



# C19 National Foresight Group: Intelligence Briefing Paper 10

## Variation of need by place and informal workers

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This briefing synthesizes data with systematic findings from across academic subjects. This evidence of empirical data and academic insight contributes to our existing knowledge on who is most likely to be experiencing adversity in our communities. To start to build a (provisional) picture about who is likely to be most affected by Covid-19 and the impacts from NPIs.

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### Context

A data review is undertaken by academics at Nottingham Trent University every week to inform the C19 National Foresight Group. Evidence related to Covid-19 psychological, social and economic trends are reviewed to inform, frame and prioritise discussions at national and local strategic decision-making level (LAs and LRFs). The C19 National Foresight Group synthesise data trends and academic findings across disciplines, with evidence of existing vulnerabilities and inequalities to start to build existing and emerging risk or adversity profiles of impacts from Covid-19.

### Who is this for?

This is most useful for the following roles. Please pass this on to those people in the following roles in your area:

- National thought leaders
- Local strategic decision-makers
- Intel cells
- Head of the MAIC



- SCG and TCG Chair
- Directors of Public Health
- Head of Health Protection Boards
- LA Chief Execs
- Head of Recovery Groups/Cells
- Multi-Agency Support Teams
- LRF Secretariat

**Focussed theme this week:** This week we are focussing on the development of the C19 approach to understanding the impacts on individuals, families and groups of C19. This is a tool for local strategic and operational decision makers to use to understand and prioritise need within their local communities.

Data trends:

This week we are focussing on academic insights.

Academic Insights:

We are providing one summary of work we have completed relating to economic insecurity and a piece on the informal economy. This is the penultimate piece with one more to come which will be shared next week. We will be releasing these as a compendium next week as a separate release.

- 1) Scoping review of the literature to inform discussion on the variation in need across different geographies or 'place' in the Covid-19 crisis
- 2) The informal economy and vulnerable workers

## Academic Synthesis

(gathered from systematic literature reviews, rapid reviews, webpages, academic articles, pre-prints, academic expertise)

**N.B.** This is not a literature review, but a review of the broad area (balanced with C19 specific literature) to see what topics lie within the area to inform future work. Predominantly based on systematic literature reviews and rapid reviews, this is to indicate the size of the literature review should we wish to commission one. Carried out by Stephanie Bianco, Adam Potter, Dr Stacey Stewart, and Rich Pickford, with revisions and edits by Dr Rowena Hill, NTU. Please contact us if you require a list of sources consulted to develop your own literature review. The section is to provide an overview of the academic and research foresight on the developing areas of latent and emergent economic needs of the community.

## A scoping review of the literature to inform discussion on the variation in need across different geographies or 'place' in the Covid-19 crisis

### Narrative of the review

The following scoping literature review aims to explore the geography, and local impact, of economic vulnerabilities as a result of the Covid-19 crisis. It is recognised that this crisis will leave certain demographic groups and household types more susceptible to economic insecurities (separate reviews have been conducted to reflect this). In addition to impact to public health, and the vulnerabilities of particular demographic groups, the current crisis will likely raise borrowing and debt. In discussing the impact of economic vulnerabilities and in crisis management it is important to consider factors at a local level to understand disparities. The present scoping review aimed to explore how the economic consequences of the crisis would impact upon particular geographical locations within the UK, which will now be referred to as 'place'.

### Key Messages:

In summary, those who are particularly vulnerable to the economic crisis include:

- Understanding where best to target economic reform packages or support packages such as wellbeing, legislation and additional welfare or food provisions.



