

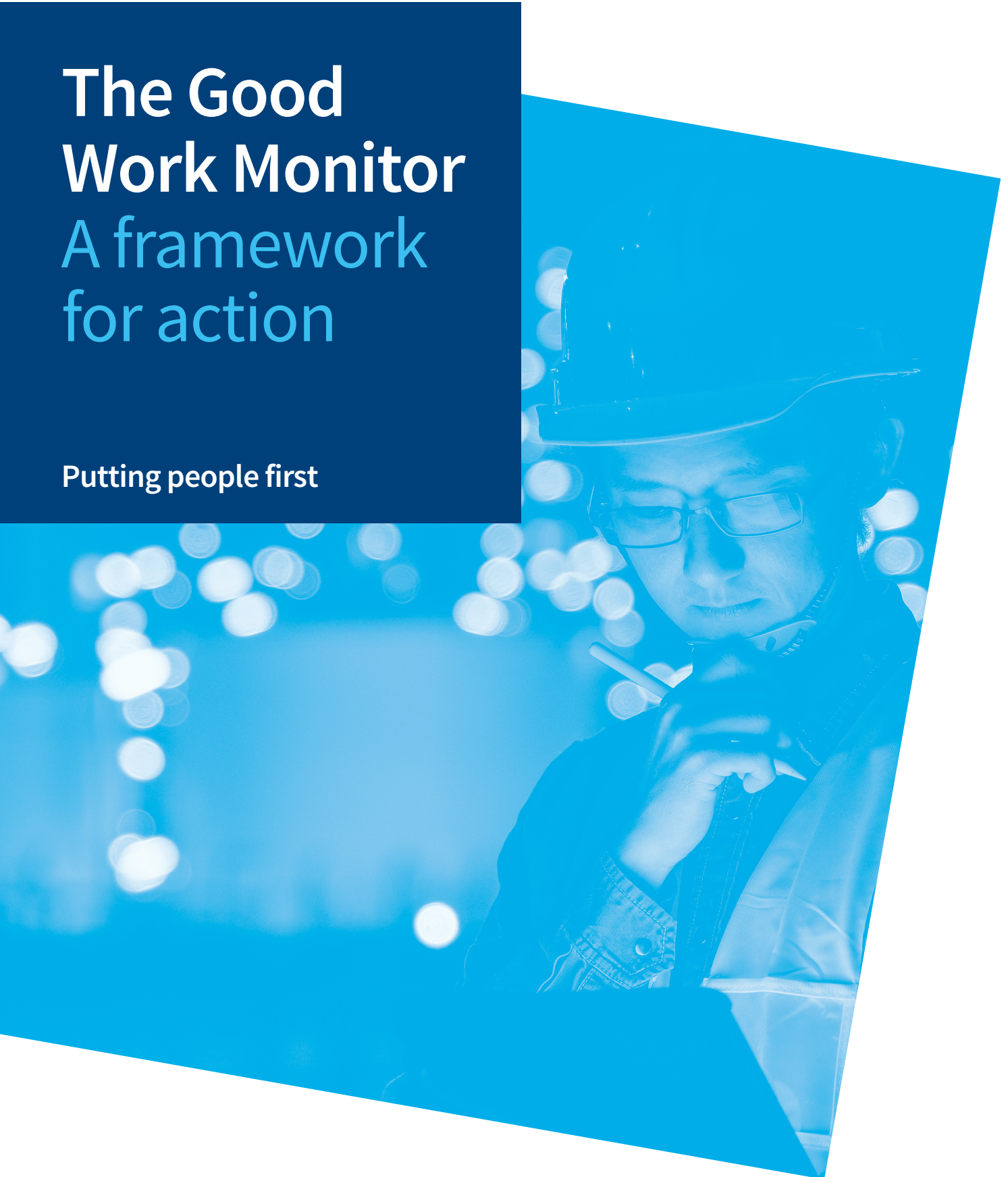


Institute *for the*  
Future of Work

# The Good Work Monitor

## A framework for action

Putting people first



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The Institute for the Future of Work research and develop practical ways to improve work and working lives. We do that by understanding how work is changing and how we can make the future better – in the face of technological change and economic turmoil.

We believe that bringing people together with different perspectives and experiences enriches our understanding and ideas. Through this collaborative approach, we aim to create innovative, practical and inclusive solutions.

We use the best interdisciplinary research to shape policy and decision-making in government and business, building approaches that put people first.

# Foreword

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Covid-19 has upended our world of work and amplified the underlying inequalities in our society. We have seen the gulf widen between those in good work, and those whose working lives are precarious and uncertain, including many key workers across the country. It has become starkly apparent that the social and economic burden of the pandemic is not borne equally.

Against this background, the Institute for the Future of Work's Good Work Monitor builds a detailed sub-regional map of access to good work across the country. It enables exploration of the downstream relationship of good work with local population health, and the upstream social and economics conditions of work by local areas for the first time.

The Good Work Monitor demonstrates that areas that offer a high level of access to good work are more resilient to the adverse effects of the pandemic, and suffer fewer deaths. Importantly, it shows a strong correlation of 'bad' work to 'deaths of despair.' This suggests that the worrying trends identified by Professor Sir Angus Deaton in the USA are now being reflected in the UK – a sharp reminder that prevention is better than cure.

The Good Work Monitor should lead to renewed impetus for the goal of 'good work for all' – and reposition 'good jobs' at the centre of recovery planning. If a silver lining can be drawn, it is that shocks can precipitate action that would not otherwise have been considered possible. This is the moment to act and ensure that a future of good work is secured for all.

## **Professor Sir Chris Pissarides**

Co-Chair of the Institute for the Future of Work,  
and Nobel Laureate in Economics



# 1



## Chapter 1 Executive summary



## Chapter 1

# Executive summary

---

Good work is central to the wellbeing and flourishing of individuals, communities and the country. Our research shows that good work is also central to meeting the toughest socio-economic challenges of the pandemic and to rebuild strong, resilient communities across the country. A plan for future good work is a plan for recovery.

Good work is more than employment. It is work that promotes dignity, autonomy, equality; work that has fair pay and conditions; work where people are properly supported to develop their talents and have a sense of community. Our analysis shows that access to good work confers protection against the health, social and economic shocks of the pandemic at all levels. As we look beyond Covid-19, the ambition to create and sustain good work offers a vision for recovery and to level up across the country. The Good Work Monitor provides a framework to achieve this goal.

The Good Work Monitor creates the first single and holistic measure of the availability of good work in each local authority area of England outside London.



[Visit our online interactive map to see how your area is doing](#)

Our analysis demonstrates that the places where good work is most available have fared best throughout the pandemic. These areas have experienced a less dramatic increase in unemployment and less furloughing of employees. Where there is good work, people are healthier and their exposure to the impacts of Covid-19 have been less acute, with fewer Covid mortalities. By contrast, the ‘left behind communities’ with little access to good work have experienced the sharpest end of the pandemic.

**‘Good work helps citizens, communities, and firms to withstand short-term shocks and adapt to long-term transformations. It supports good health and fosters a sense of cooperation and solidarity across communities, binding us together as we work towards shared goals’**

The Future of Work Commission 2020

## Chapter 1

### Executive summary

People living in areas with less good work have suffered both the primary and secondary impacts of the pandemic most severely and seen pronounced inequalities of work and health deepening. The relationships between work and health are illustrated starkly by the Good Work Monitor: a lack of good work correlates strongly with ‘diseases of despair’ before the pandemic and with Covid mortalities through the pandemic.

As leaders across the political spectrum, and at every level of government, seek to build back better, the Good Work Monitor demonstrates how good work can provide the foundations for building a country that is healthy and resilient, in which people and communities can flourish. The Institute for the Future of Work has argued that building a future of good work is the best way to respond to *both* the immediate disruption of Covid-19 *and* the underlying transformation of the economy wrought by the introduction of new technologies. An economy should meet the most pressing and anticipated needs of society – and that the ultimate purpose of the economy is to promote wellbeing. The Good Work Monitor embodies this philosophy and shows why and how this can be done.

‘Good health is, to a large extent, a consequence of good jobs. Work is absolutely central to wellbeing, dignity and for communities...if work is threatened, we threaten the fundamental components of wellbeing’

Professor Sir Angus Deaton,  
at IFOW’s Future of Work Conference



[The interview with Sir Angus Deaton is available to watch here](#)

The Good Work Monitor combines data on three domains derived from the Good Work Charter: **labour market access, status and autonomy and pay and conditions**. We have mapped this score against indicators of the underpinning social and economic conditions that support good work, and against the health of local people. This has meant that we have been able to build a sub-regional geography of access to good work, providing policy-makers and practitioners with a detailed understanding of the environment in each English local authority area outside London. The Good Work Monitor will allow them to tailor their interventions to the communities they serve.

‘Placing good work at the heart of our economic rebuild will boost health, support more resilient citizens, communities, and firms, and will build a more united country’

Future of Work Commission

Analysis of the Monitor, alongside the findings of the Future of Work Commission’s post Covid report, highlights the need for new strategies to create and sustain good work across the country.

## Chapter 1 Executive summary

### Key insights

#### 1

**Good work builds resilience and aligns health, social and economic interests.**

We find that good work correlates strongly with good health and bad work is associated with deaths of despair and Covid-19 mortalities.

#### 2

**Nuanced local dynamics invite local policy interventions designed for local needs.**

We find there is no single set of factors that characterise places without access to good work, although common features have been identified. This points to a transformative role for local authorities.

#### 3

**Inequalities in access to good work and health vary as much within regions as they do between regions.** We find marked local differences in prosperity, demand, education and inequality at a local authority level sit behind a patchwork of access to good work.

#### 4

**Covid-19 has changed the geography of access to good work.** Inequalities in access to good work and health have become more pronounced through the pandemic, and there are some distinctive new challenges.

#### 5

**Worker transitions are likely to accelerate.**

People and communities in areas with the lowest Good Work Monitor scores in access to good work will need additional, targeted social and economic support.

### Key recommendations

#### 1

**Future Good Work for all should be repositioned as a central, cross-government policy objective.** A national Strategy Work 5.0 should be initiated with a remit extending to all dimensions of the Good Work Monitor and the social, as well as economic, conditions for good work across the country.

#### 2

**Levelling up the country must be a social as well as economic endeavour, guided by a shared vision of Future Good Work for all.**

The Good Work Monitor may be used to guide, evaluate and adjust levelling up policies across the country.

#### 3

**Good work standards should be embedded by use of policy levels at a national, regional and local government level.** Policy activism in recovery and levelling up planning should include raising basic standards for good work to boost the 'floor' of protection; and incentives to raise the 'bar' of best practice beyond legal requirements.

#### 4

**Local authorities should be equipped to lead and implement local 'compacts'** and pilots with across the domains of the Good Work Monitor in collaboration with other local authorities facing similar challenges. Our clustering methodology may enable a new approach to devolved funding and powers to advance the good work agenda.

#### 5

**Open data on all dimensions of good work should be consistently collected** and shared, together with the new areas highlighted here.



## 2



## Chapter 2 Background to the Good Work Monitor

## Chapter 2

# Background to the Good Work Monitor

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The Institute for the Future of Work (IFOW) exists to shape a better future of work. We do that by understanding how work is changing and how we can make the future better in the face of technological change and the economic turmoil of a post-Covid world.

