SERTUC

the TUC in London, the South East and Eastern Region

sertuc 2009 sub-regional profiles

eastern region

The East of England comprises Bedfordshire, Essex, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. Across the region between 1992 and 2007 Gross Value Added per head in the workplace grew from £9,055 to £18,857, at today's prices. The region is the third most productive English region, behind London and the South East and the proportion of the UK's Gross Domestic Product generated in the region in the period increased from 8.5 to 8.8 per cent. However, the region's workplace GDP remains below the UK average and the rate of increase in the region was greater in the more prosperous Herts and least rapid in Essex, thus consolidating the region's long-standing economic disparities.

Government national income statistics do not yet reflect the impact of the present recession, but we know from employment statistics that it has been considerable. The agricultural sector has lost 5,000 jobs. It is significant to the region, not because it is a particularly large employer, but because any decline impacts heavily on communities that are vulnerable, adding to rural poverty. Job losses have been widespread; in finance and business services (Norwich Union), transport (National Express), construction (Bovis,Twidgens and Ridgeons), estate agents (Bidwells), shipping (MPH in Great Yarmouth), retail (Woolworths and MFI), printing and in IT. Manufacturing is important to the region but the region lost another 18,000 jobs in the year to March 2009 including Cemex Concrete Products, Myers Beds, Stylo footwear and Visteon in Basildon. A great number of workers are presently on short-term working, such as at ABP ports Felixtowe.

The regional unemployment rate is low in UK terms, but the number of unemployed workers increased by a third in the last year, up by 44,000. The employment rate is down and the economic activity rates of adult men and women decreased. The last known unemployment rate for BAME workers is substantially higher than the average rate for the region's workforce.

The region has been the destination for migrant workers, both high and low skilled. Many short-term migrant workers have returned home or gone to work elsewhere in Europe but an increasing proportion of those that remain in the region are choosing to settle here. Problems relating to securing the employment rights of migrant workers remain.

The region suffers from poor quality employment and low pay, 15 per cent of households receive Working Families Tax Credit and one in 10 primary school children qualifies for free school meals, indicating the levels of poverty in the region.

The region's population has grown rapidly in the last 25 years and this is predicted to continue. Access to low cost housing remains a huge problem, with increasing need, council house sales, non-existent public sector house building, increased commuting and purchase of second homes and now a collapse of private sector house building all contributing an imbalance in the housing market.

The region's transport infrastructure is poor and rural isolation is a significant problem. Post office closures were a significant blow to many isolated communities, adding to financial exclusion.

More than a fifth of all UK research and development is in this region. As some 80 per cent of R&D is associated with manufacturing the concern is for the impact on manufacturing sites and jobs.

Resident population, 2007	5,661,000
Population change between 2001 and 2007	+ 4.8%
Percentage of population 65+, 2007	16.8%
Minority ethnic population, self-assessed, 2006	432,000
Net inflow of inter-regional migrants, 2007	+ 19,000
Net international migration into the region, 2007	+ 30,000
Number of persons in employment, April 2009	2,793,000
Number of workers employed in manufacturing, March 2009	235,000
Decline in number of workers employed in manufacturing, 2006-9	- 31,000
Number of workers in self-employment, September 2008	402,000
Number of part time workers, September 2008	740,000
Number of workers with second jobs, September 2008	118,000
Number of workers temporarily employed, September 2008	126,000
Number of persons unemployed, ILO measure, April 2009	180,000
Rate of unemployment, ILO measure, April 2009	6%
Increase in the number of persons unemployed 2008-2009	+ 44,000
Economic activity rate of men 16+, April 2009	72.5%
Economic activity rate of women 16+, April 2009	57.5%
Percentage of men aged over 65 still in employment, April 2009	13.2%
Percentage of women aged over 60 still in employment, April 2009	13.8%
Employment rate of all persons 16-60/65, April 2009	76.8%
Economic activity rate of all persons 16-60/65, April 2009	81.9%
Male employees, working age, receiving job related training, June 2008	12.6%
Female employees, working age, receiving job related training, June 2008	16.1%
Average time taken to travel to work, Dec 2008	24 mins
Percentage of 16-18s in education or training, 2006-7	72%
Percentage of population of working age with no qualifications or equivalent, June 2008	11.7%
Change in the number of trade union members, 1995-2008	+ 1,000
Trade union membership density, of employees, December 2008	22%
Employees who work in a workplace where unions organise, Dec 2008	41%
Number of trade union learning centres in the region, 2008	51
Full-time employees working more than 45 hours per week, Sept 2008	22.7%
Weekly median earnings, male, all full-time employees, Spring 2008	£550.00
Weekly median earnings, female, all full-time employees, Spring 2008	£423.70
Gender pay gap, mean full-time hourly earnings, 2007	18.4%
Percentage of households living on less than £150 per week, 2006-7	10%
Percentage of households in receipt of tax credits, 2006-7	17%
Proportion of primary school children eligible for free school meals, '07-8	10.7%
Average price of a dwelling, 2007	£234,000
Households accepted as homeless by local authorities, 2007-8	5,900
Proportion of dwellings rented from local authorities, 2007	8%
Number of lone parent households with dependent children, Spring 2008	140,000
Gross value added, £ per head of population, 2007, index (UK=100)	94
Gross value added per head of population, 2007	£18,857
Gross value added in manufacturing per employee, 2006	£49,802
Percentage gross value added contributed by sector in 2006, [agriculture + industry + services]	1 + 21.5 + 77.5
Percentage of UK exports from the region, 2007	9%
Percentage of UK imports to the region, 2007	13.6%
Percentage of UK research and development conducted in the region, 2007	20.8%
Allocation of European Structural Funds O1, O2 & O3 to region as % of UK total allocation, 2006	1%