- Many of the places highlighted as being at risk of socio-economic consequences of the current Covid-19 socioeconomic impacts are also at higher risk of contracting the virus.
- Evidence is emerging that employers are asking workers to continue working, without alterations to employment conditions to Covid-19 secure working conditions.
- Economic output is forecast to decline by around 50% in parts of the Midlands and Northwest. High levels of employment in the informal sector (annually generating around 12% of Britain's GDP), operate within any one city and informal business owners are likely to move workers around the country to meet levels of demand.
- Twenty local authorities which are likely to suffer severe economic consequences during the current crisis. Most of these are in the Midlands, Northwest or Wales.
- Clear regional dimension to the current crisis which must be considered and gives direct predictions of the needs of greatest vulnerability to be targeted in policy.
- Local level understanding of the socio-economic impacts of economic decline as the regional picture often hides critical local variation on employment, unemployment and economic inactivity.
- Government's national schemes, such as the Job retention and Business Interruption loans, will be utilised in some parts of the country more than others. It also highlights that through the crisis, different approaches will be required in different parts of the country.
- An interactive map has been developed by the RSA to explore at risk employment by area and this can be accessed here: <https://www.thersa.org/action-and-research/rsa-projects/economy-enterprise-manufacturing-folder/interactive/coronavirus-jobs-risk-local-authority>
- The financial consequences of Covid-19 on Wales has been highlighted as an area of great risk.
- Government policy has begun to try to alleviate these financial pressures, further commitment needs to be provided to those renting, council tax holiday payments should be considered and gaps need to be filled within the current support packages to secure people's incomes and safety nets for those in need.
- 'Just-About Managing' (also referred to as Ordinary working) families are spread across the UK, they contribute most to populations in the North East, Midlands and Wales in particular.

## Geography of needs background

The UK's economy is seeing more damage in the Covid-19 crisis than any other developed country according to a recent report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (CECD, 2020). The report forecasts an 11.5% drop in GDP at present which is likely to rise to 14% if lockdowns are extended and an estimated rise of 9% in unemployment. The UK has seen a lower rise in unemployment at present than other nations such as the US, which some attribute to Government Job Retention schemes (RSA, 2020). There are fears that it could worsen once such schemes end. However, many reports note that this economic disparity is not likely to hit all UK households in the same way with notable social groups being more at risk of economic insecurities (ONS, 2020). This includes, but is not limited to:

- Young workers – who are more at risk to lose employment and have less savings to rely upon
- Just Managing Families/ Ordinary Working Families
- Those in lower paid roles
- Households in which there are children, particularly single parent households
- Households of BAME, where there is more likelihood of employment in sectors which have been affected by COVID-19
- Those who have seen some financial impact in the current crisis
- Migrant workers, who are more likely to be employed in the informal sector

Not every geographical area is likely to be affected in the same way; reports from the CECD, Social Metrics Commission, The Centre For Cities, The Centre for Progressive Policy (CPP) and the RSA all



highlight areas in which the current crisis is likely to have the greatest economic impact. In addition to discussing the intersections between societal groups and socio-economic vulnerabilities, it is vital that these are considered within a place framework and that the intersections between social group and place are considered in crisis management and welfare support changes. In previous times of economic crisis and in welfare reforms direct impacts at local and regional levels can have big variations in different areas of the country. Such geographical effects are not just essential in planning but are also needed **to understand where best to target economic reform packages, as some local areas may require additional support as well as where to target additional support packages in the form of wellbeing, legislation and additional welfare or food provisions** (The Resolution Foundation, 2020). This also infers the need for economic support packages targeted at specific local areas too.

### **Prior to and post CovidD-19**

In exploring previous welfare reforms/reductions in support, **older industrialised areas of England, Scotland and Wales are typically the most effected places as are a number of seaside towns, London boroughs and the Midlands**. Interestingly, many of these areas are highlighted as being at risk of socio-economic consequences of the current Covid-19 economic crisis, as well as being at higher risk of Covid-19 (Social Metrics Commission, 2020; CPP, 2020). Researchers have made an association between socioeconomic impacts and the likelihood of increasing risk of contracting the virus (Social Metrics Commission, 2020; Atchison et al., 2020). It should be noted that this scoping review has highlighted a link between areas of low socio-economic status and forms of poverty which are at risk of Covid-19 consequences as a result of managing the crisis including lack of access to food, self-isolation and shielding. Further, recent reports from the Centre for Progressive Policy (CPP; 2020) highlight that the economic crisis and workplace closures will lead to increased risk-taking behaviour, increasing the likelihood of contracting the virus. This will have severe economic implications for particular areas previously associated with industry. An example of this has been recently highlighted by a Labour Behind the Label Report, which suggested that some **employers were asking workers to continue working, without alterations to employment conditions to Covid-19 secure working conditions**. In some cases, workers exhibited symptoms of illness and were still encouraged to work.

