

UK Freeports Monitoring & Evaluation

Innovative PowerBI APS Dashboard

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The Freeports Programme

Introduction to the Programme

- Freeports are special areas within the UK’s borders where **different economic regulations apply**
- **Ten Freeports** centred around one or more air, rail, or seaport, with specific tax and customs sites that can sit within an outer boundary of **up to 45km beyond the port**
- The Freeports Programme is aiming to address specific challenges and opportunities identified across **three key areas:**

Comprehensive package of measures: tax reliefs, customs, business rates retention, planning, regeneration, innovation, and trade and investment support

Freeports are located in some of the most deprived English communities, including areas suffering from post-industrial decline or disproportionately impacted in the early days of COVID-19



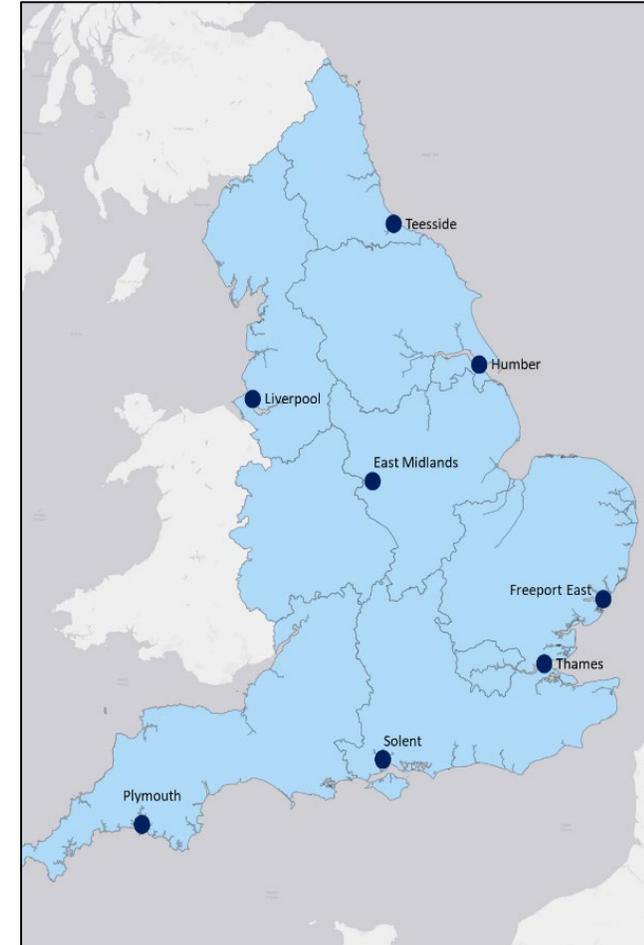
Promote **regeneration and job creation** – Government’s lead policy objective



Create **hotbeds for innovation** and clusters of economic activity



Establish Freeports as **national hubs for global trade and investment** across the UK



Freeports Monitoring & Evaluation

M&E Strategy

Purpose of the M&E

*Assess the **effectiveness of the policy** and provide accountability to Government and taxpayers*

*Understand **what works and why** to provide ongoing learning as the Programme is delivered*

*Evaluate whether overall objectives have been met and the extent to which **change has occurred as a direct response of the Programme***

Why dashboard?

