



department for  
**culture, media  
and sport**

# Taking Part Survey

Project Management and Governance

July 2012

Taking Part is a National Statistic and has been produced to the standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

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# Project Management and Governance

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This note sets out project management arrangements for the Taking Part survey.

## Background

The Taking Part survey measures adult (16+ years) and child (5-15 years) participation in culture and sport in England. It is the key evidence source for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), providing reliable national estimates of participation. The Taking Part survey contributes to the evidence base across a wide range of topics including participation in culture and sport, satisfaction and enjoyment with culture and sport, social capital, charitable giving, volunteering and barriers to participation. The survey also collects an in-depth range of socio-demographic information on respondents.

Taking Part has been run on a continuous basis since 2005 and DCMS has overall responsibility for the survey. DCMS is the main funder of the survey, with contributions from Sport England, Arts Council England and English Heritage (co-funders).

The survey is conducted by contractors TNS-BMRB, who have held the contract since 2005. Following the latest round of competitive tendering in late 2010/early 2011, TNS-BMRB was awarded the contract to conduct the next four years of Taking Part, up to and including 2014/15.

## Governance

The Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for Taking Part is the DCMS Deputy Director for analysis, who is responsible for resourcing the survey and owning key risks. The SRO works together with the DCMS Head of Profession for Statistics, who is responsible for the integrity and quality of the survey, survey changes and that the survey meets the standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics<sup>1</sup>.

Day to day management of the survey is carried out by the Taking Part project team. The project team lead and DCMS Head of Profession for Statistics has overall responsibility for the management (and contract management) of Taking Part.

The project team is supported by the Taking Part Steering Group, which is the strategic decision-making group for the survey.

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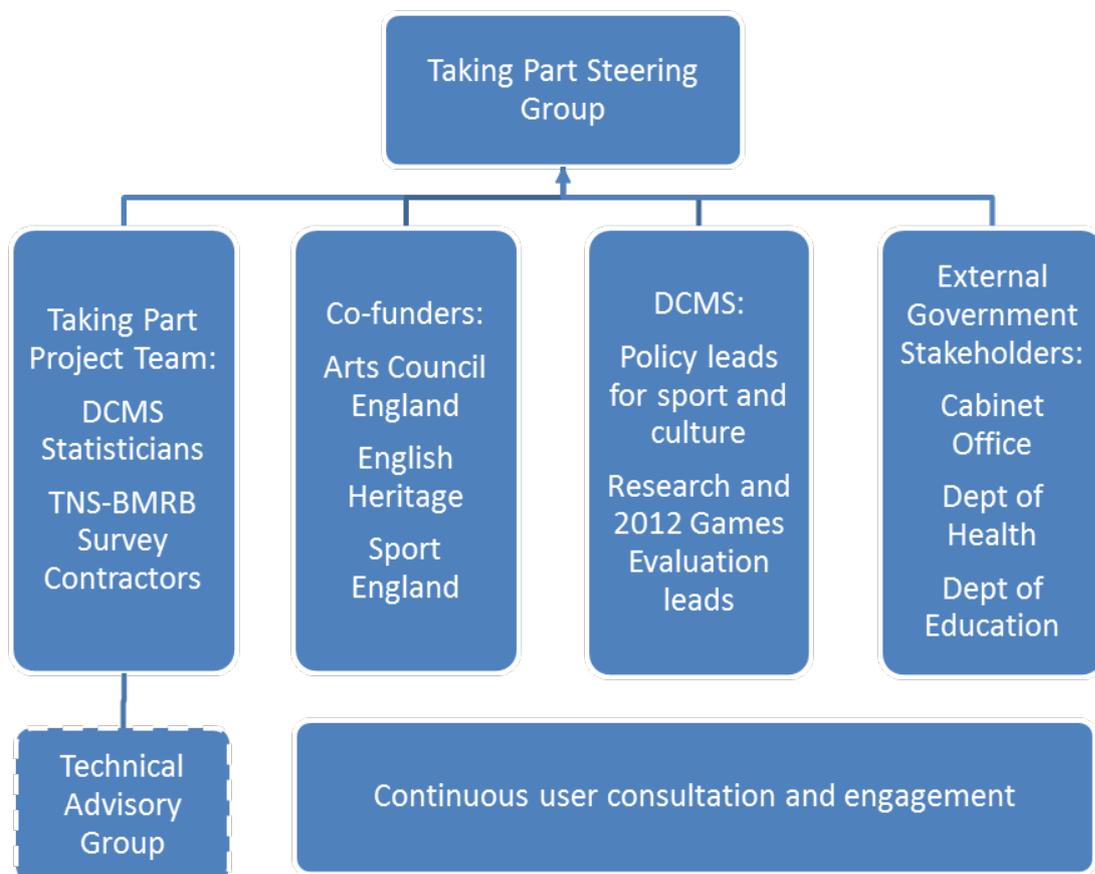
<sup>1</sup> Code of Practice for Official Statistics <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/>

