



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Statistical Digest of Rural England

Rural Economy Seminar

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Beth Kerwin – StO

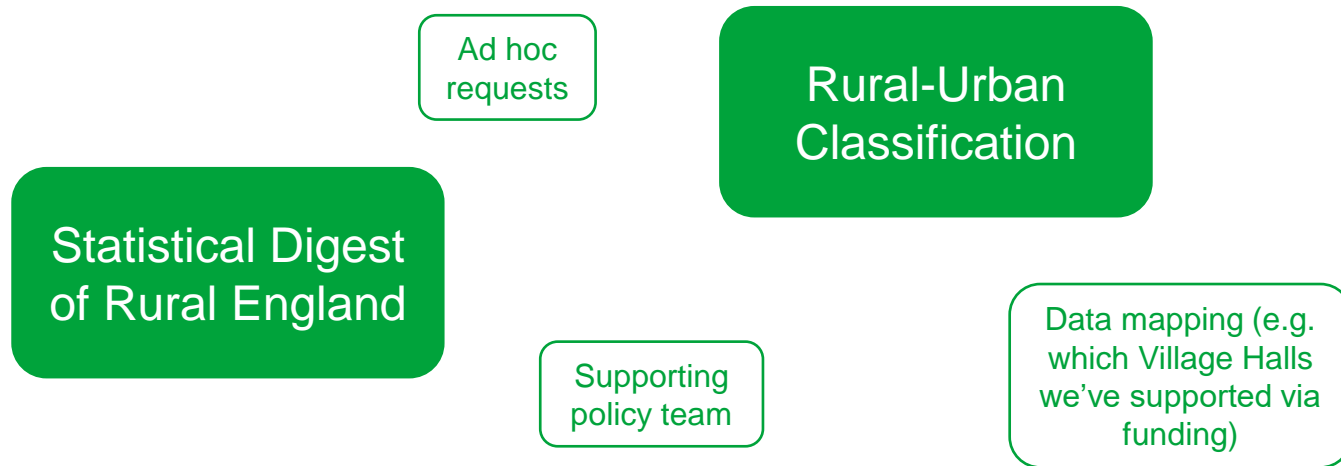
Agenda

- Part 1 – Overview of the Statistical Digest publication
- Part 2 – Detailed look at the Rural Economic Bulletin
- Part 3 – Showcasing other sections we have recently updated

Who are we?

We are the Statistics arm of Defra's Rural team.

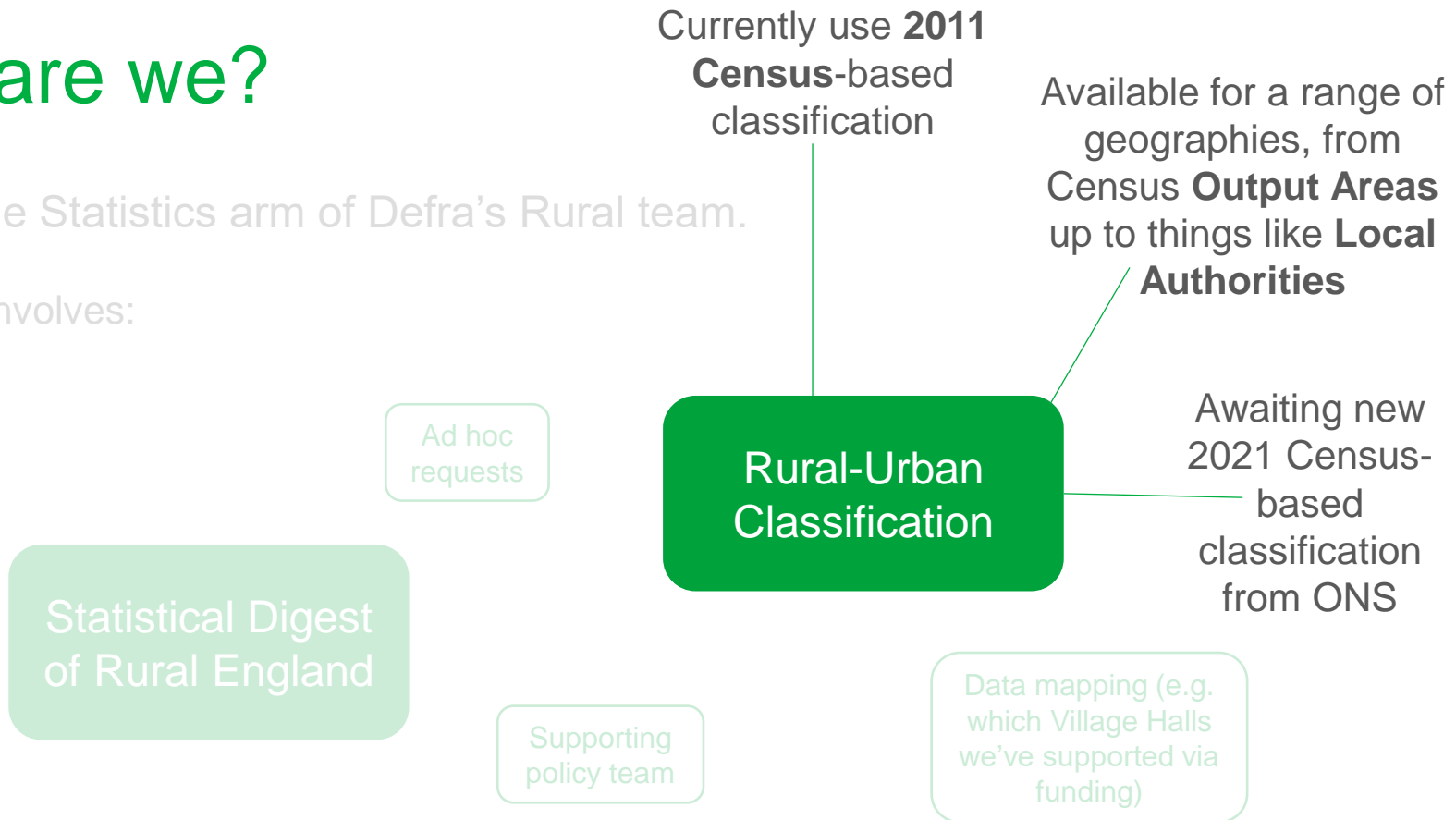
Our work involves:



Who are we?

We are the Statistics arm of Defra's Rural team.

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/rural-urban-classification>

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Our work involves:



<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistical-digest-of-rural-england>

What is the Digest?

The Statistical Digest of Rural England (hereafter the Digest) is a collection of statistics on a range of social and economic topics and provides broad comparisons between Rural and Urban areas by settlement type.

We have:

- **PDF reports**; these explain the analysis and give the key headlines in text form (e.g., for ministerial briefings)
- **Supplementary data tables**; these have no text but instead focus on the statistics themselves, often providing them in more detail than what is given in the PDF report
- We are also working to develop **web versions** (HTML) of the publication to improve accessibility.

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How do we choose?

The Digest covers a wide variety of topics. Our decisions for analysing data are usually informed by:

- **Stakeholder** interest and priorities
- **Ministerial** interest and priorities
- **Policy** interest and priorities

Why did it need updating?

Previously, there were issues with the way we presented the Digest:

- 1) It was one big PDF file (lots of scrolling!)
- 2) It was difficult for users to find the information they wanted
- 3) Statistics weren't always placed alongside other related topics
- 4) The publication was not very accessible (e.g., alt text, colour schemes)

Old Digest

Not exactly
“digestible”!

Contents

Sections of the Digest are updated throughout the year. In this edition the following section(s) have been updated:

- [Fuel poverty](#)

Statistical Digest of Rural England	1	Broadband speed	106
Official Statistics	5	Broadband coverage	107
Defining rural areas	6	Tourism	110
Rural population and migration	11	Gross Value Added (GVA) from Tourism	110
Mid-year population 2020	11	Tourism: business counts and employment	110
Population by age	12	Rural living	112
Average age of the population	15	Housing	112
Population change	16	Housing completions	112
Ethnicity	18	Net additions to housing stock	115
Population at local authority level	20	Second and empty homes	116
Internal migration	25	Residential housing transactions	121
Internal migration by age	27	Additions to affordable housing stock	124
Rural economy	30	Housing and accommodation affordability	125
Employment and earnings	30	Housing affordability	125
Employment rate	31	Homelessness and temporary accommodation	128
Unemployment rate	32	Household expenditure	130
Economic inactivity	33	Nominal expenditure and disposable income	130
Earnings	35	Expenditure on commodity or service groups	132
Home working	38	Deprivation	135
Productivity measured by Gross Value Added (GVA)	42	Poverty	138
Contribution to England's Gross Value Added (GVA)	43	Fuel poverty	143
Gross Value Added (GVA) per Workforce Job	45	Education and skills	147
Contribution to England's Gross Value Added (GVA) by industry	47	Childcare provision	147
Businesses	49	Secondary education	152
Business composition	49	Pupils leaving school with English and Maths at A* to C grades or equivalent at GCSE level, based on residency of pupils	152
Businesses by industry type	52	Pupils leaving school with English and Maths A* to C grades or equivalent at GCSE level, based on Income Deprivation Affecting Children Indices (IDACI) decile and residency of pupils	154
Employment by industry type	57	Pupils leaving school with English and Maths at GCSE level, by geographical residency of pupils	155
Businesses by size band	59	Pupils leaving school with English and Maths A* to C grades or equivalent at GCSE level, based on school location	159
Small and medium businesses	60	School inspection outcomes, based on school location	161
Business count	67	Higher education	162
Business start-ups	68	Full-time entrants to higher education	162
Innovation and investment	69	Part-time entrants to higher education	163
Businesses engaged in innovation	69	Skills	164
Capital investment per employee	71	Workplace based skills	164
Rural accessibility	73	Residence based skills	168
Transport and travel	73	Apprenticeships	172
Distance travelled	74	Health and Wellbeing	173
Trips made	81	Life expectancy	174
Journey to School	85	Potential years of life lost (PYLL)	176
Accessibility to services	89	Infant mortality rate	177
Average minimum travel times	91	Wellbeing	178
Access to key services	93	Loneliness	184
Average number of key services available	95	Feelings about the local neighbourhood	186
Overall measure of accessibility of services	97	Volunteering and charity	189
Broadband	105	Crime	192
		Commercial Victimization Survey	198
		Crime Survey for England & Wales	199

New Digest: Home page

[Home](#) > [Environment](#) > [Rural and countryside](#)

Collection

Statistical Digest of Rural England

Statistical Digest of Rural England: a compendium of socio-economic statistics for Rural areas. The compendium is structured into 8 thematic reports and is supported by a high level summary of key findings.

From: [Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs](#)

Published 12 September 2013

Last updated 16 April 2024 — [See all updates](#)

New Digest: Home page

[Home](#) > [Environment](#) > [Rural and countryside](#)

