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Coverage
United Kingdom

Theme
Social and Welfare



Households in the East spend most on culture

Households in the East of England spent more money on recreation and culture than those in any other region of the UK during the two year period from January 2006 to December 2007, according to new figures published today by the Office for National Statistics.

Family Spending, the annual ONS report on household expenditure, reveals that households in the East of England spent an above-average £63.60 per week on recreation and culture, with the South East second at £63.00 per week.

London households spent the least on recreation and culture at £48 per week – 17 per cent below the national average of £57.50. However, London tops the weekly expenditure on mortgage payments (£76.60) and net rent payments (£40.10), far above the UK averages of £53.30 and £19.60 per week respectively.

Households in Wales had the lowest mortgage payments at £43.40 per week, while Northern Ireland had the lowest net rent payments at £10.40 per week.

Transport was the most costly weekly expenditure in all but four of the regions. Average weekly spending in the UK on transport in 2006 and 2007 was £61.30, with households in the South East spending the most at £78.30 per week, 28 per cent greater than the average. North East households spent the least at £49 per week, 20 per cent less than the UK average.

Households in Northern Ireland spent the most on cigarettes each week at £7.70 (88 per cent higher than the UK average of £4.10), with Scotland second at £5.50.

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Overall, average household expenditure in the UK was £454.10 per week for 2006 and 2007. Expenditure was highest in London (£529.30 per week, 17 per cent higher than the average), followed by the South East (£512.70 per week, 13 per cent higher than the average). However, it is important to note that under COICOP (the Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose), the internationally agreed classification system for reporting household consumption expenditure, mortgage capital repayments are excluded from the headline figure. However, a separate chapter on housing costs, including this item, is available in Family Spending.

Expenditure was higher than average in three other regions: the East (£484.50 per week, 7 per cent higher than the average), Northern Ireland (£466.40 per week, 3 per cent higher than the average), and the South West (£459.40 per week, 1 per cent higher than the average).

Spending was lowest among households in the North East (£388.70 per week, 14 per cent lower than the average), followed by Wales (£403.20 per week, 11 per cent lower than the average).

While 79 per cent of households in the UK owned a mobile phone in 2006-2007, there were marked differences in ownership between the regions. In Northern Ireland only 51 per cent owned a mobile telephone, and in Wales, only 54 per cent. Ownership was highest in the South West and the East Midlands, at 85 per cent of all households.

Family Spending is based on the findings of the Expenditure and Food Survey (EFS), a survey of over 6,000 households across the UK. The EFS shows how households spend their money on all items, including food, clothing, leisure, transport, and housing. The survey also provides data on how spending patterns vary depending on household income, household composition and regional location of households.

Information from the EFS is a major source of data for the UK National Accounts and is used by government departments as a basis for policy making. It is also used to determine the content of the 'basket of goods' used to measure inflation in the Retail Price Index and is a valued resource for business and academic research.

BACKGROUND NOTES

1. *Family Spending 2008* is available to view online at <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=361>
2. **Average weekly expenditure by selected COICOP* category by GOR, 2006-07**

	£ average weekly expenditure			
	Food & non-alcoholic drinks	Transport	Recreation & culture	All expenditure
United Kingdom	47.20	61.30	57.50	454.10
London	48.70	64.40	48.00	529.30
South East	50.80	78.30	63.00	512.70
East of England	48.00	66.20	63.60	484.50
N. Ireland	54.40	60.10	53.90	466.40
South West	47.20	65.70	62.20	459.40
England	47.30	61.90	57.60	459.40
Scotland	46.30	58.80	58.20	429.10
West Midlands	48.20	56.30	54.10	425.10
North West	44.50	52.30	59.40	419.30
Yorks & Humber	44.80	53.70	57.60	416.70
East Midlands	45.70	56.40	55.10	407.80
Wales	44.30	54.50	56.30	403.20
North East	44.10	49.00	52.00	388.70

* COICOP (the Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose) is an internationally agreed classification system for reporting household consumption expenditure.

3. **Regional data are based on a two year average, with data from both 2006 and 2007 being used. This is to ensure that there are enough households in each region to provide representative data.**
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