

UK Case Study: North East England

- **Area:** Small Region / Relatively Remote / Extensive Rural Areas / 3 River-Based Conurbations
- **Population:** Small (2.5 million) / Urban / Declining / Ageing / Low Ethnic Minority (2.4%)
- **Economic Base:** Manufacturing Decline / Few World-Class Business Clusters, HQs, Knowledge Based Industries / Predominantly SMEs / Growth in Consumer and Public Services not Business Services / Low R&D / Small Pockets of High Growth Technology Companies /
- **Labour Market:** Growth in Employment / High Levels of Worklessness / Low Skill / Low Participation in HE / Graduate Retention Improving
- **Culture and Environment:** Strong Regional Identity / Low Living Costs / High Quality of Life / Excellent Public Services / Growth in Cultural Facilities / Pockets of Significant Regeneration

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North East Higher Education Profile

- **5 Universities and Northern Office of Open University:** Relatively Strong and Diverse Institutions / Growing in Size and Income / Collaborative History / Significant Regional Presence (3% GDP)
- **Governance:** Universities Legally Independent Institutions / Overseen by Department of Education & Skills / Higher Education Funding Council for England / Strong Relationships with other Government Departments eg DTI and DoH
- **Regional Government Infrastructure:** Regional Development Agency / Local Authority Partnerships / Regional Agenda for HE Voluntary.
- **Impact of Diversification of Funding Sources:** Market Forces / Global Competition / R&D / New Fee Regime / Increasing Localisation of Student Market / Institutional Competition

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Themes for Discussion

- **Regional Disparities:** National Policy Framework / Regional Impact
- **Widening Participation into HE:** National Policy Framework / Aimhigher Project / Institutional Strategies
- **University-Business Interaction:** National Policy Framework / Regional Impact / Knowledge House (the NE Universities' Business Consultancy Service)