IFOW defines good work through 10 principles, drawn up by the members of the Future of Work Commission, with input from the public which are set out in the Good Work Charter.

What gets measured is what gets valued – and tends to be where action is oriented. The Good Work Monitor is the first holistic measure of the *availability* of good work across the country. We believe government, industry and the public should prioritise and value the creation of future good work. To achieve that, it is vital to have a clear and accurate measure of the sub-regional geography of good work across the country. And to develop practical policy initiatives, it is necessary to map access to good work against local conditions and impacts.

Building on a growing body of research on work quality, including by IFOW partners at the Health Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, RSA, Carnegie Trust and the CIPD, we have developed the Good Work Monitor to meet this need.

The Monitor creates a benchmark from which to measure success against our ambition of access to good work for all. IFOW has worked with researchers from University College London and Opinium to rigorously select, assess and compile the data that underpins the monitor.

The monitor comprises three domains: **labour market access, status and autonomy, and pay and conditions**. Indicators were selected by reference to IFOW's Good Work Charter, based on a review of relevant academic and policy literature, and subject to data quality and availability. Data was collected for 119 unitary authorities and counties across England. Objective measures, which reflect real-world choices and outcomes, were preferred to capture persistent trends within local areas at an aggregate level, and for consistency. London has been excluded as wide-scale commuting and outliers results mean that the relationship between work, socioeconomic conditions and health in the capital warrants a separate analysis.



[Further information about the Good Work Charter is available here](#)



[An accompanying methods note is available here](#)

## Chapter 2

### Background to the Good Work Monitor

Despite the wealth of data the monitor draws on, it does not cover all dimensions of job quality which pertain to the Good Work Charter, particularly around health and safety, or voice and representation. This is due to the absence of quality statistics on these issues. Addressing this deficit in data will be important to developing a deeper understanding of good work in the future. IFOW will refine and update the monitor as new data becomes available, producing a Good Work Monitor series to map changes over time.

The Good Work Monitor is a new tool designed for policy-makers to understand local strengths and weaknesses and to tailor policy responses to local needs.

**Table 1: Good Work Monitor structure**

Labour market access
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unemployment rate</li> <li>• Working age labour force participation</li> </ul>
Status and autonomy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of workers in routine occupations</li> <li>• Percentage of workers in professional/managerial work (SOC 1–3)</li> </ul>
Pay and conditions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Median pay (indexed to regional prices)</li> <li>• Percentage of workers with ‘satisfactory hours’</li> </ul>

In this report, we highlight some of the key findings from the monitor. Firstly, we show how each local authority ranks on the overall good monitor score. We then group local authorities by common characteristics, drawing on a statistical clustering method. We go on to explore the conditions that underpin the availability of good work and the relationship between good work and health in detail to enable a more nuanced understanding of local dynamics. Finally, we highlight how the impacts of Covid-19 have amplified the trends identified in the monitor.

Given the richness of information within the monitor, this commentary reflects our initial analysis only. We would encourage policymakers and practitioners to use the interactive data visualisations to explore individual local authorities and specific aspects of the monitor in greater depth. Further detail on each indicator can be found in the accompanying method note.

The IFOW would welcome opportunities to collaborate with partners to utilise the full scope of the monitor in the future.



[All the data used in this analysis can be downloaded here](#)



# 3



## Chapter 3 The Good Work Monitor

## Chapter 3

# The Good Work Monitor

## The Good Work Monitor reveals stark differences in the availability of good work prior to the pandemic.

Eight of the top 10 performing local authorities are in South East England joined only by the affluent area of Trafford in Manchester, and Rutland, the smallest unitary authority in England by population. There is a greater degree of regional dispersion among the ten lowest performing regions. Eight of these are within Northern England, with the other two situated in the Midlands.

The Good Work Monitor demonstrates that there are equally dramatic differences within a region. For example the region of Yorkshire and the Humber includes both the city of York, ranking 23rd on the Monitor, and Kingston upon Hull which ranks 116th. This highlights the limitations of regional initiatives and the need for interventions to support good work to be designed with local needs in mind.

**Figure 1: IFOW Good Work Monitor and subcomponent scores**

Rank	Unitary/County authority	UK region	Access and participation score	Status and autonomy score	Pay and conditions score	Good Work Monitor total score
1	Wokingham	South East	171.9	200.0	130.1	502.0
2	Windsor and Maidenhead	South East	171.8	196.2	129.4	497.4
3	Oxfordshire	South East	174.8	174.9	140.7	490.5
4	Trafford	North West	135.9	183.7	146.8	466.4
5	Bracknell Forest	South East	192.7	142.3	129.3	464.3
6	Surrey	South East	154.9	185.9	107.3	448.0
7	West Berkshire	South East	171.3	146.3	126.6	444.1
8	West Sussex	South East	161.7	149.2	120.2	431.0
9	Buckinghamshire	South East	166.2	176.4	84.1	426.7
10	Rutland	East Midlands	142.5	149.7	133.4	425.6
11	Reading	South East	138.7	151.5	130.4	420.7
12	South Gloucestershire	South East	157.9	138.6	123.8	420.3
13	Solihull	West Midlands	126.8	171.5	119.9	418.3
14	Hertfordshire	East of England	144.7	151.7	121.5	417.9
15	Cambridgeshire	East of England	158.9	140.5	118.3	417.7

Chapter 3  
The Good Work Monitor

Figure 1: IFOW Good Work Monitor and subcomponent scores *continued*

Rank	Unitary/County authority	UK region	Access and participation score	Status and autonomy score	Pay and conditions score	Good Work Monitor total score
16	Bath and North East Somerset	South West	148.2	161.8	106.7	416.8
17	Stockport	North West	157.6	146.9	108.7	413.2
18	Warwickshire	West Midlands	182.6	109.8	119.2	411.6
19	Southend-on-Sea	East of England	164.3	151.3	91.1	406.7
20	Gloucestershire	South West	176.7	141.0	87.7	405.4
21	Warrington	North West	135.5	126.7	141.8	404.0
22	Hampshire	South East	167.3	141.7	94.2	403.2
23	York	Yorkshire and the Humber	159.2	122.8	120.6	402.6
24	Central Bedfordshire	East of England	164.1	126.5	111.7	402.3
25	Bristol, City of	South West	140.6	148.8	109.6	399.0
26	Bedford	East of England	177.8	125.9	87.9	391.6
27	North Somerset	South West	167.6	130.1	82.9	380.6
28	Cheshire East	North West	146.7	138.4	93.9	379.1
29	Dorset	South West	143.4	124.0	101.5	368.9
30	Bury	North West	128.9	112.9	126.9	368.6
31	Essex	East of England	144.8	119.3	96.2	360.3
32	East Sussex	South East	127.9	147.8	81.9	357.7
33	Poole	South West	140.2	128.7	88.1	357.0
34	Milton Keynes	South East	122.7	102.0	127.9	352.7
35	Cheshire West and Chester	North West	127.4	131.5	90.0	348.9
36	Wiltshire	South West	169.5	121.8	57.0	348.3
37	Leicestershire	East Midlands	136.9	121.7	84.0	342.6
38	Wirral	North West	126.3	104.3	109.0	339.7
39	Cumbria	North West	157.3	80.2	98.1	335.6
40	Kent	South East	121.0	123.9	88.2	333.1
41	North Tyneside	North East	110.7	118.6	103.8	333.0
42	Leeds	Yorkshire and the Humber	130.1	97.3	105.5	332.9
43	Medway	South East	142.9	120.4	69.5	332.8
44	Herefordshire, County of	West Midlands	159.4	107.0	64.7	331.1



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The Good Work Monitor

Figure 1: IFOW Good Work Monitor and subcomponent scores *continued*

Rank	Unitary/County authority	UK region	Access and participation score	Status and autonomy score	Pay and conditions score	Good Work Monitor total score
45	Lancashire	North West	127.2	102.2	99.5	329.0
46	Staffordshire	West Midlands	156.6	99.2	72.5	328.3
47	North Yorkshire	Yorkshire and the Humber	151.5	113.5	60.2	325.2
48	Brighton and Hove	South East	76.2	181.3	67.1	324.6
49	Sheffield	Yorkshire and the Humber	100.0	115.8	108.2	324.0
50	Liverpool	North West	85.6	113.5	122.0	321.1
51	Thurrock	East of England	127.0	73.3	117.5	317.8
52	Shropshire	West Midlands	174.6	99.0	42.6	316.1
53	Worcestershire	West Midlands	143.8	126.4	45.4	315.5
54	Slough	South East	136.6	70.8	105.0	312.4
55	Calderdale	Yorkshire and the Humber	136.5	104.2	68.0	308.7
56	Portsmouth	South East	115.6	101.0	92.0	308.5
57	Suffolk	East of England	139.9	82.2	84.5	306.7
58	Manchester	North West	99.8	100.4	104.6	304.8
59	Halton	North West	118.6	64.4	120.7	303.8
60	East Riding of Yorkshire	Yorkshire and the Humber	139.3	109.4	53.6	302.3
61	County Durham	North East	124.5	86.3	91.4	302.2
62	Bournemouth	South West	140.2	111.7	50.2	302.1
63	Coventry	West Midlands	100.4	91.4	110.2	302.0
64	Devon	South West	159.7	118.8	22.2	300.7
65	Newcastle upon Tyne	North East	56.4	118.8	124.2	299.4
66	Derbyshire	East Midlands	154.1	84.4	58.2	296.7
67	Stockton-on-Tees	North East	99.2	88.7	108.7	296.6
68	Derby	East Midlands	117.4	87.9	89.8	295.2
69	Nottinghamshire	East Midlands	122.9	80.6	91.2	294.6
70	Darlington	North East	117.8	91.0	83.3	292.1
71	Somerset	South West	157.9	84.1	49.5	291.4
72	Northumberland	North East	113.2	99.1	78.1	290.4
73	Torbay	South West	133.7	103.4	50.4	287.4
74	Swindon	South West	149.6	63.9	73.9	287.4

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The Good Work Monitor

Figure 1: IFOW Good Work Monitor and subcomponent scores *continued*

Rank	Unitary/County authority	UK region	Access and participation score	Status and autonomy score	Pay and conditions score	Good Work Monitor total score
75	Northamptonshire	East Midlands	139.9	77.1	65.5	282.6
76	Gateshead	North East	112.2	69.2	96.8	278.1
77	Sefton	North West	124.0	115.6	38.0	277.6
78	Lincolnshire	East Midlands	125.3	88.2	63.3	276.8
79	Norfolk	East of England	123.2	87.7	64.6	275.6
80	Isle of Wight	South East	113.1	101.2	60.0	274.2
81	Telford and Wrekin	West Midlands	108.2	76.8	84.7	269.7
82	Dudley	West Midlands	86.5	72.2	108.8	267.5
83	Kirklees	Yorkshire and the Humber	99.3	96.8	70.4	266.5
84	St. Helens	North West	104.0	80.8	81.2	266
85	Tameside	North West	110.9	58.8	96.1	265.8
86	Cornwall	South West	134.2	91.8	38.0	264
87	Plymouth	South West	139.5	71.6	48.9	259.9
88	Southampton	South East	108.7	81.5	67.5	257.8
89	Knowsley	North West	118.6	56.9	77.0	252.4
90	Salford	North West	112.1	52.7	87.4	252.1
91	Walsall	West Midlands	91.5	65.9	94.3	251.6
92	Wigan	North West	124.0	51.6	67.4	243.0
93	Birmingham	West Midlands	47.9	90.8	95.5	234.2
94	Bolton	North West	88.3	74.1	65.5	227.8
95	Luton	East of England	84.3	46.3	88.8	219.4
96	Barnsley	Yorkshire and the Humber	82.3	62.2	72.4	216.8
97	Rochdale	North West	88.1	34.9	93.1	216.1
98	Redcar and Cleveland	North East	85.1	51.9	77.9	214.9
99	Oldham	North West	69.9	50.9	93.8	214.6
100	Doncaster	Yorkshire and the Humber	89.8	35.2	76.2	201.2
101	South Tyneside	North East	63.1	83.6	54.2	200.8
102	Rotherham	Yorkshire and the Humber	107.6	66.7	24.2	198.5
103	Wolverhampton	West Midlands	44.3	42.7	108.7	195.7

