

Integrity of Official Statistics

The Code of Practice for Official Statistics states that at all stages in the production, management and dissemination of official statistics, the public interest should prevail over organisational, political or personal interests. In order to meet this requirement it is essential that those producing statistical reports are protected from any political pressures that might influence the production or presentation of that statistics.

NIHE is a non-departmental public body (NDPB) which means it is not an integral part of a government department and carries out its work at arm's length from the Minister in its sponsor department, the Department for Communities (DfC). This independence from the Department helps to ensure that the producers of official statistics are protected from any political pressures.

In NIHE the lead statistical official has sole responsibility for deciding on statistical methods and procedures, and on the content and timing of statistical reports. If a circumstance arises where the lead statistical official (or a member of the statistical team) comes under political pressure in relation to the production or presentation of official statistics, the lead statistical official will explain NIHE's obligations in relation to the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. If the political pressure continues the lead statistical official will escalate the issue by seeking guidance from the appropriate person listed below (depending on the severity of the political pressure):

- NIHE's Head of Profession (Chief Executive) who is responsible for safeguarding the professional integrity of 'National Statistics' and other 'official statistics' produced by NIHE.
- The Senior Statistician in NIHE's sponsor department (DfC).
- The Chief Statistician in Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)
- The National Statistician (UK Statistics Authority)