07	National Drug Treatment Reporting System (NDTRS)	X	X		X		X	X		X				
DHC	1.04	National Intellectual Disability Database	X	X				X		X					
DHC	1.01	National Perinatal Reporting System	X	X	X	X		X	X						
DHC	1.04	National Physical and Sensory Disability Database	X	X				X	X	X					
DHC	1.06	National Psychiatric In-Patient Reporting System (NPIRS).	X	X	X	X		X		X					
DHC	1.06	Two-county Psychiatric Case Register (PCR)	X	X	X	X		X		X					
DHC	1.06	Psychiatric In-patient Census	X	X	X	X		X							
DHC	1.03	SIDS Register (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
DHC	1.05	Survey of lifestyles, attitudes and nutrition (SLÁN)	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X				X
DHC	1.05	National Breast Screening Programme	X	X				X		X					
DHC	1.05	Health behaviours in school-aged children (HBSC)	X	X		X		X							
DJELR	7.01	Annual report of An Garda Síochána	X					X							
DJELR	8.05	Asylum Management Live System	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X			X
DJELR	7.01	Central Authority for Child Abduction Information	X	X	X						X				
DJELR	7.02	Central Authority for Maintenance Recovery Information	X	X	X		X				X				
DJELR	7.02	Civil Legal Aid	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DJELR	7.02	Criminal Legal Aid	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DJELR	8.02	Equality for Women Measure of the NDP 2000-6	X	X	X	X		X	X			X			
DJELR	7.02	Garda Complaints Board	X					X							
DJELR	8.02	Membership of state boards		X											
DJELR	7.03	Prisoner Records System	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X		X
DJELR	7.01	PULSE System	X	X	X			X			X				X
DJELR	8.05	Reception and Integration Agency databases - DASS and LOCATIONS	X	X	X			X	X		X				
DJELR	6.02	Survey on Housing	X	X	X	X		X	X						
DJELR	5.00	Survey on Parental Leave	X	X		X			X						
DJELR	10.02	Survey on Transport	X	X	X	X		X	X						
R/C	3.01	Donations to Schools		X	X		X	X							

Dept[37]	Domain	Title of data source	Age	Gender	M/S	S/E	Income	G/C	F/S	Disability	Nationality	R/E	T/C	S/O	R/A
R/C	1.09	Health Expenses		X	X		X	X							
R/C	6.00	Home Loan Interest		X	X		X	X							
R/C	3.02	Income Distribution of individuals on tax records		X	X		X	X							
R/C	3.01	Maintenance Payments		X	X		X	X							
R/C	1.09	Medical Insurance		X	X		X	X							
R/C	1.09	Permanent Health Benefit		X	X		X	X							
R/C	2.01	Quarterly report of inflows and outflows to and from PAYE record		X	X		X	X							
R/C	6.00	Rent Relief (non-aged persons)		X	X		X	X							
R/C	9.00	Service Charges		X	X		X	X							
R/C	3.07	Tax Population		X	X		X	X							
R/C	4.09	Third Level Education Fees		X	X		X	X							
R/C	1.04	Blind Person		X	X		X	X	X	X					
R/C	1.02	Dependant Relative		X	X		X	X	X	X					
R/C	1.02	Homecarer credit		X	X		X	X	X	X					
R/C	1.04	Housekeeper/incapacitated taxpayer		X	X		X	X	X	X					
R/C	1.04	Incapacitated Child		X	X		X	X	X	X					
R/C	12.03	Rent Relief - Aged Persons	X	X	X		X	X	X	X					
R/C	3.01	Gift/Inheritance Tax Self-Assessment Return (IT38)			X	X		X							
R/C	3.00	Inland Revenue Affidavit (CA24)	X		X	X		X							
R/C	6.00	Particulars Delivered (PD) Form-ST 21													
R/C	3.00	Questionnaire Form CA4			X			X							
DSFA	1.03	Bereavement Grant	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DSFA	3.06	Blind Person's Pension	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DSFA	1.02	Carer's Allowance	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DSFA	5.02	Deserted Wife's Allowance	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DSFA	5.02	Deserted Wife's Benefit	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DSFA	1.04	Disability Allowance	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DSFA	1.04	Invalidity Pension	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DSFA	5.02	Lone Parents Allowance	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DSFA	3.06	Old Age Contributory Pension	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DSFA	3.06	Old Age Non-Contributory Pension	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DSFA	5.02	One Parent Family Payment	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DSFA	12.01	Orphan's (Non-Contributory) Pension	X	X	X		X	X	X						

