

# REGIONAL RECOVERY PLANNING

BLACK PROFESSIONALS NETWORK  
28<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2020

# WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY

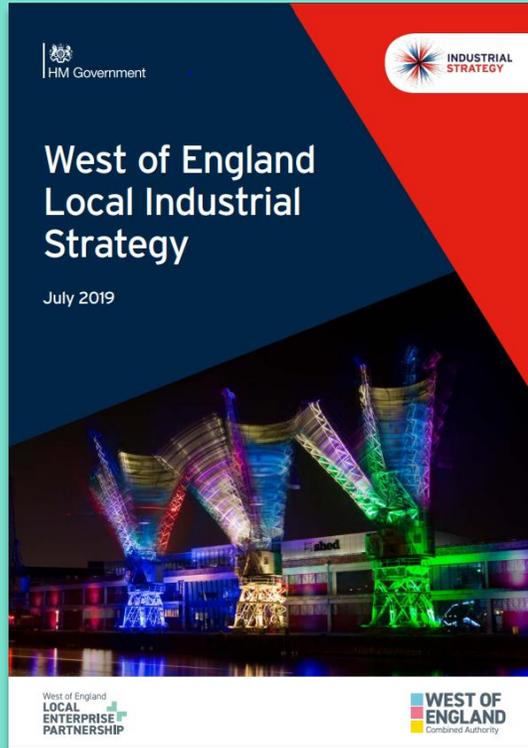
- Covers 3 Unitary Authorities Bristol, Bath & North East Somerset and South Gloucestershire
- WoE Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) includes North Somerset
- Established early 2017 and the West of England Mayor, Tim Bowles, was elected in May 2017
- 1 of 9 Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs)

Devolution means....

- £1 billion of investment to boost economic growth in the region (£30m over 30 years)
- Adult Education Budget (AEB) from 2019/20
- Enhanced powers for housing delivery
- 100% business rates retention pilot



# LOCAL INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY



*Our Local Industrial Strategy will cement the West of England as the place to develop and test innovative solutions to the challenges of the future. It will enable us to raise our productivity and drive economic growth in a way that is sustainable and offers opportunity to all our residents.*



**Fostering innovation from research through to commercialisation:** The West of England will be recognised as the national and international centre of innovation - where innovation happens both within traditional sectors and across sectors, where new ideas are tested.



**Driving inclusive growth:** The West of England values its people. It will be a place where residents have the opportunity to both contribute to, and benefit from the opportunities that come with economic growth.



**Improving business competitiveness:** Businesses of all sizes in the West of England will strive to improve performance, resilience and sustainability, enabling them to grow and offer a wide range of good quality jobs.



**Investing in the right infrastructure and housing for future growth:** Residents will be able to move seamlessly around the region between work, home and leisure activities using affordable transport solutions that minimise the impact on the environment. A range of housing types will be available that are high quality and more affordable.



**CLEAN  
GROWTH**

# BUSINESS SUPPORT & RECOVERY

We have established new business support via the [West of England Growth Hub](#):

- **Trading Better Online** - specialist support to help businesses become digitally enabled and improve their resilience and productivity. Partnership between WECA and TechSPARK.
- **Financial Resilience** - support which targets the region's accountancy expertise to help SMEs plan for financial resilience. Partnership between WECA and ICAEW.
- **Thrive West** - through WECA, the region's local authorities, Public Health England and business ambassadors will raise awareness, provide advice and guidance on mental health in the workplace
- **Extending Growth Hub reach** - additional funding from BEIS to support **Peer to Peer networking**, support to small businesses with specific funds for tourism sector
- **Universal Business Support** - additional resource is being put in place to increase local outreach and help local areas respond more flexibly to business needs
- **The Creative Scale Up programme** - a first cohort of businesses are halfway through a tailored package of support, fully engaged online with their mentors and peer-to-peer groups
- **WECA's Low Carbon Challenge Fund** - gearing up to next round. Grants for up to 40% to reduce emissions/energy bills, improve efficiency and access low carbon technologies
- WECA is gearing up to launch a new **Business Innovation Fund** - a £3.3m programme to provide grant funding of up to £50,000 to firms developing new products and services



