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The North East Wins Title - “The Worst Region In Which To Be Young”

A new regional measure of young people’s prospects, launched today, reveals that the North East is the most intergenerationally unfair region in which to live in the United Kingdom.

The Regional Intergenerational Fairness Index, produced by the Intergenerational Foundation, builds on the annual [Intergenerational Fairness Index](#) – a quantitative measurement of how government policies affect young people compared to older generations – to give valuable insights into fairness for young people across the UK.

Angus Hanton, co-founder of IF (www.if.org.uk) comments, “Our research demonstrates that where you live has a direct impact on your prospects as a young person compared to the prospects of older generations.”

“The level and type of intergenerational unfairness differs from region to region but high unemployment, high housing costs, demographic dependency (high ratios of older dependents to younger taxpayers), high carbon emissions, and high levels of medical procedures for older generations, coupled with low voter turnout, low levels of degree qualifications, and low levels of research and development investment, all conspire to reduce the prospects for young people. If policy-makers want to take the plight of young people seriously they must act now by addressing these pressures.”

In almost all regions intergenerational unfairness is pronounced but the North East and Yorkshire & The Humber appear to be the worst places to be young today. Northern Ireland and the East of England appear to be most intergenerationally fair for young people.

In housing, IF looked at affordability and costs: how much people spend on housing as well as levels of housebuilding. Affordability is worst in London and the South East and best in Northern Ireland and the North East. In terms of housebuilding, Northern Ireland also appears to be building most new homes whilst Wales, Yorkshire & The Humber, West Midlands and the North West are building the least.

In the area of democratic participation, the North and Scotland are less intergenerationally fair than other regions, with fewer young people and many of them choosing not to vote. The Scottish initiative to encourage 16 and 17 year olds to vote in the 2014 referendum suggests that Scotland may be actively trying to address this issue and offers hope that regional policy initiatives can be used to address failings in intergenerational fairness.

Scotland does well when it comes to the average age of councillors, as does London. London also does well in terms of demographic dependency with a low ratio of old to young at 21.9%. This is in contrast to Wales and the South West where the percentage of the population who are economically inactive is far higher at 39.5% and 40% respectively.

Jeremy Leach, co-author of the report adds, “For the first time we have identified how intergenerational fairness differs across the UK. We hope that it will help kick start work between Central Government and the regions to overcome what are significant disadvantages for young people in the places where they live and work.”

The Regional Intergenerational Fairness Index is an expression of how fairness across the generations is changing by region. The Index works by using quantitative data that cover some of the most important aspects of our society. IF chose eight content areas – unemployment, housing, democracy, health, environmental impact, education, spend on research and development and demographic dependency and compared them regionally using 12 indicators.

The Index is structured so that the higher the Index figure (above 100) the greater the level of intergenerational unfairness and the lower it is (below 100) the fairer the position is for young people:

Indicator	Regional Index
UK	100
North East	114
Yorkshire & the Humber	111
Wales	110
North West	107
West Midlands	107
East Midlands	102
Scotland	99
London	99
South West	98
South East	95
East of England	92
Northern Ireland	92

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Note to Editors:

1. Heat maps for each content area are included in the report.
2. A breakdown of each region’s performance is also included.
3. GDP deflators have been used to exclude the effects of inflation.
4. The effects of population growth have been avoided by using numbers on a per head basis.
5. IF produces an annual [Intergenerational Fairness Index](#) for the UK.

The Intergenerational Foundation (www.if.org.uk) is a vehemently independent, non-party-political think tank that researches intergenerational fairness on behalf of younger and future generations.

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