Dept[37]	Domain	Title of data source	Age	Gender	M/S	S/E	Income	G/C	F/S	Disability	Nationality	R/E	T/C	S/O	R/A
DSFA	**12.01**	Orphan's Contributory Allowance	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DSFA	**5.02**	Lone Parent Unmarried Pension, Lone Parent Widowed Pension, Lone Parent Separated Spouses Allowance, Lone Parent Prisoners' Spouses Allowance, Prisoners' Wives Allowance	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DSFA	**3.06**	Retirement Pension	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DSFA	**3.06**	Widows' and Widowers' Contributory Pension	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DSFA	**3.06**	Widows' Non-Contributory Pension	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DSFA	**5.00**	Adoptive Benefit	X	X	X		X	X	X	X					
DSFA	**1.04**	Disability Benefit	X	X	X		X	X	X	X					
DSFA	**2.03**	Health and Safety Benefit	X	X	X		X	X	X	X					
DSFA	**1.01**	Maternity Benefit	X	X	X		X	X	X						
DSFA	**2.03**	Occupation Injuries Benefit - Constant Attendance Allowance	X	X	X		X	X	X	X					
DSFA	**2.03**	Occupation Injuries Benefit - Death Benefit Pensions	X	X	X		X	X	X	X					
DSFA	**2.03**	Occupation Injuries Benefit - Disablement Benefit/Pension	X	X	X		X	X	X	X					
DSFA	**2.03**	Occupation Injuries Benefit - Injury Benefit	X	X	X		X	X	X	X					
DSFA	**2.03**	Occupation Injuries Benefit - Medical Care Scheme	X	X	X		X	X	X	X					
DSFA	**2.03**	Occupation Injuries Benefit - Unemployability Supplement	X	X	X		X	X	X	X					
DSFA	**12.01**	Back to School Clothing and Footwear Scheme	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	**3.04**	Budget Supplement	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	**12.01**	Crèche Supplement	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	**3.04**	Exceptional Needs Payment	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	**3.04**	Fuel Supplement	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	**3.04**	Other Supplement	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	**3.04**	Special Heating Needs Supplement	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	**3.04**	Basic Supplementary Welfare Allowance	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	**3.04**	SWA Adult Diet Supplement	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	**3.04**	SWA Assistance towards Funeral Expenses	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	**3.04**	SWA Housing Mortgage Interest Supplement (Local Authority)	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	**3.04**	SWA Rent Supplement	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	**3.04**	Travel Supplement	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				

Dept[37]	Domain	Title of data source	Age	Gender	M/S	S/E	Income	G/C	F/S	Disability	Nationality	R/E	T/C	S/O	R/A
DSFA	3.04	Urgent Needs Payment	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	4.02	Back to Education Allowance	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	2.01	Back to Work Allowance	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	2.01	Back to Work Enterprise Allowance	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	9.01	Farm Assist	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	12.03	Pre-Retirement Allowance	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	2.05	Unemployment Assistance	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	2.05	Unemployment Benefit	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	12.00	Central Records System (CRS) and independent but interlinked schemes such as Child Benefit, ISTS, PenLive	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	12.01	Child Benefit	X	X	X			X	X		X				
DSFA	1.02	Carer's Benefit	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	3.04	Family Income Supplement	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DSFA	1.09	Treatment Benefit	X		X			X							
DSFA	8.04	Household Benefits Package and Free Travel	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				
DoT	10.01	Road Accident Database	X	X				X							
DoT	10.01	Social Attitudes to Road Traffic Risk in Europe (SARTRE)	X	X	X	X	X								
DoT	10.01	Road Safety Tracking of advertisements on TV	X	X											

Appendix G   Data Needs Questionnaire

Policy Area:	Name:	Tel:	e-mail:

1/ Indicators Currently in Use			
Please describe indicator	Priority assigned by Department to this indicator - High (H) Medium (M) Low (L)	Is this indicator adequate for your purposes? Yes/No	If not, please describe preferred indicator if it could be available
[indicator 1]			
[indicator 2 …..]			

2/ Indicators which you would like to see developed	Priority assigned by Department to this indicator: High (H) Medium (M) Low (L)
Please describe indicator	

Secretary General
Department of ...