West of England  
**GROWTH  
HUB** ➤➤➤

# EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS SUPPORT

- **Future Bright** has expanded to provide dedicated 1:1 coaching support for people - made redundant or laid off; at risk of redundancy; hours and income significantly reduced; self-employed; furloughed employees, if eligible for Universal Credit. An additional £3.6m has been awarded to the project by WECA
- **Workforce for the Future**: launching in September, an £8m programme aimed at helping SMEs plan for future skills. Will create a core support service to provide immediate engagement on skills/training brokerage, retention and skills planning. 2<sup>nd</sup> call for projects targeting SMEs and areas hit hardest by Covid-19
- Devolved **Adult Education Budget (AEB)** - £15m per annum - helps adults over the age of 19 develop the skills and qualifications needed for life, work, apprenticeships and further learning
- Opportunity for AEB to provide the underpinning foundational skills needed by residents to access regional opportunities, in light of increased need, as unemployment rates rise
- The **West of England Careers Hub** has been expanded to work with schools to progress against government's career development objectives - the Gatsby benchmarks



I've achieved more than I thought possible. I would definitely advise other people to take advantage of the support that Future Bright can offer. 

Caroline

# REGIONAL RECOVERY TASKFORCE ESTABLISHED

Mayor Tim Bowles asked by Prime Minister to lead regional recovery

## **Purpose**

- To support the region's recovery and renewal following COVID-19
- Bring together and build on work already underway, to develop a coordinated regional response to benefit residents and business
- Ensure we have a strong and consistent message to government

## **Key responsibilities**

- Identifying challenges and opportunities following the pandemic.
- Agreeing measures to help businesses adapt to the new economic landscape and improve their resilience
- Finding ways to help people access employment, skills and training opportunities
- Creating a vision for the economic renewal of the West of England, building on and refocusing the principles of the Local Industrial Strategy  
<https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/ourstrategy/>

# Design principles for recovery

- Get residents back to work: supporting training, redeployment and access to jobs
- Green recovery supporting the region's carbon objectives and embedding environmental behaviour change
- Strengthening inclusion of people in the hardest hit places and communities
- Rebuild business: strengthening innovation and trade, and encouraging start-ups and growth in sectors of opportunity
- Renew places, ensuring transport and digital access to work, and building resilience and attractiveness in hard-hit places

