



Public sector employment and expenditure by region

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This note uses public sector employment and expenditure data to show the relative importance of the public sector to the regions and countries of the UK.

In Q1 2014:

- Northern Ireland had the highest proportion of public sector workers in the UK – 28% of employment, equivalent to 220,000 people.
- The East of England had the lowest – 15% of employment, equivalent to 415,000 people.

In 2012/13:

- Public spending per head was highest in Northern Ireland at £10,900, or £20 billion in total.
- It was lowest in the South East of England at £7,600 per head, or £67 billion in total.

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1 Public sector employment

In Q1 2014:

- There were 5.4 million people employed in the public sector, 18% of the total
- Northern Ireland had the highest proportion of public sector workers – 28%
- The East of England had the lowest – 15%
- 713,000 people in London worked in the public sector, the highest number in any region. This was 16% of people working in the region

These figures come from the quarterly ONS publication, [Public sector employment](#).

They are workplace based estimates meaning that they refer to the region in which people work, not the region in which they live.

Not all public sector employment can be identified by region, for example diplomatic staff in the Foreign Office. The UK figure includes public sector employees who cannot be assigned to a particular region.

Public sector employment as % of total employment
Q1 2014



2 Public sector expenditure

In 2012/13:

- Total public spending identifiable to a UK region totalled £560 billion, equivalent to around £8,800 per head
- Northern Ireland had the highest public spending per head, at £10,900 – £20 billion in total
- The South East of England had the lowest public spending per head – £7,600 or £67 billion in total

These data come from the HM Treasury publication, *Public Expenditure Statistical Analysis, country and regional analysis*. As in the case of public sector employment, not all public expenditure can be identified to a particular region, for example, spending on defence. In 2012/13, 79% of total public spending could be identified to a specific region.

It should also be noted that most public spending is intended to benefit certain categories of individuals and enterprises, irrespective of location. The data used here shows where these individuals and enterprises are located. It does not show the amount that is planned to benefit a certain region because only a small fraction of spending is planned on a regional basis.¹

Public spending per head, £000s
2012/13



¹ HM Treasury, *Public Expenditure Statistical Analysis 2013*, July 2013, p 109

3 Data tables

Employment

Public sector employment by country and region

Headcount, Q1 2014, not seasonally adjusted

	Number 000s	% of employment	% of UK total
North East	240	21%	4%
North West	602	19%	11%
Yorkshire and the Humber	470	19%	9%
West Midlands	351	17%	6%
East Midlands	451	18%	8%
East of England	415	15%	8%
London	713	16%	13%
South East	629	15%	12%
South West	444	17%	8%
England	4,316	17%	80%
Wales	318	24%	6%
Scotland	545	21%	10%
Northern Ireland	220	28%	4%
<i>United Kingdom</i>	<i>5,423</i>	<i>18%</i>	<i>100%</i>

Source: ONS, *Public sector employment statistical bulletin*, Table 6

Note: UK total includes employees not allocated to a region

Expenditure

Public sector employment by country and region

Headcount, Q1 2014, not seasonally adjusted

	Number 000s	% of employment	% of UK total
North East	240	21%	4%
North West	602	19%	11%
Yorkshire and the Humber	470	19%	9%
West Midlands	351	17%	6%
East Midlands	451	18%	8%
East of England	415	15%	8%
London	713	16%	13%
South East	629	15%	12%
South West	444	17%	8%
England	4,316	17%	80%
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Workplace based estimates