London region

London is Europe's second largest city (to Paris) with a population estimated to increase (because of more people of childbearing age) to 8.25 million by 2026. It is not a static population, with hundreds of thousands of people moving in and out of London's 32 boroughs every year. Three million people live in Inner London's 14 boroughs (including the City of London), and 4.6 million in Outer London's 19 boroughs. Each year more people leave London than migrate into London.

A significant minority of the workforce in London comprises inward commuters who reside outside of the city region. Thus whilst London's already high unemployment levels have increased during the recession, many of London's finance workers have "signed on" for Job Seekers' Allowance in their home regions of the South East or East.

Around 29 per cent of the workforce is from a BAME community and a third of the workforce was born outside of the UK. Unemployment levels are consistently worse for all BAME communities, though levels vary greatly between different groups. Women make up 45 per cent of the workforce – lower than the rest of the UK. In 2007 women made up 43.4 per cent of London's workers, less than in the UK generally (45 per cent). The gender pay gap has remained static since 2006 at 23 per cent.

London is one of the 'command centres' of the global economy and produces 21 per cent of the UK's total Gross Added Value. London, the South East and the Eastern regions are the only UK regions to have a GVA higher than the national average. However, London is also characterised by inequality, poverty and social exclusion: 40 per cent of London's children live in poverty (Inner London 48 per cent; Outer London 36 per cent) – this figure has decreased by 1 per cent since 2000. It is important to note that of these 57 per cent in Inner London and 49 per cent in Outer London have at least one parent in work. Pensioner poverty has fallen from 32 per cent in 1998, to 22 per cent in 2007 – predominantly due to the Government's Pension Credit payments.

Productivity and Average Earnings are higher in London than the rest of the UK, largely due to the concentration of very high added value enterprises. However, this masks widespread in-work poverty, often found within contracted out parts of the service economy. Forty seven per cent of part-time workers earn less than £7.60 an hour, the 2009 "London Living Wage", and 15 per cent of full-time workers, equating to one in five of London's workforce. It is also estimated that around one in 10 workers earn less than the National Minimum Wage of £5.73 an hour.

London's leading sectors (in order of the number of workers employed) are: business services, health & education, retail, and other services, followed by transport & communications, financial services, hotels & restaurants, public administration, manufacturing, wholesale, and construction.

Public transport is hugely important to London's economy, nearly 90 per cent of the workforce commute to work by bus, rail and underground. Work on Crossrail, from Maidenhead and Heathrow in the west, to Shenfield and Abbey Wood in the east, began this year and is due to be completed in 2017. The average time taken to travel to work continues to increase and now stands at 44 minutes, compared to 20+ minutes in other regions.

