

In April 2010, the sample of construction firms selected for the Quarterly Construction Enquiry (QCE) was refreshed. As in previous years, the Inter Departmental Business Register (IDBR) was used as the sampling frame to select new firms.

Users are advised that the target sample population for the QCE is now based on businesses classified to Divisions 41-43 of industrial classification SIC(2007) rather than Division 45 SIC(2003).

The vast majority of firms classified under Divisions 41-43 of SIC(2007) were previously listed under Division 45 of SIC(2003) and therefore there is a high degree of consistency between both classifications.

The main change between both classificatory groups is the inclusion of Property Developers and Property Investment Businesses listed under Division 41.1 SIC(2007) in the 'construction groupings'. However, it has been decided that Division 41.1 should be excluded from consideration for selection in the QCE. This is based on advice from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) who has concluded that since construction activity is virtually all sub-contracted by these firms no construction output would be recorded.

In summary, the change in the sampling population as a result of moving to the SIC(2007) classification is minimal and this will have a negligible impact on the continuity of the series contained within the Northern Ireland Construction Bulletin.