



# SOUTH YORKSHIRE SUB-REGIONAL REPORT

2025

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# 1 — INTRODUCTION

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Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) and University of Sheffield (UoS) host the South Yorkshire Y-PERN team. The SHU team are based in the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research (CRESR) and comprise of two policy fellows, Elizabeth Sanderson and Dr Jamie Redman, Professor Peter Wells, who sits on the Y-PERN Academic Steering Committee, and Dr Rich Crisp, who is also a Co-investigator of the Yorkshire Policy Innovation Partnership (YPIP).

They work closely with CRESR colleagues and academics and knowledge exchange professionals across the University, including Professor Sarah Pearson, Director of the Social and Economic Research Institute, and Dr Sarah Molton, Associate Director of Innovation, Social Sciences at SHU.

Y-PERN is represented at UoS by a policy fellow, Dr Dan Olnier, and Professor Vania Sena, Chair of Entrepreneurship and Enterprise within the University's Management School. Dr Olnier is embedded within the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA), while Professor Sena sits both on the Y-PERN Academic Steering Group and is also a Co-Investigator on YPIP. They both work with Yasmin Knight, Assistant Director for Regional Engagement and Innovation at UoS, and her team.

# 2 —

## Y-PERN WORK UNDERTAKEN IN SOUTH YORKSHIRE SO FAR

The teams at SHU and University of UoS have been working in collaboration with several policy makers and researchers at SYMCA on a regular basis since Y-PERN commenced. Our work has sought to move from a reactive contract research model to create an infrastructure for joint SHU/ UoS and SYMCA working over long term strategic development. This has included: providing evidence to support priorities, providing critical challenge, enriching data analysis, and deepening relationships between SYMCA, SHU and UoS, including by embedding Y-PERN staff into SYMCA to work alongside their officers.



The Y-PERN model has opened up ways to test novel academic/policy working methods. SYMCA's Head of Growth and Skills Policy, Alice Rubbra, has written a blog capturing the key benefits of this approach ([see here](#)). Y-PERN has provided easily quantifiable benefits for SYMCA, such as loaning of skillsets where capacity is limited, traditional knowledge transfer and co-production of outputs - but of equal value have been more informal and implicit policy outcomes that emerged through close, continuous collaboration.

SHU initial policy engagement work focused on working with SYMCA colleagues to develop an

agenda to investigate and improve job quality in South Yorkshire. This was in response to the South Yorkshire Mayor's 2022 manifesto's aim to tackle poor job quality as part of a broader commitment to building 'a better not just bigger economy'. A summary of the agenda can be found [here](#). UoS initial engagement began with secondment into the SYMCA office to support their policy team with the evidence base for the Mayor's policy priorities. This involved networking with each team in SYMCA to understand their evidence use and working together to collate these into a series of policy and data two-pagers for internal use.

Priority areas for SYMCA colleagues, however, then moved on and two specific strands to policy engagement work developed between SYMCA and SHU/UoS colleagues.

Above:  
People Place Policy  
Conference 2024  
at Sheffield Hallam  
University

# 3 — SUPPORTING A SKILLS STRATEGY FOR SOUTH YORKSHIRE

First, SHU/UoS colleagues were actively involved in supporting the development of SYMCA's current Skills Strategy. This consisted of the following activities:

- An evidence briefing on skills and labour market eco-systems
- An evidence briefing on the current level of economic inactivity and support available for inactive populations in South Yorkshire
- A series of workshops feeding into Skills Strategy design
- Data analysis to produce some key numbers for the Skills Strategy, including estimating South Yorkshire's earnings and qualifications relationship and estimating the region's skill and occupational differences to the rest of the UK.

Below:  
People Place Policy  
Conference 2024  
at Sheffield Hallam  
University

Following publication of the Skills Strategy, the team at SHU then produced a report assessing evidence on the effectiveness of a range of interventions which could be funded or supported under the Strategy. The report is intended to inform partnership discussion and commissioning activity.

The Skills Strategy sets out three 'Missions' which the evidence review took as a starting point:

- 1.** Move those far from the labour market into work or ready for work
- 2.** Raise attainment of core knowledge and skills
- 3.** Increase the supply of a high-skilled workforce.

Under each of the missions the report presents key trends at local, regional and national levels,

seeks to understand barriers facing individuals and firms in achieving outcomes related to each mission, and presents evidence of effective interventions. The report then presents a series of implications for SYMCA and its partners. The following section gives a flavour of the report content.





