

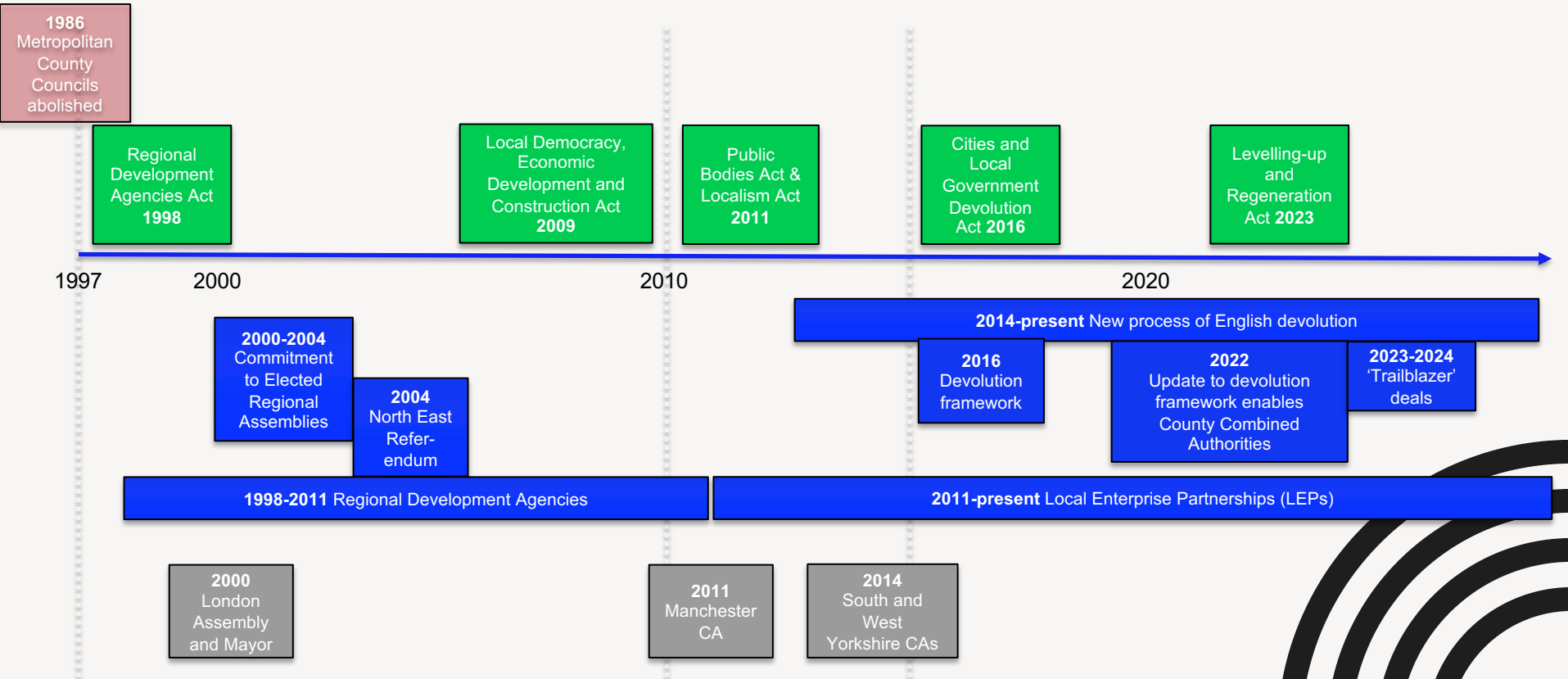


**Centre for
Food Policy**
Shaping an effective food system

The past and future of English devolution: Opportunities for food systems change

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A short recent history of English devolution (1997-2024)



