LEGATUM INSTITUTE

PROSPERITY INDEX

www.li.com
www.prosperity.com

The United Kingdom Prosperity Index

2021

With thanks to the Atlas Network for their support

The Legatum Institute would like to extend its gratitude to Richard Oldfield for his support for the production of this report.

The Legatum Institute would also like to thank the Legatum Foundation for its sponsorship and for making this report possible. Learn more about the Legatum Foundation at www.legatum.org

Contents

Foreword

MEETING THE UNITED KINGDOM'S RESET MOMENT

The Legatum Institute is delighted to launch the UK Prosperity Index at a unique moment in the country's history. The United Kingdom stands at a 'reset moment'. It has delivered on the vote for Brexit by exiting the European Union. It is forging a new trading relationship with its European allies and charting a new course toward Global Britain. And while the UK was among the hardest hit by Covid-19, it is now finding a way out of the global pandemic, emerging as a global leader in the design, development and distribution of effective vaccines.

If the country is to make the most of this reset moment, then it will need to unlock prosperity across all of its regions and communities. In many ways the UK is well positioned to do just this—it is one of the most prosperous countries in the world, with an open and vibrant economy. Its national institutions are robust, and its people are among the most educated in the world. As our 2020 Prosperity Index showed, globally the UK now ranks 13th out of 167 nations and has one of the world's strongest economies.

But there are also clear challenges. As our new UK Prosperity Index reveals, while levels of prosperity in the UK remain much higher than other nations and increased further during the first half of the 2010s, in more recent years this prosperity has been stagnating. This underlines the need for a more detailed assessment of what is going well and what is not.

The UK Prosperity Index is designed to do just that. It is a tool that can be used to better map and monitor the pathways toward prosperity in all corners of the UK. Drawing on a wealth of data, the Index is designed to map current levels of prosperity at the local authority level, how they have evolved over the past decade and how they will continue to track in the years ahead. It is, we believe, the most ambitious and comprehensive index of its kind to date. It draws on data for 379 local authorities across the UK, using 256 indicators organised into more than 50 policy-relevant elements. The Index, supported by dozens of advisors and updated annually, will not only help decision-makers 'level up' the country and unlock prosperity, but also track progress at the local level over time.

This transformational tool allows leaders to assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of their respective areas and explore the economic, social and institutional choices that need to be made in order to drive prosperity from the ground up. Just as importantly, it allows citizens and the media to hold government to account.

It finds that the UK is an amazing country—13th in the global Prosperity Index. It has been making great strides in many of the things that already dominate the debate about levelling up—including infrastructure, and the natural environment. We have a strong economy powered by innovators and a world class education system, but we are held back by declining enterprise conditions, weak health systems that were simply not pandemic ready, and have insufficiently created the environment in which our family life, and relationships have been able to thrive and feel valued.

All of our concern has been for the economy—but actually our concern should have been much more focused on who we are becoming and not on what we are getting. To really become a prosperous nation, Britain needs to become a place where we truly value the family, where we care for one another, investing in our mental and physical wellbeing and where we can innovate and build businesses that are not stifled by unnecessary regulation.

Last year, we said that it is a time for each nation to decide its character and who it wants to be. This is especially true for the UK today. The decisions that the country makes now will have a profound impact on its future development, shaping the direction of an independent and sovereign country and the future for generations to come. The UK Prosperity Index is designed as a contribution to this process, and one that we hope you will use.

Philippa Stroud

Baroness Philippa Stroud
CEO, Legatum Institute

Credit: shutterstock.com

Introducing the Centre for UK Prosperity

The Centre for UK Prosperity was launched in October 2020 with the goal of supporting the UK's journey toward prosperity. Our team is focused on creating a movement of people who are committed to unlocking prosperity across all regions and communities in the UK, supporting the 'levelling up' agenda, and tracking its performance over time.

At the Legatum Institute we have long argued, and demonstrated, that genuine prosperity is about far more than building a strong economy or supporting individual wealth—it is more than just giving people 'bridges and trains'. True prosperity is possible only when all citizens, neighbourhoods and communities are able to reach their full potential across broad aspects such as education, entrepreneurial activity, and community life.

This underlying philosophy is rooted in the observation by Robert F. Kennedy that the economic indicators that dominate the conversation, such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), tend to measure 'everything except that which is worthwhile'. They say very little about the other drivers of prosperity that we explore in this report—including the quality of our natural environment, social capital, including the strength of families, health outcomes and the quality of education. Clearly, these things are linked to economic performance but they are often forgotten in a debate that often focuses only on growth.

This is why, while we support the Government's new focus on levelling up regions that have historically been left behind, we believe that the Government can be bolder. Amid the UK's 'reset moment', we need to do more than just level up regions to the status quo. We need to be much more ambitious and reach entirely new heights, by creating the conditions that will allow all of our regions and communities to reach their full potential.

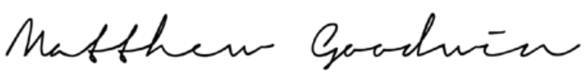
For the first time in a long while, the UK is an independent and sovereign state. Its citizens now exercise more influence and control over the decisions that affect their daily lives. Together, the country has more autonomy, flexibility and control over its own destiny than at any other point for half a century. We need to embrace this moment with both hands and use the advantages that it brings to support as many of our regions and local communities into the 'fast lane' toward greater and long-lasting prosperity.

This is why, with the generous support of our donors, we are publishing the UK Prosperity Index. It includes detailed data on 379 boroughs, council areas, local government districts, unitary and local authorities that encompass the four nations of the UK, drawing on dozens of different datasets and the wisdom of more than 50 academic, research and policy advisors. The comprehensive set of indicators provides a rich and policy-relevant dataset that allows all local authorities to map, in granular detail, their journey toward greater prosperity. The Index will be updated annually and iterated in response to external feedback and new data becoming available.

The Index allows citizens, local authorities, regions, and government to sharpen their understanding of what is working, track their progress over time and, ultimately, hold government to account. It is the beginning of a conversation—not the final word. The Index will also be accompanied by a sustained period of policy engagement that will see the Legatum Institute and its Centre for UK Prosperity work alongside local authorities, regional organizations and policymakers to identify best practice and share these lessons, both nationally and internationally.

We hope that national, regional and local governments, businesses, investors, philanthropists, citizens and others will use the Index, engage with our Centre and work with us to bolster the prosperity of the UK. Please feel free to join this conversation by emailing me direct at matthew.goodwin@li.com.

I look forward to hearing from you.



Professor Matthew Goodwin
Director of the Centre for UK Prosperity

Prosperity in the UK had improved from 2011, but has plateaued since 2016.

Credit: shutterstock.com

Using the United Kingdom Prosperity Index

The United Kingdom Prosperity Index has been developed as a practical and policy-relevant tool to help identify what action will help to unlock prosperity in the UK. The Index is not designed to offer a definitive view, nor is it geared toward establishing the causal relationships that underpin our ranking of local authorities. Rather, it is designed to offer a helpful, data-led tool that organizations, agencies and people can use to inform their work.

The Index consists of 3 domains and 12 pillars, built upon 53 actionable policy areas (elements), 256 indicators and covering 379 local authorities across all regions of the UK. It is designed to benefit a wide range of users.

Specifically:

- Government and policymakers can use the Index to determine specific areas that require action to help drive increased prosperity in left-behind towns and regions;
- Local authority and regional leaders can use it to help shape their policy priorities, develop strategic relationships with neighbouring areas and monitor their progress over time;
- National, regional and local investors can use it to inform capital allocation and to identify emerging areas that have the key ingredients of prosperity, including strong investment environments that support and nourish local businesses and entrepreneurs;
- Business leaders can use it to identify and communicate the changes they need, in order to improve the business climate and the productive capacity of local authorities and regions;
- Philanthropists can use it to identify areas where they can have the greatest impact;
- Journalists and citizens can use it to hold national, regional and local government to account;
- Academics and researchers can use it to complement their other datasets to analyse the underlying patterns behind economic and social issues, identify new research questions, build strategic partnerships with local case studies and inform the broader policy, business, and philanthropic community.

INTERPRETING THE INDEX

For every local authority[1] in the UK, the Index uses the same indicators, and combines them in the same way to create what we call 'pillars'. We also draw on national-level data to present the overall picture of prosperity in the UK. It is a multi-level approach.

By using the Index at a local authority, one can compare the relative performance of each local authority for prosperity and for each of the 12 pillars of prosperity, such as health, education, and social capital, as well as the 53 elements within the pillars. The elements represent key policy areas, such as education, government integrity, and mental health, to help facilitate more targeted action, identify areas of 'best practice' and also those where a refreshed approach is required.

The higher the ranking, the stronger the performance of that local authority for the pillar or element, when compared with another authority lower down the rankings.

Further to this, the Index provides data over a 10-year period, making it possible to see whether prosperity has been improving or deteriorating, and what is driving that change. This will enable areas of strength in a local authority to be built on and areas of weakness to be addressed. We will be updating the Index on an annual basis, allowing us to update this picture over time.

APPLYING THE INDEX

The data in the Index and the analysis contained in the report can be used for a variety of purposes:

- Benchmarking performance against other authorities;
- In-depth analysis of prosperity at the local authority level;
- Understanding whether prosperity is improving or weakening over time, and why;
- Identifying the binding constraints to increasing prosperity and also 'levelling up';
- Informing new priorities for regional and local authority agendas.

Where a local authority is showing a strong or weak performance in a pillar, it is possible to drill down and identify what particular policy-related element is driving this trend. This will help inform the required policy action to strengthen performance.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE

There are several tools available to aid analysis and interpretation of the UK Prosperity Index. Alongside this report, which provides a high-level analysis of the findings from local authorities, additional information is available via our website at www.li.com.

Local authority profiles. This 15-page profile, for each of the 379 local authorities in the selected regions, provides more detailed pillar, element and indicator information, including rankings and scores, and how these change over time.

Indicator scores. An Excel spreadsheet that contains the scores for all of the indicators for each year since 2011 at the local authority level. Using these scores, the user can carry out more in-depth analysis. Further information on how the scores for each indicator are calculated can be found in the Methodology section (see page 101).

Team members at the Legatum Institute are also available to engage and provide support to those interested in addressing the challenges and opportunities presented by these materials. Please contact us directly at ukprosperity@li.com.

USING THE INDEX

Political leaders

This report provides national and local government with the ability to explore the performance of the regions of the UK and local authorities across 12 pillars of prosperity. The Index and the data on which it is built provide a foundation on which more effective interventions and policies can be designed. It provides an unparalleled overview of how these units have been performing over time and relative to one another.

Policymakers

The Index and its accompanying resources allow policymakers to benchmark the performance of local authorities against other authorities across 12 pillars and 53 elements of prosperity, to create a more granular perspective of performance and identify what is holding back their development.

Each of the 53 elements has been designed to be a recognizable, discrete area of domestic policy, and is measured using a combination of indicators from a variety of public data sources. The indicators should be interpreted as a set of proxies for the underlying policy concept, and we would encourage policymakers to interpret their score and rank for an element as the trigger for more fundamental analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of its performance.

In addition to helping focus analysis, these materials also allow policymakers to develop diagnostic tools and identify potential options to consider, based on the performance of other authorities.

Philanthropists

The Index also identifies areas where philanthropists might want to contribute to drive levels of prosperity in the UK, working in partnership with local agencies. This might involve using the Index to identify areas where civil society can make a meaningful difference to people's lives, such as by contributing to the strengthening of social capital in particular local areas where it is fraying, or working in partnership with local authorities to try and boost the quality of local investment environments for small businesses and entrepreneurs.

Investors and business leaders

The business community is well positioned to identify barriers to starting, operating, and growing business, and to demonstrate to local and national government the economic potential from reforms such as lifting onerous regulation and reducing other barriers to help improve the investment environment. Furthermore, business leaders and investors can contribute to infrastructure policy development by demonstrating the economic impact of investment in communications, transport, and energy projects, where they can constrain further prosperity.

Academics and researchers

For academics and researchers, our database of curated indicators is a unique resource, enabling comparison of trends and patterns across the past 10 years for much of the data. By providing a holistic dataset across many disciplines, it provides an opportunity to compare in a straightforward way the impact of disparate factors, such as how living conditions are related to education levels, or how levels of social tolerance are related to levels of institutional trust.

Journalists and civil society

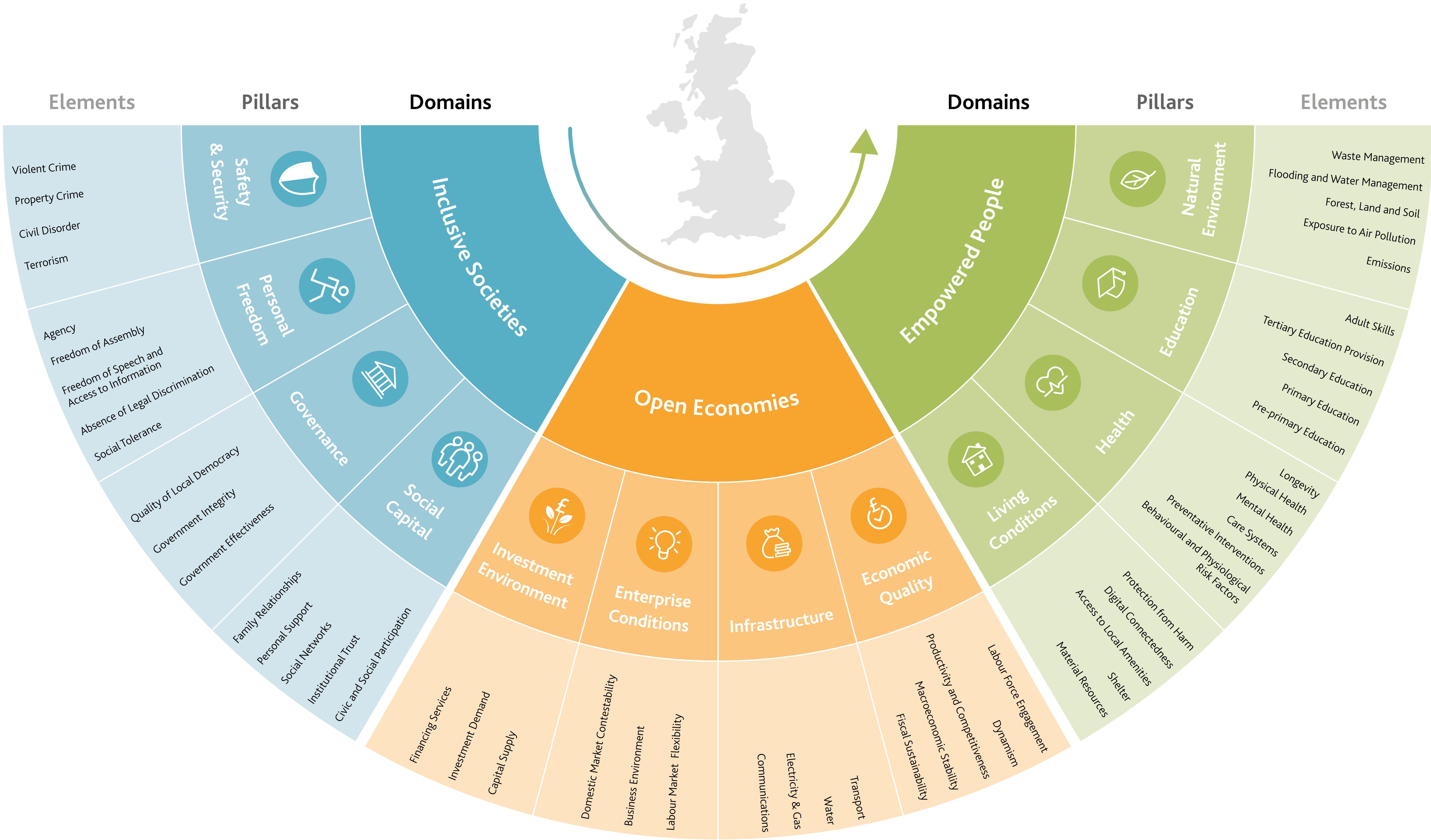
The UK Prosperity Index is based on publicly available and verifiable data, which means it can be a powerful resource for those who want to hold up a mirror to those in power and society at large. Holding national and local leaders to account is a crucial role for both journalists and civil society. The institutional, economic and social performance of a local authority is critical to its prosperity, and that of the UK as a whole, and having non-government actors identifying weaknesses, as well as celebrating successes, can help spur on regional and local authority leaders. To do so well requires easy access to reliable data that can be represented in a digestible way.

THE PATHWAY TO TRANSFORMATION

Transformation is a process, not an event. Intermediate benchmarks are most helpful and effective, and the most obvious challenges facing a region, or a local authority, should be considered in the first instance. Understanding the specifics of each region and local authority's circumstances will be critical to determining the sequencing and prioritisation. The Index provides a set of hypotheses to test. The issues of highest priority will likely be the elements that are performing relatively poorly, but are not necessarily the weakest performing elements, as creating the conditions to warrant improving the weakest performing elements may require improving some of the elements that are less weak first.

It is important to identify the most binding constraint to progress and use it to inform the sequencing and prioritisation. To give a simplified example, a local authority may find itself with a weak environment for investment and low levels of dynamism. In such a situation, seeking to increase investment is unlikely to have much of an impact, as investors will be more attracted to investing in an area where there is already a large number of start-ups and new entrepreneurs. In such a circumstance, creating an environment that attracts new businesses and start-ups might make for a more impactful first step.

As every single local authority can improve both economic and social wellbeing of its residents, clear opportunities therefore exist for local authorities to learn from each other. The Index identifies these opportunities for improvement, and where other local authorities have been successful in addressing the same challenges. This can guide supplementary research to inform the ways in which successful strategies from one authority might be adapted to address weaknesses in another local authority.


Elements
Pillars
Domains
Domains
Pillars
Elements
Inclusive Societies
Safety & Security
Violent Crime
Property Crime
Civil Disorder
Terrorism
Personal Freedom
Agency
Freedom of Assembly
Freedom of Speech and Access to Information
Absence of Legal Discrimination
Social Tolerance
Governance
Quality of Local Democracy
Government Integrity
Government Effectiveness
Social Capital
Family Relationships
Personal Support
Social Networks
Institutional Trust
Civic and Social Participation
Open Economies
Investment Environment
Financing Services
Investment Demand
Capital Supply
Enterprise Conditions
Domestic Market Contestability
Business Environment
Labour Market Flexibility
Infrastructure
Communications
Electricity & Gas
Water
Transport
Economic Quality
Fiscal Sustainability
Macroeconomic Stability
Productivity and Competitiveness
Dynamism
Labour Force Engagement
Empowered People
Natural Environment
Waste Management
Flooding and Water Management
Forest, Land and Soil
Exposure to Air Pollution
Emissions
Education
Adult Skills
Tertiary Education Provision
Secondary Education
Primary Education
Pre-primary Education
Health
Longevity
Physical Health
Mental Health
Care Systems
Preventative Interventions
Behavioural and Physiological Risk Factors
Living Conditions
Protection from Harm
Digital Connectedness
Access to Local Amenities
Shelter
Material Resources

Executive summary

This report marks the inaugural publication of the Legatum Institute's UK Prosperity Index. The Index tracks prosperity across all 379 local authorities of the United Kingdom. Its unique data allows policymakers at the national, regional and local level to assess the development, growth and extent of prosperity across all areas of the UK, as well as how different areas and 'archetypes' are changing over time. It comprehensively measures their comparative performance across 12 pillars of prosperity, which draw on more than 69 sources and are grouped into 53 policy-focused elements. Using the UK Prosperity Index, policymakers and opinion-formers can not only track the relative performance of local authorities and the government's 'levelling up' agenda but also determine the choices that need to be made at this unique moment in history.

KEY FINDINGS: THE 2021 UK PROSPERITY INDEX

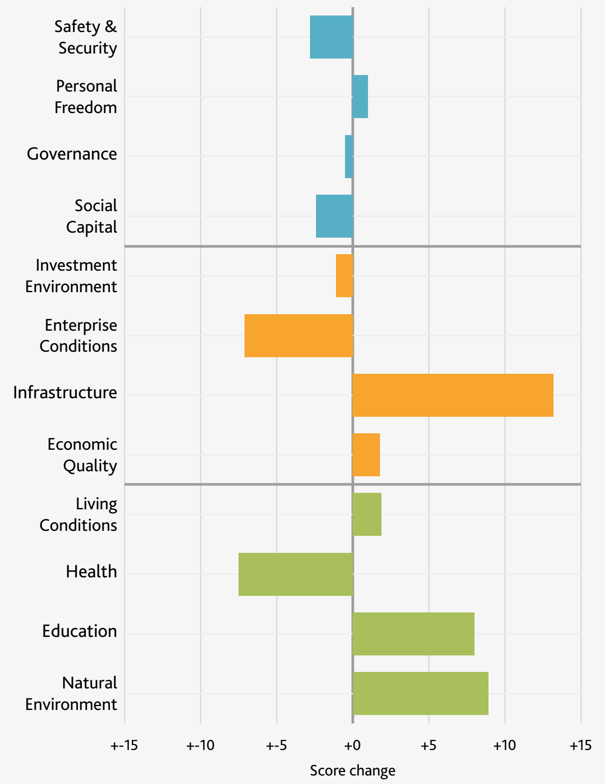
- **The UK is one of the most prosperous nations in the world, ranked 13th in the Legatum Prosperity Index™. Its prosperity increased during the first half of the 2010s but since then has been stagnating. This underlines the need for a much closer assessment of prosperity in the UK if the country is to make the most out of its reset moment.**
- **Despite fears of economic stagnation, the UK Prosperity Index shows that the country continues to build an open and strong economy that benefits from one of the strongest education systems in the world, an increasingly strong natural environment, and improving infrastructure. The Index confirms that many of the UK's 'economic fundamentals' are strong or improving.**
- **However, we also find that overall prosperity is currently being undermined by a deterioration in things that lie outside of the traditional focus on GDP, infrastructure and transport, including: the safety and security of communities, people's physical and mental health, conditions for local enterprise such as labour market flexibility, key aspects of social capital and, to a lesser extent, governance. Much of this is missed in a levelling up debate that focuses narrowly on 'bridges and trains'.**
- **Drilling down into the regional and local drivers of prosperity also reveals why the conversation about levelling up the UK is too simplistic. Crude distinctions between 'north and south' or 'cities and small towns' gloss the considerable variation that exists both between and within regions and fails to highlight the success stories where were see considerable increases in prosperity.**

OVERALL PROSPERITY IN THE UK HAS STAGNATED

The UK remains one of the most prosperous nations in the world and is well positioned to prosper in the future. But currently, its overall prosperity has plateaued. Since prosperity peaked in 2016, every region, excluding London, has reported a small overall decline in prosperity.

Overall, the UK is continuing to build a strong and open economy. It has achieved big improvements in the quality of its infrastructure, labour force engagement and competitiveness. But these gains are currently being undermined by a deterioration in several specific areas: in the quality of conditions for local enterprise, which are needed to bolster business dynamism and entrepreneurialism; in the safety and security of communities, which are struggling with increasing violent crime; in the physical and mental health of people; in key indicators of social capital, including weaker family relationships, evidenced by an increase in looked after children; and, to a lesser extent, in the quality of local governance. The regions that have suffered the sharpest overall decline in prosperity in the last five years include Merseyside and the non-metropolitan areas in the North West.

UK score change 2011-21, by pillar



LEVELLING UP THE UK NEEDS MORE THAN BRIDGES AND TRAINS

Before Covid-19, the UK had one of the strongest economies in the world and enjoyed steady, albeit low, GDP growth, as well as historically low unemployment. In the decade before the pandemic, the rate of unemployment nearly halved, from 7.7% in 2009 to 3.9% in 2019. The UK has also continued to improve its infrastructure, especially communications. Internet speeds have increased sharply over the last decade and transport infrastructure has improved. These gains are broad rather than narrow; of the 50 areas with the most improved infrastructure, all of them are outside of major metropolitan areas.

However, over the last decade, the quality of local investment environments—which measures aspects such as investment demand and the extent to which businesses are satisfied with finance arrangements—has deteriorated in 11 of 15 regions. Furthermore, 47 of the 50 areas with the strongest investment environments are in London and the South East, while 28 of the 50 weakest are found in Scotland.

The UK's pathway to prosperity is being undermined by a marked deterioration in its enterprise conditions. Many businesses report a deterioration of local conditions for enterprise, including skill shortages and barriers to doing business. Things that help to drive enterprise, such as flexible local labour markets, are also deteriorating. Some areas are experiencing especially significant challenges in productivity, competitiveness and dynamism, especially Northern Ireland and Wales. These areas typically have low business survival rates, fewer high-tech businesses, and few new businesses starting.

Prosperity is also being undermined by significant increases in violent crime, including homicides, sexual offences and also an increased frequency of terrorist attacks, such as recent attacks in London and Manchester. Deterioration in the overall safety and security of communities has occurred across 13 of 15 regions in the UK, including three quarters of all local authorities. Some of the sharpest deteriorations have been recorded in Thanet (South East), Kensington and Chelsea (London), Bradford (Yorkshire and the Humber), and Warrington (North West).

Key aspects of social capital are also deteriorating. The strength of families appears to be weakening. There are rising numbers of looked after children and children on protection plans, as well as a slight decline in the number of times a week that families eat together. Before Covid-19, there was also a decline in the strength of people's social networks and a fall in institutional trust. Social capital is especially poor in London and the North of England—of the 50 local authorities with the weakest social capital, 32 are in London, the North East or the North West. Of the 50 local authorities with the strongest social capital, 41 are in the South East or East of England. Furthermore, people are increasingly choosing cohabitation rather than marriage, with cohabiting couples more likely to separate and accounting for half of family breakdown. There is also a growing marriage gap between rich and poor—for families with children under 5, 87% of high earners (over £43,000) are married, compared with 24% of low earner families.

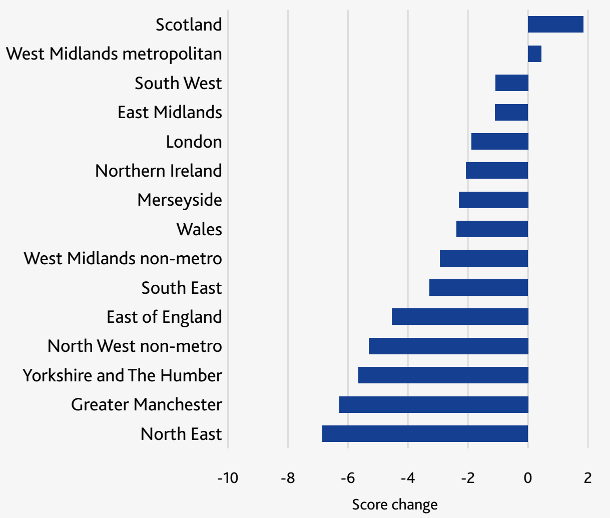
The quality of local governance is also declining, largely due to reductions in local election turnout and the collapse of political choice, measured as a lack of change in overall political control. The number of authorities that have not seen any change in the ruling party over the last twenty years has increased from 42 a decade ago to 69 today. These governance problems are especially affecting Rural England, the Industrial Heartlands, and Central London.

PEOPLE'S LIVED EXPERIENCES ARE IMPROVING

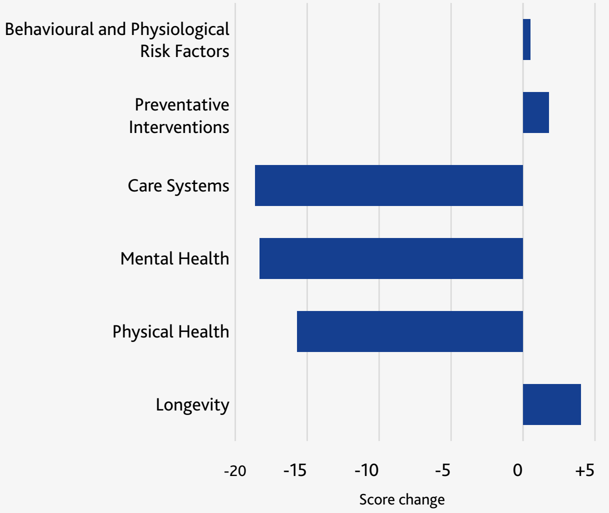
People in the UK have some of the strongest living conditions in the entire world. Before Covid-19, they enjoyed significant improvements in education, especially in attainment outcomes. The country also has a continually improving natural environment, reflected in a steady decline in emissions. All regions have experienced improvements in educational outcomes at secondary level and in the skill levels of the adult population. More than half of the top-performing authorities for education are in London, although Wales and Northern Ireland have seen the largest improvements over the last decade.

All regions within the UK have also seen their environment improve, including reductions in emissions and exposure to air pollution. The decreases in CO_2 emissions in the UK are encouraging, with

Safety & Security score change, by region



Health element score change, 2011-2021



decreases from industry, commercial sources and transport. These decreases are a result of the changes in fuel mix from coal to gas and renewable sources of electricity generation, as well as reduced energy use by businesses. Additionally, more trees are being planted and an increasing proportion of waste is recycled. Nearly half of the 50 authorities that have improved the most for natural environment are in London and Scotland.

However, even before the impact of Covid-19, these gains in social wellbeing were being offset by a marked deterioration in people's overall physical and mental health and in the quality of health care. We find a significant decline in the number of care home beds and in the percentage of people that are admitted, discharged or treated within four hours of attending A&E. Even before Covid-19, there were declines in the proportion of people who were treated within 18 weeks for routine treatments or within 62 days for urgent cancer treatment. This deterioration in health over the last decade has been experienced across all regions, with the greatest deteriorations in the North East, Yorkshire and the Humber, and North West non-metropolitan area. However, the individual authorities experiencing the greatest deterioration come from outside these regions, including Tendring, Basingstoke, and Torbay. Covid-19 exposed many of the frailties in a health system that was not prepared for a pandemic.

THE NATIONAL DEBATE ABOUT LEVELLING UP IS TOO SIMPLISTIC

Much of the discussion about UK prosperity draws crude distinctions between the north and south. These are too simplistic and lose sight of complex regional variations. Simply distinguishing between 'cities' and 'towns' glosses over considerable variation within and between different geographical areas.

To move the debate forward, we identify 17 distinctive 'archetypes'.

While the Commuter Belt around London, London, Rural England and Mid-Sized Urban Hubs are the most prosperous, Post-Industrial Urban areas, Rural Wales, the Welsh Valleys, Central-Belt Scotland and the Industrial Heartlands are the least prosperous.

Each cluster has strengths and weaknesses, and therefore each has a starting point from which to build greater prosperity. For example, the most prosperous cluster, the Commuter Belt, has weaknesses including significant air pollution. In contrast, the least prosperous, the Industrial Heartlands, has high rates of poverty, weak governance and poor health outcomes, but has relatively competitive markets for business and good infrastructure. In a mid-prosperity archetype, such as Coastal Towns, residents have poor health and low educational attainment, but strong family relationships and high rates of volunteering. Future policy and practice would be better targeted at these clusters, whose profiles we examine in detail in this report.

CONCLUSION

As the UK charts its way out of the Covid-19 pandemic with a world-leading vaccination programme and aims to take advantage of new freedoms post-Brexit, the importance of addressing regional disparities has never been greater. The pandemic has highlighted old inequalities and created new ones. The Index shows what is well understood—prosperity is concentrated in the South of England, and it is appropriate for the levelling up agenda to target more deprived areas. However, the Index also shows that deprivation and prosperity take different forms. Investment in infrastructure or even broader economic goals, although necessary, will not be sufficient to achieve a true 'levelling up' of the UK. Investment in health, education, and poverty reduction will be required, alongside rebuilding trust in institutions, enhancing social cohesion, and addressing family relationships. The Index identifies a range of discrete challenges, and addressing these will require input from all levels of government, the private sphere, and the non-profit sector. To really become a prosperous nation, Britain needs to become a place where we truly value the family, where we care for one another, investing in our mental and physical wellbeing and where we can innovate and build businesses that are not stifled by unnecessary regulation.

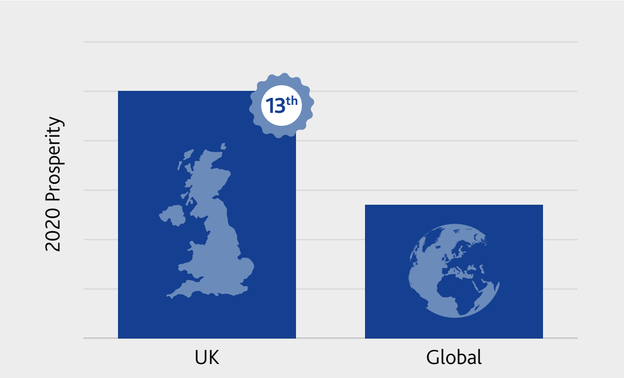
Before Covid-19, UK citizens enjoyed significant improvements in education and the environment.

Credit: shutterstock.com

Key findings

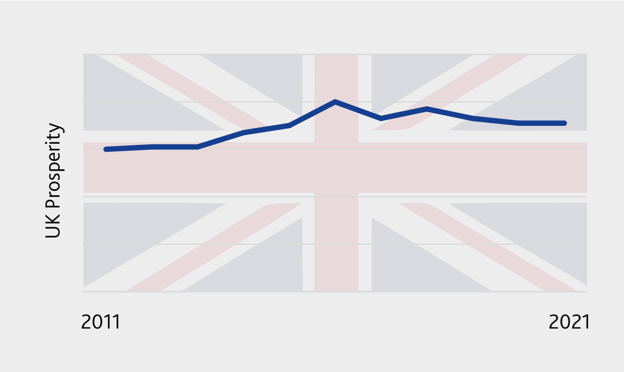
The United Kingdom is one of the most prosperous nations in the world, ranked 13th in the Legatum Prosperity Index™.

Despite fears of economic decline, the UK is continuing to build an open and strong economy. It has one of the strongest education systems in the world, an increasingly strong natural environment with improving infrastructure.



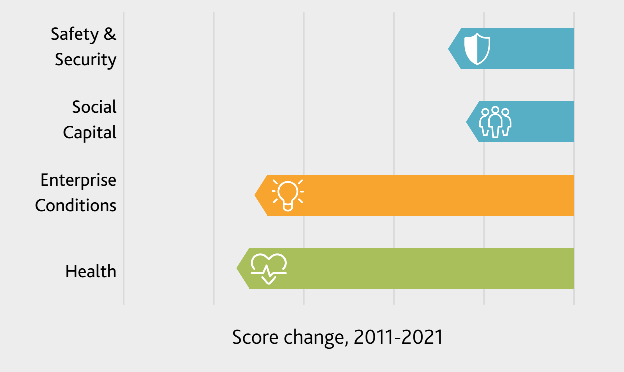
While overall prosperity increased in the first half of the 2010s, it has since stagnated.

Only London, the East Midlands and West Midlands metropolitan region have seen rising overall prosperity in the last 3 years. Fourteen of fifteen UK regions have seen prosperity decline since 2016, with the sharpest deteriorations in the North West.



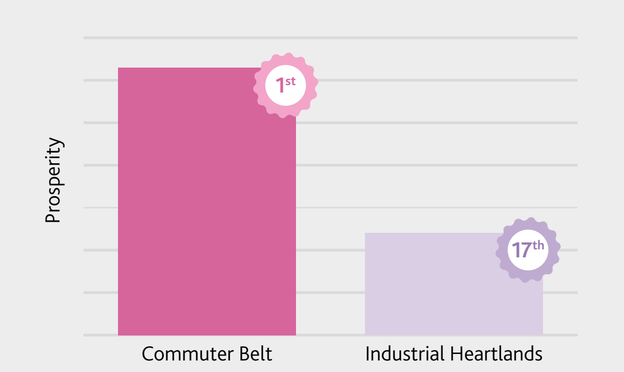
Prosperity is currently being undermined by factors that lie outside of the traditional focus on 'bridges and trains'.

These include a decline in the Safety and Security of communities due to rising violent crime, a deterioration in people's mental and physical health, an erosion of Social Capital, including fraying family relationships, weakening Enterprise Conditions, a loss of public trust in institutions and deteriorating local democracy. These are all undermining the pathway to prosperity.



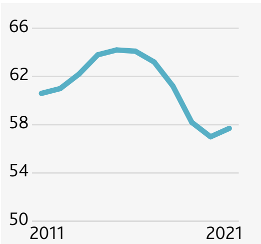
The national conversation about levelling up is far too simplistic.

Talk about 'north-south' divides misses considerable variation both between and within regions. No region is homogenous; there are different 'archetypes' of prosperity in each region. We identify 17 archetypes that cut across different regions and urban or rural areas. Each comes with its own unique challenges and opportunities.

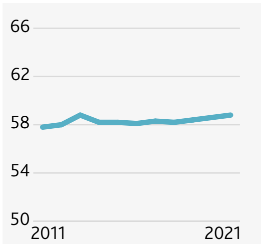


The pillars at a glance

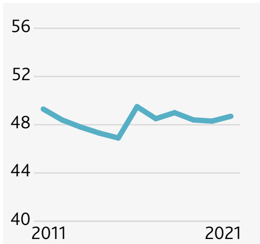
The **Safety and Security** pillar measures the degree to which violent crime, property crime, civil disorder, and terror have destabilised the security of individuals, both immediately and through longer lasting effects.



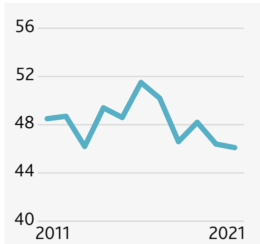
The **Personal Freedom** pillar measures progress towards basic legal rights, individual liberties, and social tolerance.



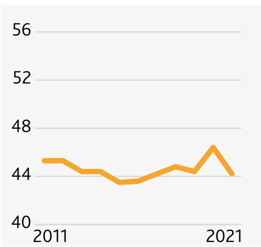
The **Governance** pillar measures the quality of local democracy, whether politicians are trusted, and effectiveness of local government services.



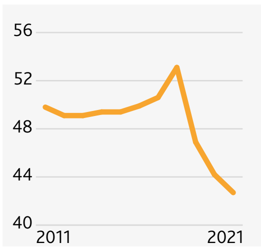
The **Social Capital** pillar measures the strength of family, personal and social relationships, institutional trust, and civic participation in a country.



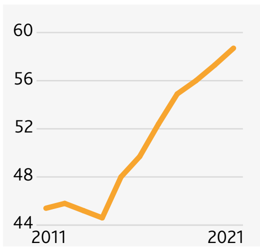
The **Investment Environment** pillar measures the extent to which investment capital is readily accessible and in demand.



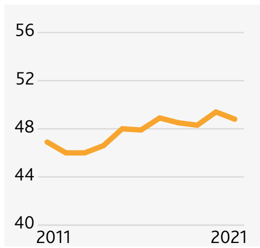
The **Enterprise Conditions** pillar measures the degree to which regulations enable businesses to start, compete, and expand.



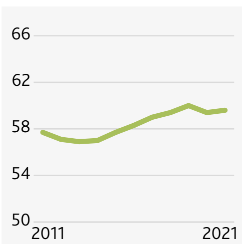
The **Infrastructure** pillar measures the quality of the infrastructure that enables commerce and business activity.