# Taskforce topics: issues & opportunities

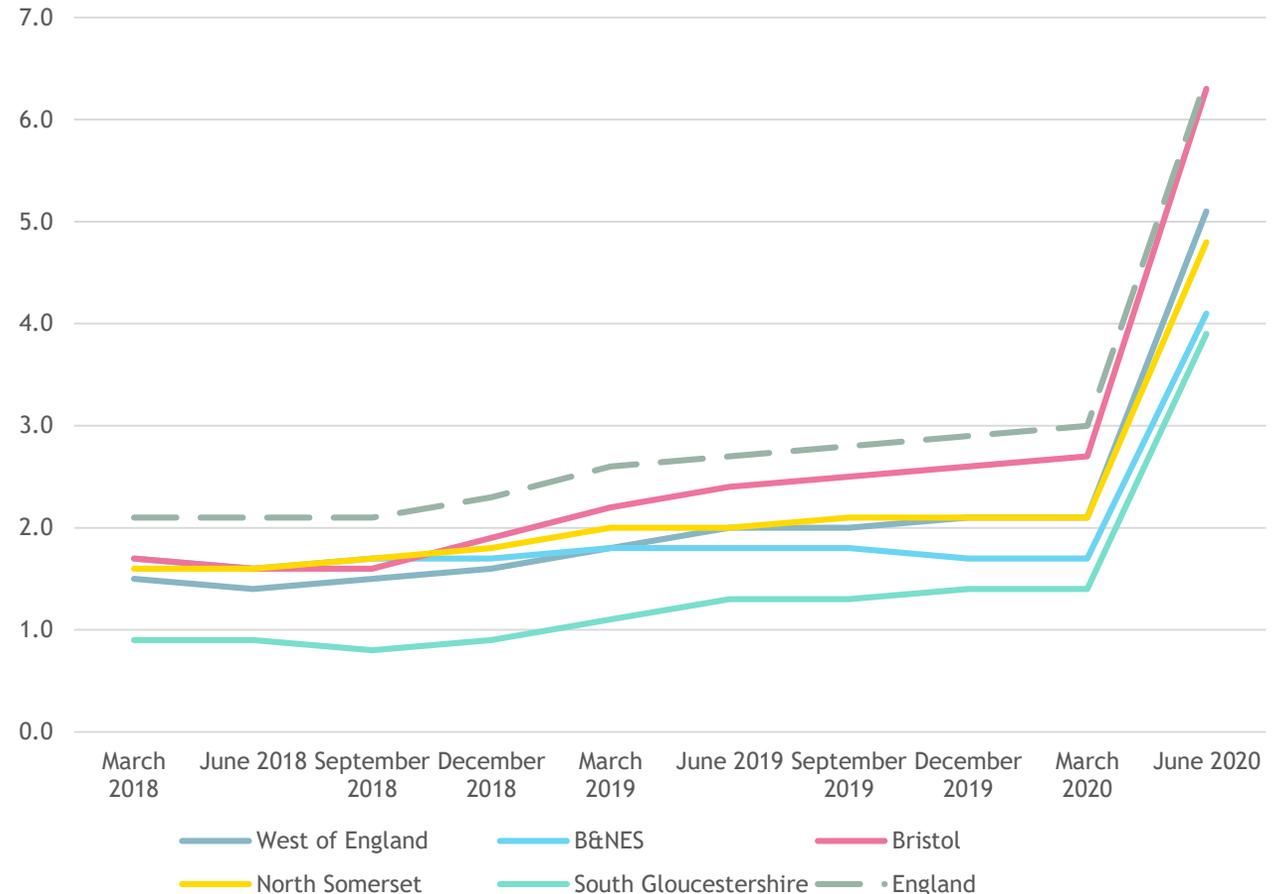
- **Significant job losses at all skill levels and stages of working lives:** Flexible re-training and redeployment opportunities to support residents to move into areas of job growth
- **Providing young people with training and/or employment opportunities:** Flexible skills/education/work experience offer reconsidering FE/HE/apprenticeships
- **Accelerated digital transformation (affecting businesses, jobs, learning and leisure):** Improve digital access and skills particularly for excluded communities, identify growth opportunities and support digital transformation
- **Positive low carbon behaviour change and improvement in air quality:** Embed change and avoid a shift back to more polluting behaviour in move to 'new normal'
- **Disadvantaged and deprived communities are hardest hit (by pandemic as well as by job losses, digital exclusion etc):** Targeted initiatives to reduce inequality gaps, including skills, enterprise, transport, health, digital access
- **Lack of public confidence to leave homes means footfall reduced in city / town centres:** Build community confidence with clear messages about staying safe, make public transport as safe as possible, support regrowth/repurposing of town and city centres
- **Region's unique cultural draw compromised by lockdown:** Support adaptation and resilience of leisure / cultural assets to retain attractiveness as a vibrant, diverse and creative place with a strong sense of community
- **Job losses across the business base including in high volume employment sectors:** Drive business adaptation and resilience, nurture start ups and scale ups and identify new sector growth opportunities (including low carbon)
- **Contraction of key, high skilled, industries that are important to the region:** Identify and capture high value growth opportunities, stimulate innovation, attract inward investment and redeploy high skilled workers

# What is the data telling us

- We are starting to see impact on our labour market....but the expectation is this will get worse before it gets better
- As a whole the region remains below the national average, but this varies across UA areas
- The impact of the furlough scheme is probably keeping the rate artificially low for now

June 2020	Count	% of working age
B&NES	5,035	4.1
Bristol	19,950	6.3
N.Som	5,970	4.8
S.Glos	6,970	3.9
West of England	37,825	5.1
England	2,231,740	6.4

