

Using Administrative Data to Understand UK Civil Society Organisations

Professor Alasdair Rutherford, Dr Diarmuid McDonnell, Professor
John Mohan, Dr Charles Rahal, Dr David Clifford, Dr Fiona Coupar-
Kenney

2025-05-15



**Economic
and Social
Research Council**

Context

A range of open data on different types of third sector and civil society organisations.

A range of 'payload' datasets (regularly updated, e.g. on finance), some open and some restricted.

We want to broaden the scope beyond just charities, improve its quality, and document so that access and use is easier.

Data Sources

Data (with link to source)	Source identifier
Companies House	COH
Charity Commission for England and Wales	CHC
Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator	SC
Charity Commission for Northern Ireland	NIC
Cooperatives	COOP
Mutuals	MPR
Care Inspectorate Scotland	CIS
Care Quality Commission	CQC
Scottish Housing Regulator	SHR
Social Housing England	SHPE

Data Sources

Order	Source	Code
1	Charity Commission, England and Wales	CHC
2	Scottish Charity Register	SC
3	Charity Commission, Northern Ireland	NIC
4	Companies House	COH
5	Co-operatives	COOP
6	Mutuals Public Register	MPR
7	Scottish Housing Register	SHR
8	Social Housing England	SHPE
-	Care Inspectorate Scotland	CIS
-	Care Quality Commission	CQC

**The changing landscape of UK civil society:
longitudinal evidence from linked administrative
data**

Aim

Examine long-run change in civil society activity across local authorities in England, disaggregated by organisation type (Charity, CIC, Co-operative/Mutual).

Explain patterns in this change as a function of material deprivation, ethnic composition, level of education, region, degree of rurality etc.

Use more advanced, longitudinal statistical modelling approaches (GCM).

Data

Linked civil society organisational data to administrative data for local authorities in England over the period 2005-2023.

Key measures:

- **Organisation density** = number of CSOs present in a local authority
- **Material deprivation** = Index of Multiple Deprivation
- **UK region** = ITL 1 classification (North West, North East etc)
- **Rurality** = Population per hectare (Most Urban to Most Rural)
- **Population demographics** = Census 2021 characteristics

Data

la_name	year	pop	orgcount_chc	orgcount_cic	orgcount_mpr	region	ruc	imd_decile
Hartlepool	2005	90457	131	0	7	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Hartlepool	2006	90781	132	1	7	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Hartlepool	2007	90969	136	5	7	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Hartlepool	2008	91379	139	10	7	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Hartlepool	2009	91530	135	14	7	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Hartlepool	2010	91773	130	20	7	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Hartlepool	2011	92088	131	23	7	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Hartlepool	2012	92344	129	23	6	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Hartlepool	2013	92465	132	25	6	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Hartlepool	2014	92358	132	24	6	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Hartlepool	2015	92125	131	26	5	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Hartlepool	2016	92260	140	22	5	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Hartlepool	2017	92306	138	19	5	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Hartlepool	2018	92288	132	24	5	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Hartlepool	2019	92401	129	36	5	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Hartlepool	2020	92202	133	45	6	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Hartlepool	2021	92575	135	58	6	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Hartlepool	2022	93847	133	77	6	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Hartlepool	2023	95366	133	76	6	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2005	138517	210	0	32	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2006	138169	211	1	32	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2007	138190	218	2	32	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2008	137885	219	6	29	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2009	137273	202	10	29	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2010	137667	203	17	28	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2011	138368	198	20	24	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2012	138472	199	27	24	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2013	138588	199	37	22	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2014	139030	200	34	21	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2015	139602	200	36	20	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2016	140649	195	30	18	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2017	141213	199	33	15	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2018	141057	196	32	12	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2019	142134	189	39	11	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2020	142459	197	45	11	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2021	143943	202	60	11	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2022	148583	204	64	9	North East	Urban with City and Town	1
Middlesbrough	2023	152650	205	69	9	North East	Urban with City and Town	1

