**Mapping Vulnerability to Fuel Price Increases in England**

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**Abstract**

Motor fuel prices have decreased rapidly since 2014, but what if they start rising again? Which parts of the country would be most vulnerable to a fuel price shock? The (t)ERES research project has developed a spatial index of ‘vulnerability to fuel price increases’, based on data derived from MOT vehicle tests, Experian income estimates and government Accessibility Statistics. We define vulnerability as the combination of high exposure (fuel expenditure), high sensitivity (low income) and low adaptive capacity (ability to shift modes). We find evidence of a regressive pattern at the national level, as the highest income areas (London and the South East) have the lowest level of car dependence, with resulting high levels of resilience. However, we do not find evidence of a similar regressive pattern within city-regions. Also, we find a spatial relationship between low income and high fuel economy of the vehicle fleet. These findings go against previous international research on ‘oil vulnerability’, and highlight the distinctiveness of English urban socio-spatial configurations. We conclude by discussing the implications of current trends towards the ‘suburbanisation of disadvantage’ on vulnerability to fuel price increases, possible applications of the index in future research, and its relation to current policy interest in “just about managing” households (JAMs).

No booking required. All welcome.

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