When needed for specific survey developments or reviews, a Technical Advisory Group is formed to provide expert advice and ensure that any changes to the survey meet user requirements and that methodological changes are evidence based and follow best practice.

In addition, the Taking Part project team organises ad-hoc user meetings/events when necessary.

Continuous engagement and consultation with survey users ensures that the questionnaire content and reporting approach meets user needs. The main vehicles for user consultation are the DCMS website (formal consultations), Taking Part webpage 'user corner' and via the mailing list and notification in survey releases.

Figure 1: Overview of Taking Part governance arrangements



## Steering Group

The Steering Group is a strategic decision-making body, responsible for reviewing the project’s progress, dealing with conflicts between key customers, securing adequate resource, reviewing risks and tracking progress.

The Steering Group is chaired by the Head of Profession for Statistics and meets quarterly to monitor risk and make key decisions on survey design and content. DCMS and co-funders are responsible for agreeing changes to the survey.

The group is chaired by the DCMS Head of Profession for statistics. Membership includes the senior representatives from each of the co-funders (SE, ACE, EH) and DCMS policy Deputy Directors or representatives from each of the sectors and DCMS research and 2012 games evaluation leads. A representative from TNS-BMRB will be invited to attend if necessary. External Government stakeholders are also invited.

The group meets quarterly and by exception in the event of a major issue arising. Meetings are timed to coincide with key Taking Part milestones (e.g. questionnaire sign-off).

The terms of reference for the Steering Group are included in Annex 1.

## Questionnaire changes decision process

Survey development requires questionnaire changes to reflect new policy priorities and to harmonise questions with the latest standards or with other survey questions. DCMS and co-funders are responsible for agreeing changes to the survey by the following process:

1. A log of suggested question changes is kept by the Taking Part project team throughout the year.
2. A request from the Taking part project team to Taking Part Steering group members is sent in the autumn, which allows all members to represent their interests and any changes in their sector.
3. Any agreed changes to the survey which will require additional development and piloting are agreed within the group at the October meeting.
4. Minor changes which do not need piloting will be discussed in the January steering group meeting.

The Project team will then liaise with the contractors and ensure that all changes are signed off by the end of February to allow the new survey to be implemented in the field at the beginning of the survey year (April).

## Technical Advisory Group

A Technical Advisory Group will be set up when needed for survey development. The group will advise on both user requirements and technical issues, with the aim of ensuring that the design, content and development approach of the survey is methodologically sound and meets stakeholder needs. The advisory group makes recommendations to the Taking Part project team and to co-funders who report these to the Steering Group.

Membership of the Technical Advisory Group will be formed according to need and will comprise Taking Part team members, co-funder analysts, and methodology and survey experts (for example, methodologists from TNS-BMRB and ONS' Methodology Advisory Service and academia). The group is chaired by the head of the Taking Part project team.

The terms of reference for the Technical Advisory Group are included in Annex 2.

## User Consultation and Engagement

There are a wide range of users of the Taking Part survey, including policy officials and analysts from DCMS and the public sector, researchers and academics, business users, research consultancies, the media and public.

User consultation and engagement under-pin the governance and management of the survey. Engagement with wider users is via:

- Notification of upcoming changes in statistical releases
- A web-based user list for emailing releases and news

- DCMS twitter account
- A Taking Part 'user corner' on the DCMS website
- Formal consultation when needed
- Annual user events

The DCMS website contains a Taking Part 'user corner' webpage. This page is used to make Taking Part announcements, publish key documentation (including, minutes of meetings, technical reports and questionnaires) and contain links to other Taking Part resources.