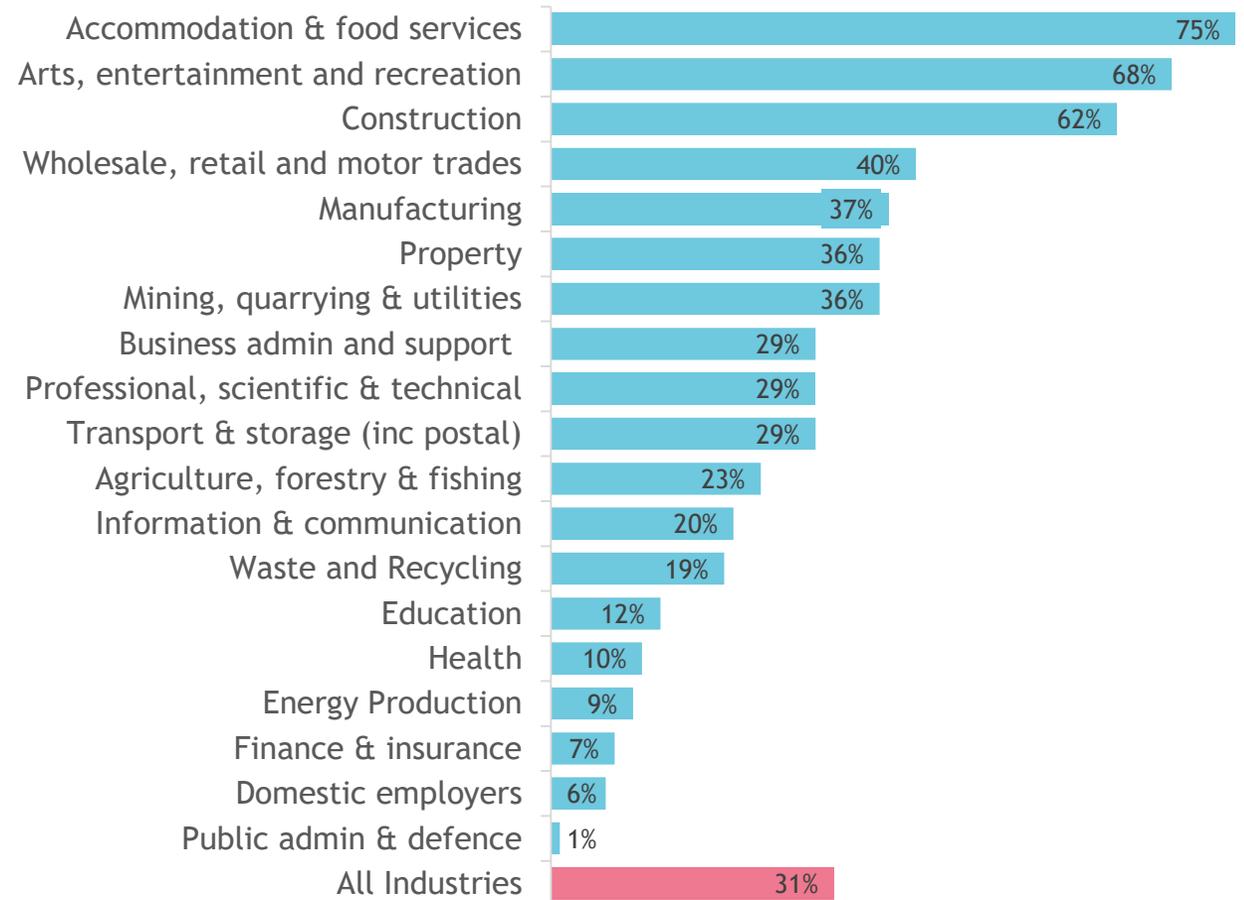
Percentage of Working Age Residents Claiming Unemployment Related Benefits