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The Good Work Monitor

Figure 1: IFOW Good Work Monitor and subcomponent scores *continued*

Rank	Unitary/County authority	UK region	Access and participation score	Status and autonomy score	Pay and conditions score	Good Work Monitor total score
104	Sandwell	West Midlands	67.4	9.5	115.2	192.1
105	Peterborough	East of England	107.7	38.6	41.6	187.9
106	Blackburn with Darwen	North West	61.8	73.8	51.6	187.2
107	North East Lincolnshire	Yorkshire and the Humber	106.9	29.3	51.0	187.2
108	Nottingham	East Midlands	32.6	64.3	88.9	185.8
109	Sunderland	North East	83.3	36.5	60.9	180.7
110	Wakefield	Yorkshire and the Humber	94.1	31.8	54.0	179.9
111	Bradford	Yorkshire and the Humber	73.6	72.9	29.0	175.5
112	Blackpool	North West	65.2	59.5	49.6	174.3
113	Leicester	East Midlands	72.5	12.6	84.7	169.8
114	North Lincolnshire	Yorkshire and the Humber	76.8	41.5	49.8	168.1
115	Middlesbrough	North East	24.3	49.1	75.0	148.4
116	Kingston upon Hull, City of	Yorkshire and the Humber	79.2	31.0	20.5	130.7
117	Hartlepool	North East	14.3	71.0	45.0	130.4
118	Stoke-on-Trent	West Midlands	77.1	13.6	32.8	123.4



[Visit our online interactive table to use the sortable column facility](#)

Source: IFOW

The map (see Figure 2) helps to understand the varied distribution of the availability of good work across the country. Darker blue areas, indicating a higher Good Work Monitor score, are concentrated in – but not limited to – the South around London. The pale blue area West to East from Lancashire to South Yorkshire and Lincolnshire represents a strip of low scoring areas. These align closely to the constituencies that swung from Labour to the Conservatives in the 2019 election and have been the focus of the government's Levelling Up initiatives. However, areas outside this band, such as Peterborough also suffer from poor availability of good work.




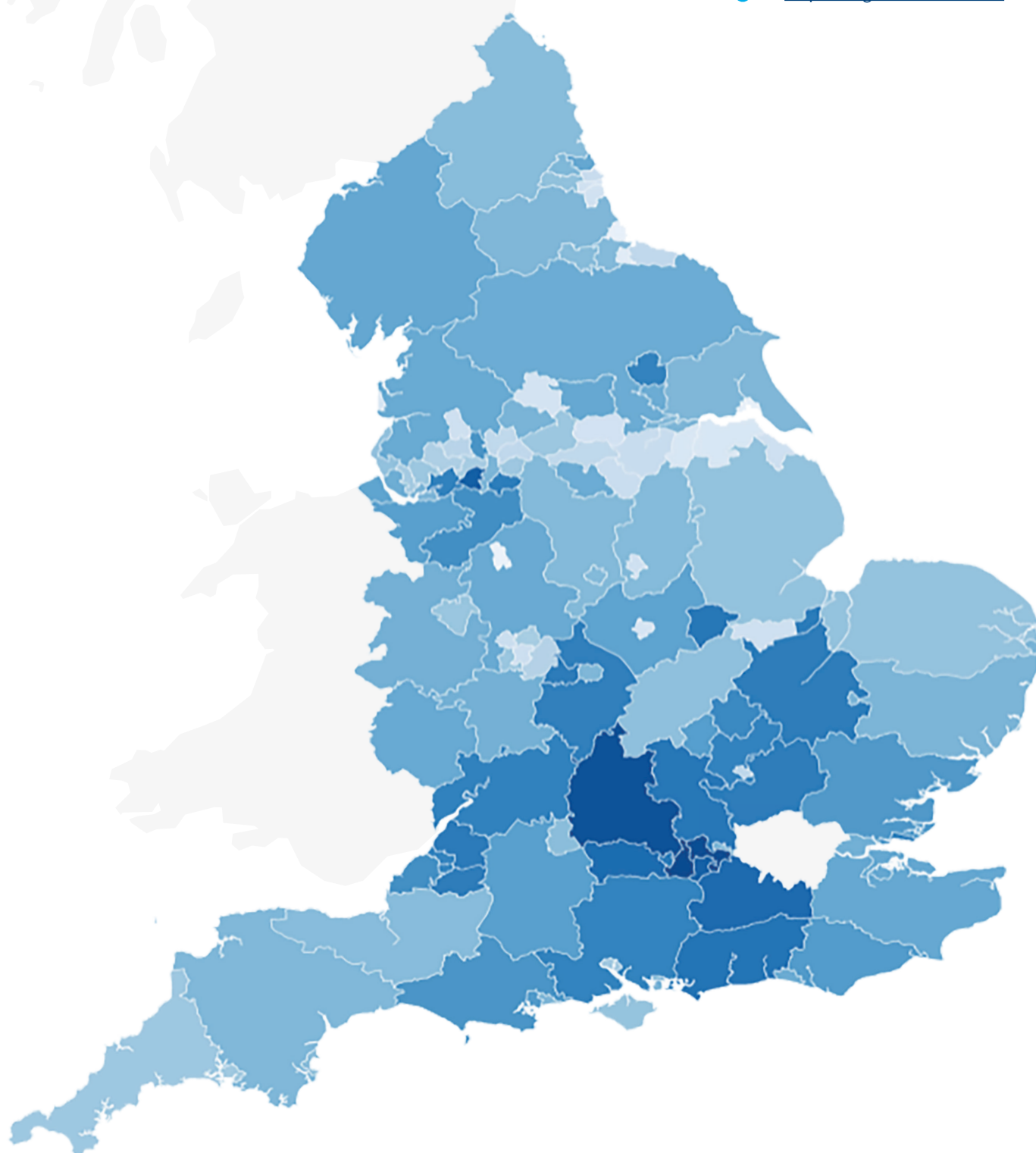
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Figure 2: Map of IFOW Good Work Monitor scores

Total Score (Out of 600)

100  550

 [Visit our online interactive map for regional information](#)



Source: IFOW

## Good Work Groupings

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Looking at the profile of individual local authorities allows us to see beyond broad regional stereotypes and look at groups that share common characteristics. We have explored the geography of good work further by combining our analysis with statistical clustering techniques which can identify areas with shared profiles without any reference to location.

Clustering analysis of the monitor results shows four groupings, represented by different colours on the map (see Figure 3). For each community, we suggest ‘archetypes’ to aid interpretation.

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### Good Work Winners

The cluster of pink local authorities (Community D in the map) are predominantly based in the South and encircle London, Bristol and the Midlands with notable outposts in Northern England around Cheshire and York. These areas are typically strong performers across all domains of the Good Work Monitor, and can be thought of as the leading localities for Good Work availability. This cluster is characterised by higher levels of labour market participation, lower levels of routine work, and higher pay. These scores reflect a good economic mix of activities, good education outcomes and stronger overall economic performance.

The features of this cluster indicate the existence of stronger social and physical infrastructure to support good work. As we explore below, the instrumental, as well as intrinsic, value of good work is clearly demonstrated by the availability of good work in this cluster driving relatively strong health indicators in this group. The average healthy life expectancy for people living in these regions is five years higher than is found in the Regional Urban Centres and Northern Towns groups.

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### Rural and Coastal Counties

The purple cluster local authorities (Community C) is largely made up of rural and coastal counties. This cluster performs strongly on labour market access, meaning low unemployment and high participation, but has higher levels of routine work, and lower levels of professional and managerial work than Good Work Winners.

The coastal areas present a unique set of policy challenges. They tend to have an older age demographic and be more reliant on seasonal tourism for economic activity, meaning that the Covid-19 pandemic has hit particularly hard. As we explore below, coastal towns have a tendency to suffer from higher than average levels of substance abuse, which may be linked to high levels of social deprivation. The administrative geography of the UK means that only a handful of these coastal towns are represented by their own Unitary Authority. Where there is such representation, such as in Blackpool and Portsmouth, these areas profile similar to the Regional Urban Centres and Northern Towns groups described below. This suggests that the large geographic area covered by many of the local authorities in the Rural and Coastal group is masking significant internal inequalities in access to Good Work.

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### Regional Urban Centres


Community B (dark blue) includes most of the Birmingham city region, along with urban economic centres in Leicester, Nottingham, Coventry, Leeds and Sheffield, as well as parts of Manchester and Newcastle. For this reason, we characterise this community as ‘Regional Urban Centres’. These areas have similar levels of routine work and pay to the Rural and Coastal group, but lower levels of participation and higher unemployment. Interestingly, these localities stand out in the ‘satisfactory hours’ indicator, suggesting that these are areas in which many workers are beginning to find a better work/life balance.

