

PRESS RELEASE

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NORTH ENGLAND AND WALES REVEALED AS KEY AREAS OF DESIGN ECONOMY GROWTH

New analysis by the Design Council identifies some of the fastest growing UK Design Economy regions over the last decade as North East, North West, and Wales*

Employing a workforce of over 390,000 designers in these regions, the Design Economy is a significant and fast-growing industry in post Brexit Britain

Jobs including Product and Industrial Design are central to findings

Today, in Manchester at the Northern Powerhouse Conference, the Design Council launched findings from the upcoming Design Economy Report, the foundation of their national programme of research and strategic recommendations, showing how the Design Economy can drive the UK's future prosperity.

The report's mission is to show the economic, social, and environmental value of design in the UK and create the conditions needed for good design to thrive across the country.

The north holds a rich tapestry of design excellence, showing particular strengths in Product and Industrial Design and Clothing, which reflects the rich design histories of these regions. Product and Industrial Design was also shown to be the highest productivity design sector, contributing £73,633 in GVA per worker per year, (27% more productive than the UK average).

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Design Economy GVA growth in Wales and the North West was over 95% above the relative national average in 2020, narrowly followed by the North East at 80% above the relative national average.

Design has been shown to increase productivity and return on investment across the economy, acting as key driver for regional growth and prosperity.

The report identifies 7 key cities in the north with strong design clusters including:

- Tameside in the North West for Product and Industrial Design
- Sunderland, County Durham and North Tyneside in the North East for Product and Industrial Design
- Calderdale and York in Yorkshire and Humber for Product and Industrial Design
- Wrexham in Wales for clusters in Clothing, Product and Industrial Design

Jobs within these design sectors include user experience designers, product designers, development engineers, tailors and dressmakers.

Not all areas in the north however have experienced growth, Yorkshire and the Humber saw an 8% decline in its design economy between 2017 and 2019 showing that support is crucial.

Minnie Moll, Chief Executive, Design Council said:

"Our Design Economy research is important evidence of the value of design and what potential there is to leverage the sector for growth. It is heartening to see significant growth in the North of England and Wales."

Andy Haldane, Chair, Levelling-Up Commission, said:

"These findings show that nurturing the design economy should be at the heart of driving jobs, skills and regional prosperity in the North."

The Design Economy report looks the diversity of the design sector, its vital role in levelling up the UK's regional economies, and the changes that must be made to ensure that design works for everyone.

The Design Economy report will be published in full on 21 July 2022.

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Notes to Editor:

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[Infographics available HERE](#)

GVA contributions of design (2019):

North East: 1.87bn

North West: 8.04bn

Yorkshire and the Humber: £5.2bn

Wales: £2bn

Rates of GVA Growth (2017 - 2019):

*North East: 9% growth in design economy vs. 5% in regional economy

North West: 14% growth in design economy vs 6% in regional economy

Yorkshire and the Humber: 8% decline in design economy vs 7% growth in regional economy

Wales: 18% growth in design economy vs. 7% in regional economy

The design economy employment breakdown of designers (2020):

North East: 44,153

North West: 173,921

Yorkshire and the Humber: 117,009

Wales: 56,200

These figures include all designers who work in design industries and all designers who work in other parts of the economy, such as in finance and retail.

About Design Economy: Design Economy is the Design Council's flagship research programme that identifies the social, environmental, and economic value of design across the United Kingdom. It demonstrates its economic prosperity, potential to address regional inequalities, and significant capability to support the UK's drive to achieve net-zero. Research was undertaken by BOP Consulting and the Enterprise Research Centre at Aston University. The findings of the latest edition will be published in July 2022.

www.designeconomy.co.uk

#DesignEconomy

About Design Council: The Design Council is the national strategic advisor on design, and champions design and its ability to make life better for all. It is an independent and not for profit organisation incorporated by Royal Charter. The Design Council uniquely works across all design sectors and delivers programmes with business, government, public bodies and the third sector. The work encompasses thought leadership, tools and resources, showcasing excellence, and research to evidence the value of design and influence policy.

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