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Themes

Population

**Communities
and Households**

**Rural
Economic
Bulletin**

**Health and
Wellbeing**

**Connectivity and
Accessibility**

Housing

**Education,
Qualifications
and Training**

Energy

Themes



Themes

Population

Communities and Households

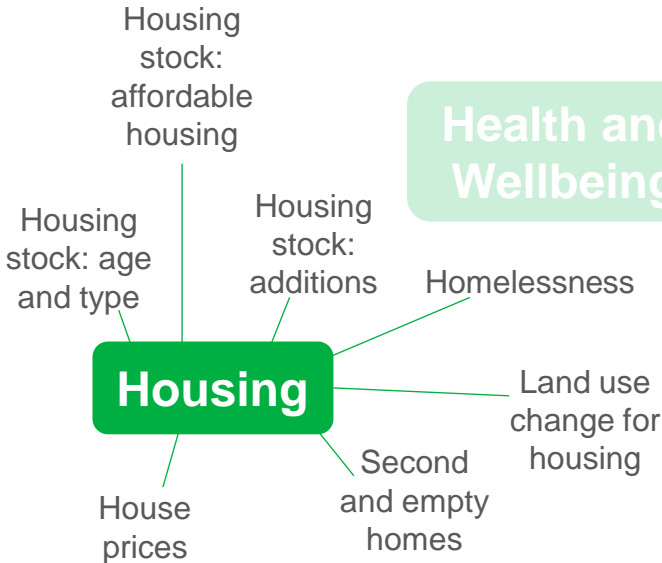
Rural Economic Bulletin

Connectivity and Accessibility

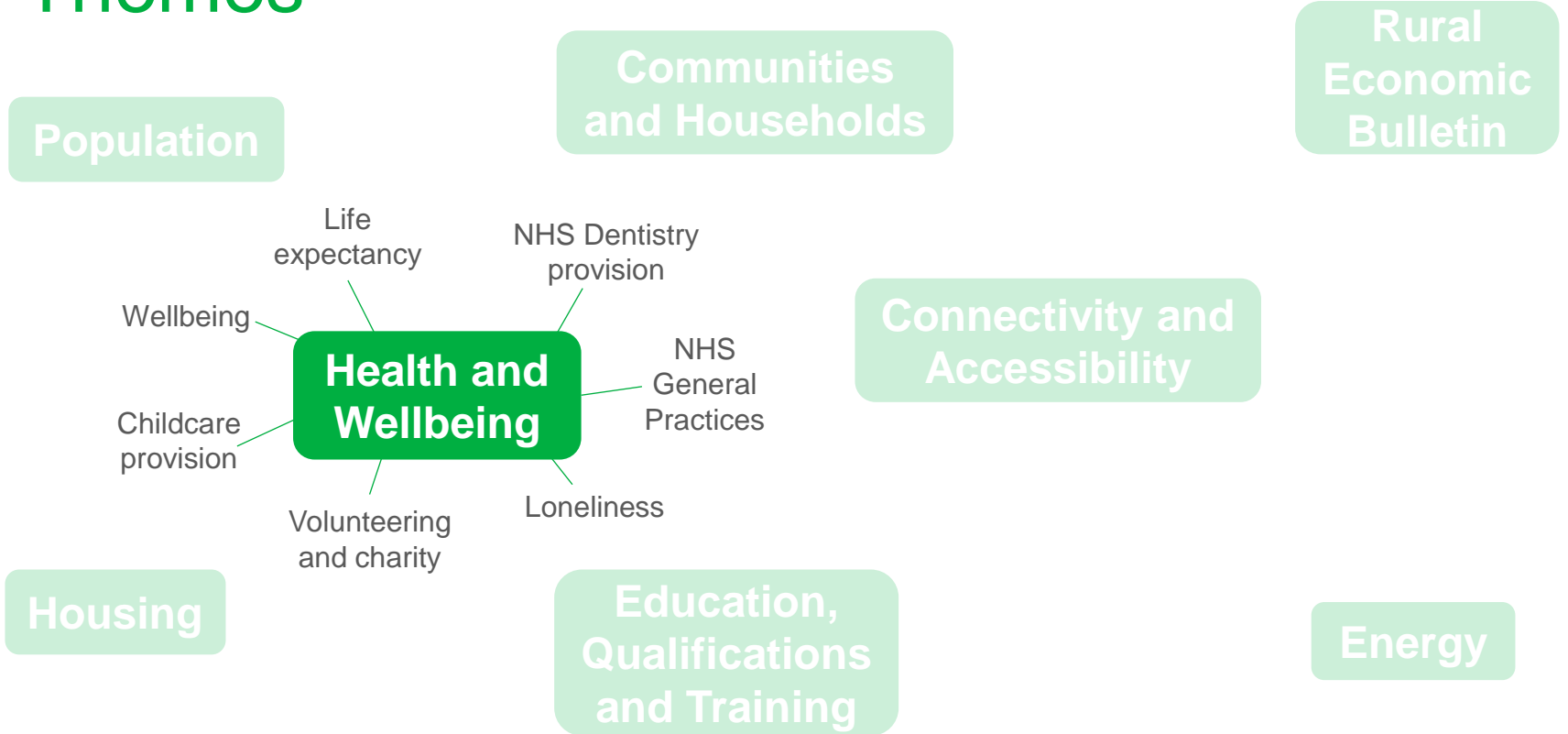
Health and Wellbeing

Education, Qualifications and Training

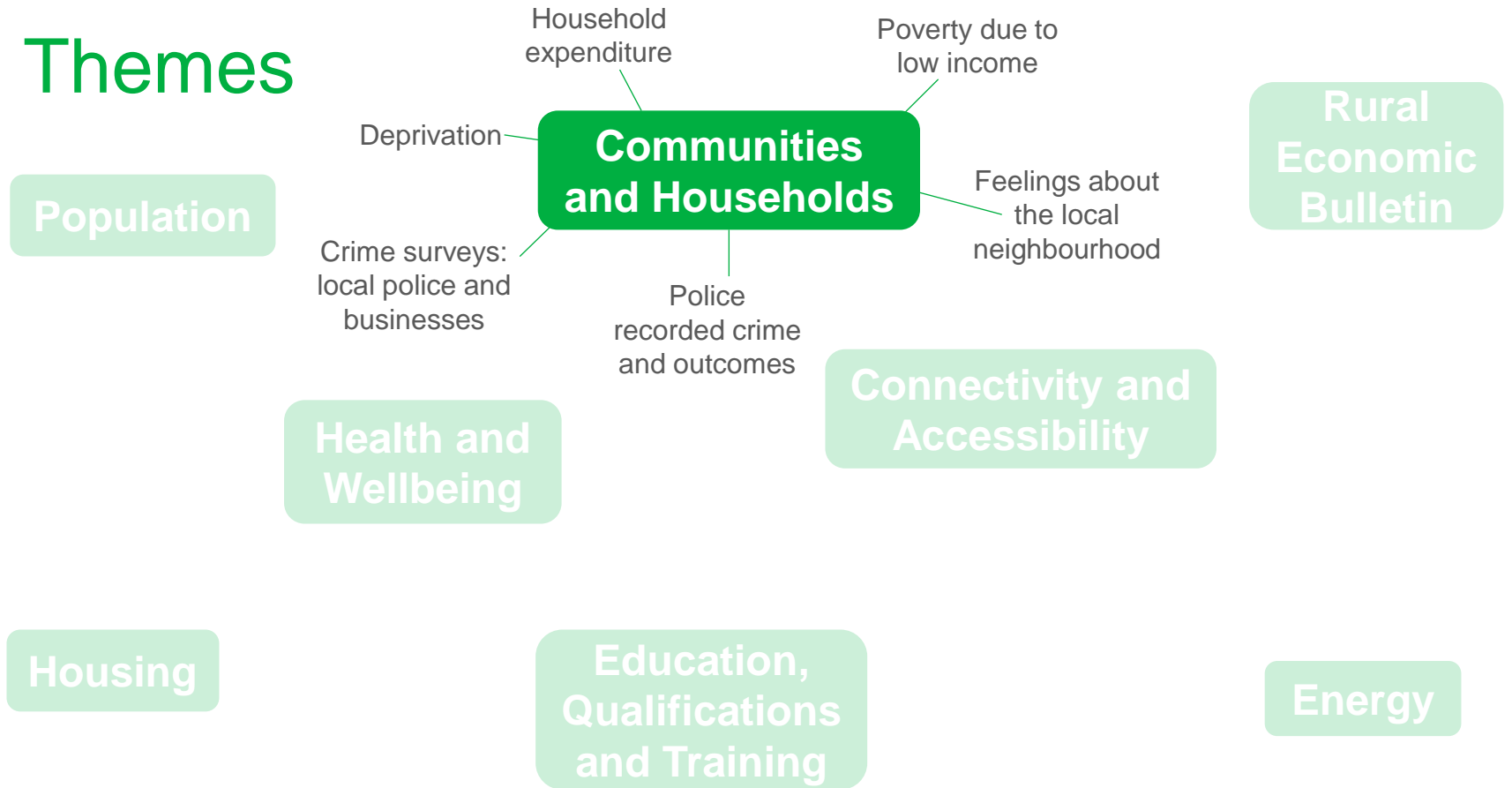
Energy



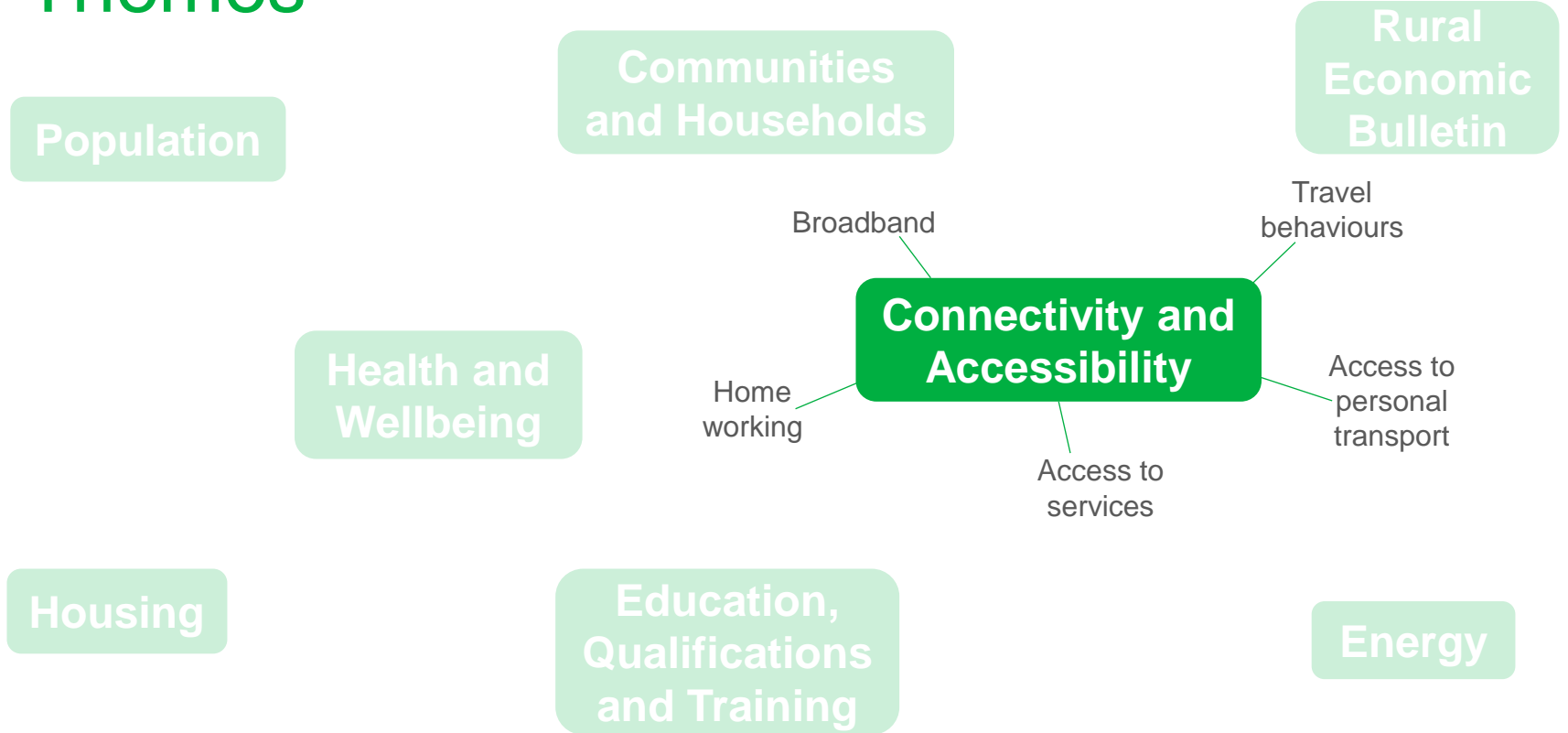
Themes



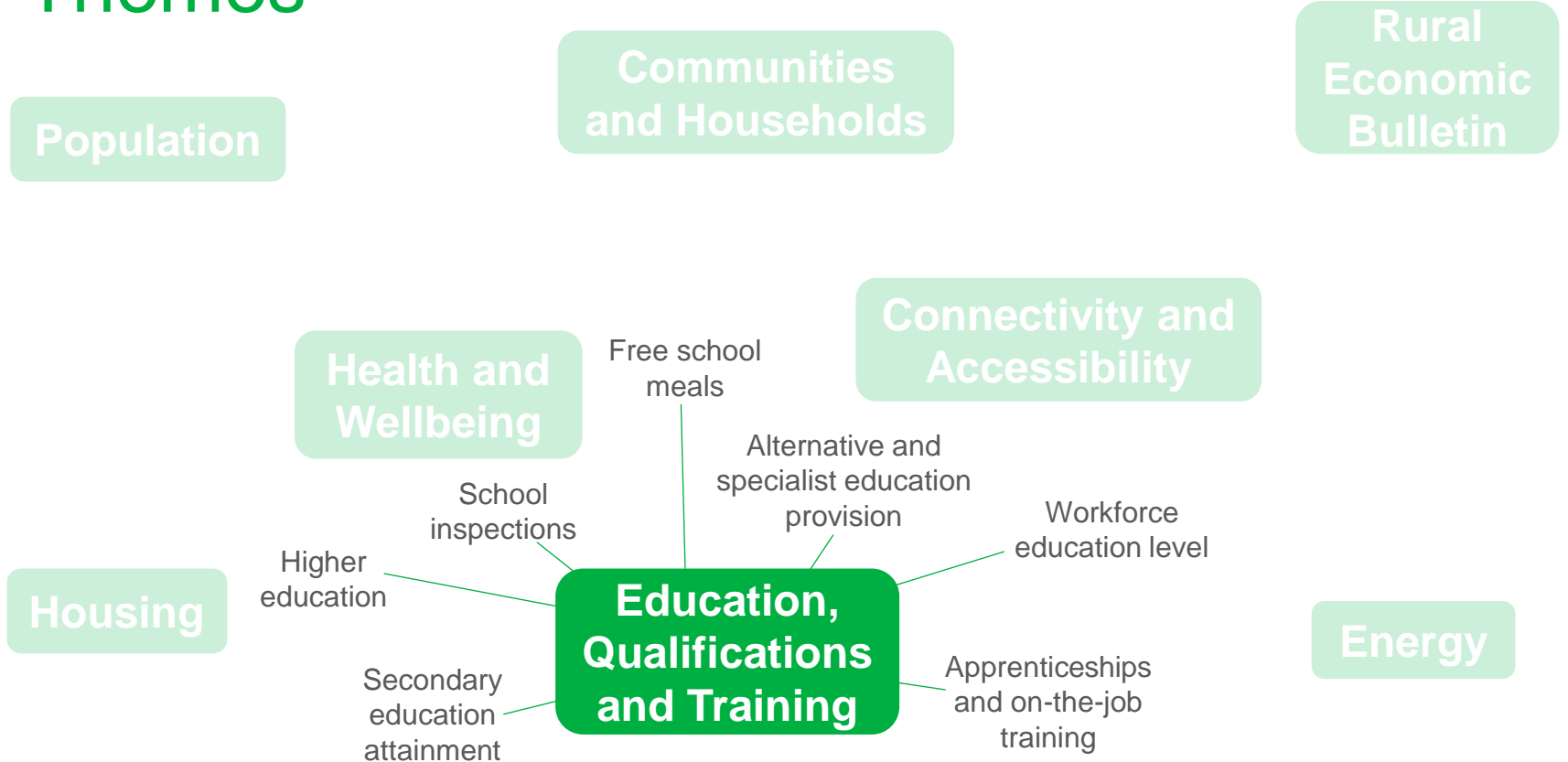
Themes



Themes



Themes



Themes

Population

Communities
and Households

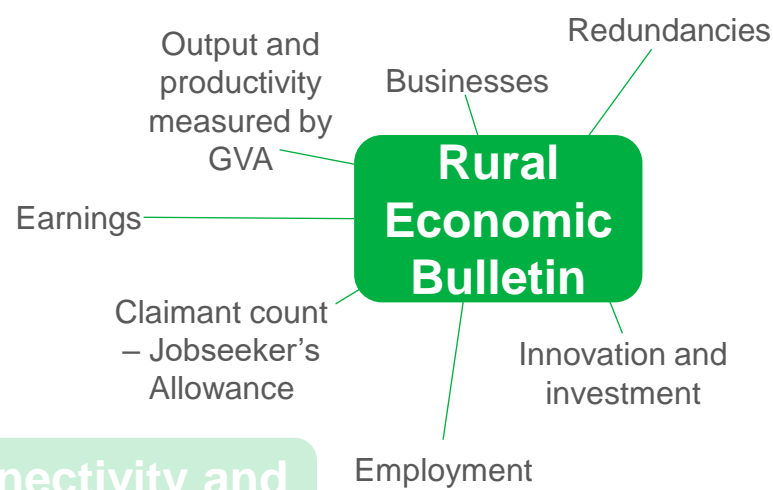
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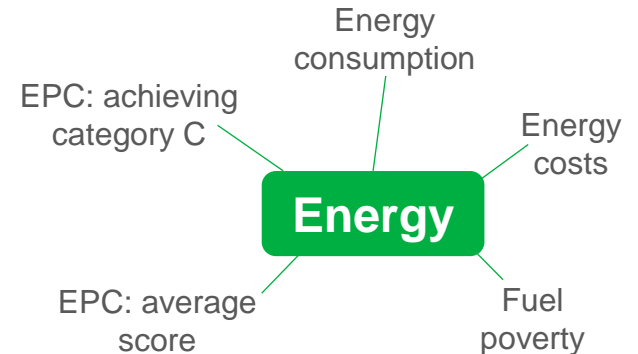
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and Training



Contents

- A to Z Index
- Key Findings
- Population
- Housing
- Health and Wellbeing
- Communities and Households
- Connectivity and Accessibility
- Education, Qualifications and Training
- Rural Economic Bulletin
- Energy
- About the Digest and Rural Definitions

Users can now
easily find what they
need straight from
the home page

Contents

— A to Z Index

Index to improve user journey

— Key Findings

Headlines for briefings etc.