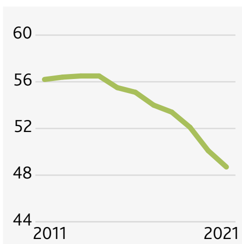
The **Economic Quality** pillar measures how well a local economy is equipped to generate wealth sustainably and with the full engagement of the workforce.



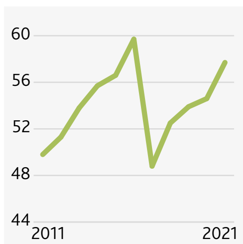
The **Living Conditions** pillar measures the quality of life experienced by people, including material resources, shelter, digital connectivity, access to local amenities, and protection from harm.



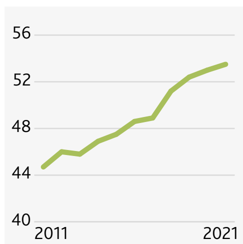
The **Health** pillar measures the extent to which people are healthy and have access to the necessary services to maintain good health. It includes health outcomes, health systems, illness and risk factors, and mortality rates.



The **Education** pillar measures enrolment, outcomes, and quality across four stages of education (pre-primary, primary, secondary, and tertiary education), as well as the skills in the adult population.



The **Natural Environment** pillar measures the aspects of the physical environment that have a direct effect on people in their daily lives and changes that might impact the prosperity of future generations.



Mapping UK prosperity in 2021

East Renfrewshire (45th) is the most prosperous local authority in Scotland. It has seen improvements in Natural Environment (5th), Safety and Security (4th), and Governance (76th).

Belfast (351st) is the least prosperous local government district in Northern Ireland, performing poorly in Health (361st), Living Conditions (331st), and Enterprise Conditions (340th). However, it has benefited from a number of improvements, including its Infrastructure (167th).

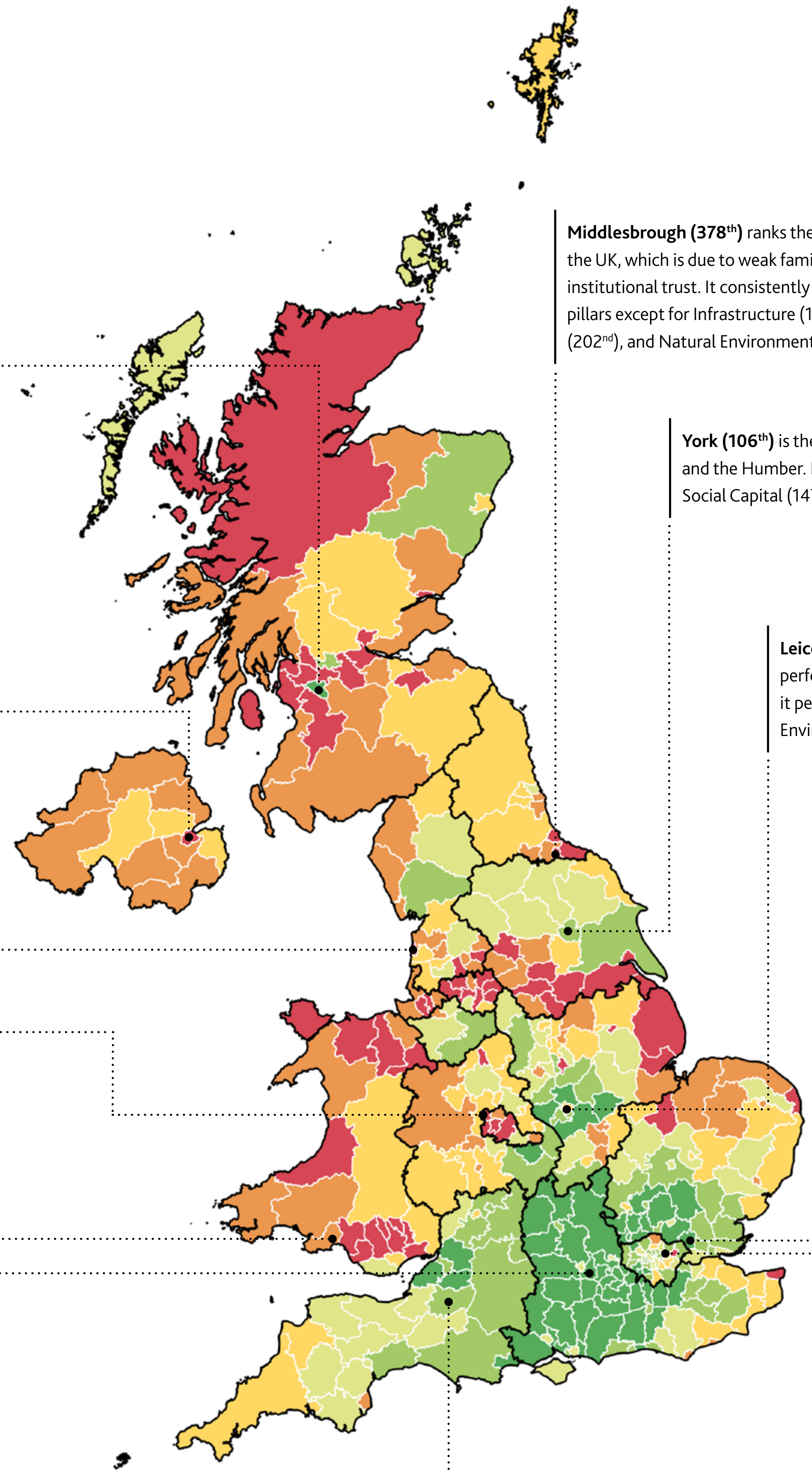
Blackpool (379th) is the least prosperous local authority in the UK, ranking in the bottom quartile for 9 out of 12 pillars. It is also the weakest of all local authorities for Health, due to poor mental and physical Health.

Wolverhampton (363rd) is the least prosperous local authority in the West Midlands. However, it has seen improvements in its Investment Environment (113th), Infrastructure (18th), and Education (293rd).

Swansea (275th) is one of the most improved local authorities in Wales, having seen improving Natural Environment (39th), Education (94th), and Living Conditions (326th).

Wokingham (1st) is the most prosperous local authority in the UK. It performs strongly in Living Conditions (1st), Health (1st), and Enterprise Conditions (10th).

Mendip (117th) has seen the largest improvement in overall prosperity within the South West over the last 10 years. It has seen improvements in Infrastructure (361st), Governance (13th), and Education (285th).



Middlesbrough (378th) ranks the lowest for Social Capital in the UK, which is due to weak family relationships and lack of institutional trust. It consistently ranks near the bottom for all pillars except for Infrastructure (147th), Investment Environment (202nd), and Natural Environment (208th).

York (106th) is the most prosperous local authority in Yorkshire and the Humber. It has seen improvements in Education (45th), Social Capital (147th), and Infrastructure (117th).

Leicester (205th) is the East Midland's best performer for Enterprise Conditions (6th). However, it performs very poorly for Education, Natural Environment, and Safety and Security.

Brentwood (46th) in the East of England has the second-best rank for Living Conditions (2nd) in the UK, with low rates of homelessness and income deprivation.

Newham (182nd) has seen the greatest improvement in prosperity in the UK in the last 10 years, with improvements in all pillars except Enterprise Conditions (263rd) and Health (95th).

United Kingdom Prosperity Index 2021 rank:

1–63 | 64–126 | 127–189 | 190–254 | 255–317 | 318–379

Rankings

2011 rank	2020 rank	2021 rank	Area	Region	Safety & Security	Personal Freedom	Governance	Social Capital	Investment Environment	Enterprise Conditions	Infrastructure	Economic Quality	Living Conditions	Health	Education	Natural Environment
4	1	1	Wokingham	S East	42	189	79	13	208	10	123	26	1	1	18	218
34	9	2	Richmond upon Thames	London	302	297	59	196	10	34	9	17	186	3	3	247
3	4	3	Waverley	S East	49	127	74	3	17	46	259	99	33	4	54	30
13	5	4	Woking	S East	153	127	34	37	23	164	97	27	7	21	63	46
12	11	5	Epsom and Ewell	S East	92	127	2	52	118	269	74	20	3	26	37	122
22	7	6	Hart	S East	109	269	6	63	19	158	46	61	34	55	61	137
14	13	7	Guildford	S East	123	127	103	18	12	180	84	54	54	7	71	38
2	6	8	Elmbridge	S East	102	127	28	35	31	191	82	10	44	14	66	232
5	3	9	St Albans	E Eng	210	163	14	4	184	4	64	129	12	10	35	139
17	12	10	Surrey Heath	S East	104	127	200	25	22	108	91	16	30	13	92	112
1	14	11	Mole Valley	S East	67	127	30	9	96	115	166	18	105	8	57	95
18	10	12	Winchester	S East	73	269	9	21	13	30	163	127	144	83	65	250
24	2	13	Three Rivers	E Eng	187	163	11	14	166	134	27	23	27	69	41	168
45	26	14	Rutland	E Mid	12	86	27	81	79	64	247	250	32	54	24	200
42	22	15	City of London	London	378	121	15	302	1	17	297	1	62	87	1	378
43	18	16	Fareham	S East	48	269	18	99	56	47	61	88	26	135	113	213
37	21	17	East Hampshire	S East	34	269	25	83	14	128	205	120	119	99	73	134
26	31	18	Runnymede	S East	182	127	175	59	20	193	65	51	24	41	48	298
25	42	19	Reigate and Banstead	S East	115	127	204	42	109	185	79	29	6	17	69	155
11	8	20	Windsor and Maidenhead	S East	167	189	46	2	201	183	130	37	5	5	53	276
31	45	21	Mid Sussex	S East	70	127	100	29	86	116	150	30	14	92	228	57
32	54	22	Horsham	S East	81	127	109	27	84	72	184	28	95	20	236	73
51	28	23	Eastleigh	S East	87	269	118	108	44	55	156	57	49	63	149	178
15	17	24	Hertsmere	E Eng	240	163	36	33	117	81	2	12	79	45	139	340
39	37	25	Basingstoke and Deane	S East	97	269	23	60	42	192	154	70	50	168	112	158
38	39	26	Rushmoor	S East	109	269	32	127	24	268	90	49	115	176	111	83
58	29	27	Isles of Scilly	S West	6	343	21	5	222	36	374	76	11	2	197	74
76	25	28	Harborough	E Mid	57	86	81	54	75	32	218	189	28	28	135	278
7	15	29	South Oxfordshire	S East	56	189	51	50	69	59	251	86	81	29	181	197
6	24	30	West Oxfordshire	S East	36	189	113	23	66	91	258	144	75	22	125	196
10	16	31	East Hertfordshire	E Eng	190	163	155	6	153	35	114	45	82	15	56	321
71	27	32	Milton Keynes	S East	196	189	64	46	210	48	8	11	139	71	104	86
27	55	33	South Gloucestershire	S West	66	35	281	109	124	88	143	116	16	30	67	89
16	30	34	Tandridge	S East	124	127	235	30	103	79	73	178	25	11	80	243
59	52	35	Harrow	London	322	297	24	323	9	38	48	56	250	143	12	245
35	41	36	Bath and North East Somerset	S West	78	35	29	72	142	65	267	343	40	23	51	90
69	56	37	Test Valley	S East	68	269	63	128	8	244	173	140	154	37	137	207
60	20	38	West Berkshire	S East	63	189	52	41	227	83	212	50	70	9	74	238
23	23	39	North Hertfordshire	E Eng	149	163	72	22	195	137	83	32	84	19	105	237
103	46	40	Charnwood	E Mid	129	86	43	84	93	58	144	199	35	50	102	301
50	57	41	Buckinghamshire	S East	75	189	61	87	126	144	274	94	53	18	100	146
19	19	42	Vale of White Horse	S East	27	189	73	53	74	182	282	130	43	35	172	198
29	49	43	Bracknell Forest	S East	107	189	225	133	205	179	131	52	8	12	59	124
30	34	44	Watford	E Eng	297	163	143	19	132	178	3	142	4	119	52	114
88	36	45	East Renfrewshire	Scot	4	283	76	162	357	276	221	321	113	24	14	5
46	48	46	Brentwood	E Eng	257	72	182	32	119	142	110	7	2	152	83	299
33	32	47	Dacorum	E Eng	242	163	40	11	174	163	129	63	87	72	79	110
78	88	48	Chichester	S East	139	127	104	31	64	31	268	35	99	60	318	189
47	51	49	Welwyn Hatfield	E Eng	253	163	87	7	189	121	32	153	109	25	72	204
56	80	50	Sevenoaks	S East	248	102	211	12	76	5	185	74	138	40	202	225
67	78	51	Epping Forest	E Eng	251	72	177	43	121	94	93	15	31	44	212	264
41	43	52	Cherwell	S East	103	189	89	71	71	195	211	106	58	62	110	274
79	73	53	Kingston upon Thames	London	315	338	268	284	43	73	42	93	210	16	16	180
74	44	54	Hinckley and Bosworth	E Mid	82	86	134	142	88	60	228	170	55	51	118	244
85	147	55	Adur	S East	106	127	116	61	95	256	92	81	19	109	241	242
75	63	56	Spelthorne	S East	168	127	267	45	25	316	80	58	13	112	85	360

2011 rank	2020 rank	2021 rank	Area	Region	Safety & Security	Personal Freedom	Governance	Social Capital	Investment Environment	Enterprise Conditions	Infrastructure	Economic Quality	Living Conditions	Health	Education	Natural Environment
57	68	57	Warwick	W Mid	217	151	135	148	150	52	71	84	146	98	68	131
131	67	58	Merton	London	329	338	251	319	33	39	20	40	258	27	19	297
9	60	59	B'mouth, C'church and Poole	S West	199	47	62	238	58	232	271	278	21	165	40	43
72	59	60	Uttlesford	E Eng	197	72	78	1	106	271	219	71	45	31	148	314
70	76	61	Havant	S East	112	269	19	125	60	54	51	271	133	272	249	129
64	58	62	New Forest	S East	71	269	65	86	37	107	277	147	218	123	152	128
48	97	63	North Somerset	S West	118	35	69	119	105	53	241	289	71	117	88	151
178	84	64	Camden	London	373	121	176	353	3	28	28	2	286	65	21	323
149	129	65	Crawley	S East	288	127	107	85	104	258	6	6	72	195	210	185
119	118	66	Brighton and Hove	S East	260	127	120	206	81	49	87	182	117	90	62	169
144	104	67	Wandsworth	London	339	121	265	295	16	257	50	117	200	6	10	319
83	83	68	Barnet	London	346	297	164	253	6	127	118	122	270	70	6	305
65	111	69	Worthing	S East	192	127	93	89	83	222	77	123	17	101	304	140
146	125	70	Bromley	London	316	338	347	261	39	16	35	121	183	33	25	201
8	33	71	Stroud	S West	43	35	86	175	167	106	298	148	118	75	157	49
128	79	72	Colchester	E Eng	245	72	22	34	176	86	141	169	29	261	160	66
95	40	73	Blaby	E Mid	74	86	205	68	111	97	164	240	9	93	171	280
63	71	74	Tunbridge Wells	S East	209	102	142	51	169	95	275	75	92	74	81	67
182	108	75	Broxtowe	E Mid	142	315	58	223	137	170	72	230	18	122	58	292
105	99	76	Central Bedfordshire	E Eng	227	163	49	62	215	213	68	47	51	36	173	275
84	69	77	Tonbridge and Malling	S East	243	102	112	24	145	68	139	89	61	68	184	308
148	70	78	Aberdeenshire	Scot	5	256	38	188	265	21	362	105	172	48	246	32
173	140	79	Islington	London	371	64	57	351	4	13	41	4	328	79	33	358
157	94	80	Hounslow	London	356	297	128	320	27	33	16	14	332	133	22	277
52	35	81	South Cambridgeshire	E Eng	146	213	80	47	70	356	220	8	102	57	217	335
81	65	82	Melton	E Mid	61	86	129	73	67	80	281	229	52	199	196	212
89	105	83	Rushcliffe	E Mid	140	315	298	139	133	56	122	241	47	64	38	291
44	87	84	Cheshire East	N West	152	176	56	114	286	12	145	98	193	173	60	107
91	77	85	Sutton	London	304	338	319	312	36	85	31	151	223	89	13	164
54	96	86	Chelmsford	E Eng	255	72	208	26	123	228	94	107	42	42	199	241
155	115	87	Ealing	London	354	297	88	309	2	104	58	77	342	163	15	322
129	75	88	Oadby and Wigston	E Mid	96	86	119	179	112	76	202	290	64	146	156	165
36	64	89	Dorset	S West	51	47	75	195	53	230	355	259	106	156	119	80
240	171	90	Hammersmith and Fulham	London	369	121	213	348	7	43	56	25	307	47	4	367
49	81	91	Broxbourne	E Eng	259	163	139	57	156	279	45	115	131	46	167	154
20	47	92	Tewkesbury	S West	26	35	102	170	188	174	287	113	123	130	120	279
245	128	93	Tower Hamlets	London	366	64	114	335	28	23	134	13	340	76	8	368
21	38	94	Cotswold	S West	35	35	140	160	125	62	301	139	204	110	226	205
28	53	95	Cheltenham	S West	121	35	276	165	163	145	195	146	41	147	117	175
132	62	96	North West Leicestershire	E Mid	85	86	180	141	110	129	170	164	98	111	177	343
68	101	97	Rochford	E Eng	90	72	341	56	175	293	193	46	20	43	238	211
62	85	98	Stevenage	E Eng	285	163	92	82	191	313	57	156	23	121	98	150
111	117	99	Dartford	S East	324	102	171	101	99	93	19	72	80	170	128	338
98	110	100	Gosport	S East	84	269	47	112	61	149	196	295	57	350	301	69
107	225	101	South Lakeland	N West	52	258	361	135	187	1	213	158	187	128	87	156
73	144	102	Stratford-on-Avon	W Mid	213	151	126	123	155	67	242	91	249	91	70	285
147	156	103	Derbyshire Dales	E Mid	65	315	160	208	63	69	312	318	69	127	168	221
170	164	104	Hillingdon	London	343	297	136	344	21	75	12	97	314	160	31	329
53	74	105	Wiltshire	S West	37	35	259	100	209	143	296	188	91	52	165	163
153	90	106	York	Yrk & Hum	46	248	168	147	324	197	117	218	167	56	45	217
280	93	107	Redbridge	London	341	308	285	304	29	155	21	55	315	102	11	353
101	138	108	Bristol, City of	S West	250	35	186	169	108	89	171	242	83	155	188	116
61	86	109	Oxford	S East	241	189	201	113	72	295	192	267	10	61	239	215
164	130	110	East Devon	S West	13	179	236	126	57	311	356	236	157	100	213	35
80	123	111	Braintree	E Eng	176	72	172	10	138	253	248	19	85	187	283	313
99	106	112	Maidstone	S East	266	102	66	55	120	66	208	208	147	196	218	135

2011 rank	2020 rank	2021 rank	Area	Region	Safety & Security	Personal Freedom	Governance	Social Capital	Investment Environment	Enterprise Conditions	Infrastructure	Economic Quality	Living Conditions	Health	Education	Natural Environment
112	166	113	Havering	London	337	308	174	325	55	113	1	161	305	49	46	294
152	174	114	Kensington and Chelsea	London	376	121	209	263	11	41	102	102	275	132	2	373
150	89	115	East Dunbartonshire	Scot	10	283	317	204	363	231	127	255	112	85	29	27
109	127	116	Maldon	E Eng	108	72	77	16	134	266	307	124	67	181	288	270
184	92	117	Mendip	S West	100	47	13	91	100	262	361	234	155	67	285	273
106	168	118	Arun	S East	156	127	261	66	94	237	233	111	97	80	296	222
117	169	119	Rugby	W Mid	246	151	157	181	154	147	101	82	231	84	108	333
139	91	120	South Northamptonshire	E Mid	203	86	33	150	225	126	326	101	38	82	214	271
156	161	121	East Riding of Yorkshire	Yrk & Hum	155	304	50	115	116	119	217	244	235	138	76	341
108	160	122	Basildon	E Eng	292	72	279	58	136	238	40	43	65	140	313	209
275	157	123	Hackney	London	374	64	148	352	26	8	67	9	363	131	23	357
82	122	124	Swindon	S West	127	35	291	298	197	162	206	110	39	94	182	188
96	114	125	Castle Point	E Eng	161	72	312	75	180	282	112	191	46	129	273	40
100	146	126	Ashford	S East	265	102	162	92	161	123	255	171	142	81	232	54
92	131	127	Bromsgrove	W Mid	232	151	234	193	290	19	34	22	164	213	189	246
237	165	128	Bedford	E Eng	295	163	8	38	241	110	148	96	94	151	336	239
138	159	129	Harlow	E Eng	312	72	247	70	141	325	5	80	48	144	303	152
125	61	130	Craven	Yrk & Hum	22	248	97	28	305	301	197	154	319	86	77	194
134	172	131	Bexley	London	321	308	283	306	38	254	54	168	237	66	36	261
114	103	132	Slough	S East	249	189	220	212	217	302	53	44	110	210	28	351
197	149	133	Richmondshire	Yrk & Hum	19	248	84	15	196	92	367	263	230	124	180	78
97	95	134	Harrogate	Yrk & Hum	29	248	301	8	350	109	279	79	248	59	86	106
142	153	135	Westminster	London	379	121	246	248	5	9	78	5	329	113	5	379
135	100	136	Sedgemoor	S West	100	47	17	158	68	285	309	198	168	279	341	186
55	135	137	Warrington	N West	215	176	262	215	279	186	4	68	228	159	39	311
221	152	138	Hambleton	Yrk & Hum	23	248	309	17	114	61	311	192	285	161	134	269
140	196	139	Portsmouth	S East	218	269	125	217	59	15	126	317	148	183	329	331
165	66	140	Babergh	E Eng	31	213	12	20	312	184	334	197	89	114	269	342
137	143	141	Wealden	S East	62	127	145	111	90	229	323	293	103	241	244	126
130	181	142	Gravesham	S East	324	102	122	110	101	51	108	217	135	166	252	288
219	190	143	Amber Valley	E Mid	158	315	169	241	128	133	232	233	130	193	103	259
121	102	144	Ribble Valley	N West	32	366	206	176	326	250	292	31	122	137	50	202
90	119	145	Cambridge	E Eng	303	213	154	64	78	378	113	118	63	108	191	230
235	134	146	Vale of Glamorgan	Wales	132	13	141	231	296	215	186	354	199	32	44	177
126	136	147	Reading	S East	261	189	127	189	221	318	178	73	86	38	121	318
251	206	148	South Derbyshire	E Mid	93	315	299	236	122	220	254	114	15	246	122	325
143	124	149	Somerset West and Taunton	S West	105	47	44	145	73	327	358	310	116	190	275	84
160	182	150	Teignbridge	S West	15	179	273	104	89	310	352	253	156	149	237	50
196	175	151	North Tyneside	N East	177	115	269	301	194	139	119	159	159	292	89	51
163	188	152	Thurrock	E Eng	263	72	37	166	186	374	43	125	76	172	140	359
193	151	153	Ryedale	Yrk & Hum	23	248	108	49	160	130	359	95	353	139	136	330
159	218	154	Solihull	W Mid Met	313	359	190	256	307	99	10	41	225	125	34	173
175	209	155	Gedling	E Mid	142	315	337	228	131	218	159	311	22	104	131	272
94	82	156	Chorley	N West	86	366	55	250	358	236	96	59	150	265	141	33
40	145	157	Forest of Dean	S West	30	35	90	197	157	111	365	262	73	259	299	174
77	120	158	Huntingdonshire	E Eng	179	213	292	105	85	357	188	145	126	53	224	337
122	113	159	East Cambridgeshire	E Eng	133	213	170	67	65	373	291	109	188	78	227	348
120	72	160	Mid Suffolk	E Eng	33	213	123	48	224	249	340	119	124	136	234	326
141	132	161	South Somerset	S West	99	47	144	167	97	284	364	193	96	153	322	99
166	187	162	Lewes	S East	116	127	67	77	98	305	266	341	66	301	287	182
230	167	163	Southampton	S East	280	269	35	265	45	226	207	276	165	227	286	191
113	137	164	South Hams	S West	15	179	207	95	52	354	371	251	211	182	161	117
208	192	165	Brent	London	358	297	293	327	15	190	69	53	339	150	26	332
118	185	166	Lichfield	W Mid	95	237	264	267	297	24	95	175	201	202	146	181
167	158	167	Daventry	E Mid	204	86	137	156	226	154	269	60	181	106	262	253
334	221	168	Waltham Forest	London	353	308	184	339	48	207	14	160	350	58	27	369
171	219	169	Stafford	W Mid	117	237	244	229	211	101	210	190	254	178	124	81
253	193	170	Southwark	London	372	64	149	336	30	219	85	67	358	200	9	302
194	163	171	Orkney Islands	Scot	2	6	286	80	275	203	379	132	345	39	257	37
239	230	172	Isle of Wight	S East	77	269	68	222	50	57	353	307	192	343	278	167
110	139	173	South Kesteven	E Mid	138	290	20	69	264	194	295	216	101	228	205	312
205	199	174	Mid Devon	S West	13	179	226	132	54	335	373	200	160	201	248	147

2011 rank	2020 rank	2021 rank	Area	Region	Safety & Security	Personal Freedom	Governance	Social Capital	Investment Environment	Enterprise Conditions	Infrastructure	Economic Quality	Living Conditions	Health	Education	Natural Environment
214	186	175	North Devon	S West	40	179	221	76	47	306	372	227	278	186	240	119
206	201	176	Exeter	S West	125	179	325	153	77	351	265	298	108	236	163	36
209	202	177	West Devon	S West	15	179	203	44	49	323	375	336	244	264	186	21
93	150	178	Cheshire West and Chester	N West	148	176	185	130	294	216	272	92	247	158	164	61
145	133	179	Trafford	Gtr Manch	338	349	306	205	318	208	88	38	209	203	7	115
227	207	180	Lambeth	London	368	64	167	345	35	358	30	85	309	118	17	354
162	205	181	High Peak	E Mid	164	315	161	198	129	87	263	347	129	250	159	267
341	229	182	Newham	London	364	64	165	316	51	263	39	150	335	95	20	372
231	251	183	North East Derbyshire	E Mid	83	315	348	260	152	102	284	245	137	169	192	94
271	265	184	Erewash	E Mid	180	315	275	257	147	161	138	313	37	238	211	290
191	50	185	Broadland	E Eng	79	213	240	103	309	221	303	104	128	96	233	309
177	264	186	Eden	N West	45	258	98	138	170	217	369	87	359	284	109	145
124	141	187	North Kesteven	E Mid	53	290	1	151	345	227	318	280	111	304	270	355
242	121	188	Na h-Eileanan Siar	Scot	1	6	39	88	285	307	376	312	306	184	297	97
151	154	189	Southend-on-Sea	E Eng	281	72	183	202	172	332	250	249	56	276	75	190
281	176	190	City of Edinburgh	Scot	283	53	327	219	356	156	100	112	140	77	174	77
316	189	191	Aberdeen City	Scot	206	256	105	303	346	82	299	172	152	103	298	24
261	142	192	Northumberland	N East	131	115	229	328	181	148	288	304	238	287	133	18
174	220	193	Redditch	W Mid	230	151	95	247	313	98	120	78	180	290	334	105
154	107	194	East Suffolk	E Eng	91	213	26	65	266	175	317	270	134	235	323	306
180	98	195	South Norfolk	E Eng	88	213	99	97	232	288	330	222	141	107	271	324
257	273	196	Cornwall	S West	44	343	188	144	190	122	336	334	222	242	222	79
195	257	197	Tamworth	W Mid	159	237	151	305	334	169	24	65	153	358	289	170
264	195	198	Newcastle upon Tyne	N East	267	115	194	374	192	168	107	330	246	192	91	19
136	197	199	Fylde	N West	58	366	110	258	371	157	244	39	174	293	208	100
255	180	200	Northampton	E Mid	336	86	111	214	256	132	169	83	36	216	317	235
190	178	201	Torridge	S West	40	179	41	117	46	321	377	358	304	267	327	13
169	227	202	Swale	S East	294	102	224	74	127	150	198	221	162	188	333	315
204	223	203	Medway	S East	305	102	324	211	143	172	161	203	77	189	176	328
168	271	204	East Staffordshire	W Mid	141	237	166	224	288	37	293	155	149	289	261	220
296	295	205	Leicester	E Mid	274	86	300	225	91	6	182	287	203	231	330	307
279	320	206	Ashfield	E Mid	247	315	296	262	139	206	124	288	74	171	320	192
222	266	207	Staffordshire Moorlands	W Mid	69	237	54	274	212	84	338	141	295	319	235	159
116	173	208	Canterbury	S East	290	102	53	90	151	322	240	337	189	157	216	295
293	116	209	Stirling	Scot	122	53	231	200	373	272	257	257	194	164	201	1
199	245	210	Rother	S East	144	127	96	102	179	243	315	326	158	282	302	203
243	216	211	East Northamptonshire	E Mid	234	86	195	157	259	171	252	183	78	234	295	179
183	275	212	Gateshead	N East	220	115	303	368	214	3	104	323	239	342	97	52
254	255	213	Shetland Islands	Scot	3	6	289	129	362	71	378	223	361	34	258	62
133	284	214	North Warwickshire	W Mid	239	151	297	182	158	298	86	149	297	145	190	334
244	238	215	Peterborough	E Eng	300	213	132	194	87	336	52	207	161	219	367	231
297	155	216	Monmouthshire	Wales	114	13	198	296	255	112	305	314	355	134	43	216
186	228	217	South Staffordshire	W Mid	76	237	257	279	272	135	162	126	271	268	158	268
203	217	218	Perth and Kinross	Scot	39	53	282	203	351	90	324	204	226	120	350	12
246	244	219	Scarborough	Yrk & Hum	23	248	133	40	199	159	320	269	336	280	337	160
263	299	220	Chesterfield	E Mid	211	315	350	270	148	77	176	363	104	224	170	127
226	270	221	Newark and Sherwood	E Mid	186	315	271	192	115	125	209	301	125	237	243	365
223	194	222	Luton	E Eng	320	163	181	168	219	341	33	34	120	256	276	293
115	233	223	Wychavon	W Mid	223	151	216	154	277	22	308	62	265	180	259	320
86	109	224	South Ribble	N West	287	366	210	264	355	234	165	3	176	244	107	141
225	294	225	Cannock Chase	W Mid	174	237	342	318	230	18	142	185	184	351	220	56
330	326	226	Haringey	London	375	64	173	315	32	120	49	186	365	191	30	346
185	211	227	Mid Ulster	N Ire	137	202	258	98	247	368	310	274	252	88	116	29
189	210	228	Dover	S East	262	102	215	78	149	367	222	173	221	239	178	229
127	212	229	Folkestone and Hythe	S East	277	102	222	93	144	344	204	181	175	226	292	219
294	215	230	Powys	Wales	11	13	85	277	239	63	360	367	375	126	101	111
267	247	231	Croydon	London	357	338	364	373	34	29	38	215	348	97	55	233
87	204	232	Malvern Hills	W Mid	222	151	42	180	273	40	335	103	311	296	268	183
290	285	233	Scottish Borders	Scot	7	1	266	173	320	300	366	333	283	141	325	26
217	283	234	Nuneaton and Bedworth	W Mid	284	151	239	239	165	251	17	260	256	283	206	289
213	222	235	Lancaster	N West	170	366	153	254	258	212	75	196	262	346	155	59
332	208	236	Cardiff	Wales	254	13	227	272	281	223	116	339	334	73	64	240

2011 rank	2020 rank	2021 rank	Area	Region	Safety & Security	Personal Freedom	Governance	Social Capital	Investment Environment	Enterprise Conditions	Infrastructure	Economic Quality	Living Conditions	Health	Education	Natural Environment
215	312	237	Tendring	E Eng	244	72	197	36	178	141	278	256	60	367	340	310
200	282	238	Carlisle	N West	188	258	192	240	203	160	325	201	290	308	260	8
66	184	239	Gloucester	S West	195	35	340	249	182	267	155	281	179	253	294	118
201	112	240	West Suffolk	E Eng	145	213	71	118	237	343	321	224	100	148	311	347
259	303	241	Newcastle-under-Lyme	W Mid	172	237	178	297	223	151	238	302	202	303	267	63
104	191	242	Stockport	Gtr Manch	347	349	255	185	267	173	140	100	233	222	95	31
250	162	243	Selby	Yrk & Hum	28	248	280	39	283	286	302	135	255	230	256	339
188	200	244	West Lindsey	E Mid	147	290	3	137	335	225	316	258	143	332	253	364
198	268	245	Plymouth	S West	191	179	355	221	80	362	283	291	90	318	223	48
102	179	246	West Lancashire	N West	98	366	191	271	311	296	109	131	145	341	266	142
284	319	247	Bolsover	E Mid	169	315	318	285	164	181	236	296	107	223	280	296
301	308	248	Herefordshire, County of	W Mid	178	151	45	190	171	114	370	346	346	251	126	223
282	293	249	Telford and Wrekin	W Mid	273	237	150	322	261	275	103	219	234	295	143	85
218	234	250	Ards and North Down	N Ire	157	202	320	120	249	345	253	266	224	167	145	64
317	256	251	County Durham	N East	256	332	307	291	220	2	264	284	273	305	138	44
241	243	252	Antrim and Newtownabbey	N Ire	216	202	249	152	244	349	226	264	217	214	144	103
323	314	253	Greenwich	London	362	308	331	355	41	337	44	138	313	162	32	327
321	290	254	Lewisham	London	365	64	83	340	40	342	60	231	368	154	42	362
234	236	255	Lisburn and Castlereagh	N Ire	184	202	329	235	246	352	245	275	198	115	96	87
349	337	256	Coventry	W Mid Met	327	359	260	321	162	78	37	174	279	209	193	286
210	239	257	Sefton	M'side	225	231	314	293	263	304	25	202	212	320	169	82
310	254	258	Sunderland	N East	238	115	311	378	228	27	89	209	268	269	231	71
187	242	259	Stockton-on-Tees	N East	279	332	326	359	200	165	106	137	288	205	93	214
212	213	260	Kettering	E Mid	282	86	152	210	257	259	223	212	121	204	328	234
313	226	261	West Lothian	Scot	55	53	290	243	376	370	121	194	173	142	357	14
161	298	262	Wirral	M'side	200	231	316	332	268	245	76	179	208	306	204	65
262	305	263	Allerdale	N West	126	258	131	213	177	204	351	297	298	356	183	101
274	342	264	Enfield	London	367	308	328	330	18	167	63	133	371	194	49	344
224	241	265	Moray	Scot	8	6	339	172	341	289	357	308	269	175	359	3
247	126	266	North Norfolk	E Eng	80	213	48	96	319	233	347	306	170	220	290	352
312	263	267	South Ayrshire	Scot	94	1	238	234	364	317	256	319	308	314	247	4
272	325	268	Bassetlaw	E Mid	221	315	315	159	92	329	235	309	88	208	274	363
216	232	269	Halton	N West	235	231	334	287	242	277	22	24	197	348	332	172
304	237	270	Angus	Scot	59	53	354	216	349	74	322	305	220	105	362	9
236	248	271	Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	N Ire	207	202	305	149	251	350	249	332	240	116	147	47
207	148	272	Ipswich	E Eng	278	213	138	146	271	315	189	184	132	294	355	133
238	272	273	Mid and East Antrim	N Ire	233	202	243	124	243	363	239	292	293	233	130	41
260	287	274	Shropshire	W Mid	166	237	295	251	193	118	342	329	284	260	115	143
352	269	275	Swansea	Wales	181	20	187	347	327	201	201	373	326	215	94	39
285	224	276	Corby	E Mid	310	86	101	191	262	270	132	152	59	328	369	206
179	309	277	Wyre Forest	W Mid	230	151	60	187	295	117	168	272	310	310	324	256
288	331	278	Barrow-in-Furness	N West	173	258	356	163	207	20	333	134	178	370	319	149
277	259	279	South Tyneside	N East	198	115	294	350	198	247	98	349	242	336	142	121
123	291	280	Worcester	W Mid	223	151	189	246	302	140	234	187	215	252	343	210
299	341	281	Derby	E Mid	293	315	304	331	140	45	215	252	206	243	306	265
307	317	282	Sheffield	Yrk & Hum	301	345	322	227	284	25	172	226	260	197	215	70
338	258	283	Fife	Scot	120	53	336	255	369	11	214	237	219	257	358	113
353	249	284	East Lothian	Scot	9	53	321	218	354	312	337	283	169	179	348	34
176	250	285	Wyre	N West	64	366	288	237	353	124	260	64	232	369	219	123
292	198	286	Argyll and Bute	Scot	21	6	179	209	352	189	354	316	349	338	281	23
337	262	287	Carmarthenshire	Wales	18	20	115	199	254	246	343	375	379	266	123	102
333	231	288	Pembrokeshire	Wales	38	20	16	230	234	240	344	370	376	258	251	224
303	267	289	Flintshire	Wales	136	13	117	242	322	265	328	279	301	221	203	304
158	260	290	Pendle	N West	175	366	82	273	343	290	273	33	190	262	363	184
202	261	291	Fermanagh and Omagh	N Ire	151	202	199	207	240	377	331	324	280	255	114	11
270	288	292	Causeway Coast and Glens	N Ire	193	202	338	140	245	309	286	348	259	232	132	28
329	281	293	Darlington	N East	296	332	343	343	218	96	81	177	289	327	84	157
331	361	294	Walsall	W Mid Met	326	359	256	365	107	26	26	165	337	355	272	262
266	280	295	Newry, Mourne and Down	N Ire	202	202	323	121	250	346	313	320	287	177	129	25
172	203	296	Rossendale	N West	171	366	212	245	347	303	276	42	163	321	209	284
192	304	297	Bury	Gtr Manch	350	349	248	233	278	198	133	206	216	206	153	53
287	170	298	King's Lynn and West Norfolk	E Eng	154	213	163	136	235	44	346	265	191	288	335	370

