The North-South divide first arose in the last 1920s with persistent overcapacity and high unemployment in Britain’s staple exporting industries to employment black spots across the country (Armstrong & Taylor, 2000). The response to this was to set up the Industrial Transference Board to provide financial assistance to workers to help them find jobs. By 1938, this had helped over 200,000 workers to move to areas where job opportunities were more favourable, although this was relatively small in comparison to the size of the issue (Armstrong & Taylor, 2000). Providing these funds was just the beginning of multiple attempts by successive governments to tackle regional inequalities in England and the story of the development of the North-South divide.

The reasons behind these differences emerging are said to be from a variety of factors including adverse shifts in Britain’s world trade position, restrictive domestic economic policies, and several recessions in the 1920s and 30s which imposed severe shocks on the industrial North (Gardiner, et al., 2013). At the same time, the South did not suffer as much due to the development of advanced manufacturing in the region along with the development of the ‘new economy’. These factors led to the Barlow commission report of 1940 which highlighted the difference in conditions between the North and the South and hence argued for a degree of spatial rebalancing (Ward, 2010). This was the foundation for the 1945 Labour governments introduction of a radical new regional policy system intended to promote a more balanced distribution of employment across the country (Gardiner, et al., 2013).

What this shows is that the North-South divide has been entrenched for almost a century now despite different attempts by governments to tackle the issue. What more recent data however suggests is that the North-South divide is much more complicated than the existing research indicates. This is because more recent data gives us an insight in a finer detail than what could be seen before, indicating that there is still a divide in the UK, but this does not necessarily split directly along the lines of North and South. If this gap continues to wider there is likely to be both serious economic and social