# 29% of the West of England workforce has been furloughed, and 31% of the UK workforce

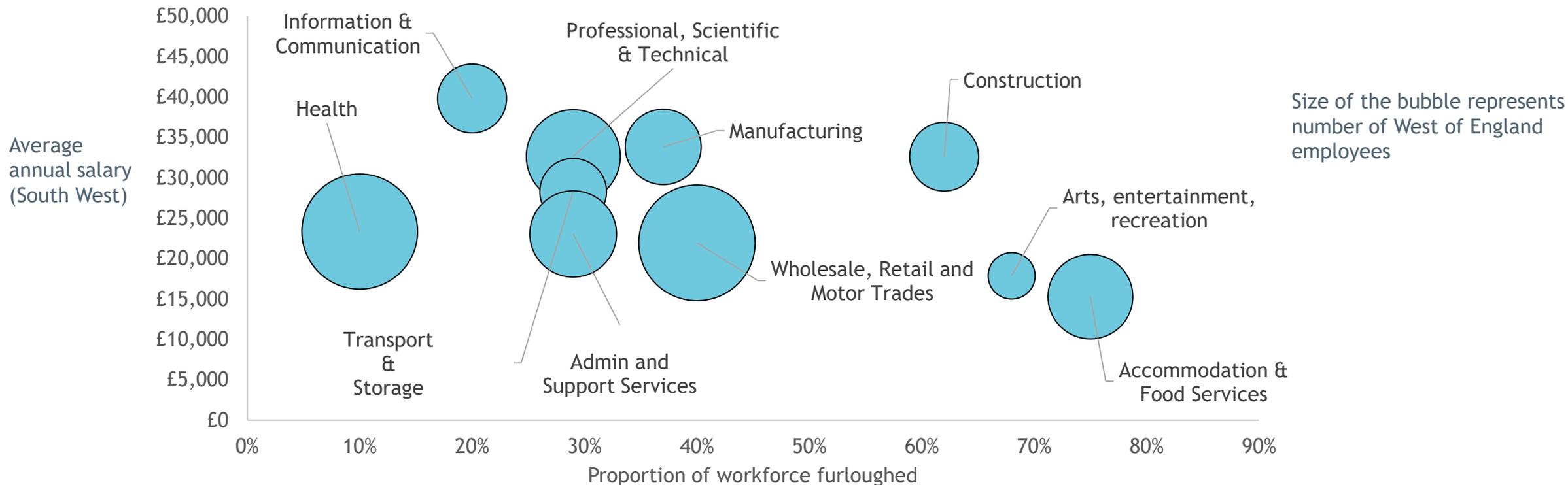
- As of 30 June 2020, 9.4 million people in the UK have been furloughed, by 1.1 million employers, with claims amounting to £26.5 billion.
- 161,000 West of England employees have been furloughed, representing around 29% of those eligible for furlough.
- Nationally employees aged 16-21 are most likely to be furloughed with 50% of those eligible furloughed.
- Least likely to be furloughed are men in their forties (28%) and women aged 41-58 (23%).
- In the South West, furlough levels are highest among the accommodation and food sector (75% of the eligible workforce); arts, entertainment and recreation (68); and construction (62%).

% South West workforce furloughed by industry (30 June)

