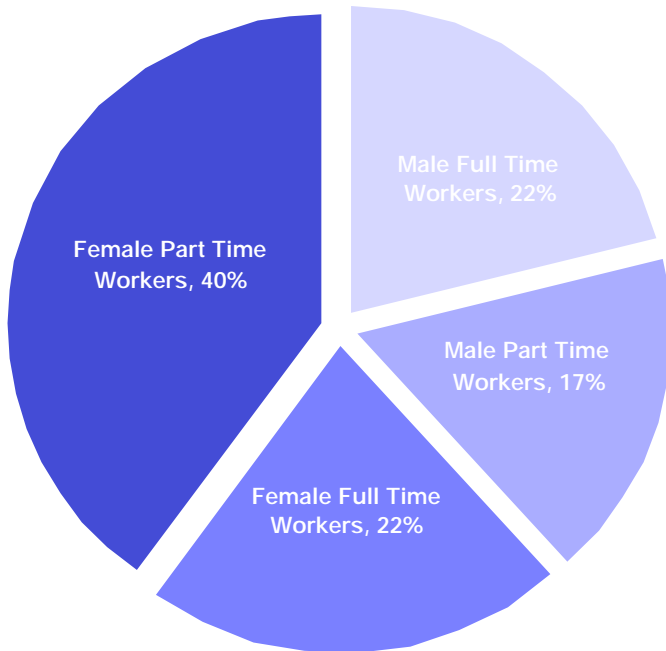


Active Leisure and Learning in the East of England

How many jobs in the Sector?

East of England distribution of employment in the sector



- Around 42,000 people are employed in the sports and active leisure sector in the East of England in 2002, with a further 3,300 people self-employed
- 1.8% of the regional workforce is employed in the sector, a higher proportion than the national figure for the sector
- 9.9% of all sports and active leisure jobs in the UK are in the East of England
- 61.7% of the workforce are women
- 57.2% of the workforce are part-time
- Besides the paid workforce, there is an estimated 638,300 who work on an informal voluntary basis including 220,700 people performing core formal voluntary roles.

Source: ABI 2002 (excludes self-employed)

Job opportunities in the sector

- The Annual Business Inquiry shows that between 1998-2002 employment in the sector increased by over 7,900 jobs
- In 1998 Skills Foresight data for England suggested a 2.5% annual growth in employment in the sector over the next ten years, however the East of England has exceeded this forecast in the four year period up to 2002 with an average growth rate of 5.3% per year
- Besides this considerable expansion, there is also expected to be a relatively high staff turnover rate. Up to 2008, 30% of current jobs will need to be filled because of replacement demand, a figure equivalent to 13,600 jobs



National Foresight data for the sector suggests that:

- Female employment will experience a slightly greater increase than male employment
- There is expected to be a higher growth in part-time employment
- The rate of growth in the level of self-employment will be modest compared to the growth in the number of employees

Businesses in the Sector

- There are over 3,200 sports and active leisure business units in the East of England

- A lower proportion of businesses in the sector (72%) are micro-businesses (employing up to 10 people), compared to 85% across all sectors in the region
- There is a higher proportion of small businesses employing 11-24 people (14%) than in the East of England economy as a whole (8%)
- There are relatively few large businesses with over 200 employees
- A high proportion of people in the sector work in businesses employing 25-49 people (24% compared to an average of 13% in the region) and businesses employing between 11 and 24 employees (18% compared to a regional 13%). As a consequence of this employment in small sized businesses there is relatively less employment in micro and especially large sized businesses