Dear …

I am writing as a follow-up to the letter sent by the Secretary General of the Department of Finance and myself to you last March informing you of an initiative to develop a framework for social and equality statistics in this country.

A Steering Group on Social and Equality Statistics, chaired by Prof. Frances Ruane, has now been established to progress this task. The Group is supported by a joint secretariat of Brenda Boylan (Dept of the Taoiseach) and Gerry Brady (CSO). Two sub-groups have also been established to look at:

    I.   Social Data Needs, chaired by Dr. Brian Nolan, ESRI.
    II.   Social Data Sources, chaired by Gerry O'Hanlon, CSO.

On the issue of social data needs we are now asking for your assistance in quantifying data needs for social policy development throughout government departments and agencies under their aegis. This assessment of need will cover the key social indicators currently used, and sought, by your Department.

A questionnaire has been developed by the Social Data Needs Sub-Group (attached) in order to carry out this exercise. This questionnaire is accompanied by an explanatory note and an example of the type of social indicators in use in the UK and published annually by the Office of National Statistics in Social Trends.

I would be grateful if you could ensure that this questionnaire is completed by the appropriate people in your Department in order to ensure full coverage of all social policy areas. The information should be supplied to Brenda Boylan of this Department (Brenda.Boylan@taoiseach.gov.ie, tel. 6194025) by 17 July 2002.

Your Department's liaison person for this exercise is _____, who is a member of the Social Data Needs Sub-Group.

This exercise provides an opportunity for your Department to identify a range of high-level social policy indicators currently in use and those that would be desirable but are not currently available. Your co-operation in this matter is much appreciated and will play an important part in ensuring that a strong framework for social and equality statistics can be developed into the future.

Yours sincerely,

Dermot McCarthy
Secretary General
Department of the Taoiseach

Information Sought in Relation to Social and Equality Indicators

Background

The Steering Group on Social and Equality Statistics has been set up to
report by Autumn 2002 on

    1.   An assessment of social data needs in terms of social policy development now and into the future across Government Departments and Agencies.

    2.   Identification and evaluation of existing social data sources.

In order to quantify data needs for social and equality policy development, Departments are being asked to fill in the attached form from a policy perspective, providing details on:

    1.   The key social indicators that are currently being used within the Department, and whether or not these meet current needs; and

    2.   The type of social indicators that would be of value in the context of Departments' social policy development, but which are not currently available.

<u>Completion of Questionnaire</u>

The attached questionnaire first asks for a listing of key social indicators currently in use in your Department, an assessment of their suitability for the purpose, and where unsatisfactory how they might be improved or what indicator would be preferred. It then asks about social indicators not currently in use or available but seen as valuable. (The extent to which indicators can be broken down by characteristics such as age, gender, etc. is of critical importance but will be addressed separately, at a later stage in the exercise).

<u>Part I: Indicators currently in use</u>

Social indicators are statistics which allow social progress to be measured in a particular area, or provide information about important social trends which will affect the context in which policy is formulated. Examples of social indicators are as follows:

- Proportion of people living in 'consistent poverty'.
- Proportion of pupils with 'serious literacy' difficulties.
- Proportion of the population aged 18-59 with only lower secondary education or less.
- Number of Childcare Places per 1,000 children 5 years and under.

Examples of the types of social and equality indicators in use elsewhere are given in the attached list from the annual Social Trends publication by the UK Office of National Statistics.

The aim is to identify high-level social indicators currently in use, how those might be improved, and major perceived gaps in terms of the areas or social trends covered.

- Priority Assigned:
  This refers to the level of importance assigned to a particular indicator currently in use within a Department.

- Is this indicator adequate for your purposes? Yes/No:
  This question refers to coverage, timeliness and quality of the indicator in use as well as the extent to which they measure what needs to be measured from a policy-maker's perspective.

- If not, please describe preferred indicator if it could be available:
  This seeks to identify indicators that would more adequately meet the needs of your Department where indicators currently in use do not meet those needs.

<u>Part 2: Indicators which you would like to see developed:</u>

This section is asking Departments to take a broad look at the sort of indicators that they would like to have access to in the future as an input to policy making.

The liaison person for the Department of … is _____ who will deal with any queries arising.

Appendix H   Data Sources Phase 1 Questionnaire

Steering Group on Social and Equality Statistics

Audit of Data Sources Sub-Group

Covering Note accompanying Data Sources Inventory Questionnaire

Increasing economic progress over recent years has allowed a stronger focus on social policy considerations than before. Combined with an increased emphasis on benchmarking, indicators and evaluation of government policies generally, there is a real need for a reliable body of high quality information and data focused on outcomes across the social agenda.