— Population

— Housing

— Health and Wellbeing

— Communities and Households

— Connectivity and Accessibility

— Education, Qualifications and Training

— Rural Economic Bulletin

— Energy

8 key topics

Users can now
easily find what they
need straight from
the home page

— About the Digest and Rural Definitions

Further information

Index

New alphabetical index help users quickly identify the correct document they need

Official Statistics

A to Z Index for the Statistical Digest of Rural England

Updated 1 February 2024

Applies to England

Contents

[A-Z index of topics](#)

A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
J
K

A-Z index of topics

Topics/indicators are listed alphabetically, alongside links to the bulletin publication it sits within as well as a download link to the supplementary data tables (where available).

A

Accessibility: Access to key services

Bulletin: [Connectivity and Accessibility](#) (Section D)

Data: [supplementary data tables](#) (Worksheet DB)

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Jump to letter

Contents

[A-Z index of topics](#)

A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
J
K

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Link to relevant topic



Link to data



Key statistics

If users are pushed for time, they don't need to fish through 8 publications – just look at the key findings document!

Official Statistics

Key Findings, Statistical Digest of Rural England

Updated 16 April 2024

Applies to England

Contents

Population

Housing

Health and Wellbeing

Communities and Households

Connectivity and Accessibility

Education, Qualifications and Training

Rural Economic Bulletin

Energy



Print this page

Population

The key findings from the [Population](#) section, as of July 2023, are as follows:

- Around 10 million people live in Rural areas, however the Rural population is growing at a slower rate than the Urban population.
- The more Rural the area the older the average age and the faster this average age is increasing.
- Overall, 'white' is the majority ethnic group in both Rural and Urban areas, however Urban areas tend to be more ethnically diverse than Rural areas.
- Net internal migration within tends to be towards Predominantly Rural areas, and the rate of this migration has grown since 2011; the exception to this is amongst those aged 17-20 who are leaving Predominantly Rural in search of education and training opportunities.
- 12 million people lived in a Predominantly Rural Local Authority in 2020; this is 21.3% of the England population.

Key statistics

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Jump to topic

Contents
[Population](#)
[Housing](#)
[Health and Wellbeing](#)
[Communities and Households](#)
[Connectivity and Accessibility](#)
[Education, Qualifications and Training](#)
[Rural Economic Bulletin](#)
[Energy](#)

 [Print this page](#)

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Example: Rural Economic Bulletin

Main document
(PDF)



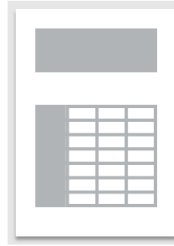
[Statistical Digest of Rural England - Rural Economic Bulletin](#)

PDF, 2.95 MB, 84 pages

This file may not be suitable for users of assistive technology.

► [Request an accessible format.](#)

Accompanying
data tables



[Rural Economic Bulletin Supplementary Data Tables](#)

ODS, 211 KB

This file is in an [OpenDocument](#) format

Main document
(ODT;
Accessible version)



[Statistical Digest of Rural England - Rural Economic Bulletin](#)

ODT, 6.51 MB

This file is in an [OpenDocument](#) format

Example:

Rural Economic Bulletin

For each topic we have a set of supplementary data tables.

These include analysis using the more detailed Rural-Urban Classification, as well as statistics for specific geography levels (e.g., Local Authorities).

These typically are represented by Local Authority-level maps within the full PDF report.



[Rural Economic Bulletin Supplementary Data Tables](#)

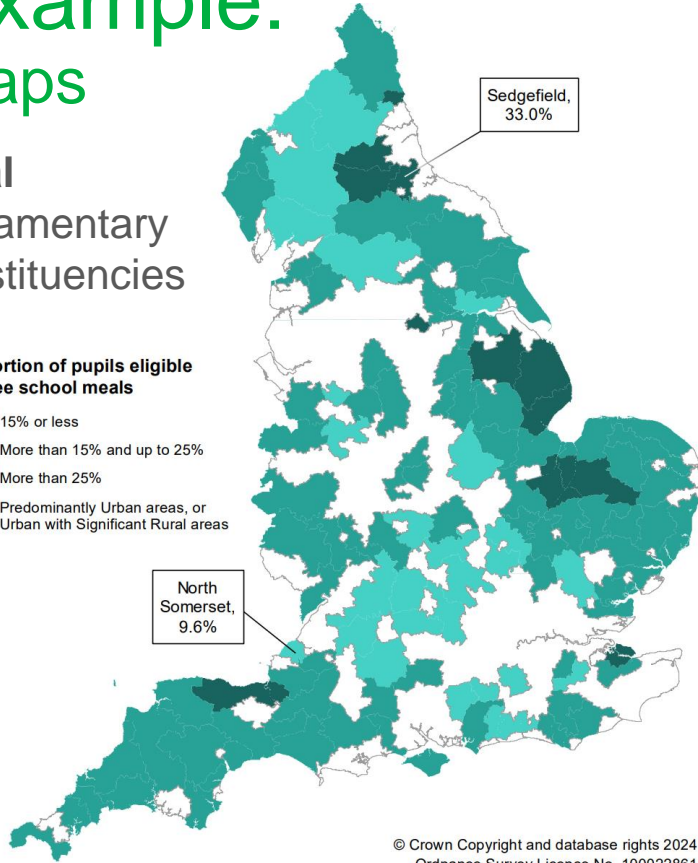
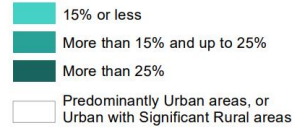
ODS, 211 KB

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Example: Maps

Rural Parliamentary Constituencies

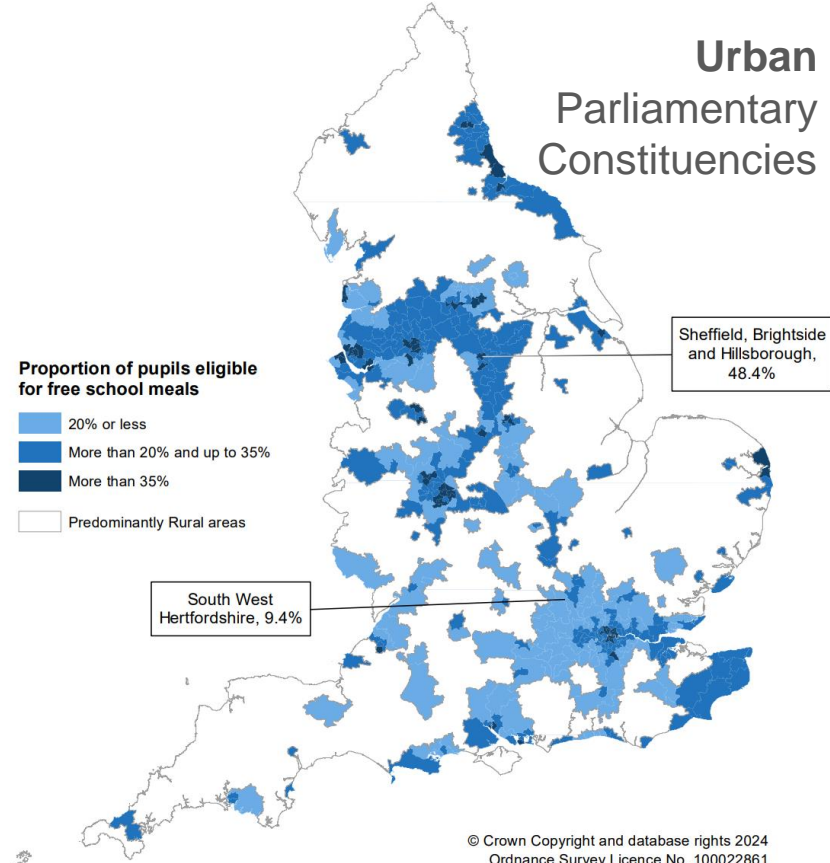
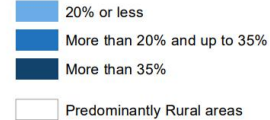
Proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals



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Urban Parliamentary Constituencies

Proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals

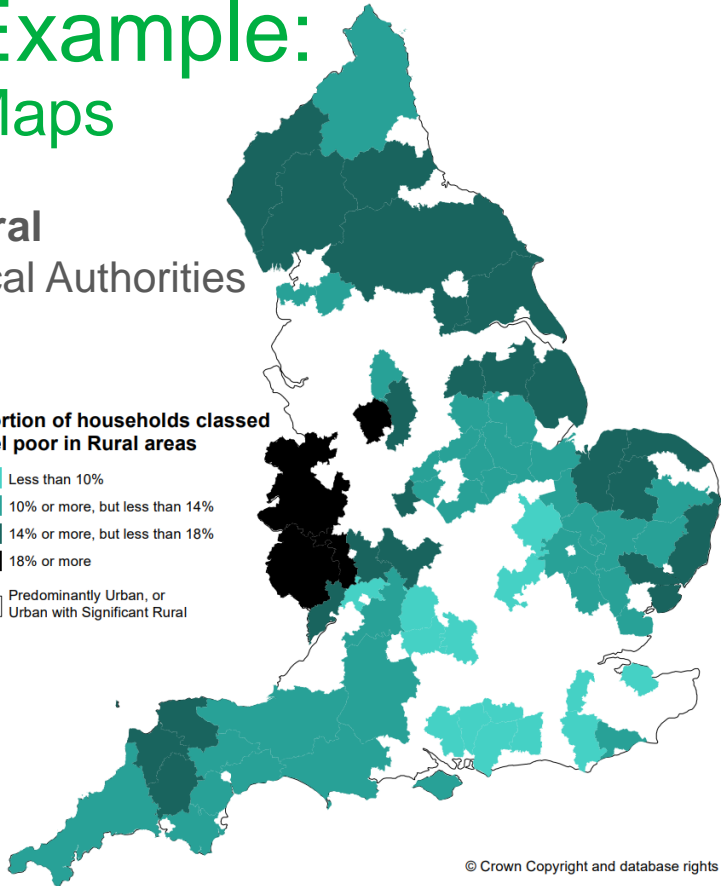
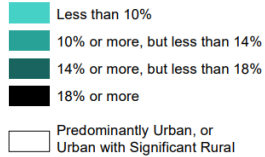


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Example: Maps

Rural Local Authorities

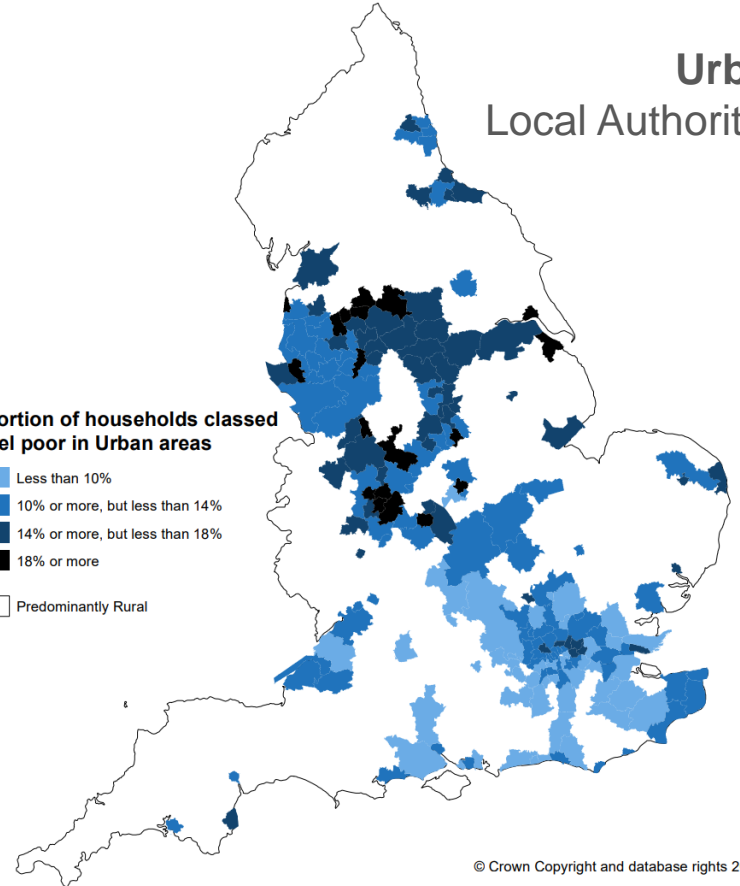
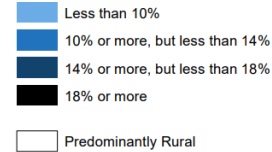
Proportion of households classed as fuel poor in Rural areas



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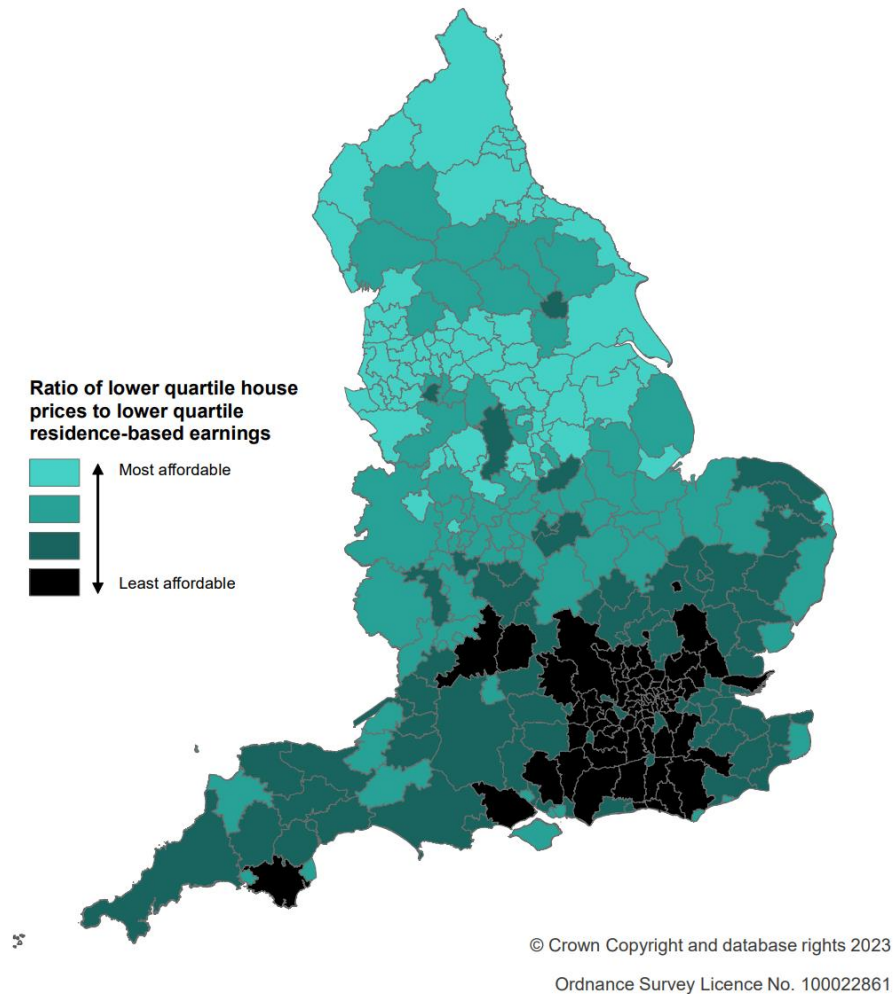
Urban Local Authorities

Proportion of households classed as fuel poor in Urban areas



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Example: Maps



Example:

Rural Economic Bulletin

Details

The Rural Economic Bulletin is a compendium of economics statistics for Rural and Urban areas in England.