The project team hold one-to-one meetings with key stakeholders during the questionnaire design process, as well as when shaping the analysis and reporting approach.

A Taking Part user engagement event is held annually, where views on the Taking Part programme are sought and outputs can be presented. Presentations from the 2010 and 2011 events are available in the 'user corner' pages of the website.

# Annex 1: Taking Part Steering Group – Terms of Reference

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## **Objectives of the steering group**

The steering group is a strategic decision-making body. It will:

- Review Taking Part progress
- Review risks
- Agree the specific terms of entry of any additional funders and interest groups/stakeholders
- Set priorities (e.g. topics, survey content, survey mode)
- Resolve conflicting priorities between stakeholders when necessary
- Secure adequate resource
- Agree changes to the survey questionnaire

## **Membership**

DCMS membership:

- SRO (DCMS Deputy Director for Analysis)
- DCMS Head of Profession for Statistics (Chair)
- Taking Part project team
- DCMS lead for research
- DCMS lead for 2012 Games Legacy Evaluation
- DCMS policy leads from Sport, Arts, Libraries, Heritage, Media and Museums
- DCMS survey contractor (TNS-BMRB) will attend the project board meetings when required.

Co-funder membership:

- Sport England
- Arts Council
- English Heritage

External membership:

- Department of Health
- Department for Education
- Cabinet Office

**Chair and secretariat**

The project board will be chaired by the DCMS Head of Profession for Statistics

Contact details are: Tom Knight at [tom.knight@culture.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:tom.knight@culture.gsi.gov.uk) or Tel. 0207 211 6021.

Secretariat support will be provided by Sam Tuckett, Statistical Officer, DCMS

Contact details are: [sam.tuckett@culture.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:sam.tuckett@culture.gsi.gov.uk) or Tel. 0207 211 2382.

**Scope**

Day to day decisions will be made by the project team, but decisions that could significantly affect the quality, cost or timing of Taking Part will be escalated to the Steering Group.

**Timescale, Frequency and location of meetings**

The Group will meet quarterly for the duration of Taking Part delivery. In the event of a major issue arising, steering group will meet by exception. The group may also be required to make decisions via correspondence.

Meetings are timed to coincide with key Taking Part milestones (e.g. questionnaire sign-off). Meetings will be held at DCMS' offices.

**Accountability and reporting processes**

The project team will be accountable to the SRO for Taking Part and to Steering Group and will provide progress reports in advance of each meeting. Summaries of minutes and decisions will be published in the Taking Part 'user corner' of the DCMS website.

# Annex 2: Taking Part Technical Advisory Group – Terms of Reference

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A Technical Advisory Group will be set up when needed to provide expert advice on specific survey developments or for reviews of the survey.

## **Objectives of the technical group**

- To provide methodological advice on technical issues for survey development (e.g. sampling, questionnaire development, question testing, weighting etc)
- To provide review input into consultations on survey changes
- To ensure the methodological integrity of Taking Part
- Review methods used in the Taking Part survey and options for development

## **Membership (flexible according to need)**

- Taking Part project team lead (Chair)
- Analysts from ALB co-funders
- TNS-BMRB Survey contractors

Methodology experts from:

- ONS Methodology Advisory Service
- TNS-BMRB
- Academia

## **Chair and secretariat**

Tom Knight, project team lead will chair the group.

Contact details are: [tom.knight@culture.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:tom.knight@culture.gsi.gov.uk) or Tel. 0207 211 6021

Secretariat support will be provided by Sam Tuckett, Evidence and Analysis Unit, DCMS

Contact details are: [sam.tuckett@culture.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:sam.tuckett@culture.gsi.gov.uk) or Tel. 0207 211 2382

## **Scope**

Day to day decisions will be made by the project team, decisions for specific survey developments that require wider technical expertise will be presented to the Technical Advisory Group for advice.

## **Timescale / Frequency**

For the duration of the delivery of the survey the Technical Advisory Group will be convened by exception when needed to provide expert advice on specific survey developments or for reviews of the survey.

**Accountability and reporting processes**

The Technical Advisory Group will report to the project team who will feed-back advise received to the Steering Group.





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