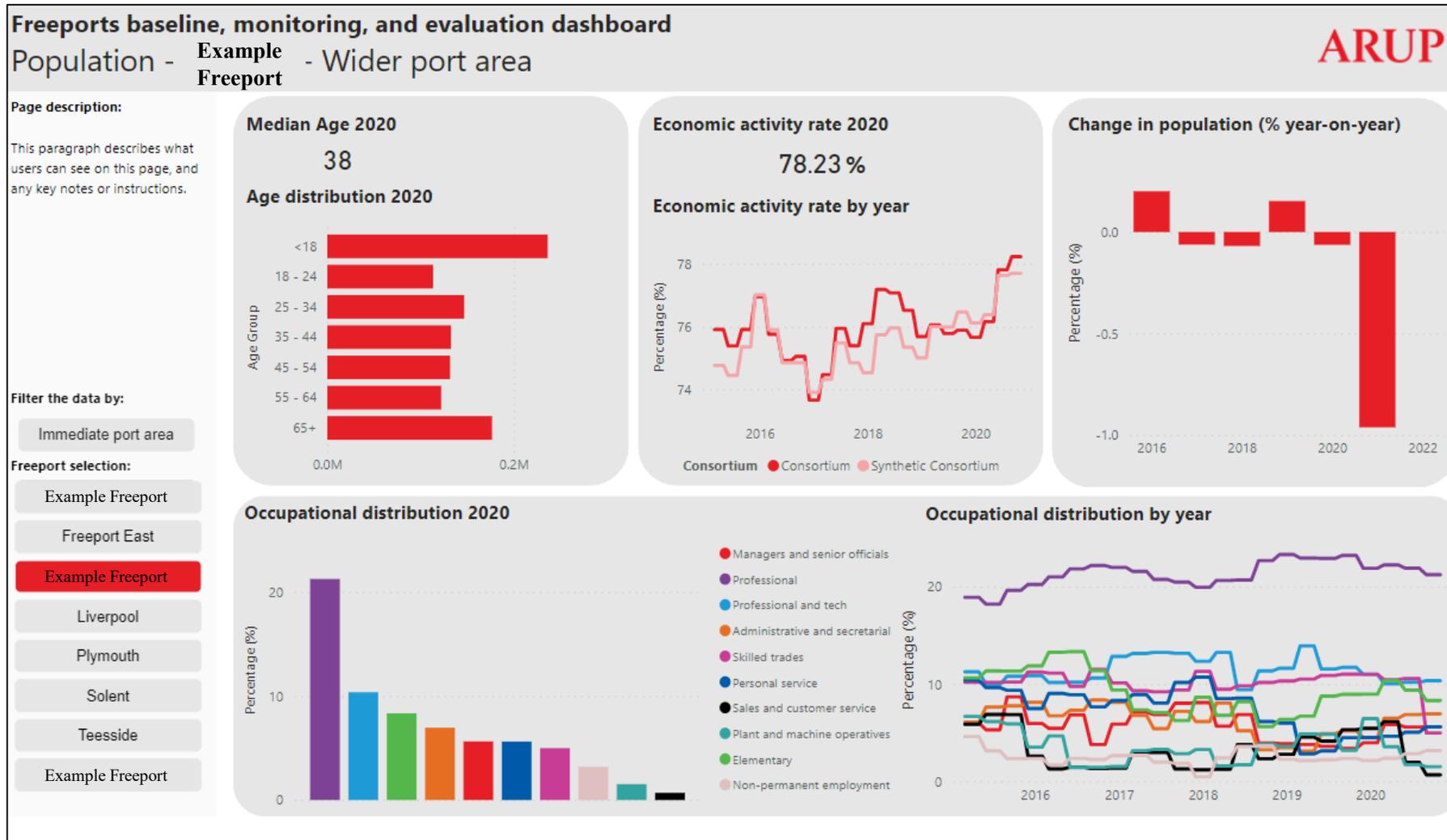
- The dashboard allows users to intuitively **navigate data for each Freeport at different geographical levels** and aggregations, including baseline socio-economic data, publicly available statistics and monitoring data
- An **effective data pipeline** with a dashboard makes it easy to periodically update charts and results

Contributors

- The project is funded by the UK Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities
- Arup's City Economics and Planning team developed the M&E data strategy and built the PowerBI dashboard
- Developed by Lorena Cruz Serrano, Csaba Pogonyi, Chris Jackson, Yasmine Hujair, Ben Savours

Freeports M&E Dashboard – example tab

Baseline, monitoring and evaluation dashboard



“No-Freeports Programme” counterfactual

Innovative methods for impact evaluation



Synthetic control group method used to develop a ‘Synthetic Freeport’ for each of the eight Freeports:

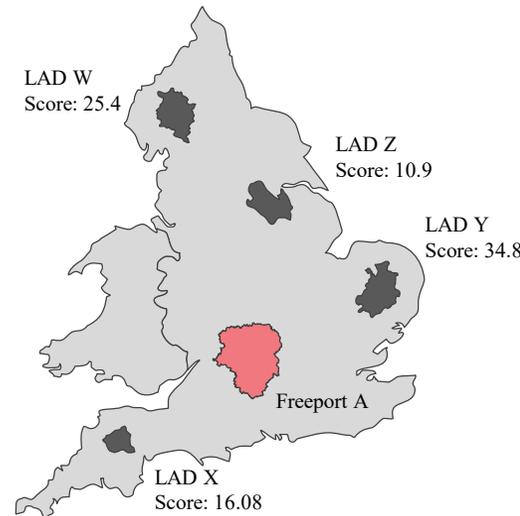
In the absence of the programme, the Synthetic Freeport and the actual Freeport would produce similar monitoring figures

