

RSN Economic Profiling Service

Introduction

The RSN has developed an economic profiling service for its members. Information will be provided based on the indicators and to the frequency set out in the table below. In addition to straightforward data two spreadsheet benchmarking tools have been developed for Notified Vacancies, JSA claimants and the Vulnerability Index. This second report in the terms of the service looks at data up to November 2012

Indicator	Frequency
Wages – Annual Survey Hours and Earnings – resident analysis	Annually
Job Density	Annually
Notified Vacancies	Quarterly
JSA Claimants at LEP and local authority level	Quarterly
Proportion of Public Sector Jobs	Annual
Working Age Population	Quarterly
Out-turn forms – showing spend on ED benchmarking	Annual
Vulnerability Index	Annually

All the statistics are taken from publicly available data sources. We have attached a commentary for three data areas released: the Vulnerability index, Notified vacancies and JSA below.

If you would like further information on this service or help to interpret it for your area, including potential access to GIS mapping support in relation to it please contact Ivan Annibal at:

Ivan.Annibal@sparse.gov.uk

Vulnerability Index Results for 2012

Summary

According to the RSN 2012 rural vulnerability index rural authorities became relatively more vulnerable in 2012 than 2011. At District level coastal rural authorities have suffered particularly badly and 5 of the 10 most vulnerable authorities are now both coastal and rural. At first tier level 7 of the 24 rural authorities studied for the index are in the top 25% of all authorities including London Boroughs and the most vulnerable is Northumberland which is the 16th most vulnerable authority in England in 2016.

The Vulnerability Index

The Vulnerability Index was developed in response to the challenge of measuring the impact of the recession on local authority areas. Traditional measures of need such as the Index of Multiple Deprivation concentrate on current circumstances. In view of the deep seated and long term changes, which are likely to change the current configuration of long term prosperity and sustainability in English Communities, the RSN identified the need to develop an index of vulnerability to change, to sit alongside more traditional measures of need.

The index identified vulnerability by looking at:

Wage levels, the current stock of public sector jobs, the number of JSA claimants and the percentage of the population which is working age. You can access a more detailed note explaining why these indicators were chosen and the data sources used.

Our index is simple and easily understood. The spreadsheet which accompanies this narrative allows you to compare your authority against all other authorities and benchmark its relative vulnerability within key categories of authorities – such for example as other districts in a given county and all other predominantly rural authorities. You simply need to click on the drop down menu at the side of the local authority name displayed in the spreadsheet and choose your authority to generate a listing of your relative vulnerability.

2012 Results

This is the second year of our development of the index and comparing the relative position of authorities between the two indexes provides some interesting context for authorities thinking about the impact of the recession in their area.

At first tier level the top 10 most vulnerable authorities in 2011 and 2012 were as set out in the table below:

Ranking 2011	Ranking 2012
Blackpool	Blackpool
Sefton	Torbay
Torbay	Sefton
Wolverhampton	Wolverhampton
NE Lincs	Darlington
Southend	Middlesborough
Darlington	Wirral
Wirral	Blackburn
Middlesborough	Dudley
Doncaster	Stoke

The most vulnerable RSN member authority in both years was Northumberland which was 21st in the index in 2011 and in 2012 is 16th.

Whilst none of these authorities are RSN members a number have key service centre roles for rural communities – particularly Torbay, Darlington and North East Lincolnshire.

At district level a number of RSN member authorities are in the top 10 of the most vulnerable authorities:

Ranking 2011	Ranking 2012
Thanet	Thanet
Hastings	Boston*
Boston*	Eastbourne
Scarborough*	North Devon*
Shepway*	Hastings
Eastbourne	Waveney*
Great Yarmouth	Tendring*
Weymouth and Portland	Weymouth and Portland
Tendring*	Wyre
Worthing	Shepway*

Interestingly 4 of the most vulnerable authorities within the top 10 were RSN members in 2011 and in 2012 the figure has risen to 5, with North Devon moving from the 12th most vulnerable district in 2011 to the 4th in 2012. This change appears to have been driven by a significant increase in JSA claimants, from a very low base of 159th out of 201 to 99th out of 201.

All of the authorities in the top 10 over both years which are RSN members are also coastal and in a number of these authorities such as Tendring and Boston their economic vulnerability is further challenged by their vulnerability to flood risk.

Key sub-regional service centre towns within a number of these authorities such as Boston, Clacton, Lowestoft, Scarborough, Folkestone and Barnstaple give them a disproportionate dependence on public sector jobs.

