

LOCAL ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

Welcome to Dorset Council's local economic assessment page, designed to provide you with a series of bulletins to give an overview of Dorset's economy and labour market together with links to other key documents you may find useful.

Please let us know if there's anything else you'd like to see on this page that is currently missing.

Key points

- Uncertainties continue in the UK economy, which has been performing below expectation since the Brexit referendum in 2016. In Dorset, GVA per resident head remains below the average for the UK and for most parts of the South West.
- Unemployment remains low in Dorset and employment is relatively high.
- There is an output gap between Dorset and the UK as we produce less per hour than the average.
- Dorset's economy is valued at £7 billion but growth over the last five years has lagged the UK.
- Dorset's faster growing sectors included: ICT (including film/TV etc as well as computer services); Other services (ie personal services supporting the population); Professional/scientific/technical services.
- Dorset has around 20,000 local business units. There has been growth in business, but not as much as nationally.
- 18% of Dorset's economically active population is self-employed – above the national average.
- Dorset has about 153,000 employees in employment, but many workers are in low pay sectors such as accommodation and food services where we have above-average representation.
- Employee representation is below average in high-pay sectors such as ICT and financial services.
- Dorset has a net commuting loss with key destinations being Poole, Wiltshire and the New Forest.
- Full time earnings are below average in Dorset.
- Representation of higher-level skills (HNC level and above) in Dorset's workforce is below average – and business demand for these skills is rising.
- Apprenticeships are more popular in Dorset than nationally but starts have fallen significantly both nationally and locally.
- Whilst there has been improvement, Dorset scores below the South West average for Early Years Foundation Stage development; Key Stage 2 reading, writing and maths tests; Attainment 8 score; and Average Points Score for A levels.
- Whilst most parts of Dorset are not deprived, ten of our neighbourhoods are in the 20% most deprived areas nationally. Nine of these are in Weymouth & Portland.
- Different aspects of deprivation can be measured.
 - 20 of Dorset's neighbourhoods are in the 20% most deprived areas nationally for education.
 - 46 of Dorset's neighbourhoods are in the 20% most deprived areas nationally for barriers to housing and local services – this reflects rurality and distance from services.

- Seven of Dorset's neighbourhoods – all in Weymouth & Portland – are in the 20% most income-deprived areas nationally. Employment deprivation tends to be in the more urban areas.
- The contribution of the natural environment to Dorset's economy is often overlooked, but it attracts people to visit, to live and to work.
- As well as enhancing quality of life, our environmental economy is worth at least £900million a year.
- Dorset is a desirable place to live. With high house prices and low earnings, affordability is an issue and home ownership among younger people is low.
- Dorset local authorities are working to improve digital and physical connectivity and counteract the impacts of climate change on the transport network.
- With a focus on the environment and ensuring that economic growth benefits everyone, Dorset aims to address productivity issues by attracting inward investment, developing sectors and skills, improving infrastructure and developing the Dorset Innovation Park.

Reports

- Our communities topic report – Economic Overview update, March 2019
- Our communities topic report – Competitive Dorset, March 2019
- Our communities topic report – Dorset Business, March 2019
- Our communities topic report – Dorset Labour Market, March 2019
- Our communities topic report – Dorset Skills, March 2019
- Our communities topic report – Dorset Environment, March 2019
- Our communities topic report – Dorset Housing and Infrastructure, March 2019
- Our communities topic report – Inclusive Dorset, March 2019
- Dorset LEA Economic Overview commentary for the wider Dorset area (including Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole), January 2017

Dashboards

Industrial Risk

Indices of Deprivation 2015

Population Projections

Links to other documents

Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Workspace Strategy and Study 2016

<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/joint-planning-policy-work/bournemouth-dorset-and-poole-workspace-strategy-and-study.aspx>

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Eastern Dorset) 2015

<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/joint-planning-policy-work/shma/2015-update-and-review-of-the-strategic-housing-market-assessment.aspx>

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment/SHLAA (Western Dorset) 2018

<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/west-dorset-and-weymouth-portland/local-plan-review/evidence/strategic-housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment.aspx>

The Economic impact of Jurassic Coast WHS Designation and AONB

<https://jurassiccoast.org/documents/the-economic-impact-of-the-jurassic-coast-world-heritage-site-designation-2016/>

Western Dorset Economic Growth Strategy <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/business-consumers-licences/economic-development/western-dorset-economic-growth-strategy/western-dorset-economic-growth-strategy.aspx>

Enabling Economic Growth Strategy <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/business-consumers-licences/economic-development/economic-development-dorset-county-council.aspx>

Dorset LEP Strategic Economic Plan

<https://dorsetlep.co.uk/strategy/strategic-economic-plan/>