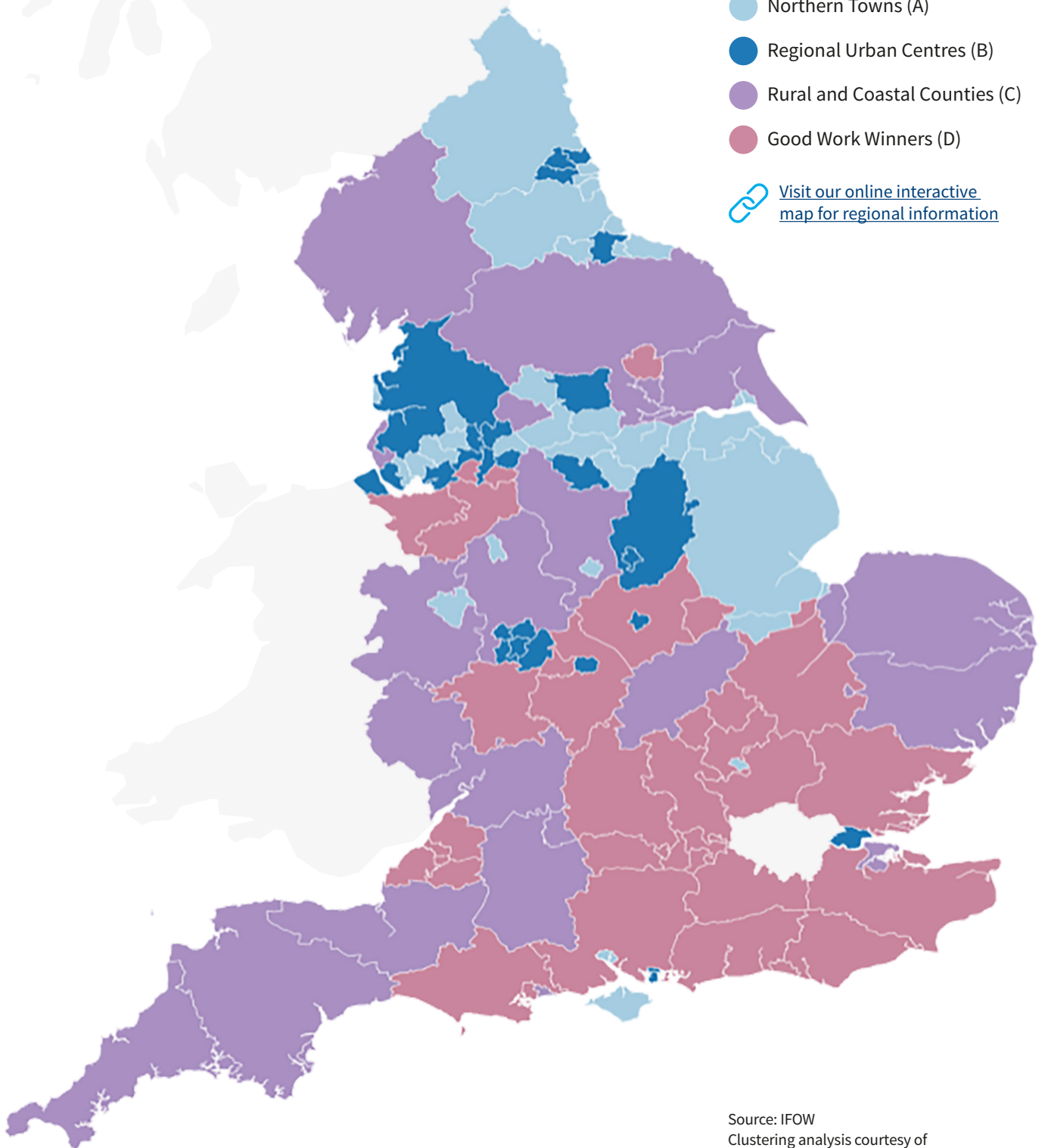
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**Figure 3: Map of Good Work Monitor communities**

Data is taken from the IFOW Good Work Monitor. Colours represent different communities, defined by an unsupervised clustering algorithm on the basis of similarity.

-  Northern Towns (A)
-  Regional Urban Centres (B)
-  Rural and Coastal Counties (C)
-  Good Work Winners (D)

 [Visit our online interactive map for regional information](#)



Source: IFOW  
Clustering analysis courtesy of  
Dr Jonathan Clarke

### Chapter 3 The Good Work Monitor

Although the Regional Urban Centres group profiles similarly to the Northern Towns group on a wide range of social and economic indicators, one noticeable difference is the rate of business start ups, which is on average higher in this group than in either the Northern Towns or Rural and Coastal groups, and not dissimilar to what is found in the Good Work Winners group. This reflects that fact that these areas, although trailing the more economically prosperous regions of the country, are still important economic engines for large parts of England.

## Northern Towns

The Northern Town cluster (Community A), is represented by the light blue colour in the map. These areas have the poorest availability of good work across all dimensions of the Good Work Monitor, and are particularly concentrated in the North, particularly along the belt from Lincolnshire, through South and West Yorkshire and into Lancashire. Although these areas score poorly across all dimensions of the Good Work Monitor, the features of this cluster which are most striking are high levels of unemployment, the high proportion of people in routine occupations and poor levels of pay. Looking beyond the Monitor to the wider economic conditions, these areas typically have weaker overall economies than are found in the other groups, low business start-up rates and a lower proportion of people holding post A-level qualifications. These localities illustrate the challenges facing the levelling up agenda, namely how to break the self-perpetuating cycle of weaker local economies leading to diminished opportunities for residents, and vice versa.

The consistency of this geographic pattern reflects entrenched and structural labour market problems in post-industrial towns that have not had the support needed to transition away from declining levels of extractive and manufacturing work. This is partly reflected in the fact that the Northern Towns group has the least industrial diversification of the four groups. A hefty subsection of this cluster neatly coincides with the “Red Wall” constituencies. As a group, these towns face the most acute social and economic challenges of any areas in England and must remain a central component of the levelling up and recovery agenda.

The group is characterised by a high level of ‘routine’ occupations which stand as a proxy for job autonomy in the Good Work Monitor. Routine occupations are also associated with a higher risk of automation, and associated labour market polarisation, as we have explored elsewhere. The pressing need for nuanced and locally-targeted policies in this group to support to create good jobs is underlined by the striking ‘deaths of despair’ rates, as we demonstrate below. This may be, quite literally, a matter of life and death.



[The Impact of Automation on Labour Markets: Interactions with Covid-19](#)



## Chapter 3 The Good Work Monitor

### Inequality within regions

Alongside the inequalities between the different regions of the UK, there are also significant inequalities within regions. The Figure 4 charts below visualise these

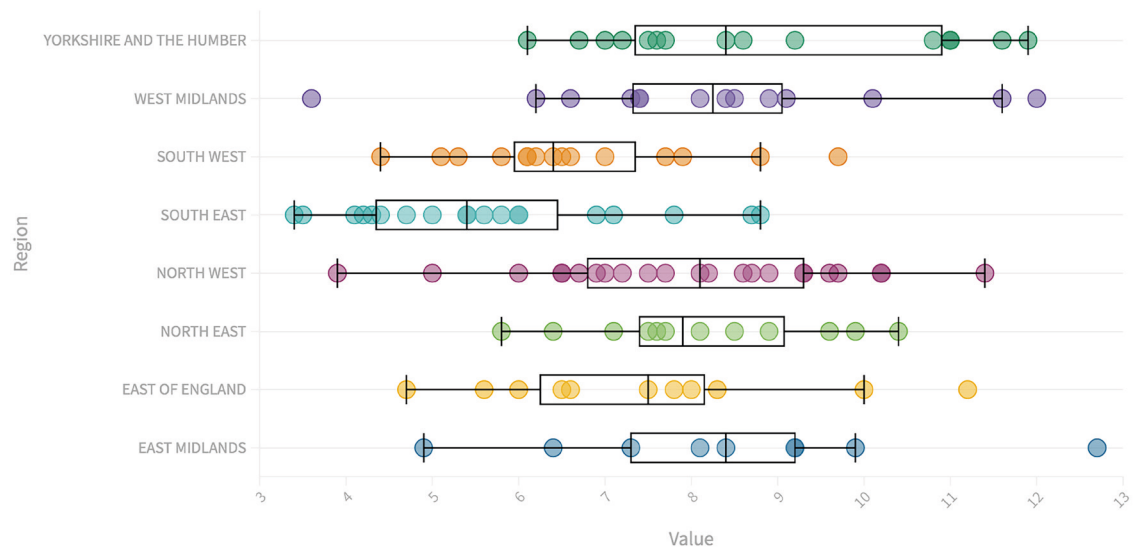
intra-regional inequalities across each indicator, using non standardised values. It also enables comparisons between regions with respect to their internal inequality.

**Figure 4: Intra-regional inequality in Good Work Monitor indicators**

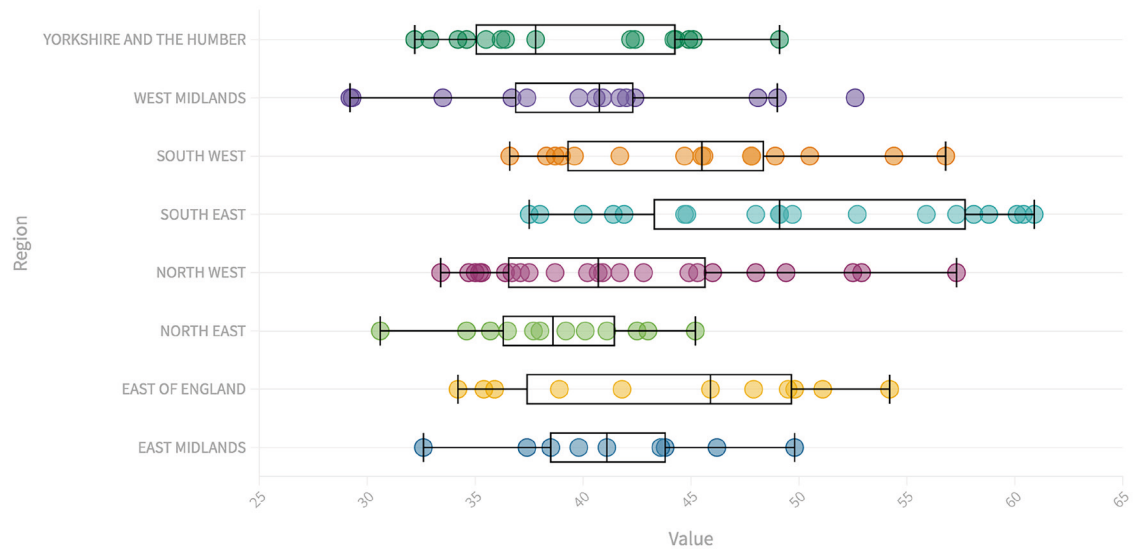


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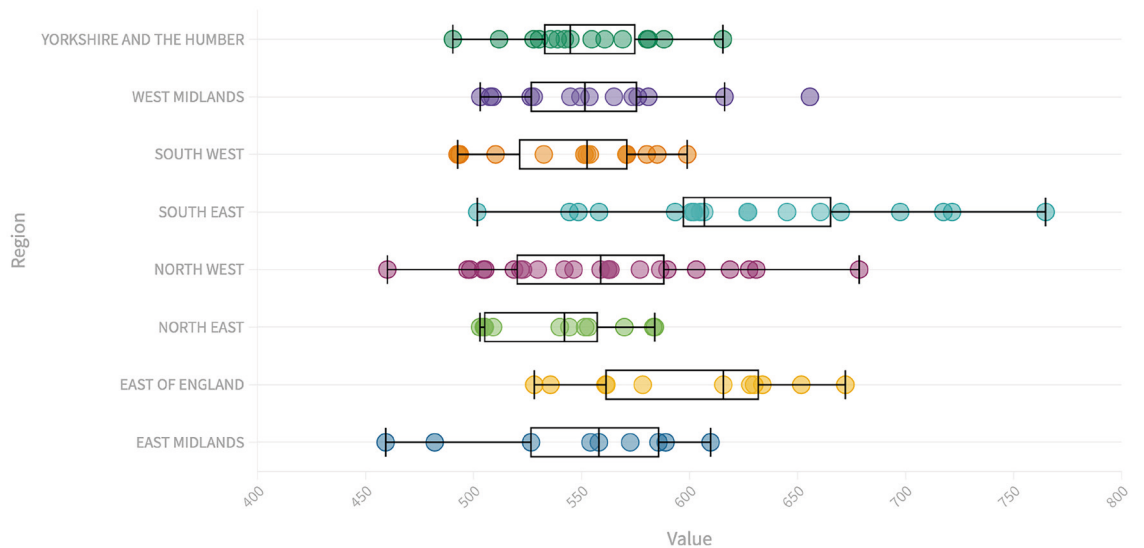
### Routine occupation share (%)