Previously published as a separate report, the Bulletin is now one of the seven thematic reports which make up the [Statistical Digest of Rural England](#). Previous versions of the Bulletin up to 2022 are available from the [National Archive](#).

Summary of latest updates

The March 2024 release of the Digest includes analysis updates for the following topics within this theme:

- Employment
- Redundancies
- Claimant count – Jobseeker’s Allowance

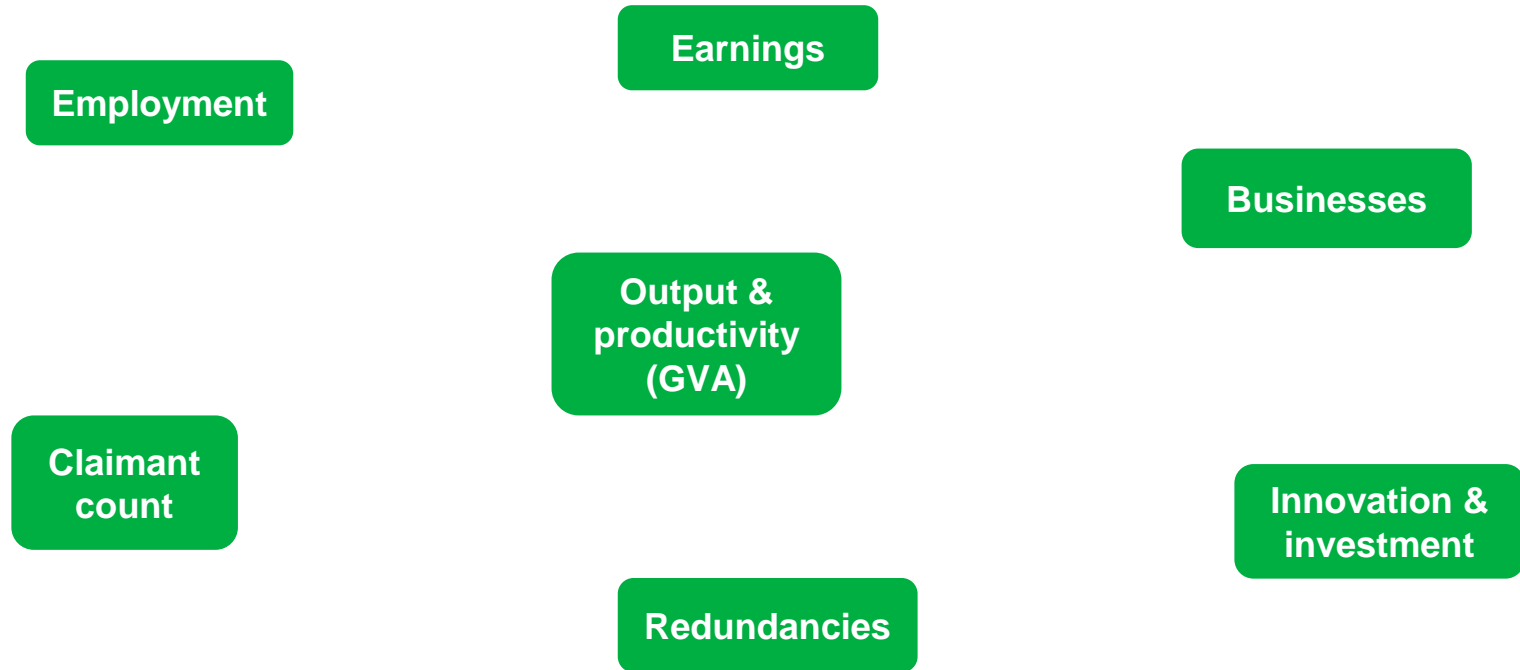
The supplementary data tables provide additional statistics for each section of the Digest, using the Rural-Urban Classification categories. The Local Authority data tables supply the disaggregated datasets, used to conduct analysis in the Digest, at a Local Authority level where feasible.

Rural Economic Bulletin

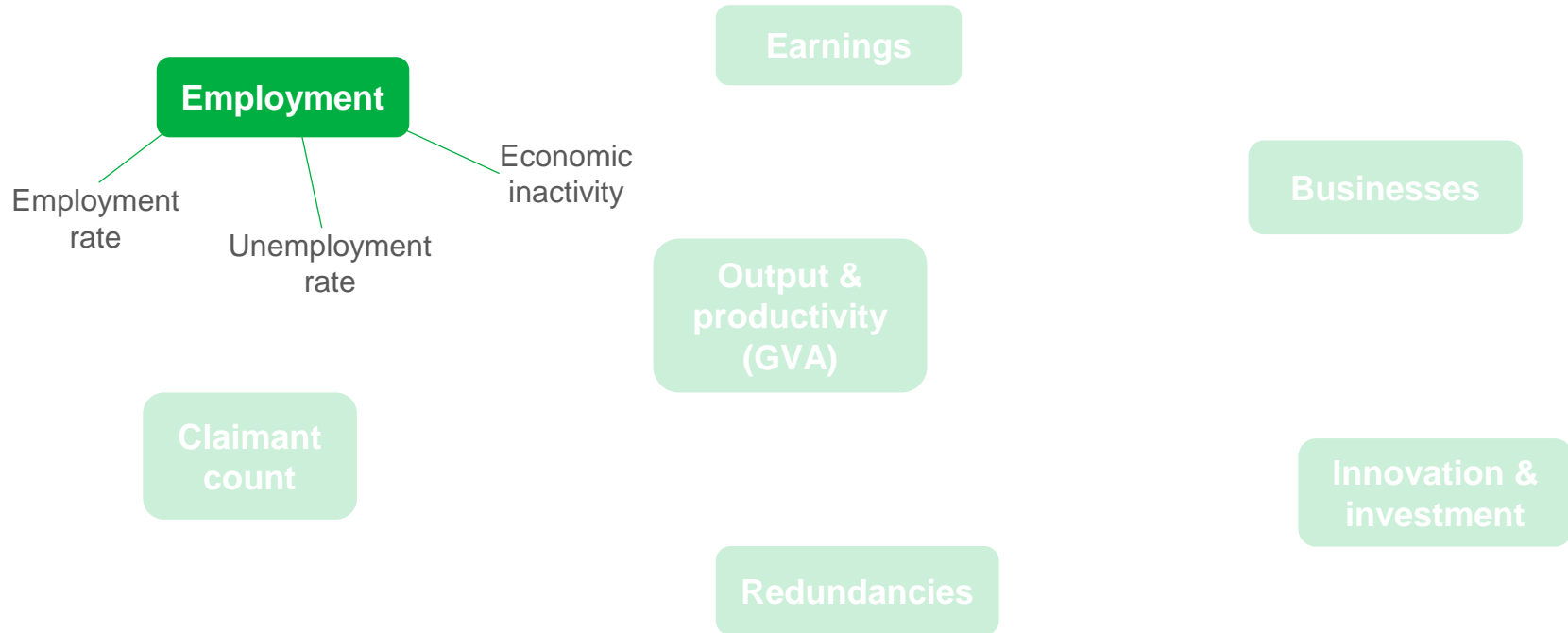
- A to Z Index
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- Connectivity and Accessibility
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- About the Digest and Rural Definitions

- Rural Economic Bulletin was originally a standalone publication alongside the Statistical Digest.
- The bulletin was originally set up at the request of the Secretary of State as a set of indicators to monitor the rural economy following the economic downturn in 2007.
- Original bulletin content merged with other sections relevant to the Rural economy to create the economic report forming part of the overall Digest publication.

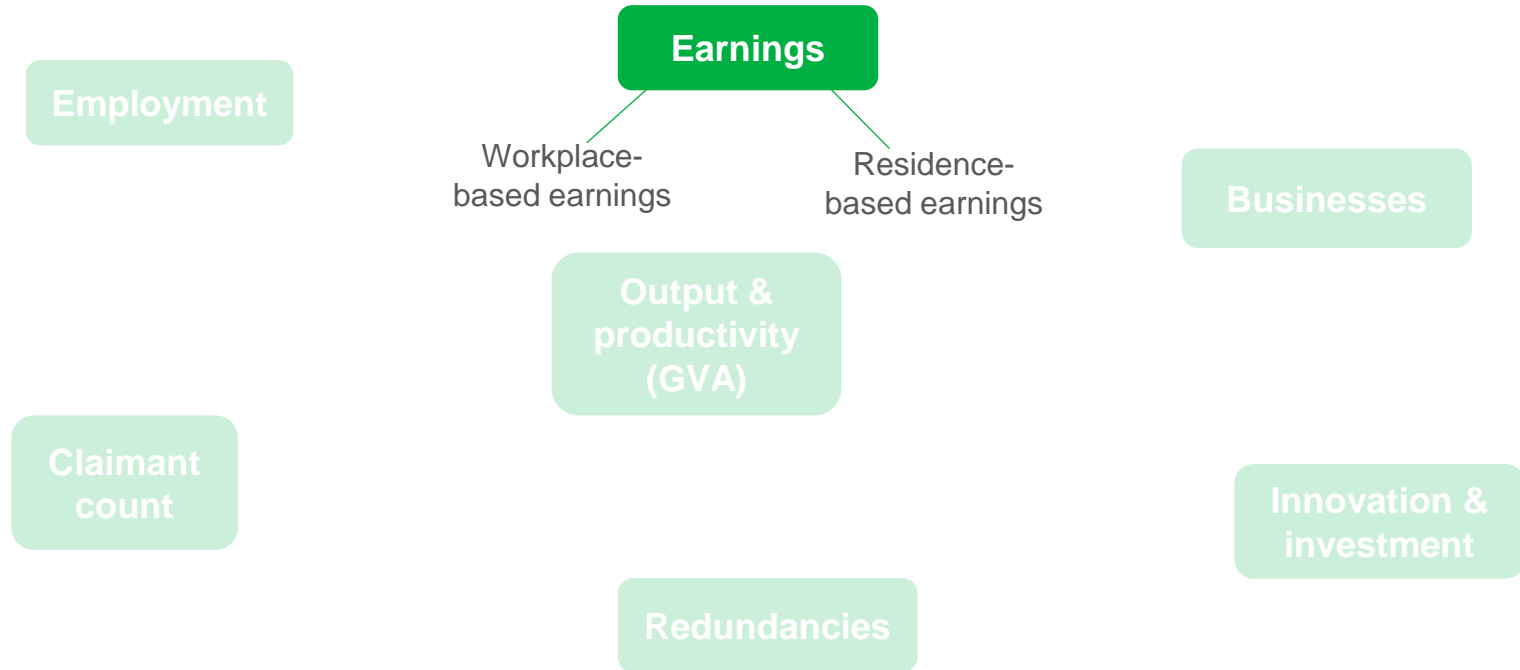
What's in the Rural Economic Bulletin?



