

# **Work, Skills and Well-being in Wales:**

## **Findings from the Skills and Employment Survey 2012**



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# **SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT SURVEY 2012:**

## **Introduction**

**Alan Felstead**  
**Cardiff School of Social Sciences**  
**Cardiff University**



# Previous Surveys in the Series

Date	Survey	Sample Size
1986	Social Change & Economic Life Initiative	4047
1992	Employment in Britain Survey	3855
1997	Skills Survey	2467
2001	Skills Survey	4470
2006	Skills Survey	7787

# Skills and Employment Survey 2012

- Funders: ESRC & UKCES + Wales Institute for Social and Economic Research Data and Methods
- Coverage: working adults aged 20 to 65 in England, Scotland and Wales
- Sampling procedure: national random probability samples, with interviews at home, lasting one hour
- Achieved sample: 3,200
- Response rate: 49%
- Data collection: GfK-NOP

# Distinctiveness

- Time span : mid-1980s to 2012
- Change in the world of work through the eyes of workers
- Wide scope of information about skills and job quality
- Focus here is on 2006 versus 2012 – both surveys boosted for Wales through different funding sources (2006 = Future Skills Wales Partnership; 2012 = WISERD) – 407 in 2006 and 587 in 2012

# What Does the Survey Cover? 1

## *Skills and Skill Development*

- Broad Skills
- Generic Skills
- Informal Learning at Work
- Employer Training

# What Does the Survey Cover? 2

## *Quality of Work Tasks*

- Job task discretion
- Work effort and its determinants
- Task characteristics (e.g., repetitiveness, variety)

## *Work Organisation*

- Types of teamwork
- Direct participation
- Union involvement

# What Does the Survey Cover? 3

## *Employment Conditions*

- Pay and hours
- Contract status
- Promotion opportunities
- Job security

## *Motivation and Well-Being*

- Work preferences
- Job satisfaction
- Organisational commitment
- Fear at work
- Psychological well-being



Wales Institute of Social & Economic  
Research, Data & Methods  
Sefydliad Ymchwil Gymdeithasol ac  
Economaidd, Data a Dulliau Cymru

## SKILLS AND THE QUALITY OF WORK IN WALES, 2006-2012 Main Report

Alan Felstead, Rhys Davies and Sam Jones  
July 2013



### JOB SKILLS, QUALIFICATION USE AND TRAINING IN WALES: Results from the Skills and Employment Survey 2012 Alan Felstead, Rhys Davies and Sam Jones

#### Headlines

Work is an important feature of the modern Welsh economy. A lot is known about pay, but less is known about other features of work such as what skills do jobs require, how relevant are qualifications for work, and how does training and learning compare with other parts of Britain. This Report provides some answers.

- Jobs are less skilled in Wales than in the Rest of Britain or London and the South East, with part-time jobs in Wales among the lowest skilled of all.
- The mismatch between the supply of, and the demand for, qualifications is proportionately larger in Wales than in other parts of Britain. However, the overqualified in Wales are better able to use their skills once in work; this reverses a pattern found in 2006.
- The intensity of training is lower in Wales and it fell faster between 2006 and 2012 than anywhere elsewhere. Both the requirement to learn at work and the capacity to learn from other colleagues also fell.

#### Penawdau

Mae gwaith yn nodwedd bwysig o economi fodern Cymru. Gwyddom lawer am gyflogau, ond nid ydym yn gwybod cymaint am nodweddion eraill gwaith fel pa sgiliau sydd eu hangen ar gyfer swyddi, pa mor berthnasol yw cymwysterau ar gyfer gwaith, a sut mae hyfforddiant a dysgu'n cymharu â rhannau eraill o Brydain. Mae'r adroddiad hwn yn rhoi rhai atebion.

- Mae swyddi llai medrus yng Nghymru o gymharu â gweiddi Prydain neu Llundain a de-ddwyrain Lloegr, ac mae swyddi rhan-amser yng Nghymru ymhlith y rhai leiaf medrus.
- O ran cyfran, mae mwy o wahaniaeth rhwng y cymwysterau sydd ar gael a'r galw am gymwysterau yng Nghymru nac yn rhannau eraill o Brydain. Fodd bynnag, mae'r rhai sydd â mwy o gymwysterau na'r hyn sydd ei angen yn gallu defnyddio eu sgiliau'n well ar ôl dechrau gweithio; mae hyn yn gwrthdroi'r patrwm a welwyd yn 2006.
- Mae dwyster hyfforddiant yn is yng Nghymru a lleihaodd yn gyflymach rhwng 2006 a 2012 nac y gwaelth mewn unrhyw le arall. Gwelwyd gostyngiad hefyd yn yr angen i ddsygu gan gydweithwyr.



### WELL-BEING, INSECURITY AND ATTITUDES TO WORK IN WALES: Results from the Skills and Employment Survey 2012 Rhys Davies, Alan Felstead and Sam Jones

#### Headlines

Attitudinal data on the experience of work and the intrinsic quality of work in Wales are relatively rare. This Report offers unique insights into the stresses and strains of work, the attitudes of workers towards employment and who they work for, and the fear of job loss.

- Working hours are shorter, and job-related stress and work strain are lower in Wales than in the Rest of Britain or London and the South East.
- Workers in Wales attach greater importance to employment and exhibit higher levels of organisational commitment compared to other parts of Britain.
- Perceived levels of job security are higher in Wales than elsewhere in Britain. However, the costs associated with job loss are greater in Wales reflecting the relative lack of comparable employment alternatives.

#### Penawdau

Cynharfod llin yw'r data am agweddau tuag at y profiad o waith a rhinwedd cyneriad gwaith yng Nghymru. Mae'r adroddiad hwn yn cynnig coplog unigryw ar anawsterau a straein byd gwaith, agweddau gweithwyr tuag at wellthio a'u cyflogwyr, a'r pryder o goli swyddi.

- Mae oriau gwaith yn fyrach ac mae straein s'n ymneud â swyddi a gwaith yn is yng Nghymru nag ydyw yng ngweiddi Prydain neu Llundain a de-ddwyrain Lloegr.
- Mae gweithwyr yng Nghymru'n rhoi mwy o bwyslais ar gyflogaeth ac yn dangos lefelau uwch o ymreimad sefydliadol o gymharu â rhannau eraill o Brydain.
- Mae lefelau'r canfyddiadau ynghylch diogelwch swyddi'n uwch yng Nghymru nac ydynt mewn rhannau eraill o Brydain. Fodd bynnag, mae'r costau s'n gysylltiedig â cholli swyddi yng Nghymru'n uwch gan adlewyrchu'r prinder cymharol o swyddi eraill sydd ar gael.