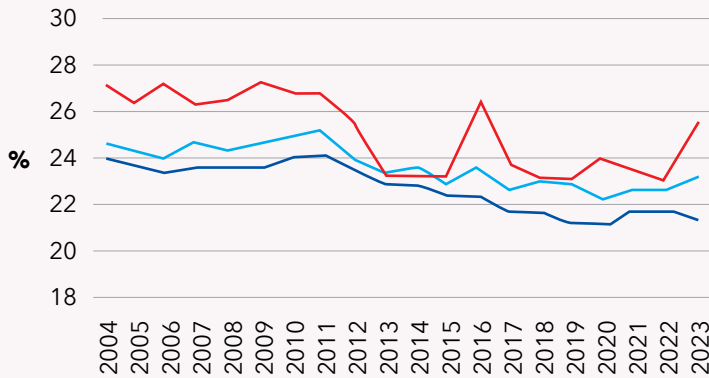
# EVIDENCE REVIEW: SOUTH YORKSHIRE SKILLS STRATEGY TRENDS

The report explores three key trends shaping the labour market in South Yorkshire: trends in economic inactivity, trends in qualification levels and trends in job related training.

### Key

- UK
- Yorkshire and The Humber
- South Yorkshire

## Economic Inactivity



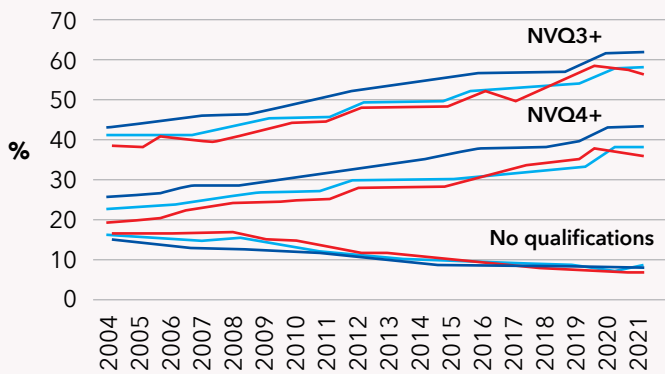
Source: ONS Annual Population Survey (APS) (yearly Jan-Dec, 2004-23), aged 16-24

High rates of economic inactivity not a new phenomenon to the UK. Increases following pandemic onset largely driven by those aged 50-64 and 16-24.

Last two decades: rate in South Yorkshire generally greater than nationally and in Yorkshire and The Humber.

Numbers of long-term sick continue to rise to a record level of 2.83 million in Feb 24 (UK, Labour Force Survey).

## Qualifications



Source: ONS APS (yearly Jan-Dec, 2004-21), aged 16-64

Improving levels of qualification, although pandemic disrupted trends.

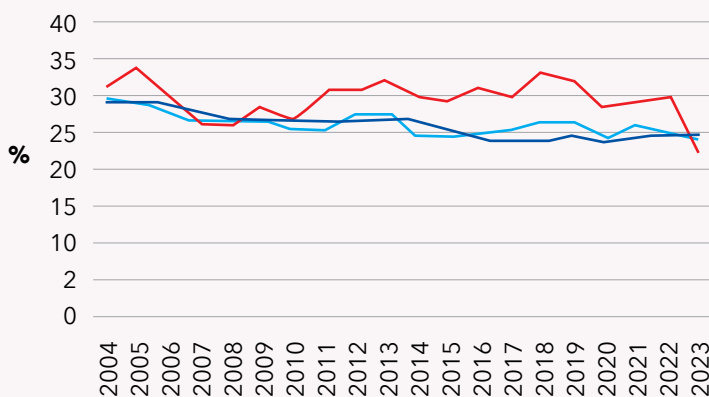
Improvements generally lower in South Yorkshire than nationally.

	%	RQF4+	RQF3+	None
2022	UK	45.5	66.7	7.0
	Y&H	38.9	62.8	8.0
	SY	38.3	54.1	7.0
2023	UK	47.1	67.7	6.6
	Y&H	41.2	64.8	7.6
	SY	38.4	62.7	10.9

Rates achieving Level 2 in English and Maths by 19 years old also rose nationally, regionally, and subregionally until around 2016/17 when these started to stabilise before rising again in 2020-21.

Source: ONS APS (yearly Jan-Dec, 2022-21), aged 16-64

## Job-related training



Job related training appears to be falling in recent years in South Yorkshire.

Employer Skills Survey (2022) results also point to decreases in training: 60% of employers in England had funded or arranged training for staff over the previous 12 months, a decrease from 66% in 2017.

The proportion had also fallen in Yorkshire and The Humber (from 66% to 58%).

South Yorkshire figures only available for 2022 (60%).