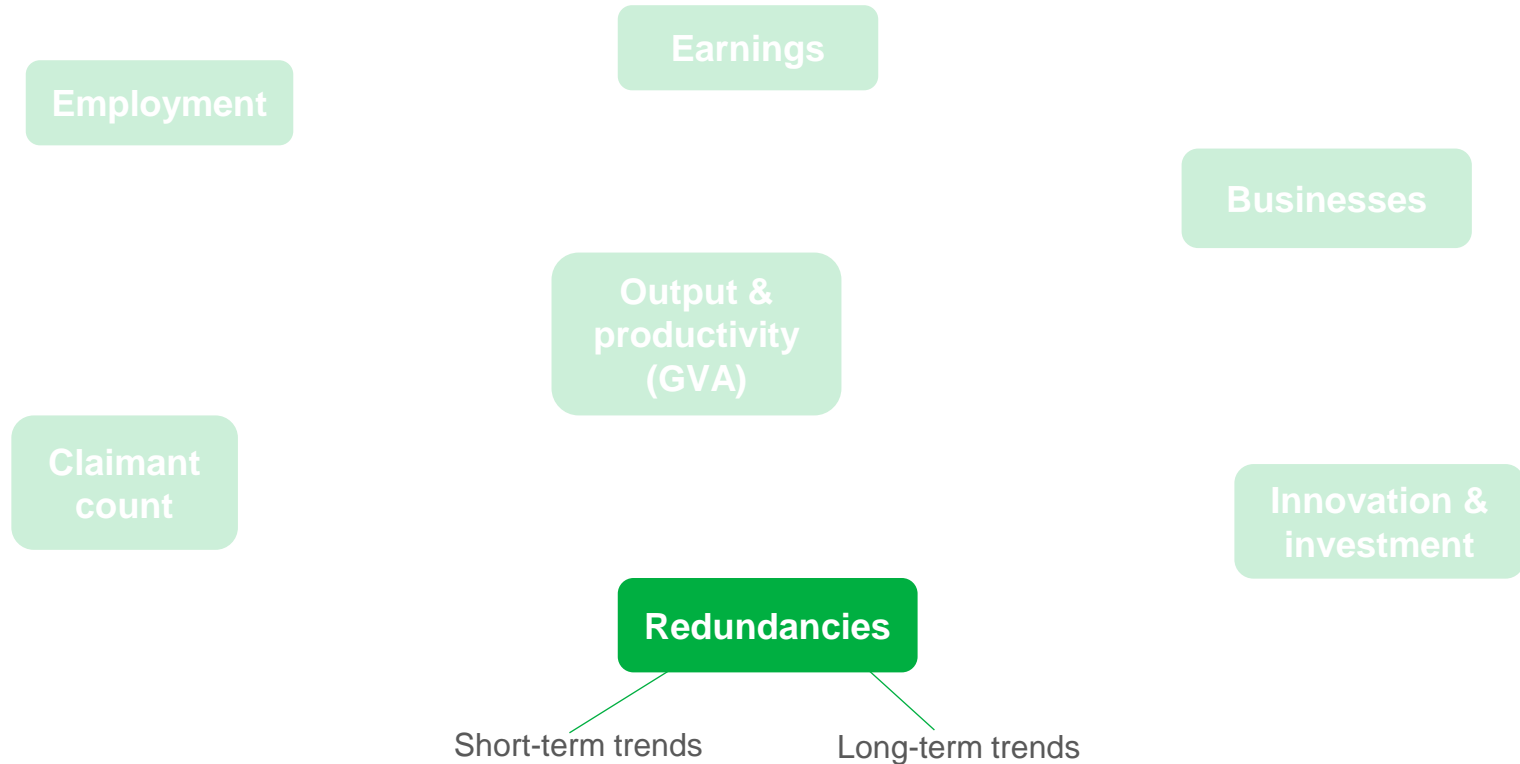
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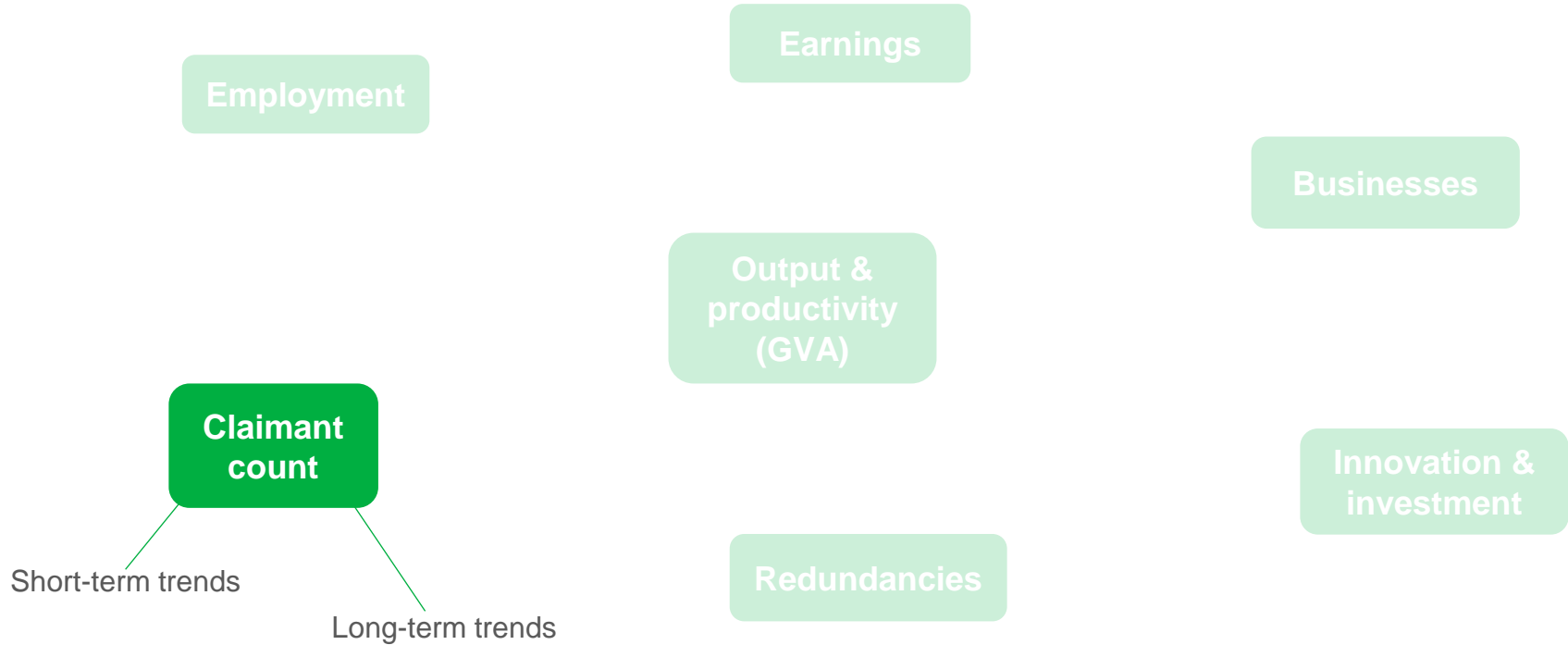
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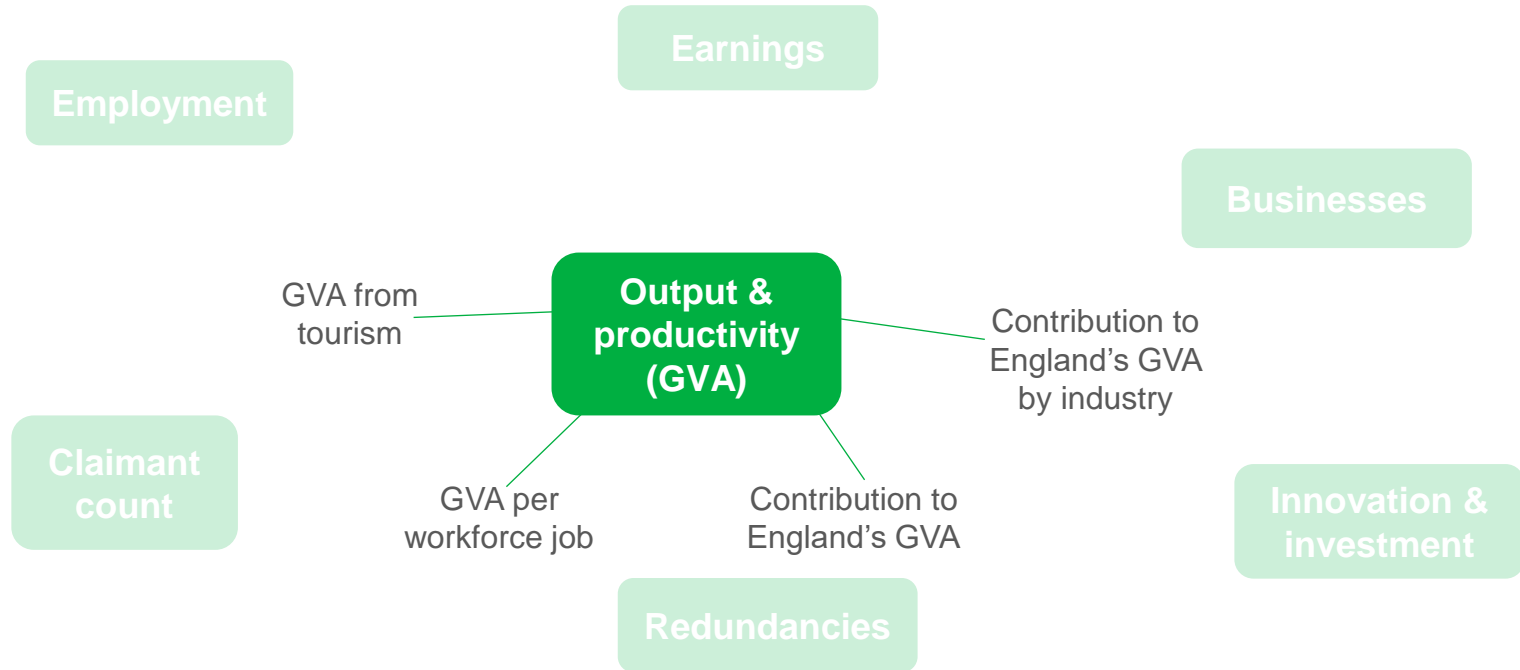
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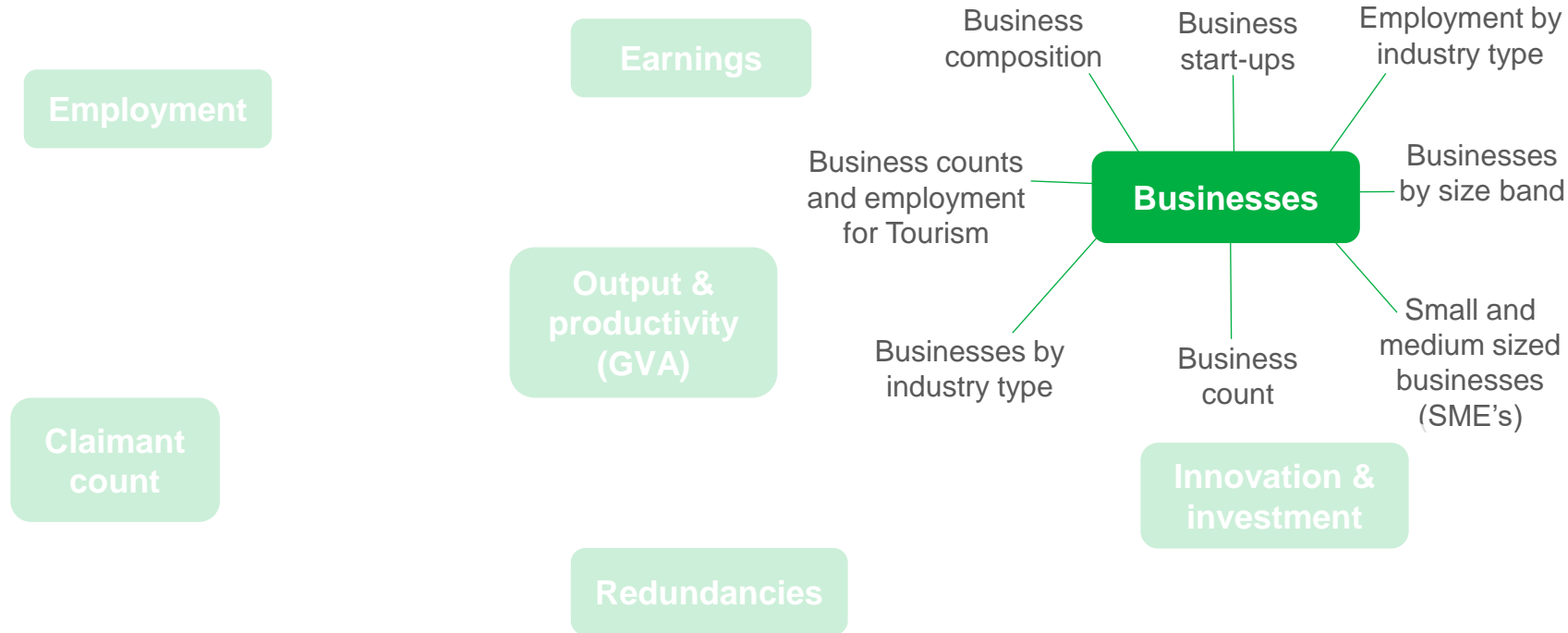
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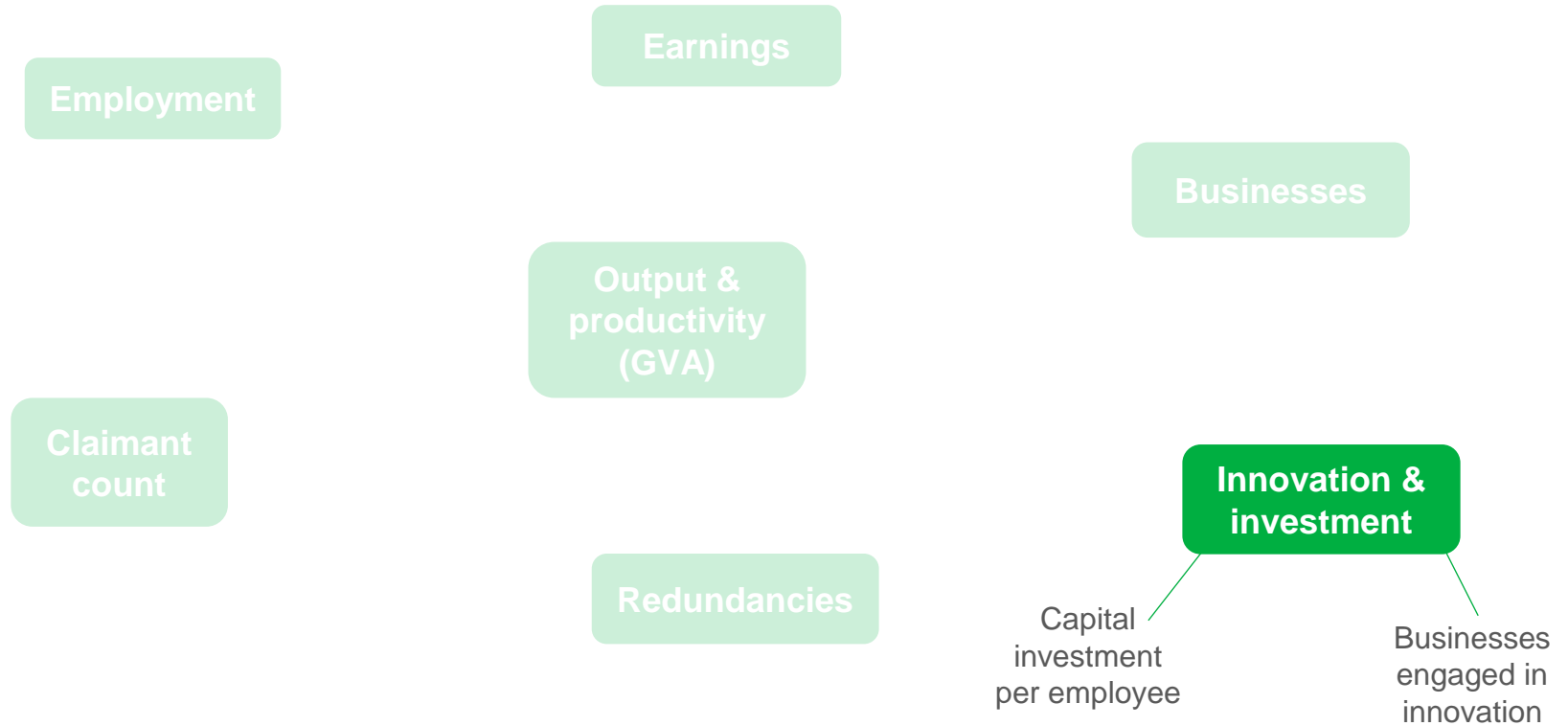
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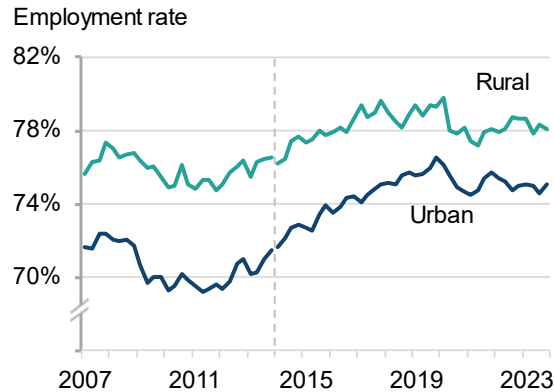
What's in the Rural Economic Bulletin?