Resident population, 2007	7,556,900
Population change between 2001 and 2007	+ 3.2%
Percentage of population 65+, 2007	11.7%
Minority ethnic population, self-assessed, 2006	2,298,600
Net inflow of inter-regional migrants, 2007	- 82,000
Net international migration into the region, 2007	+ 70,000
Number of persons in employment, April 2009	3,709,000
Number of workers employed in manufacturing, March 2009	173,000
Decline in number of workers employed in manufacturing, 2006-9	- 25,000
Number of workers in self-employment, September 2008	577,000
Number of part time workers, September 2008	779,000
Number of workers with second jobs, September 2008	111,000
Number of workers temporarily employed, September 2008	191,000
Number of persons unemployed, ILO measure, April 2009	329,000
Rate of unemployment, ILO measure, April 2009	8.1%
Increase in the number of persons unemployed 2008-2009	+ 50,000
Economic activity rate of men 16+, April 2009	74.1%
Economic activity rate of women 16+, April 2009	58%
Percentage of men aged over 65 still in employment, April 2009	12.2%
Percentage of women aged over 60 still in employment, April 2009	14.7%
Employment rate of all persons 16-60/65, April 2009	70%
Economic activity rate of all persons 16-60/65, April 2009	76.3%
Male employees, working age, receiving job related training, June 2008	11.5%
Female employees, working age, receiving job related training, June 2008	16.4%
Average time taken to travel to work, Dec 2008	44 mins
Percentage of 16-18s in education or training, 2006-7	81%
Percentage of population of working age with no qualifications or equivalent, June 2008	11.9%
Change in the number of trade union members, 1995-2008	- 31,000
Trade union membership density, of employees, December 2008	23.59%
Employees who work in a workplace where unions organise, Dec 2008	41.9%
Number of trade union learning centres in the region, 2008	35
Full-time employees working more than 45 hours per week, Sept 2008	23.9%
Weekly median earnings, male, all full-time employees, Spring 2008	£630.00
Weekly median earnings, female, all full-time employees, Spring 2008	£534.50
Gender pay gap, mean full-time hourly earnings, 2007	23%
Percentage of households living on less than £150 per week, 2006-7	11%
Percentage of households in receipt of tax credits, 2006-7	12%
Proportion of primary school children eligible for free school meals, '07-8	24.3%
Average price of a dwelling, 2007	£351,000
Households accepted as homeless by local authorities, 2007-8	13,800
Proportion of dwellings rented from local authorities, 2007	14%
Number of lone parent households with dependent children, Spring 2008	294,300
Gross value added, £ per head of population, 2007, index (UK=100)	166
Gross value added per head of population, 2007	£33,179
Gross value added in manufacturing per employee, 2006	£61,565
Percentage gross value added contributed by sector in 2006, [agriculture + industry + services]	0.1 + 11.1 + 88.8
Percentage of UK exports from the region, 2007	10.3%
Percentage of UK imports to the region, 2007	15.8%
Percentage of UK research and development conducted in the region, 2007	11.6%
Allocation of European Structural Funds O1, O2 & O3 to region as % of UK total allocation, 2006	1.8%

south east region

The region comprises Kent, East and West Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire and Isle of Wight, Berkshire Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire.

It is the most populous and arguably the most dynamic economic region of the UK with an economy of over £140 billion (the world's 20th largest). Industrial restructuring continues with an ongoing reduction in manufacturing jobs including at Vesta on the Isle of Wight and the threat to Ford at Southampton. But there is the potential of new jobs at Rolls Royce at Chichester and Maclaren at Woking.

The region has many competitive advantages: proximity to large markets, high skill base, good R&D resources and transport links. The economy lacks diversification (but it is predicted to grow) and there has been some restructuring in the finance sector with job losses. There is also a concentration of defence-related employment; on the maritime side employment will grow.

Overall employment and unemployment levels have been impacted on with a slower level in the rise in unemployment; young workers and new graduates are the most vulnerable, but there are still vacancies. The region has a sizeable Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic population that endures a rate of unemployment twice the average for the region. The region has a large migrant worker population that fluctuates. Whilst the South East has a skill and qualification base, employer commitment to training at work is weak, contributing to the productivity deficit compared to the most productive regions in Europe. It also has an ageing workforce which could lead to skills shortages in due course.

