

## Regional Trends 39

The ONS annual report, *Regional Trends*, is a comprehensive source of official statistics for regions in the UK. This year's edition, published in May on the National Statistics website, also includes three feature articles, focusing on: differences in regional economic performance; a regional perspective on deprivation and ethnicity in England; and profiling areas using the new National Statistics Area Classification.

Here we summarise key statistics for the South East.

**Earning gap** - Full-time gross weekly earnings were greatest in London at £575 for men and £483 for women, but the gender gap was most marked in the South East where the difference was £128 (men £521, women £393). In the lower earning regions the difference was less with the gap in Northern Ireland amounting to £54 (men £410, women £356).

**Regional economies** - London had the highest gross value added (GVA) per head of over £22,200 in 2004, placing it 32 per cent above the UK average, with the North East 20 per cent below on residence-based estimates. The East of England and South East were the only other regions with above average GVA per head (9 and 16 per cent).



**Household income** - London and the South East had the highest levels of total household income per head at £24,505 and £22,245 respectively in 2003, accounting for nearly one-third of the UK total.

**Households** - The South East was the region with the highest number of households, at 3.4 million in 2003. It also had the highest projected growth of 20 per cent to just over 4 million households by 2021.

**Travel** - There was a slight decrease in the distance each person traveled per year by car in Great Britain between 2002/03 and 2003/04. The South East had the largest decrease of 242 miles between the two years (4 per cent reduction).

**Education** - Educational attainment at GCSE level continued to increase throughout the UK over the last few years, with 54 per cent of pupils achieving 5 or more A\*-C grades in 2003/04. At just under 58 per cent, the South East had the largest proportion of pupils achieving these grades in England.

**Waste** - Households in the South East recycled the greatest amount from 2000/01 to 2003/04 as a percentage of waste produced. In 2003/04 the South East recycled 5.5 kilograms per household per week.

For further information see [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk)



## State of the Countryside 2006

The 2006 State of the Countryside report has been released by the Commission for Rural Communities. It presents a holistic analysis of rural issues in England to inform rural policy debates. The latest report builds on the approach of the 2005 edition by providing a greater analysis of change against the new Rural and Urban definition (DEFRA 2004). Although the report does not include specific analyses for each region, data is routinely broken down regionally. Key findings with respect to the rural South East are:

- + 22.4% of settlements in the South East are classified as rural, placing it fourth highest of the eight English regions.
- + Houses in the rural settlements of the South East generally have the lowest affordability in rural England.
- + There are relatively few low-income households (with an income of less than £15,861) in the rural South East.
- + Many of the top earning districts, measured by median weekly pay, are located in the rural South East, namely South Buckinghamshire, South Oxfordshire and Test Valley, although Rother is one of the ten most deprived according to this measure.
- + The rural South East has the lowest level of benefit claimants, and the highest job density of compared to the rural parts of the other regions.
- + Wild bird indicators have declined by 12% in the South East between 1994 and 2004 (2nd highest behind the West Midlands).

For more information, see [www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk](http://www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk)

**NB: Watch this space for news of a South East Rural Evidence Base!**

## New local authority Health Profiles launched

The first local authority Health Profiles to cover the whole of England have been produced by Public Health Observatories. They cover all but two of the 388 local authorities in England, and will be updated every year.

These Health Profiles can be used by local authorities and the health service to highlight the health issues for their local authority area and to compare them with other areas. The profiles are designed to show where there are important problems with health or health inequalities. They can be used with other local information, such as the Audit Commission's Area Profiles, to target action to improve the health of local people.

Later in the year, these Health Profiles will be released in a more accessible popular format designed specifically to communicate relevant key health messages to the local community. These will be branded as 'Community Health Profiles' in line with the 'Choosing Health' White Paper commitment.