A recent CPP report also estimates that **economic output will decline by around 50% in parts of the Midlands and Northwest** and stresses that these are areas of particular concern. In addition, these areas also have high levels of employment in the informal sector. This is a sector which annually generates around 12% of Britain's GDP, are not uncommon despite in not being well understood in the national narrative and sustain around 2.5 million workers (Think Tank, 2014). It is difficult to estimate **how much there is of this informal sector employment in any one city and informal business owners are likely to move workers around the country to meet levels of demand**. Informal businesses are likely to operate without complying with employment law, health and safety and environmental regulations. To note are the large number of people employed within this sector and the likely rise of those seeking employment with such businesses if unemployment rates continue to rise. For example, the recent report from Behind the Label notes that a high proportion of migrant workers are employed in this sector but that, in times of economic insecurity, many people turn to this sector for employment despite unfair working conditions, low pay and a lack of security and health and safety. People are likely to be willing to work in the informal workforce if they fail to qualify for government schemes, have no recourse to public funds and are therefore prevented from claiming welfare support, or if they are classed as self-employed but are given no payslips and are therefore unable to obtain government support. This may be of particular concern to those across the Midlands and other areas of the UK where there is a high proportion of informal employment (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2014).

### **Areas of concern in the current crisis**

The CPP (2020) report considers the **twenty local authorities which are likely to suffer severe economic consequences during the current crisis. Most of these are in the Midlands, Northwest or Wales**, none of these areas are located in the South East or London (there is only one



area, Hertfordshire in South East/London which is listed in these 20 areas). No one council within the UK houses more than two of the top ten local authorities with the lowest estimated decline in economic output. Results show a clear regional dimension to the current crisis which must be considered and gives direct predictions of the needs of greatest vulnerability to be targeted in policy.

The Social Metrics Commission (2020) highlights that in addition to the impacts on some coastal and rural communities, some extremely urbanised areas are likely to be affected in which there are the most cases of low socio-economic status and vulnerable persons. Research highlights the need for work to be done at a local level to understand the socio-economic impacts of economic decline. **The regional picture often hides critical local variation on employment, unemployment and economic inactivity.**

The majority of reports covered within this review highlighted a particular concern of the economic security of those living within the North and the Midlands (CPP, 2020; Centre for Cities, 2020; Social Metrics Commission, 2020). Whilst many reports have been concerned with the self-employed, a large proportion of self-employment is located in London (with almost half of the UK's self-employed population are based in London; Centre for Cities, 2020). However, whilst there are lower rates of self-employment in the North and the Midlands, those within the self-employed sector in these areas are more likely to be in precarious situations. In addition, there are higher rates of lower-skilled and lower paid occupations within these regions (CCC, 2020). Reports suggest that in such roles, not only is there likely to be a greater economic impact but there is less opportunity to be able to work from home (CCC, 2020; The Resolution Foundation, 2020). The recent report from the Centre for Cities (2020) suggests that cities located in the greater south have higher employment in sectors where a shift to working from home is easier. There is a large proportion of employment in Reading, Aldershot and Edinburgh (around 40% of the employed population – and an additional proportion of these populations would be covered by the Government's job retention schemes). However, the same report highlights that less than 20% of workers in Barnsley, Burnley and Stoke would work from home and that many northern and Midlands cities are likely to be hard hit in the current crisis. Exceptions in these areas are Manchester, Leeds, Warrington and Newcastle as these areas have a higher proportion of jobs which could shift to homeworking reflecting a slightly different structure to economies of these regions in comparison to other northern cities. A graph from the CPP report has been given below to highlight areas of risk:

Chart 2: 9 of the top 10 and 16 of the top 20 are in the Midlands or the North West