Employment

Employment rates have been consistently higher in Rural areas than in Urban areas since 2007, while rates for unemployment and economic inactivity have been consistently lower in Rural areas.

Employment as a % of working age population



Data source:

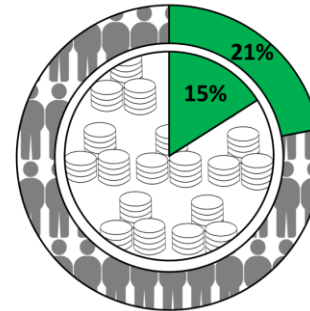
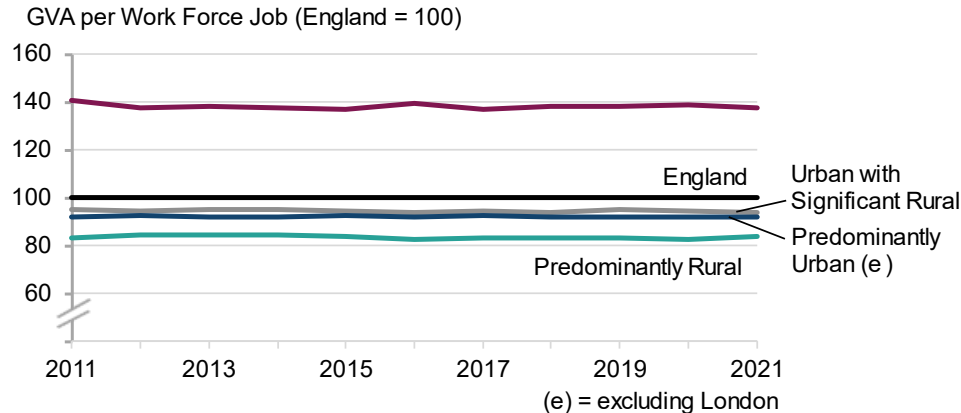
Labour Force Survey run by the Office for National Statistics

The achieved sample size for the UK Labour Force Survey (LFS) during October to December 2023 (OD23) was 44,338 individuals in 20,324 households

Output & productivity (Gross Value Added)

Latest estimates show the productivity of Predominantly Rural areas (measured using GVA per workforce job) was around 84% of that for England as whole. There has been little change over recent years.

GVA per workforce job (£) compared with England as a whole



While Predominantly Rural areas account for **21%** of the population, they contribute around **15%** of England's economy

Data source:

Gross Value Added estimates published by the Office for National Statistics at ITL3 and Local Authority level.

Businesses

In 2021/22, there were 554,100 businesses registered in Rural areas, accounting for 23% of all registered businesses in England.

The average turnover per person employed is greater in Urban areas, especially Urban Conurbations, and lower in Rural areas, especially those in a sparse setting.

There are more registered businesses per head of population in Rural areas than in Urban areas. This reflects differences in sizes of business, sizes of settlements and other factors.

The 'Education, health and social work' sector is the largest employer in both Rural and Urban areas.

The majority of Rural businesses (local units) have less than 50 employees while the majority of Urban businesses (local units) have more than 50 employees.

Data source:

Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR) compiled by the Office for National Statistics. It is a comprehensive list of UK businesses used by government for statistical purposes.

Two main data sources are Value Added Tax (VAT) and Pay As You Earn (PAYE) records from HMRC. The IDBR covers around 2.7 million businesses in all sectors of the economy, but since the main two tax sources have thresholds, very small businesses operating below these will, in most cases, not be included.

Recent updates

We plan updates based on when data is published, if it is of current interest, when we last updated our analysis (if at all), and if there are other similar topics that could be updated.

Last Tuesday we published:

- Secondary education
- Progression to higher education

In March we published:

- General Practices
- Employment
- Redundancies
- Claimant count

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Secondary Education – Digest update

Previously, we only had statistics for the **proportion of pupils passing their English and Maths GCSEs**, by pupil residence, school location, and IDACI decile.

We have now developed the section to reflect the headlines used by DfE:

Percentage of pupils entering the English Baccalaureate

39.3%

an increase of 0.6 percentage points since 2021/22

Percentage of pupils achieving grades 5 or above in English and mathematics GCSEs

45.3%

a decrease of 4.5 percentage points since 2021/22

Average Attainment 8 score of all pupils

46.3

a decrease of 2.5 points since 2021/22

Average EBacc APS score per pupil

4.05

a decrease of 0.22 points since 2021/22

Key facts

On average GCSE level attainment is higher for students living in Rural areas than for those living in urban areas but in recent years they have been less likely to enter the collection of subjects that make up the English Baccalaureate.

More than 7 in 10 Rural pupils passed their English and Maths GCSEs in 2022/23

Just over 1/3 of Rural students entered the English Baccalaureate in 2022/23

Rushcliffe had the highest English and Maths GCSE pass rate across all Rural areas

Blackpool had the lowest English and Maths GCSE pass rate in England; St Albans had the highest, and both are Urban

More Rural pupils passed their English and Maths GCSEs than those living in Urban areas

The more deprived an area is, the lower the proportion of students passing their English and Maths GCSEs

Pupils who **lived** in Rural areas had proportionally higher GCSE attainment than those who **attended schools** in Rural areas

Pupils in Urban areas made slightly less progress between the end of primary school and the end of secondary school than the national average

Pupils in Rural areas made slightly more progress between the end of primary school and the end of secondary school than the national average

New addition

To support understanding of the new metrics, we have added in a **background information** section right after the summary.

This will help to ensure users understand the differences between the new statistics, as well as what they actually mean.

English Baccalaureate (EBacc)

The EBacc is a set of subjects at GCSE-level that keeps young people's options open for further study and future careers.

The EBacc consists of:

- English language and literature
- maths
- the sciences
- geography or history
- a language (ancient, e.g. Latin; or modern, e.g. French)

For the sciences, pupils could study GCSE combined science; this means pupils take 2 GCSEs that cover the 3 main sciences (biology, chemistry, and physics). They could alternatively study 3 single sciences at GCSE-level; this means pupils choose 3 subjects from biology, chemistry, physics, and computer science.

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Subjects that keep students' options open

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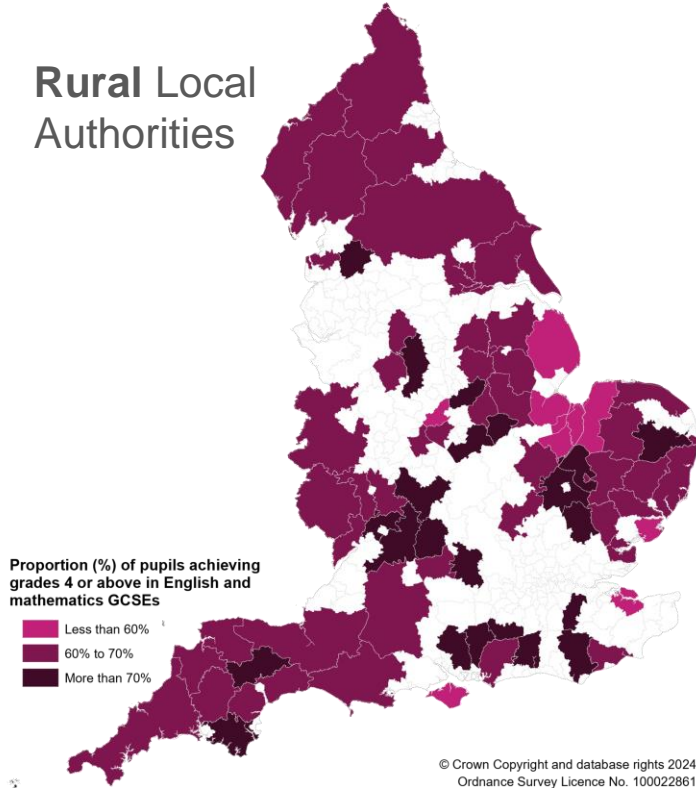
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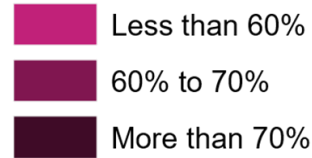
How well a student did at secondary school

Proportion of pupils passing their GCSEs

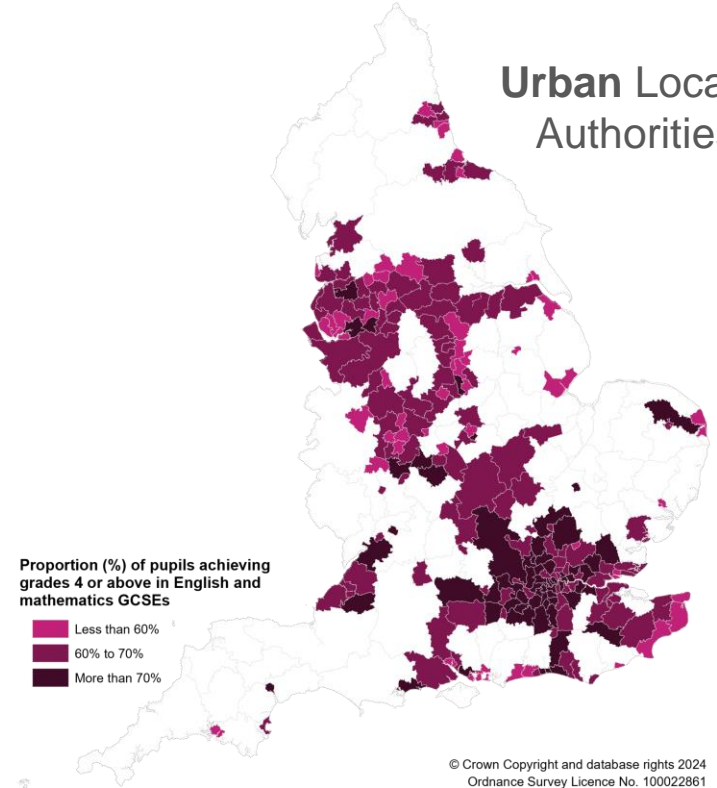
Rural Local Authorities



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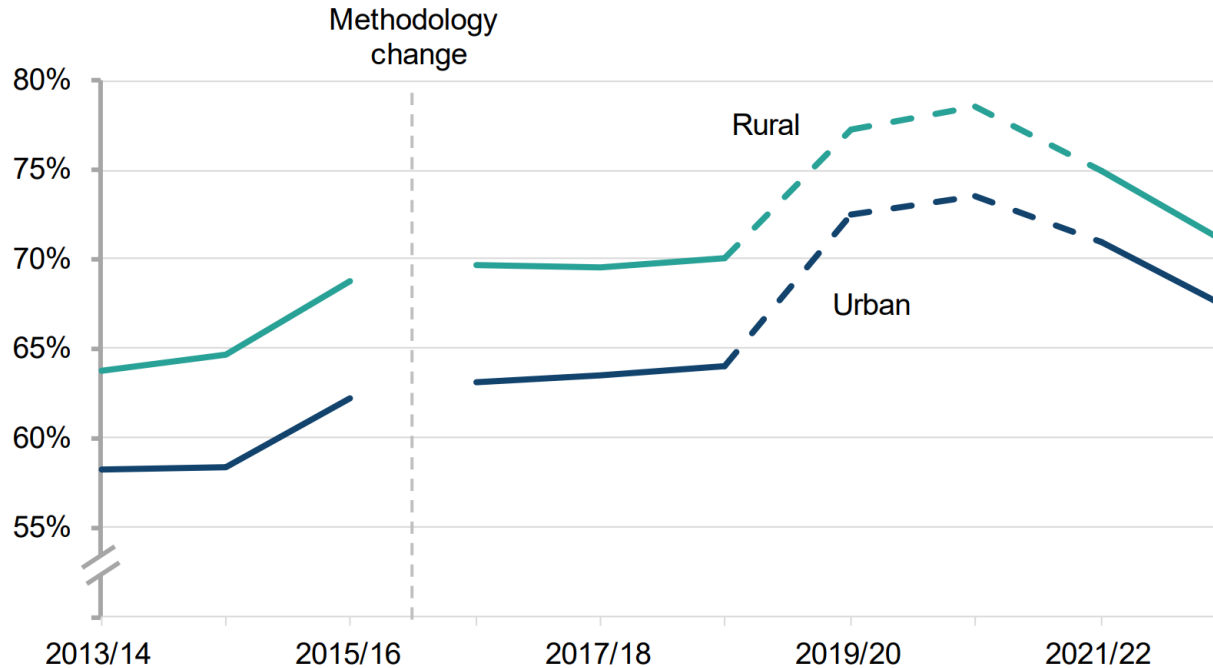