## BARRIERS

To better facilitate understanding of the multiple and complex barriers facing jobseekers and/or learners, the report draws on existing literature (see Kenyon et al., 2022: 24-6) to develop a four-type barrier framework.

- 1. Situational barriers** arising from personal and family circumstances.
- 2. Dispositional barriers** arising from the attitudes, perceptions and expectations that people themselves bring to education, training or job opportunities.
- 3. Institutional barriers** arising from incompetence and/or poor practice present within current structures or systems of support.
- 4. Financial barriers** arising from insufficient disposable income, which may limit access to opportunity.

The table shows how these barriers align with the three missions in the Skills Strategy:

### Key

- One Mission
- Two Missions
- Three Missions

	Mission 1	Mission 2	Mission 3
<b>Situational</b> Personal + family circumstances	Disability/long-term sickness		
	Caring responsibilities		
	Severe or multiple needs (e.g. care experience, trauma, drug or alcohol use, homelessness, offending)		
		Difficult to fit learning around existing work commitments	
<b>Dispositional</b> Attitudes, perceptions and expectations of jobseeker/learner	Cultural attitudes towards some paid work	Poor initial experiences of compulsory education	
	Inability or unwillingness to meet required competencies	Lack of interest in learning	
	Lack of interest in 'poor' jobs e.g. low wage, low status and/or precarious	Concerns around competence to learn ('too old' or 'too stupid')	Decline in 'optimism' among young people
		Poor parental experiences of learning	
<b>Institutional</b> Incompetence and/or malfeasance present within current systems of support	Exclusion from formal pathways into employment or education (e.g. due to race, class, disability)		Racial or sexual harassment
	Labour market discrimination	Lack of information about opportunities	
	Lack of wraparound support (e.g. housing)	Employer reluctance (cost or unwillingness)	
	Ineligibility for employment support	Ineffective teaching styles	Low status of tech'l education
		Inflexible provision	Requirement for L2 quals
			Administrative burdens associated with disability
<b>Financial</b> Monetary barriers	Lack of access to suitable childcare		
	Travel costs		
	Insufficient income to meet basic needs	Cost of learning materials	
	Other poverty/unemployment traps	Rising cost of living	
			Low apprenticeship wages

## EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT SKILLS STRATEGY MISSIONS

### Mission 1: Moving People into Work

There is good evidence that the types of interventions in the table below are effective in overcoming barriers faced by people distant from the labour market. Support is most effective when: it is personalised to the needs of people, integrated and addresses multiple challenges (notably around health), provided by a key worker with a dedicated case load, and accessible. There is less consistent evidence around: in-work support; intermediate and temporary wage subsidy approaches; work experience and volunteering; and participant engagement. These features may be more important for particular groups and at particular points in the economic cycle.

Element	Key intervention examples
<b>Personalised:</b> learner-led, tailored to needs, holistic, flexible, voluntary	Working for Health (Blackpool); Out-of- Work (Wales)
<b>Integrated:</b> addresses complexity of need, integrated with adjacent support services especially health services, timely	Employment Advisers in IAPT/Talking Therapies (Eng); Communities for Work (Wales); Working Well Early Help (Greater Man); Working Win (SY)
<b>Key-worker model:</b> trusted, consistent advisors, skilled, well-trained, well- connected	Talent Match (Eng)
<b>Accessible:</b> effective promotion, outreach, appropriate premises, clear and effective referral pathways	Talent Match (Eng) Building Better Opportunities (Eng)

### Mission 2: Core knowledge and skills

There is at least consistent evidence that the following types of support can engage people to build core knowledge and skills. The main actions recommended include: subsidising costs (such as childcare and travel) to support training and employment uptake; providing integrated, wrap-

around support (such as housing support or debt counselling); and providing flexible and first steps support alongside keyworker/coaching support to engage some groups.

Element	Key intervention examples
<b>Subsidising costs:</b> Paying course fees, childcare or travel; incentives to employers can increase uptake	Cost and Outreach Pilots; Tackling Multiple Disadvantage; Your Work Your Way
<b>Integrated, wrap-around support:</b> e.g. debt, childcare, housing support alongside learner provision	Citizens Curriculum, Test and Learn Pilots, Skills for Life, WEA, Tackling Multiple disadvantage
<b>Flexible delivery models can engage hard to reach:</b> e.g. first steps, online, out-of-hours, modular/short courses; keyworker/coaching; family/community learning. Some models costly and some learners prefer in-person approaches	Citizens Curriculum, Test and Learn Pilots (Liverpool City Region), Skills for Life, WEA, Tackling Multiple disadvantage

### Mission 3: High Skilled Workforce

We generally found less clear evidence around supporting people to attain high level qualifications (from Level 3 and above). The evidence that does exist suggests the design of interventions around four main areas: provision of high quality information, advice and guidance which signals the benefits of different employment pathways (for instance through apprenticeships), improving access to level 3 and above qualifications through subsidy of key courses and development of systems such as 'microcredentialisation' as standard; working to promote learning pathways suited to the needs and aspirations of individual learners; and work to shape employer behaviours and practices, for instance through sector and cluster level support on skills utilisation.