2011 rank	2020 rank	2021 rank	Area	Region	Safety & Security	Personal Freedom	Governance	Social Capital	Investment Environment	Enterprise Conditions	Infrastructure	Economic Quality	Living Conditions	Health	Education	Natural Environment
273	323	299	Hastings	S East	271	127	214	174	183	205	289	352	171	337	347	55
320	339	300	Mansfield	E Mid	272	315	333	281	135	214	175	350	166	218	291	251
181	279	301	Hyndburn	N West	229	366	241	300	339	314	149	66	177	302	245	176
258	252	302	Calderdale	Yrk & Hum	340	264	272	177	332	100	137	166	263	315	90	193
265	276	303	Wellingborough	E Mid	328	86	254	184	260	209	180	128	93	275	360	317
283	177	304	Norwich	E Eng	317	213	202	171	338	196	177	246	114	263	351	166
278	347	305	Copeland	N West	72	258	270	186	213	333	329	211	316	373	194	58
291	240	306	Leeds	Yrk & Hum	344	264	274	164	291	211	125	167	267	174	250	236
211	253	307	Preston	N West	201	366	357	286	348	202	174	48	205	322	229	88
311	302	308	Torbay	S West	160	179	263	294	146	353	348	376	136	363	151	42
318	310	309	Derry City and Strabane	N Ire	268	202	284	220	248	299	237	325	351	273	154	17
249	183	310	Breckland	E Eng	150	213	232	94	252	281	349	247	229	240	342	281
233	286	311	St. Helens	M'side	276	231	250	329	269	348	15	180	241	326	242	227
256	329	312	Eastbourne	S East	237	127	308	131	102	355	270	360	196	357	315	60
314	334	313	Dumfries and Galloway	Scot	60	1	223	201	344	334	345	331	327	211	353	108
220	214	314	South Holland	E Mid	128	290	4	79	216	347	341	315	195	352	339	377
248	289	315	Kirklees	Yrk & Hum	332	264	228	155	300	187	135	195	282	281	230	303
306	335	316	South Lanarkshire	Scot	208	1	360	252	361	273	225	303	253	212	349	16
340	274	317	Gwynedd	Wales	183	20	130	268	289	239	327	378	341	299	99	75
232	307	318	Thanet	S East	331	102	124	106	159	365	190	361	214	313	310	228
295	235	319	Highland	Scot	47	6	91	134	379	210	363	261	366	311	374	7
305	344	320	Dudley	W Mid Met	306	359	230	346	173	200	11	214	261	285	370	266
228	246	321	Blackburn with Darwen	N West	236	366	156	311	331	328	160	136	323	371	82	132
351	316	322	Bridgend	Wales	134	20	196	367	303	280	262	345	370	271	127	161
336	327	323	Conwy	Wales	194	20	70	290	301	291	290	377	364	245	166	104
324	340	324	Barnsley	Yrk & Hum	299	345	367	278	292	50	151	162	257	185	277	109
268	292	325	Lincoln	E Mid	314	290	10	143	342	308	203	372	68	374	305	257
252	306	326	Fenland	E Eng	226	213	217	107	82	372	319	322	185	278	356	376
229	301	327	East Lindsey	E Mid	189	290	5	122	321	146	350	365	182	366	321	371
326	321	328	Denbighshire	Wales	252	20	31	292	280	264	306	371	377	254	185	125
276	332	329	Bolton	Gtr Manch	359	349	278	276	304	188	23	143	300	312	179	98
365	322	330	Caerphilly	Wales	185	20	330	313	310	283	181	328	324	270	225	254
286	315	331	Wigan	Gtr Manch	342	349	277	226	329	292	70	213	236	325	198	92
358	371	332	Nottingham	E Mid	307	315	372	354	130	42	152	362	207	225	279	282
319	300	333	Redcar and Cleveland	N East	275	332	310	363	204	248	194	273	274	345	162	260
363	336	334	Rhondda Cynon Taf	Wales	111	20	237	375	314	278	229	366	296	291	309	130
372	350	335	Midlothian	Scot	50	53	373	244	366	330	304	254	127	198	375	22
269	313	336	Burnley	N West	289	366	147	283	340	261	136	36	325	377	352	96
342	278	337	Ceredigion	Wales	20	20	94	310	236	326	368	379	378	347	47	162
356	318	338	Isle of Anglesey	Wales	89	20	121	361	315	320	339	355	374	298	106	226
309	277	339	Boston	E Mid	165	290	7	116	229	375	332	359	151	375	316	375
327	296	340	Renfrewshire	Scot	205	283	351	275	375	371	105	239	264	249	308	15
368	338	341	Newport	Wales	286	13	358	269	287	166	183	344	338	274	150	283
298	333	342	Liverpool	M'side	308	231	352	349	274	224	47	157	266	372	254	153
302	324	343	North Lincolnshire	Yrk & Hum	269	304	146	161	270	359	300	243	272	277	200	374
315	297	344	Falkirk	Scot	163	53	359	266	368	366	111	228	227	248	354	136
335	362	345	Birmingham	W Mid Met	348	359	335	299	316	14	7	210	360	353	207	300
366	349	346	Torfaen	Wales	219	20	233	360	306	260	216	369	372	207	265	258
344	328	347	Wrexham	Wales	228	13	193	314	325	255	294	338	343	344	282	199
361	345	348	North Ayrshire	Scot	54	6	346	326	377	339	230	327	277	349	365	10
354	364	349	Barking and Dagenham	London	370	308	378	370	62	131	29	176	367	217	78	361
374	357	350	Neath Port Talbot	Wales	130	20	242	317	336	324	224	342	347	297	314	336
357	351	351	Belfast	N Ire	334	202	287	183	253	340	167	238	331	361	187	263
362	367	352	Sandwell	W Mid Met	333	359	362	372	168	152	13	108	322	335	346	345
360	348	353	North Lanarkshire	Scot	270	283	365	288	365	153	66	232	291	247	373	72
367	372	354	Kingston upon Hull, City of	Yrk & Hum	345	304	219	369	185	103	55	351	373	365	195	356
339	363	355	Rotherham	Yrk & Hum	298	345	345	357	299	70	158	277	302	340	264	248
348	374	356	Stoke-on-Trent	W Mid	291	237	218	366	231	105	200	282	352	378	345	187
300	352	357	Knowsley	M'side	258	231	363	338	276	338	36	21	321	362	378	255
350	356	358	Inverclyde	Scot	162	283	159	307	374	379	146	340	294	368	361	6
376	354	359	East Ayrshire	Scot	135	1	374	324	367	287	261	356	243	354	377	2
289	343	360	Bradford	Yrk & Hum	351	264	253	259	298	297	153	285	281	317	338	148

2011 rank	2020 rank	2021 rank	Area	Region	Safety & Security	Personal Freedom	Governance	Social Capital	Investment Environment	Enterprise Conditions	Infrastructure	Economic Quality	Living Conditions	Health	Education	Natural Environment
325	355	361	Hartlepool	N East	323	332	245	371	206	241	157	248	317	376	255	316
355	353	362	Salford	Gtr Manch	360	349	349	358	293	199	59	69	245	309	326	252
346	378	363	Wolverhampton	W Mid Met	335	359	376	364	113	176	18	220	356	364	293	249
347	359	364	Rochdale	Gtr Manch	363	349	302	342	333	242	62	163	276	330	307	76
373	346	365	Merthyr Tydfil	Wales	113	20	106	377	308	364	231	364	344	359	368	120
343	311	366	Wakefield	Yrk & Hum	330	264	313	308	233	331	187	294	303	323	284	287
359	365	367	Doncaster	Yrk & Hum	319	345	332	280	238	274	191	286	330	339	312	350
378	360	368	Clackmannanshire	Scot	119	53	366	232	378	361	285	235	312	229	379	68
379	369	369	Blaenau Gwent	Wales	214	20	252	356	317	319	280	374	357	324	364	195
364	368	370	Dundee City	Scot	318	53	368	289	360	136	199	368	292	300	366	45
328	373	371	Tameside	Gtr Manch	355	349	375	362	337	235	115	205	299	334	175	138
308	358	372	North East Lincolnshire	Yrk & Hum	309	304	158	334	282	369	246	357	333	316	263	366
369	370	373	Manchester	Gtr Manch	377	349	371	341	330	138	128	90	320	307	221	91
345	330	374	Great Yarmouth	E Eng	264	213	344	178	323	294	314	353	213	329	376	349
322	376	375	Oldham	Gtr Manch	361	349	370	333	328	252	227	225	251	331	300	171
375	366	376	West Dunbartonshire	Scot	212	283	379	282	370	376	179	299	318	333	372	20
377	375	377	Glasgow City	Scot	349	283	377	337	359	177	99	300	354	286	371	144
371	377	378	Middlesbrough	N East	352	332	353	379	202	360	147	268	369	360	331	208
370	379	379	Blackpool	N West	311	366	369	376	372	7	243	335	362	379	344	93

Merseyside has some of the best infrastructure in the UK.

Credit: shutterstock.com

Pillar profiles

Prosperity is a multi-dimensional concept, which the Prosperity Index seeks to measure, explore, and understand as fully as possible. The framework of the Index captures prosperity through 12 equally-weighted pillars, each with constituent elements—the building blocks and policy areas crucial for achieving prosperity for the residents of the UK. The 12 pillars are grouped into three domains, which are the essential foundations of prosperity—Inclusive Societies, Open Economies, and Empowered People.

INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES

The Inclusive Societies domain captures the relationship structures that exist within a society, among individuals and between individuals and broader institutions, and the degree to which they either enable or obstruct societal cohesion and collective development. These social and legal institutions are essential in protecting the fundamental freedoms of individuals, and their ability to flourish.

This domain consists of the Safety and Security, Personal Freedom, Governance, and Social Capital pillars, and it comprises 77 indicators captured within 17 elements.

OPEN ECONOMIES

The Open Economies domain captures the extent to which an economy is open to competition, encourages innovation and investment, promotes business and commerce, and facilitates inclusive growth. For a society to be truly prosperous, it requires an economy that embodies these ideals. This domain consists of the Investment Environment, Enterprise Conditions, Infrastructure, and Economic Quality pillars, and it comprises 75 indicators captured within 15 elements.

EMPOWERED PEOPLE

The Empowered People domain captures the quality of people's lived experience and the associated aspects that enable individuals to reach their full potential through autonomy and self-determination. This domain consists of the Living Conditions, Health, Education, and Natural Environment pillars, and it comprises 104 indicators across 21 elements.

An infographic that sets out the construction of the 2021 UK Prosperity Index, and the linking of the three domains, 12 pillars and 53 elements is found on page 8. The pages that follow examine each of these domains, pillars, elements, and the indicators underpinning this structure, in more detail.

Credit: shutterstock.com

Defining Inclusive Societies

Inclusive Societies are an essential requirement for prosperity, where social and legal institutions protect the fundamental freedoms of individuals, and their ability to flourish. This domain explores the relationships structures that exist within a society, and the degree to which they either enable or obstruct societal cohesion and collective development. Areas within this domain range from the relationship of citizen and state, to the degree to which violence permeates societal norms, to the interaction of freedoms of different groups and individuals, to the way in which individuals interact with one another, their communities, and institutions. These issues have been both a practical consideration for the majority of modern human experience, as well as a subject of academic study. We examine the fundamental aspects of Inclusive Societies across four pillars, each with component elements.

Safety and Security measures the degree to which individuals and communities are free from violent crime, property crime, civil disorder, and terrorism. The lives of individuals, their freedoms, and the security of their property are at risk in a society where these activities are present, both through their current prevalence, and long-lasting effects. In short, a community or society can prosper only in an environment of security and safety for its citizens.

Personal Freedom measures basic legal rights (agency), individual liberties (freedom of assembly and association, freedom of speech and access to information), the absence of legal discrimination and the degree of social tolerance experienced in a society. Societies that recognise and protect these rights and freedoms have been shown to enjoy increased levels of satisfaction among their citizens. Furthermore, a country benefits from higher levels of national income when its citizens' personal liberties are protected and when it is welcoming of the diversity that stimulates innovation.

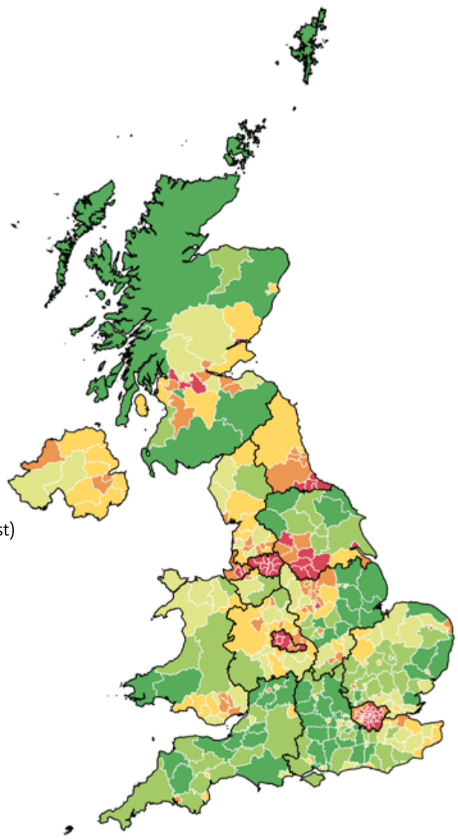
Governance measures the extent to which there are checks and restraints on power, and whether government operates effectively and without corruption. The nature of an area's governance has a material impact on its prosperity. The quality of local democracy and government integrity contribute significantly to prosperity, as do competent governments that enact policy efficiently and design regulations that deliver policy objectives without being overly burdensome.

Social Capital measures the family and personal relationships, social networks and the cohesion a society experiences where there is high institutional trust, and people respect and engage with one another (civic and social participation), both of which have a direct effect on the prosperity of a country. A person's wellbeing is best provided for in a society where people trust one another and have the support of their family and friends. Societies with lower levels of trust tend to experience lower levels of economic growth. Thus, the word 'capital' in 'social capital' highlights the contribution of social networks as an asset that produces economic returns and improves wellbeing.

Inclusive Societies 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
1	Na h-Eileanan Siar (Scot)
2	Isles of Scilly (S West)
3	North Kesteven (E Mid)
4	Babergh (E Eng)
5	Epsom and Ewell (S East)
6	Orkney Islands (Scot)
7	Aberdeenshire (Scot)
8	East Renfrewshire (Scot)
9	Rutland (E Mid)
10	Winchester (S East)
11	Shetland Islands (Scot)
12	Scottish Borders (Scot)
13	Mole Valley (S East)
14	Mendip (S West)
15	Hart (S East)
16	Bath and North East Somerset (S West)
17	East Hampshire (S East)
18	Waverley (S East)
19	South Holland (E Mid)
20	Richmondshire (Yrk & Hum)



Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
360	Haringey (London)
361	Kensington and Chelsea (London)
362	Camden (London)
363	Birmingham (W Mid Met)
364	Nottingham (E Mid)
365	Greenwich (London)
366	Enfield (London)
367	Rochdale (Gtr Manch)
368	Sandwell (W Mid Met)
369	Blackpool (N West)
370	Salford (Gtr Manch)
371	Glasgow City (Scot)
372	Middlesbrough (N East)
373	Croydon (London)
374	Wolverhampton (W Mid Met)
375	Westminster (London)
376	Oldham (Gtr Manch)
377	Tameside (Gtr Manch)
378	Barking and Dagenham (London)
379	Manchester (Gtr Manch)

Rank

1–63 | 64–126 | 127–189

190–254 | 255–317 | 318–379

Londoners have the highest trust in institutions out of all regions of the UK, although they also experience weak Safety and Security.

Credit: shutterstock.com

Inclusive Societies in the UK

The UK has some of the strongest institutions in the world, ranking 15th out of 167 nations for Inclusive Societies. Globally, it ranks 21st for Safety and Security, 19th for Personal Freedom, 13th for Governance and 12th for Social Capital.

Despite this strength, there has been a decline in the contribution that these core institutions have made to overall prosperity in the UK in recent years. The UK is facing higher crime levels and increased terrorist attacks. While the UK still has strong national institutions, public engagement with local government has been declining.

Safety and Security (Global Rank: 21st)

People living in the UK do not face many of the threats to their safety that people in other countries face—there is little chance of death from conflict or being internally displaced, and unlike in other countries, the government does not engage in systematic violence when there is dissent. However, despite the strengths we see in international comparisons, the UK still shares problems that are faced in other developed countries. It ranks 25th for violent crime and 55th for property crime globally, with its homicide rate 38th in the world.

Furthermore, safety and security is worsening in the UK. All regions, except Scotland and Northern Ireland, have seen deteriorations. The biggest declines have come in areas that already have poor levels of safety and security—particularly the Industrial Heartlands, Post-Industrial Urban areas, and Coastal Towns. Worsening rates of violent crime are the major contributor, particularly knife crime, robbery, homicide, and sexual offences. For example, in Greater Manchester, the worst performing region, the homicide rate has increased from 15 to 22 per 100,000 over 10 years. After Greater Manchester, London is the second-worst performing region, with the highest rates of knife crime, robbery, modern slavery referrals and forced marriages. Unsurprisingly, rural areas are safer with lower crime rates than urban areas—for example, knife crime in the South West is one quarter of that in London.

Furthermore, civil disorder has worsened, with increasing rates of weapon possession and public order offences. The UK has also been increasingly targeted by terrorist attacks over the last decade, with the Manchester bombings and multiple London terror attacks being the most prominent. The number of attacks in England has increased from 65 in the 2000s to 129 in the 2010s. Northern Ireland has a disproportionately large number of terrorist incidents, although in the last decade there have been far fewer deaths and injuries than in previous decades, with just 17 deaths since 2011.

One of the bright spots is that the rate of property crime is declining. The UK as a whole is improving in the areas of criminal damage, theft, and burglary—and these improvements are seen in each region. For example, the number of criminal damage offences per 1,000 people fell from 15 to 9. In Scotland, where property crime has fallen the most, the rate of criminal damage offences fell from 18 to 9 per 1,000 people.

Personal Freedom (Global Rank: 19th)

Globally and outside of the pandemic, citizens of the UK have been able to enjoy basic freedoms. The UK's relative strengths are in Freedom of Assembly and Association (where it ranks 10th), while it ranks 16th in Agency. Although before the pandemic personal freedom had improved slightly in the UK, one concern has been the decline in freedom of speech and access to information. One of the concerns raised by Freedom House has been the rise of mass surveillance technology, including the use of biometric data and facial recognition software. Most recently, they note that no privacy assessment was undertaken prior to the Covid-19 contact tracing system being rolled out.

According to Gallup, tolerance of ethnic minorities, LGBT individuals, and immigrants has improved over the last 10 years, with the percentage of people saying their area is a good place to live for LGBT individuals rising from 66% to 75%, and for immigrants it rose from 72% to 76%. According to the British Election Study, tolerance for different religions has also improved. In social tolerance, Greater Manchester, London, and Yorkshire and the Humber have improved the most.

Governance (Global Rank: 13th)

The UK has a strong set of national institutions that ensure there are strong executive constraints, political accountability, and rule of law. Furthermore, corruption is relatively rare, although the UK government has recently faced allegations of 'cronyism'.

However, the quality of governance has declined in the UK, mainly as a result of a deterioration in the quality of local democracy. While turnout has increased in recent general elections, local election turnout has dropped. Northern Ireland is the strongest performer, with an average turnout of more than 50% in its local elections, while the three non-London metropolitan regions—Merseyside, Greater Manchester and the West Midlands metropolitan area —all have had turnouts of less than 31%. Turnout for national elections is higher than for local elections. Furthermore, few councils see changes in the party with overall control; in 69 local councils there has been no change in the party in power for the last 20 years, which indicates that there could be little real policy change or a proper contest of ideas in those local authorities.

The UK political system is one of the most centralised in the world, with less than 5% of overall government tax revenue raised locally. There are opportunities to devolve more power to local authorities, which could reinvigorate local democracy.[2]

Government effectiveness has improved. Measures of administrative competence, such as the time taken to process housing benefit claims and the proportion of successful planning appeals, have improved over the decade. Within England, industrial areas such as Merseyside and Greater Manchester have the least effective local governments. Outside of England, it is the more rural areas that tend to perform poorly in government effectiveness.

Social Capital (Global Rank: 12th)

Social capital is one of the UK's strengths, but it has deteriorated in the UK over the last decade. The primary reasons for it declining include the worsening social networks and weakening trust in institutions, with a slight deterioration in the strength of family relationships.

Trust in members of parliament, as well as the local MP, has fallen. Confidence in the government has also declined—just 34% (down from 38%) of UK respondents express confidence, which is 134th in the world. The lowest institutional trust is found in Wales, Lancashire, and Post-Industrial Urban areas.

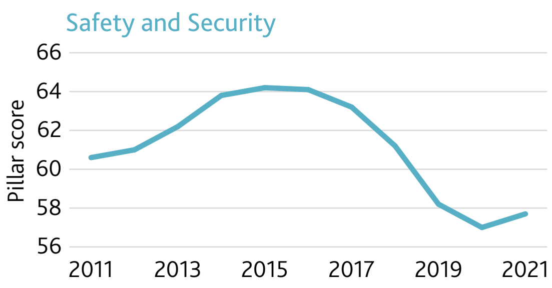
Within family relationships, there are mixed outcomes. There has been a large fall in underage pregnancy and the percentage of lone parent families has also decreased slightly. The number of teenage pregnancies, for example, has fallen from 7 per 10,000 girls aged 13-16 to just 3. However, there are also challenges. Based on data collected before lockdown, the average number of days in a week that families eat together has fallen slightly. The number of children requiring child protection has also increased. There are major regional differences in family relationships. Generally, it is in Wales, Post-Industrial Urban areas (such as Blackpool, Sunderland, and Plymouth), and Lancashire, where there are weaker family relationships. For example, in Lancashire 26% of families are lone parent families, whereas in the Commuter Belt it is just 18%. Furthermore, couples are increasingly choosing cohabitation rather than marriage, and cohabiting couples are more likely to separate and account for half of family breakdown. There is also a growing marriage gap between rich and poor—of families with children under 5, 87% of high earner families (over £43,000) are married, while just 24% of low earner families are married.[3]

Furthermore, while overall civic and social participation has risen over the decade, there have been declines in volunteering and the number of community spaces. For example, the number of pubs has fallen—there are now 5.8 pubs or bars per 10,000, people, compared with 7.5 a decade prior, with the South West and Wales losing the most. The economic fallout from the Covid-19 pandemic will likely reduce this further.

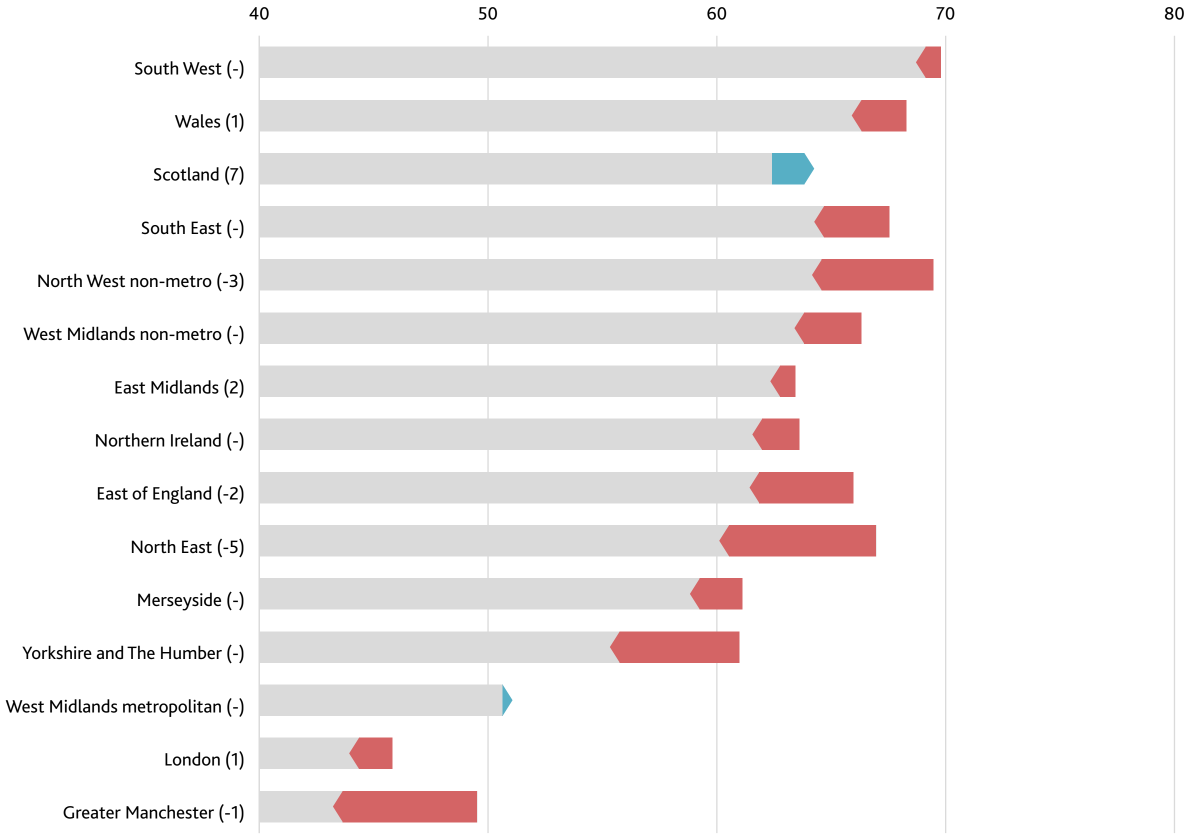
Credit: shutterstock.com

Safety and Security

Safety and Security is an integral component of prosperity. Citizens' wellbeing is dependent on having personal safety, where their person and property are free from violence and theft. A secure and stable environment is necessary for attracting investment and sustaining economic growth. In short, a society can prosper only in an environment of security and safety for its citizens.



Safety & Security: Regions score and score change (rank change), 2011-2021



ELEMENT (WEIGHT %)

Violent Crime (50%) assesses the level of violent crime based on the extent of knife crime, robbery, sexual offences, domestic abuse, homicides, modern slavery, and forced marriages.

Property Crime (30%) captures the level and impact of property crime, based on criminal damage, theft, burglary, and fraud.

Civil Disorder (15%) captures the level of disorderly behaviour, looking at public order offences, possession of weapons, firearms offences, and perceived anti-social behaviour.

Terrorism (5%) captures the deliberate and targeted harm inflicted by non-state actors on a community, taking into account the number of incidents, injuries and also deaths that result.

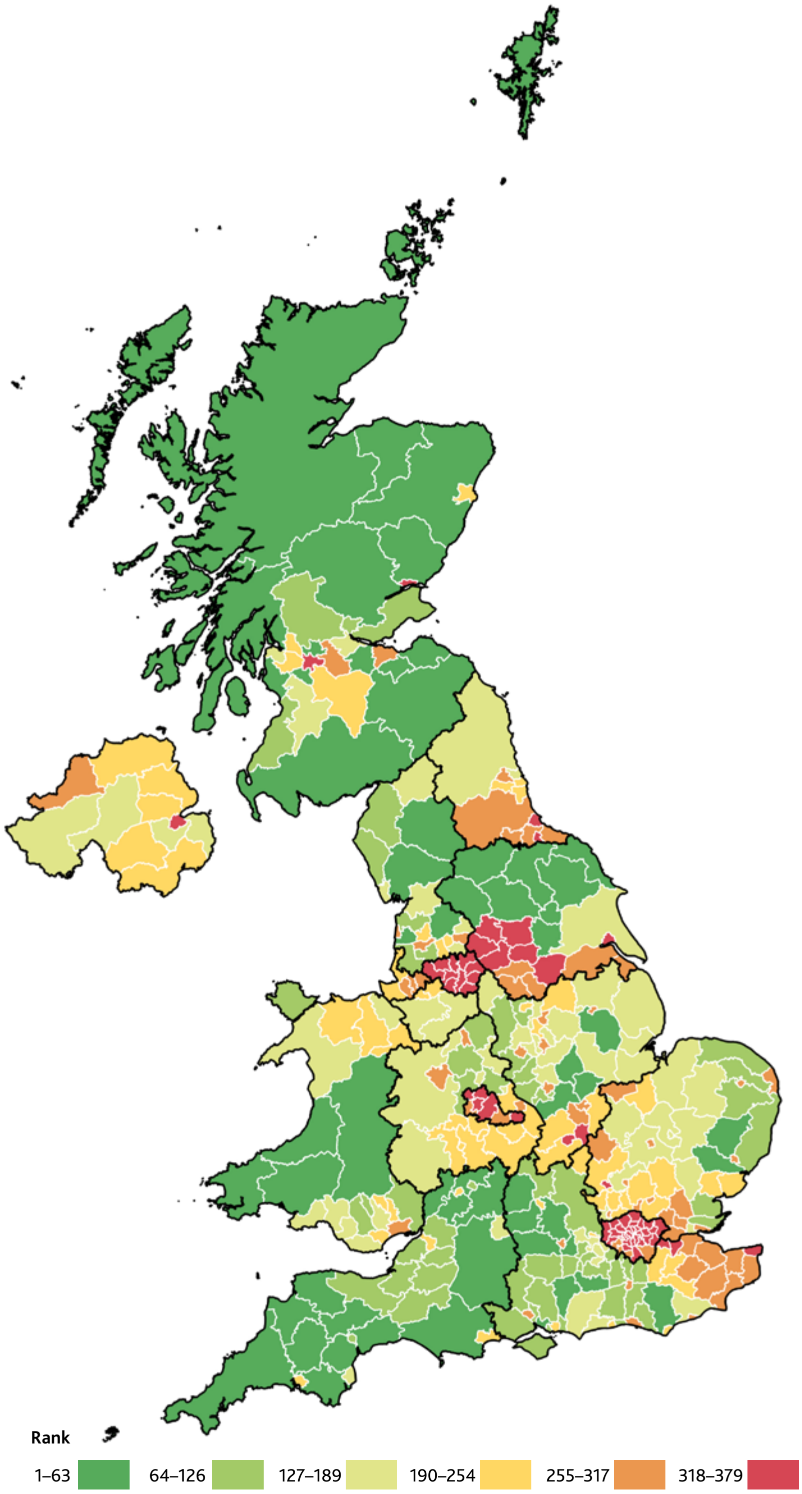
Safety and Security 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

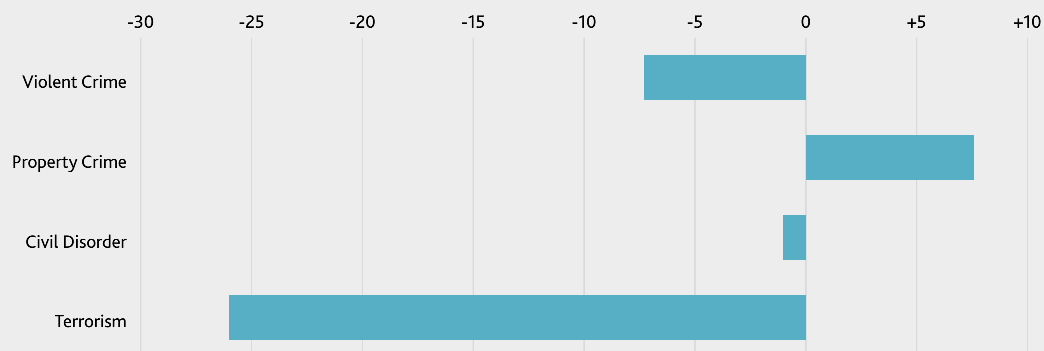
Rank	Local Authority
1	Na h-Eileanan Siar (Scot)
2	Orkney Islands (Scot)
3	Shetland Islands (Scot)
4	East Renfrewshire (Scot)
5	Aberdeenshire (Scot)
6	Isles of Scilly (S West)
7	Scottish Borders (Scot)
8	Moray (Scot)
9	East Lothian (Scot)
10	East Dunbartonshire (Scot)
11	Powys (Wales)
12	Rutland (E Mid)
13	East Devon (S West)
13	Mid Devon (S West)
15	Teignbridge (S West)
15	South Hams (S West)
15	West Devon (S West)
18	Carmarthenshire (Wales)
19	Richmondshire (Yrk & Hum)
20	Ceredigion (Wales)

Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
360	Salford (Gtr Manch)
361	Oldham (Gtr Manch)
362	Greenwich (London)
363	Rochdale (Gtr Manch)
364	Newham (London)
365	Lewisham (London)
366	Tower Hamlets (London)
367	Enfield (London)
368	Lambeth (London)
369	Hammersmith and Fulham (London)
370	Barking and Dagenham (London)
371	Islington (London)
372	Southwark (London)
373	Camden (London)
374	Hackney (London)
375	Haringey (London)
376	Kensington and Chelsea (London)
377	Manchester (Gtr Manch)
378	City of London (London)
379	Westminster (London)

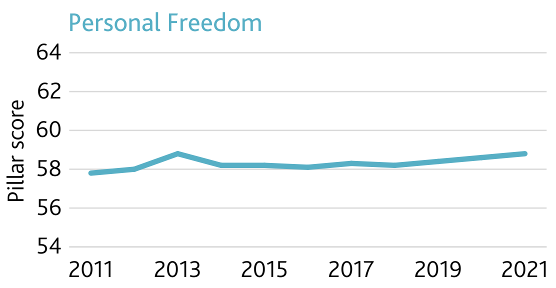


Change in Safety & Security, 2011-2021

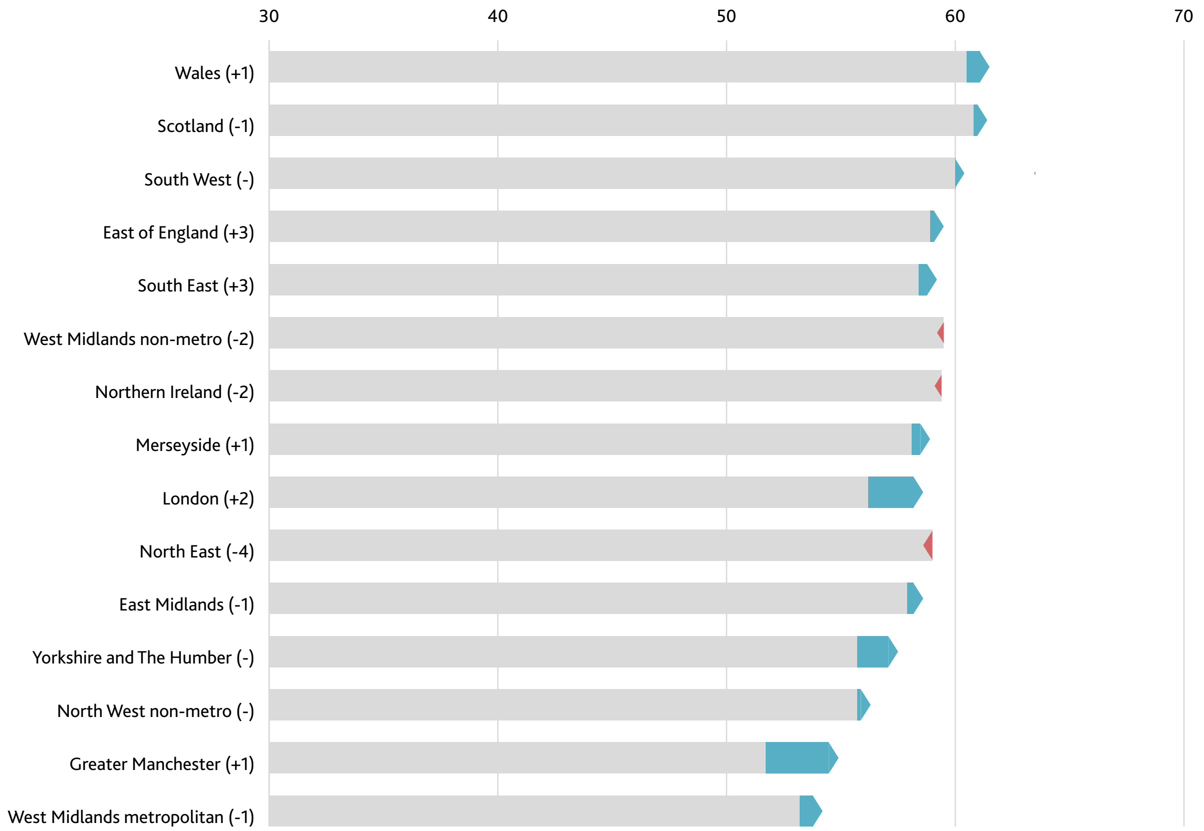


Personal Freedom

Personal Freedom captures the extent to which the people in a society are free to determine the course of their lives without undue restrictions. This includes freedom from coercion and restrictions of movement, speech and assembly. Central to this is the level of agency an individual experiences, their freedom from discrimination, and how tolerant society is.



Personal Freedom: Regions score and score change (rank change), 2011-2021*



ELEMENT (WEIGHT %)

Agency (10%) captures the degree to which individuals are free from coercion or restriction and are free to move. At its heart, an individual experiences agency if they have the freedom to act independently and make their own free choices.

Freedom of Assembly and Association (10%) captures the degree to which people have the freedom to assemble with others in public spaces to express opinions freely, with autonomy from the state, and to form collective interest organisations.

Freedom of Speech and Access to Information (10%) captures the ability of people to express political opinion without reproach and the extent to which the media is censored and is independent from and not influenced by the ruling government.

Absence of Legal Discrimination (10%) assesses the level of discrimination in law or by government and whether the law protects individuals and groups from suffering discrimination. This dimension captures multiple factors, including gender, sexuality, religion, ethnicity, and economic background.

Social Tolerance (60%) captures the degree to which societies are tolerant of class, ethnic, and religious differences within the population, and the level of tension arising over these differences. Societal discrimination and intolerance can engender serious issues within a society, and are a significant inhibitor of an individual's freedoms.

*Note that all region variation is driven by the Social Tolerance element. The other four elements have UK level data only.