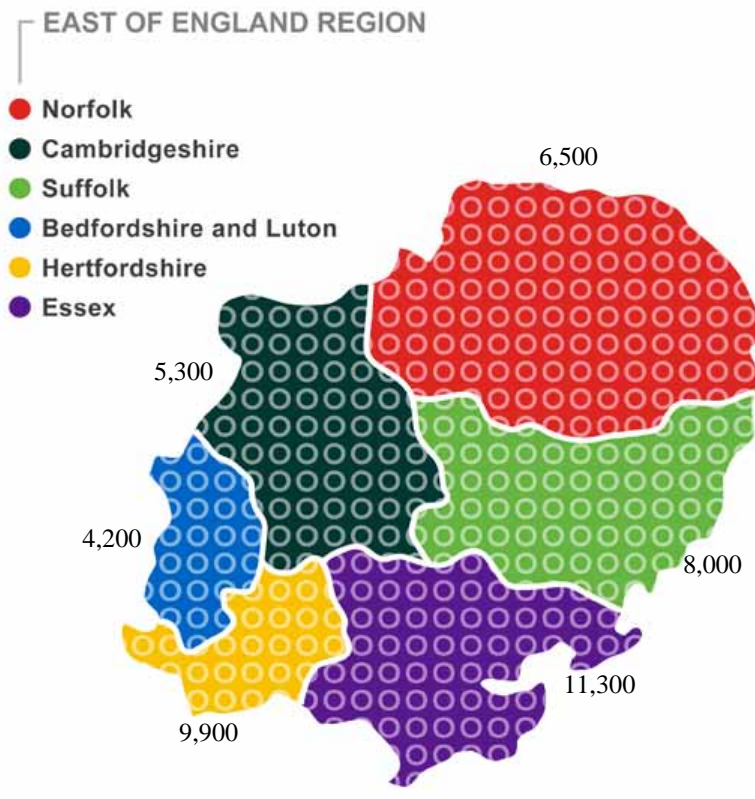
Source: Annual Business Inquiry

Key companies in the sector

There are many well-known large companies operating in the sector. In professional sport, there are Nationwide football clubs at Norwich, Ipswich, Southend, Colchester, Luton, Watford, Cambridge and Peterborough. Essex host County Cricket in the region and Saracens (based at Watford) are in the Rugby Union Premiership. The East of England is the home of horse racing with the governing body (the Jockey Club) and many of the major stables based in Newmarket. Besides Newmarket there are also courses at Yarmouth and Huntingdon that are responsible for attracting visitors and spending in the region.

The region also has a number of stadia and facilities; Portman Road, Ipswich, has hosted international football and Vicarage Road, Watford has hosted international rugby. The presence within the region of the Norfolk Broads and miles of coastline presents the opportunity for a wide range of outdoor recreation including sailing and boating. The region is also marketed as England's Cycling Country with a wide range of routes. Much employment in sport and fitness is local authority based, but private clubs are an increasing source of employment opportunities. The English Institute of Sport for the region is based at the Sportspark, Norwich, where World Class athletes have access to strength and conditioning facilities, an outdoor athletics track, squash and badminton courts, Astroturf pitches and a 50m pool. EIS East also has multi-sport training centre at the University of Hertfordshire at Hatfield. There are a number of theme and leisure parks in the region including Dinosaur Adventure Park in Norfolk, Banham Zoo and Adventure Island in Southend.

Employment in the Active Leisure and Learning Sector in the sub-regions



- As the map shows, regionally Essex and Hertfordshire employ the most people in sports and active leisure. Employment in this sector as a percentage of total employment is highest in Suffolk (2.6%)

- Essex and Suffolk have the highest number of sports and active leisure businesses

- Businesses in this sector make up 1.5% of businesses in the region with the highest proportion in Suffolk (2.4%)

Skills and recruitment issues in the sector

The 2003 National Employer Skills Survey was commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council, in partnership with the Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) and the Department for Education and Skills, in order to provide detailed information about the extent, causes and implications of England's recruitment problems and skill gaps. It also measures employers' training activities.

Of the active leisure and learning employers in the region, 27% of businesses expect employment to increase in the next 12 months compared to 30% nationally. 5% are expecting employment to decrease in the period in the region.

Employers were asked their views on the levels of skills required to do each job. Across all occupations nationally in the sector, the skills most required at advanced and high levels are customer handling skills (27% of employers say this is required at an advanced level, 46% at a high level), communication skills (24% advanced, 48% high) and team working (20% advanced, 49% high). Notable is the low level of IT skills required.

23% of establishments had vacancies at the time of the survey. In employment terms vacancies form 4.5% of employment in the region. 60% of establishments in the region with vacancies are finding at least one position hard to fill, equivalent to 14% of all establishments.