The region has particular problems with housing pressure and costs, and with transport infrastructure, that in turn impacts on the environment. The region acts as a gateway for goods and people and has major airports, the Channel Tunnel and numerous ports, and now the opening of the rail link at Ebbsfleet. The transport industry is a major employer but it is important that the region is not just a conduit for goods made elsewhere and continues to be a producer. Substantial investment in housing and infrastructure continues on the Kent side of the Thames Gateway, along with the opening of the high speed rail link from Ashford to London.

Manufacturing employment has declined with job losses of around 11,000, but the sector, due to the sterling/euro ratio has grown in volume and remains very important to the region's economy employing just over 300,000 and being the largest manufacturing region in the UK.

Output per person in manufacturing is considerably greater than in the rest of the economy. The sector is a huge earner of export revenues, as well as a source of most of the research and development in the region. Although there is some concern that some R&D will be outsourced offshore.

The comparative affluence of the region conceals the level of deprivation endured by a significant proportion of the region's population, there are large numbers of households on low income or on benefits. This particularly impacts on a number of coastal communities, with seasonal employment, under-investment and no real sustainable quality employment. This economic marginalisation of communities impacts on areas like Thanet in Kent, Worthing in Sussex and the Isle of Wight.

Resident population, 2007	8,308,700
Population change between 2001 and 2007	+ 3.6%
Percentage of population 65+, 2007	16.5%
Minority ethnic population, self-assessed, 2006	609,000
Net inflow of inter-regional migrants, 2007	+ 23,000
Net international migration into the region, 2007	+ 30,000
Number of persons in employment, April 2009	4,179,000
Number of workers employed in manufacturing, March 2009	299,000
Decline in number of workers employed in manufacturing, 2006-9	- 28,000
Number of workers in self-employment, September 2008	588,000
Number of part time workers, September 2008	1,116,000
Number of workers with second jobs, September 2008	181,000
Number of workers temporarily employed, September 2008	190,000
Number of persons unemployed, ILO measure, April 2009	244,000
Rate of unemployment, ILO measure, April 2009	5.5%
Increase in the number of persons unemployed 2008-2009	+ 74,000
Economic activity rate of men 16+, April 2009	73.5%
Economic activity rate of women 16+, April 2009	59%
Percentage of men aged over 65 still in employment, April 2009	11.9%
Percentage of women aged over 60 still in employment, April 2009	14.8%
Employment rate of all persons 16-60/65, April 2009	78%
Economic activity rate of all persons 16-60/65, April 2009	82.7%
Male employees, working age, receiving job related training, June 2008	13.2%
Female employees, working age, receiving job related training, June 2008	17%
Average time taken to travel to work, Dec 2008	25 mins
Percentage of 16-18s in education or training, 2006-7	74%
Percentage of population of working age with no qualifications or equivalent, June 2008	9.2%
Change in the number of trade union members, 1995-2008	+ 46,000
Trade union membership density, of employees, December 2008	21.5%
Employees who work in a workplace where unions organise, Dec 2008	40.7%
Number of trade union learning centres in the region, 2008	23
Full-time employees working more than 45 hours per week, Sept 2008	21.5%
Weekly median earnings, male, all full-time employees, Spring 2008	£584.40
Weekly median earnings, female, all full-time employees, Spring 2008	£437.40
Gender pay gap, mean full-time hourly earnings, 2007	20.1%
Percentage of households living on less than £150 per week, 2006-7	9%
Percentage of households in receipt of tax credits, 2006-7	15%
Proportion of primary school children eligible for free school meals, 2007-8	9.4%
Average price of a dwelling, 2007	£278,000
Households accepted as homeless by local authorities, 2007-8	5,510
Proportion of dwellings rented from local authorities, 2007	5%
Number of lone parent households with dependent children, Spring 2008	182,000
Gross value added, £ per head of population, 2007, index (UK=100)	106
Gross value added per head of population, 2007	£21,218
Gross value added in manufacturing per employee, 2006	£48,953
Percentage gross value added contributed by sector in 2006, [agriculture + industry + services]	0.5 + 18.3 + 81.3
Percentage of UK exports from the region, 2007	15.2%
Percentage of UK imports to the region, 2007	22.4%
Percentage of UK research and development conducted in the region, 2007	20.2%
Allocation of European Structural Funds O1, O2 & O3 to region as % of UK total allocation, 2006	0.2%