# **JOB SKILLS, QUALIFICATION USE AND TRAINING IN WALES:**

**Results from the Skills and Employment Survey 2012**

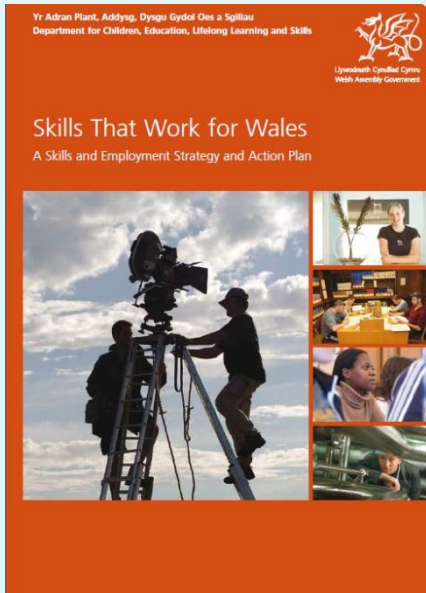
**Alan Felstead**

**Cardiff School of Social Sciences**

**Cardiff University**



# Job Skills, Qualification Use and Training



- Making Wales a 'high quality, high skilled economy'
  - this would benefit workers, employers and government
  - but measures not clearly specified and progress towards the goal rarely assessed
  - however, we know that average rates of pay in Wales are relatively low and low pay more widespread than elsewhere



- Since the recession the language has changed with the focus on 'sustainable jobs'
  - measured by 'high-level' indicators
  - household income, gross value added and the employment rate

Skills and Employment Survey 2012;  
reports at [www.cardiff.ac.uk/socsi/ses2012](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/socsi/ses2012)

# Added Value

- But what do we know about other features of work quality?
  - surprisingly little is the short answer
  - official datasets not that helpful, hence their reliance on ‘high-level’ indicators of the sort in the Programme for Government
  - so analysis of job quality often restricted to pay but little else
- Enter the Skills and Employment Survey and its predecessors

# Indicators

## *Job Skills:*

- Required qualifications, prior training & initial post-entry learning
- Generic skills such as numeracy, planning and computing

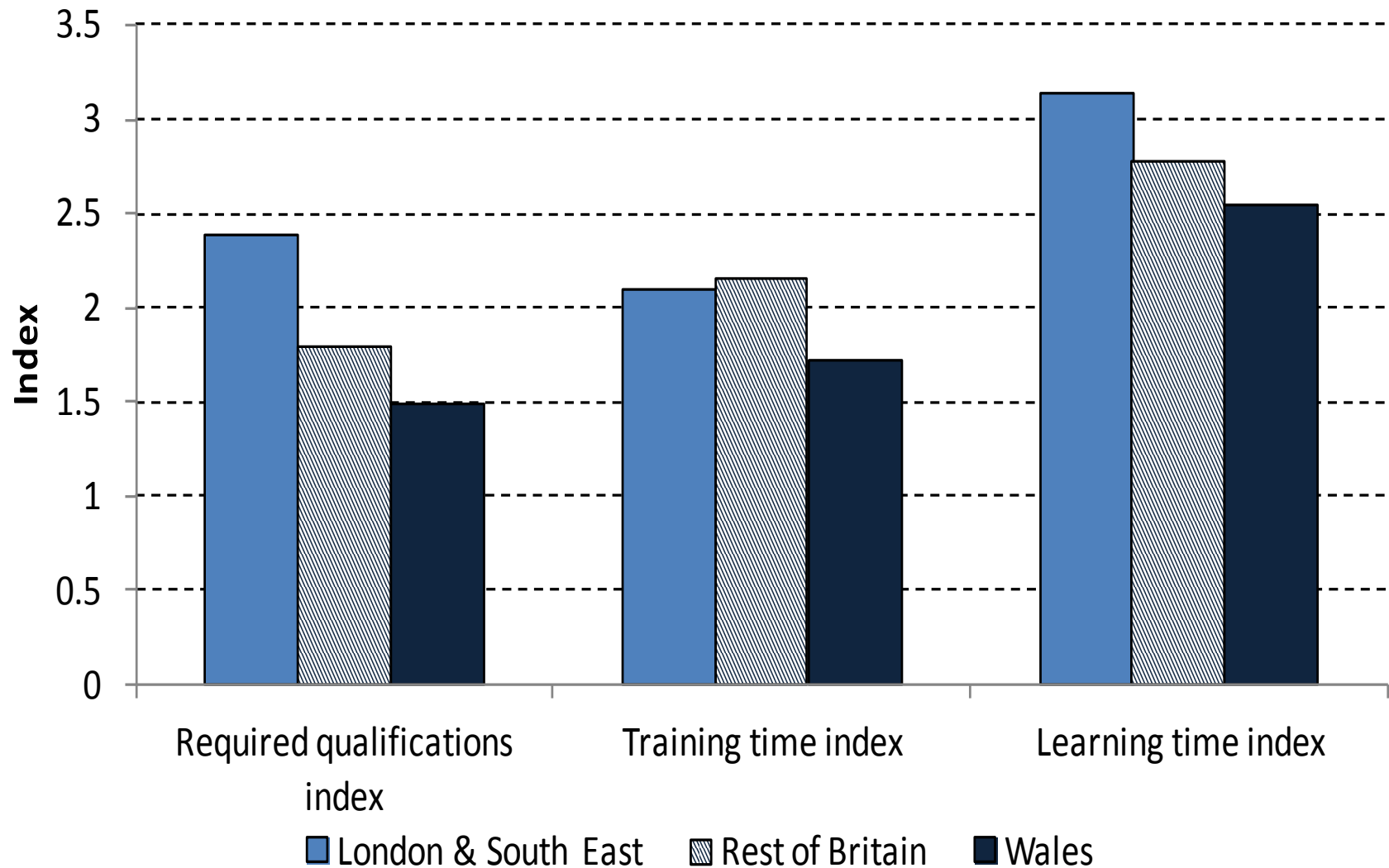
## *Qualification Use:*

- Aggregate imbalances (supply minus demand)
- Overqualification
- Overqualification + an inability to use skills at work