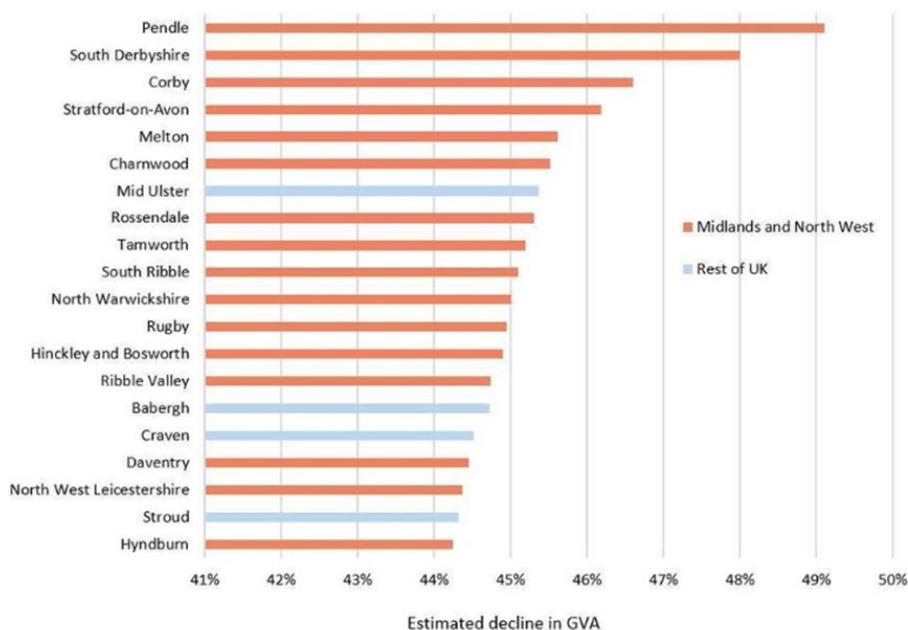
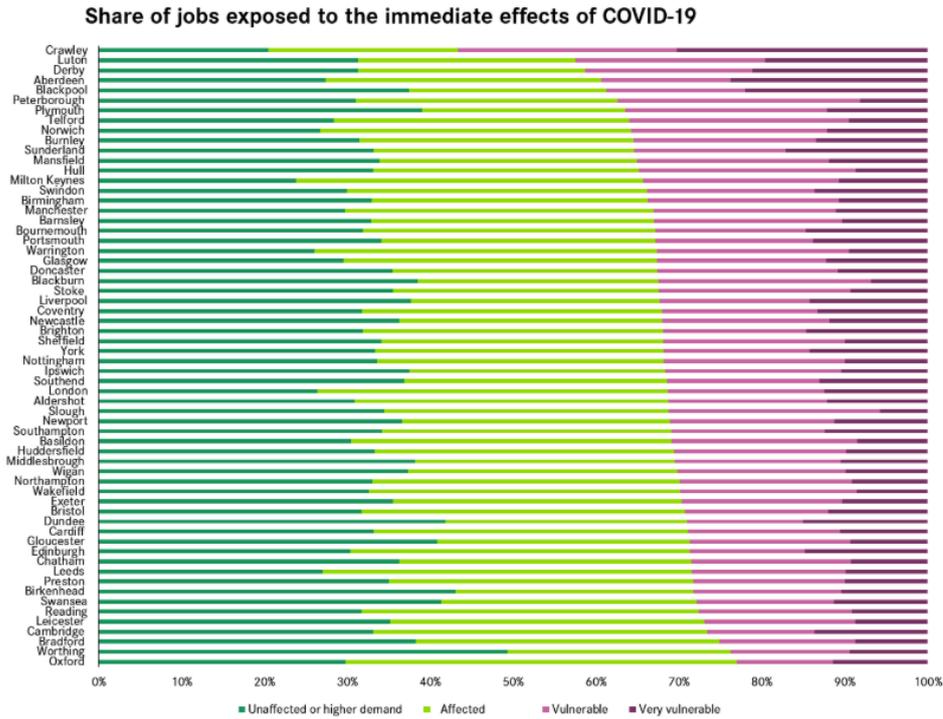


Figure from Centre for Progressive Policy (CPP; 2020) "Which local authorities face the biggest immediate economic hit?"

