

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2012: Fife Facts

Introduction

The Scottish Government launched its latest Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) – SIMD12 – on 18 December 2012. It ranks datazones (some 700 people on average) across Scotland from 1 (most deprived) to 6505 (least deprived). As an index, it measures relative not absolute deprivation (i.e. how multiple deprivation compares between datazones, rather than how much deprivation is in each). Its uses include: understanding the concentration of multiple deprivation, tracking change over time for Fife's most and least deprived areas, informing policy and allocating resources.

Fife in context

Fife is Scotland's third largest local authority and has a 7% share of Scotland's population and datazones. Its varied socio-economic profile reflects Scotland as a whole:

Figure 1 - Barcode chart: distribution of Fife's Datazones in SIMD 2012



With SIMD 2012, Fife continues to track what is happening in Scotland as a whole. In absolute terms, 12.8% of the working age population are employment deprived in Fife and Scotland. 13.3% of the population are income deprived in Fife, just below 13.4% for Scotland.

Since 2004, Fife has seen an increasing share of Scotland's most deprived datazones but consistent with its share of Scotland's population and datazones. National analysis often focuses on the 15% most deprived datazones in Scotland. Fife now has 58 of its 453 datazones in the 15% most deprived for Scotland, seven more than in 2009. Locally, we focus on the 20% most deprived datazones: 87 of Fife's datazones are now in the 20% most deprived for Scotland, two more than in 2009. Fife sees some improvement in the 10% most deprived datazones, with 24 datazones in the 10% most deprived in Scotland, four less than in 2009.

Area Overview

Figure 2 Table: Area distribution of 20% most deprived datazones, showing change from 2009 to 2012

Area	No of datazones in 20% most deprived		Change
	2012	2009	
South West Fife	7	6	+1
City of Dunfermline	9	9	0
Cowdenbeath	19	20	-1
Kirkcaldy	21	19	+2
Glenrothes	11	11	0
Levenmouth	19	19	0
North East Fife	1	1	0
Fife	87	85	+2

Two thirds of Fife's share of Scotland's 20% most deprived areas can be found within the Kirkcaldy, Cowdenbeath and Levenmouth areas.

SIMD Domains

As deprivation can take many different forms, the SIMD combines seven different domains (aspects) of deprivation:

Figure 3 Table: Domain distribution of 20% most deprived datazones, showing change from 2009 to 2012

Makeup of the index	Domain	No of datazones in 20% most deprived		Change
		2012	2009	
28%	Income	93*	78	+15
28%	Employment	99	101	-2
14%	Health	36	35	+1
14%	Education, Skills and Training	92	94	-2
9%	Geographic Access	95	81	+14
5%	Crime	76	90	-14
2%	Housing	9	9	0

Fife's relative position has improved across the majority of domains, most notably with 14 fewer datazones in the 20% most deprived on the crime domain, reflecting a reducing trend in recorded crimes in Fife.

Fife sees an increase in the number of datazones in the 20% most deprived for Income and Access. There have been changes to the way that the Income domain is calculated*, notably a reduction in the low income threshold from £250 to £198. This means that the 2012 income figure is not directly comparable with previous years. It is likely that the change reflects more accurately Fife's position of people being in work but on a low income, but still consistent with Fife's share of Scotland's population.

Changes in the Access domain may reflect greater accuracy in drive times data, which now uses observed road speeds instead of average speed based on the type of road.

What the SIMD tells us and what it doesn't

Identifying the most deprived datazones in Scotland enables policies to target need. However, since the SIMD is a relative ranking of all datazones in Scotland, as some improve and move down the table others will move up to take their place. Such changes may only reflect a relative change in deprivation. Further analysis of the underlying data may be necessary to explain:

- a) the extent to which absolute changes in deprivation have occurred
- b) explanation for changes in Fife's relative rankings, including changes elsewhere
- c) significant changes in the pattern of deprivation within Fife.

Further Information

Information about the SIMD including reports, guidance and mapping is available at

1. National analysis of SIMD <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SIMD/>
2. Fife analysis of SIMD www.fifedirect.org.uk/deprivation
3. Local area SIMD data and maps www.fifedirect.org.uk/knowfifedataset

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