# 4 — SUPPORTING SOUTH YORKSHIRE'S PLAN FOR GOOD GROWTH

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The second strand of policy engagement work has focused on supporting the development of SYMCA's [Plan for Good Growth](#).

UoS colleagues undertook analysis work for SYMCA's growth plan development, focusing on data and modelling to understand South Yorkshire's economic position in relation to the rest of the UK, especially for sectors. SYMCA's policy priority was to understand South Yorkshire's sectoral history, strengths and weaknesses. This was done by developing novel analysis and visualisations that were designed to make insights as accessible to policymakers as possible. These open data and methods have been used to develop a repository of regional analysis tools, including interactive visualisations. UoS colleagues plan to disseminate, test and refine this work to maximise its wider use (more on this, including examples and links, below).

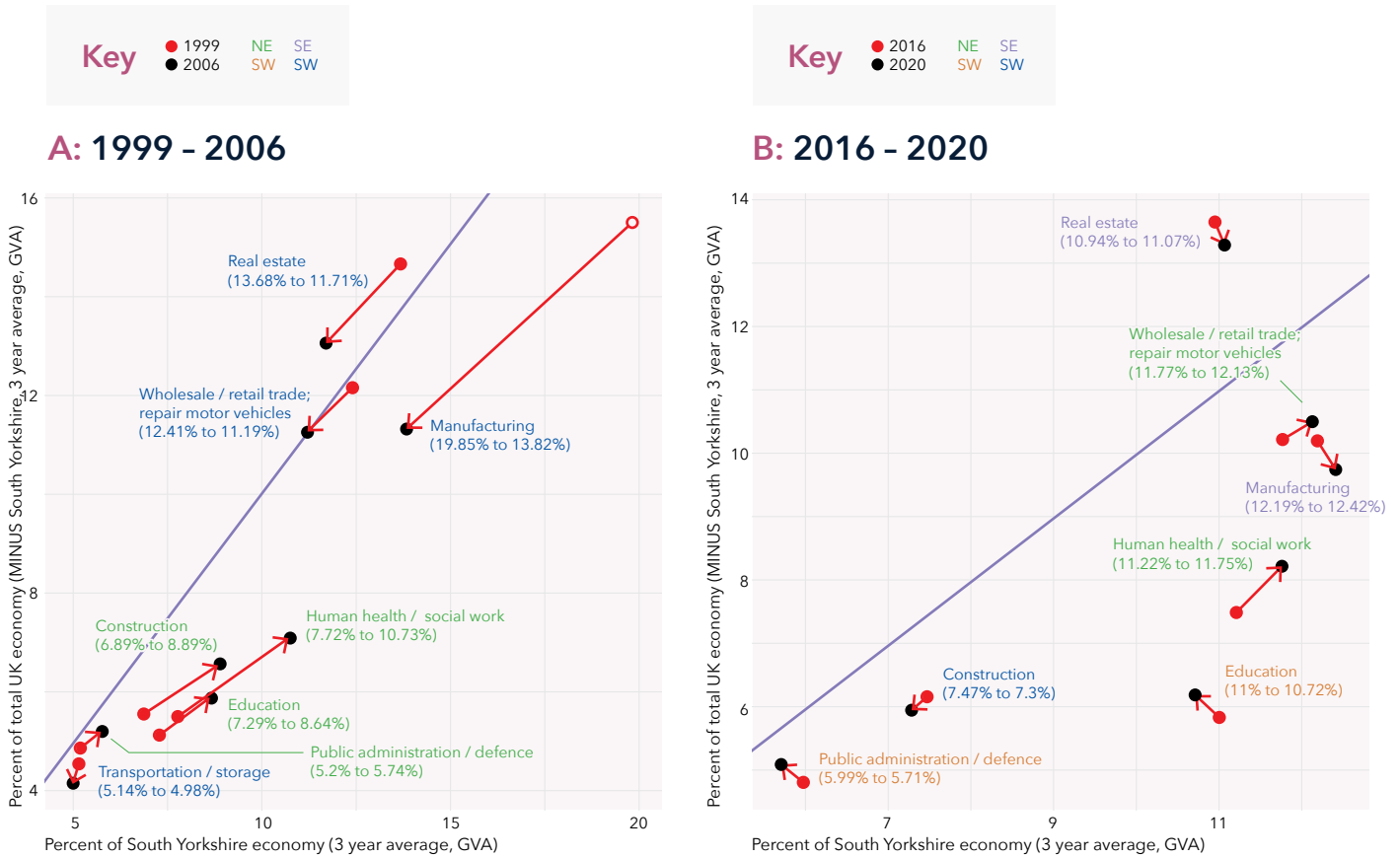
Work included presenting ongoing data analysis about South Yorkshire's economic structure both within SYMCA and to SYMCA's partners in the 'growth group' that includes all four South Yorkshire's local authorities and representatives from Sheffield's two universities. UoS colleagues also worked with consultants employed by SYMCA (Metro Dynamics) and met regularly with other external partners such as the Centre for Thriving Places and the Centre for Local Economic Strategies.