Long-run trends in CSO density

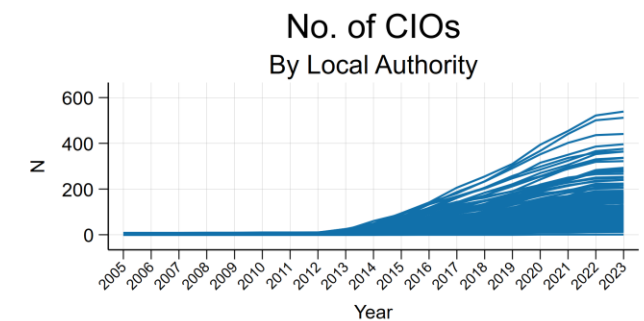
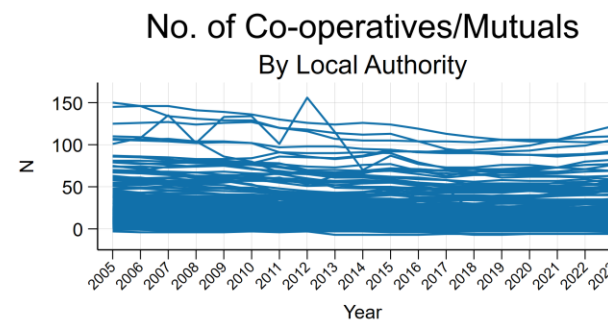
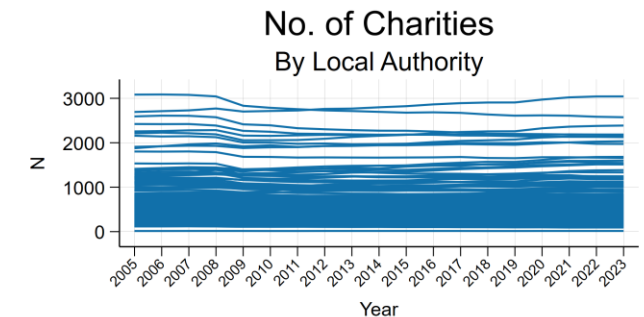
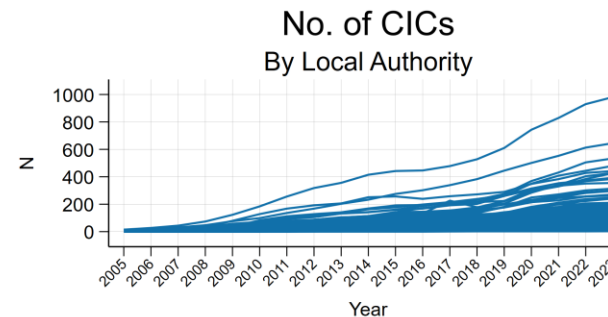
Varying trends in CSO density by organisation type:

- Sharp growth in CICs
- No growth in charities
- Slight decline in co-ops / mutuals
- Sharp growth in CIOs*

As a result, the composition of local civil society sectors has changed.

* Growth represents conversions of existing organisations as well as new ones.