Some real gaps exist in the social data that is currently available and, in this context, the National Statistics Board has proposed that steps be taken to create a framework for social and equality statistics that would better support policy formulation across the range of key social concerns. The Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion, chaired by the Department of the Taoiseach, is also taking a particular interest in this initiative.

In order to progress this important body of work, a Steering Group on Social and Equality Statistics, chaired by Professor Frances Ruane (Chairperson of the National Statistics Board) has been established to consider the development of a framework for social and equality statistics in this country. Such a framework will be essential to support evidence-based policy development across the social agenda in the future.

The work undertaken by the Group, whose secretariat is provided jointly by Brenda Boylan (Dept of An Taoiseach) and Gerry Brady (Central Statistics Office) will represent the first step in the development of a national framework for social and equality statistics. The end-objective is to develop the capacity in Ireland to produce statistics along the lines of those produced in other countries (e.g. the Social Report for New Zealand). This would involve, inter alia, the development of linkages across administrative data systems. This task is being given a high priority and the Steering Group will be reporting in Autumn of this year.

The **Terms of Reference for the Steering Group** are as follows:

1   To review existing and proposed social indicators and measures in terms of their content, data requirements and ability to meet current demands for social and equality statistics

2   To identify and evaluate existing statistical surveys and administrative data in relation to their comprehensiveness, comparability with other sources, coverage, timeliness, accessibility, etc.

3   To determine what would be required to enhance the usefulness of data from different administrative sources in generating social and equality statistics

4   To examine what would be required to allow integrated analyses of data from different statistical and administrative sources and how such new analyses could be best disseminated

5   To identify current gaps in social and equality statistics and how these should be met, having regard to the priorities of, and resource implications for, stakeholders

6   To develop a framework for social and equality statistics that can meet future policy needs arising from new social and equality policy developments

Two sub-groups have been established to progress work simultaneously on both the policy and data sides. The **Working procedures for the sub-groups** are as follows:

The **first group,** chaired by Professor Brian Nolan of the Economic and Social Research Institute**,** should undertake an **audit of data needs.** This Group will focus on Terms of Reference 1, 5 and 6 with an emphasis on the following:

- Producing a comprehensive and coherent picture of known current needs across all relevant domains;

- Anticipate emerging future needs in the medium to longer terms;

- Seek to establish priorities.

The **second group,** chaired by myself**,** should undertake an **audit of data sources.** This Group will focus on Terms of Reference 2, 3 and 4 with an emphasis on the following:

- Identifying all current and planned statistical surveys in the social domain;

- Identifying all major administrative sources;

- Provide a systematic overview for each source of the information available including coverage, form in which held and accessibility;

- Examine the potential for improving each source

The Steering Group, on the basis of the work of the sub-groups, will reconcile the needs with the sources and thus establish the information gaps which currently exist or can be expected to emerge in the medium to long term. It then remains for the Steering Group to put forward recommendations for the enunciation of a prioritised framework to address these gaps.

The Data Needs Sub-Group has compiled a draft list of **domains** as part of its development of a framework for social and equality statistics. These define the scope of data sources that are of relevance to our work.

1   Health and access to health care
2   Labour market and working conditions
3   Income and wealth
4   Education and training
5   Households and families
6   Housing
7   Safety and security
8   Social relationships and integration
9   Environment
10   Transportation
11   Lifestyles and consumer expenditure
12   Population

Gerry O'Hanlon
Chairperson Data Sources Sub-Group

May 17 2002

Steering Group on Social and Equality Statistics

Audit of Data Sources Inventory Questionnaire

Contact and Usefulness Evaluation Details

Please complete one questionnaire per administrative source or statistical survey. Only include surveys and schemes that are of relevance to social and equality statistics. The domains listed in the covering note may provide some useful guidance in determining whether a scheme or survey is of relevance.

Name of Administrative Source or Statistical Survey (also give an abbreviated name if relevant)

Name of Responsible Organisation

Name and Contact details of Person completing this questionnaire (for any queries)

Brief Description of the Administrative Source / Statistical Survey

- Purpose

- Approximate year of introduction

- Likely future continuity

- Data collection format (e.g. interview, post)

- Is the PPS Number collected

- How many completed forms in the latest scheme/survey

What unit is covered in the Administrative Source / Statistical Survey (e.g. Individual person, Household, School, etc.)