SYMCA requested Y-PERN's sector data analysis be summarised in an accessible 'two pager' for their website, which can be viewed [here](#). Y-PERN

**“[University of Sheffield] colleagues undertook analysis work for SYMCA's growth plan development, focusing on data and modelling to understand South Yorkshire's economic position in relation to the rest of the UK, especially for sectors.”**

contributed two key aspects: a clear story about South Yorkshire's structural economic history, and an examination of where growth has been most significant in more recent years. Earlier data back to 1998 showed how South Yorkshire's historically strong sectors have been exactly those that declined relative to the rest of the UK, especially in manufacturing - but that more recent years have seen this picture begin to shift back (see figure 1 description for full explanat).

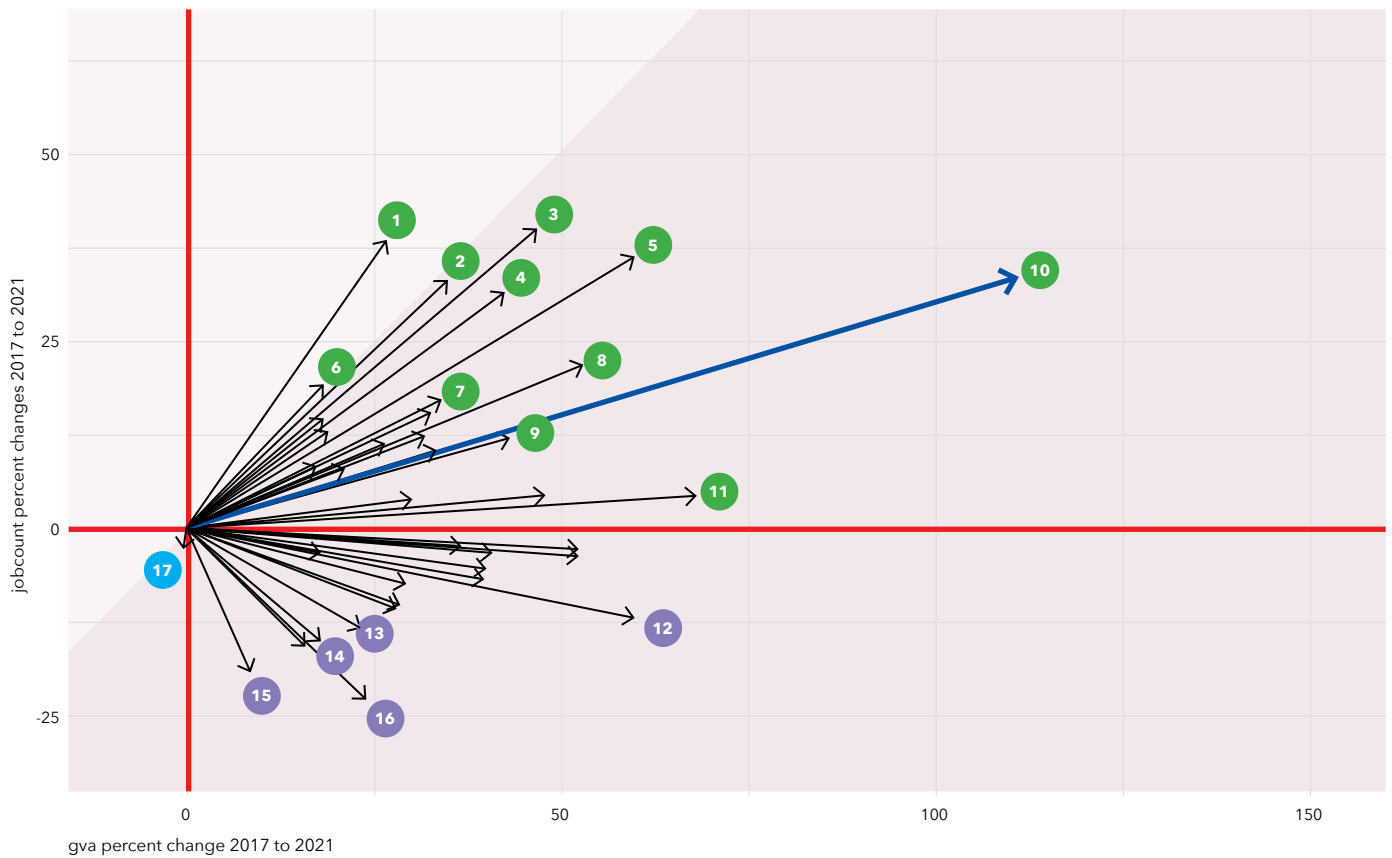




**Figure 1:** South Yorkshire’s historic sector change compared to the rest of the UK, two time periods

How have South Yorkshire’s economic sectors changed historically? This plot shows the percentage of South Yorkshire’s economy these sectors make up on the bottom axis (showing those that were more than 5% of the economy at the time) and, on the vertical axis, compares that to the percentage in the rest of the UK. Each plot does this for two time periods. (A) shows the large structural change that happened in the earliest period of this data (between the 1998-2000 average and 2005-2007 av - the arrows point between those times). For example, it can be seen that manufacturing declined as a proportion of both SY’s and the UK’s economy (the arrow is pointing ‘south west’) - but it is to the right of diagonal line, so manufacturing was and is a larger part of South Yorkshire. The decline thus had a more severe economic impact than in the UK as a whole. Plot (B) looks at a shorter, more recent period where manufacturing has seen a turnaround in its direction - beginning to grow again as a proportion of South Yorkshire’s economy even while shrinking elsewhere in the UK on average (arrow goes ‘south east’). Analysis elsewhere shows that South Yorkshire is one of the few places where both output and job numbers are increasing in manufacturing.