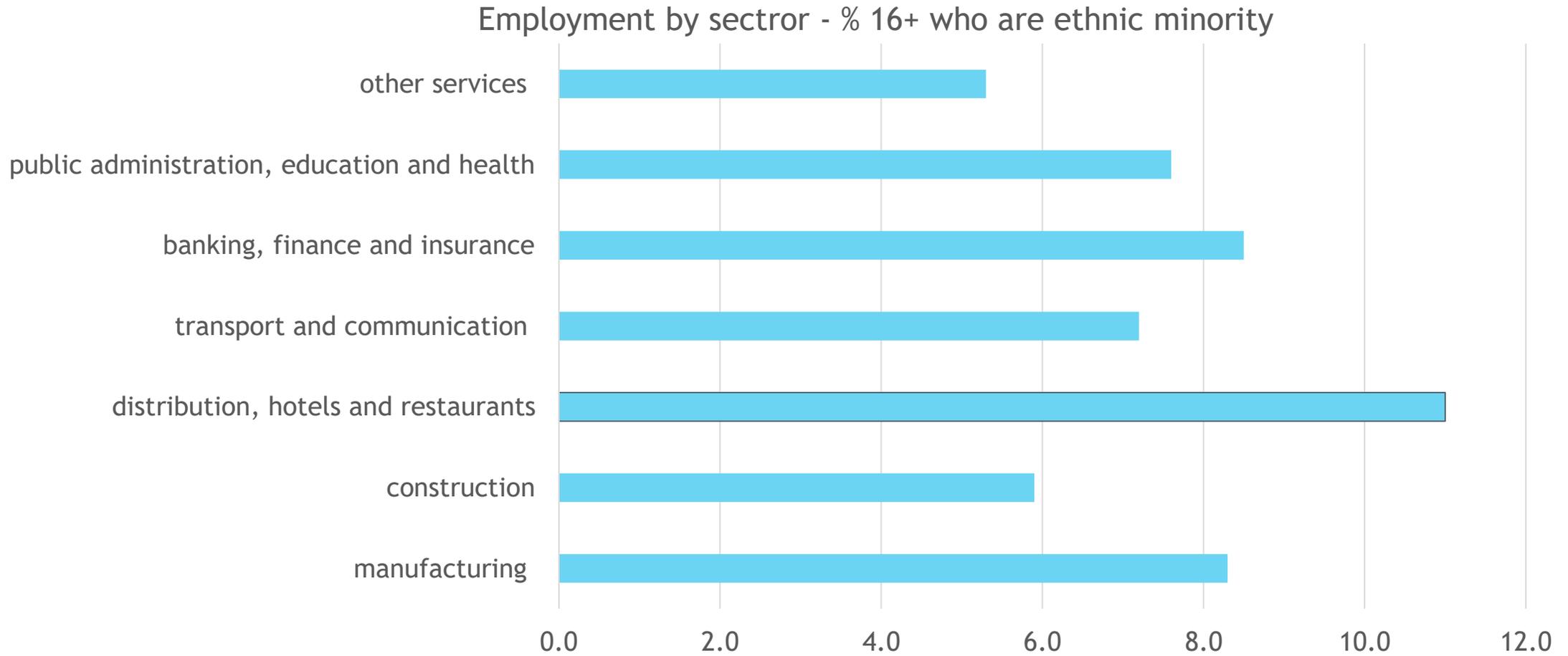


# Employment and Skills: many on furlough are likely to be lower-earners

- Those with lower average annual earnings may be most impacted - In the South West, 75% of the accommodation and food services workforce, and 68% of the arts, entertainment and recreation workforce have been furloughed. In the South West, average annual earnings for these workers in these workers is £15,300 and £17,900 respectively, compared to an average salary of £26,700 across all industries.