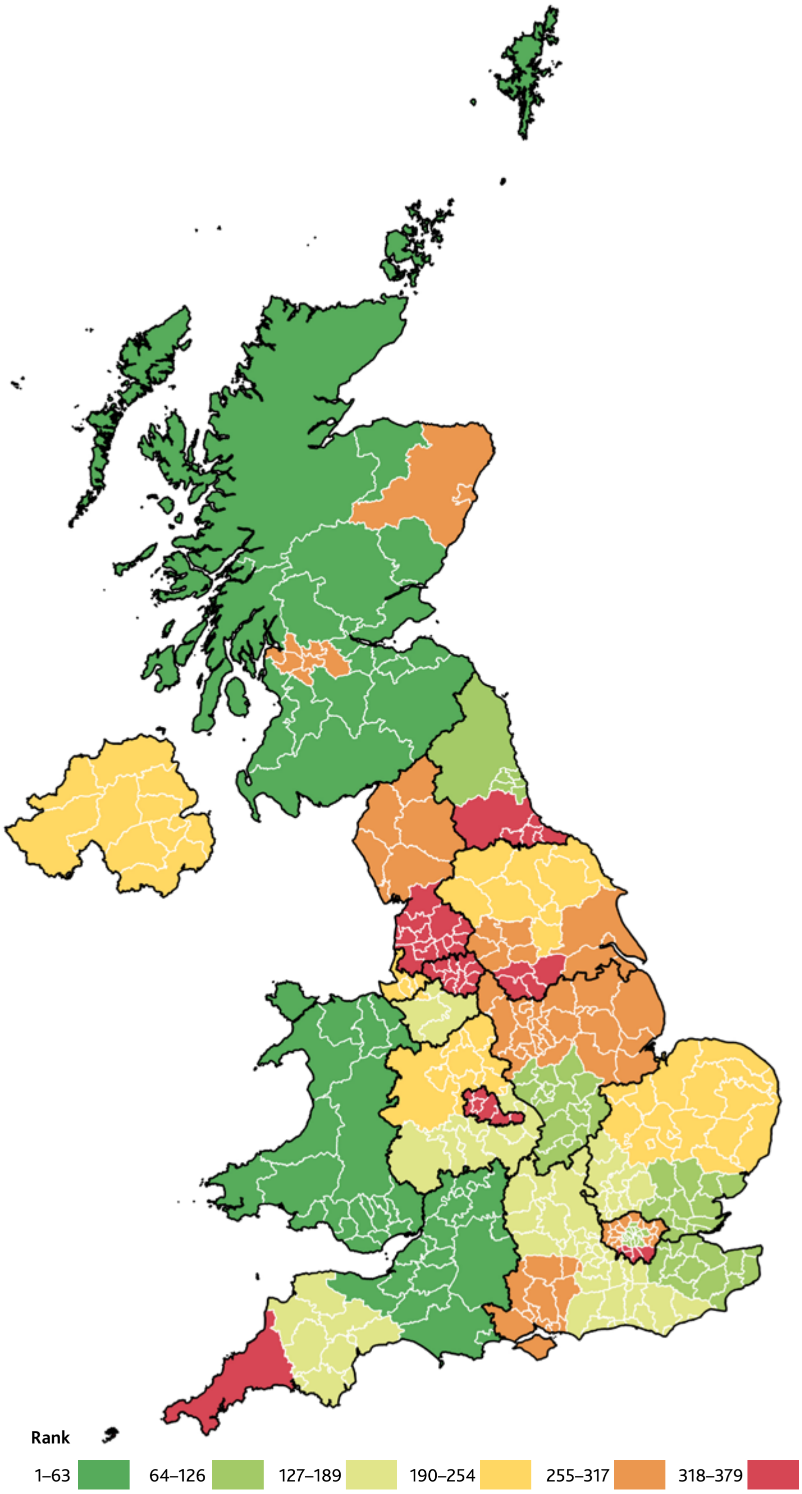
Personal Freedom 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

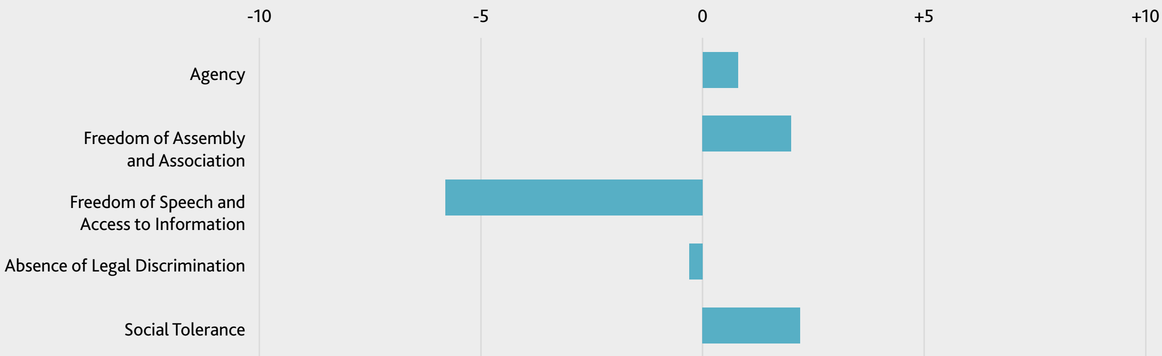
Rank	Local Authority
1	Scottish Borders (Scot)
1	Dumfries and Galloway (Scot)
1	South Ayrshire (Scot)
1	East Ayrshire (Scot)
1	South Lanarkshire (Scot)
6	Na h-Eileanan Siar (Scot)
6	Orkney Islands (Scot)
6	Shetland Islands (Scot)
6	Moray (Scot)
6	Argyll and Bute (Scot)
6	Highland (Scot)
6	North Ayrshire (Scot)
13	Powys (Wales)
13	Monmouthshire (Wales)
13	Vale of Glamorgan (Wales)
13	Flintshire (Wales)
13	Wrexham (Wales)
13	Cardiff (Wales)
13	Newport (Wales)
20	Pembrokeshire (Wales)

Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
359	Dudley (W Mid Met)
359	Walsall (W Mid Met)
359	Coventry (W Mid Met)
359	Sandwell (W Mid Met)
359	Wolverhampton (W Mid Met)
359	Birmingham (W Mid Met)
366	Ribble Valley (N West)
366	Fylde (N West)
366	Wyre (N West)
366	Chorley (N West)
366	West Lancashire (N West)
366	Lancaster (N West)
366	Rossendale (N West)
366	Pendle (N West)
366	Preston (N West)
366	Hyndburn (N West)
366	Blackburn with Darwen (N West)
366	South Ribble (N West)
366	Burnley (N West)
366	Blackpool (N West)

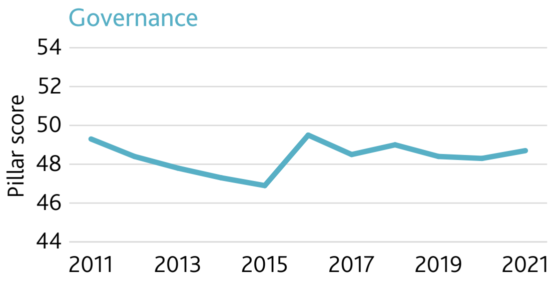


Change in Personal Freedom, 2011-2021

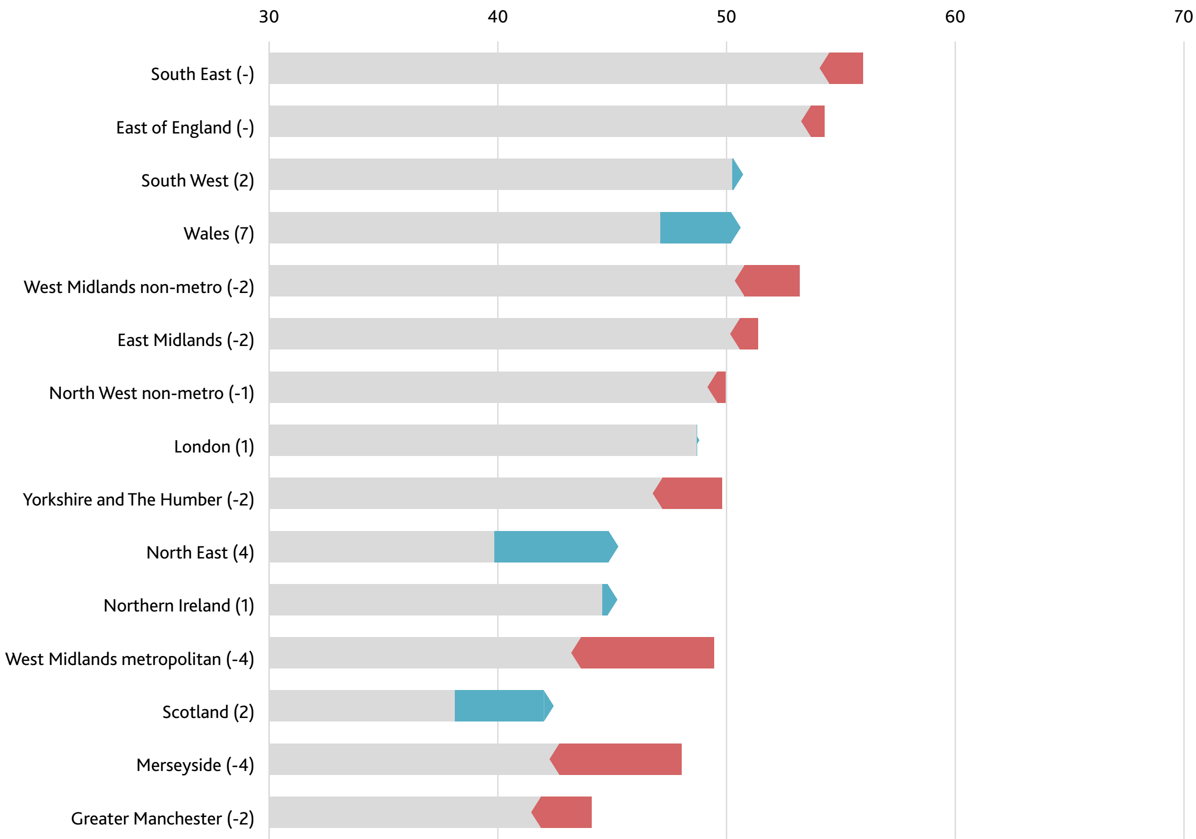


Governance

Governance captures the extent to which there are checks and restraints on political power, and whether governments operate effectively and without corruption. The nature of governance has a material impact on prosperity. The quality of local democracy and low corruption contribute significantly to economic growth, as do competent governments that enact policy effectively and design regulations that deliver policy objectives without being overly burdensome.



Governance: Regions score and score change (rank change), 2011-2021



ELEMENT (WEIGHT %)

Quality of Local Democracy (35%) captures the engagement of people in local and national governance, using local and national election voter turnout, maximum number of years that the same party has held power in a local council and the percentage of votes in local elections that are non-mainstream.

Government Integrity (30%) assesses the perceived integrity of a government, encompassing the degree of trust in local and national politicians.

Government Effectiveness (35%) captures the quality of local service delivery, the quality of the bureaucracy, and the competence of officials.

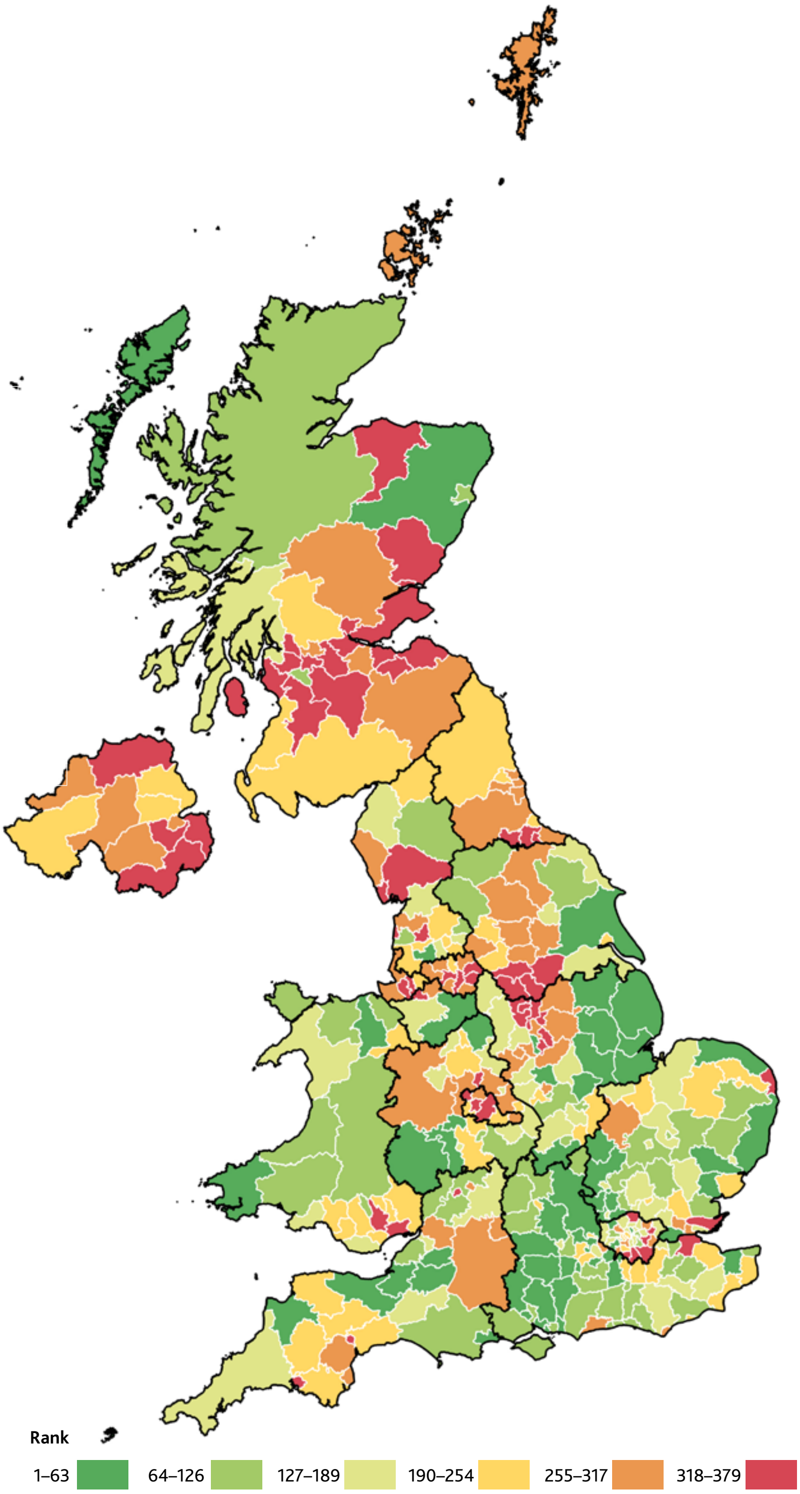
Governance 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

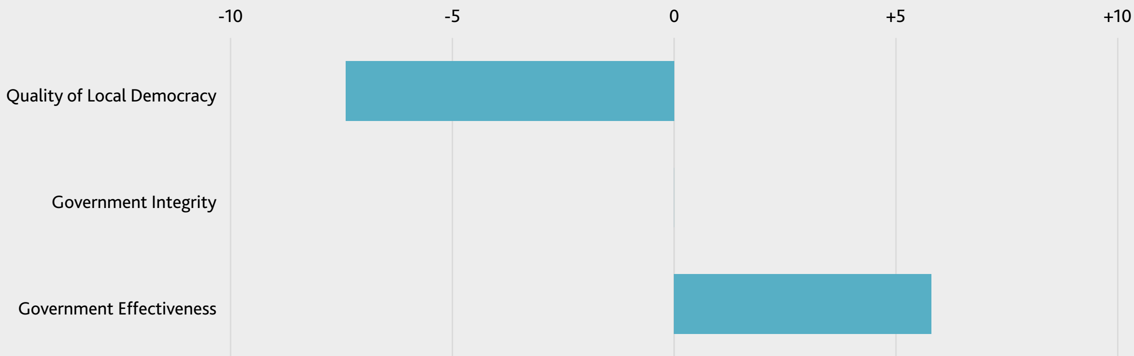
Rank	Local Authority
1	North Kesteven (E Mid)
2	Epsom and Ewell (S East)
3	West Lindsey (E Mid)
4	South Holland (E Mid)
5	East Lindsey (E Mid)
6	Hart (S East)
7	Boston (E Mid)
8	Bedford (E Eng)
9	Winchester (S East)
10	Lincoln (E Mid)
11	Three Rivers (E Eng)
12	Babergh (E Eng)
13	Mendip (S West)
14	St Albans (E Eng)
15	City of London (London)
16	Pembrokeshire (Wales)
17	Sedgemoor (S West)
18	Fareham (S East)
19	Havant (S East)
20	South Kesteven (E Mid)

Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
360	South Lanarkshire (Scot)
361	South Lakeland (N West)
362	Sandwell (W Mid Met)
363	Knowsley (M'side)
364	Croydon (London)
365	North Lanarkshire (Scot)
366	Clackmannanshire (Scot)
367	Barnsley (Yrk & Hum)
368	Dundee City (Scot)
369	Blackpool (N West)
370	Oldham (Gtr Manch)
371	Manchester (Gtr Manch)
372	Nottingham (E Mid)
373	Midlothian (Scot)
374	East Ayrshire (Scot)
375	Tameside (Gtr Manch)
376	Wolverhampton (W Mid Met)
377	Glasgow City (Scot)
378	Barking and Dagenham (London)
379	West Dunbartonshire (Scot)

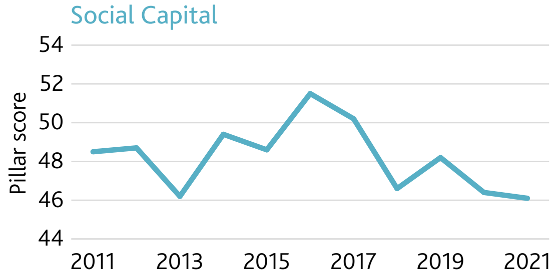


Change in Governance, 2011-2021

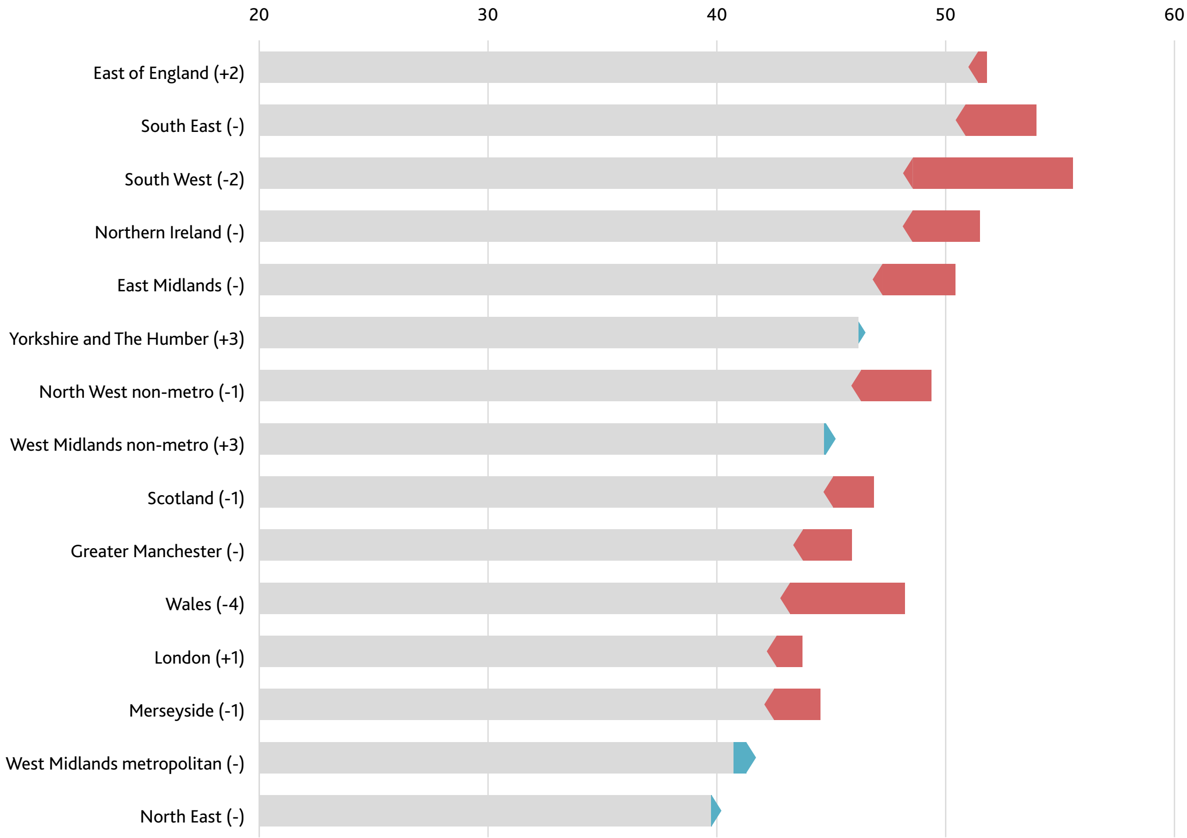


Social Capital

Social Capital captures how cohesive a society is in terms of people trusting, respecting and helping one another, and the institutional structures they interact with. A person's wellbeing is best provided for in a society where people trust one another and have the support of their family and friends. Societies with lower levels of trust tend to experience lower levels of economic growth and social wellbeing. Thus, the word 'capital' in 'social capital' highlights the contribution of social networks as an asset that produces economic returns and improves wellbeing.



Social Capital: Regions score and score change (rank change), 2011-2021



ELEMENT (WEIGHT %)

Family Relationships (30%) captures the strength of the closest-knit personal relationships and family ties. These relationships form the crux of support that individuals can turn to, emotionally, mentally, and financially on a daily basis.

Personal Support (10%) assesses the support that individuals feel from their community.

Social Networks (15%) captures the strength of, and opportunities provided by, ties that an individual has with people in their wider network. These ties are a vital part of social support, and these networks can bolster bridging capital when social and community networks span different groups in society. Local social networks depend on building and maintaining relationships with other individuals and families, including neighbours.

Institutional Trust (20%) captures the degree to which individuals trust their institutions, such as the courts and Parliament. Trust in institutions is an important foundation upon which the legitimacy and stability of political systems are built.

Civic and Social Participation (25%) captures the degree to which people participate in civic and social spheres in their community, through volunteering, donating money, and local meeting places such as pubs and sports clubs.

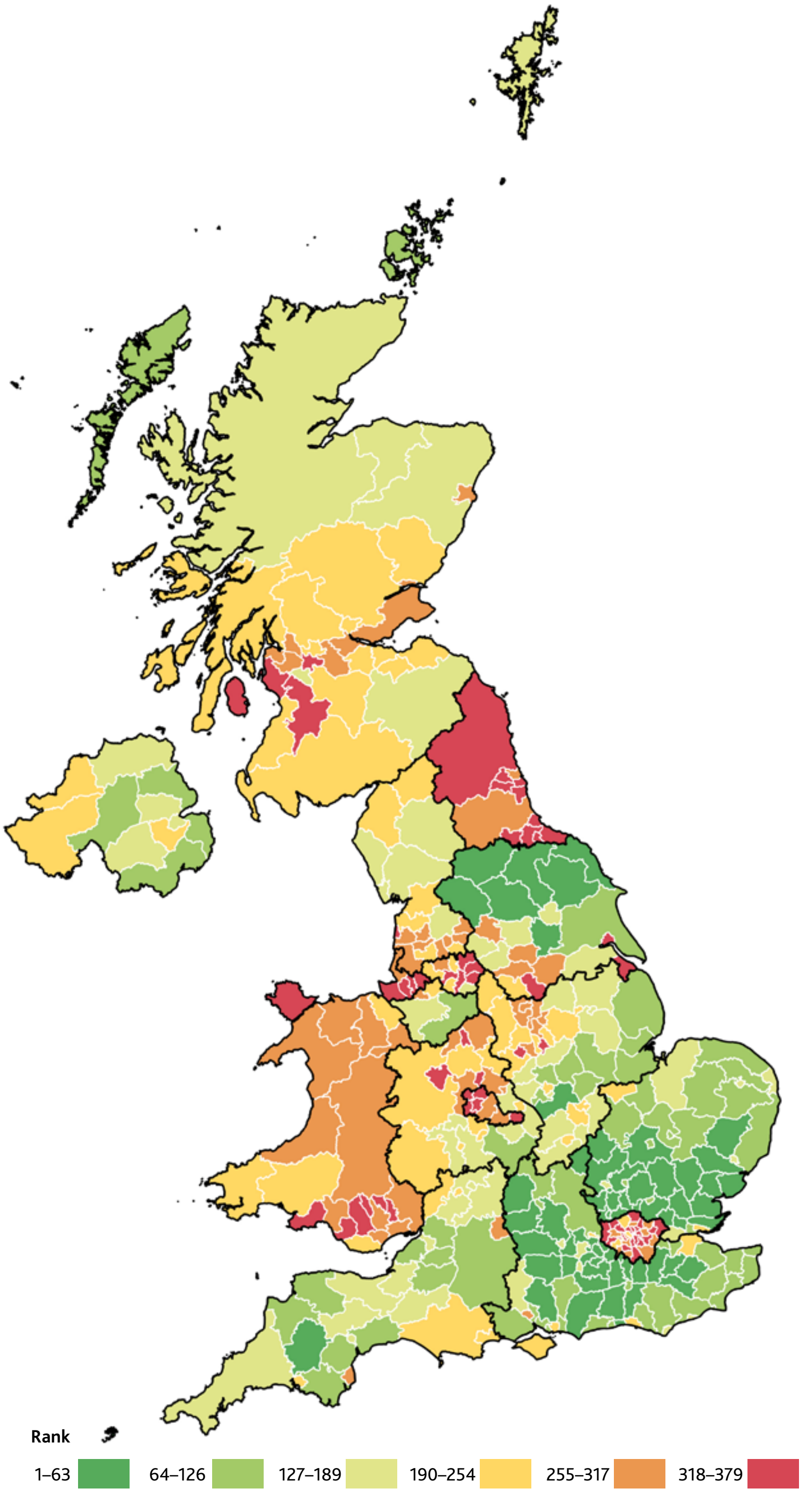
Social Capital 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

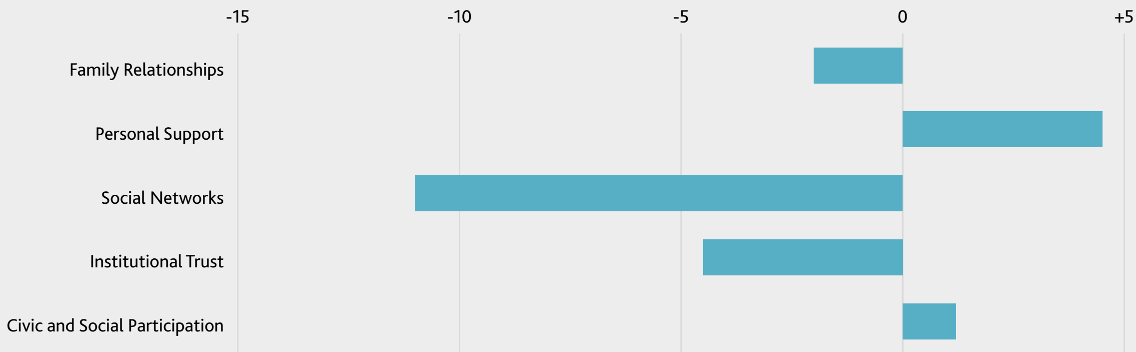
Rank	Local Authority
1	Uttlesford (E Eng)
2	Windsor and Maidenhead (S East)
3	Waverley (S East)
4	St Albans (E Eng)
5	Isles of Scilly (S West)
6	East Hertfordshire (E Eng)
7	Welwyn Hatfield (E Eng)
8	Harrogate (Yrk & Hum)
9	Mole Valley (S East)
10	Braintree (E Eng)
11	Dacorum (E Eng)
12	Sevenoaks (S East)
13	Wokingham (S East)
14	Three Rivers (E Eng)
15	Richmondshire (Yrk & Hum)
16	Maldon (E Eng)
17	Hambleton (Yrk & Hum)
18	Guildford (S East)
19	Watford (E Eng)
20	Babergh (E Eng)

Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
360	Torfaen (Wales)
361	Isle of Anglesey (Wales)
362	Tameside (Gtr Manch)
363	Redcar and Cleveland (N East)
364	Wolverhampton (W Mid Met)
365	Walsall (W Mid Met)
366	Stoke-on-Trent (W Mid)
367	Bridgend (Wales)
368	Gateshead (N East)
369	Kingston upon Hull, City of (Yrk & Hum)
370	Barking and Dagenham (London)
371	Hartlepool (N East)
372	Sandwell (W Mid Met)
373	Croydon (London)
374	Newcastle upon Tyne (N East)
375	Rhondda Cynon Taf (Wales)
376	Blackpool (N West)
377	Merthyr Tydfil (Wales)
378	Sunderland (N East)
379	Middlesbrough (N East)



Change in Social Capital, 2011-2021



Defining Open Economies

Open Economies encourage innovation and investment, promote business and commerce, and facilitate inclusive growth. This domain captures the extent to which regional and local economies embody these ideals. Without an open, competitive and dynamic economy, it is challenging if not impossible to create lasting social and economic wellbeing where individuals, communities, and businesses are empowered to reach their full potential.

Trade and commerce between regions, communities, and other nations is fundamental to the advance of innovation, knowledge transfer, and productivity, which creates economic growth and prosperity. Open economies are more productive, while in an uncompetitive market, or one that is not designed to maximize welfare, growth stagnates, and crony capitalism thrives, with knock-on impacts elsewhere in society. One of the biggest opportunities for policymakers is to embrace open and pro-competitive economic policy that attracts innovation, ideas, capital, and talent. While most policymakers focus on the big fiscal and macroeconomic policy tools at their disposal, the microeconomic factors are sometimes overlooked, and their potential to drive openness and growth is underestimated. With a focus on these microeconomic factors, we examine the fundamental aspects of Open Economies across four pillars, each with component elements.

Investment Environment captures the amount and variety of investment finance available, and the extent to which it is in demand. Contestable markets with low barriers to entry and adequate pools of funding are important for businesses to innovate and develop new ideas.

Enterprise Conditions captures how easy it is for businesses to start, compete and expand. Open markets with low barriers to entry are crucial for businesses to innovate and develop new ideas, and for entrepreneurs to thrive. This is essential for a dynamic and enterprising economy, where regulation enables business and responds to the changing needs of society.

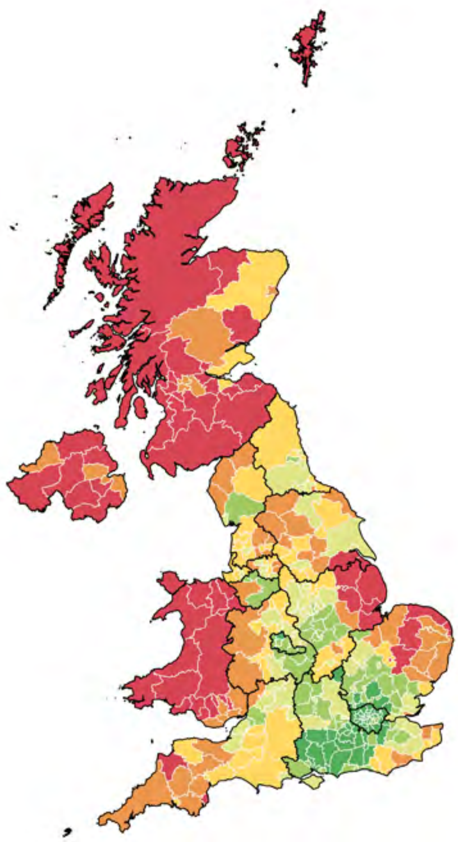
Infrastructure captures the quality of the infrastructure that enables commerce. Businesses require infrastructure that allows for efficient communication, adequate provision of water and electricity, and connects them to transport hubs and economic centres. This leads to more competitive and efficient markets, allowing new products and ideas to be commercialised and transported within the UK and overseas, ultimately benefiting consumers through a greater variety of goods at more competitive prices.

Economic Quality captures how robust an economy is as well as how an economy is equipped to generate wealth. A strong economy is dependent on high labour force engagement and the production and distribution of a diverse range of valuable goods and services.

Open Economies 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
1	City of London (London)
2	Camden (London)
3	Islington (London)
4	Westminster (London)
5	Richmond upon Thames (London)
6	Hackney (London)
7	Hounslow (London)
8	Hammersmith and Fulham (London)
9	Ealing (London)
10	Harrow (London)
11	Tower Hamlets (London)
12	Merton (London)
13	Hillingdon (London)
14	Surrey Heath (S East)
15	Bromley (London)
16	Kensington and Chelsea (London)
17	Elmbridge (S East)
18	Redbridge (London)
19	Hart (S East)
20	Hertsmere (E Eng)



Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
360	East Lothian (Scot)
361	East Ayrshire (Scot)
362	North East Lincolnshire (Yrk & Hum)
363	Blaenau Gwent (Wales)
364	Conwy (Wales)
365	Moray (Scot)
366	Gwynedd (Wales)
367	North Ayrshire (Scot)
368	West Dunbartonshire (Scot)
369	Clackmannanshire (Scot)
370	Shetland Islands (Scot)
371	Isle of Anglesey (Wales)
372	Fermanagh and Omagh (N Ire)
373	Highland (Scot)
374	Scottish Borders (Scot)
375	Boston (E Mid)
376	Dumfries and Galloway (Scot)
377	Inverclyde (Scot)
378	Na h-Eileanan Siar (Scot)
379	Ceredigion (Wales)

Rank

1–63 | 64–126 | 127–189
190–254 | 255–317 | 318–379

Within the Open Economies domain, the UK has seen improvements in communications infrastructure, transport infrastructure, and labour force engagement.

Credit: shutterstock.com

Open Economies in the UK

Historically, the UK has had one of the strongest economies in the world, ranking 10th globally for Open Economies. It has high productivity and competitiveness and a national culture that supports entrepreneurialism and enterprise.

Most regions in the UK have benefitted from improving economic prosperity over the last decade, with the East Midlands seeing the greatest rise due to a significant improvement in the quality of its investment environment, including an increased supply of capital for businesses. All regions have seen strong improvements in infrastructure and increasing labour force engagement.

There are strong regional patterns. Firstly, and unsurprisingly, it is the large cities that outperform other areas—London and Birmingham, are ranked highly, as well as many local authorities in the Commuter Belt around London. Secondly, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland all perform much more poorly than England; even urban local authorities within these regions find it challenging to provide a thriving economy for business. The top ranked local authority in each nation is Cardiff (284th), Edinburgh (212th), and Belfast (295th). Northern Ireland has seen the largest decline in this domain, with deteriorating labour market flexibility, an increasing regulatory burden, and businesses lacking confidence in obtaining finance through the banking sector.

Investment Environment (Global Rank: 7th)

At a national level, the UK has a high-quality environment for investment, with good property rights, investor protections, contract enforcement and few restrictions on international investment. As one of the world's global financial centres, the supply of capital is relatively good—for example there has been an improvement in how experts perceive the soundness of banks, and increased success at financing projects. Unsurprisingly, London has the best Investment Environment in the UK, followed by the South West and the South East.

However, there has been an overall national decline in the perception of banking services and demand for investment. For example, the confidence of SME managers in obtaining finance in the future has fallen from 71% to 61%. The percentage of small businesses attempting to raise external finance to fund new product development has fallen from 19% to 14%.

This has not been felt equally—demand for investment actually increased in the East Midlands, South East, London and Wales over the last decade. These regions, excluding Wales, have seen an increase in capital supply to meet the increasing demand. Wales has seen an increase in venture capital over the decade, from £13 per capita to £31 per capita, although there has been a decrease in the supply of loans.

Enterprise Conditions (Global Rank: 12th)

The UK has one of the best business environments in the world and it is frequently seen as an easy place for international corporations to do business. However, across the UK, local conditions for enterprise have declined. Regulation remains a national challenge, especially in the post-Brexit era. As we noted in a 2019 report, the tax code is complex and corporations spend a lot of time filing taxes.[4] A further challenge is skills shortages. On average, 26% of vacancies are generated by skills shortages within businesses; this is as high as 36% in the South West.

Despite these challenges, the UK's domestic market contestability has improved in recent years, largely because of increased local competition. The least competitive markets are in Wales, Northern Ireland, and Merseyside, with few businesses facing competition locally, although Merseyside is starting to see this improve.

Infrastructure (Global Rank: 7th)

Globally, the UK performs well in measures of infrastructure, and there has been steady improvement in the quality of the UK's infrastructure.

In communications, there has been a steady growth in internet speeds and availability. Average download speeds have risen ninefold from 8 Mb/s to 72.1 Mb/s over the last decade. However, while the UK has a strong communications network globally, it still lags behind some countries on download speeds. The most recent data, from February 2021, put the UK 49th in the world for its fixed broadband speed, and 31st for its mobile coverage.[5] The UK government has committed to increasing internet speeds and coverage, aiming to increase the amount of gigabit-capable broadband across the country.[6]

The UK also has a well-developed transport infrastructure, ranking eighth in the world. The UK is investing heavily in major rail projects such as Crossrail and HS2. Through the northern powerhouse and the Government's 'levelling up' agenda, there has been a raft of projects announced in the north of England, including the £4.8 billion Levelling Up fund recently announced.[7] One major example is the £380 million upgrade of the London to Newcastle A1, which could reduce journey times by 20%.[8] While much of this investment is directed at the north of England, there are other areas that have worse transport infrastructure. According to the UK index, the South West and Northern Ireland have the worst transport infrastructure, while the West Midlands metropolitan area has the best transport outside London.

Economic Quality (Global Rank: 16^{th})

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the UK economy was relatively strong. There had been steady (albeit low) growth, and declining unemployment. Over the 10 years prior to the pandemic, unemployment nearly halved, decreasing from 7.7% to 3.9% in 2019. The UK was also the second most dynamic economy in the world, with high capacity to attract talented people and many new businesses.

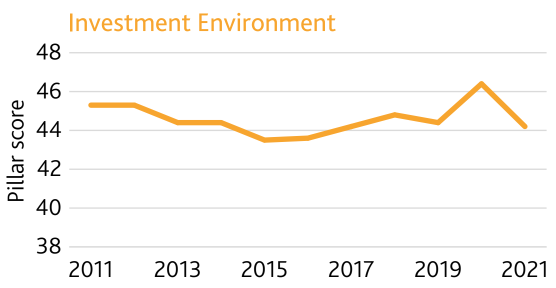
However, the response to the pandemic has shut down large parts of the economy and increased unemployment. Government debt has risen sharply. One of the challenges will be ensuring that central and local government remain able to fund important services. Throughout the 10 years prior to the pandemic, financial pressure on local authorities throughout the UK had been increasing following the post-financial crash austerity policies. The total percentage of service expenditure spent on social care has increased from an average of 28% to 35%. These pressures will likely increase in the coming years.

In some regions of the UK, there is low productivity, competitiveness and dynamism, particularly in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. These regions for example, have much lower numbers of new businesses and lower spending power per dwelling. In these three areas, the second-year business survival rate is 30 businesses per 10,000 people for Scotland, 27 for Wales, and 22 for Northern Ireland, compared with the UK average of 42.

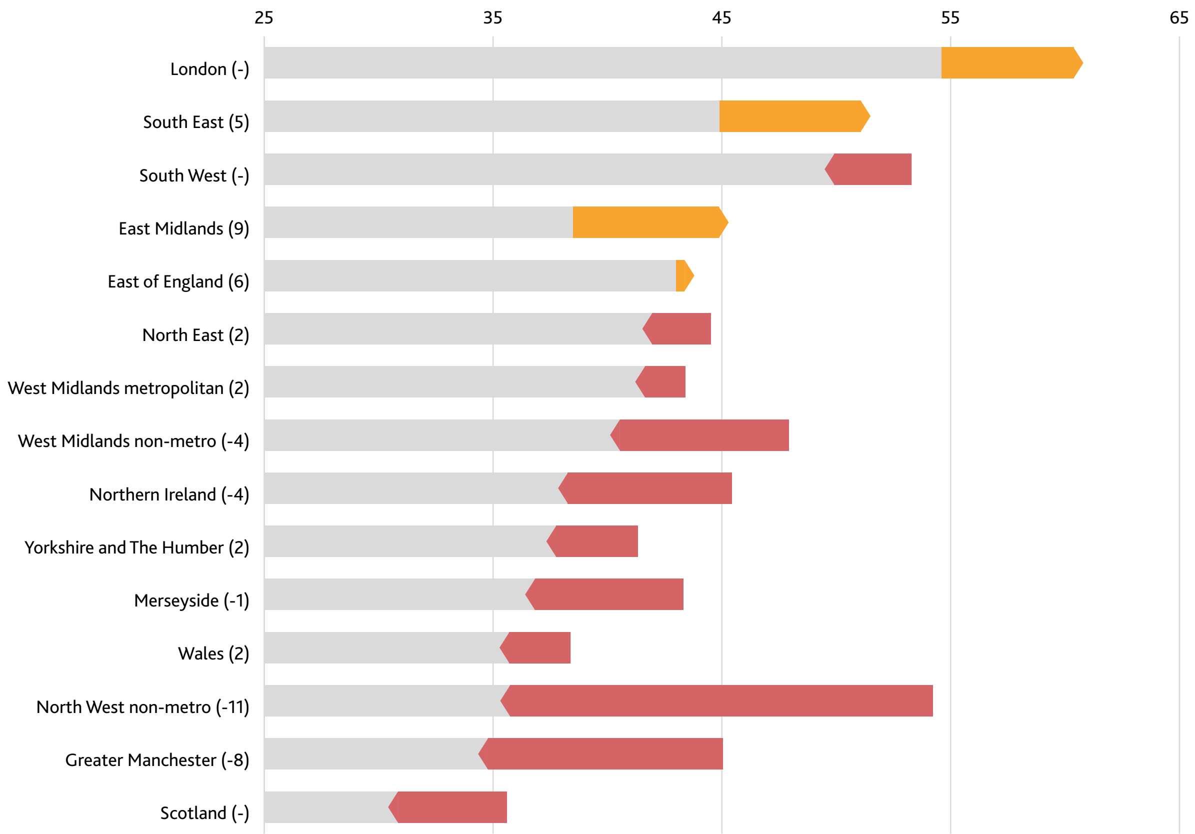
Credit: shutterstock.com

Investment Environment

Investment Environment captures the extent to which a variety of domestic and international capital is available for investment. An adequate supply of capital of the right type for investable propositions is essential to an area's economy.