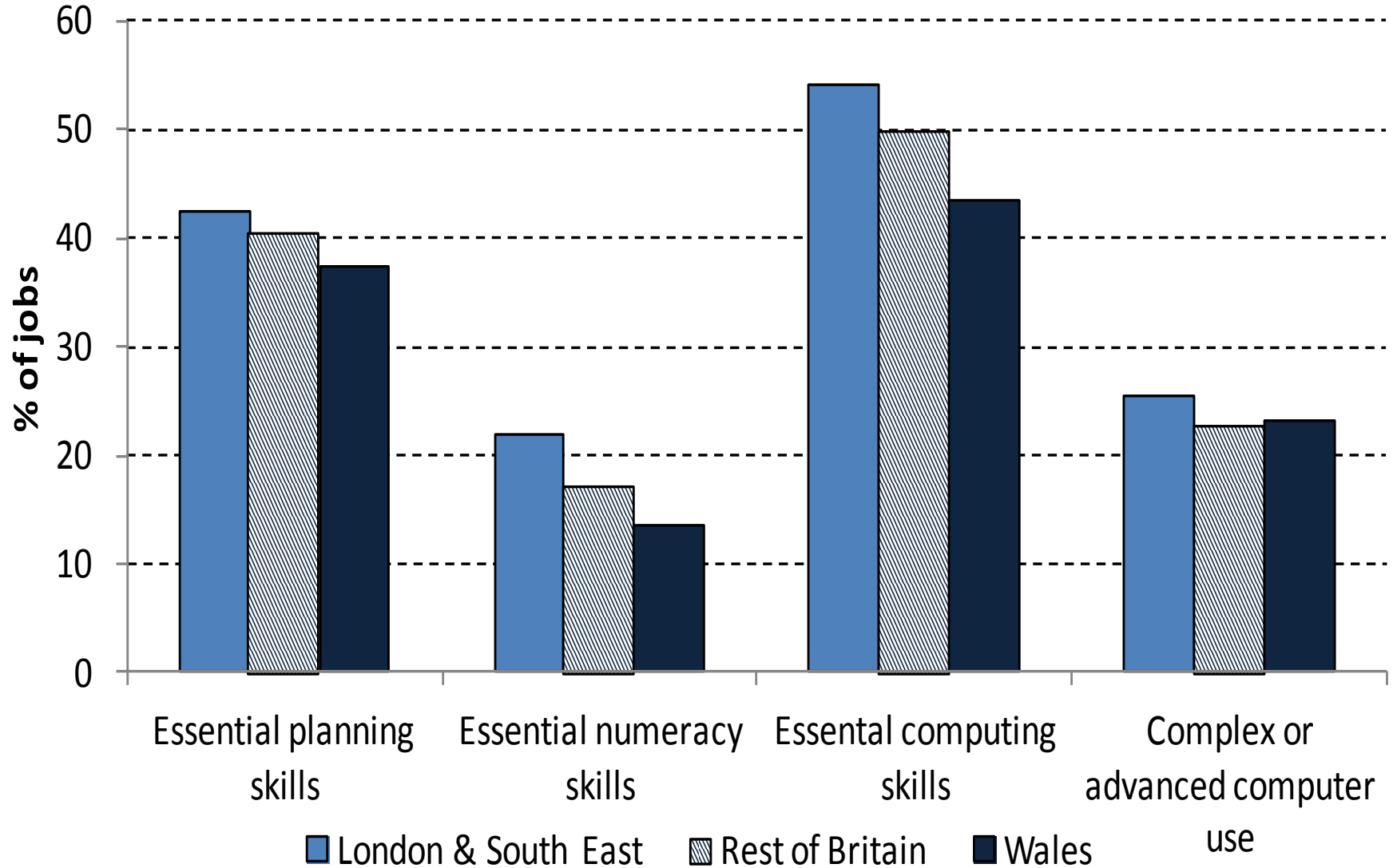
## *Training and Learning:*

- Training incidence over last year and intensity
- Learning – requirement to learn at work and learning from work group members

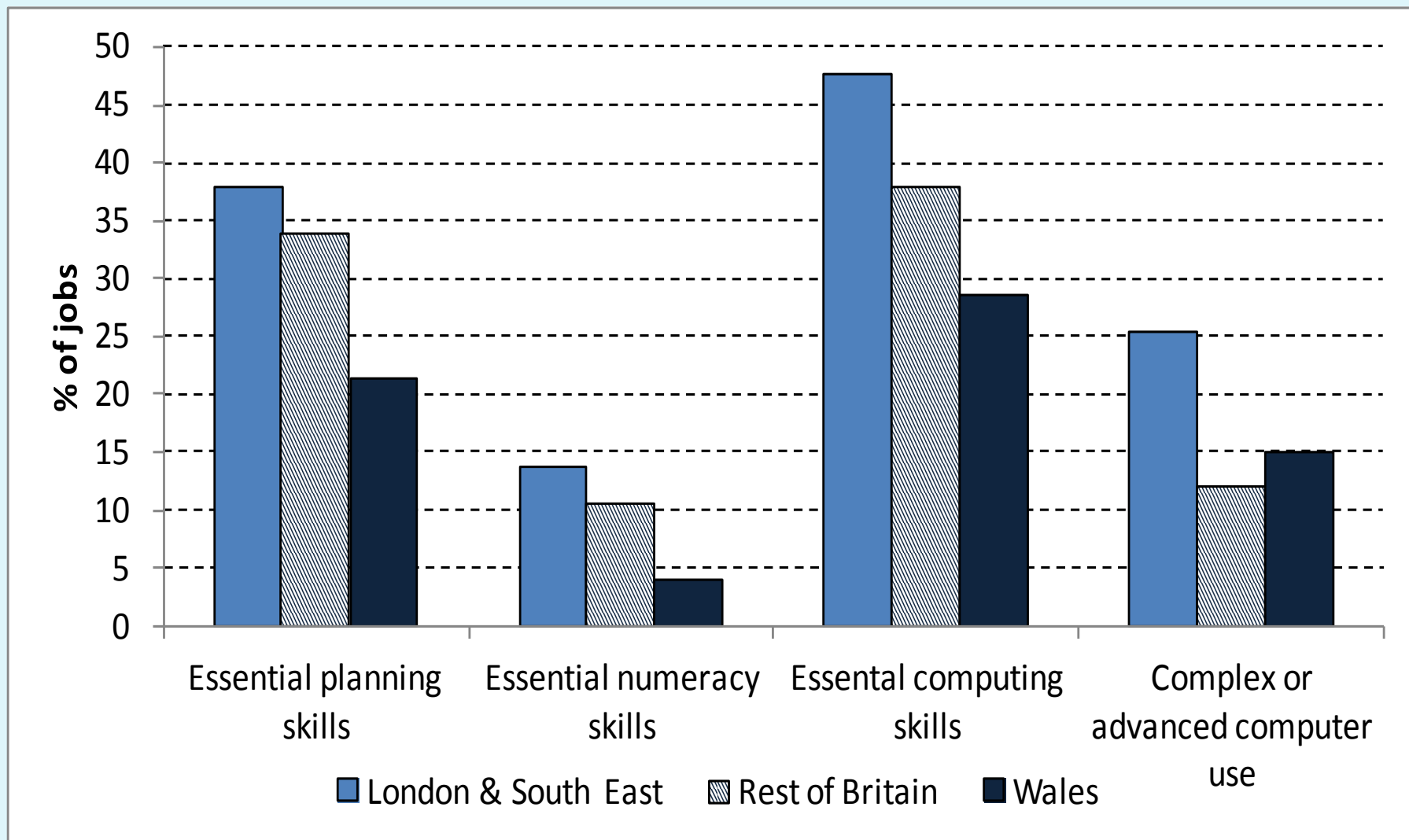
# Broad Skills Indices, Part-time Workers, 2012