### Professional and managerial occupation share (%)

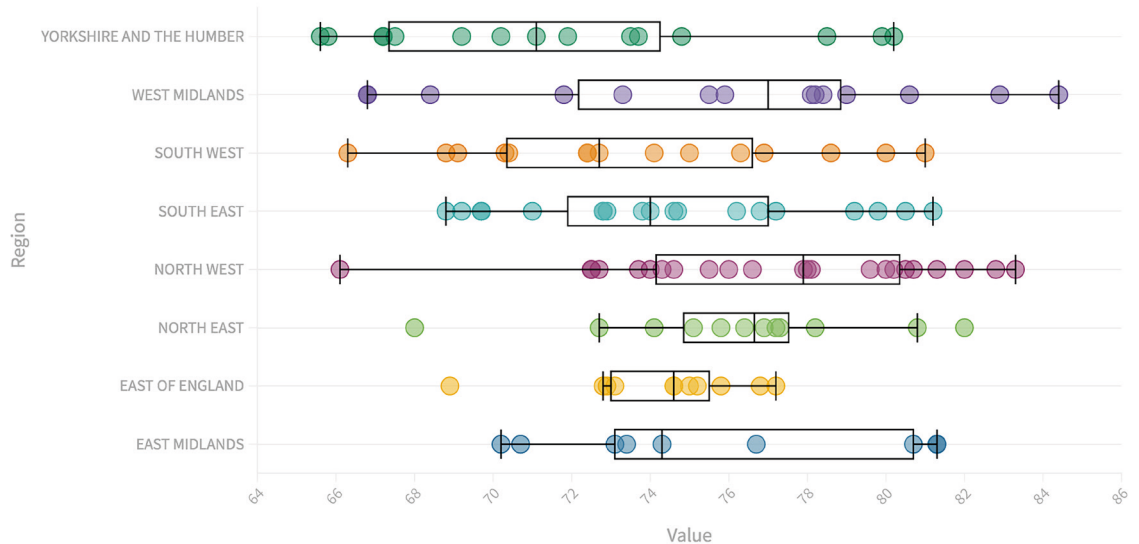


### Average weekly pay (£ indexed to regional price level)



### Chapter 3 The Good Work Monitor

#### Satisfactory hours (%)



[Visit our online  
interactive chart](#)

Source: IFOW

These charts demonstrate an important point, that it matters exactly where you live within a region. For example, unemployment rates in York are low by this measure, only 2.3%, yet York sits within the Yorkshire and Humber region which has the highest median unemployment rate across its constituent local authorities. Conversely, Brighton and Hove, part of the South East, has unemployment rates that are more akin to less affluent towns in Northern England.

There are similar outliers to be found across the other domains. Nottingham has a notably low labour force participation rate, and along with Leicester, performs quite significantly worse than other areas in the East Midlands regions across a number of the different indicators in the Monitor. This disparity is noted in Nottingham City Council's Growth Plan: "although the wider city economy is comparable to the other core cities, the core city area contains a disproportionate amount of the most deprived communities that are struggling to enter the labour market".



[Nottingham City Council's  
Growth Plan](#)

## Understanding the conditions for Good Work

Good work does not spring out of a vacuum. To understand local dynamics and design effective targeted, policy interventions, we must understand the underlying conditions that allow good work to flourish. What enables good work and what impedes it?

Here, we explore which economic and social factors might influence the availability, accessibility and creation of good work by local authority. Good Work Monitor scores have been mapped against a combination of 12 other dimensions that indicate the existence of the conditions for good work under four pillars: prosperity, demand, education and inequality. The rationale and our use of these indicators are set out in the methods note.

## Results

As is the case for the Good Work Monitor, this analysis reveals strong performance in the South East of England. For this analysis looking at the conditions of good work, Manchester, and the small local authority Rutland in the East Midlands are the only localities in the top ten areas outside of the South East Region. North Tyneside is the first region from the North East region to appear in the rankings, in 41st place. The full results are detailed in Figure 5.

**Table 2: Conditions for Good Work indicators**

Prosperity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gross Value Added (GVA) per capita</li> <li>GVA growth (2014–16 average)</li> <li>Productivity (GVA per worker)</li> </ul>
Demand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business start ups per 100,000 population</li> <li>Job density (jobs per worker)</li> <li>Industrial diversity (HHI of employment shares)</li> </ul>
Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training providers per 100,000 population</li> <li>Percentage of residents with NVQ4+ qualifications</li> <li>GCSE attainment (2017–19 average)</li> </ul>
Inequality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of workless households</li> <li>Dispersion of internal deprivation</li> <li>80/20 inequality</li> </ul>

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**Figure 5: Socioeconomic conditions for Good Work total and subcomponent scores**

Rank	Local authority	UK region	Prosperity	Demand	Education	Inequality	Conditions for Good Work total score
1	Slough	South East	204.7	154.0	196.8	243.4	833.8
2	Milton Keynes	South East	238.8	218.3	148.1	185.4	818.7
3	Reading	South East	169.9	184.6	216.4	195.3	808.2
4	West Berkshire	South East	195.5	210.6	186.4	187.0	806.6
5	Windsor and Maidenhead	South East	160.6	214.7	225.7	144.8	769.8
6	Manchester	North West	131.6	254.9	138.3	231.7	769.1
7	Wokingham	South East	240.7	132.4	212.3	194.7	761.5
8	Trafford	North West	158.7	206.9	221.0	169.0	751.9
9	Buckinghamshire	South East	138.3	175.6	213.2	201.5	744.2
10	Cheshire East	North West	161.3	240.9	165.6	138.6	738.9
11	Oxfordshire	South East	143.1	165.4	200.8	208.0	733.6
12	Surrey	South East	139.4	185.4	217.8	169.7	732.4
13	Rutland	East Midlands	95.9	146.2	256.7	238.7	721.5
14	Warwickshire	East Midlands	140.9	198.2	187.1	174.7	710.4
15	Bracknell Forest	South East	121.1	139.5	179.4	220.8	687.4
16	Hertfordshire	East of England	141.7	163.8	196.1	165.2	673.2
17	Bristol, City of	South West	96.0	179.7	156.8	208.7	665.1
18	Worcestershire	West Midlands	107.4	227.4	172.3	147.6	662.3
19	Cambridgeshire	East of England	116.1	163.2	181.6	187.5	662.1
20	South Gloucestershire	South West	157.3	176.9	144.3	182.6	652.0
21	Hampshire	South East	104.6	172.3	165.6	190.7	649.8
22	Swindon	South West	141.1	171.2	123.0	189.8	649.1
23	Gloucestershire	South West	93.0	168.1	174.7	192.6	644.3
24	Salford	North West	111.8	206.9	114.7	195.2	634.6
25	Solihull	West Midlands	172.1	138.4	165.1	132.2	630.1
26	Warrington	North West	99.5	171.5	179.6	172.7	628.1
27	North Yorkshire	Yorkshire and the Humber	65.6	167.3	198.7	184.2	614.1
28	Poole	#N/A	100.7	154.8	167.6	177.0	613.6
29	Bury	North West	120.9	197.5	145.2	147.0	613.6



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Figure 5: Socioeconomic conditions for Good Work total and subcomponent scores *continued*

Rank	Local authority	UK region	Prosperity	Demand	Education	Inequality	Conditions for Good Work total score
30	Leicestershire	East Midlands	96.0	162.8	176.3	172.5	613.1
31	Devon	South West	95.0	162.7	158.9	193.9	610.6
32	West Sussex	South East	93.3	163.6	168.6	171.7	610.5
33	Bedford	East of England	116.9	166.7	162.9	148.1	606.4
34	Portsmouth	South East	87.7	146.2	130.2	226.7	599.9
35	Northamptonshire	East Midlands	98.5	158.6	154.3	180.1	597.3
36	Leeds	Yorkshire and the Humber	111.9	174.5	122.5	174.6	596.4
37	Cheshire West and Chester	North West	118.4	179.6	148.3	139.1	596.0
38	North Somerset	South West	104.8	146.8	155.2	184.3	595.3
39	Birmingham	West Midlands	91.3	171.7	101.1	212.5	591.0
40	Luton	East of England	138.9	89.3	128.9	226.3	590.8
41	Essex	East of England	101.4	159.5	144.5	176.4	588.2
42	Stockport	North West	77.7	176.1	157.6	162.4	581.6
43	Brighton and Hove	South East	94.6	152.1	177.5	147.7	577.5
44	Lancashire	North West	94.7	139.8	170.3	163.8	576.1
45	Bath and North East Somerset	South West	102.0	142.4	175.3	132.9	568.6
46	Herefordshire, County of	West Midlands	48.3	153.2	140.1	220.0	563.0
47	Central Bedfordshire	East of England	74.5	126.7	140.6	193.0	562.7
48	Kent	South East	89.9	148.4	157.1	157.0	562.2
49	Cumbria	North West	97.0	143.9	144.1	168.8	560.6
50	York	Yorkshire and the Humber	46.7	142.4	191.7	168.5	560.0
51	Oldham	North West	116.7	126.9	108.9	199.4	558.9
52	Suffolk	East of England	77.6	152.3	145.3	169.7	557.7
53	Thurrock	East of England	125.7	107.7	117.2	195.1	556.8
54	Bournemouth	#N/A	70.4	134.4	146.4	190.2	554.7
55	Derby	East Midlands	106.3	118.0	134.7	174.0	553.6
56	Wiltshire	South West	91.8	173.3	137.1	147.8	553.0

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**Figure 5: Socioeconomic conditions for Good Work total and subcomponent scores** *continued*

Rank	Local authority	UK region	Prosperity	Demand	Education	Inequality	Conditions for Good Work total score
57	Staffordshire	West Midlands	87.6	137.6	163.2	158.4	553.0
58	Somerset	South West	67.1	148.8	139.6	192.4	552.1
59	Liverpool	North West	59.2	149.8	120.8	202.9	545.1
60	Norfolk	East of England	71.4	149.4	127.5	190.3	543.8
61	East Sussex	South East	95.0	125.7	152.8	162.6	543.6
62	Southampton	South East	72.8	99.6	129.1	211.7	535.6
63	Leicester	East Midlands	85.3	122.8	99.2	220.6	533.9
64	Peterborough	East of England	115.4	134.6	110.8	168.4	533.9
65	Coventry	West Midlands	87.7	118.4	117.8	183.1	532.5
66	Nottingham	East Midlands	95.6	152.7	106.0	177.1	531.4
67	Southend-on-Sea	East of England	68.1	138.4	151.1	167.3	529.1
68	Medway	South East	112.9	117.7	110.6	175.1	528.3
69	Shropshire	West Midlands	56.2	143.3	135.2	182.9	523.5
70	Knowsley	North West	181.8	61.9	94.3	184.3	521.9
71	Blackburn with Darwen	North West	75.0	102.1	136.1	205.6	521.2
72	Calderdale	Yorkshire and the Humber	80.5	130.6	146.1	161.1	519.5
73	Darlington	North East	71.4	146.3	175.3	111.6	517.4
74	Newcastle upon Tyne	North East	85.4	154.1	143.8	121.0	513.9
75	East Riding of Yorkshire	Yorkshire and the Humber	74.3	144.5	126.3	174.7	513.6
76	Cornwall	South West	68.4	125.8	102.2	220.5	512.6
77	Sheffield	Yorkshire and the Humber	59.1	125.0	140.9	181.7	511.8
78	Stockton-on-Tees	North East	55.3	139.9	152.3	154.2	511.3
79	Nottinghamshire	East Midlands	63.7	129.2	157.2	154.1	509.4
80	Derbyshire	East Midlands	71.0	115.9	167.2	144.7	508.2
81	Bolton	North West	74.6	144.5	123.6	158.9	504.8
82	Bradford	Yorkshire and the Humber	78.7	108.4	87.0	209.8	493.9
83	Lincolnshire	East Midlands	36.8	124.8	144.2	184.5	491.4