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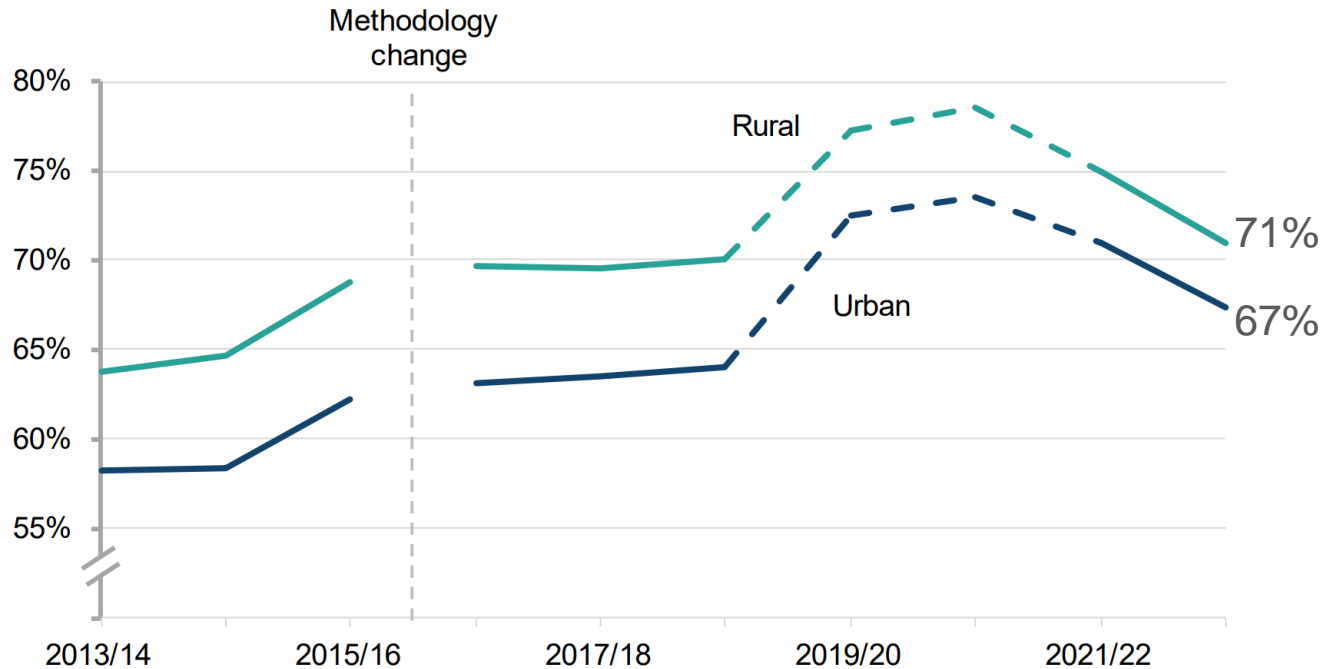


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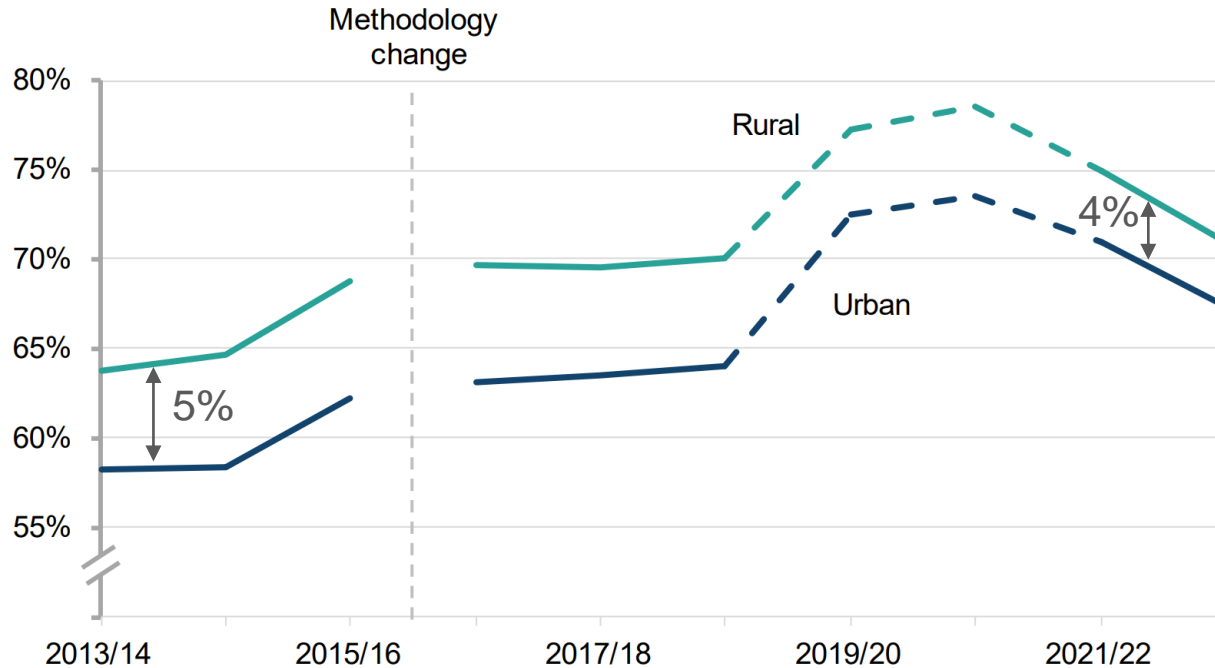
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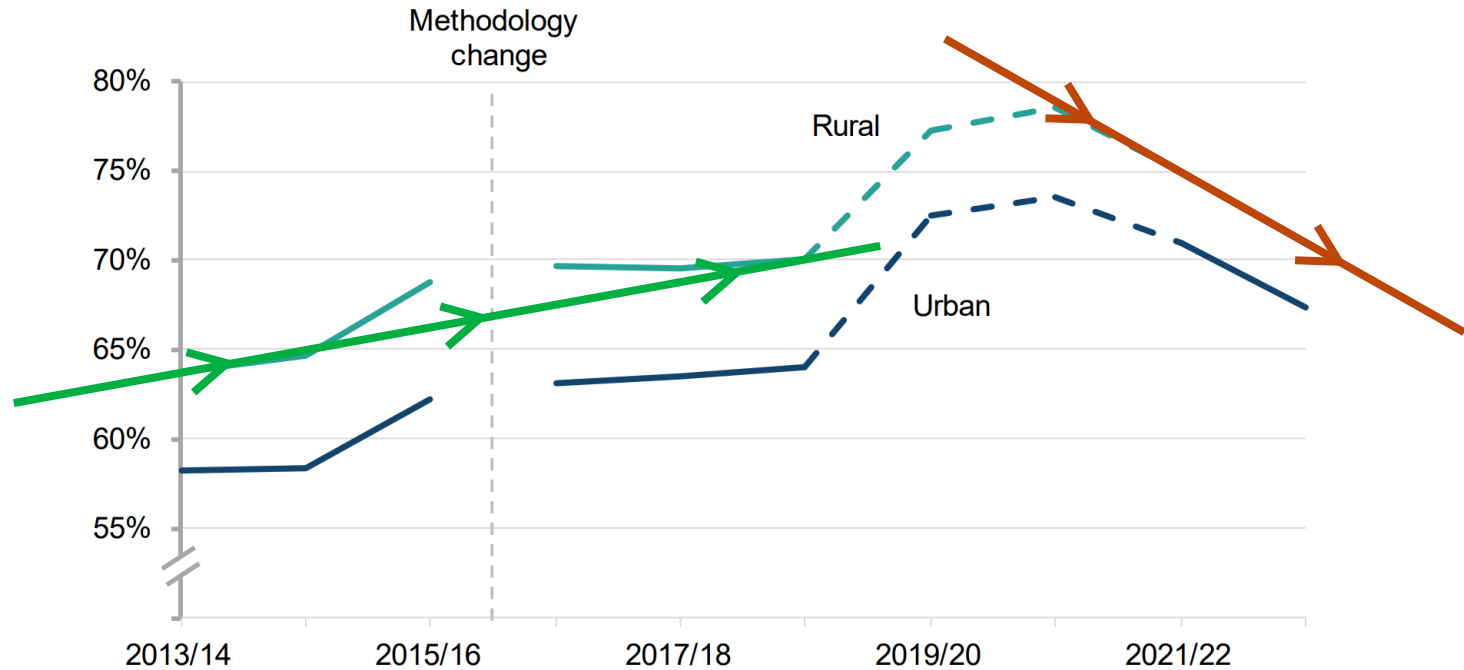
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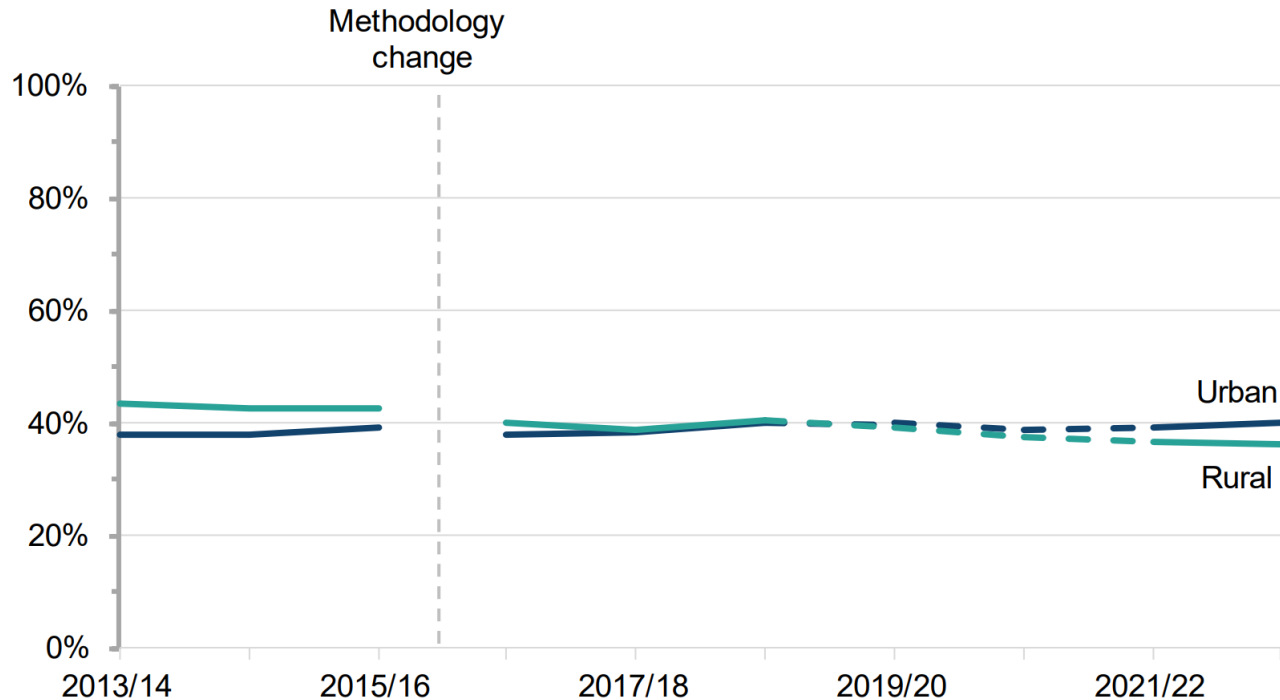
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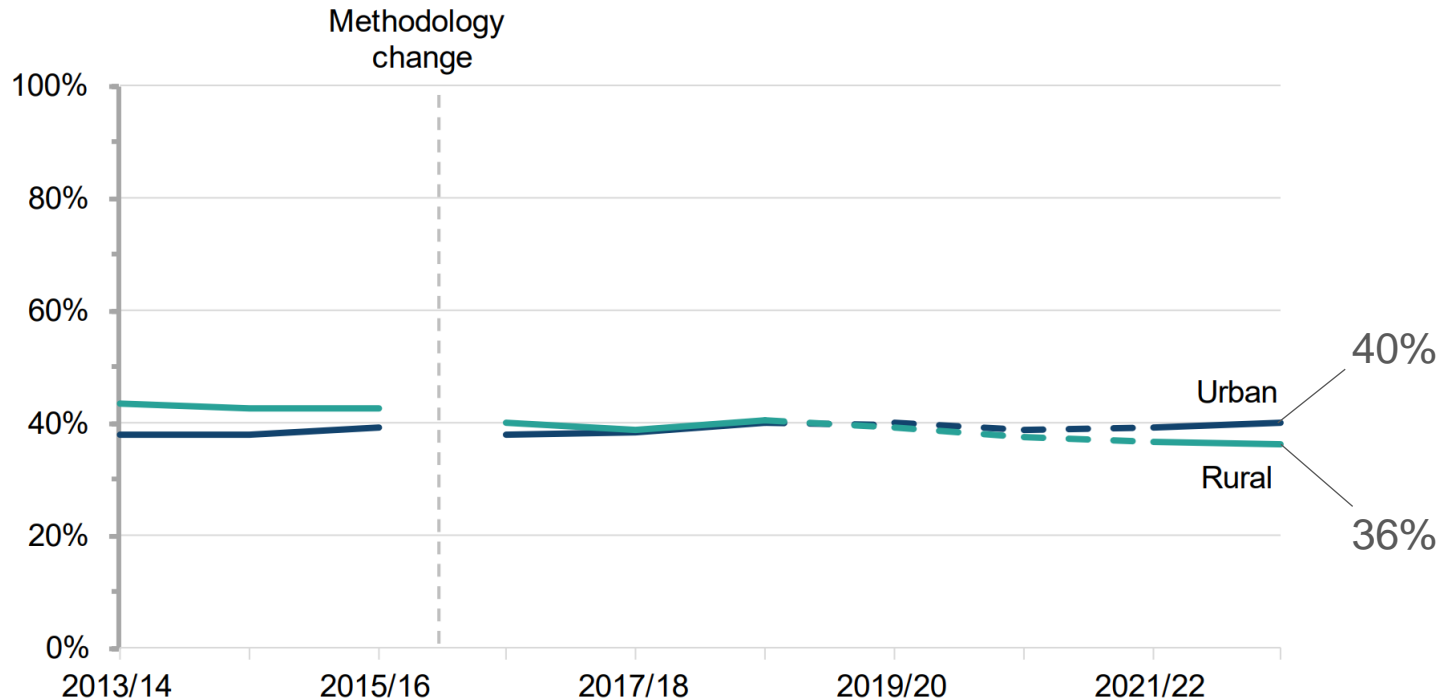
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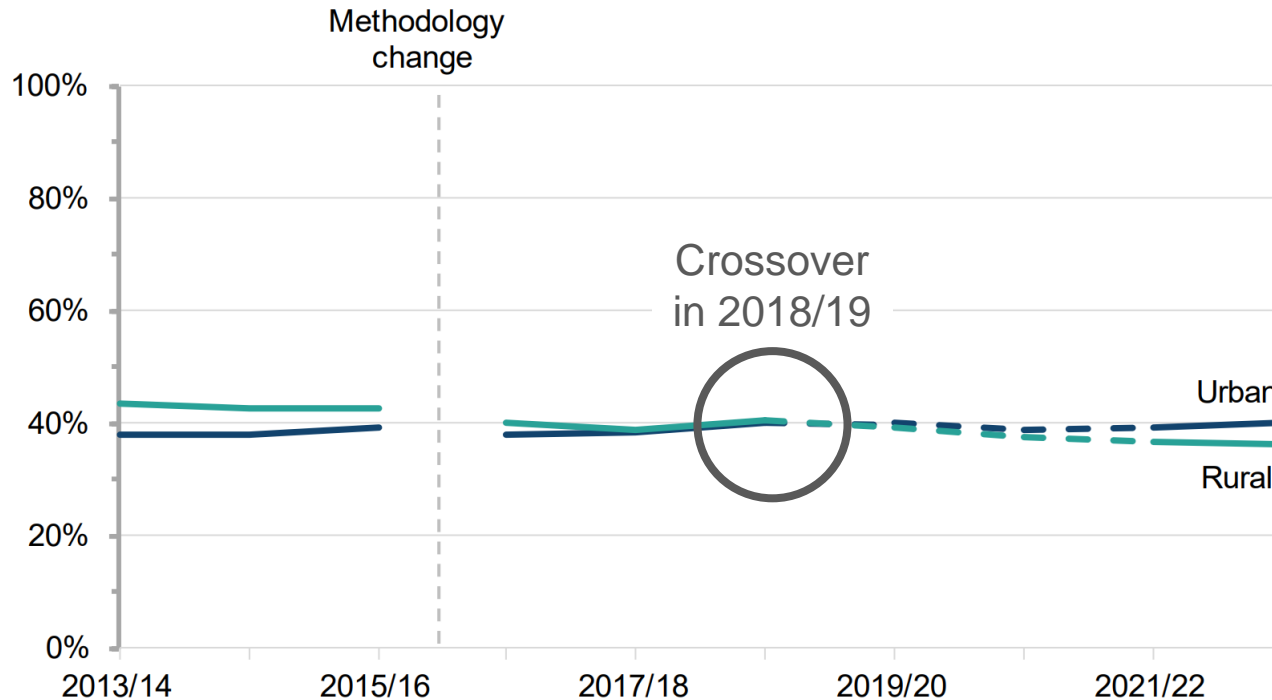
Proportion of pupils studying the English Baccalaureate subject combination