The ICT sector, while not highly concentrated in South Yorkshire, has seen remarkable growth in recent years compared to elsewhere, and stayed resilient through the pandemic. The figure below shows ICT percent growth from 2017 to 2021 (smoothed average) to illustrate this point. ICT has been growing nationally (all arrows point to the right), but South Yorkshire (in blue) has had significantly higher GVA and jobs growth than elsewhere (statistical comparisons were done; see 2 pager). Arrows in the dark diagonal section of the plot show places where productivity (GVA per job, shown in the labels) increased. A portion of places increased productivity while increasing both GVA and job count. Another chunk (all those pointing ‘south east’) grew both productivity and GVA while job counts *dropped*. South Yorkshire was not one of these: it has GVA and jobs growth combined, with productivity per job rising. ICT is a stand out story because of its significantly stronger growth in South Yorkshire compared to other places. Manufacturing has also grown, but it is much less clear that it stands out compared to other places.



**Figure 2:** ICT percent change over time for ITL2 zones - GVA vs jobs

ICT percent change over time for ITL2 zones - GVA vs jobs. South Yorkshire highlighted in blue. Arrows in dark diagonal section saw productivity (GVA per job) grow, with different mixes of GVA and job growth and shrinkage, e.g. ‘South East’ arrows with purple labels saw GVA and productivity grow overall while job numbers dropped. The pink diagonal marks where productivity (in gva per job) has increased/decreased.

As well as the sector analysis, UoS colleagues contributed to other Growth Plan sections, including an initial draft of a ‘Growth Context’ section, exploring potential challenges to growth in South Yorkshire. Y-PERN also took part in two sessions exploring data for metrics and monitoring with the ONS Local team and a range of other LAs and MCAs from across the UK, including Greater Manchester