Investment Environment: Regions score and score change (rank change), 2011-2021



ELEMENT (WEIGHT %)

Financing Services (20%) captures how responsive the banking sector is to the demands of business, by measuring the perceptions of the banking sector and experience.

Investment Demand (30%) captures the demand for new investment finance, through measuring demand for investment in new processes, new products and overseas expansion, from sources including banking and more sophisticated financial markets.

Capital Supply (50%) captures how much capital is available, and whether different types of financing (such as venture capital) are available. It also captures the extent to which a lack of finance availability threatens projects.

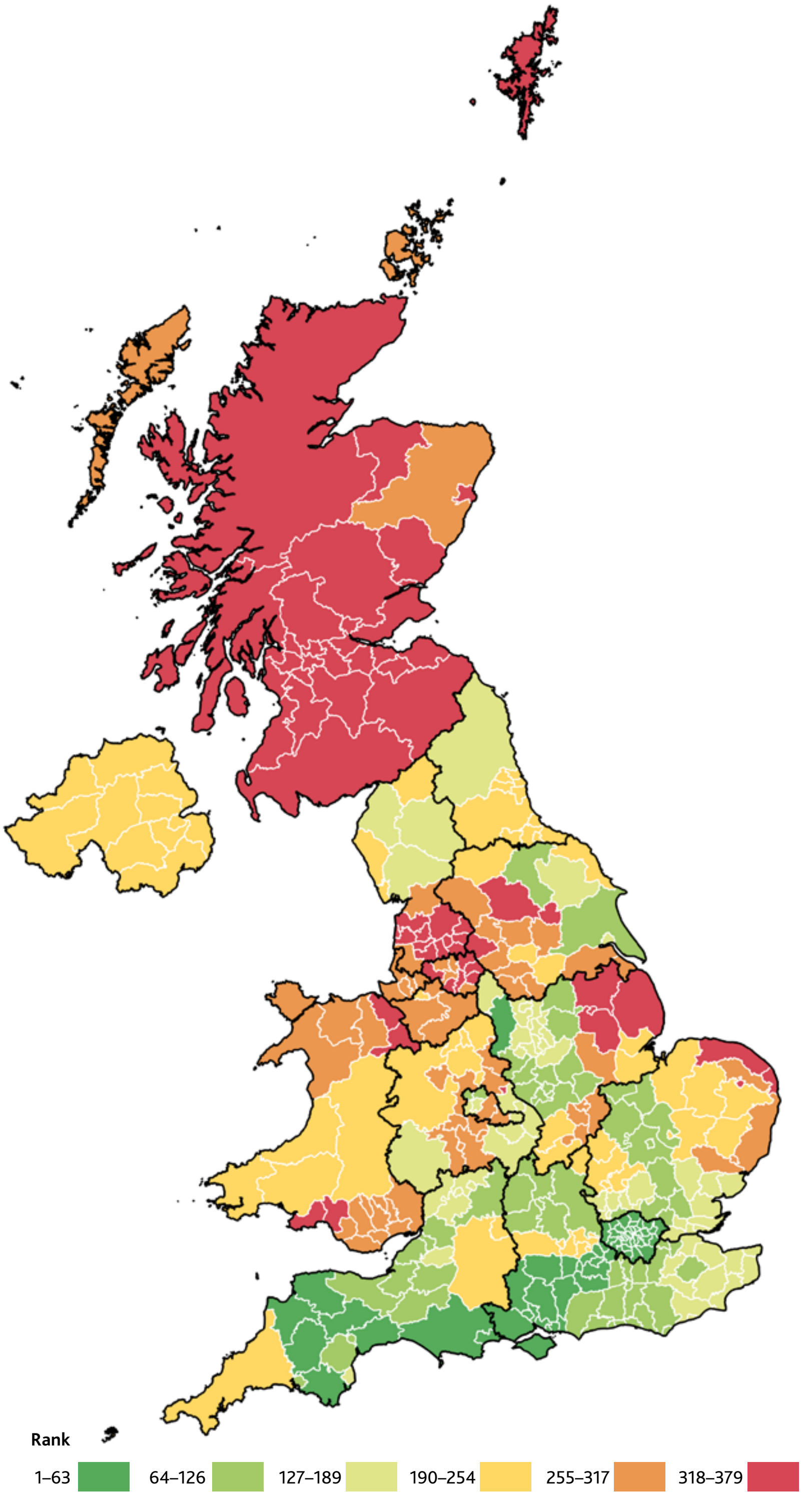
Investment Environment 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

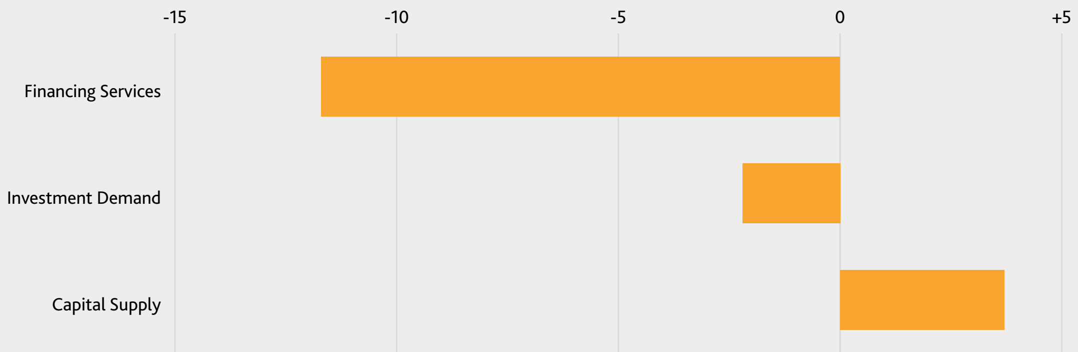
Rank	Local Authority
1	City of London (London)
2	Ealing (London)
3	Camden (London)
4	Islington (London)
5	Westminster (London)
6	Barnet (London)
7	Hammersmith and Fulham (London)
8	Test Valley (S East)
9	Harrow (London)
10	Richmond upon Thames (London)
11	Kensington and Chelsea (London)
12	Guildford (S East)
13	Winchester (S East)
14	East Hampshire (S East)
15	Brent (London)
16	Wandsworth (London)
17	Waverley (S East)
18	Enfield (London)
19	Hart (S East)
20	Runnymede (S East)

Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
360	Dundee City (Scot)
361	South Lanarkshire (Scot)
362	Shetland Islands (Scot)
363	East Dunbartonshire (Scot)
364	South Ayrshire (Scot)
365	North Lanarkshire (Scot)
366	Midlothian (Scot)
367	East Ayrshire (Scot)
368	Falkirk (Scot)
369	Fife (Scot)
370	West Dunbartonshire (Scot)
371	Fylde (N West)
372	Blackpool (N West)
373	Stirling (Scot)
374	Inverclyde (Scot)
375	Renfrewshire (Scot)
376	West Lothian (Scot)
377	North Ayrshire (Scot)
378	Clackmannanshire (Scot)
379	Highland (Scot)

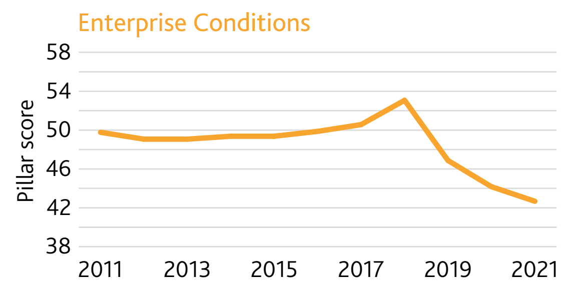


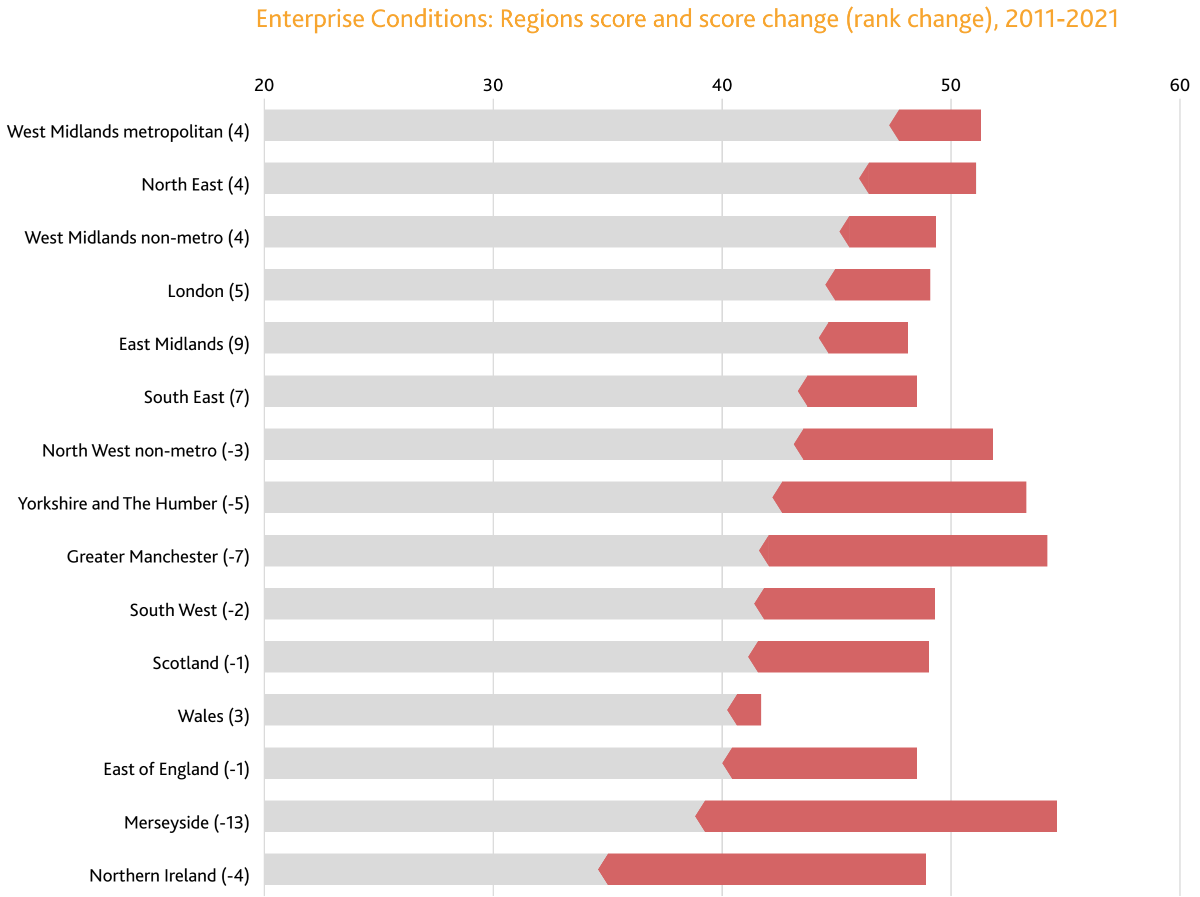
Change in Investment Environment, 2011-2021



Enterprise Conditions

Enterprise Conditions captures the degree to which regulations enable businesses to start, compete, and expand. Contestable markets with low barriers to entry are important for businesses to innovate and develop new ideas. This is essential for a dynamic and enterprising economy, where regulation enables business and responds to the changing needs of society.





ELEMENT (WEIGHT %)

Domestic Market Contestability (30%) examines how open the market is to new participants, versus protection of the incumbents.

Business Environment (40%) captures the legislative and policy driven factors that encourage entrepreneurialism, including property costs, compliance, and local government restrictions.

Labour Market Flexibility (30%) captures how dynamic and flexible the workplace is for both employer and employee.

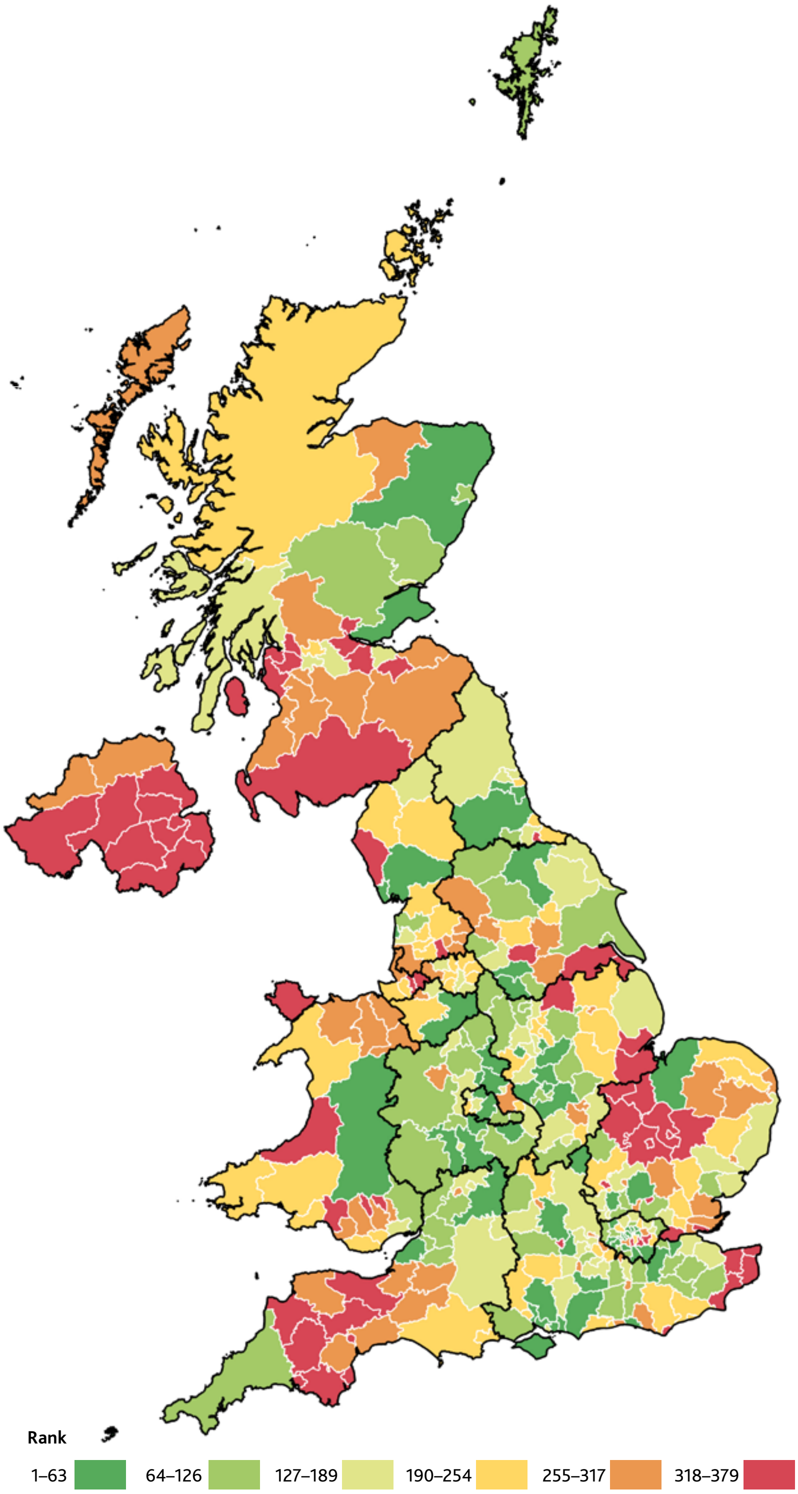
Enterprise Conditions 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

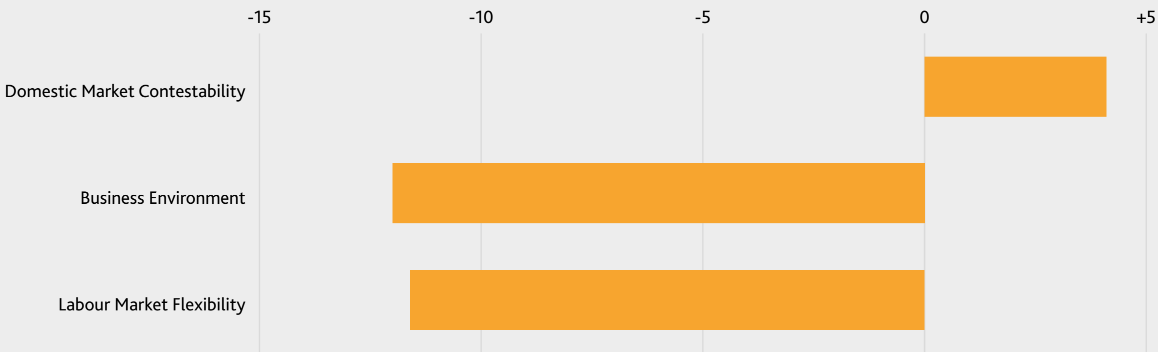
Rank	Local Authority
1	South Lakeland (N West)
2	County Durham (N East)
3	Gateshead (N East)
4	St Albans (E Eng)
5	Sevenoaks (S East)
6	Leicester (E Mid)
7	Blackpool (N West)
8	Hackney (London)
9	Westminster (London)
10	Wokingham (S East)
11	Fife (Scot)
12	Cheshire East (N West)
13	Islington (London)
14	Birmingham (W Mid Met)
15	Portsmouth (S East)
16	Bromley (London)
17	City of London (London)
18	Cannock Chase (W Mid)
19	Bromsgrove (W Mid)
20	Barrow-in-Furness (N West)

Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
360	Middlesbrough (N East)
361	Clackmannanshire (Scot)
362	Plymouth (S West)
363	Mid and East Antrim (N Ire)
364	Merthyr Tydfil (Wales)
365	Thanet (S East)
366	Falkirk (Scot)
367	Dover (S East)
368	Mid Ulster (N Ire)
369	North East Lincolnshire (Yrk & Hum)
370	West Lothian (Scot)
371	Renfrewshire (Scot)
372	Fenland (E Eng)
373	East Cambridgeshire (E Eng)
374	Thurrock (E Eng)
375	Boston (E Mid)
376	West Dunbartonshire (Scot)
377	Fermanagh and Omagh (N Ire)
378	Cambridge (E Eng)
379	Inverclyde (Scot)

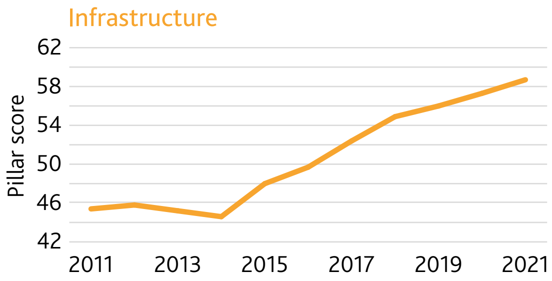


Change in Enterprise Conditions, 2011-2021

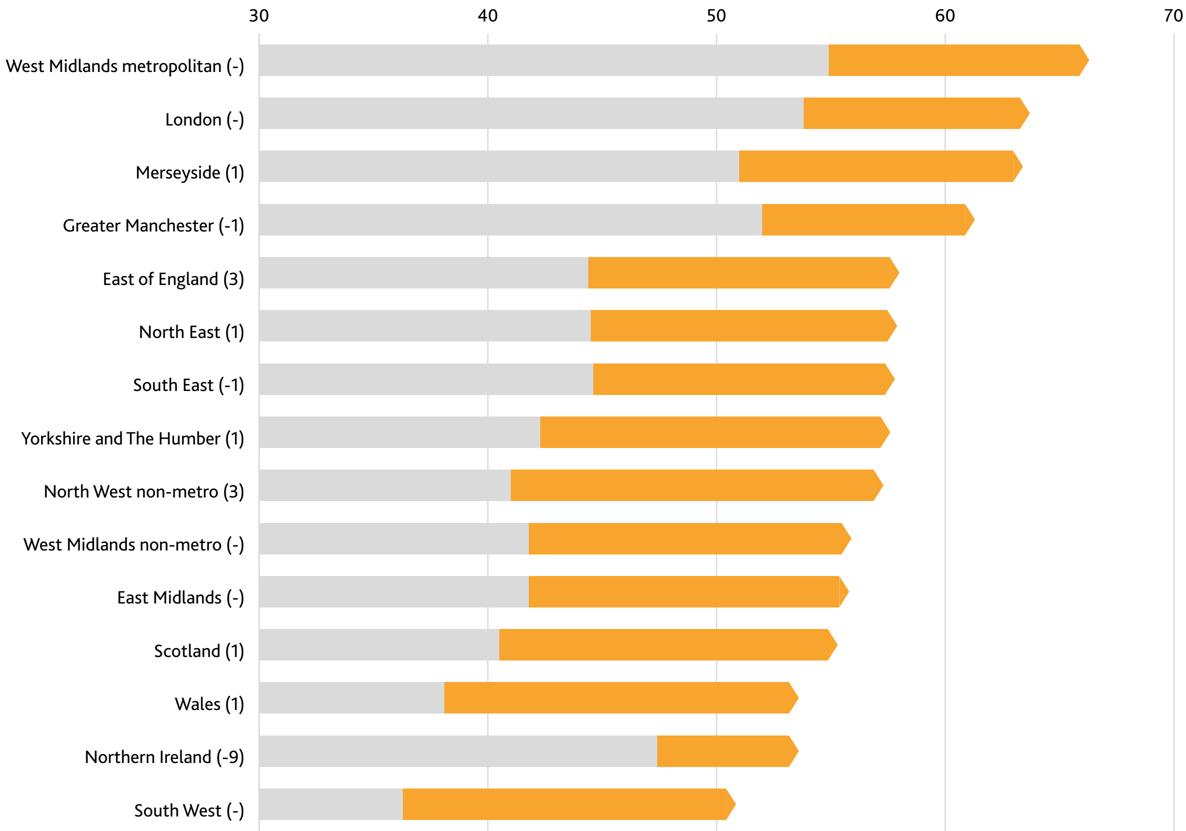


Infrastructure

Infrastructure captures the quality of communications, transport and resources infrastructure. Where markets have sufficient infrastructure, with easy communication, adequate water and electricity, and access to transport hubs, they can flourish. Such commerce leads to more competitive and efficient markets, allowing new products and ideas to be tested, funded, and commercialised, ultimately benefiting consumers through a greater variety of goods at more competitive prices.



Infrastructure: Regions score and score change (rank change), 2011-2021



ELEMENT (WEIGHT %)

Communications (40%) captures how well businesses can use the internet for commerce, measuring the speed of internet and how widespread access to superfast internet is.

Electricity & Gas (10%) assesses the access and affordability of electricity and gas services.

Water (5%) assesses the quality of water infrastructure and the reliability and cost of water.

Transport (45%) assesses the ease and efficiency for people and goods to travel within the UK. This measures the quality, diversity, and penetration of road and rail transport within a local authority, as well as access to key transport hubs.

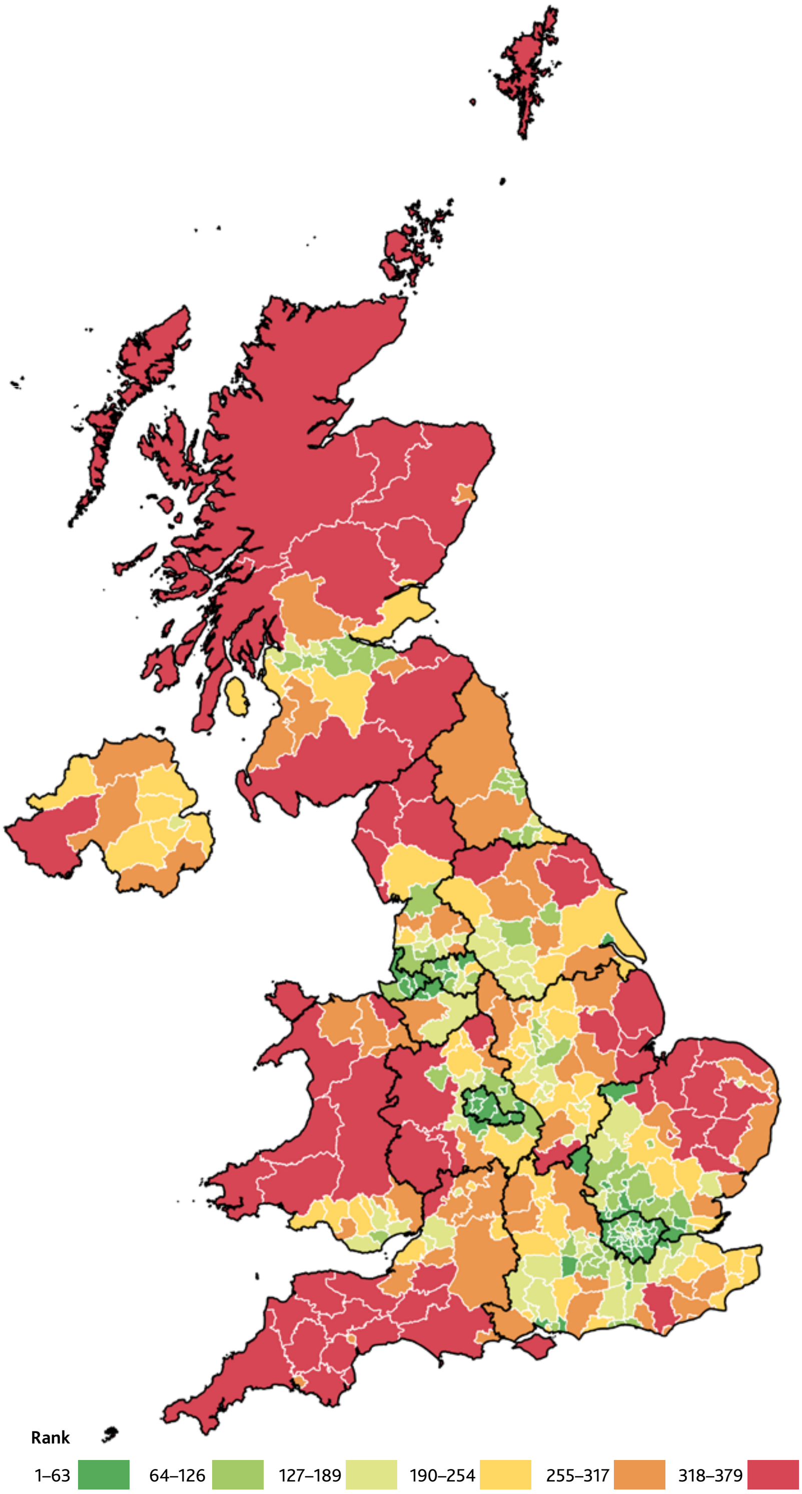
Infrastructure 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

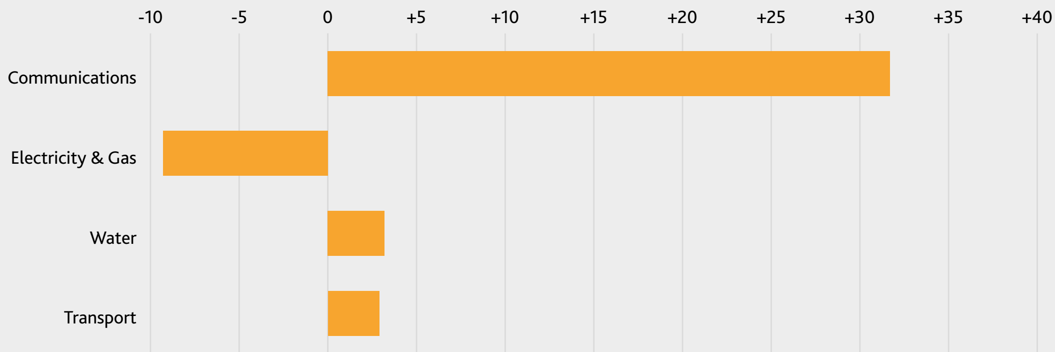
Rank	Local Authority
1	Havering (London)
2	Hertsmere (E Eng)
3	Watford (E Eng)
4	Warrington (N West)
5	Harlow (E Eng)
6	Crawley (S East)
7	Birmingham (W Mid Met)
8	Milton Keynes (S East)
9	Richmond upon Thames (London)
10	Solihull (W Mid Met)
11	Dudley (W Mid Met)
12	Hillingdon (London)
13	Sandwell (W Mid Met)
14	Waltham Forest (London)
15	St. Helens (M'side)
16	Hounslow (London)
17	Nuneaton and Bedworth (W Mid)
18	Wolverhampton (W Mid Met)
19	Dartford (S East)
20	Merton (London)

Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
360	Powys (Wales)
361	Mendip (S West)
362	Aberdeenshire (Scot)
363	Highland (Scot)
364	South Somerset (S West)
365	Forest of Dean (S West)
366	Scottish Borders (Scot)
367	Richmondshire (Yrk & Hum)
368	Ceredigion (Wales)
369	Eden (N West)
370	Herefordshire, County of (W Mid)
371	South Hams (S West)
372	North Devon (S West)
373	Mid Devon (S West)
374	Isles of Scilly (S West)
375	West Devon (S West)
376	Na h-Eileanan Siar (Scot)
377	Torridge (S West)
378	Shetland Islands (Scot)
379	Orkney Islands (Scot)

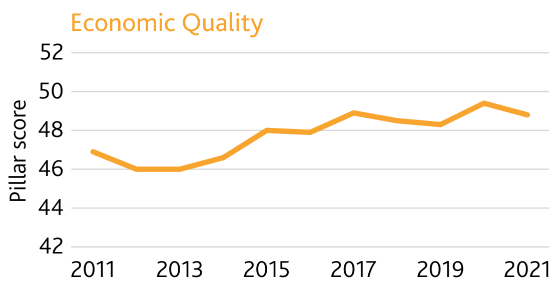


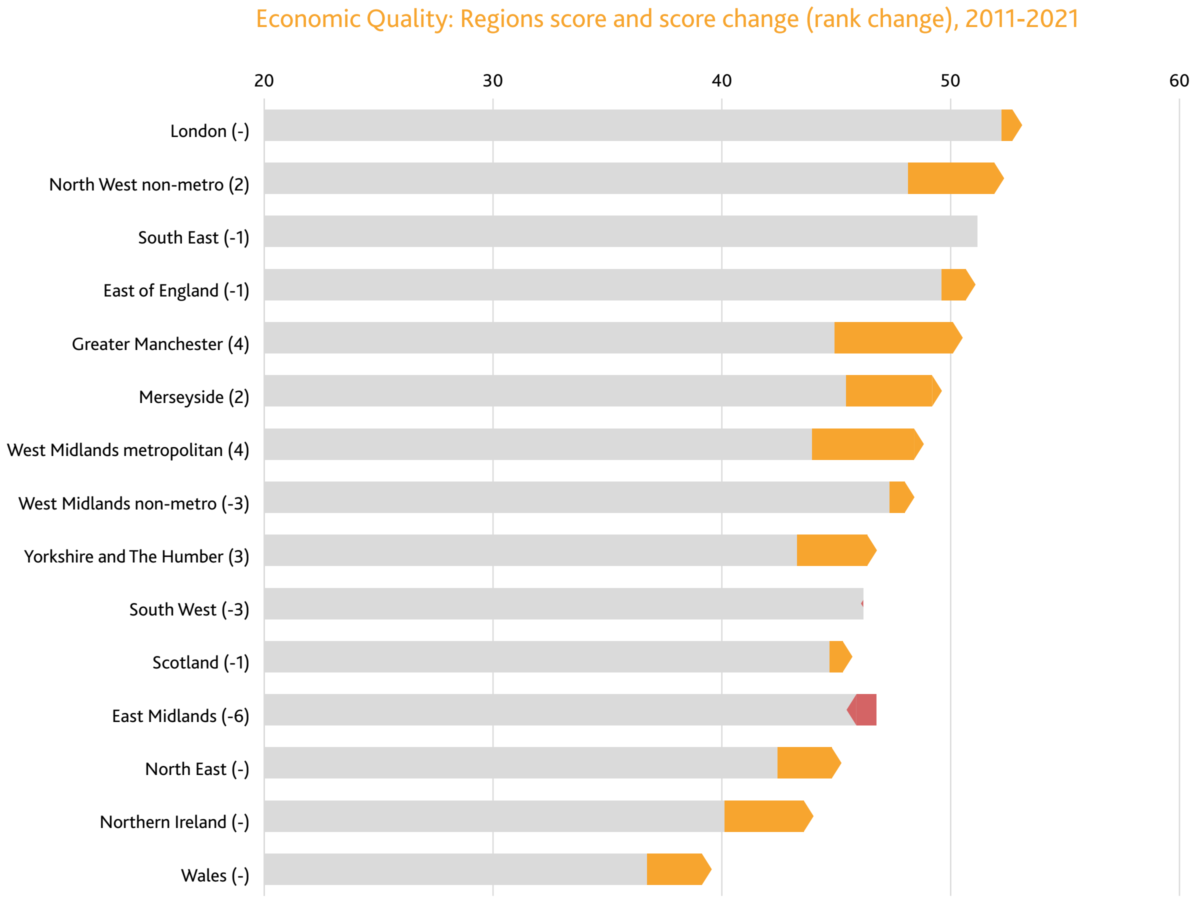
Change in Infrastructure, 2011-2021



Economic Quality

Economic Quality reflects how well a local economy is equipped to generate wealth sustainably and with the full engagement of its workforce. A strong economy is dependent on the production of a diverse range of valuable goods and services and high labour force participation.





ELEMENT (WEIGHT %)

Fiscal Sustainability (20%) assesses the ability of a local government to sustain its current spending, tax, and other policies in the medium to long term.

Macroeconomic Stability (10%) captures the stability of the local economy, measuring key elements of the economy including the GVA per capita growth rate, inactivity shocks, economic shrinkage, and SME growth.

Productivity and Competitiveness (30%) captures the efficiency with which inputs can be converted into outputs. Competition enhances productivity by forcing firms to innovate new ways to reduce cost and time constraints.

Dynamism (20%) captures the level of innovation and competition that occurs within a local authority by measuring the churn of businesses—the number of new start-ups entering and failed firms exiting an economy.

Labour Force Engagement (20%) covers the rates of unemployment, economic activity rates, job satisfaction, and degree of part-time and non-permanent employment.