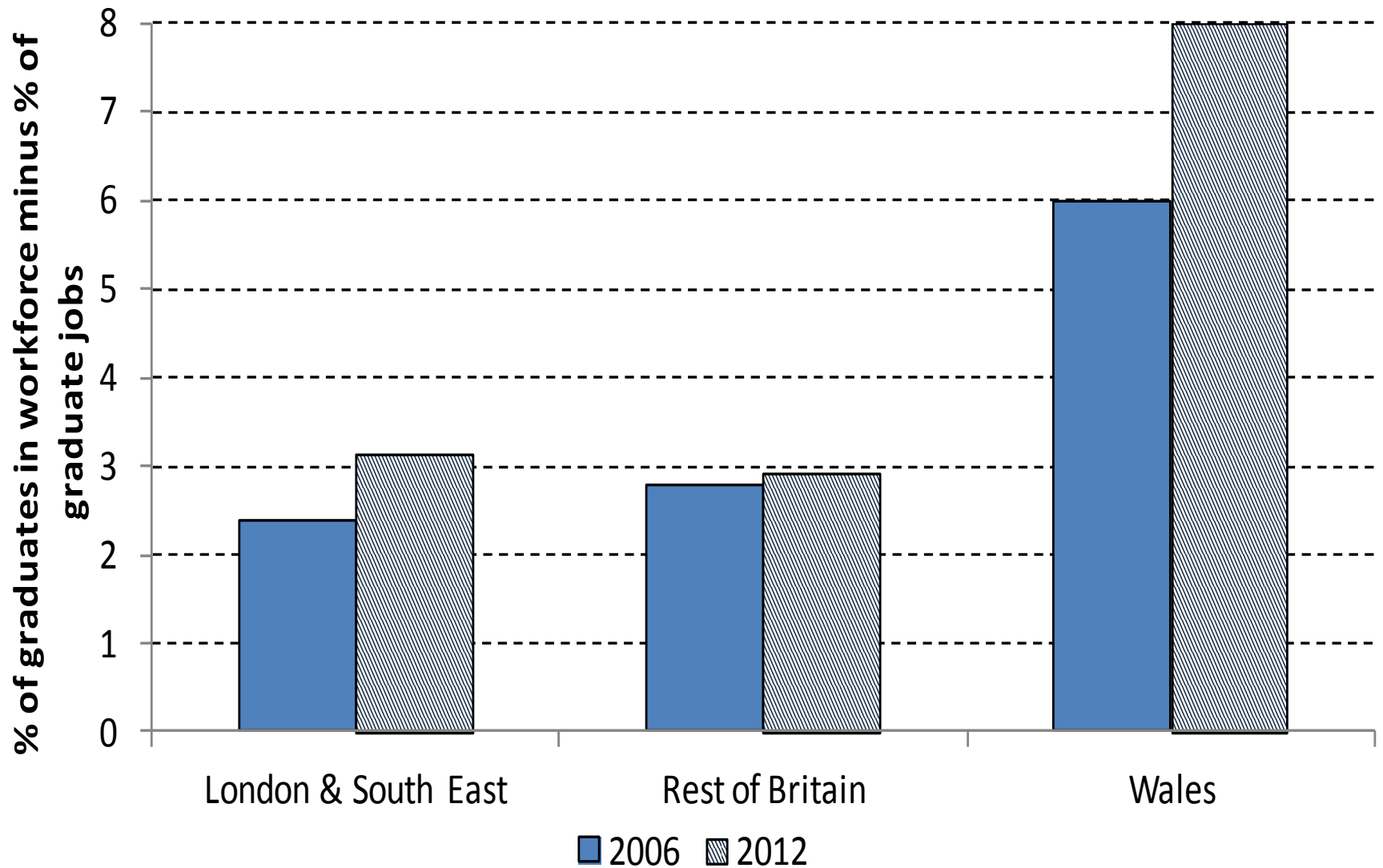
# Selected Generic and Computing Skills, 2012