The observed difference will likely to be due to the Freeports Programme’s impact



Propensity Score Matching algorithm used to estimate weights for control local authorities, which are then used to calculate a weighted average for each of the eight Freeports:

Synthetic Freeport Example



Example Freeport

Weighted average of 3-5 UK local authorities

Indicators

APS:

- Population
- Unemployment rate
- Economic activity rate
- Occupational distribution

ASHE:

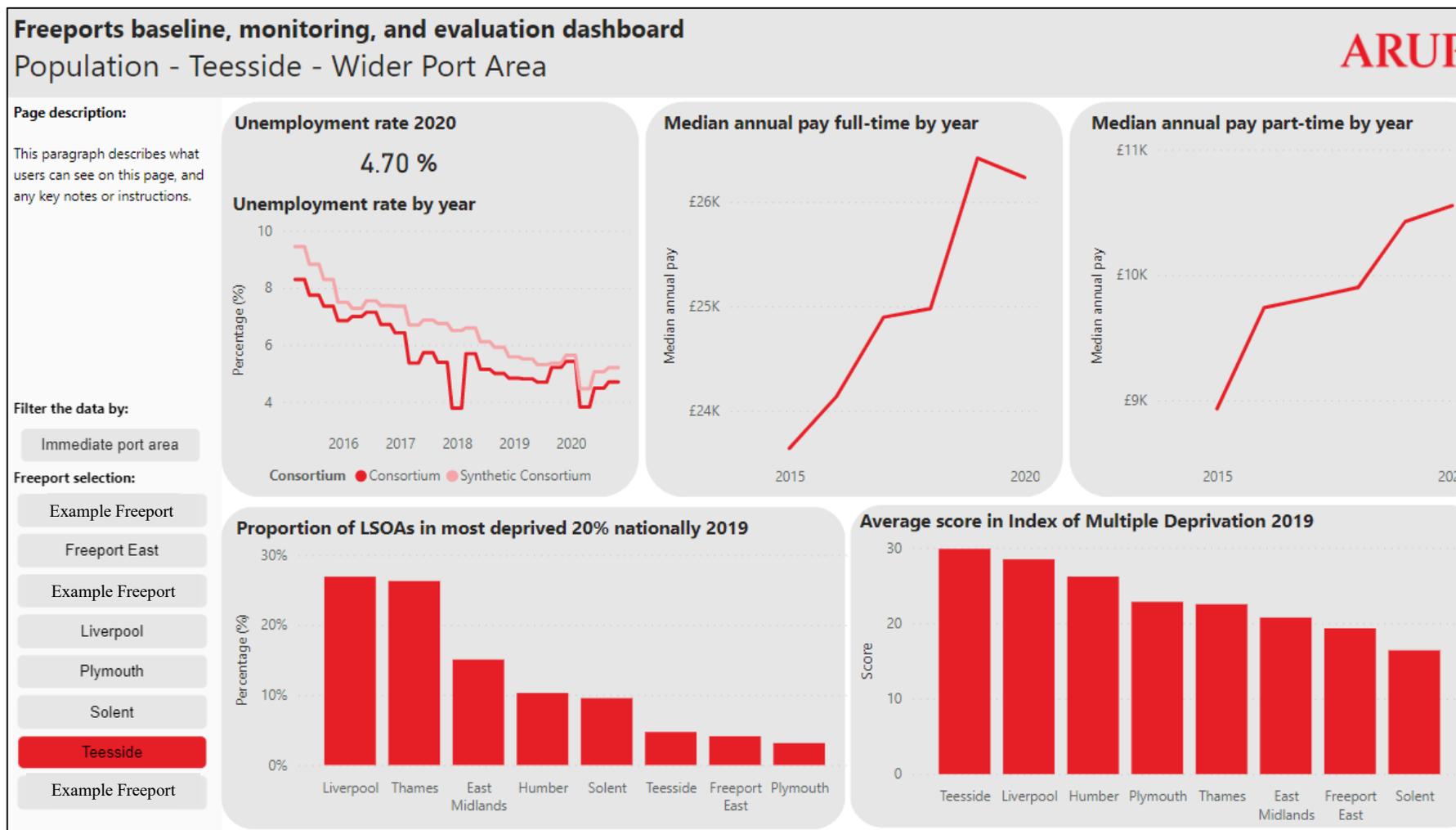
- Median Annual pay

BRES:

- Employment
- High value-added jobs
- Green jobs

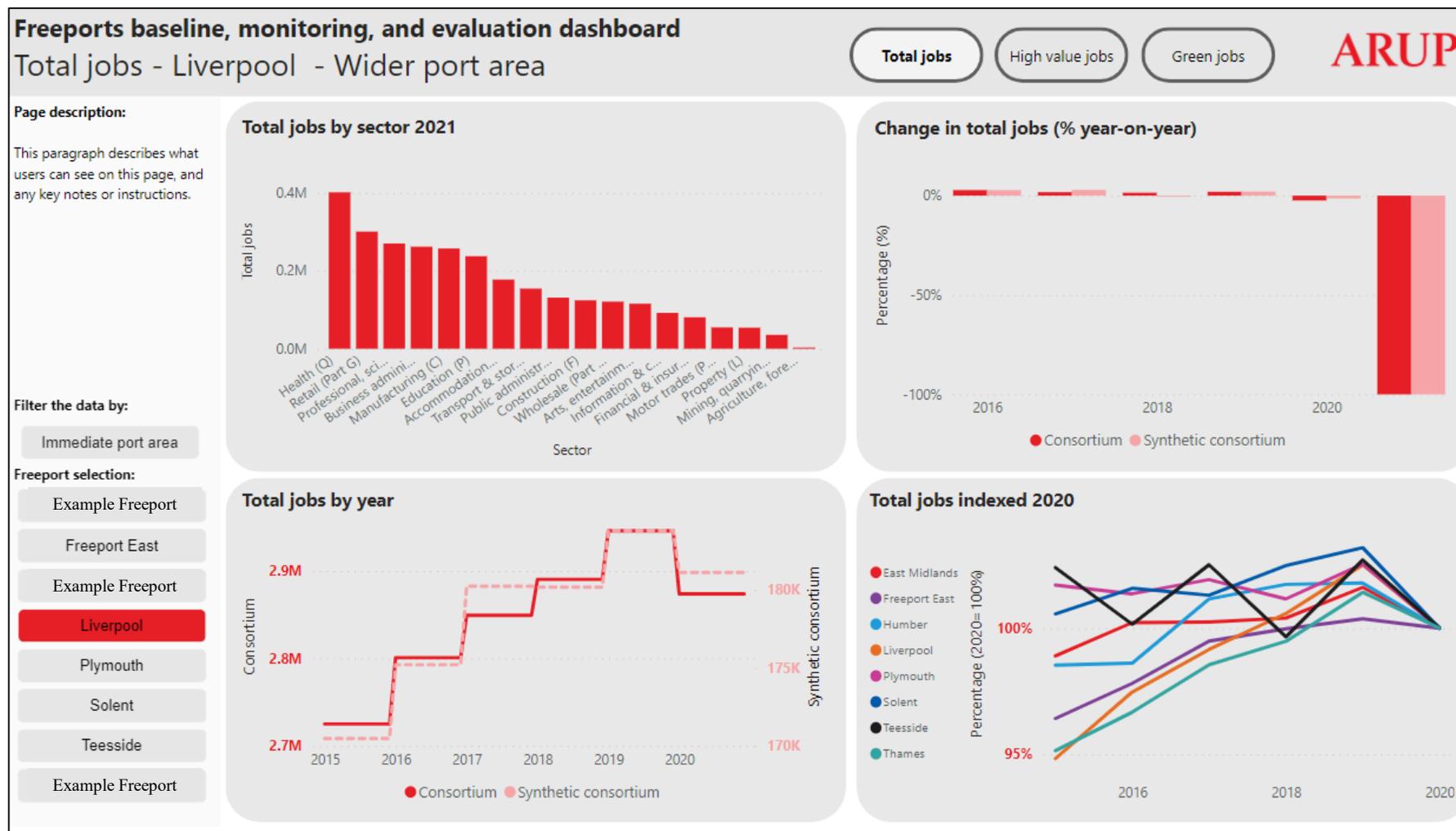
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