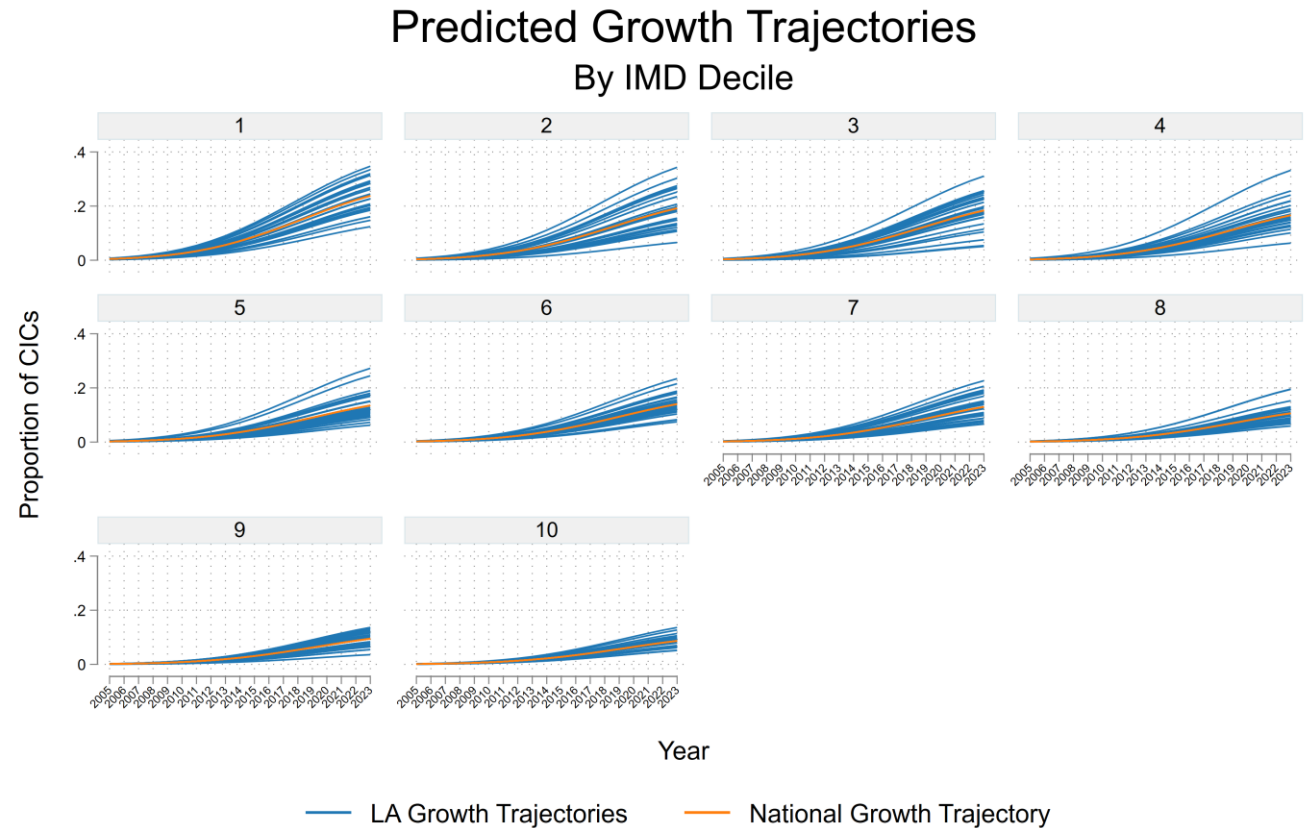
Change Over Time By Outcome



Composition of local civil society sectors

Material deprivation is an important differentiator:

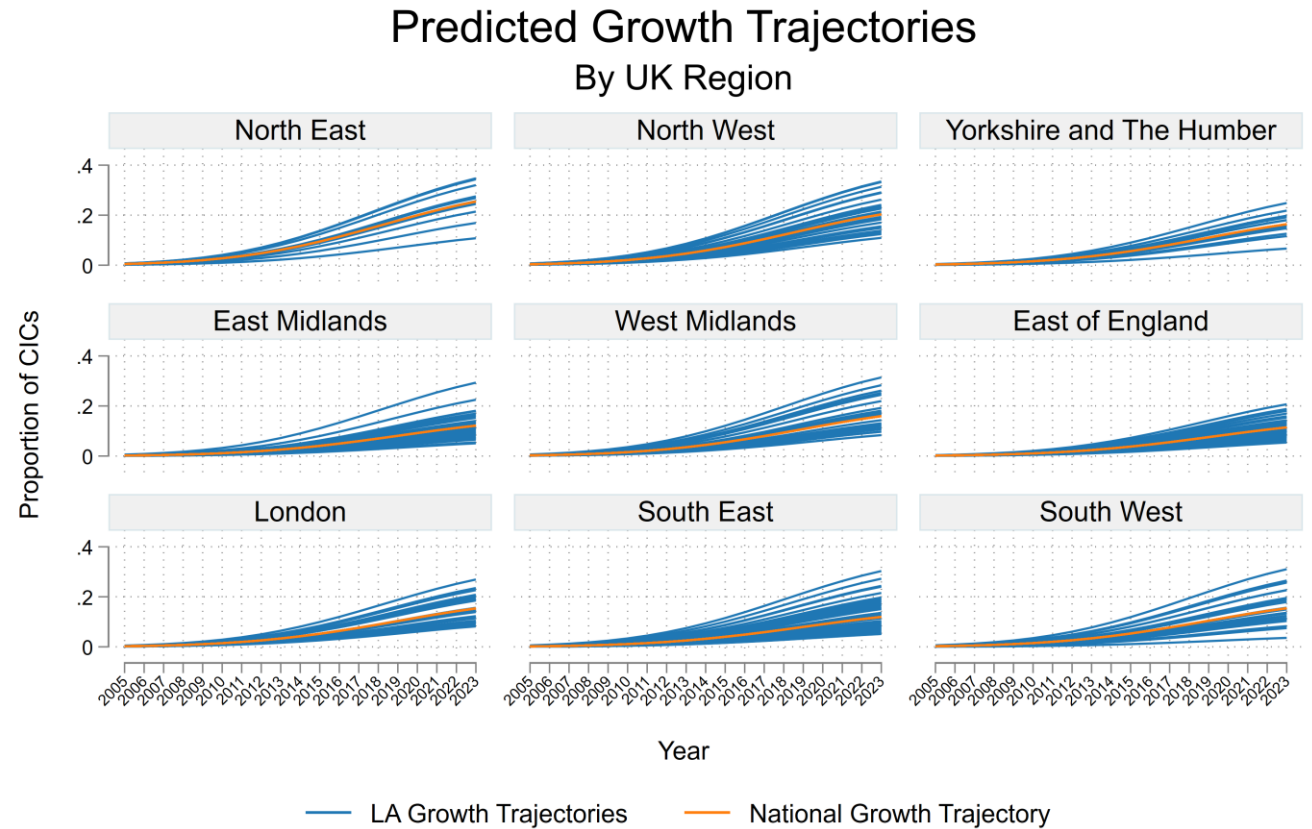
- Most deprived areas have highest proportion of CICs
- However there is higher variance in this proportion in these areas as well