# Selected Generic and Computing Skills, Part-time Workers, 2012



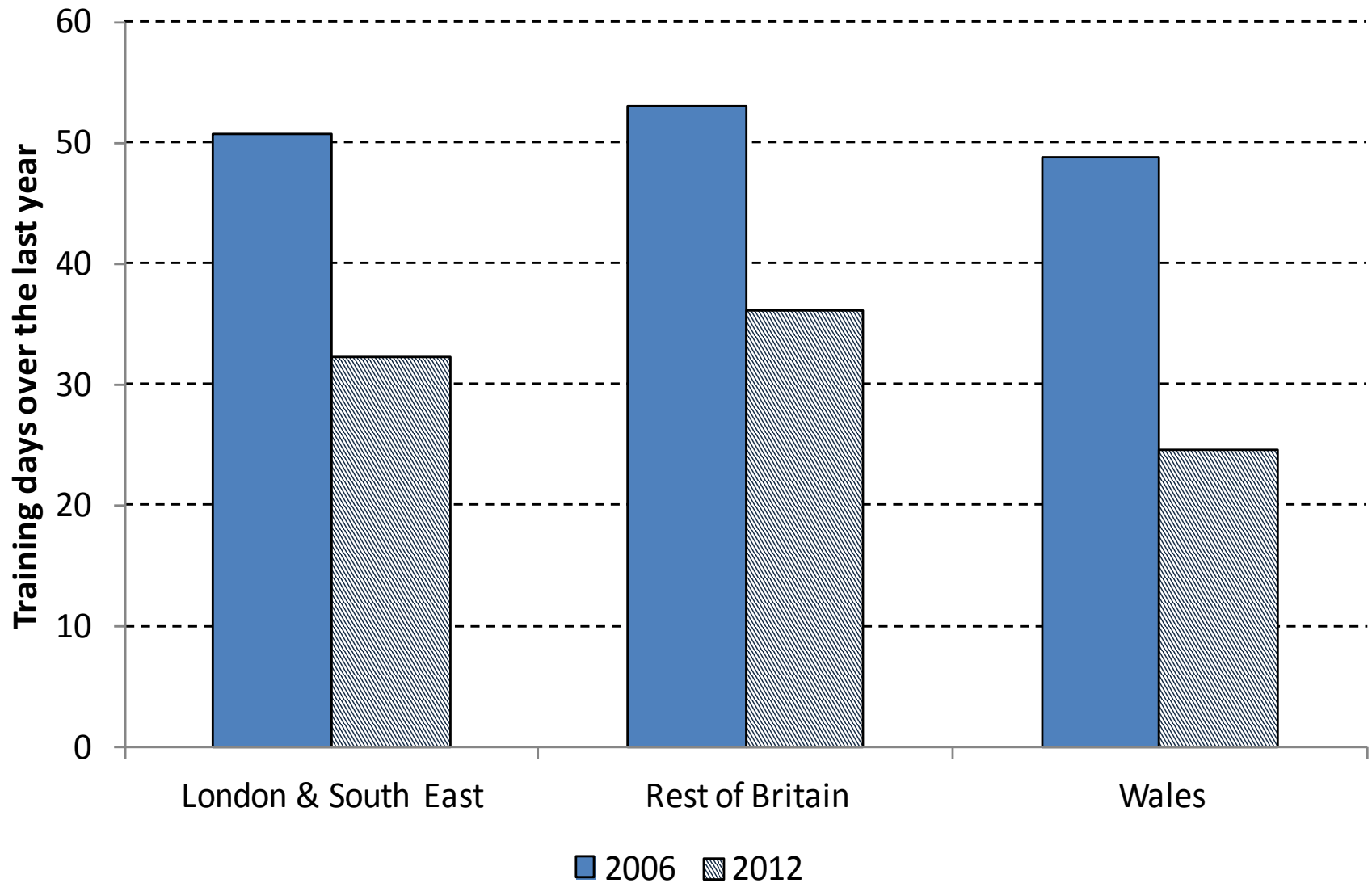
# Degree Mismatch, 2006-2012



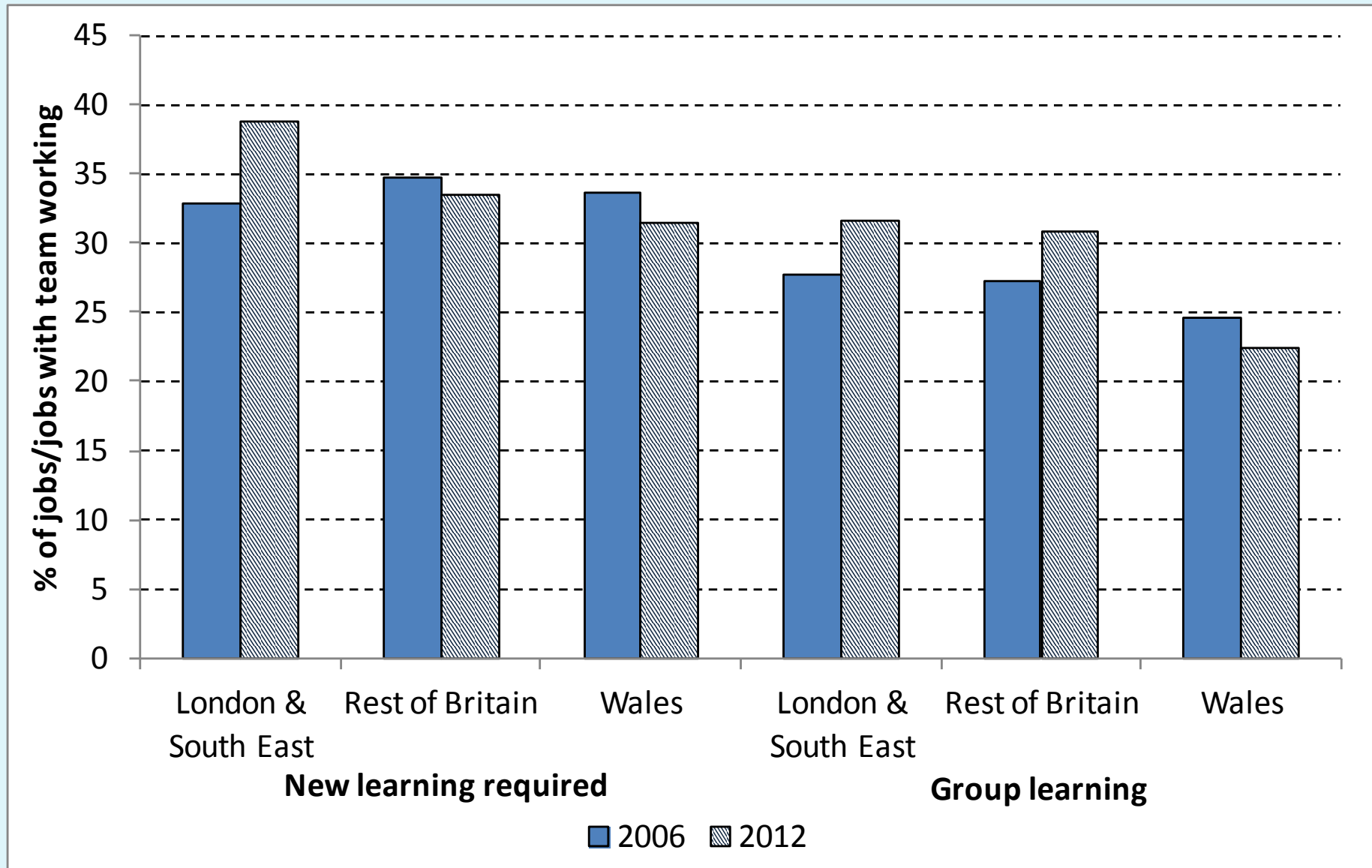
# Underutilisation of Skills at Work, 2006-2012

	Percentage of Jobs					
	London and the South East		Rest of Britain		Wales	
	2006	2012	2006	2012	2006	2012
Overqualification rate	36.7	30.2	40.0	39.1	40.5	37.5
'Real' overqualification rate	12.8	10.9	13.0	12.8	15.5	9.5

# Training Intensity, 2006-2012



# Informal Learning, 2006-2012



# Summary & Implications

- There is a long way to go before Wales can claim to be 'a high-quality, skill skilled economy'
- But the good news is that despite producing more qualified workers than the economy needs, overqualified workers in Wales are better able to use their skills at work
- The bad news is that work in Wales is lower skilled, with low skilled work more concentrated in part-time jobs than elsewhere
- The policy implication is that more needs to be done to lift the skills of jobs, but especially those held by part-timers

# **Work, Skills and Well-being in Wales:**

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# **WELL-BEING, INSECURITY AND ATTITUDES TO WORK IN WALES:**

**Results from the Skills and Employment Survey 2012**

**Rhys Davies**

**WISERD**

**Cardiff University**



# Well-being, Insecurity and Attitudes to Work: Issues

- Well-being has become a popular topic with ONS now measuring levels of *Life Satisfaction, Happiness, Anxiety*
- Wales produces the lowest revenue per head of any area of the UK and exhibits high levels of non-work
- Interest in high performance work systems: competitive advantage through quality not cost
  - improved participation and enriched work - contributing to high wages and possibly well being
- So how does Wales fair in terms of **work-related** wellbeing compared to other areas of Britain?
- Enter the Skills and Employment Survey

# Indicators

## *Work Intensity:*

- Long hours working and control over working hours
- Levels of job strain and stress (worrying about work)

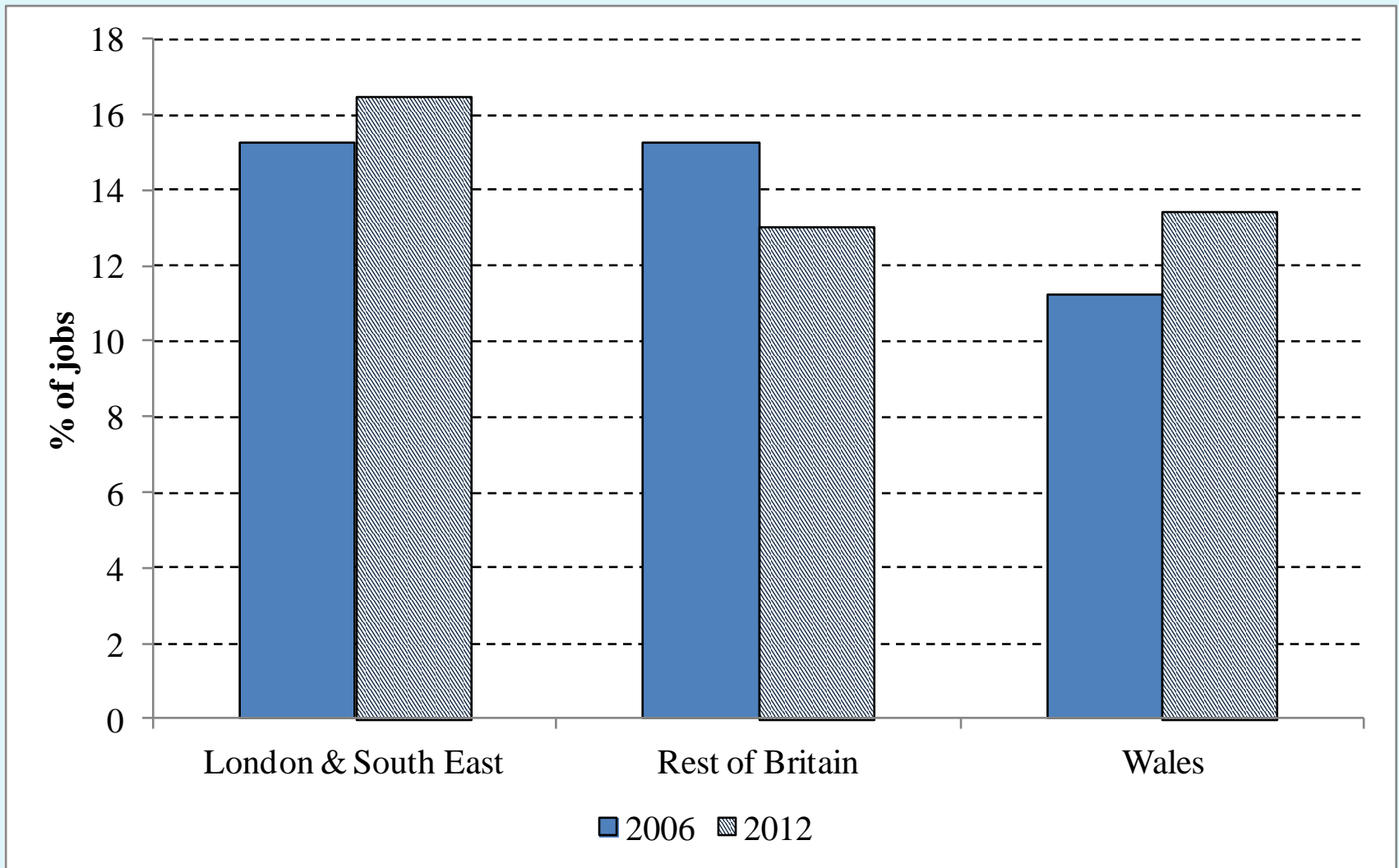
## *Attitudes to work*

- Enthusiasm, contentment and satisfaction with work
- The importance and centrality of work in people's lives
- Organisational commitment

