



NEWS RELEASE

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STATISTICAL RELEASE



31 March 2009

Annex A

Statistical News Release

REGIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS - RESULTS FOR THE ENGLISH REGIONS

STATISTICAL RELEASE

Regional versions of the UK Government's indicators of sustainable development are published today to help provide a perspective of sustainable development in each region.

To support the UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy, 'Securing the Future' (published in March 2005), there is a suite of 68 national sustainable development indicators. For 46 of these indicators, for which data are available, it has been possible to produce regional versions for the Government Office Regions.

The indicators highlight issues within the priority areas of Sustainable Consumption and Production, Natural Resources, and Sustainable Communities. Other indicators provide useful contextual information.

The regional indicators are available on the UK Government sustainable development website (<http://www.defra.gov.uk/sustainable/government/progress/regional/index.htm>) and pull together already published statistics to enable comparisons to be made between regions and with progress nationally.

Key findings within the Regional Sustainable Development Indicators

- * Every region has shown improvement in a number of areas during the last decade.
- * With a few exceptions, every region is moving in the same direction as the national trends.
- * There is no single region that is in the best or worst position for all of the indicators.
- * For every region there are areas where they are in a better position and areas where they are in a worse position, relative to other regions.

North East

In the North East the proportion of pensioners in low income households was amongst the lowest of the regions. A greater proportion of school trips were made by walking and cycling than in other regions. The region had the lowest number of rough sleepers and homeless households. The proportions of people fearing crime had seen the largest reductions of the regions. The proportions of rivers of good quality were amongst the highest of the regions.

The North East had the lowest rates of employment and economic output. The proportion of workless households and those experiencing fuel poverty are the highest of any regions. Percentage of smokers was amongst the highest of the regions and life expectancy was amongst the lowest.

North West

Farmland and Woodland bird populations in the North West increased by more than in other regions. Density of new dwellings on previously developed land was the second highest of the regions.

The North West had the highest level of household waste produced per person. Productivity (gross value added per workforce job) in the North West was amongst the lowest of the regions. The rate of burglary (as estimated from the British Crime Survey) was the highest of the regions. The North West had seen the largest increase in the proportion of local sites assessed to have unsatisfactory or poor local environment quality. The proportion of households perceiving difficulties in getting to a doctor or hospital without a car was amongst the highest of the regions.

Yorkshire and the Humber

The proportion of trips to school made by walking and cycling was the joint highest of the regions. Reductions in the proportions of people fearing crime were amongst the largest of the regions.

In Yorkshire and the Humber productivity (gross value added per job) was amongst the lowest of the regions. The rate of violent crime (as estimated from the British Crime Survey) was the highest of the regions and the proportion of 19 years old attaining level 2 qualifications was the lowest of the regions.

East Midlands

The percentage of household waste recycled or composted in East Midlands was the highest of all regions. The proportion of 16-18 years not in employment, education or training was lowest amongst the regions. The East Midlands had seen the highest regional improvement in both biological and chemical water quality since 1990.

The East Midlands had the lowest density of newly built dwellings and had the highest proportions of people perceiving difficulty in getting to a doctor or hospital. The proportion of pensioners in low income households (before housing costs) was the highest of the regions.

West Midlands

The West Midlands recycled the highest proportion of waste. The region had the biggest increase of new dwellings built on previously developed land and experienced the largest reduction in road accidents.

The proportion of adults who smoked was amongst the highest of the regions. The West Midlands had the highest rate of infant mortality of the regions and the proportion of trips to school made by car was amongst the highest.

East of England

The percentage of pensioners in low income households in East of England was joint lowest of the regions. Burglary, vehicle theft and violent crime (as estimated by the British crime survey) were amongst the lowest of the regions, as was the fear of crime. The proportion of males of working age in employment was higher in East of England than any other regions. Infant mortality in the region was amongst the lowest and female life expectancy amongst the highest. Deaths from suicide were lowest in the East of England.

The region has seen the largest increase in the proportion of local sites to have unsatisfactory or poor local environmental quality.

London

The amount of household waste produced per person in London was the lowest of all the regions, although the proportion recycled was also the lowest. The reuse of previously developed land for new housing in the region was the highest of all the regions as was the density of new housing. London had the highest level of productivity (gross value added per job) and gross value added per head.

The proportion of children living in workless and relative low-income households (after housing costs) was higher in London than other regions. The number of homeless people and homeless households was the highest of the regions and the proportion of people satisfied in the local area was the lowest of the regions. Rates of vehicle theft and fear of crime were also the highest of the regions.

South East

Employment levels in the South East were higher than other regions. Participation in informal and formal volunteering was also the highest of the regions. Life expectancy was amongst the highest and the rate of infant mortality was amongst the lowest of the regions. The region had seen the largest increase in the proportion of 19 year olds attaining level 2 qualifications.

The total amount of waste was the highest of the regions. The region had seen the largest decline in woodland and farmland bird populations. The proportion of trips to school made by walking and cycling was amongst the lowest of the regions.

South West

The South West had amongst the highest proportions of rivers of good quality. Rates of burglary, vehicle theft and violent crime (as estimated by the British crime survey) are amongst the lowest of the regions and satisfaction with local area was highest of the regions. The proportion of 19 years old attaining level 2 qualifications was amongst the highest of the regions. Mortality rates from circulatory disease and cancer were the lowest of the regions and overall life expectancy was amongst the highest.

The lowest percentage of journeys was made by public transport in the South West, and the region saw the second lowest reuse of previously developed land for new housing

Summary

A table showing regional "traffic light assessments" for all indicators where there is sufficient trend data to make an assessment can be found here:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/sustainable/government/progress/regional/factsheets.htm>

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. To support the establishment of the new UK Government sustainable development strategy, Securing the Future, a revised set of indicators of sustainable development have been established.
2. There are 68 national indicators supporting the four priority areas of sustainable consumption and production, climate change and energy, protection of our natural sources and enhancing the environment, and creating sustainable communities for a fairer world.
3. Regional Sustainable Development Indicators have been produced for 46 of the 68 indicators, for which data are available.
4. All the national and regional indicators are reported on the UK Government sustainable development website (<http://www.defra.gov.uk/sustainable/government/>), which includes charts, assessments of progress, commentary and access to the data used.
5. The current edition of "Sustainable development indicators in your pocket" was published in July 2008 and provides the assessment against 1990 and 1999 baselines for the national indicators. Free copies are available

from Defra Publications, Admail 6000, London, SW1A 2XX (tel: 08459 556000, e-mail: defra@cambertown.com), quote product codes PB12683 (A6 size) or PB12683A (A4 size).

6. Regional Sustainable Development Indicators are only available on the website and superseded Regional quality of life counts (RQOLC) which was formerly published annually as a printed report and provided regional versions of the former 15 "headline indicators" of sustainable development.

7. For Carbon dioxide emissions, in 2006 the North East emitted the least CO₂ in total compared with other regions; the South East emitted the most CO₂ and twice the amount emitted in the North East. However taking population into account, the North East had the highest emissions per head of all the regions; London had the lowest emissions per head. Estimates at the regional level have only recently become available and it is not yet possible to assess progress over time – only comparisons between regions for the current year can be made.

A National Statistics publication

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