At first tier level the relative position of RSN member authorities was as follows:

Authority	Ranking 2011	Ranking 2012	Change
Cambridgeshire	144	115	-29
Cheshire East	83	90	+7
Cheshire West and Chester	79	60	-19
County Durham	51	52	+1
Cornwall	37	26	-11
Cumbria	74	47	-27
Devon	42	33	-9
Dorset	40	34	-6
East Riding	56	43	-13
Hampshire	120	120	0
Herefordshire	44	39	-5
Isle of Wight	14	18	+4
Lincolnshire	32	26	-6
Norfolk	45	47	+2
North Lincolnshire	56	77	+21
North Somerset	97	108	+11
North Yorkshire	74	79	+5
Northumberland	21	16	-5
Oxfordshire	119	118	-1
Rutland	85	50	-35
Shropshire	27	25	-2
Somerset	39	45	+6
Suffolk	58	63	+5
Wiltshire	70	80	+10

In 2011 5 RSN authorities were in the worst 25% of authorities on the list: Cornwall, Isle of Wight, Lincolnshire and Northumberland and Shropshire. In 2012 this has risen to 7: Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Isle of Wight, Lincolnshire, Northumberland and Shropshire. Apart from the Isle of Wight all the other authorities in 2012 had become relatively more vulnerable than in 2011.

Overall 13 authorities became relatively more vulnerable whilst 10 became relatively less vulnerable and one (Hampshire) retained its previous ranking.

Significant increases in relative vulnerability (10 places or more) occurred in: Cambridgeshire, Cheshire West and Chester, Cornwall, Cumbria, East Riding and Rutland. Overall the level of relative decline for first tier RSN authorities which slipped down the list were higher than the levels of relative improvement for first tier RSN authorities which rose up the list.

Northumberland continues to be the most vulnerable RSN authority and Hampshire the least vulnerable.

Notified Vacancies as a percentage of Working Population

Introduction

One powerful and easy way of looking at fluctuations within economies at local authority level is to consider trends around the number of jobs advertised. This information is available through the Office of National Statistics. Trends in notified vacancies run around three months in advance of up or down turns in local economies more generally and using this information you can develop inferences about the direction of travel of your economy.

As part the RSN profiling service we have systemised and benchmarked information on the number of notified vacancies for our members. The spreadsheet which accompanies this note shows the performance of all authorities in quartiles. By clicking on the drop down box you can see the quartile trend for your authority. You can also compare how it performs against categories of authorities by using the drop down box immediately below – you can select the District average or the average for authorities in the rural 50 and rural 80 categories.

We will update this information on a quarterly basis and produce a commentary on trends.

Notified Vacancies Commentary

Best Performers

In the first edition of this digest we reviewed performance from January 2011 to the end of August 2012 and using an average figure for the number of notified vacancies as a % of the working population we could identify the 10 authorities set out in the first three columns of the table as the best performing. Subsequent performance over the next 3 months, to November 2012 reveals the picture set out in the final 3 columns of the table:

August 2012			November 2012		
North Warwickshire	Rural-50 Average	2.61%	North Warwickshire	Rural-50 Average	4.01%
Daventry	Rural-80 Average	2.55%	Daventry	Rural-80 Average	3.24%
Corby	Other Urban	2.27%	East Staffordshire	Significant Rural	3.21%
Exeter	Other Urban	2.24%	Corby	Other Urban	3.20%
East Staffordshire	Significant Rural	2.02%	Lichfield	Rural-50 Average	3.15%
Lichfield	Rural-50 Average	2.00%	Welwyn Hatfield	Other Urban	2.85%

Lincoln City	Other Urban	1.99%	Harborough	Rural-50 Average	2.83%
North West Leicestershire	Rural-50 Average	1.98%	Cannock Chase	Significant Rural	2.73%
Tamworth	Other Urban	1.89%	Northampton	Other Urban	2.72%
Crawley	Other Urban	1.89%	Stratford-on- Avon	Rural – 80 Average	2.61%

Overall in line with national trends the number of jobs within the economy has risen and this is reflected in the table with best performer – North Warwickshire having moved from 2.61% to 4.01%. The overall range of performance has moved from 1.89% – 2.61% in August 2012 to 2.61% – 4.01% in November 2012

9 of the top 10 performing districts are in the midlands. The south west midlands cluster in adjoining counties of Warwickshire, Staffordshire, Northamptonshire and Leicestershire with their main urban centres no more than 30 miles from each other continues in this context to be a hot spot for vacancies. There is significant continuity with August with 5 local authorities: North Warwickshire, Daventry, Corby, East Staffordshire and Lichfield all in the top 10 in both periods. North Warwickshire and Daventry retain their position as the top 2 best performers.

