

Establishing a Rural Minimum Income Standard: the role of transport

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What is the Minimum Income Standard?

- MIS = the income required by different household types to reach a minimum, socially acceptable standard of living
- Social consensus: members of the public, advised by experts
- Detail!
- Defining 'minimum': needs not wants

Definition of the minimum standard

‘A minimum standard of living in the UK today includes, but is more than just, food, clothes and shelter. It is about having what you need in order to have the opportunities and choices necessary to participate in society.’

Rural MIS: background, aims and challenges

- 2008 MIS launch and the Commission for Rural Communities
- What different and additional costs do rural households face in order to achieve the same standard of living as urban households?
- Challenges:
 - defining types of rural area
 - calculating transport costs
- Research 2009-2010

Selecting comparable fieldwork sites representing rural difference (1)

- Urban (sparse)
- Urban (less sparse)
- Rural town/town and fringe (sparse)
- Rural town/town and fringe (less sparse)
- Village (sparse)
- Village (less sparse)
- Dispersed/hamlet and dispersed (sparse)
- Dispersed/hamlet and dispersed (less sparse)

Selecting comparable fieldwork sites representing rural difference (2)

- Rural town/town and fringe (sparse)
- Village/dispersed/hamlet and dispersed (sparse)
- Village/dispersed/hamlet and dispersed (less sparse)

Selecting comparable fieldwork sites representing rural difference (3)

- Average accessibility characteristics, using National Core Accessibility Indicator datasets, for census output areas
- DHC's composite indicator

MIS Rural budgets

Rural town	1	Working-age without children
	2	Parents
	3	Pensioners
Village	4	Working-age without children
	5	Parents
	6	Pensioners
Hamlet	7	Working-age without children
	8	Parents
	9	Pensioners

MIS components

- Food
- Clothing
- Housing costs
- Domestic fuel
- Household goods
- Personal goods and services
- Social and cultural
- Transport

MIS and transport

- Bus and occasional taxi
- Cars

Standardising accessibility costs

- Minimum number of trips required to services
- Average distance in miles to each service from each type of rural area
- Car cost per mile (including fuel, running costs, depreciation, etc)
- Number of trips x distance x km cost

Results (1): additional weekly rural costs compared with UK MIS

	Rural town	Village	Hamlet
Couple pensioner	£2.26 1%	£43.00 19%	£48.08 22%
Single working-age adult without children	£15.98 9%	£31.92 18%	£41.37 24%
Working-age couple with two children	£46.67 12%	£59.52 15%	£72.20 18%
Lone parent with one child	£21.98 9%	£33.65 14%	£36.81 16%

Based on April 2010 prices

Results (2): village motoring budget

	Total MIS Rural transport budget (£)	Amount additional to UK MIS transport budget (£)	Rural transport budget as percentage of overall additional rural budget (%)
Single working-age adult	42.69	22.97	72
Couple pensioner	38.14	28.14	65
Couple parents with 2 children	94.33	55.45	93
Lone parent with 1 child	48.13	28.83	86

Based on April 2010 prices

Conclusions and future possibilities

- Substantial additional costs
- Income required disproportionate to the amount required to meet needs: the tax and benefits system
- School and school transport
- Mediating the need to travel: internet, supermarkets, NHS dentists, etc
- The prospect of a MIS Highlands and Islands...
- Future applications?

Minimum Income Standard

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