Local authority Health Profiles can be accessed at: [www.communityhealthprofiles.info/index.php](http://www.communityhealthprofiles.info/index.php)



## South East Cultural Observatory

### goes live

Launched this month, the Southeast Cultural Observatory (SECO) is an online resource that aims to articulate how cultural activity – which includes sport, the arts, libraries, museums and heritage - contributes positively to issues such as health, regeneration and learning. Led by Culture South East, SECO is a project supported by SEEDA, The Arts Council England, South East, Sport England, South East and MLA South East.

SECO's manager, Louise Etheridge says "Many people believe that culture has an intrinsic value of its own and has no need to demonstrate its worth. We know this to be true, but we also acknowledge that for those people trying to extend the reach of cultural activities, the usefulness of culture as a tool to further other objectives, for instance, regeneration or social inclusion objectives, is extraordinary."



SECO aims to deliver the information, tools and signposting to enable users to make the case for culture. Louise says "We believe that if we can show policymakers and funders in areas that are traditionally non-cultural, for instance in health or learning, how culture can contribute to their objectives, cultural activity in the South East will be broadened and investment in cultural activity will increase. "

Although SECO will act as a single point of cultural information, it is also working actively on regional initiatives. Louise says "Currently SECO is providing specific information to the cultural agencies who are working on the Regional Commentaries initiative, and we are hosting pages for the Sports Events South East project" SECO is also an active member of the South East Regional Observatories Network, and working with SEE-iN on regional initiatives.

For more information, please contact Louise Etheridge at [l.etheridge@culturesoutheast.org](mailto:l.etheridge@culturesoutheast.org) or 07813 160613  
[www.seco.org.uk](http://www.seco.org.uk)

## Framework for Regional Statistics

ONS have published a draft Strategic Framework for Regional Statistics. The Framework comes in response to the *Allsopp Review of Statistics for Economic Policy Making (2004)*, which highlighted the lack of capacity of National Statistics to supply the data needed for effective regional economic policy.

Integrated into the National Statistics work programme up to 2007/08, the Framework is an initial statement that eventually aims to address:

- + Any needs for new, or different, types of data;
- + Issues relating to measurement, standards, classification and data harmonisation;
- + Analysis and dissemination approaches; and
- + The mechanisms of involving stakeholders in the implementation and development of work programmes.

ONS are currently inviting comments on the draft Framework.

The draft Framework is available at  
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=14356> .



# New on SEE-iN

- + Regional Competitiveness & State of the Regions 2006 (DTI)
- + Labour Market Statistics, South East: August 2006 (ONS)
- + House Price Index, June 2006 (DCLG)
- + Police Service Strength, England and Wales, 31 Mar 2006 (Home Office)
- + Crime in England and Wales 2005/2006 (Home Office)
- + Local Authority Health Profiles (Public Health Observatories)
- + Augmenting the Evidence base for the Examination in Public of the South East Plan (Roger Tym & Partners for ODPM & GOSE)
- + Perceptions of the South East and its Regional Assembly (MORI for the Regional Assembly)
- + The State of the Countryside 2006 (CRC)
- + Regional Trends 39 (ONS)
- + Regional Statistics Strategic Framework (ONS)

# Coming Soon

A member of the  
Association of Regional  
Observatories



## Research and data

### September 2006

House Price Index,  
July 2006 (DCLG)

Labour Market Statis-  
tics, South East: Sept  
2006 (ONS)

## Events 2006

12-14 Sept: AGI2006  
Association of Geo-  
graphic Information  
Annual Conference  
(London)

[www.agi.org.uk](http://www.agi.org.uk)

21 Sept: Annual Sus-  
tainable Development  
Research Conference

(London)

[www.sd-research.org.uk](http://www.sd-research.org.uk)

24 Nov: RSA Annual  
Conference 2006:  
Global Regions?  
(London)

[www.regional-studies-assoc.ac.uk](http://www.regional-studies-assoc.ac.uk)

# About SEE-iN

The South East England Intelligence Network is a partnership funded organisation and is the Regional Observatory for the South East.

We aim to encourage and facilitate the development of evidence based policy work, through the coordination of data and intelligence.

[www.see-in.co.uk](http://www.see-in.co.uk)

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