
Tees Valley LEP area

This document provides a summary of key findings for the Tees Valley LEP area, based on findings from three major UKCES surveys: Working Futures, the Employer Skills Survey and the Employer Perspectives Survey.

1. Working Futures (2012-2022)

Jobs and the economy

- The overall picture for the UK economy over the next decade (2012-2022) is one of gradual upturn, but with no quick return to long term trends as observed following previous recessions.
- Overall, the number of jobs in the Tees Valley LEP area is projected to rise by around 13,000 over the next decade (2012-2022), an average annual rate of growth of 0.5 per cent. This is slightly lower than the UK average rate (0.6 per cent).

Sectors

- The sector profile of the LEP area is broadly similar to the UK as a whole. However, the Tees Valley area is somewhat “over-represented”, relative to the UK, in the health and social care sector. It is “under-represented” in wholesale and retail trades, and support services.
- Private sector services as a whole are expected to contribute around 71 per cent of net job growth in the LEP area between 2012 and 2022, lower than the UK average of 85 per cent.
- The leading sources of employment growth in the Tees Valley area (in absolute terms) are forecast to be health and social work services (+7,000) and construction (+3,000).
- Public administration is projected to see a net decline in its level of employment between 2012 and 2022 in the LEP area (loss of 2,000 jobs, equivalent to a fall of 10 per cent); this decline is in line with the overall UK picture.
- Manufacturing is projected to see a continued decline in jobs (with a loss of 3,000 jobs – the equivalent of a fall of 12 per cent - over the decade in the LEP area). Again, this decline reflects the wider picture in the UK.

Occupations

- The Tees Valley LEP area has a slightly lower representation of employment in higher skilled occupations, compared with the UK as a whole. In the LEP area, 38 per cent of employment is in the three high skilled occupational groups: managers, professionals and associate professionals. This compares with a UK average of 43 per cent. However, this difference is partly the result of a much higher figure in London (57 per cent).

- The proportion of employment in the three lowest-skilled occupations is slightly higher than the UK average. In the LEP area, 28 per cent of employment is in sales or customer service, plant/process operatives and elementary roles, compared with a UK average of 25 per cent.
- The proportion employed in middle-ranking occupations is slightly higher than the UK average: jobs in administrative, skilled trades and caring/leisure roles account for 34 per cent of employment in the LEP area, compared with 32 per cent in the UK.
- As with the wider UK picture, we expect to see job growth concentrated in higher level roles, as well as in lower level roles relating to care. The projections for the LEP area are for:
 - 17,000 additional high level jobs (for managers, professionals and associate professionals), with more than half of these in professional roles. Higher skilled jobs are expected to grow at a similar rate to in the UK as a whole (16 per cent in Tees Valley compared with 17 per cent in the UK over the course of the decade).
 - 10,000 fewer jobs in middle ranking administrative, skilled manual and routine blue collar roles. Nevertheless, these areas of decline are expected to remain significant sources of employment by the end of the decade. For example, there are still expected to be around 32,000 administrative jobs in 2022 in the LEP area, despite the loss of around 4,000 jobs in the previous decade.
 - Around 6,000 additional jobs in caring or leisure roles.
- Women are expected to take more than three-quarters of the additional high level jobs created in the LEP area over the decade, as well as most of the additional jobs in caring roles. However, female workers will be hit by the losses noted above in sales, administrative and elementary jobs.

Qualifications

- As a result of supply and demand factors, the qualification profile of employment is expected to shift markedly in the LEP area:
 - The proportion of jobs held by people qualified at a higher level (level 4 and above) is projected to increase from 36 per cent to 47 per cent between 2012 and 2022.
 - Workers with low qualifications (below level 2) are expected to decline from 18 per cent to 11 per cent of the total workforce over this period.

Replacement demands in the Tees Valley LEP area

- We estimate that replacement demands (i.e. job openings created by people leaving the labour force temporarily or permanently) will contribute almost nine times as many job openings as net job growth over the next decade: 114,000 openings compared with 13,000.
- Replacement demands mean that there will be a need to recruit suitably skilled people across all broad occupational groups, including those projected to decline:
 - For some occupational groups (mostly higher skilled ones), we expect to see strong net growth in the number of jobs, supplemented by large replacement demands. For example, net growth of 10,000 jobs in professional roles is

projected to be supplemented by 22,000 job openings arising from replacement demands.