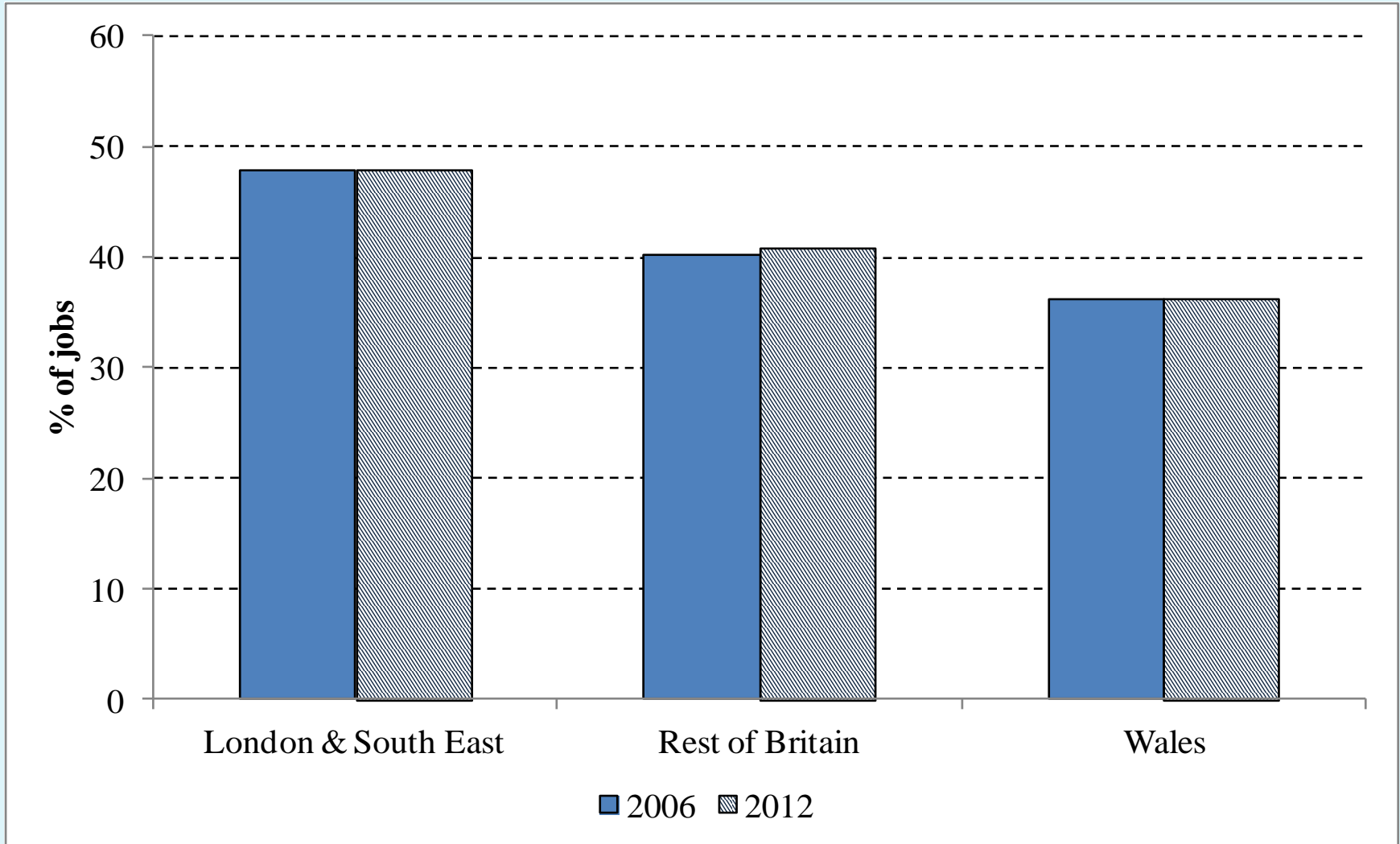
## *Insecurity*

- Fear of job loss – chance of losing one's job
- Cost of job loss – difficulty in finding a new job