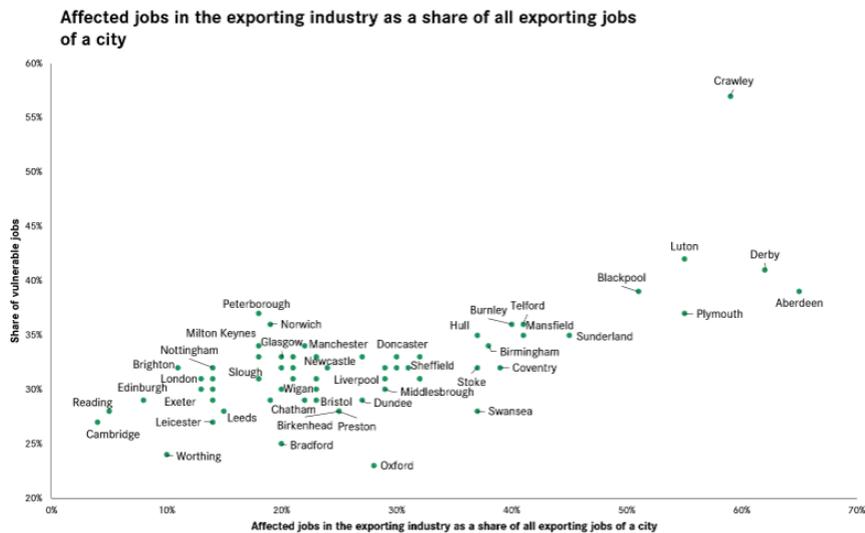
In addition, reports suggest that the Midlands has a higher rate of employment within the service sector and industry, in which homeworking is likely difficult, as is physical distancing within the workplace and the opening of these sectors is likely to be more staggered. The report from the Centre for Cities (2020) highlights that a large proportion of employment in Crawley and Derby is the aviation sector which is likely to be largely impacted in the current crisis, by a reduction in flights for business and leisure. These areas may be particularly vulnerable within the current crisis and will be strongly affected if the Job Retention Scheme is withdrawn too soon. The Centre for Cities (2020) highlights that Derby and Luton have high shares of employees in the aviation industries and employ more people in the automotive sector than other parts of the country, placing up to 40% of jobs in these areas 'at high risk'. The same report highlights that 18% of Crawley's work force has a large number of employees in the aviation and aircraft manufacturing industry with around 18% of the areas workforce employed in this sector placing it at high risk. Aberdeen's industry is largely dominated by oil and gas sectors which are also likely to suffer in the current crisis, placing around 11% of the areas workforce at risk of losing employment. Two figures below from the report highlight key areas of concern in the current crisis.

Estimated share of jobs exposed to the immediate effects of COVID-19



Source: BRES, Employment Count, 2018 Analysis of effects: Centre for Cities (2020) What does the COVID-19 crisis mean for the economies of British cities and large towns?

Estimated share of total exporting jobs exposed to the crisis



Source: BRES, Employment Count, 2018

These graphs illustrate not only particular areas of risk but also that the **Government's national schemes, such as the Job retention and Business Interruption loans, will be utilised in some parts of the country more than others. It also highlights that through the crisis, different approaches will be required in different parts of the country** (Centre for Cities, 2020). In cities



where export jobs have not been acutely affected, support should focus on helping local services businesses to find their feet again and serve the demand that should return. But in cities where the export base is more exposed, more sustained support will be required. Centre for Cities has begun to detail guidance on this.

Unemployment has drastically risen during the current crisis; in total 2.7 million people are now claiming unemployment benefits, a figure which continues to rise (Centre for Cities, 2020). Every large city and town has been impacted by this and have seen an increase in unemployment. However, unemployment has risen fastest in Northern cities and cities like Luton, Slough and Blackpool which saw the largest increases in unemployment since the beginning of lockdown. Cities and towns in southern England have seen smaller increases in unemployment which may be reflective of a use of the Government's Job Retention Scheme and greater access to abilities to work from home. **An interactive map has been developed by the RSA to explore at risk employment by area and this can be accessed here:** <https://www.thersa.org/action-and-research/rsa-projects/economy-enterprise-manufacturing-folder/interactive/coronavirus-jobs-risk-local-authority>

A recent **Citizens Advice Report (2020) on the financial consequences of Covid-19 on Wales highlighted that this is an area of great risk.** Employment levels have already fallen below other regions in the UK with a recent forecast from the Office for Budget Responsibility suggesting that unemployment could reach 10% (the equivalent of an addition 90,000) people out of work in Wales. The report also indicates that coastal and rural communities in Wales may be particularly vulnerable to employment loss when Government Protections are lifted. Further, many households in Wales have already fallen behind on bills with around 16% of the population over-indebted before the start of the Covid-19 crisis. Estimates are that nearly 300,000 people have fallen behind on household bills; 34% of renters have or expect to fall behind on their rent. The Citizens Advice report (2020) highlights that if such figures continue to rise and unemployment continues to fall, many households will fall into poverty. **Whilst Government policy has begun to try to alleviate these financial pressures, further commitment needs to be provided to those renting, council tax holiday payments should be considered and gaps need to be filled within the current support packages to secure people's incomes and act as a safety net for those in need** (Citizens Advice, 2020).