Nationally the skills that establishments found difficult to obtain from applicants are communication skills (40% of establishments with a hard to fill vacancy), team working skills (38%), customer handling skills (33%), technical and practical skills (28%) and problem solving skills (27%).

Comparing employers within the SkillsActive SSC area with employers across England, the main difference is that they are more likely to state that the hard-to-fill vacancy is caused by aspects of the job; poor terms and conditions (39 per cent compared to 21 per cent) and shift work (30 per cent compared to 15 per cent). They are less likely to give reasons associated with the number of applicants or their skills or experience. Because of this the proportion of hard-to-fill vacancies in the SkillsActive SSC area that are skill shortage vacancies is lower (at 35 per cent) than for England as a whole (50 per cent).

The implications of hard to fill vacancies are an increased workload for other staff (93% of establishments report this), difficulties meeting customer service objectives (48%), difficulties meeting required quality standards (47%) and difficulties introducing new working practices (39%).

It is estimated that 24 per cent of establishments in the SkillsActive SSC area suffered from internal skills gaps, higher than the 22 per cent reported for England as a whole. This data suggests that some 13 per cent

of employees in the sector are not fully proficient at their current jobs. In the East of England a higher proportion of establishments are reporting skills gaps (25%) and this equates to 17% of their staff.

It is evident from this that the volume of skill gaps far exceeds that of recruitment problems, as in other sectors and across England. This would suggest that there is a need for sufficient emphasis on workforce development to address these gaps as well as looking at skill supply and the quality of entrants into the sector. In the East of England the skills that need to be improved were reported as team working skills (69% of establishments with a skill gap), problem solving skills (66%) and communication skills (65%).

Pay and conditions in the sector

- The average annual salary for full-time leisure and sports managers was £26,300 in 2003
- Sports coaches, instructors and officials earn an average of £24,800 per annum
- Fitness instructors and sports and leisure assistants both earn around £15,000 nationally

Source: New Earnings Survey 2003

Education and training provision in the East of England

- SkillsActive, in partnership with employers and key organisations across the Sector, has developed a framework for Apprenticeships. The mandatory outcomes for completion lead to a Level 2 or Level 3 S/NVQ, some Key Skills awards, a Technical Certificate and other industry-relevant skills. The occupational strands cover Coaching, Teaching and Instructing (a sport or activity), Instructing Health and Fitness, Activity Leadership and the Outdoors, Spectator Control, Operational Services and Operations and Development, and Playwork.
- There are a wide range of Further Education college-based courses in areas such as sport science, fitness instruction as well as general courses in active leisure and learning.
- There are five Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVES) in sport-related subjects established or in development in England. Two of these are based in the East of England with a CoVE in sport and fitness at the College of West Anglia and a CoVE in leisure and fitness instruction being established at SEEVIC College in Essex.
- Higher-level qualifications are available at graduate and postgraduate level. They include degrees in areas such as physical education, sports development, sport science and physiology and sport and recreation management. Providers include:
 - Anglia Polytechnic University which offers an HND, DipHE and BSc in sport, health and exercise and sport science. The Law School at the university has a Sports Law centre.
 - Essex University's Department of Biological Sciences offers BScs in sport and exercise science and sport studies. MPhil, MSc and PhD courses in sport science are offered as are MScs in sport science (fitness and health) and human and equine sport science.
 - The University of Hertfordshire offers BScs in sport and exercise science and sport therapy and an MSc, PgD and PgC in sports therapy.
 - Luton University's Department of Sport Exercise and Biomedical Sciences offers CertHEs in coaching studies and health, fitness and personal training, HNDs in sports therapy and sports science and BScs in coaching studies, health, fitness and personal training, sports therapy, sports and exercise physiology, sports and exercise psychology and sport and exercise sciences.
 - Writtle College offers HNCs in areas such as sport turf science and equine management, a FD in sport turf and golf course management and landscape and amenity management and BScs in sport turf science and management, leisure management, leisure management with sport management and adventure tourism.

Other fact sheets in the series

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