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The Good Work Monitor

**Figure 5: Socioeconomic conditions for Good Work total and subcomponent scores** *continued*

Rank	Local authority	UK region	Prosperity	Demand	Education	Inequality	Conditions for Good Work total score
84	Halton	North West	58.1	138.9	127.2	136.9	479.3
85	Wakefield	Yorkshire and the Humber	84.0	126.7	102.5	159.5	478.6
86	Gateshead	North East	64.8	110.9	134.9	164.7	477.8
87	Telford and Wrekin	West Midlands	86.8	109.6	130.9	143.4	477.2
88	Rochdale	North West	71.5	127.8	102.9	165.6	475.9
89	Sefton	North West	69.2	99.7	114.8	195.8	471.7
90	Kingston upon Hull, City of	Yorkshire and the Humber	67.6	86.8	87.7	213.4	468.3
91	Dorset	South West	59.9	152.5	90.2	169.2	460.7
92	Blackpool	North West	48.4	91.0	107.3	213.4	460.1
93	Doncaster	Yorkshire and the Humber	75.1	129.5	95.6	157.8	459.2
94	Plymouth	South West	31.6	91.6	112	215.4	457.8
95	North Tyneside	North East	86.4	90.2	132.6	141.7	456.9
96	Kirklees	Yorkshire and the Humber	68.1	110.2	119.4	147.6	451.8
97	Walsall	West Midlands	54.3	102.0	106.1	184.9	449.1
98	Isle of Wight	South East	74.0	111.0	96.7	160.6	448.5
99	Middlesbrough	North East	59.6	62.0	131.1	182.6	447.5
100	Stoke-on-Trent	West Midlands	100.4	112.4	84.6	145.2	443.9
101	Sandwell	West Midlands	57.2	108.4	68.4	214.1	442.6
102	Wirral	North West	63.6	60.7	132.7	172.2	439.2
103	Rotherham	Yorkshire and the Humber	76.6	105.9	100.3	158.6	438.2
104	Wolverhampton	West Midlands	23.8	133.5	89.8	168.4	424.5
105	Sunderland	North East	47.5	97.4	91.4	171.5	423.9
106	North East Lincolnshire	Yorkshire and the Humber	35.0	105.8	101.6	170.3	420.0
107	North Lincolnshire	Yorkshire and the Humber	115.4	86.6	107.8	96.6	419.5
108	St. Helens	North West	80.5	78.0	129.5	118.2	415.0
109	County Durham	North East	67.5	87.0	91.5	151.8	414.3
110	Barnsley	Yorkshire and the Humber	62.0	73.6	105.4	166.4	412.3

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**Figure 5: Socioeconomic conditions for Good Work total and subcomponent scores** *continued*

Rank	Local authority	UK region	Prosperity	Demand	Education	Inequality	Conditions for Good Work total score
111	Wigan	North West	82.0	91.1	106.9	114.8	405.2
112	Dudley	West Midlands	49.0	110.3	89.6	159.0	404.1
113	Hartlepool	North East	40.2	88.1	134.3	110.1	389.1
114	Torbay	South West	22.5	42.6	132.7	194.9	388.4
115	Tameside	North West	47.1	72.9	106.0	148.5	381.2
116	South Tyneside	North East	27.0	76.7	123.9	137.7	380.3
117	Northumberland	North East	31.3	93.6	113.3	131.5	378.4
118	Redcar and Cleveland	North East	36.4	89.0	136.2	102.5	369.2



[Visit our online interactive table to use the sortable column facility](#)

Source: IFOW


Converting this into a map (see Figure 6) illustrates the stark levelling up challenges facing England, and the UK more broadly. Darker blue areas, indicating stronger performance are clearly clustered in London and the South East, with a smaller pocket surrounding the relatively affluent suburbs of Greater Manchester and Cheshire.

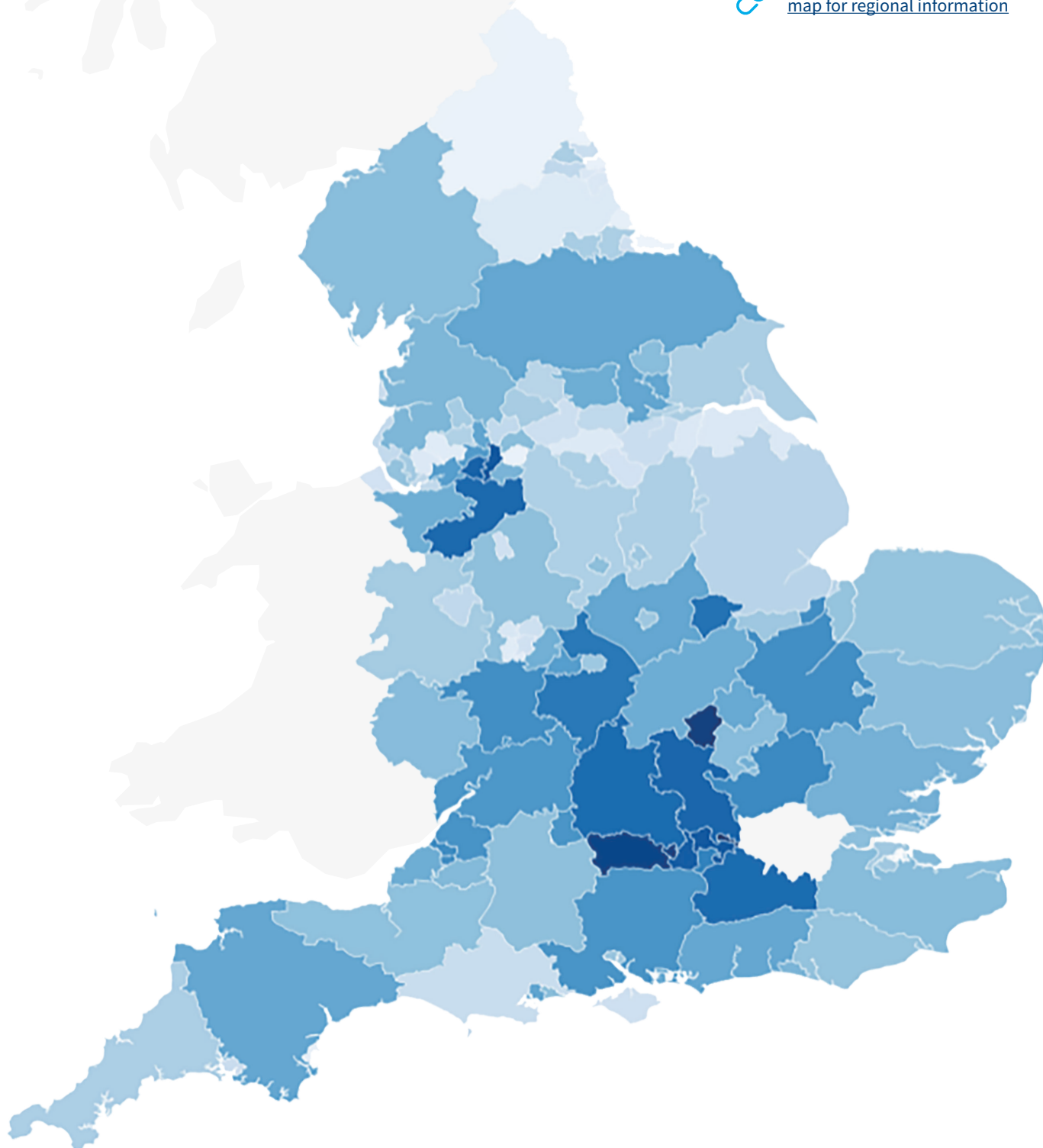
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**Figure 6: Socioeconomic conditions  
for Good Work**

**Total Score**  
(Maximum Possible Score is 1200)

350  850

 [Visit our online interactive  
map for regional information](#)



Source: IFOW



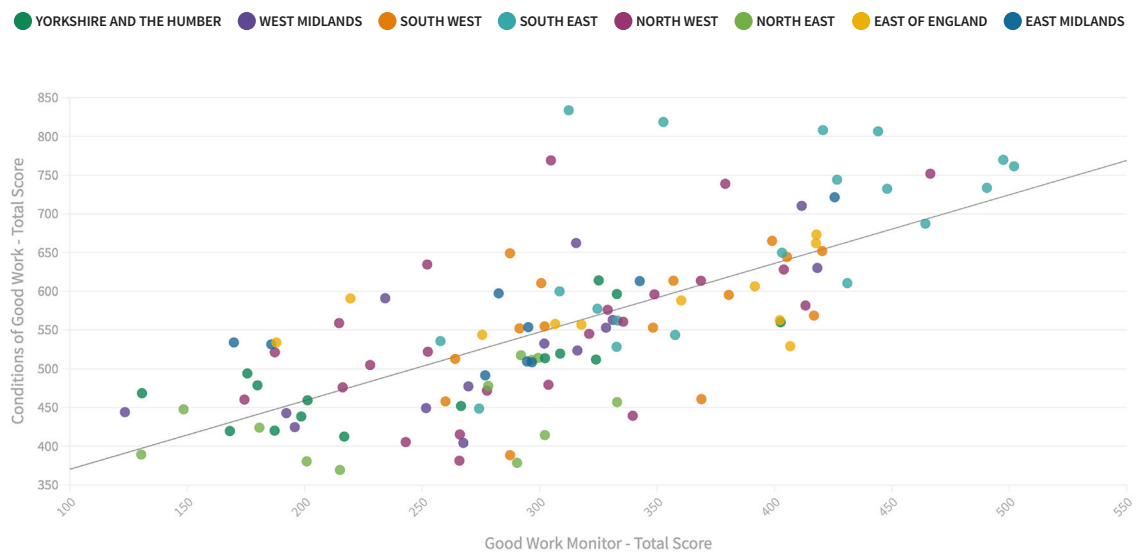
### Chapter 3 The Good Work Monitor

## Relationship with Good Work

Good work, and the social and economic conditions that underpin it as set out here are closely related. Figure 7 compares results from the Good Work Monitor, and the analysis of the conditions of good work, finding a significant positive relationship between the two measures. This is to be expected, as some Good Work Monitor features like unemployment are closely related conceptually to economic performance. Good work, strong economies, and strong communities are co-determined. They occur together, and reinforce one another.

In other words, the relationship between good work and its social and economic conditions demonstrates why good work is central to a recovery strategy, and why cross-department working and a broad range of policy expertise is needed.