#### **Additional considerations**

In other reviews, the concern of vulnerability of low to middle income families or the **'Just-About Managing'** (also referred to as **Ordinary working**) families have been raised and whilst these are spread across the UK, they contribute most to populations in the North East, Midlands and Wales in particular. Using working tax credits as a proxy for identifying the highest concentration of those with children in working families (which is reflective to the extent to which these families rely upon in-work support to help them to get by), the highest concentration are found in a diverse spread of other local authorities including Sandwell, Blackburn and North Devon (The Resolution Foundation, 2016). These are families with higher spending on essential items with no surplus income (on average) and little to no savings or assets leaving them at increased susceptibility to debt (The Resolution Foundation, 2016).

#### **Recommendations**

Researchers note that it is important to raise this issue as disparities between local economies and expected changes such as the government's current support schemes to mitigate the impacts from the Covid-19 crisis may have impacts at a local level when relaxed (Citizens Advice, 2020). Additional support could be considered for areas which are at particularly high risk or where a large proportion of employment is affected by the current crisis and restrictions. At present, the literature highlights that cities in the Midlands, North West and Wales are particularly vulnerable. No one local authority has more than two of the top 20 most affected areas by the crisis which may help to target support more specifically at areas in need. Close attention should also be paid to areas with high levels of



employment in the informal sector and areas in which industry is particularly affected by the current crisis. Any focus should example the lowest geographical unit available for this.

## The Informal Economy and Vulnerable Workers

NTU's Work, Informalisation and Place research group published a piece on how the informal sector may have played a role in the local lockdown in Leicester. It identified key issues to consider for practitioners and policy makers and we have shared it with you below. This piece is built on research into a variety of informal sectors, hand car washes, nail bars and garment manufacturers alongside work with regulators, policy makers and police. It highlights the challenge for workers and regulators and aims to support the development of better approaches to challenge informal work. It is worth highlighting that today the Interim Director of Labour Market Enforcement releases his annual report highlighting the strategy for tackling labour market infringements. This is released whilst a single enforcement body is set up to bring together all labour enforcement bodies (such as GLAA, HMRC National Minimum Wage and BEIS Agency Regulators).

### Key messages

- It is estimated about **2.5 million people work in the informal sector** in the UK
- This generates **12% of the UKs GDP each year** (£223 billion).
- The informal economy is a broad economy stretching from Organised Criminal Enterprise (drug dealing, modern slavery) through to more permissible businesses whose activities operating outside of UK rules and regulations. (unsafe working practices, non-payment of sick and holiday pay, non-payment of taxes, underpayment of wages)
- The research highlights that these businesses operate under '**permissive visibility**'. Society knows they exist (as consumers and regulators) and they operate outside of the law but they are able to continue to trade (a mix of regulatory complexity, scale of the challenge, size of businesses and lack of power or interest to report from workers).
- **Underpayment of wages (not paying the minimum wage) is endemic** in these sectors with many paying only half pay during poor weather or business conditions.
- Leicester has a concentration of garment manufacturers who sub-contract work to smaller and smaller units which can operate in unfit units and houses to produce units at a speed and cost that allows the industry to operate. Whilst Leicester is a site for concentrated garment manufacture WIPs research outlines that for HCWs and Nail Bars there is a relatively uniform distribution of businesses across the UK.
- **Workers may well not view themselves as 'victims'** and are often unlikely to report tom regulators. This is due to a range of personal and historic issues (higher wages and better conditions than native countries, using the role as a stepping stone to future employment and networks or due to residency status or coercion)
- **Many businesses continued to operate through response phase of Covid-19** but very little is known about these businesses. Estimates prior to our research estimated between 10 and 20,000 hand car washes across England (it is between 4-6000 based on our fieldwork and estimates)
- Work undertaken in these sectors is often unreliable and variable with businesses 'phoenixing' regularly (closing due to enforcement and reopening under different management.) impacting on economic insecurity.

## Working and living practices may explain Leicester's coronavirus spike

Clark, Pickford, Hunter & Fearnall-Williams

July 2, 2020 - <https://theconversation.com/working-and-living-practices-may-explain-leicesters-coronavirus-spike-141824>



Following a sharp rise in COVID-19 cases, Leicester has become the first city in the UK to enter a full local lockdown. All non-essential shops and schools have been closed, and the government's plan to reopen pubs and restaurants has been postponed. The city has recorded more than 900 new COVID-19 cases over the last two weeks.