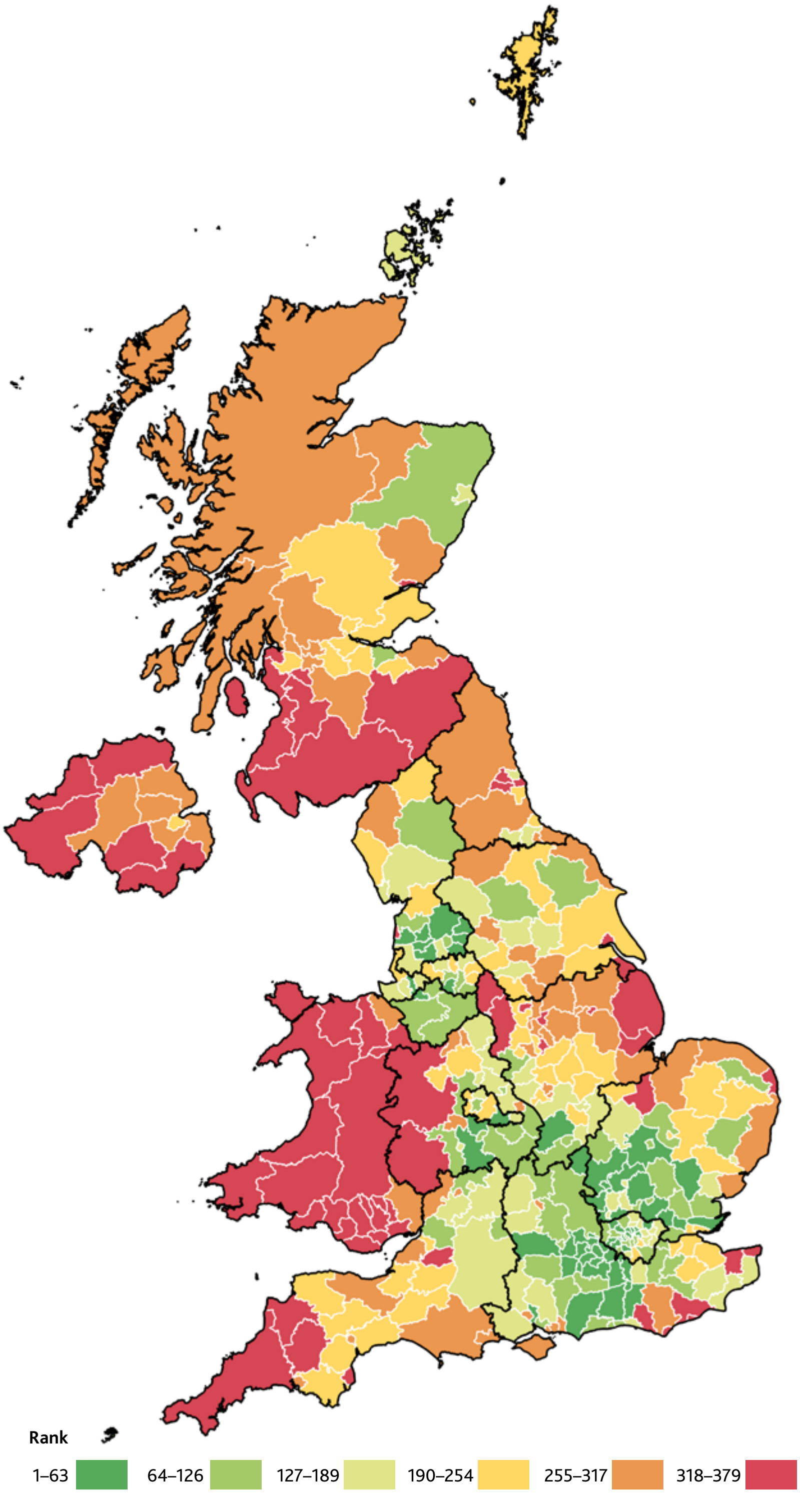
Economic Quality 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

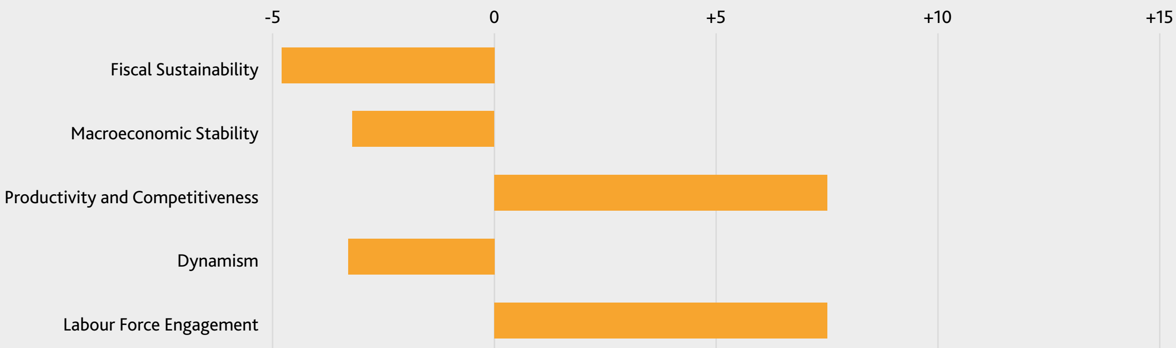
Rank	Local Authority
1	City of London (London)
2	Camden (London)
3	South Ribble (N West)
4	Islington (London)
5	Westminster (London)
6	Crawley (S East)
7	Brentwood (E Eng)
8	South Cambridgeshire (E Eng)
9	Hackney (London)
10	Elmbridge (S East)
11	Milton Keynes (S East)
12	Hertsmere (E Eng)
13	Tower Hamlets (London)
14	Hounslow (London)
15	Epping Forest (E Eng)
16	Surrey Heath (S East)
17	Richmond upon Thames (London)
18	Mole Valley (S East)
19	Braintree (E Eng)
20	Epsom and Ewell (S East)

Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
360	Eastbourne (S East)
361	Thanet (S East)
362	Nottingham (E Mid)
363	Chesterfield (E Mid)
364	Merthyr Tydfil (Wales)
365	East Lindsey (E Mid)
366	Rhondda Cynon Taf (Wales)
367	Powys (Wales)
368	Dundee City (Scot)
369	Torfaen (Wales)
370	Pembrokeshire (Wales)
371	Denbighshire (Wales)
372	Lincoln (E Mid)
373	Swansea (Wales)
374	Blaenau Gwent (Wales)
375	Carmarthenshire (Wales)
376	Torbay (S West)
377	Conwy (Wales)
378	Gwynedd (Wales)
379	Ceredigion (Wales)



Change in Economic Quality, 2011-2021



Defining Empowered People

Empowered People captures the quality of people's lived experiences and the conditions present that enable individuals to reach their full potential through self-determination. This domain starts with the resources required for a basic level of wellbeing, and then considers, health, education outcomes and access to a safe and clean natural environment. Many of these issues are inter-related. The four distinct pillars throw light on the different experiences of people who live in different local authorities to allow us to identify areas of the country that are successfully unlocking prosperity and those that are not. The four pillars are:

Living Conditions This captures the conditions necessary for individuals to attain a basic level of wellbeing. It includes material resources, housing provision, the extent to which people benefit from digital connectedness, the ease of access to local amenities, and the extent to which people live and work in a physically safe environment. These enable people to be productive members of society, acquire prosperity and build a flourishing life.

Health This captures health service provision and people's health outcomes, including their quality of mental health and physical health, which contribute to life expectancy. It assesses behavioural and physiological risk factors that affect the quality of people's health as well as the quality of healthcare provision by measuring care systems and preventative interventions. For an area to prosper, its residents must have good physical and mental health and well-run health and care systems.

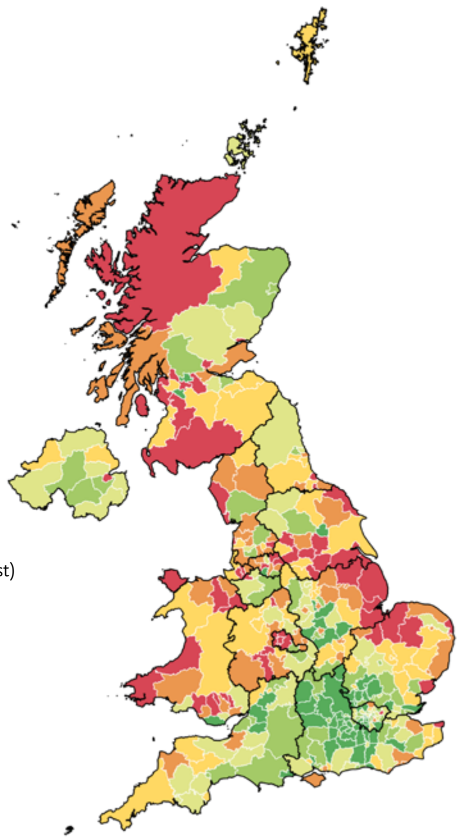
Education This captures the enrolment, attendance, and attainment outcomes at four different stages of the education system—pre-primary, primary, secondary, and tertiary. It also includes the level of adult skills in the population. Education allows people to lead more fulfilling lives and a more educated population is more able to contribute to society. Over the long term, education drives economic development and growth while improving social and health outcomes, as well as leading to higher levels of political and civic engagement.

Natural Environment This captures the quality of people's surrounding environment, which has a direct impact on their ability to flourish. It measures the extent to which natural ecosystems are sustainably managed. A well-managed rural environment yields crops, material for construction, wildlife and food, and sources of energy.

Empowered People 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
1	Wokingham (S East)
2	East Renfrewshire (Scot)
3	Richmond upon Thames (London)
4	Waverley (S East)
5	St Albans (E Eng)
6	Epsom and Ewell (S East)
7	City of London (London)
8	Woking (S East)
9	Rutland (E Mid)
10	Guildford (S East)
11	Bracknell Forest (S East)
12	Windsor and Maidenhead (S East)
13	Isles of Scilly (S West)
14	Kingston upon Thames (London)
15	Reigate and Banstead (S East)
16	East Dunbartonshire (Scot)
17	Wandsworth (London)
18	Bath and North East Somerset (S West)
19	South Gloucestershire (S West)
20	Mole Valley (S East)



Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
360	Fenland (E Eng)
361	Neath Port Talbot (Wales)
362	Glasgow City (Scot)
363	North East Lincolnshire (Yrk & Hum)
364	Wolverhampton (W Mid Met)
365	East Lindsey (E Mid)
366	Hartlepool (N East)
367	Burnley (N West)
368	Doncaster (Yrk & Hum)
369	Blaenau Gwent (Wales)
370	Boston (E Mid)
371	Merthyr Tydfil (Wales)
372	South Holland (E Mid)
373	Sandwell (W Mid Met)
374	Middlesbrough (N East)
375	Great Yarmouth (E Eng)
376	Kingston upon Hull, City of (Yrk & Hum)
377	Stoke-on-Trent (W Mid)
378	Knowsley (M'side)
379	Blackpool (N West)

Rank

1–63 64–126 127–189

190–254 255–317 318–379

Credit: shutterstock.com

The percentage of secondary students achieving level 2 qualifications in English and maths has increased from 56% to 70% over 10 years.

Empowered People in the UK

People in the UK enjoy some of the best living conditions in the world—they have access to high quality healthcare, world-leading education institutions and a rapidly improving natural environment.

Across the domain of Empowered People, we find that all regions of the UK have seen an improvement, led by Northern Ireland, which has seen a major improvement in education. Education is improving across the country, mortality rates are declining, less waste is ending up in landfills, and fewer pollutants are entering the atmosphere. Larger numbers of people now live in a good standard of housing, and more people now have access to digital technology.

Living Conditions (Global Rank: 10th)

Living conditions are improving in all regions, with the largest gains in some metropolitan areas. Northern Ireland has seen the greatest improvement in overall living conditions, including a reduction in the proportion of people living in poverty, from 25% to 21%. An increasing proportion of individuals are in persistent poverty and more children are eligible to receive free school meals. Portsmouth has seen the proportion of children on free school meals double to 22%.

Despite this, there are many positive trends in Living Conditions, with just 11% of people living in hazardous housing, a reduction of over a third in the last decade. The quality of housing has improved, with fewer homes in need of urgent repairs and larger numbers of more energy-efficient homes, though housing pressure has led to an increase in homeless households from 1.4 to 2 of all households per 100,000. Whilst rough sleeping has increased across the decade, we have seen a decrease in the last year as a result of initiatives put in place during Covid-19. From its highpoint in 2017, with 8 rough sleepers per 100,000 people, the number has fallen to 4.6 per 100,000.

Overall, the UK has seen more individuals able to connect digitally, with increasing 4G coverage and a greater proportion of regular internet users.

Health (Global Rank: 25th)

Health has deteriorated across all regions over the last decade, even before Covid-19. Life expectancy has stalled, especially for women in disadvantaged areas where it is in decline.[9] There are major inequalities in the years of good health experienced by individuals; people in more deprived areas spend more of their lives in ill-health.[10] For example, the most prosperous local authority, Wokingham, ranks 55th for Physical Health, whereas the least prosperous, Blackpool (379th), is also the lowest ranking local authority in terms of Physical Health.

The quality of the healthcare system has also deteriorated on a number of metrics. There have been decreases in the number of care home beds and in the percentage of people that are admitted, discharged or treated within four hours of attending A&E. There have also been decreases in the proportion of people who are treated within 18 weeks for routine procedures or within 62 days for urgent cancer treatment.

Nevertheless, there are encouraging signs for future health, with clear reductions in risk factors such as smoking and physical inactivity. Smoking rates in the UK are among the lowest in the EU.[11] After London, Scotland has seen the smallest deterioration in overall health, which means that it now ranks 5th out of 15 regions. Scotland's most significant improvement has been in raising people's life expectancy. In Scotland there are fewer still births, and infant mortality has now fallen to 3.3 per 1,000 live births, compared with a UK average of 3.8.

Covid-19 has had a profound effect on health in the UK in the last 18 months. Alongside millions of infections and thousands of deaths from Sars-CoV-2, there has been increased strain on the health care system and effects on mental and physical health. For example, in March 2021 it is estimated that 1.7% of the UK population had self-reported long COVID symptoms.[12] Furthermore, social distancing measures to control the spread of Covid-19 are likely to have had large effects on health and health inequalities.[13] For example, the number of people waiting for surgical procedures more than doubled, with nearly 10 million people in the UK on waiting lists.[14] For many people these prolonged waits could have further consequences for health.

Education (Global Rank: 17th)

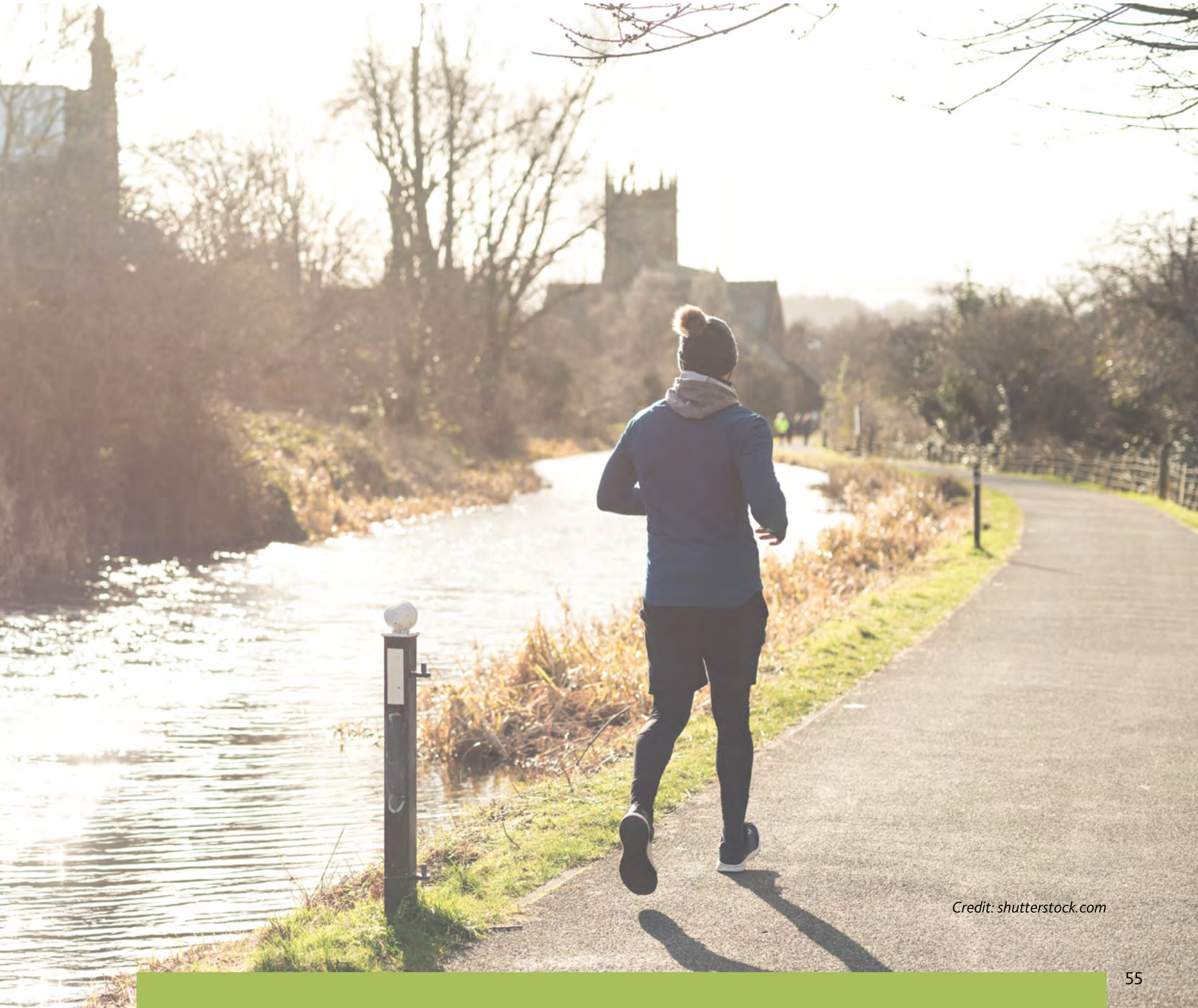
Educational standards have improved throughout the decade. All regions have experienced improvements in educational outcomes at secondary level and in the skill levels of the adult population. However, there are still significant discrepancies in the educational achievement of low-income students at both primary and secondary level. For example, the percentage of low-income secondary students achieving level 2 English and maths qualifications is just 44%, compared with 70% of all secondary pupils. In rural areas, the disadvantage gap is often wider. Some local authorities, such as Windsor and Maidenhead, have had notable success in closing the gap.[15]

Northern Ireland and Wales have seen the greatest improvements and are ranked 2nd and 5th best regions nationally. While they have both seen improvements in the qualification level of their working age population, the factors driving their schools' improvement are very different. In Northern Ireland the improvement has been driven primarily by an increase in the proportion of secondary students achieving a grade C or higher in GCSE English and mathematics. In contrast, Wales has seen dramatic improvements in the proportion of students reaching the expected standard in literacy and numeracy at the end of primary school and only modest improvements in attainment at the secondary level. There has also been a narrowing of the attainment gap for low-income students at primary level in Wales. However, there have only been modest improvements in attainment at the secondary level.

Natural Environment (Global Rank: 25th)

All regions within the UK have seen their natural environment improve. Nationwide, a reduction in emissions and exposure to air pollution is good news for the quality of life for individuals in the UK. The decreases in CO_2 emissions in the UK are a result of the changes in fuel mix for electricity generation as more is invested in renewable energy sources, lower energy demand due to greater energy efficiency, and a decline in the importance of energy-intensive industry.[16] The West Midlands non-metropolitan area is the region that has seen the greatest improvement for emissions.

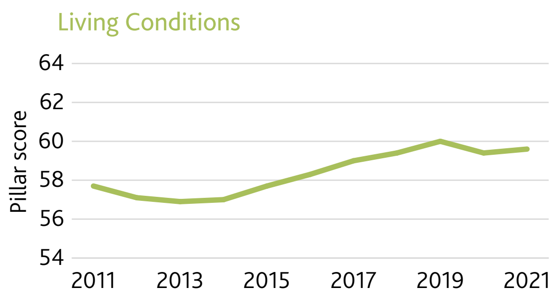
Scotland has had a fourfold increase in the area of woodland that is being planted, and it is the highest ranked region for Natural Environment. With the UK Government having pledged to plant an additional 75,000 acres of trees a year by the end of the next Parliament, the area of woodland should continue to grow.[17] There has been a decrease in the number of people using woodland areas for recreational purposes over the last decade.

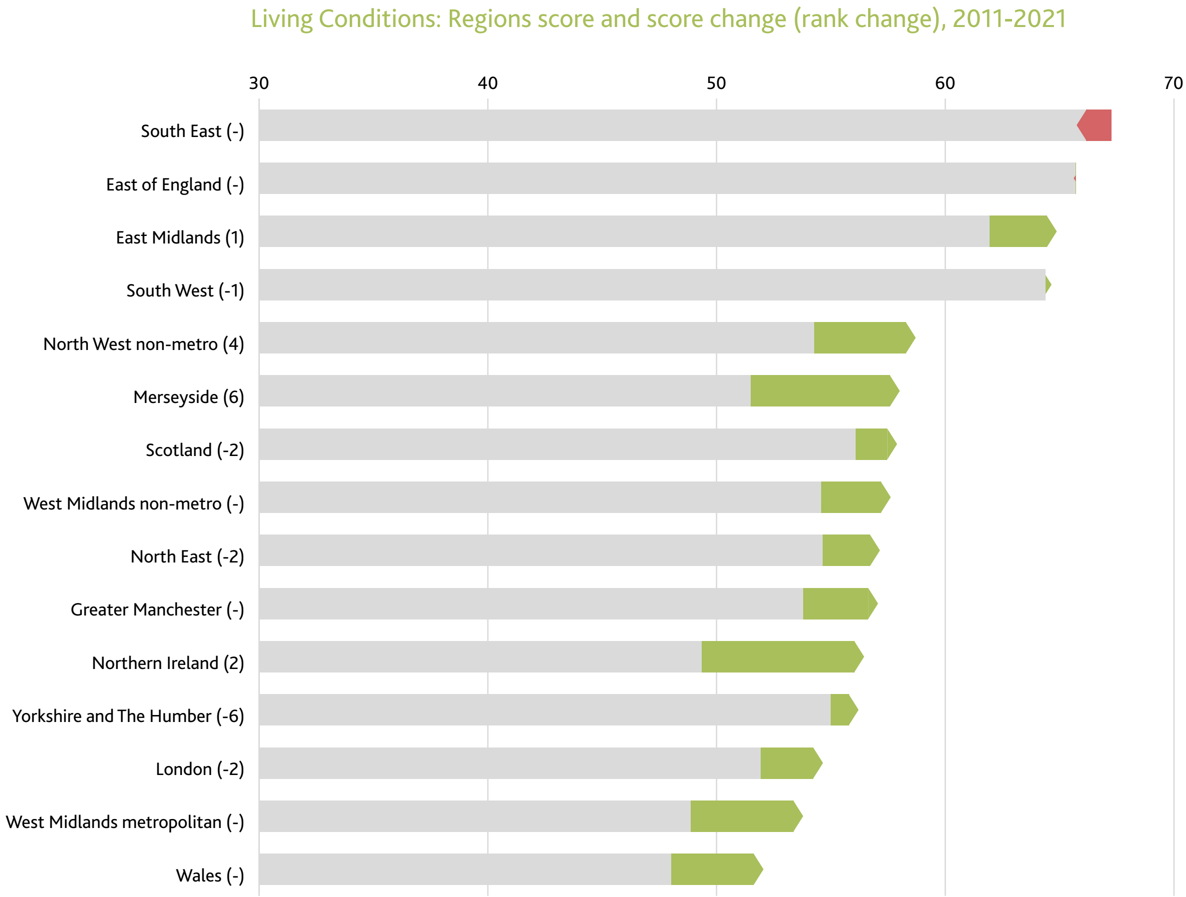


Credit: shutterstock.com

Living Conditions

Living Conditions reflects the extent to which a reasonable quality of life is extended to the whole population. This includes being free from poverty through access to sufficient resources, access to adequate housing, safety at work and in the lived environment, and the ability to connect and engage in core activities in society.





ELEMENT (WEIGHT %)

Material Resources (30%) captures the proportion of individuals with the minimum amount of resources that is necessary to survive and attain wellbeing. This element also measures the number of children in poverty.

Shelter (25%) reflects the quality of accommodation and the impact of the accommodation environment on the health of residents. It includes measures of sleeping rough, homelessness, overcrowding, housing availability, hazardous housing, and energy efficiency.

Access to Local Amenities (15%) captures the extent to which individuals are able to access the core services that citizens of a society require, such as school, local shops, and the GP.

Digital Connectedness (15%) captures the extent to which individuals are able to interact with society through digital technology.

Protection from Harm (15%) captures the safety of the environment that individuals live and work in, measuring injuries and accidental deaths from workplace-based activities.

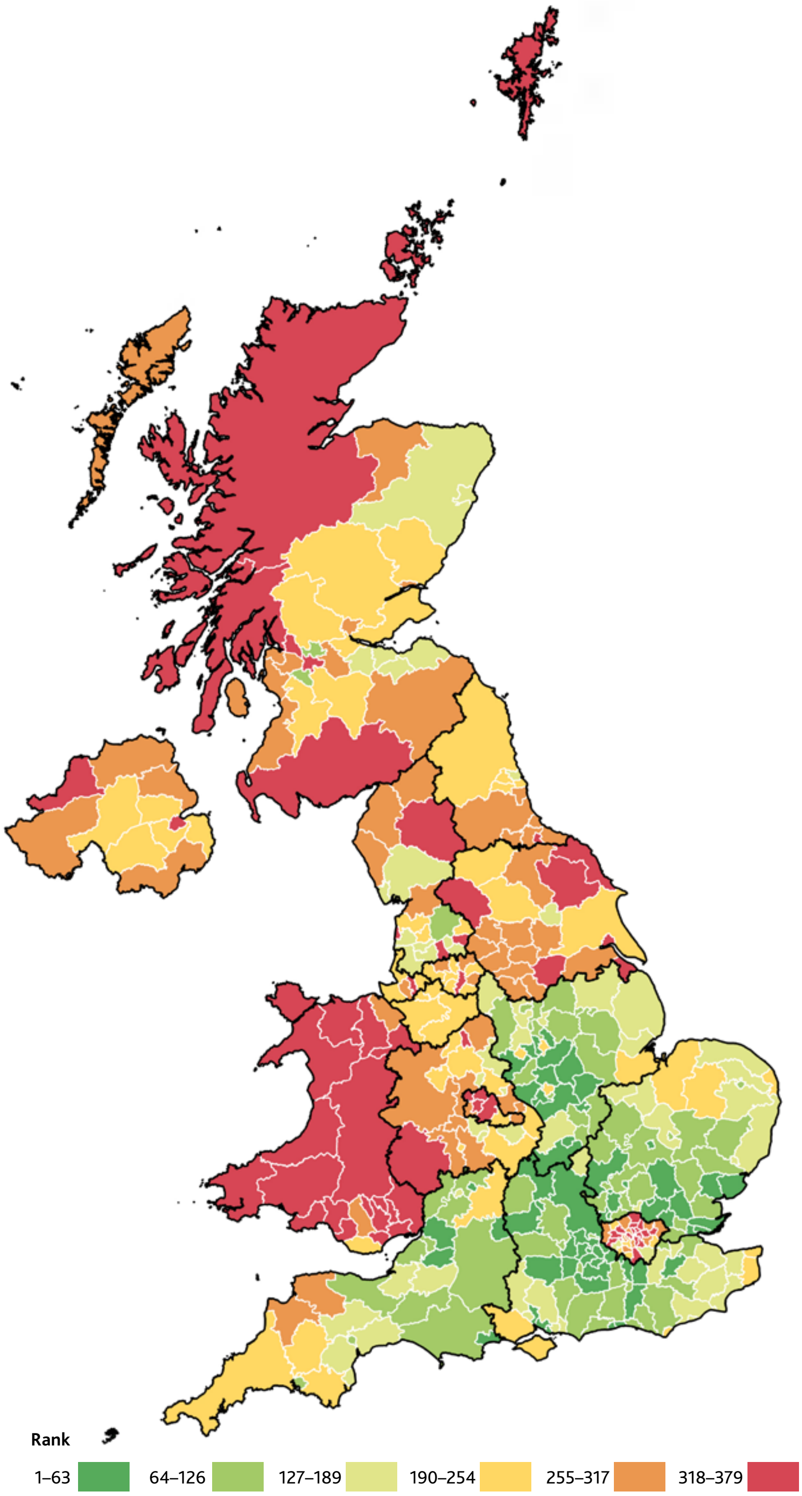
Living Conditions 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

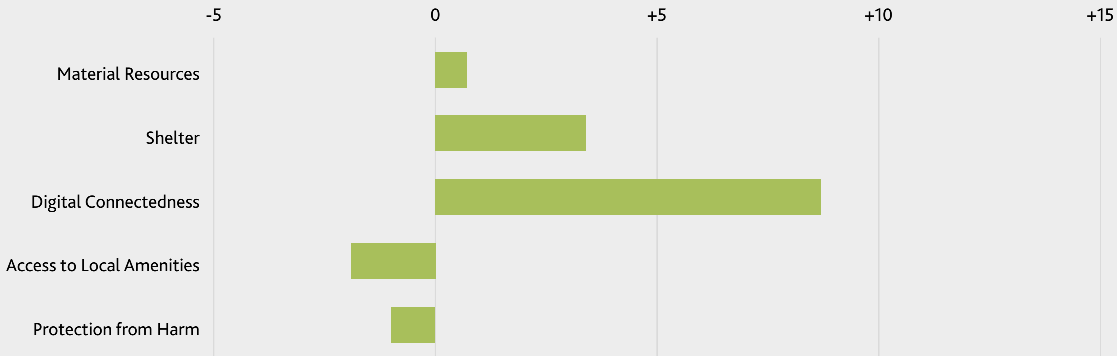
Rank	Local Authority
1	Wokingham (S East)
2	Brentwood (E Eng)
3	Epsom and Ewell (S East)
4	Watford (E Eng)
5	Windsor and Maidenhead (S East)
6	Reigate and Banstead (S East)
7	Woking (S East)
8	Bracknell Forest (S East)
9	Blaby (E Mid)
10	Oxford (S East)
11	Isles of Scilly (S West)
12	St Albans (E Eng)
13	Spelthorne (S East)
14	Mid Sussex (S East)
15	South Derbyshire (E Mid)
16	South Gloucestershire (S West)
17	Worthing (S East)
18	Broxtowe (E Mid)
19	Adur (S East)
20	Rochford (E Eng)

Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
360	Birmingham (W Mid Met)
361	Shetland Islands (Scot)
362	Blackpool (N West)
363	Hackney (London)
364	Conwy (Wales)
365	Haringey (London)
366	Highland (Scot)
367	Barking and Dagenham (London)
368	Lewisham (London)
369	Middlesbrough (N East)
370	Bridgend (Wales)
371	Enfield (London)
372	Torfaen (Wales)
373	Kingston upon Hull, City of (Yrk & Hum)
374	Isle of Anglesey (Wales)
375	Powys (Wales)
376	Pembrokeshire (Wales)
377	Denbighshire (Wales)
378	Ceredigion (Wales)
379	Carmarthenshire (Wales)

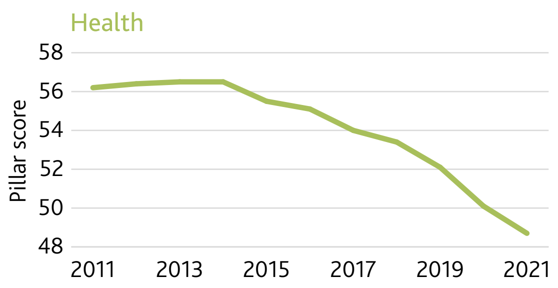


Change in Living Conditions elements, 2011-2021

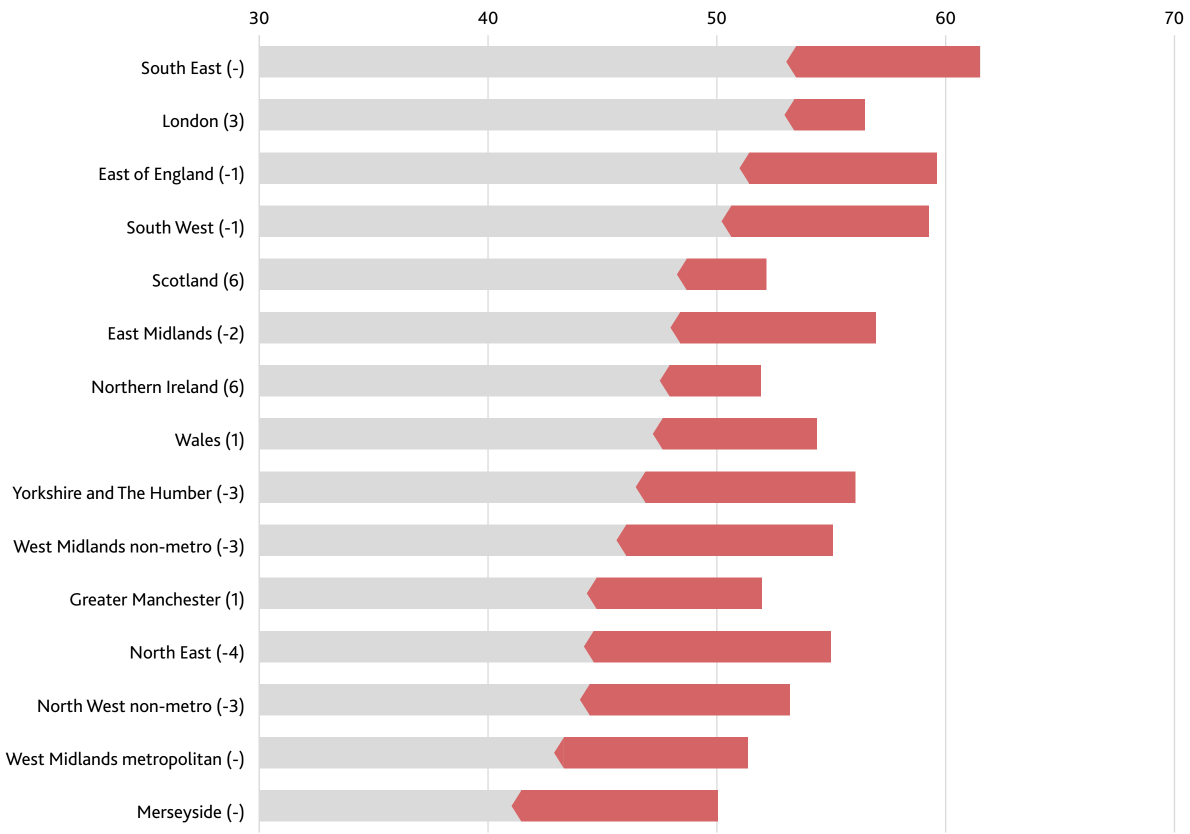


Health

Health captures the extent to which people are healthy and have access to necessary services to maintain good health. Those who enjoy good physical and mental health report high levels of wellbeing, whilst poor health provides a major obstacle to people fulfilling their potential. The coverage and accessibility of effective health care, combined with behaviours that sustain a healthy lifestyle, are critical to both individual and societal prosperity.



Health: Regions score and score change (rank change), 2011-2021



ELEMENT (WEIGHT %)

Behavioural and Physiological Risk Factors (15%) assesses the set of physiological characteristics and lifestyle patterns that increase the likelihood of developing disease, injury or illness, or of suffering from premature death.

Preventative Interventions (15%) captures the extent to which a health system prevents diseases, illnesses, and other medical complications from occurring, to save many children and adults from an early death.

Care Systems (15%) assesses the ability of a health system to treat and cure diseases and illnesses, once they are present in the population.

Mental Health (15%) captures the level and burden of mental illness on the living population. Mental health can have a significant impact on an individual's wellbeing and ability to participate effectively in the labour market and in society more broadly.

Physical Health (20%) captures the level and burden of physical illness on the living population. Physical health can have a significant impact on an individual's wellbeing and ability to participate effectively in the labour market and in society more broadly.

Longevity (20%) captures the mortality rate of a country's population through different stages of life.

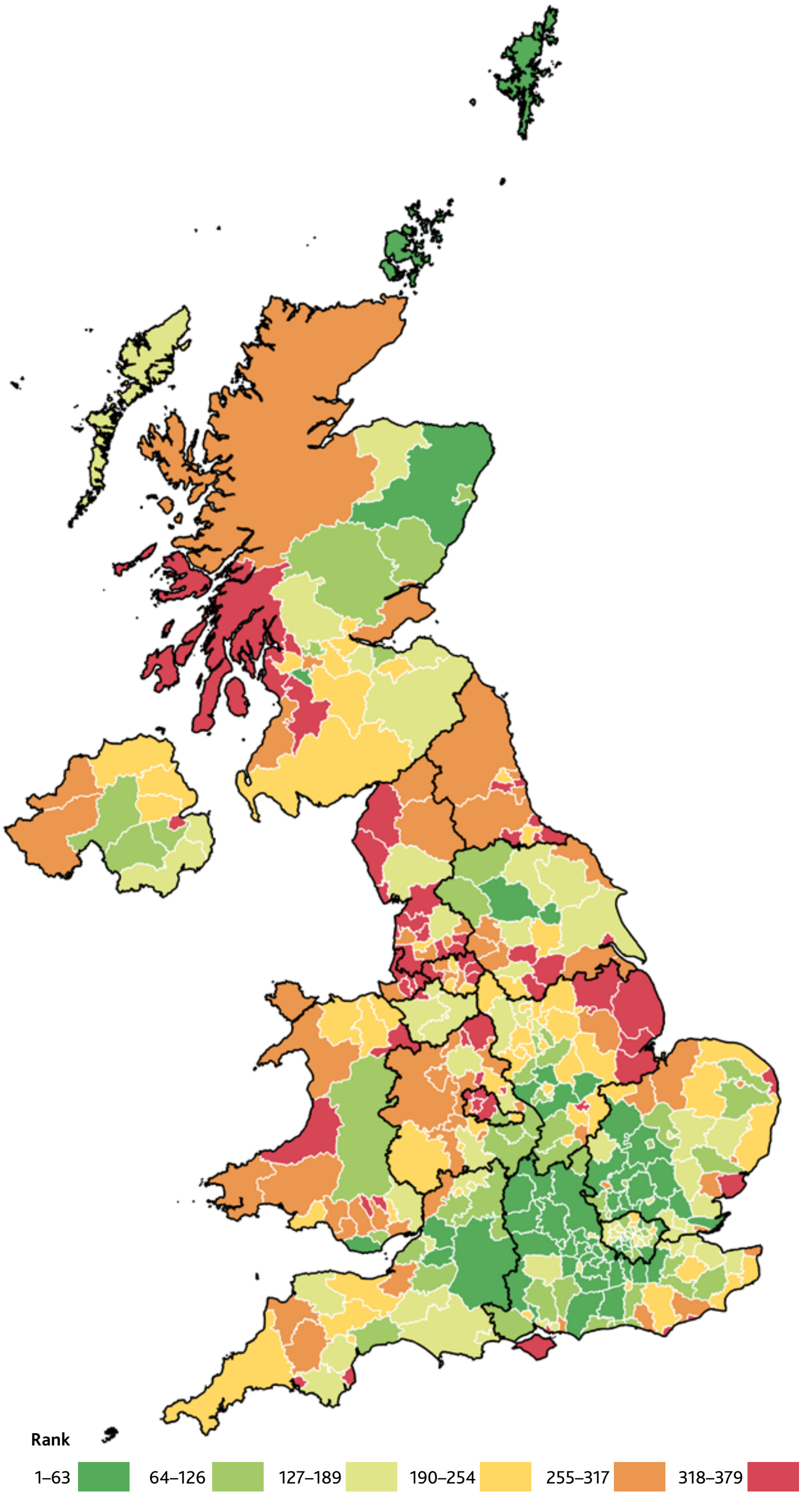
Health 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

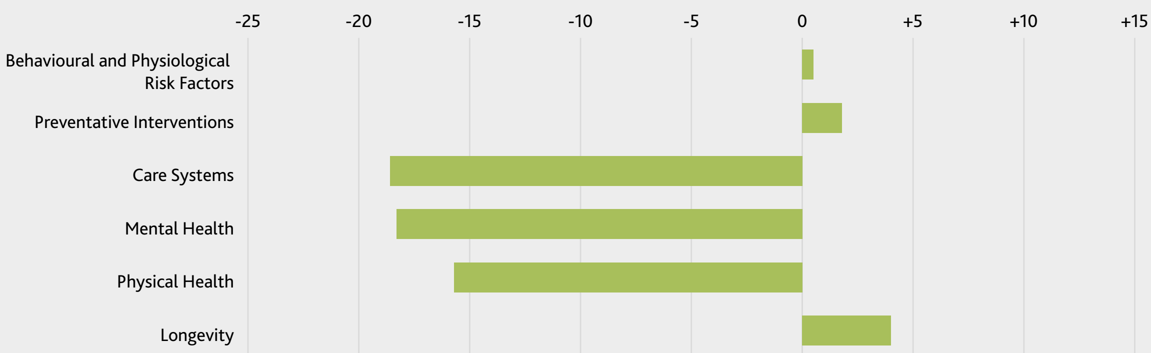
Rank	Local Authority
1	Wokingham (S East)
2	Isles of Scilly (S West)
3	Richmond upon Thames (London)
4	Waverley (S East)
5	Windsor and Maidenhead (S East)
6	Wandsworth (London)
7	Guildford (S East)
8	Mole Valley (S East)
9	West Berkshire (S East)
10	St Albans (E Eng)
11	Tandridge (S East)
12	Bracknell Forest (S East)
13	Surrey Heath (S East)
14	Elmbridge (S East)
15	East Hertfordshire (E Eng)
16	Kingston upon Thames (London)
17	Reigate and Banstead (S East)
18	Buckinghamshire (S East)
19	North Hertfordshire (E Eng)
20	Horsham (S East)

Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
360	Middlesbrough (N East)
361	Belfast (N Ire)
362	Knowsley (M'side)
363	Torbay (S West)
364	Wolverhampton (W Mid Met)
365	Kingston upon Hull, City of (Yrk & Hum)
366	East Lindsey (E Mid)
367	Tendring (E Eng)
368	Inverclyde (Scot)
369	Wyre (N West)
370	Barrow-in-Furness (N West)
371	Blackburn with Darwen (N West)
372	Liverpool (M'side)
373	Copeland (N West)
374	Lincoln (E Mid)
375	Boston (E Mid)
376	Hartlepool (N East)
377	Burnley (N West)
378	Stoke-on-Trent (W Mid)
379	Blackpool (N West)



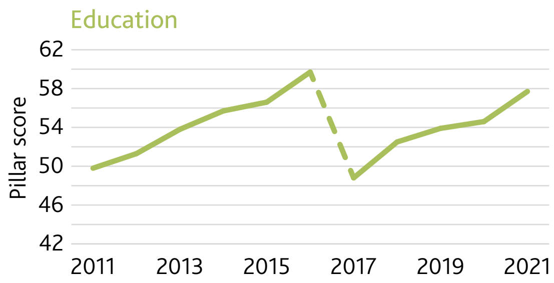
Change in Health elements, 2011-2021



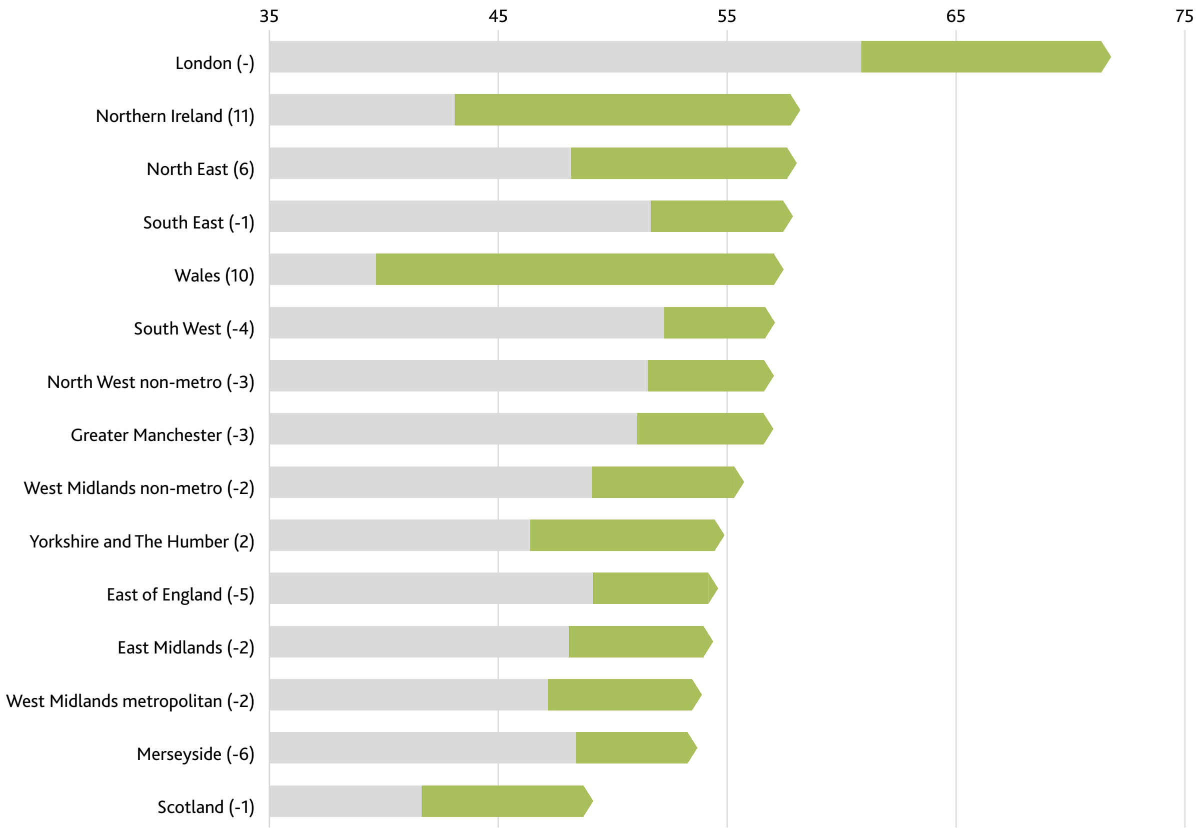
Education

Education is a building block for prosperous societies; the accumulation of skills and capabilities contributes to economic growth and education provides the opportunity for individuals to reach their potential, and live a more fulfilled and prosperous life. A better-educated population also leads to greater civic engagement and improved social outcomes—such as better health and lower crime rates.