**Figure 7: Good Work Monitors and combined conditions scores**



[Visit our online interactive chart for regional information](#)

Source: IFOW

## 4



## Chapter 4

### Good Work and health

## Chapter 4

# Good Work and health

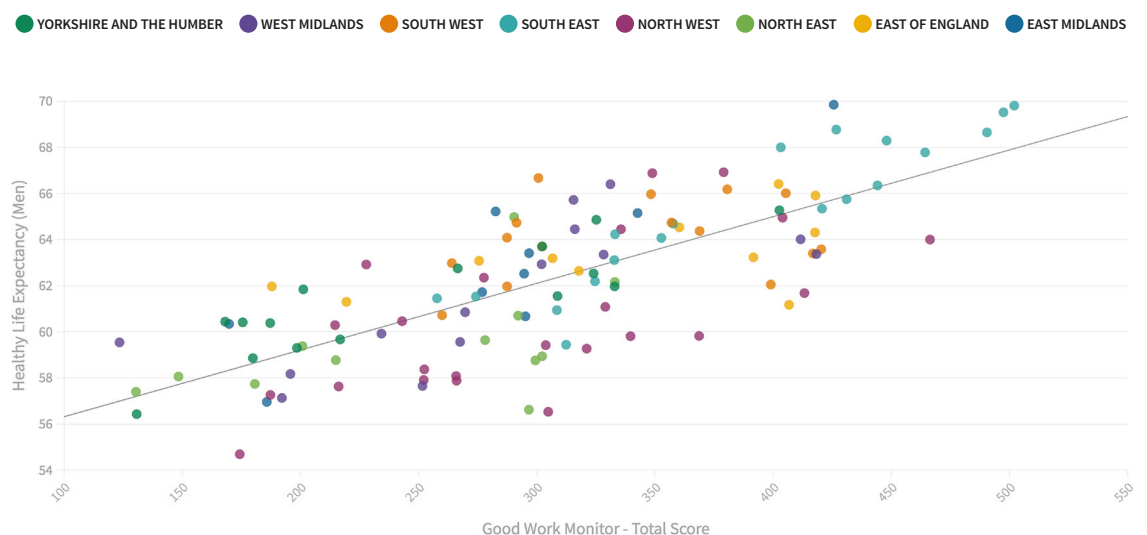
Good work is not just important for its own sake. There is a well-established relationship between work and health and wellbeing.

Good work promotes health, providing a good standard of living, sense of dignity and autonomy, the opportunity to grow and flourish, along with social networks and support. Bad work can do the opposite, locking people into working poverty and reducing their sense of security, purpose and control.

Here, we explore this relationship further, examining good work as a significant and repeated determinant of health outcomes at a local authority level. We find that there

is a strong correlation between areas that score strongly on the monitor and areas that have a high level of healthy life expectancy (the number of years of good health a person can expect to have). People living in the top scoring area, Wokingham, have over 10 more years of healthy life expectancy than people living in the lowest area on the monitor, Stoke on Trent where healthy life expectancy in men is just 59.4 years. Notwithstanding significant differences in health outcomes between the different regions of England, this pattern holds good *within* the regions of England too.

**Figure 8: Healthy life expectancy and Good Work Monitor scores across English local authorities**



[Visit our online interactive chart for regional information](#)

Source: IFOW, Health data from ONS

## Chapter 4


### Good Work and health

It also holds true that areas that rank lower on the Good Work Monitor suffer a greater burden of disease. We have mapped the monitor against the top fifteen causes of ill-health for working age people in the UK, using the Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALY) measure, a statistical estimate of the overall burden of disease caused by a specific health condition. A DALY is the sum of the number of years of life lost to a specific disease plus the number of years of disability caused, weighted by a co-efficient that measures the quality of life.

Six of these diseases show a particularly strong correlation to the absence of good work: chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, ischemic heart disease, tracheal, bronchus, and lung cancer, cirrhosis and other chronic liver diseases, drug use disorders and self-harm. At least a quarter of the variation in disease levels across the local authorities is associated

with variation in the availability of good work, as measured by the Good Work Monitor.

It's striking that half of the illnesses that strongly relate to the Good Work Monitor are what have been called 'Diseases of Despair'. In the USA, chronic liver diseases, drug use disorders and self-harm have been linked to a surprising rise in mortality among white, non-Hispanic Americans. In their research, Professors Anne Case and Sir Angus Deaton related the Diseases of Despair phenomenon to the economic and social impacts of reduced access to the labour market, leaving this population vulnerable to alcohol and drug abuse and poor mental health. This marked a reversal of a century long trajectory of improvement in health outcomes.

 [The research of Professors Anne Case and Sir Angus Deaton](#)

**Figure 9: Relationship between disease burden and the Good Work Monitor scores for English upper tier local authorities**

Disease type	Pearson correlation coefficient	R-Squared	T Statistic
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	-0.60	0.36	-8.12
Ischemic heart disease	-0.57	0.33	-7.51
Tracheal, bronchus, and lung cancer	-0.56	0.31	-7.24
Cirrhosis and other chronic liver diseases	-0.51	0.26	-6.46
Drug use disorders	-0.50	0.25	-6.24
Self-harm	-0.50	0.25	-6.15
Stroke	-0.47	0.22	-5.69
Anxiety disorders	-0.28	0.08	-3.20
Falls	-0.28	0.08	-3.13
Headache disorders	-0.25	0.06	-2.76
Depressive disorders	-0.21	0.04	-2.29
Other musculoskeletal disorders	-0.19	0.04	-2.07
Diabetes mellitus	-0.14	0.02	-1.50
Low back pain	-0.09	0.01	-0.99
Neck pain	0.01	0.00	0.13

Source: Health data from Global Burden of Disease database and IFOW calculations



## Chapter 4 Good Work and health

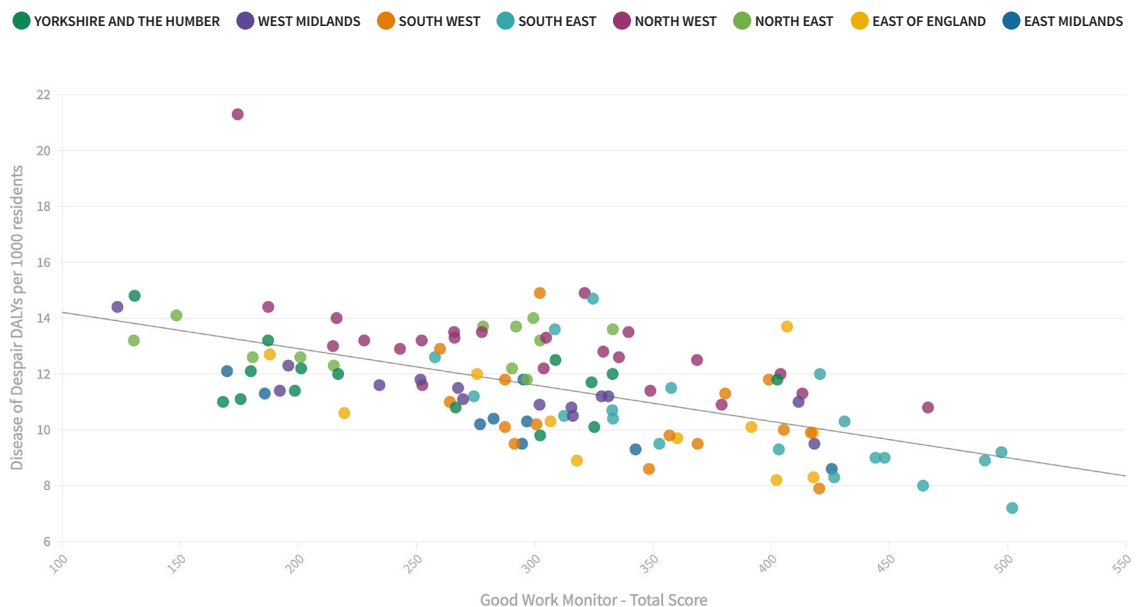
The Good Work Monitor indicates that this shocking trend may be happening in the UK, albeit to a lesser degree. This corroborates research undertaken by the Institute for Fiscal Studies as part of the Deaton Review into Inequalities in the Twenty First Century. As Figure 10 below shows, there is a notable negative correlation between the availability of good work, as measured by the Good Work Monitor, and the prevalence of diseases of despair, as measured by DALY's per 100,000 population.



[Research undertaken by the Institute for Fiscal Studies](#)

As with Good Work availability, there are significant discrepancies between the different regions of England. The North East and North West have significantly higher disease burden from Diseases of Despair compared to the rest of the country, followed by the Yorkshire and Humber region. The higher prevalence of Disease of Despair in the North of England corroborates wider narratives about economic and social challenges in these regions that have suffered most from deindustrialisation over the last few decades. Further, coastal areas seem to be particularly badly affected by these disease types, with Blackpool standing out as a significant outlier. Paying attention to Diseases of Despair is important for policy makers and public health professionals, as these can act as early warning signals for a wider range of health and social issues.

**Figure 10: Diseases of despair burden and Good Work Monitor scores**



[Visit our online interactive chart for regional information](#)

Source: Health data from Global Burden of Disease database and IFOW calculations

## 5



## Chapter 5

### The impact of Covid-19

## Chapter 5

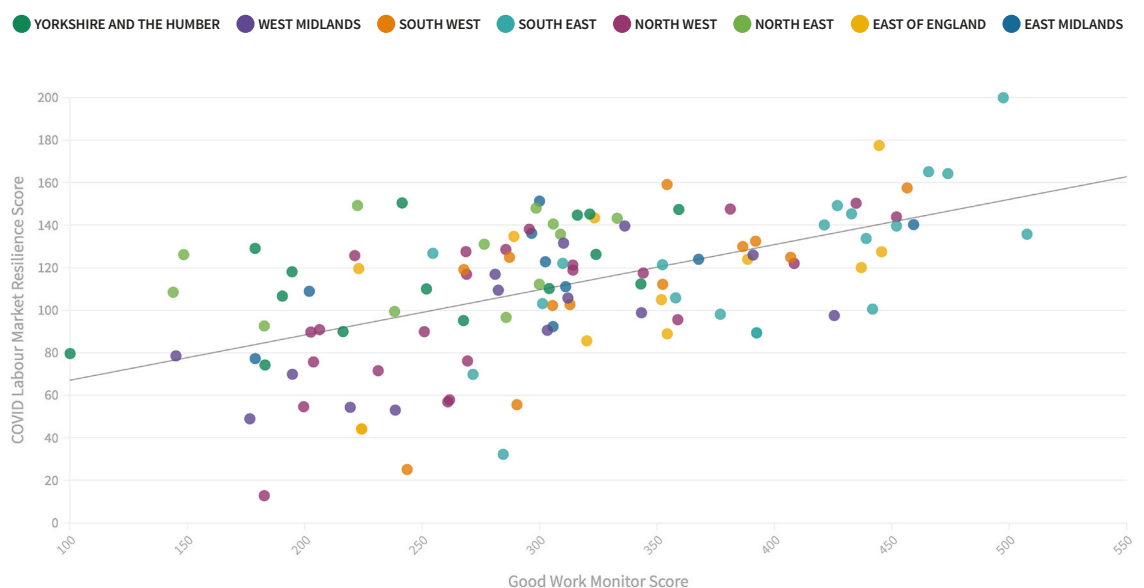
# The impact of Covid-19

Covid-19 has brought about the fastest changes to work for generations. In the first wave of the pandemic, around a third of the population was supported through furlough or Universal Credit.

The impact of the pandemic has overlaid and amplified the existing inequalities in good work that the monitor identifies. Here, we find that on average the areas with lower availability of good work pre-pandemic

have suffered a greater labour market impact, as measured by a combined index of furloughed workers and rises in universal credit claim count, both taken at the end of the first wave in June 2020.