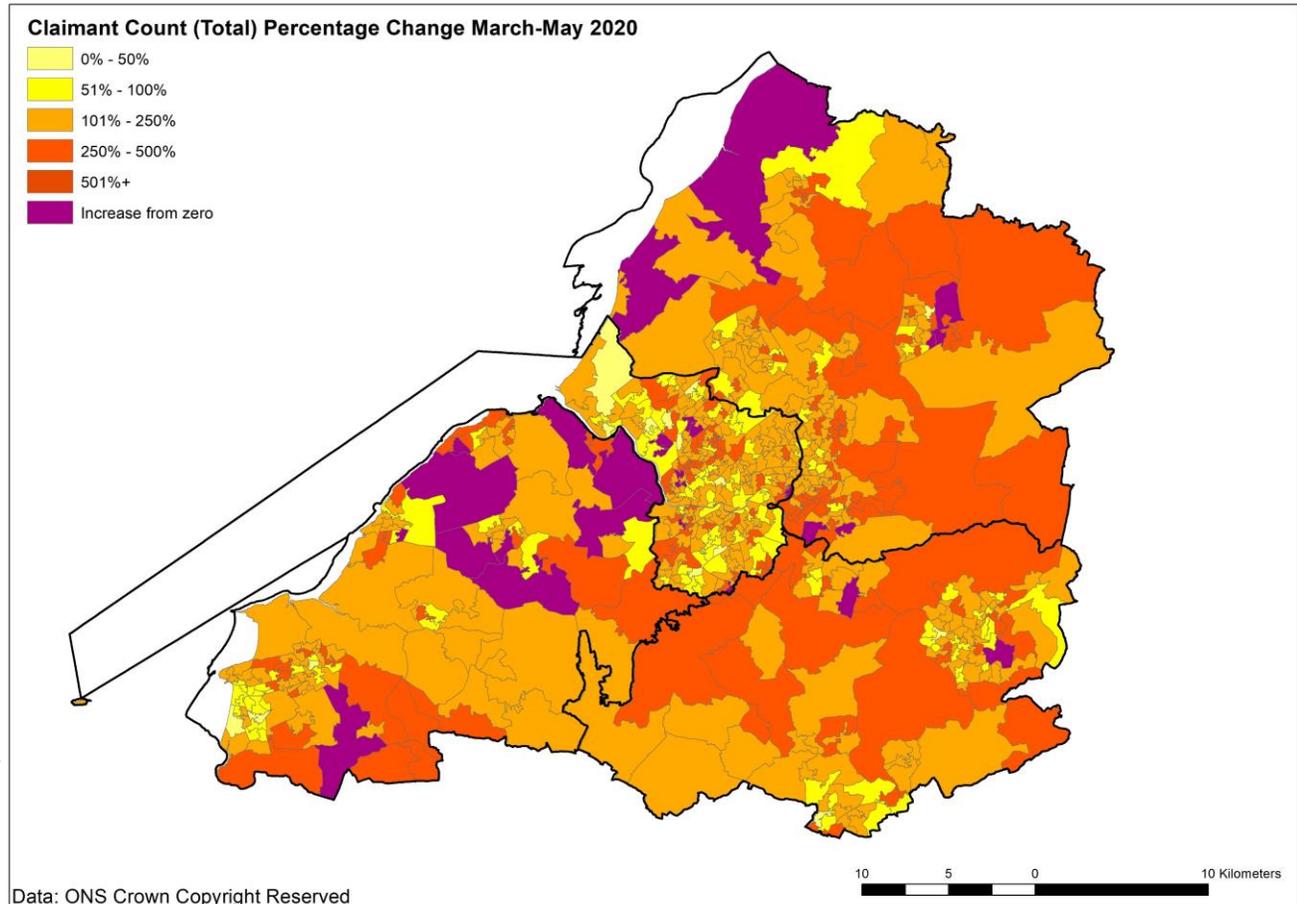
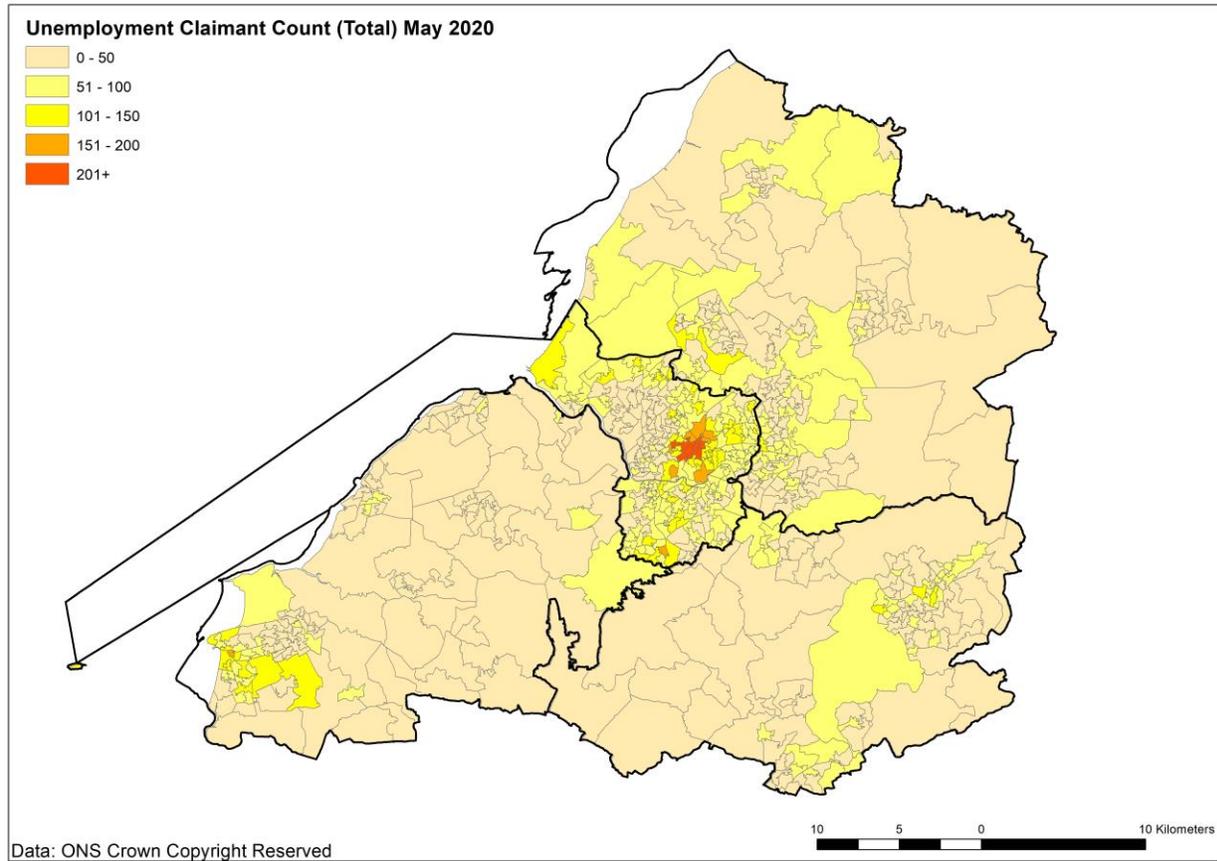
# 11% of those in employment who are from an ethnic minority group are employed in distribution and hospitality