Note that the sharp decline from 2016-2017 is due to a primary school curriculum change in England.



Education: Regions score and score change (rank change), 2011-2021



ELEMENT (WEIGHT %)

Pre-primary Education (10%) captures how well early education is attended and the educational outcomes of early childhood education. It supports the development of linguistic, cognitive, social and emotional skills.

Primary Education (30%) captures the provision and outcomes of primary education in a local authority area, including core literacy and numeracy skills.

Secondary Education (30%) captures provision and outcomes of secondary education in a local authority area, including core literacy and numeracy skills. Attaining level 2 qualification in English and Maths are an important step in an individual's educational journey opening up tertiary education opportunities as well as employment pathways.

Tertiary Education Provision (10%) captures the extent to which students from a particular local authority will go on to further education, either through apprenticeships or university.

Adult Skills (20%) captures the level of skills in a local adult population, by measuring the number of adults with different levels of qualifications.

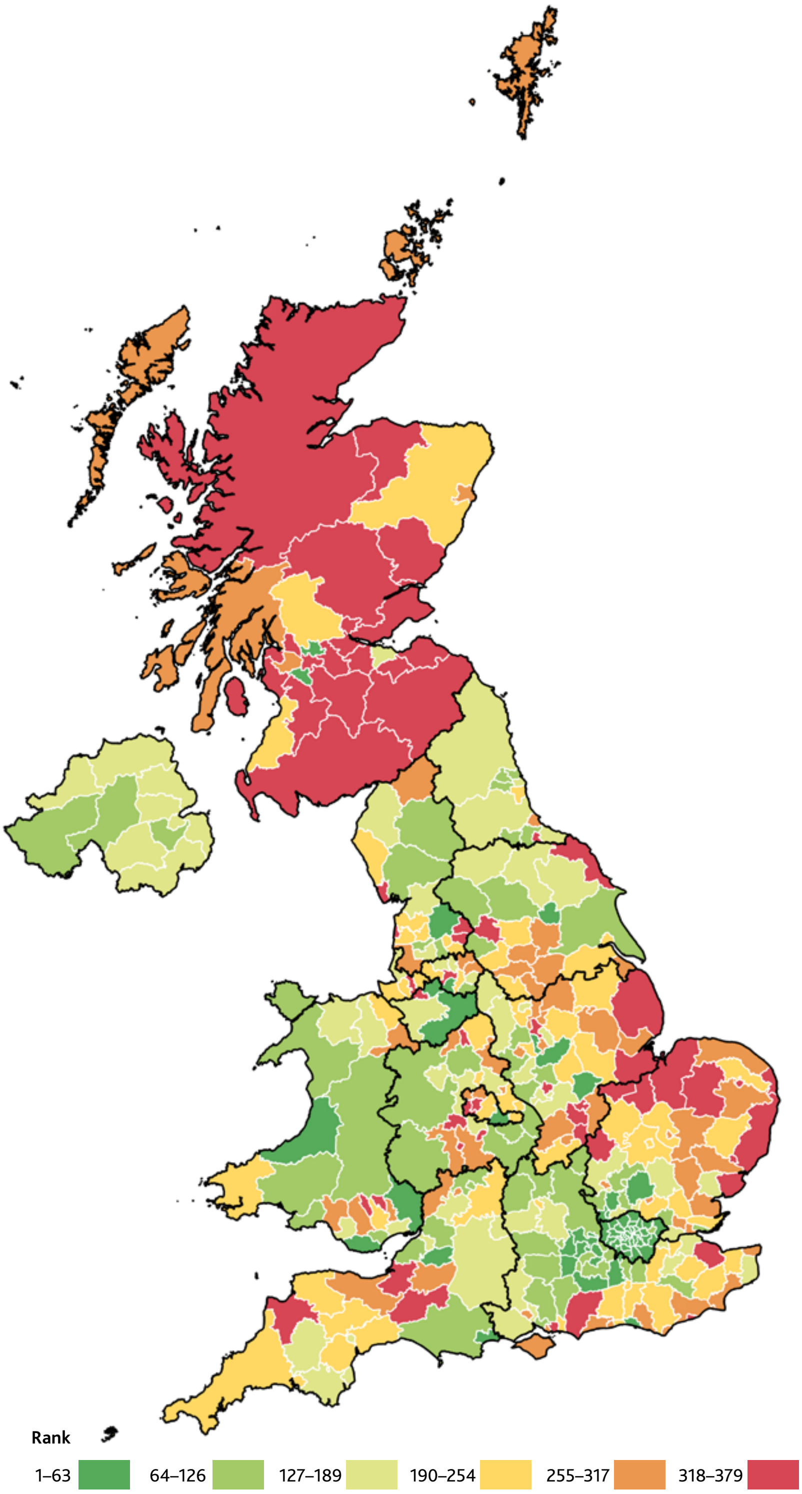
Education 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

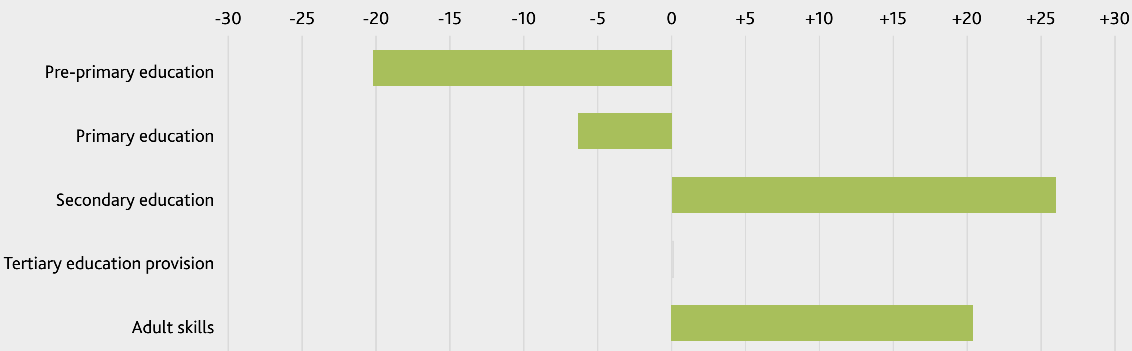
Rank	Local Authority
1	City of London (London)
2	Kensington and Chelsea (London)
3	Richmond upon Thames (London)
4	Hammersmith and Fulham (London)
5	Westminster (London)
6	Barnet (London)
7	Trafford (Gtr Manch)
8	Tower Hamlets (London)
9	Southwark (London)
10	Wandsworth (London)
11	Redbridge (London)
12	Harrow (London)
13	Sutton (London)
14	East Renfrewshire (Scot)
15	Ealing (London)
16	Kingston upon Thames (London)
17	Lambeth (London)
18	Wokingham (S East)
19	Merton (London)
20	Newham (London)

Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
360	Wellingborough (E Mid)
361	Inverclyde (Scot)
362	Angus (Scot)
363	Pendle (N West)
364	Blaenau Gwent (Wales)
365	North Ayrshire (Scot)
366	Dundee City (Scot)
367	Peterborough (E Eng)
368	Merthyr Tydfil (Wales)
369	Corby (E Mid)
370	Dudley (W Mid Met)
371	Glasgow City (Scot)
372	West Dunbartonshire (Scot)
373	North Lanarkshire (Scot)
374	Highland (Scot)
375	Midlothian (Scot)
376	Great Yarmouth (E Eng)
377	East Ayrshire (Scot)
378	Knowsley (M'side)
379	Clackmannanshire (Scot)

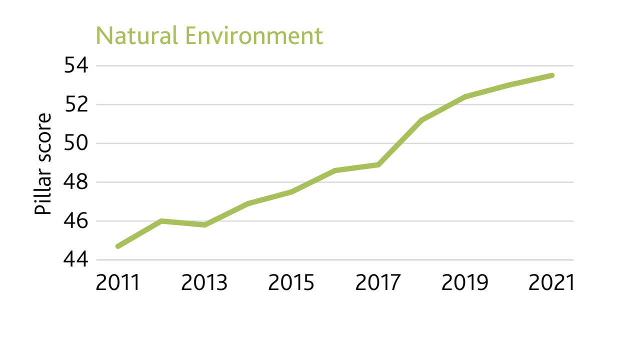


Change in Education elements, 2011-2021

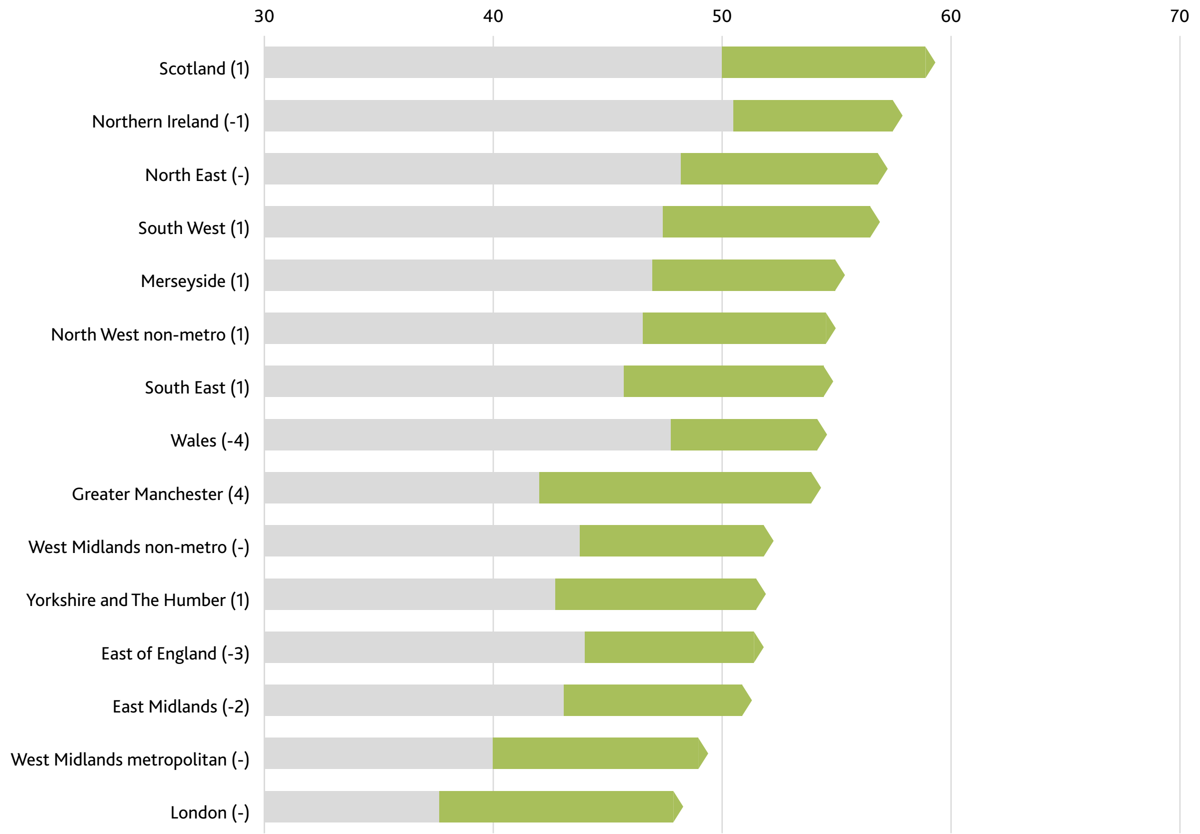


Natural Environment

Natural Environment captures the parts of the physical environment that have a direct effect on people in their daily lives and changes that could impact the prosperity of future generations. A well-managed natural environment benefits a nation by yielding crops, material for construction, wildlife and food, and sources of energy, while clean air leads to a higher quality of living for all.



Natural Environment: Regions score and score change (rank change), 2011-2021



ELEMENT (WEIGHT %)

Emissions (30%) captures the level of emissions of greenhouse gas and other gases from within a local authority. This captures the long-term effect of pressures on the atmosphere that a given local authority will have.

Exposure to Air Pollution (25%) captures the level of pollution to which a local authority's population is physically exposed, and the effect this has on mortality.

Forest, Land and Soil (20%) assesses the quality of a local authority's outdoor spaces and forests.

Flooding and Water Management (10%) assesses the quality of a local authority's water and the risk of flooding.

Waste Management (15%) captures quantity of waste collected and the local authority's recycling efforts.

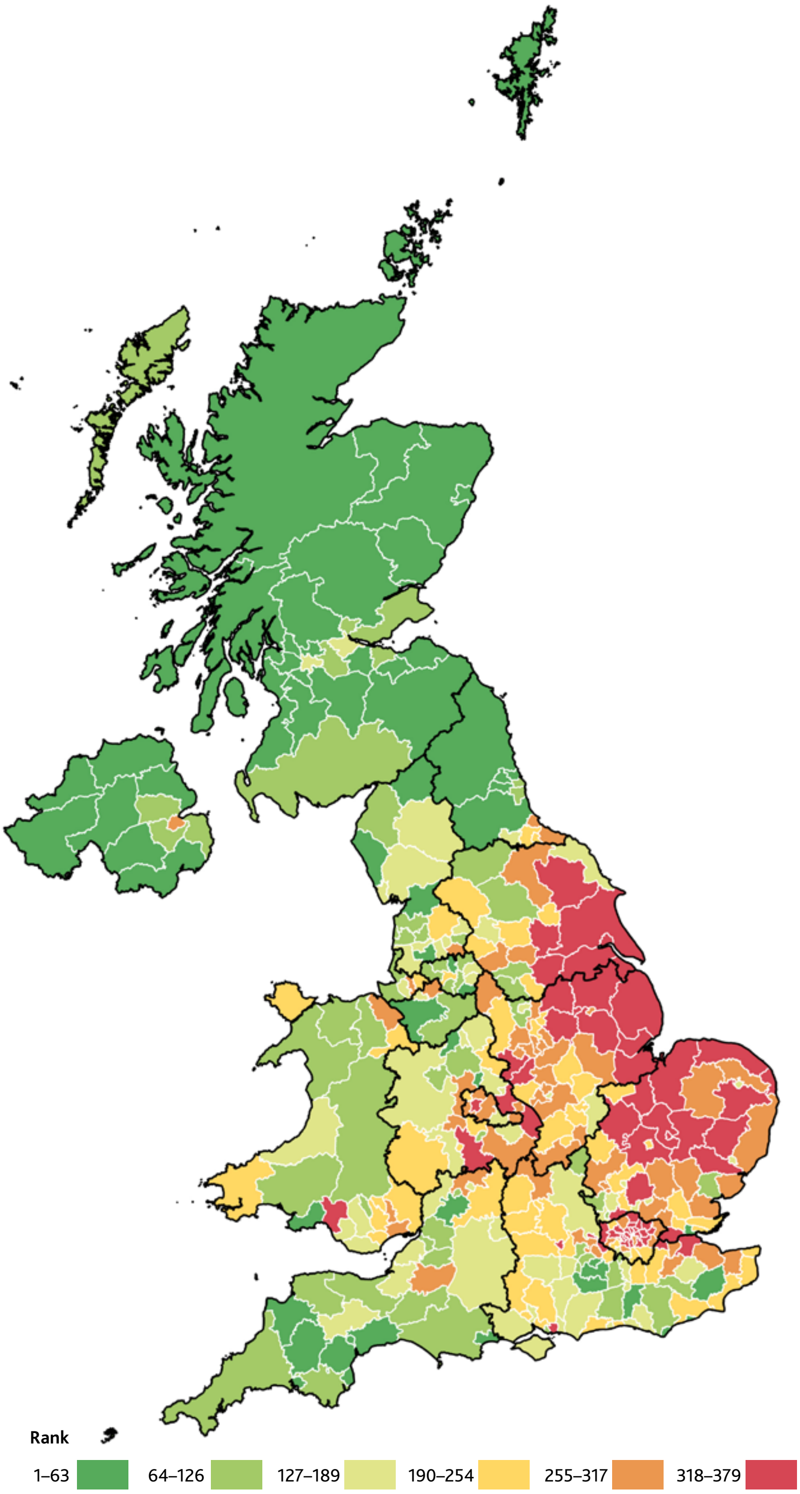
Natural Environment 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

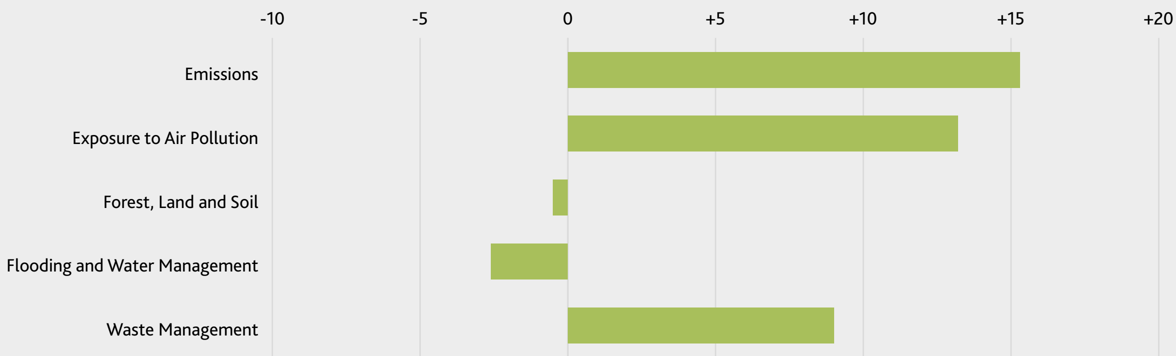
Rank	Local Authority
1	Stirling (Scot)
2	East Ayrshire (Scot)
3	Moray (Scot)
4	South Ayrshire (Scot)
5	East Renfrewshire (Scot)
6	Inverclyde (Scot)
7	Highland (Scot)
8	Carlisle (N West)
9	Angus (Scot)
10	North Ayrshire (Scot)
11	Fermanagh and Omagh (N Ire)
12	Perth and Kinross (Scot)
13	Torridge (S West)
14	West Lothian (Scot)
15	Renfrewshire (Scot)
16	South Lanarkshire (Scot)
17	Derry City and Strabane (N Ire)
18	Northumberland (N East)
19	Newcastle upon Tyne (N East)
20	West Dunbartonshire (Scot)

Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
360	Spelthorne (S East)
361	Barking and Dagenham (London)
362	Lewisham (London)
363	Bassetlaw (E Mid)
364	West Lindsey (E Mid)
365	Newark and Sherwood (E Mid)
366	North East Lincolnshire (Yrk & Hum)
367	Hammersmith and Fulham (London)
368	Tower Hamlets (London)
369	Waltham Forest (London)
370	King's Lynn and West Norfolk (E Eng)
371	East Lindsey (E Mid)
372	Newham (London)
373	Kensington and Chelsea (London)
374	North Lincolnshire (Yrk & Hum)
375	Boston (E Mid)
376	Fenland (E Eng)
377	South Holland (E Mid)
378	City of London (London)
379	Westminster (London)



Change in Natural Environment elements, 2011-2021



Credit: shutterstock.com

Why clusters matter

Unfortunately, much of the debate about how to 'level-up' the UK focuses on crude distinctions between the 'north and south', 'cities and towns' or socially conservative 'Red Wall' areas versus socially liberal university towns. This can encourage a blanket policy approach whereby very different areas are often lumped together under regional approaches or, at the other end, policies are tailored to individual local authority areas. Both of these approaches are unhelpful as they neglect the patterns that cut across different regions.

This is why we shape our analysis of prosperity in the UK around a set of distinct clusters that each come with its own challenges, opportunities and examples of best policy practice. Focusing on clusters, rather than individual areas, allows us to develop a more fine-tuned view of the varying levels of prosperity in the UK, and develop policies that are better suited for clusters of areas that face the same social, economic and political challenges. And crucially, for policy, it allows us to identify the specific 'success stories' that are outperforming their cluster peers, which opens the door to finding more effective policy solutions.

For example, Coastal Towns cut across several southern regions and have a unique fingerprint. They have strong social capital, good living conditions and can be a fertile environment for business investment. However, despite these strengths, families that live in Coastal Towns will often see their children struggle to reach the same level of educational attainment as their peers in other clusters, and will often suffer disproportionately from poor levels of mental and physical ill-health. This underlines the urgent need for a bespoke package of policy measures for Coastal Towns that can promote school readiness for young children, interventions to promote strategies to safeguard against the deterioration of mental health and the need for local clinical commissioning groups to consider whether early support could be cost-effective in preventing severe mental and physical ill-health.

RURAL ARCHETYPES

Adopting a cluster approach also reveals the problems in how we talk about rural areas, which are often regarded as homogeneous. But England actually contains two distinct sub-types of rural areas, Rural England and Remote Rural England, which have above average prosperity. In contrast, Rural Wales (which excludes the valleys) and Rural Northern Ireland are much less prosperous.

Despite increasing prosperity in Rural Wales over the last decade, including low crime, good governance and a well-stewarded natural environment, it faces distinctive challenges in developing a healthy economy for businesses. Pembrokeshire is leading the way in this respect, having seen a reduction in the numbers of businesses that view local government restrictions as a barrier to their operations; fewer businesses face recruitment challenges due to the skills of the workforce than a decade ago. One initiative that has been used by the Pembrokeshire County Council is the Kickstart Scheme, which provides funding to employers to create job placements to for 16- to 24-year-olds.[18] The progress made by Pembrokeshire could act as a blueprint for other local authorities in Wales and other rural local authorities across the UK.

NORTHERN ARCHETYPES

The neighbouring clusters of Lancashire and the Industrial Heartlands are two less prosperous archetypes in the UK and face distinct challenges.

The Industrial Heartlands suffer from high crime, which is undermining their safety and security. There are 17 homicides per 100,000 people compared with the UK average of 11, underlining the need to focus on crime prevention strategies. Furthermore, living conditions are poor, with 23% of people living in poverty and 18% experiencing income deprivation. Few people engage in local politics—election turnout is the lowest in the UK, with just 31% of people turning out to vote at local elections, and few believing that their vote will make a difference. Strong community engagement to address these issues appears to be the most targeted way to make a difference to lived experiences in the Industrial Heartlands.

In contrast, for neighbouring Lancashire, the challenges to prosperity are more focused on the business sector. One aspect of this is that employers struggle to attract the appropriate workforce to fill vacancies. Nearly 50% of vacancies are deemed 'hard-to-fill', and 38% of vacancies are due to skills shortages. Furthermore, less than 2% of businesses are seeking investment for new process development or expansion to overseas markets, the lowest rates in the country. Local authorities could support local businesses with training in entrepreneurship, adult education, and apprenticeships to help enhance the skills of the working age population. Developing a thriving business environment could help to diversify the employment opportunities, which are concentrated in only a few sectors, and strengthen the economy to act as a driver of prosperity. By considering the differing characteristics of these two areas, we can start to see the real power of the clusters in identifying distinct themes for policy focus to increase prosperity.

BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Not only can these clusters provide a new route to differentiating policy to target the most appropriate areas, but they can also provide a route for local authorities to collaborate and learn from one another. This can be illustrated using the Post-Industrial Urban archetype. Despite the Post-Industrial Urban archetype having some of the lowest prosperity in the UK, some areas within it have seen significant improvements in prosperity over the last decade. County Durham, Stoke-on-Trent, and the City of Kingston upon Hull have all seen improvements in their overall prosperity, rising on average 22 places in the rankings. For County Durham (251st), if this trajectory were to continue for the next decade it would become as prosperous as Hackney (123rd) is today. These authorities can set an example for other areas in their cluster.

Stoke-on-Trent has seen significant improvement in aspects of social capital for its residents over the last decade, despite this being a typical area of weakness for Post-Industrial Urban areas. Over the last decade, its residents have increasingly volunteered in different ways to support their communities, and those that donate money to charity have donated greater sums of money more often. There have been improved efficiencies in local government and fewer residents feel lonely and isolated. Local authorities wishing to enhance community cohesion can look to analyse the strategies that have been successful here.

Another example is the provision of shelter in Central London. Central London performs poorly for both Living Conditions and Shelter. For example, nearly 30% of its residents live in poverty, there are 3.3 homeless households per 100,000 households, and 14.5 rough sleepers per 100,000 population, which is the highest rate in the country. However, there are some London boroughs that seem to be seeing success in this area. Homelessness in Islington, at just 1.3 homeless households per 100,000 households, is four times lower than in Kensington and Chelsea and Southwark. Furthermore, other boroughs could look to Newham and Hammersmith and Fulham for strategies to address rough sleeping and support rough sleepers into alternative living arrangements, as these boroughs have the lowest rates of rough sleeping in Central London. In Hammersmith and Fulham, the borough has consulted over 100 homeless people in developing their Rough Sleeping Procurement Strategy and has prioritised a compassionate and collaborative approach.[19]

Two years ago, Newham established a rough sleeping task force based on a holistic approach, bringing together partners from local charities, businesses, health networks, national charity groups, government, the Greater London Authority and people with experience of rough sleeping.[20] Other boroughs could look at these policy approaches and evaluate where similar strategies could be applied in their local areas, as well as gleaning specific insights about the implementation and where there are lessons to be learnt from these boroughs' experiences.

SUB-ARCHETYPES

This approach to archetypes can also be applied at a smaller scale within the defined clusters. For example, the Commuter Belt is the most prosperous cluster, performing well in all but three pillars. Some local authorities within this archetype, such as Wokingham (1st), Hart (6th), and St Albans (9th) not only have some of the highest overall prosperity in the UK but have also seen the greatest improvements over the last decade. For these areas, policy to enhance prosperity further could focus on a more granular level again. Whilst their individual local authorities might well be seeing success in a broad range of areas, there may be pockets of local deprivation where residents do not experience all the positive drivers of prosperity that their neighbours do (for example, several local authorities have high rates of property crime). For these local authorities, the UK Prosperity Index may help to develop hypotheses about what policy areas could be the most important to enhance the lives of their residents. Pairing these insights with additional granular data at a more local level, for example from the index of multiple deprivation, may prove most fruitful in targeting interventions to the communities where they can make the most difference.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we believe that these clusters offer a wealth of possibilities to reimagine the policy landscape in the UK, and we will be working with dozens of local authorities to do exactly this. In order to raise prosperity from the recent plateau, we should leave behind traditional geographic policy decision-making and embark upon a journey to explore the policy-making potential of these 17 clusters.

The 17 clusters of prosperity

	Greater London+	Urban	Dispersed Urban	Rural
Higher Prosperity	Commuter Belt Outer London Central London	Mid-Sized Urban Hubs		Rural England Remote Rural England
Mid Prosperity		Coastal Towns	North Midlands Lancashire	The Islands Rural Northern Ireland Rural Scotland
Lower Prosperity		Post-industrial Urban Industrial Heartlands	Welsh Valleys Central Belt – Scotland	Rural Wales

Greater London+

	Greater London+
Higher Prosperity	Commuter belt
	Outer London
	Central London

Commuter Belt

Example LAs: Surrey Heath, Sevenoaks, St Albans

This is the most prosperous cluster, with the best health, governance, living conditions and social capital out of all the clusters. Its weak points are high levels of property crime and pollution. People are generally healthy, and a 65-year-old in the Commuter Belt can expect to live for 20 years and 11 months. Local authorities are the most effective, dealing with housing benefit claims within 16 days and collecting 98% of council tax owed. There are strong family relationships; the rate of looked after children is just 38 per 10,000 children, the lowest rate in the country. Just 18% of residents experience poverty, lower than the UK average of 22%.

Outer London

Example LAs: Croydon, Kingston upon Thames, Waltham Forest

Outer London has a strong economy, good health and education, but suffers from weak institutions and a high crime rate. Secondary education attendance rates are 95%, and 59% of low-income students gain level 2 qualifications in English and mathematics, the highest outside Central London. Venture capital investment is £407 per capita, the highest in the UK. Superfast broadband is available for 97.3% of premises, the greatest proportion nationally. Residents can access regional rail hubs in under 35 minutes, the shortest time outside Central London. However, there are high concentrations of poverty and robbery rates are 2.9 offences per 1,000 people, which is also the highest rate outside Central London. Pollution is also a weak point, with a high concentration of coarse particulate matter (17µg/m^3).

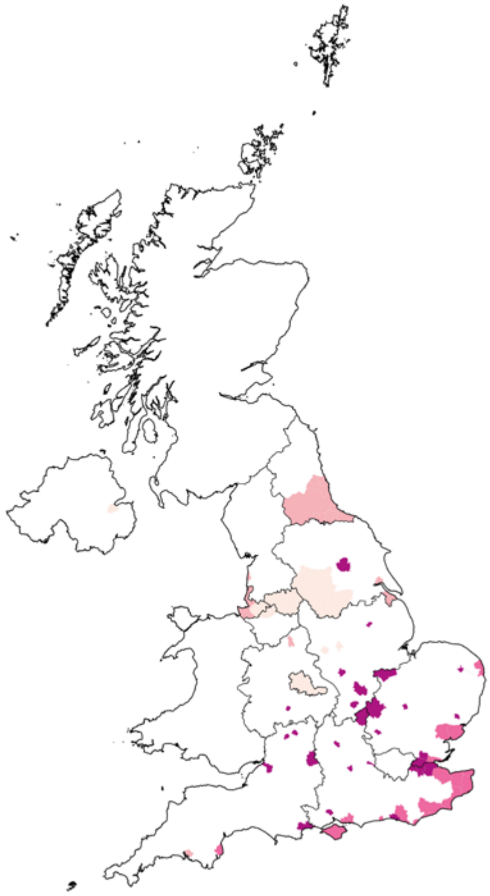
Central London

Example LAs: Camden, Lambeth, Newham

Central London benefits from both the best economy and best education system in the UK. It exhibits greater tolerance for those of other ethnicities and religions than Outer London, and has a high degree of government integrity, with the fewest people believing that MPs do special favours for donors. However, Central London has the highest levels of violent crime, property crime and civil disorder in the country. Furthermore, 29% of people live in poverty, with 16% experiencing income deprivation. Homelessness and overcrowding rates are some of the highest in the country. Vaccination and cancer screening rates in Central London are the lowest in the country. Only 88% of infants have received their 6-in-1 vaccination and just 60% of eligible women are screened for breast cancer.

Urban

	Urban
Higher Prosperity	Mid-Sized Urban Hubs
Mid Prosperity	Coastal Towns
Lower Prosperity	Post-Industrial Urban
	Industrial Heartlands



Mid-Sized Urban Hubs

Example LAs: Oxford, Leicester, Kettering

Mid-Sized Urban Hubs have good economies and living conditions, while also having some of the worst crime in the UK. They have the fastest internet with download speeds of 90 Mb/s. There is excellent 4G coverage, with 98% of outdoor areas having strong signal. Residents have more confidence in the integrity of politicians and MPs than the UK average. However, rates of property crime are high, and there are 3.3 sexual offences recorded per 1,000 people. This is the second highest rate in the UK and a rate that has nearly trebled in the last decade. In common with most urban areas, pollution is a challenge, although CO_2 emissions from domestic use are just 1.3 tonnes per person, the lowest outside Central London. While the overall health of the population of mid-sized urban hubs is relatively good, health care systems and preventative interventions and perform poorly. For example, just 73% of eligible women are screened for cervical cancer.

Coastal Towns

Example LAs: Eastbourne, Great Yarmouth, Southend-on-Sea

Coastal Towns are characterised by strong social capital combined with high rates of unemployment (especially NEET), poor health, poor education and weak enterprise conditions. Just 15% of school leavers progressed directly to higher education, compared with the UK average of 24%. Residents have poor mental and physical health, with 25% of residents reporting high levels of anxiety. There are also high levels of homelessness and rough sleeping. These Coastal Towns benefit from strong communities; 21% of residents volunteer and they have the lowest rate of single parent families.

Post-Industrial Urban

Example LAs: Kingston Upon Hull, Newcastle, Blackpool

Post-Industrial Urban areas have low social capital and poor health, with enterprise conditions and infrastructure being a relative strength. They have the third highest unemployment rate of any of the clusters at 5.4%. Furthermore, 24% of the population are in poverty and 18% are income deprived, some of the highest rates in the country. Life expectancy at the age of 65 is just 18 years and 10 months, the lowest outside Scotland's Central-Belt. Family and personal relationships are weak—the underage pregnancy rate is 4.7 conceptions per 1000 women aged 13-15 and 9% of people report that they feel lonely. These are the highest rates in the UK, demonstrating weak personal and family relations. The potential for economic revival also exists, with good road conditions and transport links; communications infrastructure is strong, with average download speeds of 84 Mb/s. Furthermore, only 23% of job vacancies are due to skills shortages, the lowest rate outside the North Midlands and Rural Northern Ireland.

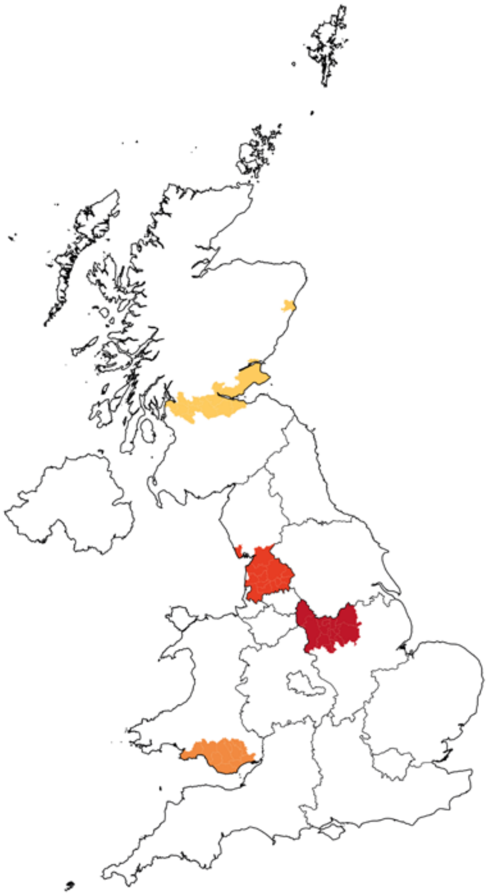
Industrial Heartlands

Example LAs: Oldham, Warrington, Sheffield, Belfast

The Industrial Heartlands is the least prosperous cluster in the UK, with high rates of crime, poor local governance, and poor health. It has the highest homicide rate in the UK, at 17.1 homicides per 100,000 people. Engagement with local democracy is low; local election turnout is 31%, the lowest in the country and general election turnout is just 63%. Social networks are weak, with only 25% of the population having a sense of belonging to the community. Health is undermined by diet; only 49% of people eat their five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. While the unemployment rate is high, fewer workers experience temporary and part-time employment than in many other areas. More promisingly, the Industrial Heartlands has good infrastructure; outside London it has the highest connectedness, taking just 46 minutes to reach the nearest rail hub by public transport. Furthermore, the rate of new business formation is above the UK average.