**Figure 11: Good Work Monitor score and Covid-19 labour market impact**



[Visit our online interactive chart for regional information](#)

Source: Furlough data from ONS, Universal Credit data from DWP (IFOW Calculations). The scores on the Y-axis are calculated by taking combining data on increases in universal credit claimants between January and June 2020, and furloughing claims in June 2020, by standardising both into a common range and adding them. Higher scores indicate that the locality has been relatively less affected by Covid in labour market terms. This analysis does not include Bournemouth and Poole due to boundary changes.

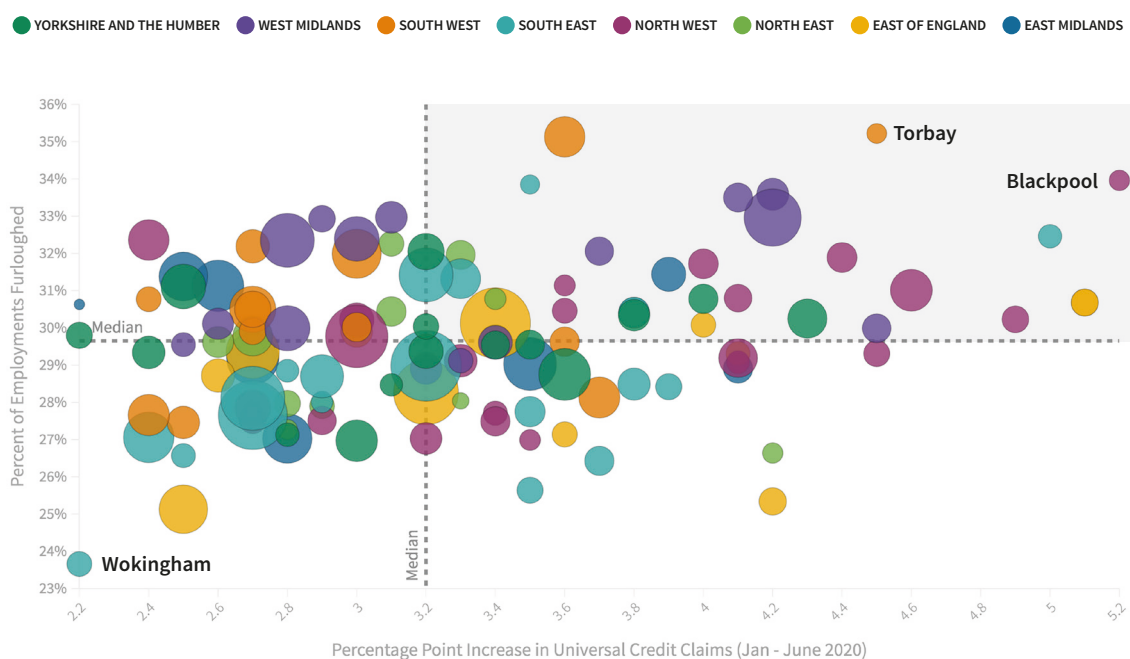
## Chapter 5

### The impact of Covid-19

For example, Blackpool, which ranks 110th on the Good Work Monitor saw a 5.2% rise in Universal Credit claims and 34% of local jobs furloughed. Meanwhile West Berkshire, which ranks 7th on the Monitor saw just a 2.5% increase in Universal Credit claims and 27% of its workforce on furlough. Figure 12 below plots rises in universal credit and furloughing following the first wave of the pandemic. Local authorities in the top right of the chart can be thought of as having suffered a double-blow from the pandemic, with above average rises in unemployment and furlough claims.

Areas with high levels of good work have generally proven more resilient to the employment impacts of the pandemic. Having been insulated from the economic and social consequences of unemployment and furlough, they will be better placed to recover from the pandemic and rebuild. Meanwhile, those already lagging on the Good Word Monitor face a further setback, with the potential to increase disparities between different parts of the country.

**Figure 12: Labour market impacts of Covid-19**  
(Bubble size represents number of total employments in that region)



[Visit our online interactive chart for regional information](#)

Source: Furlough data from ONS, Universal Credit data from DWP (IFOW Calculations)

## Chapter 5 The impact of Covid-19

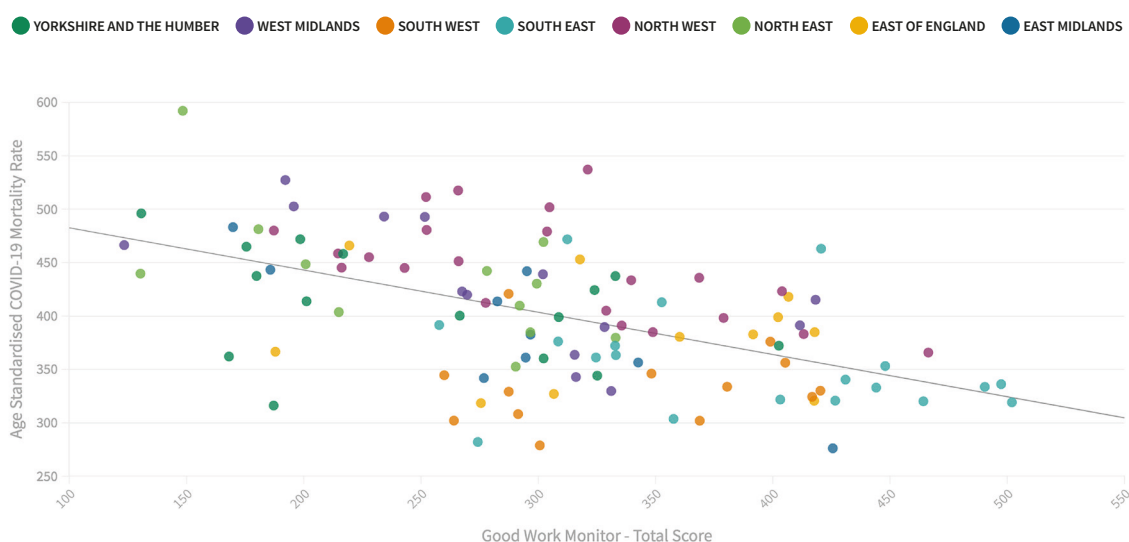
### Health outcomes of Covid-19

The relationship between health and work that the Good Work Monitor identifies has also been underscored by Covid-19. Areas with high mortality rates from Covid also tend to generally be areas with low availability of good work.

The health and economic inequalities associated with the absence of good work have clearly been amplified by the pandemic. Areas which were already lagged pre-pandemic have faced a disastrous further setback. Deep-seated challenges have been accelerated and new challenges have begun to emerge. Without concerted action, divisions we have observed across the UK will deepen. Action focused on creating future good work, on the other hand, will convert this vicious circle into a virtuous one in which the health, prosperity and resilience of communities and the country will improve.

Given this, policymakers must focus their attention and resources on areas which score lowest on the Good Work Monitor. We have found that good work is closely related to the underpinning conditions of prosperity, demand, education and inequality. It's vital that policy-makers build the social and physical infrastructures required to enable good work to flourish and create sustainable and resilient communities for the long term. The Good Work Monitor can serve as a benchmark both for the allocation of resources and for the success of these initiatives.

**Figure 13: Good Work Monitor scores and Covid-19 mortality rates across England**



[Visit our online interactive chart for regional information](#)

Source: ONS



# 6



## Chapter 6 Conclusions

## Chapter 6

# Conclusions

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We have seen that good health is a consequence of good jobs. The Good Work Monitor shows how areas that have higher levels of good work have fared better through the pandemic.

Areas where good work is scarce have suffered more deaths from Covid-19, on top of existing higher levels of diseases of despair. These areas have also been less resilient to the secondary, labour market impacts of the pandemic.

As the country builds back after Covid it's vital to address these growing inequities in work and health. Good work supports the wellbeing and flourishing of individuals and communities alike. It aligns health, social and economic interests, builds resilience and heals frayed social fabric at all levels. This will require a concerted effort by policymakers to turn an ambition of levelling up into a reality of practical measures that will achieve real changes in the areas that need it most. The Good Work Monitor offers a framework and measurements to guide and evaluate policies to level up the country.

We urge decision makers at every level of government to place good work at the centre of the recovery, knowing that it serves not only as a good in itself but as a driver of recovery. We recommend:

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### A Future Good Work Strategy

Future Good Work for all should be repositioned as a central, cross-government policy objective in 2021.

The Cabinet Office should initiate an national Work 5.0 Strategy with wide-ranging remits to create the environment and infrastructure to promote good work and build resilience. Work 5.0 should extend to all areas in the Good Work Monitor and the social and economic conditions for good work we have identified. It should cover a review and alignment of the eight existing place-based funds around the goal of good future work. The UK's national Work 5.0 Strategy should be informed by regional and local policy-makers, academics, industry and unions represented on a new Future Work Council, modelled on the Danish Disruption Council.

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### Future Good Work: a framework for levelling up the country

Levelling up the country must be a social as well as economic endeavour. Policymakers should use the Good Work Monitor as a framework to ensure Future Good Work across the country becomes the shared vision to achieve the Government's ambition to level up the country.

## Chapter 6 Conclusions

A focus on creating and sustaining good work is the most effective way of promoting health and wellbeing, mitigating striking geographic inequalities and boosting resilience across the country. This means that levelling up demands investment in social, as well as capital, infrastructures to heal deep divides across the UK. The ultimate goal of the economy – to promote wellbeing and human flourishing – should be recognised, as should the role of good work to achieve this goal. The good work and wellbeing measures in the Good Work Monitor should guide policy and the allocation of resources from now on. Targeted support for lowest scoring areas on the Good Work Monitor, will be required.

The Good Work Monitor measures, in particular the health and wellbeing outcome measures, should be integrated into policy development and evaluation of the success of levelling-up policies, adjusted as appropriate.

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### Good work standards: the ‘new norm’

National and local government should use all available policy levers to embed good work standards. Policy activism should include requiring standards for good work to raise the ‘floor’ of protection and incentives to raise the ‘bar’ of best practice.

Good work standards for government employees and contractors should be required, directly and attached to procurement contracts and services. Coronavirus assistance for employers should require good work standards in recognition of its importance to people, communities and the nation. New public employment programmes and active labour market policies aimed at building good work across the country should be prioritised in the March 2021 Budget, alongside incentives for employers to create new good jobs and improve standards. The moral, health and economic case for good work should be promoted through official channels.

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### Support the entrepreneurial local authority

National government should equip local authorities to lead and implement local ‘compacts’ across the domains of the Good Work Monitor in collaboration with others facing similar challenges, so that they are able to perform a transformative role, responding to diverse challenges at a local level.

Collaboration and peer learning should be encouraged and local authorities should not be required to pitch against each other. We hope that the ‘clusters’ identified in the Good Work Monitor should become the basis of a new conversation about devolution and innovative ways in which the Government could support entrepreneurial compacts to advance the good work agenda.

As an example, the Future of Work Commission identified the need for Work Health Corps that combined volunteer and paid community work to meet pressing local needs.

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### Expand national data collection

Good data informs good policy-making. Consistent and open data collection on all dimensions of good work should be expedited. The ONS has made strides through 2020 in collecting different types of labour market data, including three new subjective indicators on job quality based on the recommendation of the Job Quality Work Group and partnerships with online job adverts. Nevertheless, labour market statistics are largely anchored to flagship surveys that are fairly unresponsive to the rapidly changing labour market. A new level of detail on the availability and changes to the availability of good work would be welcome, building on the work of the Job Quality Working Group and extending to the domains, and areas highlighted, in the Good Work Monitor.

## Authors and acknowledgements

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