# A significant number of young people have had their employment and training disrupted

- In the last month (June), the number of ‘young’ claimants has increased by 4%, to 5% of the regional population of 16-24 year olds. This is however an increase from the 1.8% of the region’s young people claiming unemployment benefit in March 2020.
- Around 47,000 young people aged between 15 and 18 in the academic years 10-13 have had their examinations disrupted as a result of Covid-19, this is c.4% of the population of the West of England.
- Of particular concern is those leaving education at this time as research from previous recessions shows that:
  - Young people (16 - 24) are disproportionately affected by a recession, significantly affecting rates of pay, career progression and emotional wellbeing
  - Impact increases for those with lower levels of qualifications i.e. the impact is lessened for graduates, greater for those with Level 3, greater still for Level 2 and greatest for those below this level.
  - Impact of the recession is long lasting, generally for a period of several years

# Pockets of high unemployment have intensified but since the pandemic the spread has increased also



# What businesses are telling us

## Significant job losses at all skill levels and stages of working lives

### Issues:

- Redundancy risks identified in **civil aerospace and supply chain, health & life sciences, construction, tourism, culture**
- In many cases so far this appears to be voluntary redundancy and early retirement
- Risk of **losing career pathways** - either at junior or senior levels - creating skill gaps
- Particular risks for **freelancers** without savings or childcare, threatening diversity
- Uncertainty over level of redundancy and requirements - especially in businesses not open yet (**tourism, culture**).

### Opportunities:

- **Some businesses looking at re-training staff**
- **Some examples of potential redeployments:**
- **Some growth** - logistics, parts of retail (online)
- In aerospace, may be scope to move staff from civil to defence
- Potential opportunities in e.g. rural and food sector for people with transferable skills outside the sector
- Creative - possible increase in freelancers as larger firms make redundancies. Opportunity to encourage start-ups.

## Young people without access to training or employment

### Issues:

- Some **businesses ending apprenticeships** or taking a break from recruiting new apprentices - risk to pipeline
- Concern that evolving skills needs may mean existing apprentices are less suitable
- How to help former **apprentices made redundant** - some firms are taking on those being laid off by others
- Several groups identified need for **more flexibility on Levy access**, particularly for SMEs

### Opportunities:

- **Recruitment** - need for careers advice to link up with recruitment opportunities and explain different sectors; explore potential for work experience and mentoring in more secure sectors; develop career pathways for sectors that have struggled in past e.g. Care
- **Training** - Potential for more training opportunities - more use of online learning, opportunity to use colleges/universities more to provide training to business; flexible learning
- Funded internships to encourage uptake (Culture, Creative and Digital)
- Shared apprenticeship with 2-3-4 organisations to reduce vulnerability

# Emerging Taskforce proposals

## Significant job losses

- Deliver a co-ordinated West of England rapid response to job losses, building towards an all 'access hub' for vacancies, careers advice and coaching
- Draw together a comprehensive and accessible package of training and retraining opportunities to support affected individuals, aligning with future growth areas
- Kickstart a green jobs/skills revolution to drive a regional low carbon recovery and renewal
- Deliver bespoke employment and skills support for groups most affected by C-19

## Supporting young people

- Work with government to maximise impact of new Plan for Jobs, including apprenticeship, traineeships, Kickstart
- Maximise regional impact of national apprenticeship measures to allow firms to retain and take on new young apprentices
- Pilot and implement innovative sector-based approaches to nurturing young and diverse talent through the Workforce for the Future programme
- Ensure continued viability of education and training provider base to support our young people
- Maximise delivery of existing Realising Talent programme to take pre-emptive measures to prevent rise in number of people NEET
- Develop a package of start-up support for aspiring young entrepreneurs from a range of sectors, groups and communities

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