5 of the best performing authorities are predominantly rural. Both large “shire” cities Lincoln and Exeter which featured in the last index have dropped below the top 10.

Worst Performers

Interestingly whilst at the national level the overall stock of jobs has increased this table when considered in conjunction with the table showing the best performers reveals that the gap between good and poor performance has widened – between 2.61% as best and 0.43% as worst in August to 4.01% as best and 0.32% as worst in November 2012.

In August 2012 the authorities in the first three columns of the table below were the 10 worst performing. 3 authorities – Castle Point, Torridge and Gosport continue to be in the worst 10 authorities. 5 authorities, one more than in August are predominantly rural. Interestingly all authorities are in the south of England. Nine of the top ten authorities being in the South East of England. Whilst compared to the national picture of premium economic performance in the South East this may seem strange, when we consider commuting effects, particularly into Greater London for authorities in this table such as Castle Point, Chiltern and Maldon the relatively smaller stock of jobs in these areas may not be so counter-intuitive.

August 2012			November 2012		
Castle Point	Large Urban	0.60%	Tandridge	Rural-50 Average	0.51%
Wealden	Rural-80 Average	0.60%	Chiltern	Significant Rural	0.51%
Adur	Large Urban	0.60%	Rother	Rural-50 Average	0.51%
Three Rivers	Major Urban	0.59%	Havant	Large Urban	0.49%
Torridge	Rural-80 Average	0.58%	Gosport	Large Urban	0.47%
Gosport	Large Urban	0.56%	Maldon	Rural-80 Average	0.46%
Gedling	Large Urban	0.56%	Hastings	Other Urban	0.45%
Oadby and Wigston	Large Urban	0.55%	Torridge	Rural-80 Average	0.45%
Copeland	Rural-80 Average	0.50%	Dover	Rural-50 Average	0.40%
Forest of Dean	Rural-80 Average	0.43%	Castle Point	Large Urban	0.32%

Overall the predominantly rural authorities as a group performed considerably less well than other authorities – creating notified vacancies at 1.2% of their working population. Non-predominantly rural authorities achieved a figure of 2.18%. With significantly larger working populations this demonstrates that the vast majority of new jobs over the last 3 months and as shown by our last analysis the 18 months before that, 21 months in all, have been in urban authorities.

The best 10 performing predominantly rural authority areas compared to the best 10 non rural areas are shown below:

Top 10 Urban

Top 10 Rural

Urban Area	Category	Percentage	Rural Area	Category	Percentage
East Staffordshire	Significant Rural	3.21%	North Warwickshire	Rural-50 Average	4.01%
Corby	Other Urban	3.20%	Daventry	Rural-80 Average	3.24%
Welwyn Hatfield	Other Urban	2.85%	Lichfield	Rural-50 Average	3.15%
Cannock Chase	Significant Rural	2.73%	Harborough	Rural-80 Average	2.83%
Northampton	Other Urban	2.72%	Stratford-on-Avon	Rural-80 Average	2.61%
Crawley	Other Urban	2.53%	South Kesteven	Rural-50 Average	2.49%
Newcastle-under-Lyme	Large Urban	2.39%	West Lancashire	Rural-50 Average	2.25%
Amber Valley	Significant Rural	2.32%	North West Leicestershire	Rural-50 Average	2.22%
Rugby	Significant Rural	2.29%	Tonbridge and Malling	Rural-50 Average	2.17%
Ashfield	Other Urban	2.28%	Newark and Sherwood	Rural-50 Average	2.01%

The worst 10 performing predominantly rural areas compared to the worst 10 non rural areas are shown below:

Worst 10 Urban			Worst 10 Rural		
Oadby and Wigston	Large Urban	0.56%	Staffordshire Moorlands	Rural-50 Average	0.65%
Shepway	Significant Rural	0.55%	High Peak	Rural-50 Average	0.64%
Three Rivers	Major Urban	0.55%	Tendring	Rural-50 Average	0.60%
Adur	Large Urban	0.54%	Richmondshire	Rural-80 Average	0.58%
Hart	Significant Rural	0.52%	Ribble Valley	Rural-80 Average	0.54%
Chiltern	Significant Rural	0.51%	Tandridge	Rural-50 Average	0.51%
Havant	Large Urban	0.49%	Rother	Rural-50 Average	0.51%
Gosport	Large Urban	0.47%	Maldon	Rural-80 Average	0.46%
Hastings	Other Urban	0.45%	Torrige	Rural-80 Average	0.45%
Castle Point	Large Urban	0.32%	Dover	Rural-50 Average	0.40%

Job Seekers Allowance

We have also analysed levels of JSA claimants to give RSN members a simple overview of how their authority can be benchmarked with other authorities and placed in the context of trends which provide useful contemporary indicators of economic performance. Whilst we have JSA data at higher authority and LEP levels for comparison purposes it works best at District level. The attached spreadsheet enables you to look at JSA at LEP, Upper and Lower Tier Levels.