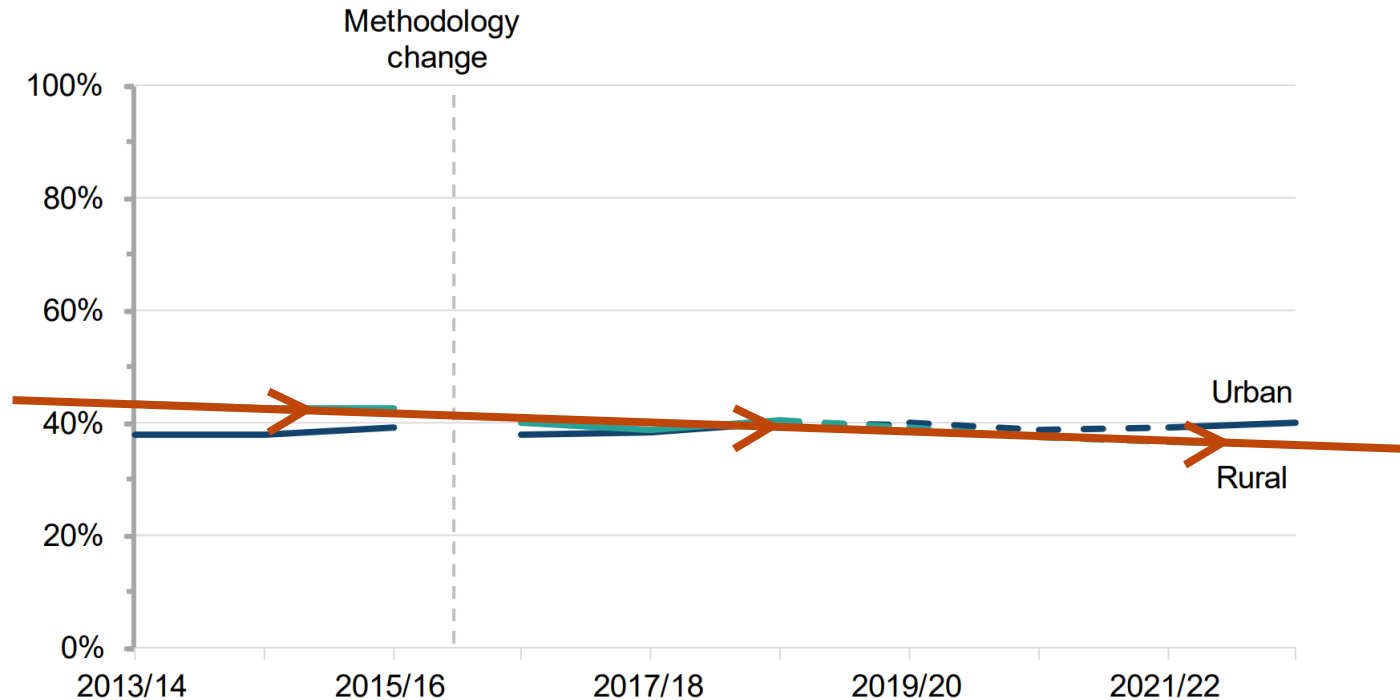
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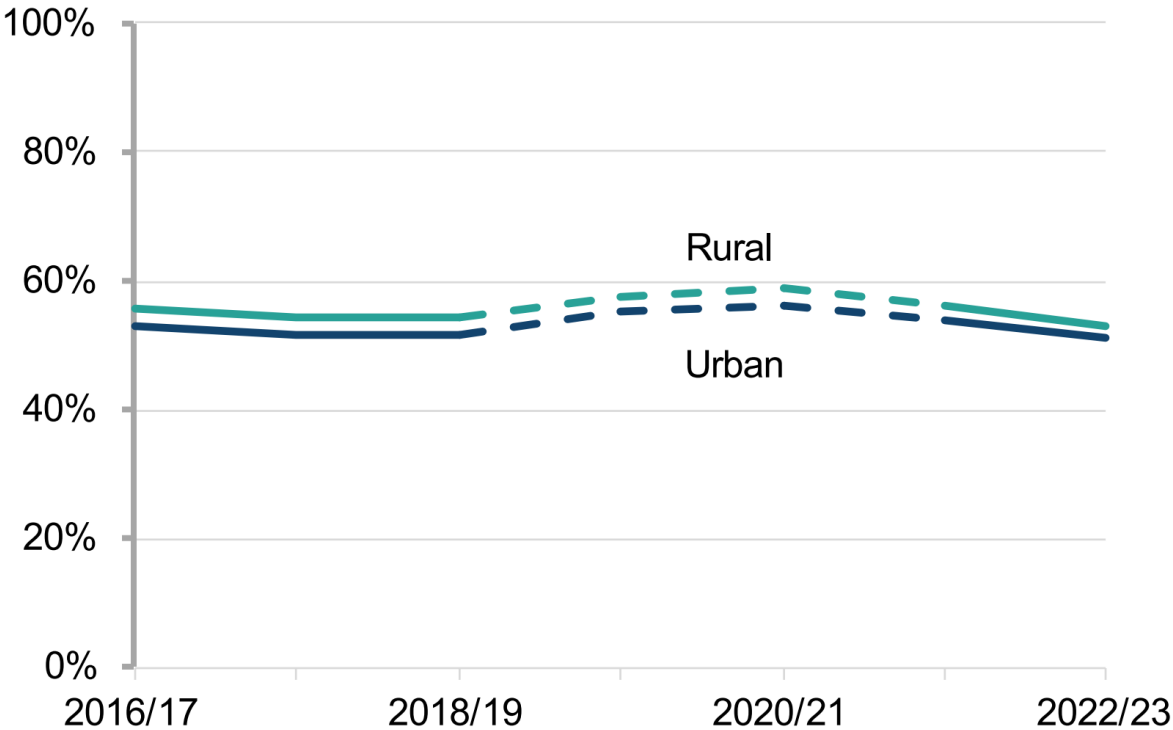


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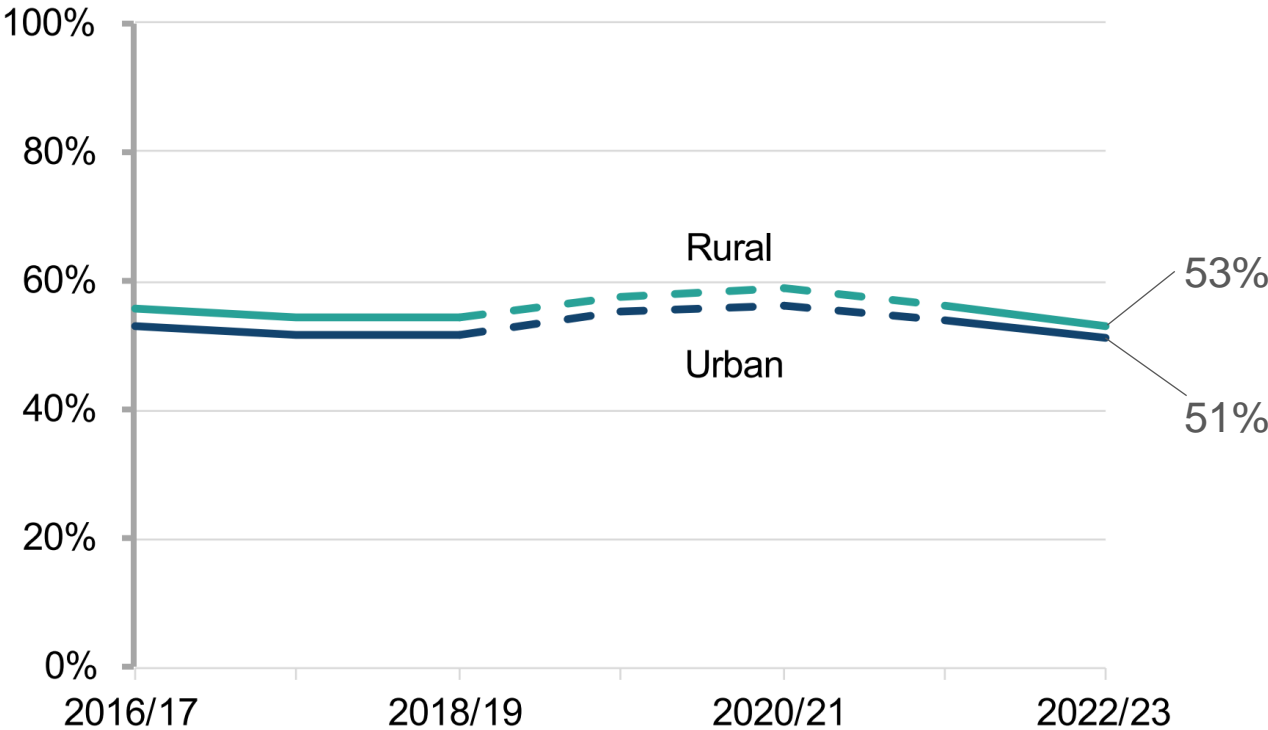
Expressed as a proportion of the maximum score for indicated year

Attainment 8



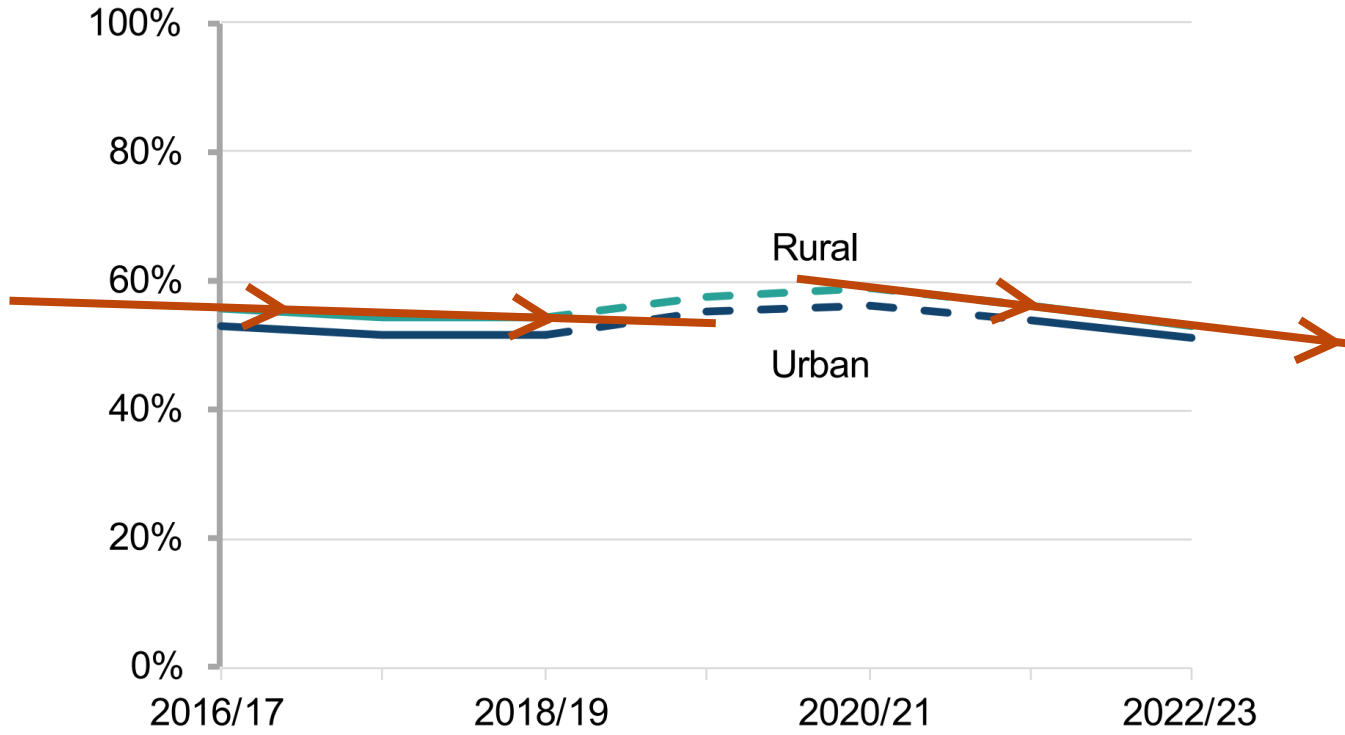
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Any questions?