- For those occupational areas in which we expect to see a net decline in the number of jobs, replacement demands mean that we can still expect a strong supply of job openings. For example, in administrative roles, it is projected that a net loss of around 4,000 jobs will be more than offset by 15,000 job openings resulting from replacement demands.

2. UK Commission's Employer Skills Survey 2013

Skill shortages

- In total, 15 per cent of employers in the Tees Valley LEP area reported vacancies at the time of the survey (March to July 2013). This is the same proportion as in England as a whole.
- While in most cases demand for skills is met through successful recruitment, around a quarter of vacancies in the LEP area (23 per cent) are reported to be hard-to-fill. This is lower than the England average of 28 per cent.
- When asked (without prompting) about the main reasons for hard-to-fill vacancies in their establishment, a shortage of suitably skilled workers is seen as the main reason in the Tees Valley area, followed by a shortage of workers with relevant experience. This reflects the England-wide picture.
- Overall, 'skill-shortage' vacancies represent 19 per cent of all vacancies in the LEP area, which is slightly lower than the England-wide figure of 22 per cent.

Skill gaps

- Most employers say that they have a proficient workforce with no skill gaps. However, the proportion reporting skills gaps is slightly higher in the LEP area than in England as a whole: 18 per cent compared with 15 per cent. However, this represents four per cent of the total workforce in Tees Valley, slightly lower than the figure for whole of England (five per cent).
- In most cases, proficiency problems are due at least in part to employees being new in their roles and/or still in training for their roles. These factors account, at least in part, for 73 per cent of all skills gaps in the LEP area, similar to England as a whole (75 per cent).
- In Tees Valley and in England more widely, the main impact of proficiency problems is an increased workload for other staff.
- In Tees Valley, (internal) skills gaps are most prominent in skilled trades, and this is also the occupation with the greatest density of (external) skill shortages. This is different to the England-wide picture – here, (external) skill shortages are most acute for skilled trades, but (internal) skills gaps are focused more on sales and customer services staff and elementary staff. This suggests that Tees Valley is distinctive in having both internal skills gaps and external skill shortages for skilled trades.
- In general, employers tend to be challenged either in terms of having inadequate skills among some of their existing workforce or struggling to find new recruits with the skills that the vacant positions require. It is very rare for employers to be challenged from both directions; just one per cent of all employers experience both skill-shortage vacancies and skills gaps; this proportion is the same in the LEP area as in England as a whole.
- Half of employers in the LEP area (50 per cent) report skills under-use (i.e. they have staff who are over-skilled and over-qualified for the jobs that they are currently doing); this is similar to the England-wide figure of 48 per cent.

Training and Workforce Development

- Most employers fund or arrange training for their staff: in the LEP area, around two-thirds had done so over the previous 12 months (67 per cent); this is similar to the England-wide figure (66 per cent).
- Half of employers in Tees Valley provide off-the-job training (50 per cent), while one in six offer on-the-job training only (16 per cent). These proportions are very similar to the England-wide average figures (48 per cent and 17 per cent respectively).
- The proportion of staff receiving training is the same in the LEP area as in England generally (62 per cent).
- However, the number of days training is slightly lower in the LEP area than in England as a whole. Each person trained received an average of 6.1 days training over the previous 12 months in the LEP area, compared with 6.7 days on average in England.
- While most employers could be described as being in 'training equilibrium' having been able to provide all the training that they wanted over the previous 12 months, over two-fifths of all employers in the LEP area (43 per cent, including non-trainers that had not delivered any) wanted to provide more training than they had been able to do. The proportion in England was very similar (42 per cent).

Recruitment of Young People

- Almost a third of employers in the LEP area (31 per cent) recruited at least one education leaver in the two to three years preceding the survey, higher than the England-wide figure (27 per cent). Specifically:
 - Eight per cent had recruited a 16 year-old school leaver (the same as the England average);
 - 14 per cent had recruited a 17-18 year old school leaver (higher than the England figure of 11 per cent);
 - 15 per cent had recruited a 17-18 year old college leaver (higher than the England-wide figure of 12 per cent);
 - 14 per cent had recruited someone from a university or HEI (the same as the England figure).