Worst Performers

The Districts with the top 10 highest levels of JSA claimants are set out below:

Thanet	Other Urban	8.10%
Hastings	Other Urban	8.02%
Great Yarmouth	Significant	
	Rural	7.22%
Burnley	Other Urban	7.08%
Lincoln	Other Urban	7.05%
Corby	Other Urban	6.58%
Mansfield	Other Urban	6.14%
Ipswich	Other Urban	5.90%
Gravesham	Major Urban	5.86%
Waveney	Significant	
	Rural	5.68%

Best Performers

The ten authorities with the lowest levels of JSA claimants are set out below:

Waverley	Significant	
	Rural	1.62%
Ribble Valley	Predominantly	
	Rural	1.61%
South Lakeland	Predominantly	
	Rural	1.61%
West Oxfordshire	Predominantly	
	Rural	1.61%
Eden	Predominantly	
	Rural	1.57%
South Northamptonshire	Predominantly	
	Rural	1.52%
West Dorset	Predominantly	
	Rural	1.50%
East Dorset	Predominantly	
	Rural	1.47%
Mid Sussex	Predominantly	
	Rural	1.45%
Hart	Significant	
	Rural	1.43%

This analysis shows a very clear urban/rural split, with none of the 10 authorities with the highest levels of JSA claimants being in predominantly rural areas and 9 of those with the lowest levels of JSA claimants being predominantly rural.

Overall Analysis

The use of up to date data sets for notified vacancies and job seekers allowance provides a useful “snapshot” of the working of the economy in localities. It is important however to treat them with caution. Place based statistics – ie things which are fixed within a community, like the stock of jobs and incomes at the workplace give a true indicator of the nature of an economy. Resident based statistics – ie things which are mobile within a community, like the workforce and incomes at place of residence need to be treated with caution because of commuting effects. In many areas of rural England low unemployment and high household incomes reflect the commuting effect of people into and out of cities and larger urban settlements.

These factors remind us that rural and urban are not absolute concepts and that rural and urban parts of wider economic geographies play complementary roles. They also point out the challenges around using administrative geographies to describe economies. Notwithstanding these caveats we have to work with what is available.

The vulnerability index provides a composite approach to interpreting rural economic development issues which interprets the challenge facing rural economies in terms of their relative resilience rather than looking at single indicators. Whilst this can be done on an annual basis (due to the frequency and geographical levels at which data is released) if we wish to get a real time sense of what is happening we need to use less satisfactory single sources of data.

The best means of using notified vacancies and JSA information in response to the issues covered above is to look at trends (you can do this for your individual authority by viewing the spreadsheets supplied with this report simply by entering the name of your authority) and keep possible commuting issues in mind. Annual data sets also provide a useful means of providing a wider context for data such as JSA. Moving the focus from JSA claimants to income levels at the workplace reveals an almost reverse effect to the idea of affluent rural areas with low JSA. The data is set out below:

Lowest 10 income areas (1-10)		Highest 10 income areas (10-1)	
<i>Torridge</i>	347.5	Lambeth	654.9
Wyre Forest	354.6	Barking and Dagenham	655.6
<i>North Dorset</i>	379.9	Mole Valley	672.1
Thanet	383.3	Southwark	682.9
<i>Herefordshire, County of</i>	384.6	Camden	685.7
<i>East Lindsey</i>	386.5	Westminster	686.4

<i>South Hams</i>	386.6	Islington	691.1
Blackpool	387.1	Copeland	764.1
<i>North Norfolk</i>	389.9	Tower Hamlets	843.2
Mansfield	391.1	City of London	917.1

Data in the table taken from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (2012) above demonstrates that whilst no-predominantly rural areas have incomes in the top 10 of authorities, 6 of the local authorities with the lowest incomes in England are predominantly rural (in italics).

Whilst we will cover all the statistics set out in this report in the forthcoming summer edition of the profiling service we will also look more closely at the best and worst performing authorities in terms of JSA trends and we will also pick out 3 authorities as case studies for some more detailed analysis.