Our research suggests that the many small-unit garment businesses and numerous roadside hand car washes may have contributed to the spike in cases. Cramped high-density living conditions, inappropriate social distancing and continued business operation during the lockdown may also have played a part. It should also be noted that Leicester has a high BAME population who may be particularly at risk.

At the heart of this problem are employers that use informal business and employment practices. They often operate beyond government regulatory institutions, imposing norms and values that erode accepted business and labour practices. They operate in plain sight, but often fail to comply with employment law, workplace health and safety rules, and environmental regulations.

Workers, in turn, tolerate such business models out of necessity, despite the insecurity, irregular working hours, low wages and lack of holiday pay. Unfortunately, it may be that they are now having to tolerate an increased risk of contracting COVID-19.

### **The need to work undermines control measures**

Employers who use predominantly informalised business and employment practices –that is, those who don't pay the right taxes, underpay employees, fail to pay holiday and sick pay, and generally ignore all relevant laws and regulations related to employment – annually generate 12% of Britain's GDP. They are not uncommon, and include both permissible businesses that are being run illegally as well as wholly criminal industries, such as making or selling counterfeiting goods, and drug dealing. Such businesses sustain 2.5 million workers, a number equal to 9% of the formal private-sector working population, and generate £223 billion per year.

There are some of these workers in Leicester. Some work in the city's textile sector, producing, cutting, trimming and packing garments. There are also people in the city – as across the East Midlands and the wider UK – who wash cars, manicure nails, deliver takeaway food or do day-rate work in food processing.

It's difficult to say with certainty how large the city's informal sector is, but our research tells us that virtually all hand car washes operate informally, failing to observe relevant employment legislation. In Leicester's textile sector, research by others suggests that there's subcontracting of work that's often informal. It's likely that the size of Leicester's informal economy matches the average figures cited above, at around 12% of the local economy.

Workers in the informal sector often accept jobs to escape poverty and have little choice in the employment they can take. Many are newly arrived migrants. Others have never entered the formal labour force, despite extensive employment experience.

Most of these informal jobs were classified as nonessential and closed during the pandemic. But it's clear that in some sectors they remained open or reopened without appropriate COVID-19 measures in the workplace. The recent Labour Behind the Label report suggests some Leicester employers asked workers to continue working without altering employment conditions to cope with the pandemic, and in some cases while workers exhibited symptoms of ill health.

Citing the same report, the Guardian reports that Public Health England found that young male workers in the garment and food processing sector between the ages of 20 and 40 were major transmitters of the virus in Leicester. This is a core demographic of hand car wash workers, too.

Informal business owners also move workers around the country to meet current needs, a practice that – during the pandemic – would have placed workers at additional risk of infection. Yet despite these obvious issues, there has been a willingness to work among the informal workforce. We believe there are several that explain why.

First, some workers fail to qualify for any government schemes to support their roles, precisely because of the informal status of the employment they hold. The much-publicised furlough scheme is only open to formal employees.

Second, some informal workers, documented or undocumented, may have “no recourse to public funds” during periods of limited leave to remain in the UK. This status prevents them from claiming benefits. In our research, we've found workers in this category prepared to work at car washes for as little as £3 an hour, which gives a sense of the financial pressures some may be under.

Third, some employers classify workers as self-employed but provide no payslips or invoices, which also means they are unable to claim government support.



Finally, our findings also show that informal workers often don't trust government agencies and that this can be a barrier to them seeking and securing support. Our research has highlighted that some workers are unaware of their rights and believe that regulators are primarily concerned with deporting workers rather than protecting their interests and prosecuting employers.

### **Living arrangements may play a role too**

Many such workers live in intergenerational housing where it is difficult to maintain social distancing between those who continue to work and other family members who do not. Often recently arrived migrants also live in houses of multiple occupation, owned by their employers, where social distancing is also difficult to maintain. These are properties rented to three or more people, not from a single household, but who share facilities like the bathroom and kitchen. Without work, they may become heavily indebted, putting them at even greater risk of exploitation.

We also witnessed cramped on-site living conditions for workers at hand car wash sites across the UK during visits with regulators. In many of these places, social distancing and basic hygiene would be difficult – if not impossible – to establish.

Our research shows that we need to be mindful of the issues facing informal workers in Leicester – and throughout the UK – if the first local lockdown is not to be the sign of a wider trend.

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At the heart of this problem are employers that use informal business and employment practices. They often operate beyond government regulatory institutions, imposing norms and values that erode accepted business and labour practices. They operate in plain sight, but often fail to comply with employment law, workplace health and safety rules, and environmental regulations.