High Performance Working practices and Product Market Strategies

- High Performance Working (HPW) is defined by the UK Commission as 'a general approach to managing organisations that aims to stimulate more effective employee involvement and commitment in order to achieve high levels of performance' (UKCES 2009).
- The survey identifies a minority of employers – 12 per cent in the LEP area – who are "HPW employers" in the sense that they adopt a number of HPW practices. This is the same as the proportion in England as a whole.
- Product Market Strategies (PMS) are defined within the survey by aggregating responses to a series of questions exploring pricing strategies, approaches to innovation and the nature of the product market (the extent to which the market attracts a "premium" and the extent of customisation of products and services in the market).

- Aggregating these responses classifies over two in five (43 per cent) of private sector employers in Tees Valley as having a high or very high product market strategy, indicating that their competitive success is not dependent on price, they pursue innovation, they compete on quality and/or that they offer customised goods or services. This is similar to the proportion in England generally (45 per cent).

3. UK Commission's Employer Perspectives Survey 2014

Employer Perspectives on Recruitment

- Around two in five employers in the Tees Valley LEP area (41 per cent) recorded at least one vacancy in the 12 months preceding the survey. This is lower than the proportion across England as a whole (50 per cent).
- Relevant work experience was rated by around two-thirds of recruiting employers in Tees Valley (63 per cent) as being a critical or significant factor looked for in candidates. Core Maths and English skills followed next, rated as critical or significant by 60 per cent of recruiting employers. More than half of recruiting employers rated academic qualifications as critical or significant (56 per cent), while a lower proportion (48 per cent) said this about vocational qualifications. These priorities reflect the wider picture across England. Over time, the survey as a whole has seen an increasing importance placed on both academic and vocational qualifications by recruiting employers.
- Overall, 22 per cent of employers in Tees Valley had taken on someone under the age of 25 in the previous 12 months (lower than the England-wide figure of 31 per cent). On the other hand, one in nine employers had taken on someone aged 50 years or older (11 per cent - in line with the figure of 13 per cent in England as a whole).

Employer Perspectives on Work Experience

- Around a third (34 per cent) of employers in the LEP area had provided individuals with work placements in the previous 12 months, while 11 per cent had conducted 'work inspiration' activities with people in education (such as mock interviews, delivering talks and holding site visits for students). These proportions are similar to the average figures across England.
- EPS 2014 canvassed employers' awareness of Traineeships and found that just over two-thirds of employers in Tees Valley (68 per cent) had heard of the scheme, the same as the figure for England. However, the survey as a whole indicates that many of these employers had limited knowledge of the scheme.

Employer Perspectives on People Development

- A considerable proportion of employers in Tees Valley use external providers to deliver training (42 per cent), although internal training provision is more common (54 per cent). Both of these figures (for external and internal training) are in line with those for England as a whole.
- Employers most commonly look to private providers (private sector training firms or third sector providers) when they are looking outside of their own organisation to deliver training: 37 per cent of all employers in the LEP area engaged the services of private providers, while only eight per cent used FE Colleges and five per cent HEIs; these figures are similar to those seen in England generally. The survey as a whole indicates that the gap between use of private and public provision has widened in recent years.

- A quarter of establishments in Tees Valley (25 per cent) offer training that is designed to lead to a vocational qualification (very similar to the figure for the whole of England – 26 per cent).
- Eight per cent of employers in the LEP area had worked with other employers to access, develop or share expertise on skills and training. This is lower than the proportion for England as a whole (17 per cent). In general, the survey found that the nature of these relationships was equally likely to be formal or informal/ad hoc.
- One in four establishments in Tees Valley (25 per cent) had sought external information, advice or other practical help on skills and training-related issues in the last 12 months. This is similar to the England-wide figure (27 per cent).
- National Occupational Standards (NOS) specify the standard of performance an individual must achieve when carrying out a function in the workplace, together with the knowledge and understanding they need to meet that standard consistently. Broadly speaking, there was some awareness of the standards: around a third of all employers in the LEP area (35 per cent) had heard of National Occupational Standards; this is slightly lower than the proportion in England generally (39 per cent).

Employer Perspectives on Apprenticeships

- One in five employers in the LEP area (21 per cent) offer formal Apprenticeships (following a framework and designed to lead to a nationally recognised qualification), which is slightly higher than the England-wide figure of 15 per cent.
- At the time of the survey, around two in five of all employers in the Tees Valley LEP area were expecting to offer formal Apprenticeships in the future (41 per cent, which was also slightly higher than the figure of 35 per cent for England as a whole).