Local Enterprise Partnerships

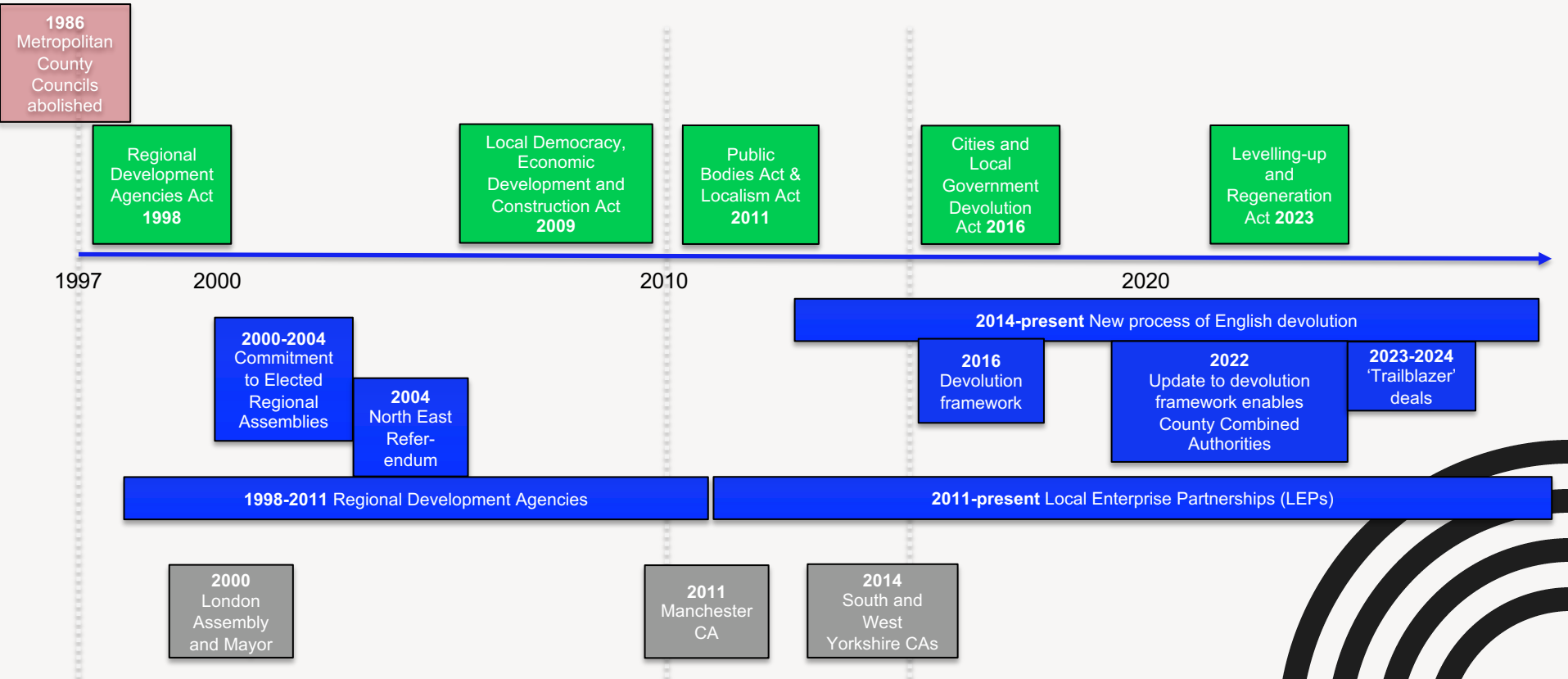
1. Black Country
2. Buckinghamshire Thames Valley
3. Cheshire & Warrington
4. Coast to Capital
5. Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly
6. Coventry & Warwickshire
7. Cumbria
8. Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham & Nottinghamshire
9. Dorset
10. Enterprise M3
11. Gloucestershire
12. Greater Birmingham & Solihull
13. Greater Cambridge & Peterborough
14. Greater Lincolnshire
15. Greater Manchester
16. Heart of the South West
17. Hertfordshire
18. Humber
19. Lancashire
20. Leeds City Region
21. Leicester & Leicestershire
22. Liverpool City Region
23. London
24. New Anglia
25. North Eastern
26. Northamptonshire
27. Oxfordshire
28. Sheffield City Region
29. Solent
30. South East
31. South East Midlands
32. Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire
33. Swindon & Wiltshire
34. Tees Valley
35. Thames Valley Berkshire
36. The Marches
37. West of England
38. Worcestershire
39. York & North Yorkshire



Local Authorities in
more than one LEP



A short recent history of English devolution (1997-2024)



(Mayoral) Combined Authorities

- CAs most robust legal form of regional and cross-boundary collaboration
- “A link between geography and the effectiveness of a combined authority. This is about administrative coherence, scale and the importance of reflecting the economic and transport geography.” (LGA 2021)
- **Each MCA agrees a bespoke deal with national government**

Devolution Framework (DLUHC, 2023)

| Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Strategic role in delivering services | Level 1+ Adult education, LEP (partial), UK Shared Prosperity Fund | Level 2+ Mayor, transport, local roads, urban regeneration, investment funds to support regional economic growth Mayors can establish development corporations to influence planning and development | Level 3+ Skills and careers, local energy planning, local growth and place, housing and regeneration |