Are the completed Administrative Source / Statistical Survey forms available on computer

Other comments (optional)

Appendix I   Data Sources Phase 2 Questionnaire

Steering Group on Social and Equality Statistics

Audit of Data Sources Phase 2 Questionnaire

A number of the inventory data sources have been identified for more detailed examination. This questionnaire will be used to assess more comprehensively the statistical potential of these selected sources.

Please include a copy of the questionnaire/form used for data collection and the relevant coding manual with the completed questionnaire.

Title of Data Source (Use data source abbreviation if preferred)

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Contact person details (Leave blank if the same as for Phase 1)

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Unique reference number

Apart from the PPS Number, are you using any other unique reference number that allows returns in two different scheme/survey periods to be linked at individual record level?

Yes [   ]   No [   ]

If yes, please give details

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Please indicate the availability of the following key social and equality information

The list given includes the nine grounds of unlawful discrimination. **See attached notes for guidance**.

Disaggregation variable	Collected Yes/No	Available on computer Yes/No	Comments/Notes
Age			
Gender			
Marital status			
Socio-economic status			
Income			
Geographical coding			
Family status / Carer Responsibilities			
Disability			
Nationality			
Race/Ethnicity			
Membership of the Traveller community			
Sexual orientation			
Religious affiliation			
Other			

Please outline the procedures used within the Scheme/Survey/Register for the following purposes:

- To identify new records

- To identify and mark units that are no longer relevant or active

- To update ongoing applicant details (e.g. educational attainment)

Audit of Data Sources Phase 2 Questionnaire

Questionnaire Completion Notes

Age – Use the comments to note whether the information available relates to the person's age in years, age group, date of birth, etc.

Gender – Indicate if female or male is coded or only indirectly derivable, for example through the applicant's forename.

Marital status – Is it possible to establish if the person is single, married, separated, divorced, widowed?

Socio-economic status – Is information collected to allow a classification based on characteristics such as occupation, education, etc.?

Income – Is any information on personal or household income collected as part of the administrative scheme or statistical survey? Use the comments section to specify the exact details of the information collected.

Geographical coding – Indicate whether the address is coded rather than only available in text format. Also indicate whether the address relates to place of residence or employment etc. and to what level of detail is the address given – e.g. household, street, town, county, etc.?

Family status/Carer responsibilities – Is it possible to establish whether a person has dependent children or has primary responsibility for an adult with a disability, who requires a high degree of support and attention?

Disability – Are disabled persons identified, i.e. persons having a total or partial absence of bodily or mental facilities, chronic disease, learning and personality disorders?

Nationality – Based on either country of birth or citizenship.

Race/Ethnicity – Includes race, colour and ethnic origin. Indicate which (if any) of these categories are identified.

Membership of the Traveller community – Are travellers identified - including those living in permanent accommodation?

Sexual orientation – Is information collected on sexual orientation, i.e. whether heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual.

Religious affiliation – Is information collected on the religious belief to which a person adheres or the religious group to which he/she belongs?

Other – Is any other information available which classifies the person according to some relevant characteristic, e.g. holder of a medical card?

The Steering Group set itself very demanding terms of reference and an exceptionally tight time frame[39]. This approach was deemed necessary in the light of the social partnership talks in the Autumn/Winter of 2002, the development of the new Strategy for Statistics by the National Statistics Board in the same time period and the escalating demands for social statistics for policy making purposes. As a consequence, it has been possible to meet many, but not all of the terms of reference set. This section summarises the progress made by the Steering Group on each of the terms of references outlined in Chapter 2.

Terms of Reference 1: **To review existing and proposed social indicators and measures in terms of their content, data requirements and ability to meet current demands for social and equality statistics.**

The Steering Group has undertaken an extensive review of existing social data being used by policy makers in Ireland, together with a review of what is being identified in major policy documents associated with the NESC, the Equality Authority and other key bodies in Ireland. While the review is not fully comprehensive, its breadth allows us to have confidence that what we have obtained through the process is broadly representative. The clearest message from the audit is the significant use being made of programme indicators within the system. While the survey could not ascertain the relative use being made of programme versus broad social indicators, the process revealed that the relationship between identifying policy priorities and the corresponding data priorities appeared to be loose. It appears that the availability of relevant data not only leads to their use but that it also leads to a greater appreciation of the importance of using such data in policy analysis. For example, the introduction of a quarterly labour force survey (QNHS) preceded the demand for such a survey by policy makers.