Composition of local civil society sectors

UK region is an important differentiator:

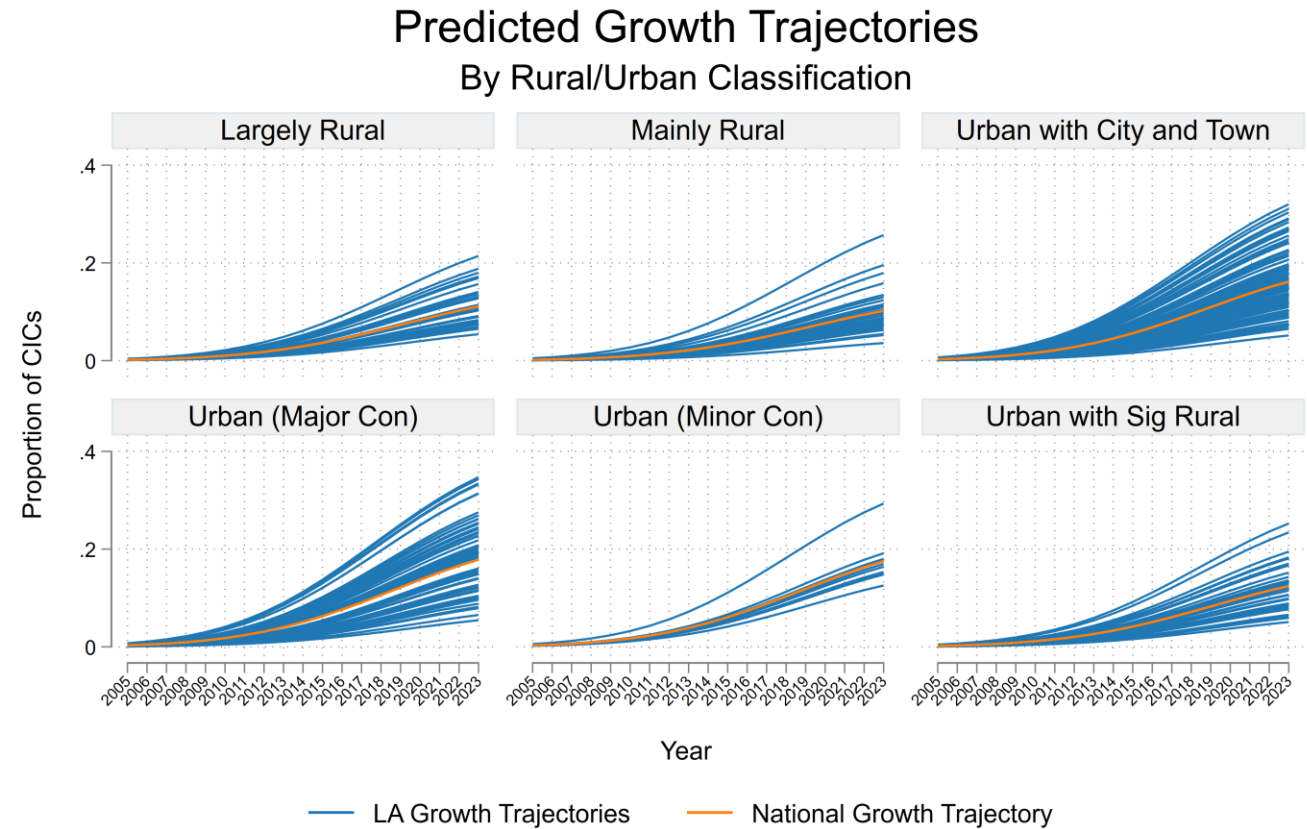
- Reasonable even spread of CICs across the UK, though particularly in the North
- However there is higher variance in this proportion in the South and Midlands



Composition of local civil society sectors

Rurality is an important differentiator:

- Urban areas have highest proportion of CICs
- They also have the highest variance in this proportion



Conclusion

Limitations:

- Absence of “under-the-radar” civil society organisations / actors
- Challenges in how to implement a UK-wide analysis

Further Work:

- Compare trends with other UK nations
- Include wider range of predictors (e.g., ONS Local measures, LA expenditure)