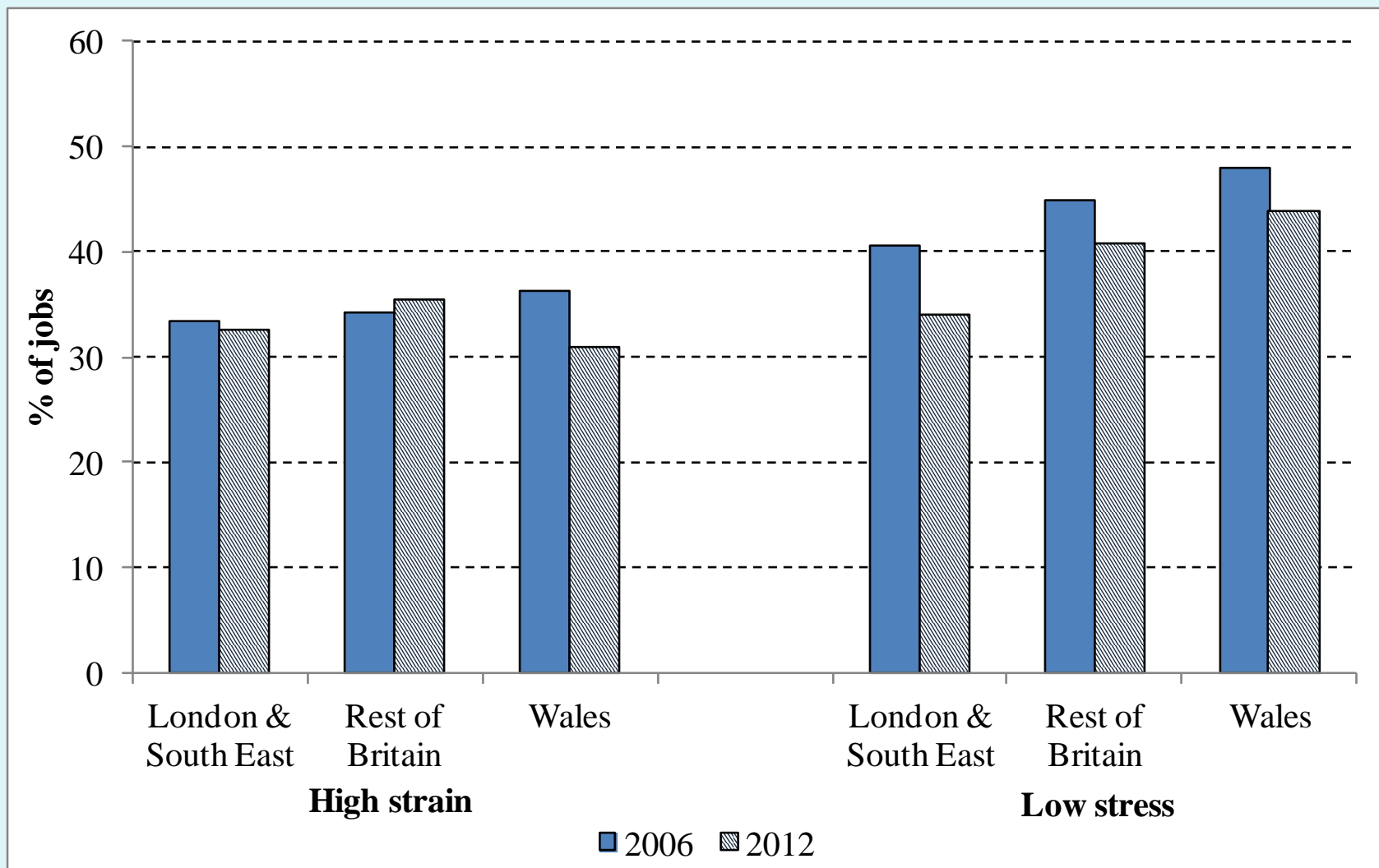
# Incidence of Long Hours, 2006-2012



# Ability to Decide Start/Finish Time, 2006-2012



# Job Strain and Job Stress, 2006-2012



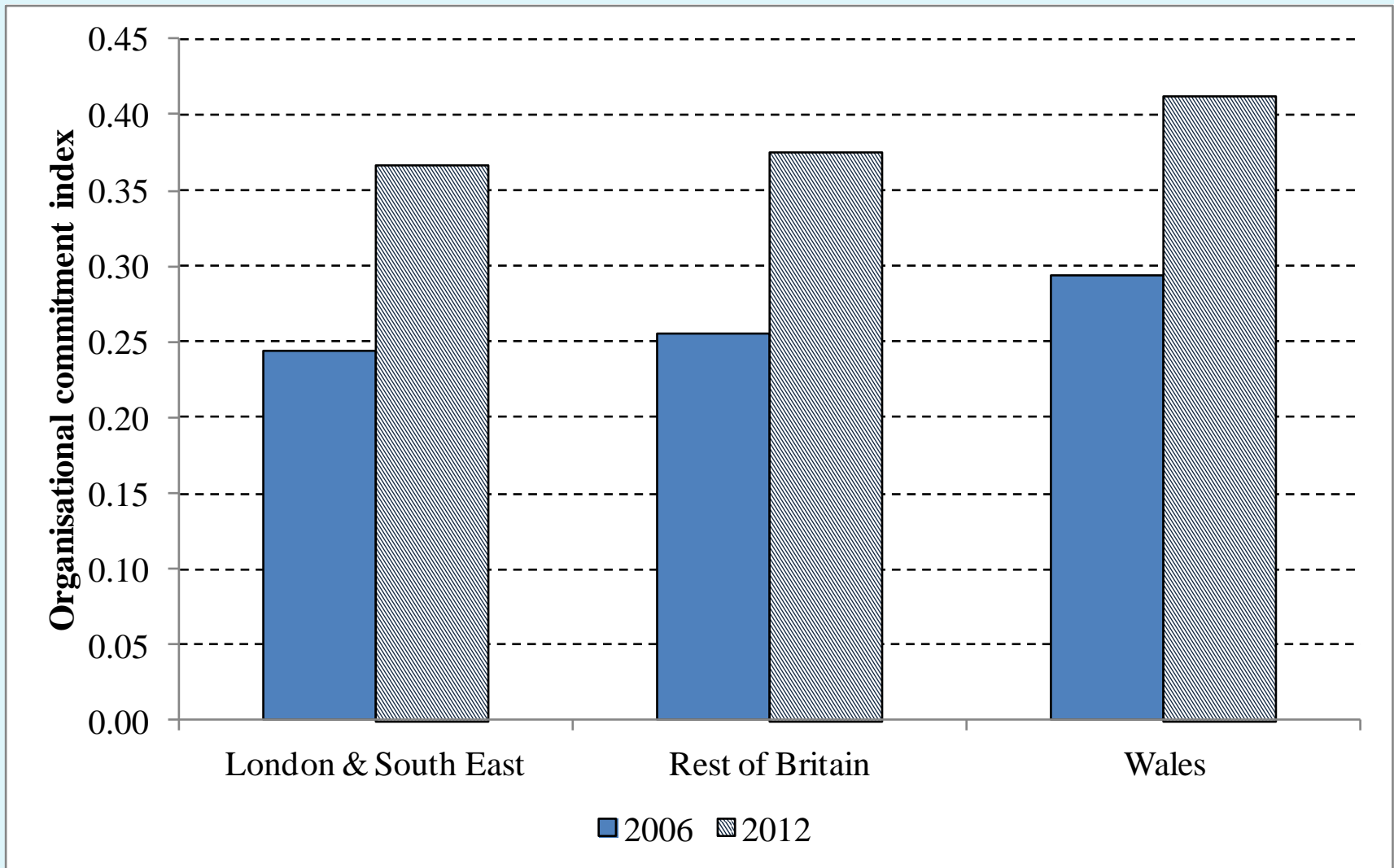
# Job Satisfaction, 2006-2012



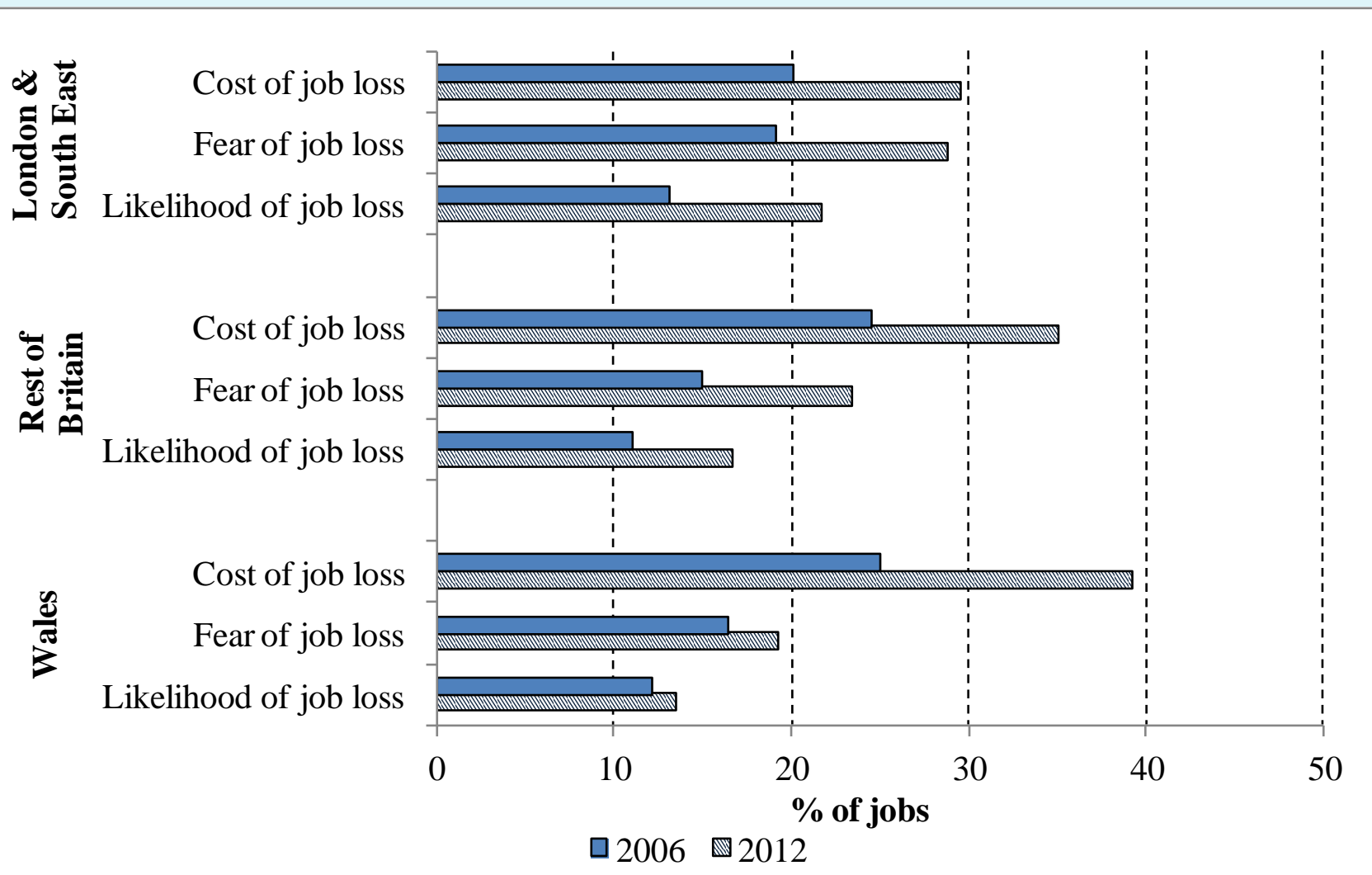
# Centrality of Work and Employment Commitment, 2012

	Percentage of Respondents		
	London and the South East	Rest of Britain	Wales
<i>Importance of work</i>			
Extremely important	21.6	22.5	23.8
Very important	41.8	42.0	48.5
<i>% who would stop work if did not need the money</i>			
All	25.2	31.5	29.2

# Organisational Commitment, 2006-2012



# Fear of Job Loss, 2006-2012



# Summary & Implications

- Wales characterised by low value added economy – characteristics of jobs of appear to reflect this
- The good news is that workers in Wales are less stressed and have higher levels of job satisfaction
- Workers in Wales attach greater importance to work and exhibit higher levels of organisational commitment