Terms of Reference 2: **To identify and evaluate existing statistical surveys and administrative data in relation to their comprehensiveness, comparability with other sources, coverage, timeliness, accessibility, etc.**

The Steering Group has attempted to enumerate all potential data sources on social and equality measures in government departments. Leaving aside CSO data, the exercise uncovered 184 sources of social and equality data within the administrative system. The vast bulk of these are now computerised, raising the possibility of their being used to generate social statistics successfully. Furthermore, almost half of the sources use the PPS Number, raising the potential for data integration. From the point of view of disaggregation, the situation is uneven, and the audit is helpful in determining what might be done to improve these records over time without excessive cost.

Terms of Reference 3: **To determine what would be required to enhance the usefulness of data from different administrative sources in generating social and equality statistics.**

In the absence of a broad framework for Ireland, social statistics have developed at department and agency levels without any regard to the benefits of these data being comparable with international statistics or being capable of integration with data from other sources. This is not surprising, as hitherto no effort has been placed on achieving such a goal. To enhance the usefulness of such data, there need to be cross-departmental agreements on:

◆ A basic national framework, such as that set out in Chapter 2;

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[39]   Dr Liz McWhirter, who was a member of the group, advised that a much less ambitious exercise in Northern Ireland had taken several years to complete and involved a major consultancy exercise.

◆ An evolving classification of indicators for each of the domains in the agreed framework;

◆ Standards on the categorisation, collection, degree of disaggregation and maintenance of data that can populate that framework.

Such agreements, which would require serious senior level commitment within the public sector, could, if data sources were linked, significantly improve the quality and quantity of social and equality statistics in Ireland. In the absence of such agreements, the potential for using administrative data to generate social and equality statistics in Ireland is minimal and the country will remain unduly reliant, compared with our European counterparts, on large-scale surveys to generate social data.

Terms of Reference 4: To examine what would be required to allow integrated analyses of data from different statistical and administrative sources and how such new analyses could be best disseminated.

For data to allow any kind of integrated analysis, the statistical measures must, as a minimum, be compatible, as noted in TOR 3. For full benefit to be obtained in generating statistics from these records, especially for analysing cross-cutting issues, and to minimise the collection costs associated with holding administrative records, the individual micro-data in different records must be matched. This can be done if use is made of a common identifier, such as the PPS Number, across the public sector, in a manner that does not create data protection problems (see Section 5.5).

Terms of Reference 5: To identify current gaps in social and equality statistics and how these should be met, having regard to the priorities of, and resource implications for, stakeholders.

This is the TOR for which much more time would have been required for a definitive response from the Steering Group. It is not possible to list categorically the current data gaps in Irish social statistics primarily, because the exercise does not necessarily identify all data needs, but rather only those which were identified by government departments and agencies[40] and by a range of existing policy documents, both national and international. In effect, a full audit of outstanding gaps must cover not just what is identified in Chapter 3 that is not available from the sources in Chapter 4, but also data needs that would arise were our policy making process more evidence-rather than anecdotally-based[41]. Consequently, even if we were to meet all of the data needs identified here, we would not necessarily have reached the standard of social statistics that are available in comparably-developed EU countries. To meet this TOR, two further steps are required: first, to identify any social indicators/disaggregations which are missing from Chapter 3 and to assess the full list on an item by item basis against what is set out in Chapter 4; and second, to identify the resource implications of meeting them. It is only when such an exercise is completed that specific data priorities can be fully determined, as indicators and statistics will differ in their importance in the policy process and in the cost of obtaining them.

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[40] While we are confident through the efforts made by Departmental representatives and by the Secretariat that all of the major data needs for policy have been identified, there may yet be some gaps in what we have here.

[41] It may be the case that some of the data needs which are not identified here would be of greater priority than some of those that are.

Progress made in relation to the Steering Group's Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference 6: **To develop a framework for social and equality statistics that can meet future policy needs arising from new social and equality policy developments.**

The Steering Group has set out in Chapter 2 a draft framework for social and equality statistics of a type that it believes will be required to match Ireland's current and future needs and to allow comparability with international data. The value of such an organising framework lies both in its providing a structure within which Ireland can develop social statistics and in its contribution to the development of policy thinking that is conceptually rather than departmentally-driven.