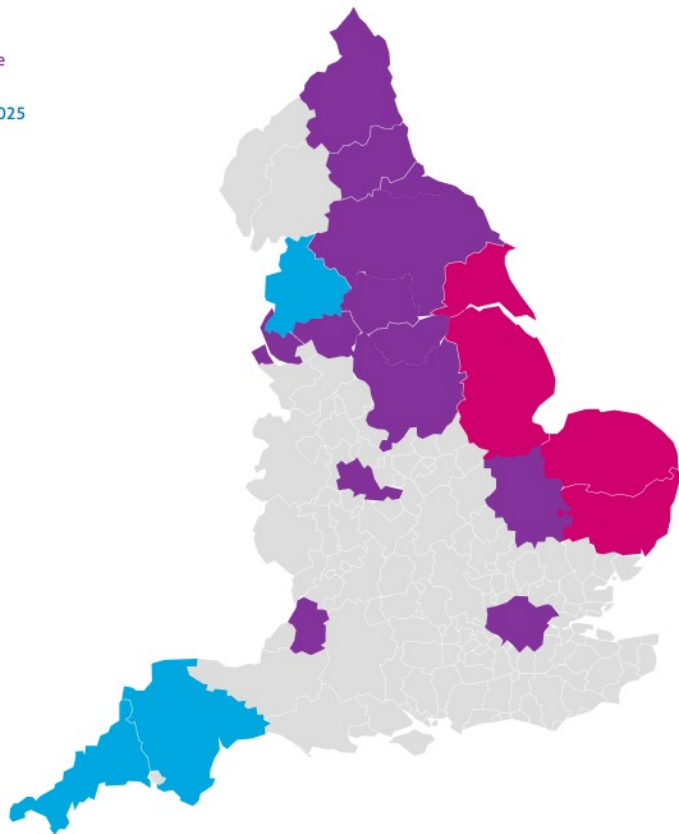
The current state of English devolution

| | |
|--|--|
| Mayoral Combined Authorities | Greater London, West Midlands, Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region, West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Tees Valley, West of England, York and North Yorkshire, East Midlands, North East. |
| Mayoral Combined Authorities agreed | Suffolk, Norfolk, Greater Lincolnshire, Hull and East Yorkshire |
| Non-Mayoral Combined Authorities agreed | Lancashire, Devon and Torbay, and Cornwall |



Area type

- Mayoral devolution in place
- Mayoral deal due in 2025
- Non-mayoral deal due in 2025



Devolution currently covers:

- 48% of England's population,
- 54% of its economic output,
- 26% of the land area.

If all the new deals are implemented as planned in 2025, this will increase to:

- 64% of England's population,
 - 67% of its economic output,
 - 54% of the land area
- (Institute of Government, 2024)

The role of Mayors

- “We have identified four different styles, which each mayor is deploying in different permutations. The styles are **disrupter**, **convenor**, **leader** and **advocate**. In practice this can mean: disrupting by bringing new perspectives to longstanding challenges; convening partners in new modes of collaboration; providing political leadership on challenging issues; and acting as an advocate for the place regionally and nationally” (LGA 2021)
- Political capital that has enabled Mayors to extend their remit and drive local-regional change.
- Aligns with European cities where Mayors hold significant political agency



The future of devolution

- The Institute for Government recently called for the extension of devolution to 85% of England by the end of the next parliament.
- The Levelling Up White Paper (2023) makes a commitment that “every part of England that wants one will have a devolution deal with powers at or approaching the highest level of devolution” by 2030, opening up the possibility of devolution to all areas of England.

Labour (2024)

- A new, clearer framework for English devolution which brings together local leaders with central government on a statutory basis.
- A presumption towards devolution, with combined authorities given the right to request powers held elsewhere and central government required to explain what steps they should take to become eligible for new powers.
- A statutory requirement for all combined authorities to adopt Local Growth Plans.



Leveraging food systems change through Mayoral Combined Authorities

- Build on existing progress: free school meals, auto-enrollment, food security, unhealthy food advertising restrictions...
- Frame food in terms of existing policy mandates within the devolution framework
- Mayors matter!
- Think and link internationally: C40 Cities, ICLEI, United Cities Local Government...
- There is a window of opportunity to influence bespoke deals and their implementation



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