**Key** NE SE SW

- 1 North Yorkshire (gva/job: 72.37 << 66.42)\*
- 2 East Yorkshire & North Yorkshire (gva/job: 59.17 >> 60.08)\*
- 3 Herefordshire, Worcestershire & Warwickshire (gva/job: 73.25 >> 76.83)\*
- 4 West Yorkshire (gva/job: 76.8 >> 83.29)\*
- 5 Shropshire & Staffordshire (gva/job: 69.07 >> 66.42)\*
- 6 Inner London - West (gva/job: 133.7 << 133.07)\*
- 7 Highlands & Islands (gva/job: 68.23 >> 78.55)\*
- 8 West Midlands (gva/job: 76.8 >> 104.77)\*
- 9 Lincolnshire (gva/job: 53.51 >> 68.32)\*
- 10 South Yorkshire (gva/job: 60.45 >> 95.68)\*
- 11 Greater Manchester (gva/job: 64.89 >> 104.92)\*
- 12 East Wales (gva/job: 32.64 >> 59.46)\*
- 13 Devon (gva/job: 60.06 >> 83.91)\*
- 14 Hampshire & Isle of Wight (gva/job: 88.72 >> 122.58)\*
- 15 Outer London - South (gva/job: 80.49 >> 108.65)\*
- 16 Cumbria (gva/job: 46.97 >> 75.83)\*
- 17 Outer London - West & North West (gva/job: 114.22 >> 148.47)\*

\*gva/job units: £1000s

# 5 —

## BUILDING ON THE SYMCA REGIONAL ECONOMIC ANALYSIS TOOLS

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UoS sectoral analysis work for SYMCA is using open data and methods, with a plan to disseminate, test and refine the tools developed, as previous regional growth plans segue into the more coordinated 'Local Growth Plan' approach being led by the new Labour government from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (previously DLUHC).

Local and Mayoral authorities are facing the same list of regional economic questions, and the same challenges answering them, including "skills gaps in the policy making process [that] lead to overreliance on consultants, preventing in-house skill development" (Centre for Cities, 'LA Evidential', 2024). Open data and methods are being used successfully to help address some of these issues in areas like transport modelling (see e.g. [bit.ly/cycleimpact](https://bit.ly/cycleimpact)), crucially providing ways for open collaboration and improvement, but there is still a long way to develop capacity. UoS colleagues plan to build on the SYMCA work to explore ways to contribute to this.

Commentary, code and analysis is being collated on a book-style website - see [bit.ly/regionalecontools](https://bit.ly/regionalecontools).

Small prototype SYMCA and Y-PERN technical sessions have been taking place to test co-learning and teaching to improve technical capacity (in, for example, R programming, powerBI and economic methods).

**“UoS sectoral analysis work for SYMCA is using open data and methods, with a plan to disseminate, test and refine the tools developed.”**

## 6 — POLICY FORUMS

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Work has also focused on deepening the relationship between SYMCA and Sheffield's two universities by working together to create **a programme of joint institutional activities**. Specifically, we have been developing a series of policy forums where academics and policymakers can come together to discuss ideas and policy priorities.

February 2024 saw the first session, which focused on alternative approaches to urban economic development. This saw SHU YPIP lead Richard Crisp discuss a paper he has co-authored titled "Beyond GDP' in cities: Assessing alternative approaches to urban economic development" and follow on work examining how these ideas are being understood, adopted, revised and implemented in different urban contexts. A blog post summarising this work in relation to Yorkshire and the Humber can be found [here](#). Forum attendees then discussed how the diverse range of economic ideas covered works (or does not work) at a local level. UoS Y-PERN Policy Fellow Dan Olnier has summarised the themes that came up in this blog post.

A further policy forum that was held in June focused on the evidence base related to the newly published Skills Strategy. Here, SHU Y-PERN Policy Fellows Jamie Redman and Elizabeth Sanderson presented a summary of the evidence review report discussed above. Discussion then focused on gaps in the evidence and possible research priorities for the coming year.

## 7 — WIDER ENGAGEMENT

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In response to the 2023 Autumn Statement, SHU colleagues produced a [blog post](#) examining the then government's strategy to tackle economic inactivity via their latest 'Back to Work plan', underpinned by a 'stricter benefit regime'.

In June 2024 a panel session took place at the People, Place and Policy (PPP) Annual Conference on: University policy engagement – a critical exploration and examination. This session was convened by SHU Y-PERN lead Peter Wells. The panel consisted of UoS Y-PERN Policy Fellow Dan Olnier, Y-PERN Chief Policy Fellow Andy Mycock, Y-PERN Senior Programme Manager Kayleigh Renberg-Fawcett, and Health and Wellbeing Manager at Darnall Well Being Waqas Hameed.

A series of meetings also took place between SYMCA colleagues, senior Y-PERN members and policy fellows, to find better ways to explore policy-relevant economic ideas. Two workshops are being planned for the coming months. These meetings also led to a blog post by SYMCA's Head of Growth and Skills policy, Alice Rubbra, on "the relationship between policymaking and research: how it works" (and doesn't). It can be read [here](#).