Workers, in turn, tolerate such business models out of necessity, despite the insecurity, irregular working hours, low wages and lack of holiday pay. Unfortunately, it may be that they are now having to tolerate an increased risk of contracting COVID-19.

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Third, some employers classify workers as self-employed but provide no payslips or invoices, which also means they are unable to claim government support.

Cramped housing may make infection more likely, and the costs of rent may make working a necessity. EPA-EFE

Finally, our findings also show that informal workers often don’t trust government agencies and that this can be a barrier to them seeking and securing support. Our research has highlighted that some workers are unaware of their rights and believe that regulators are primarily concerned with deporting workers rather than protecting their interests and prosecuting employers.

### **Living arrangements may play a role too**

Many such workers live in intergenerational housing where it is difficult to maintain social distancing between those who continue to work and other family members who do not. Often recently arrived migrants also live in houses of multiple occupation, owned by their employers, where social distancing is also difficult to maintain. These are properties rented to three or more people, not from a single household, but who share facilities like the bathroom and kitchen. Without work, they may become heavily indebted, putting them at even greater risk of exploitation.

We also witnessed cramped on-site living conditions for workers at hand car wash sites across the UK during visits with regulators. In many of these places, social distancing and basic hygiene would be difficult – if not impossible – to establish.

Our research shows that we need to be mindful of the issues facing informal workers in Leicester – and throughout the UK – if the first local lockdown is not to be the sign of a wider trend.

### **What we do in this analysis, how and why (caution when interpreting)**

A data review is undertaken by academics at Nottingham Trent University every week to inform the C19 National Foresight Group. Data related to Covid - 19 UK social and economic trends is reviewed to inform, guide and help prioritise discussions at national and local decision-making level (LRFs). The C19 National Foresight Group are keen to ensure that the data included has been ethically governed and structured to adhere to open access, data protection and GDPR regulations and principles. For example, the data is to be manipulated in an ethical manner, and the content and context is to be fit for purpose in terms of the audience and decision timeframe in question.

#### **Activity Completed**

The following findings are based on a review of multiple data sources exploring Social, Economic, Psychological, Community aspects of Covid-19 in the UK. These could include:

- ONS: covers wellbeing, perceived financial precarity, objective indicators of UK economy, household financial pressures, perceived impact on work life
- OfCom: Public perceptions of information to help manage Covid 19, perceptions of preparedness and action
- ONS: Deaths from Covid - 19
- Gov UK: Relevant contextual information
- Census and geographical data: Geographical/location specifics
- IMD: Socio economic trends associated with spread or primary/secondary impacts
- LG Inform: Population, social, demographic, lifestyle and health data
- You Gov: Public mood
- NTU’s own analysis of open source data (lead by Dr. Sally Andrews)
- Other academic survey work published within the last week



**Limitations for Consideration:** The National Foresight Group have been keen to quality assure the data assumptions, including the equity and representation of participants.

**Internet use data indicates representational issues in older adults**

Almost all of the data sets draw from online surveys. With this in mind the statistics behind online access were explored. The following is to be considered in the assumptions taken from the data sets.

The table below shows the estimated number of people who have never used the internet. The data are drawn from ONS 2019 Internet users:

**Table 1: estimated number of people who have never used the internet**

Age	Estimated number of people who have never used internet	Age	Estimated number of people who have never used internet
16-24	20,000	55-64	389,000
25-34	28,000	65-74	869,000
35-44	46,000	75+	2,482,000
45-54	158,000	Equality Act Disabled	2,336,000
		Not Equality Act Disabled	1,657,000

Table 1 shows that caution should be applied when considering the inferences made in the rest of the document as older adults could be underrepresented in the samples. The estimated numbers of those that have never used the internet begins to increase around age group category 35-44, the subsequent age categories increase by approximately twice as many non-users as the age category that precedes it. The numbers of 'over 75s' (2,482,000) for example not using the internet equates to almost a million more than the total of the other age group categories (1,510,000).

The interpretation of data should also consider the proportion of people known to be disabled by government agencies who do and do not meet the Act's criteria. These numbers make up 3,993,000 of the population, so this should be considered in the representativeness of the data.

END.

**Contact us:** If you have any questions about this output please email: [C19foresight@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:C19foresight@ntu.ac.uk)  
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