- However, this is in the context of an economy where the costs of job loss are perceived as high
- Priority must be to provide all households with the opportunity to access work, but Skills and Employment Survey reaffirms that ‘there is more to life than GDP’

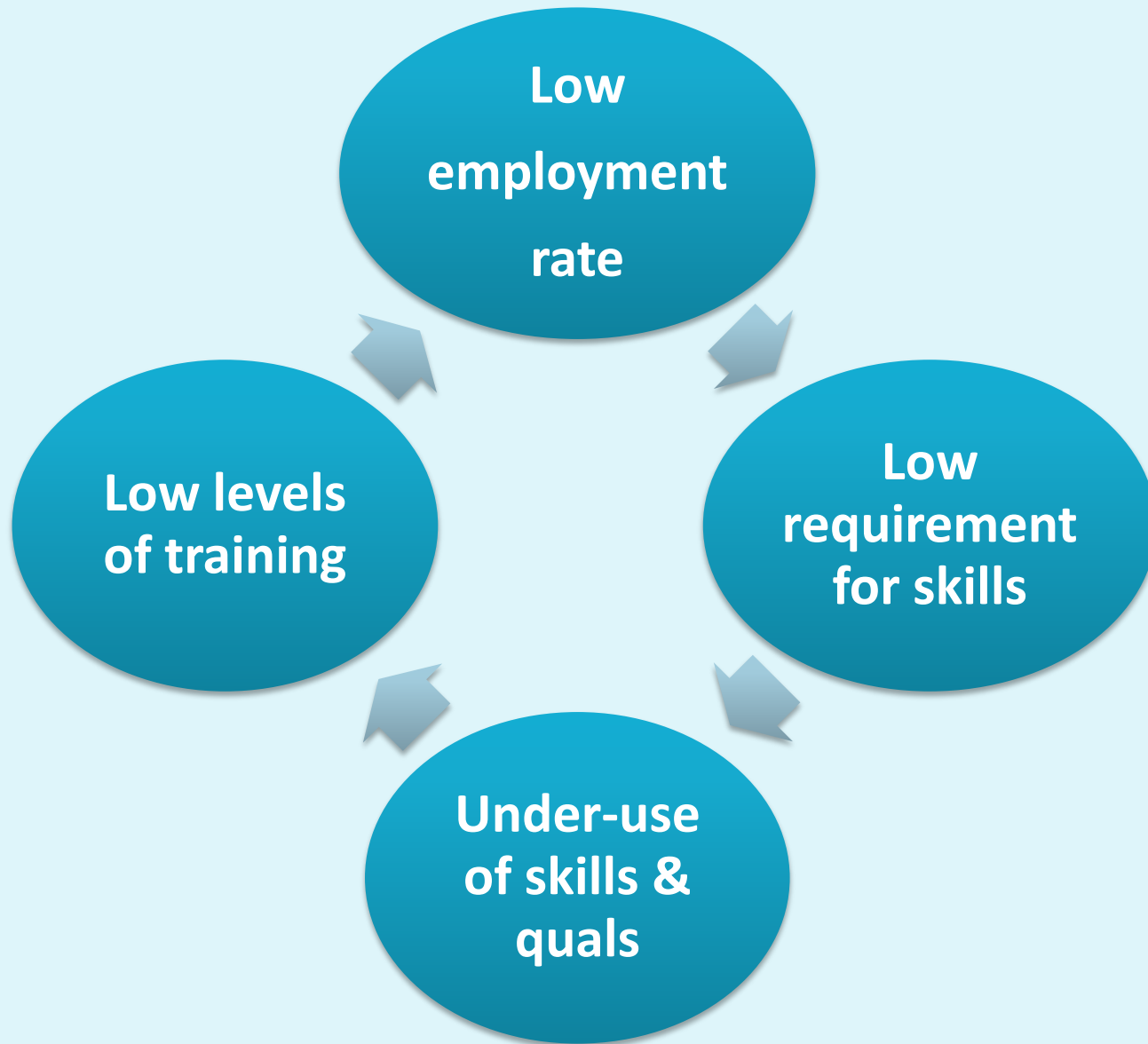


**Discussant:**  
**Victoria Winckler**  
**Director of the Bevan Foundation**



# Work, Skills and Well-being







Fewer Hours

Lower stress  
& strain

Greater Job  
Commitment

# Cut across by differences between ....

Part-timers / full-timers

Women / men

Public / private sector

Professionals / operatives

# What to do?

**How to increase  
skill required by  
jobs?**

**What implications  
for ed & training  
policy?**

**Should well-  
being be focus  
of policy?**



# Bevan

FOUNDATION

CHANGING WALES

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[www.cardiff.ac.uk/socsi/ses2012](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/socsi/ses2012)