## 8 —

# APPLYING SOUTH YORKSHIRE FOCUSED WORK TO THE WIDER REGION

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The Skills Strategy evidence review report, discussed above, considered trends at a regional (Yorkshire and The Humber) and national level in addition to South Yorkshire. The evidence on barriers and interventions discussed in the report also takes a higher-level focus e.g. includes national and, in some instances, international evidence. There may be scope to make the review, or parts of the review, available to other MCAs in the region.

The Policy Forums to date have been nested in SYMCA. There may be scope to include colleagues from the wider Yorkshire and Humber region (including colleagues from other Combined and Local authorities) in future sessions, and to host sessions in university and other locations.

SHU Y-PERN Policy Fellow Jamie Redman is also involved in discussions with colleagues at Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission around the development of their 'skills flagship project' which could potentially be an avenue for applying South Yorkshire focused work to the wider region.

The networking aim of the 'open data and methods for regional economic analysis' project will explicitly aim to develop wider-region links. The goal is for two-way dialogue, presenting and testing developed tools, and receiving feedback on what tools work, what don't, what is missing, how to help develop a shared collective view of regional economic reality, and more broadly to better understand what capacity barriers exist and how realistically to contribute to lowering them.

**“ The networking aim of the ‘open data and methods for regional economic analysis’ project will explicitly aim to develop wider-region links.”**



# 9 — NEXT STEPS FOR Y-PERN WORK IN SOUTH YORKSHIRE

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SHU and SYMCA colleagues have been discussing shared research priorities for the upcoming year. At the time of writing the following two areas are considered key priorities:

- A short piece of work on the impact of travel subsidies in increasing the uptake in skills education and training among the 16+ population.
- A more in-depth piece on productivity, skills and the nature of good work in the Foundational Economy (FE). This work is at currently at the scoping phase and is likely to use a mixed methods approach to explore opportunities for increasing productivity in sectors in the FE where low-skilled, low-waged work predominates, and to understand the potential to drive up the quality of work through productivity improvements. This will align closely with parallel research and knowledge exchange activity being undertaken through Y-PIP on inclusive business practices, in terms of how productivity improvements (e.g. through the use of new technology or job/workplace design) can generate better jobs and more inclusive workplaces.

**“The SHU team are currently finalising the proposal for research on the Foundational Economy, working closely with Sheffield City Council.”**

The SHU team are currently finalising the proposal for research on the Foundational Economy, working closely with Sheffield City Council. This has obvious links with the Y-PIP work being led by SHU on Inclusive Business and Inclusive Growth so there may also be scope to develop some joint or complementary work here.

The intention for the policy forum series is to hold two to three sessions over the next 6 to 9 months. Preliminary ideas for these workshop sessions include: understanding the graduate labour market and supporting its contribution to South Yorkshire; improving inclusion outcomes within SYMCA and within South Yorkshire; and active travel and open data.

UoS and SYMCA colleagues are currently planning to collaborate on the following:

- Continuing to develop open data, tools and methods in dialogue with SYMCA policymakers, as outlined above, with a plan to network with others beyond SYMCA to test and improve this approach. As with the Growth Plan work, this project will focus on regional economic analysis, especially productivity.
- Completing a Growth Plan related project, currently titled, "South Yorkshire sectors: the economic impact of new jobs, including in low carbon jobs". This project links the ONS 'Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy' dataset to GVA and jobs data, to explore the growth potential of 'green tech' in the context of South Yorkshire's wider economy.
- Continuing to work with SYMCA as they collaborate with central government on the new 'Local Growth Plan' direction.
- Formalising the SYMCA research relationship, as a way to support sustainability beyond Y-PERN's official end. This could include, for example, developing South Yorkshire level 'Areas of Research Interest' and linking into universities, and building on the advantages of having a Y-PERN Policy Fellow embedded in SYMCA to examine how to strengthen relationships, define the role more clearly and align incentives across regional government and academia.

UoS colleagues also have a collaborator in SYMCA to work on a co-produced paper with two key aims: to gather and present evidence and obstacles to the open regional economic data work discussed above, including a case study based on Y-PERN and SYMCA's work; to test co-production of a paper between regional policymakers and academics. An initial draft is timetabled for January 2025. There is a potential Y-PIP link to SYMCA work on inclusion (mentioned above as a potential upcoming policy forum) in the space between data policy and citizen engagement and finding ways to bring citizens democratically closer to the data that affects them. Liverpool Civic Data Coop is one model; Sheffield experiments around citizen mapping, funded by SY ICB, are ongoing, and might connect with SYMCA goals to get closer to the ground with skills policy. SYMCA itself aims to "do politics differently" and this may be one possible way to do that. Previous experiments in citizen-led metrics that fed into inclusive economy thinking may be another model.

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