Dispersed Urban

	Dispersed Urban
Mid Prosperity	North Midlands
	Lancashire
Lower Prosperity	Welsh Valleys
	Central Belt – Scotland



North Midlands

Example LAs: Chesterfield, Mansfield, Bassetlaw

The North Midlands is the median cluster. It has a strong investment environment and good living conditions, although it has a weak natural environment and low social tolerance. Residents of the North Midlands have the lowest rates of persistent poverty, at 9%, and over indebtedness, also 9%. Just 2% of households in the North Midlands are overcrowded, the lowest rate in the UK. The supply of capital is good, with no businesses reporting delayed or cancelled projects due to lack of investment. Moreover, 58% of small businesses are aware of their Local Enterprise Partnership, the highest rate in the UK. However, prosperity is held back by low levels of both productivity and new business formation. There are high levels of both emissions and air pollution. Furthermore, physical health is poor, with the highest prevalence of dementia and chronic kidney disease nationally.

Lancashire

Example LAs: Preston, Burnley, Blackburn with Darwen

While having moderately good economic outcomes and crime levels, Lancashire has the worst health and social tolerance out of any cluster. It has low rates of public order offences, and the rate of weapons possession offences is 18 times lower than the UK average. Their authorities have high levels of public works investment, having taken out loans of £1,332 per capita, tenfold higher than the UK average of £117 per person. The gross value-added per person growth of 1.5% is high. Despite this, the investment environment is poor. Only 1.6% of business are seeking investment for overseas expansion to new markets. It also has some of the most negative health outcomes in the country, across mental health (14% of residents are depressed) and physical health (the highest prevalence of respiratory disease). Mortality rates are high across all age groups. Furthermore, people's tolerance for those of different ethnicities, religions or classes is the lowest in the country.

Welsh Valleys

Example LAs: Swansea, Merthyr Tydfil, Bridgend

The Welsh Valleys benefit from low property crime, high degrees of tolerance and strong social networks. The population enjoys good levels of physical and mental health, albeit lower than average life-expectancy. Primary education is strong, and at the end of primary school, 91% of students have made the expected progress in numeracy and 90% in literacy, the highest rates in the UK. We see similar for students from low-income families, 78% and 81% in literacy and numeracy respectively. Industrial and commercial CO_2 emissions have halved in the last decade. On the other hand, they suffer from weaker family relationships and institutional trust, economic outcomes, and enterprise conditions. There are 127 looked after children per 10,000 children, almost double the UK average. Enterprise conditions are challenging, with 19% of businesses saying that a lack of support is a barrier to their business. There is also poor capital supply—the value of loans provided to small businesses by major banks is just £2,714 per person, lower than the UK average of £4,560.

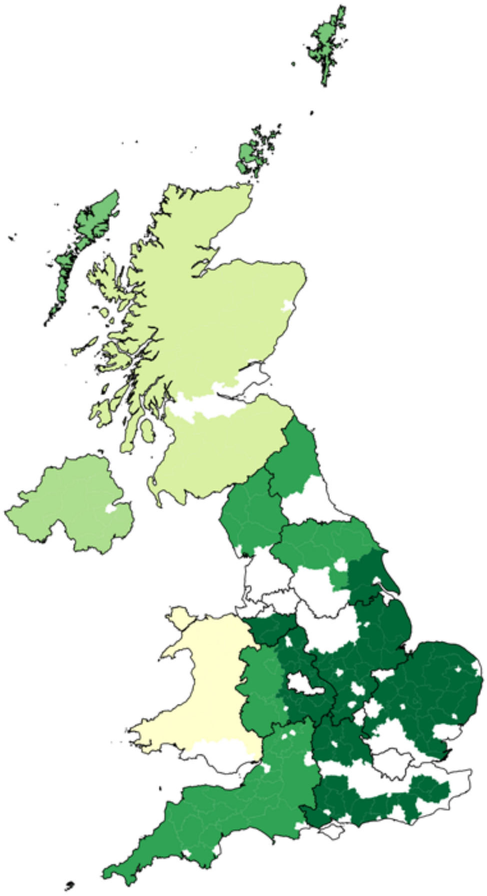
Central-Belt Scotland

Example LAs: Glasgow City, Inverclyde, Dundee

While the Central Belt of Scotland has reasonable infrastructure, it has the worst local governance and investment environment in the UK, with health and educational outcomes also extremely weak. A 65-year-old in the Central Belt can expect to live just 18 years and 2 months; this is more than two and a half years less than their counterparts in the Commuter Belt. Furthermore, 19% of the population smoke and 64% of the population are overweight or obese. Knife crime is high, 1.1 offences per 1,000 people, compared to the UK average of 0.8 offences per 1,000 people. There are 26 drug-related deaths per 100,000 people, the highest rate in the UK. In contrast, transport infrastructure is relatively good and improving. Compared with Rural Scotland, journey times to the nearest rail hub or airport are 10 minutes faster.

Rural

	Rural
Higher Prosperity	Rural England
	Remote Rural England
Mid Prosperity	The Islands
	Rural Northern Ireland
	Rural Scotland
Lower Prosperity	Rural Wales



Rural England

Example LAs: Buckinghamshire, Braintree, Boston

While Rural England is weak on economic pillars and the natural environment, it has strong local governance and social capital, with particularly high civic and social participation. There are strong family relationships with just 277 per 10,000 children classed as 'in need' by social services, compared with a UK average of 340 per 10,000 children. Over 90% of planning decisions are made in a timely manner and councils collect 98% of council tax owed. However, these local authorities have weak infrastructure with a 70-minute journey to the nearest regional rail hub. Aspects of their natural environment are weak; 18% of properties are at a medium or high flood risk. Furthermore, education provision is weak with only 55% of low-income primary students attaining numeracy standards, the lowest in the UK.

Remote Rural England

Example LAs: Cornwall, Northumberland, County of Herefordshire

Remote Rural England is safe, has good social capital, is healthy and has good secondary education and high levels of adult skills, although it has weak infrastructure. It has the highest voter turnout in general elections (72%) and 37% turnout in local election. It has the lowest rates of crime in England with less than a third as many robberies (0.4 robberies per 1,000 people) as the UK average (1.4 robberies). Excluding the Islands, it has the smallest percentage of adults with no qualifications. It has a weak economy, with 49% of job vacancies being hard-to-fill, the second-highest proportion in the UK. It takes on average 90 minutes to travel to the nearest major rail station by public transport and over two hours to the nearest airport.

The Islands

Example LAs: Scilly Isles, Orkney Islands, Shetland Islands

While the Islands are remote and have weak infrastructure and investment environments, they have exceptionally low crime, strong social capital, good health, and a good natural environment. Rates of robbery are 14 times lower than the UK average. They have high quality healthcare systems, particularly preventative interventions. For example, over 83% of eligible women take up the offer of breast cancer screening. However, infrastructure is weaker than the rest of the UK. The Islands have the slowest internet in the UK with download speeds just 36 Mb/s.

Rural Northern Ireland

Example LAs: Antrim and Newtonabbey, Derry City and Strabane

While Rural Northern Ireland has strong personal and family relationships, good education and a good natural environment, the economy underperforms and there are challenges with local governance. Turnout in national elections is only 61% and only 55% of planning decision are made in a timely manner. Businesses are struggling, with 30% citing problems with recruitment and retention. However, less than 7% of people feel lonely or isolated; families eat together 2.7 times per week, the highest rate in the UK. At 1.1 conceptions per 1000 women aged 13-15 the underage pregnancy rate is less than half the UK average. Rural Northern Ireland sends 42% of school leavers to higher education, the greatest proportion in the UK.

Rural Scotland

Example LAs: Aberdeenshire, Perth and Kinross, Highland

While Rural Scotland has the best natural environment in the UK, strong social tolerance and low crime rates, it also has a weak investment environment, weak infrastructure and poor education outcomes. Fourteen percent of businesses reported cancelling projects due to a lack of investment, the highest rate in the UK. Secondary and primary attainment is low, with just 69% of primary students meeting required attainment levels for literacy, compared to the UK average of 77%. However, the robbery rate is more than six times lower than the national figures. Rural Scotland has the fourth highest turnout in national elections (72%).

Rural Wales

Example LAs: Pembrokeshire, Conwy, Carmarthenshire

While Rural Wales has better local governance and lower rates of crime than the Welsh Valleys, its economy and infrastructure is weak, and it also has poor living conditions. There is poor access to local amenities, with distance to the nearest GP the longest in the UK at 27 minutes. There are just 35 new businesses per 10,000 people, much lower than the UK average of 56; the high-tech business share is just 5.8%. Download speeds are just 44 Mb/s, the slowest on the UK mainland. However, knife crime is the lowest in the mainland UK at just 0.4 offences per 1,000 people. Governance is also strong, with local election turnout at 45% and most local councils are governed by coalitions or see regular changes in political control.

Credit: shutterstock.com

National and Regional profiles

The performance of prosperity across the UK largely follows expected patterns. The south of England performs better than the north, and the least prosperous areas are the northern cities. The more urban areas, such as Greater Manchester or Merseyside, tend to be stronger on economic pillars than on the pillars under Inclusive Societies or Empowered People.

All regions have seen an improvement in prosperity over the last 10 years, although not all have risen at the same rate. London, Wales, and Scotland have improved the most, thanks in large part to improving Infrastructure and Education (among other aspects). Greater Manchester, Merseyside, and the North West non-metropolitan area have all risen the least. In the last five years, every region but London has seen a decline.

It is important to remember that the clusters discussed in the previous pages sit across these regions—the Commuter Belt, for example, is made up of some of the most prosperous parts of the South East and East of England, while Coastal Towns are also found in many regions across the UK. The discussion that follows discusses prosperity in the context of these clusters. Many regions are made up of groups that are more prosperous than other groups, or share different characteristics.

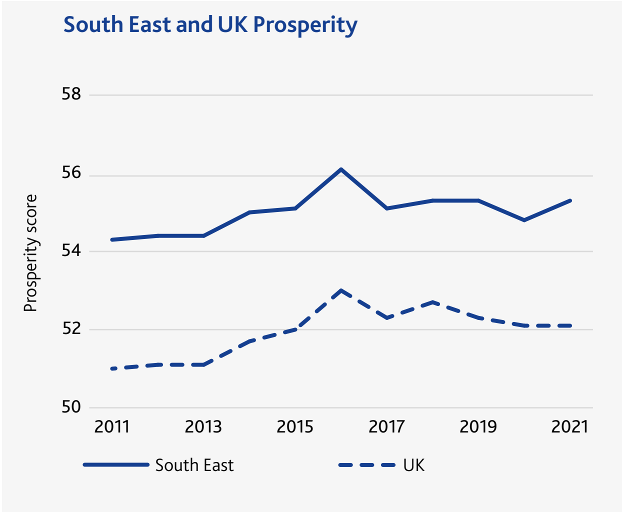
The following pages explore in more detail how and why prosperity has been changing in each of these regions over the last decade. We have broadly followed the ONS's 12 regions, except that we have made Merseyside, Greater Manchester, and the West Midlands metropolitan area separate regions, because, like London, they are large self-governing areas that have significant autonomy to determine policy. We have also included the cluster regions on the maps for each region.

Regional Rankings

Region	Prosperity	Safety & Security	Personal Freedom	Governance	Social Capital	Investment Environment	Enterprise Conditions	Infrastructure	Economic Quality	Living Conditions	Health	Education	Natural Environment
South East	**1**	4	5	1	2	2	6	7	3	1	1	4	7
South West	**2**	1	3	3	3	3	10	15	10	4	4	6	4
London	**3**	14	9	8	12	1	4	2	1	13	2	1	15
East of England	**4**	9	4	2	1	5	13	5	4	2	3	11	12
East Midlands	**5**	7	11	6	5	4	5	11	12	3	6	12	13
West Midlands non-metro	**6**	6	6	5	8	8	3	10	8	8	10	9	10
North West non-metro	**7**	5	13	7	7	13	7	9	2	5	13	7	6
North East	**8**	10	10	10	15	6	2	6	13	9	12	3	3
Northern Ireland	**9**	8	7	11	4	9	15	14	14	11	7	2	2
Wales	**10**	2	1	4	11	12	12	13	15	15	8	5	8
Scotland	**11**	3	2	13	9	15	11	12	11	7	5	15	1
Yorkshire and The Humber	**12**	12	12	9	6	10	8	8	9	12	9	10	11
Merseyside	**13**	11	8	14	13	11	14	3	6	6	15	14	5
West Midlands metropolitan	**14**	13	15	12	14	7	1	1	7	14	14	13	14
Greater Manchester	**15**	15	14	15	10	14	9	4	5	10	11	8	9

South East (1st)

Local Authority	Rank	Local Authority	Rank
Wokingham	1	Adur	55
Waverley	3	Spelthorne	56
Woking	4	Havant	61
Epsom and Ewell	5	New Forest	62
Hart	6	Crawley	65
Guildford	7	Brighton and Hove	66
Elmbridge	8	Worthing	69
Surrey Heath	10	Tunbridge Wells	74
Mole Valley	11	Tonbridge and Malling	77
Winchester	12	Dartford	99
Fareham	16	Gosport	100
East Hampshire	17	Oxford	109
Runnymede	18	Maidstone	112
Reigate and Banstead	19	Arun	118
Windsor and Maidenhead	20	Ashford	126
Mid Sussex	21	Slough	132
Horsham	22	Portsmouth	139
Eastleigh	23	Wealden	141
Basingstoke and Deane	25	Gravesham	142
Rushmoor	26	Reading	147
South Oxfordshire	29	Lewes	162
West Oxfordshire	30	Southampton	163
Milton Keynes	32	Isle of Wight	172
Tandridge	34	Swale	202
Test Valley	37	Medway	203
West Berkshire	38	Canterbury	208
Buckinghamshire	41	Rother	210
Vale of White Horse	42	Dover	228
Bracknell Forest	43	Folkestone and Hythe	229
Chichester	48	Hastings	299
Sevenoaks	50	Eastbourne	312
Cherwell	52	Thanet	318



OVERVIEW

The South East is the most prosperous region in the UK; 34 of the 60 top-performing local authorities are in this region. It is also becoming more prosperous over time, benefitting from improvements in its Investment Environment, Education and Natural Environment. The region includes four archetypes, covering the Commuter Belt, Mid-Sized Urban Hubs, Rural England and Coastal Towns. Overall, it has low crime, good governance, a strong social fabric, good health and living conditions, and a strong economy with a fruitful environment for investment. However, there are notable challenges in the Coastal Towns; of the 14 authorities where prosperity has declined, 6 are Coastal Towns. This deterioration is being driven by rising crime, deteriorating health, falling living conditions, and challenging conditions for local businesses.

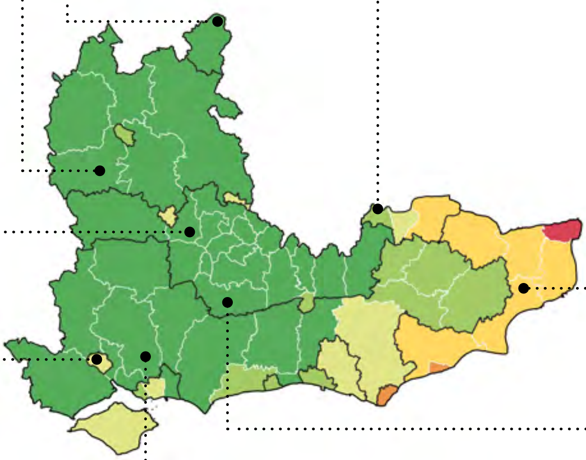
The Vale of White Horse is ranked 27th for Safety and Security and has the lowest rate of domestic violence in the UK.

Milton Keynes has some of the best maintained roads in the country, with just 1% of roads requiring maintenance.

Dartford has seen the greatest reduction in emission rates in the South East. Domestic CO_2 emissions have fallen from 2.2 tonnes per person to 1.3 over 10 years.

Wokingham has seen the biggest improvement in labour market flexibility in the region. It has the fewest skills gaps, in the country with just 1.5% of workers not meeting the present skill requirements for their jobs.

Folkestone and Hythe has seen the greatest strengthening of family relationships within the South East, with a decrease in the percentage of lone parent families, from 20% to 17% over the decade.



Waverley had one of the highest turnouts in the UK in the 2019 general election at 76%.

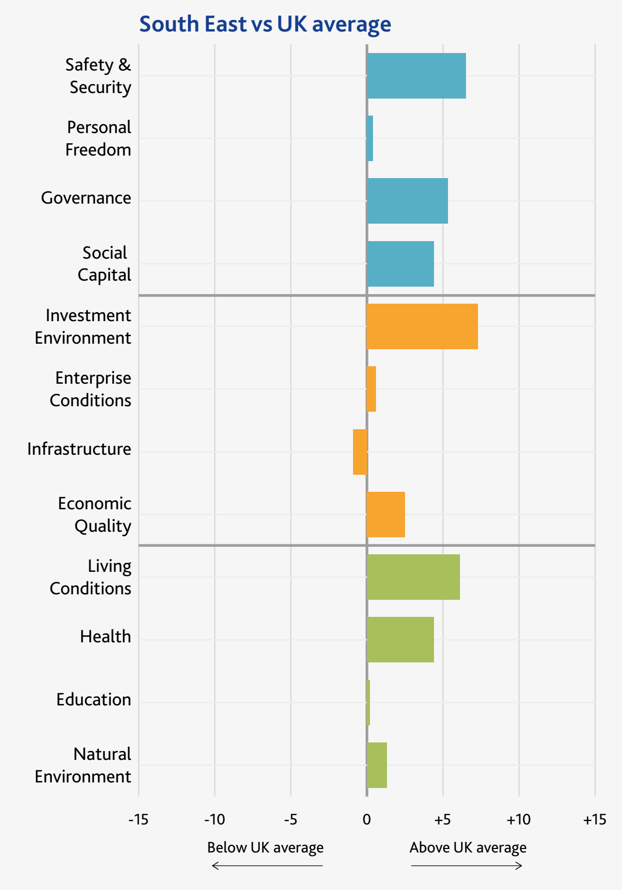
Southampton has seen the greatest reduction in exposure to air pollution in the region. The concentration of coarse particulate matter has decreased from 19 µg/m³ to 15 µg/m³.

In Winchester, 24% of individuals have volunteered to support community sport more than once in the last year, which is one of the UK's highest rates.

Performance of South East across the three Prosperity domains

Inclusive Societies

- Local communities in the South East are strong, safe and secure. The region has some of the lowest rates of violent crime, and civil disorder in the UK. While the Mid-Sized Urban Hubs and Coastal Towns in this region suffer from disproportionately high rates of property crime, the South East has the second lowest homicide rate in the country, with 7.1 homicides per 100,000 people.
- The South East performs slightly better than average for Personal Freedom, with people mostly tolerant of different ethnicities.
- Prosperity in the South East is underpinned by strong governance, with high trust and relatively effective local governments. Residents are more likely than the UK average to perceive politicians to have integrity, and greater freedom from the influence of financial donors. Local councils manage housing benefit claims and tax collection in a timely and effective manner.
- Communities in the South East also have strong social capital. The strength of family relationships, trust in institutions and rates of civic and social participation are among the highest in the country. They also have low rates of looked after children, with 53 looked after children per 10,000 children, compared with the UK average of 74 looked after children.



Open Economies

- With the exception of Coastal Towns, such as Eastbourne and Dover, the South East has strong economies that provide a fertile environment for business and entrepreneurship. The availability of finance and demand for investment to stimulate expansion into overseas markets are the highest outside London. The number of businesses that are successful in obtaining equity investments has risen from 44% to 63%. Furthermore, nearly two-thirds of businesses are confident that they will be able to secure finance in the future.
- The region has above-average Enterprise Conditions, with flexible labour markets, local competition that drives innovation, and good support for small and medium business. The Commuter Belt has high levels of productivity, competitiveness and labour force engagement. The major challenge is business costs; property costs are the second highest in the country.
- The South East is ranked 7th for Infrastructure, just below the UK average, and is also ranked 6th for Transport. It has improved three places in the rankings for transport, due to improvements in the condition of roads and an increase in the number of passengers using rail stations. However, roads in this region are still more likely than the UK average to require maintenance, with 4% of principal roads potentially requiring maintenance.
- When it comes to Economic Quality, the South East is ranked 3rd overall. It has many private sector companies and the lowest proportion of workers employed in the public sector in the UK at just 15%, compared with the UK average of 18%. Furthermore, many private sector businesses are in high-tech industries with high research and development expenditure.

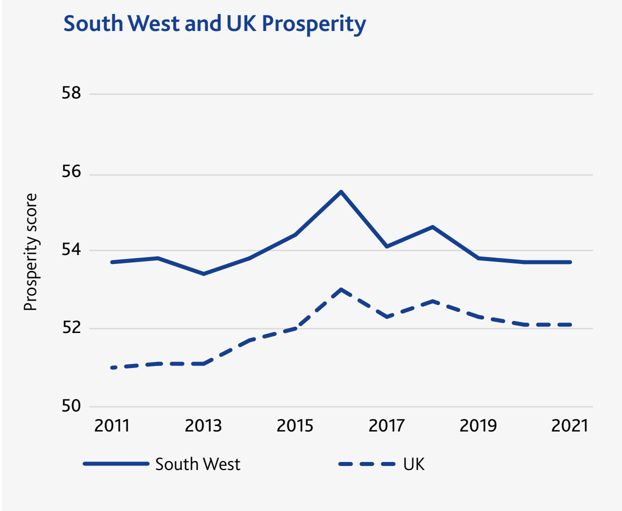
Empowered People

- People in the South East enjoy the highest Living Conditions in the country, with low rates of homelessness and poverty. The overall rate of poverty is 18%, compared with the UK national average of 22%. One area of weakness is travel times to local amenities, where it ranks 10th in the UK.
- The South East is ranked highest for Health, with low rates of mental illness and long life expectancy. However, 9 of the 10 lowest ranked local authorities in the region are Coastal Towns, and they suffer from poor mental and physical health. The prevalence of cancer in Eastbourne, Hastings and Lewes is 4.3%, compared with the UK average of 3.1%. These three local authorities also have the highest prevalence of depression in the entire South East region at 14.5%.
- Overall, the South East region performs above average in Education, and has stronger adult skills than everywhere except London. There is an uneven distribution of educational performance within the region, with the Commuter Belt significantly outperforming Coastal Towns in every aspect of education. All 14 Coastal Town local authorities in the South East fall below the UK average for the percentage of their students meeting numeracy attainment requirements at primary school.
- The Natural Environment is above-average across the region, with relatively low levels of industry CO_2 emissions. Industry CO_2 emissions have more than halved, falling from 118 tonnes per million £ of GVA to just 46 tonnes since 2011. Exposure to air pollution in the form of particulate matter is also decreasing over time.

South West (2nd)

Local Authority	Rank
Isles of Scilly	27
South Gloucestershire	33
Bath and North East Somerset	36
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	59
North Somerset	63
Stroud	71
Dorset	89
Tewkesbury	92
Cotswold	94
Cheltenham	95
Wiltshire	105
Bristol, City of	108
East Devon	110
Mendip	117
Swindon	124

Local Authority	Rank
Sedgemoor	136
Somerset West and Taunton	149
Teignbridge	150
Forest of Dean	157
South Somerset	161
South Hams	164
Mid Devon	174
North Devon	175
Exeter	176
West Devon	177
Cornwall	196
Torridge	201
Gloucester	239
Plymouth	245
Torbay	308

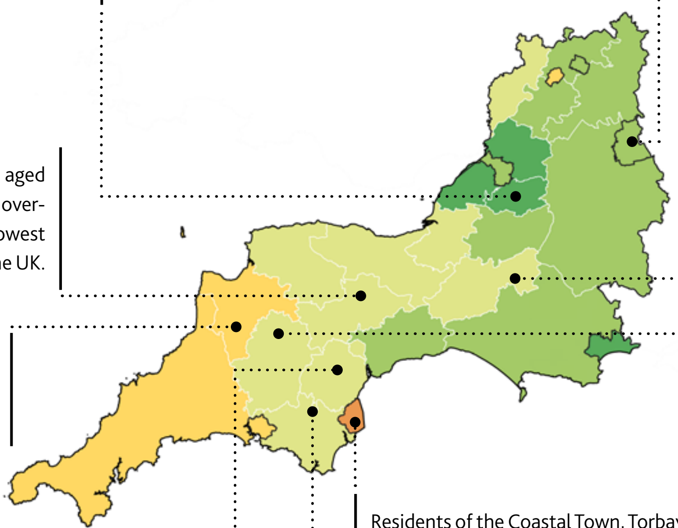


OVERVIEW

The South West is the second most prosperous region in the UK; 25 out of its 30 local authorities are found in the top half of the Index. It has strong institutions, social capital and health and relatively low rates of poverty. Its major weakness is economic: local employers face skill shortages, there is a lack of adequate infrastructure, and financial pressures on local councils are increasing. The region contains five clusters: 22 out of 30 local authorities are in Remote Rural England, five are Mid-Sized Urban Hubs, Torbay is the only Coastal Town, Plymouth the only Post-Industrial Urban local authority, and the Isles of Scilly belong to the Islands.

Bath and North East Somerset has the region's highest turnout for national parliamentary elections, with 77% of registered voters participating.

Swindon has seen a decline in the value of loans supplied to SMEs by major banks from £2,396 to £1,857.



The average time taken to process all new claims relating to housing benefits in South Somerset is 31.5 days, one of the longest in the UK.

In Mid Devon 11% of children aged 4-5 years are classified as over-weight or obese, which is the lowest percentage in the UK.

Torridge has some of the lowest nitrogen oxides concentrations in the UK, with just 4.7 μg/m³.

West Devon has the slowest average download speeds at 36.9 Mb/s in the whole of the UK.

Residents of the Coastal Town, Torbay, have less trust towards the banking sector, ranking 361st in the UK. It is failing to attract external investment for local business.

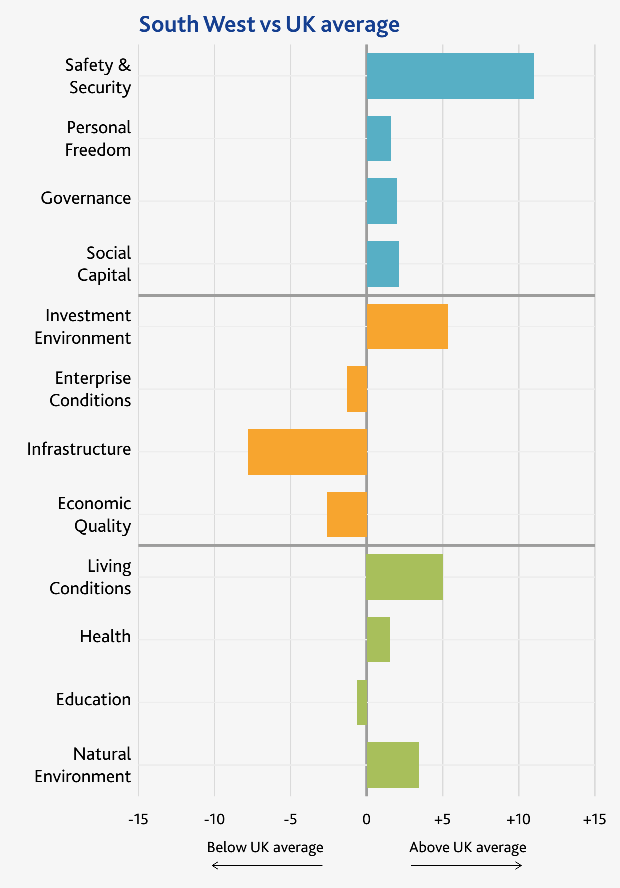
The value of loans provided to small and medium enterprises by major banks in Teignbridge is £1,900 per capita, which is one of the lowest in the South West.

The unemployment rate in South Hams was one of the lowest in the South West at 2% in 2019, which had decreased from 4% in 2010.

Performance of South West across the three Prosperity domains

Inclusive Societies

- The South West is one of the safest regions in the UK; nearly half of its authorities are in the top quarter for Safety and Security nationally, and none are in the bottom. Violent crime is the lowest in the UK, with just 4 knife crime offences per 10,000 people, half of the UK average. However, Bristol and Gloucester have higher rates of violent and property crime.
- The South West has average levels of Social Tolerance. In more rural parts of the region, there is a greater degree of intolerance shown, especially when survey respondents are asked about different classes and ethnicities.
- Governance is relatively strong. General election turnout has increased from 69% to 72% in the past decade, higher than the UK average. The percentage of council tax collected is 97%, slightly above the UK average. However, there is a general lack of trust in politicians; many people believe that politicians simply do what their financial donors want.
- Social Capital is stronger than the national average. However, there are weaknesses—for example, the percentage of people feeling isolated is 8.1%, compared with the UK average of 6.7%. Furthermore, Social Capital has been deteriorating across the South West, as more of the population feel isolated and lonely, with worsening social networks and institutional trust. The number of children in need in the South West has increased in the past decade from 300 to 320 per 10,000 children.



Open Economies

- The South West's Investment Environment is relatively strong. Loans are readily available for small and medium enterprises, especially in Plymouth and Remote Rural England areas. The average amount loaned per capita is £6,128, compared with a UK average of £4,560.
- Overall, the South West has below average Enterprise Conditions, with especially low labour market flexibility. Plymouth, Torbay and remote rural areas suffer from large skill gaps, with almost half of all job vacancies considered hard to fill by local employers. There are some authorities that provide good business environments—many have low property costs, and businesses report strong support for SMEs.
- Across the South West, infrastructure is poor, especially in coastal towns and remote rural areas. Transport in the South West is generally poor. Local authorities surrounding Bristol have excessive levels of congestion, seeing an average of 103 hours lost by drivers per year. Apart from the Mid-Sized Urban Hubs and some Remote Rural England authorities, the region has poor communications infrastructure, with download speeds slower than the UK average.
- The South West's labour market engagement has improved over the last decade, with falling unemployment and rising economic activity. Furthermore, productivity and competitiveness have been increasing, with the complexity and diversity of the workforce improving. The major weakness is the fiscal sustainability of local government, which is deteriorating, due to increased financial pressure through social care spending, which has increased from 30% to 39% of all service expenditure (compared with the UK average of 35%).

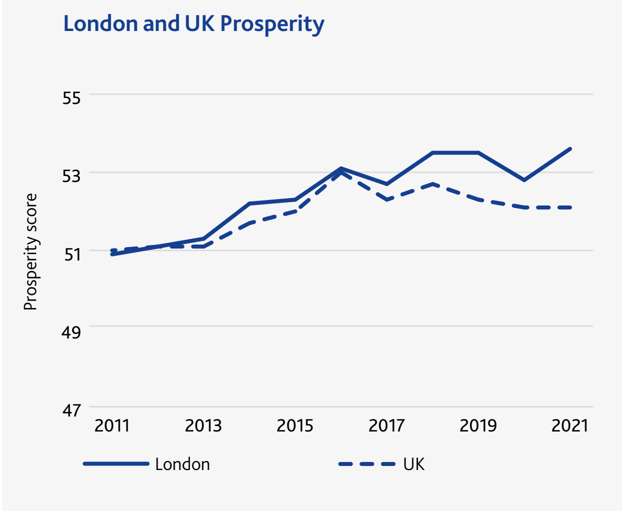
Empowered People

- The South West has good Living Conditions, with low rates of poverty and adequate housing. There are low rates of homelessness across the region, with 1.4 households per 100,000 household classified as homeless compared with the UK average of 2 households, although this has worsened over time. The two major challenges are improving digital connectedness and access to local amenities such as supermarkets, schools and GP surgeries.
- Health care in the South West is good. There are high rates of screening and vaccinations, as well as reasonable waiting times and a high degree of satisfaction with health care. However, physical health is poor. The South West has the highest prevalence of cancer and musculoskeletal conditions in the UK—cancer prevalence is 3.8% compared with the UK average of 3.1%.
- While Education has improved, it is still weaker than average, especially for pre-primary and primary education. Pre-primary enrolment is the lowest in the country, and low-income primary attainment in literacy and numeracy is also lower than the UK average. However, in many authorities, secondary education is a relative strength, particularly attainment rates. Secondary attainment is 72%, compared with the UK average of 70%.
- The South West has a strong Natural Environment, with low emissions and good waste management—49% of all rubbish is recycled, which is the second highest in the UK. However, the remote rural areas have a higher proportion of properties that are more prone to flooding.

London (3rd)

Local Authority	Rank
Richmond upon Thames	2
City of London	15
Harrow	35
Kingston upon Thames	53
Merton	58
Camden	64
Wandsworth	67
Barnet	68
Bromley	70
Islington	79
Hounslow	80
Sutton	85
Ealing	87
Hammersmith and Fulham	90
Tower Hamlets	93
Hillingdon	104
Redbridge	107

Local Authority	Rank
Havering	113
Kensington and Chelsea	114
Hackney	123
Bexley	131
Westminster	135
Brent	165
Waltham Forest	168
Southwark	170
Lambeth	180
Newham	182
Haringey	226
Croydon	231
Greenwich	253
Lewisham	254
Enfield	264
Barking and Dagenham	349



OVERVIEW

London has a strong economy, infrastructure, environment for business and education system but is suffering from a decline in safety and security and inclusive communities. While London is becoming more prosperous, this is undermined by a general failure to build inclusive and connected communities, and the highest rate of poverty in the UK.

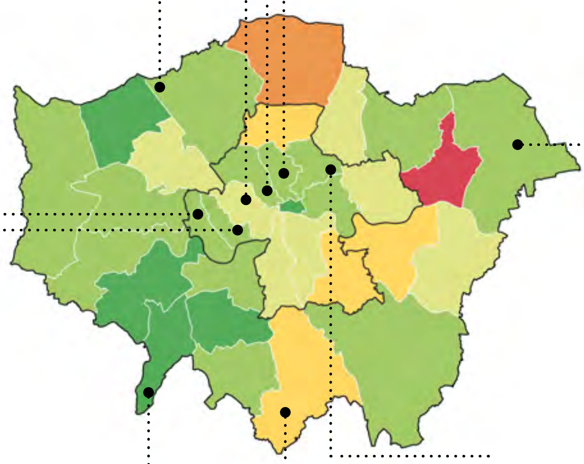
Secondary education in Barnet is the strongest in London and the second best in the UK. The percentage of pupils that are awarded level 2 qualifications in English and mathematics is among the highest at 81%.

Westminster has the highest rate of robbery, knife crime, theft and burglary in the country, with 208 thefts per 1,000 people.

Camden is among the three local authorities where the number of businesses that survive their second year of operations is one of the highest at 157 per 10,000 population, compared with the UK average of 41.

Hammersmith and Fulham has the lowest rate of recycling in the UK. Only 16% of the waste material collected by Hammersmith and Fulham is recycled, compared with the UK average of 41%.

Islington has 495 children in need per 10,000, the highest rate in London.



While urban congestion is more prevalent in London than the rest of the UK, drivers in Havering lose only 39 hours per year in congestion, compared to more than 140 hours in most local authorities of London.

Kensington and Chelsea is one of eight London boroughs where there has been no change in political control of the council over the last 20 years.

The vaccination rate for the 6-in-1 vaccination is only 80% in Hackney, compared with the UK average of 95%.

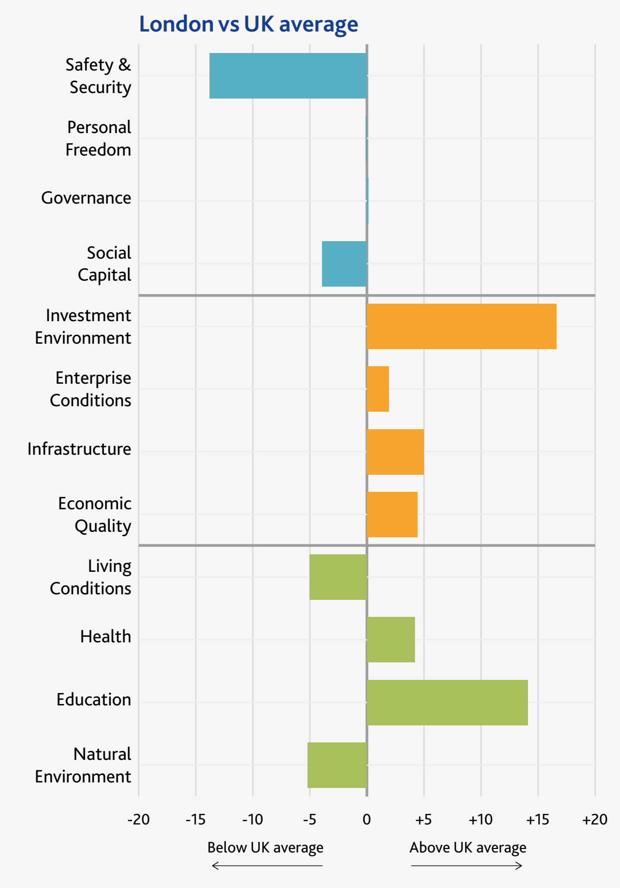
Kingston upon Thames has one of the highest rates of secondary attainment in the UK, at 82%.

Croydon has one of the longest waits to process housing benefit applications—ranked 378th nationally and taking over 34 days to process a new claim.

Performance of London across the three Prosperity domains

Inclusive Societies

- Londoners suffer some of the worst Safety and Security in the UK, including the highest rates of knife crime and robbery. There are 4.5 robbery offences per 1,000 people compared with the UK average of 1.4. Civil Disorder is among the worst in the UK, with public order offences and possession of weapons a problem. Since 2010, there have been 24 terror attacks, resulting in 22 deaths.
- London is, overall, a tolerant city, especially in Central London where there is greater tolerance when people are asked about social classes, ethnicities and religions than in Outer London.
- Governance is average in London. While it has good government integrity, there are eight boroughs across London that have little competition in politics, where the local council has been held by the same party for 20 years. Furthermore, there is little political diversity, with just 14% of the vote going to non-mainstream parties, the lowest in the UK.
- Many people in London feel bereft of strong social support, with 10% of people saying they lack companionship, the highest in the UK. London has some of lowest rates of civic and social participation. Just 10% of adults volunteer to help sports, compared with 13% in the UK. However, there is also a high level of institutional trust.



Open Economies

- London's Investment Environment, which captures the supply of capital and investment demand, is the strongest in the UK. Unsurprisingly, it has the highest amount of venture capital in the country, at £407 per person, and the highest rate of equity finance success.
- London's labour market is strong and flexible, with few skills gaps and fewer hard to fill vacancies than other regions. Just 33% of job vacancies are hard to fill, compared with the UK average of 38%. At the same time, the businesses face extremely high property costs, low levels of local enterprise partnership awareness and a perceived lack of support for small and medium sized enterprises.
- London's Infrastructure is among the strongest in the country and has improved over time. The vast majority of premises, 96.5%, have superfast broadband available, while transport networks are strong. London businesses are better connected than anywhere else to airports and major rail stations. But there remain problems. The main roads are in poor condition, and congestion causes drivers to lose 140 hours in traffic each year.
- London's economy is dynamic, productive and competitive. It enjoys large numbers of new businesses, higher rates of business survival and many small businesses making use of innovation vouchers. In the most recent year, its rate of new businesses (108 per every 10,000 people) far exceeds any other region. However, unemployment is high in many London boroughs, none more so than Enfield, which has an unemployment rate of 6%, compared with the UK average of 3.9%.

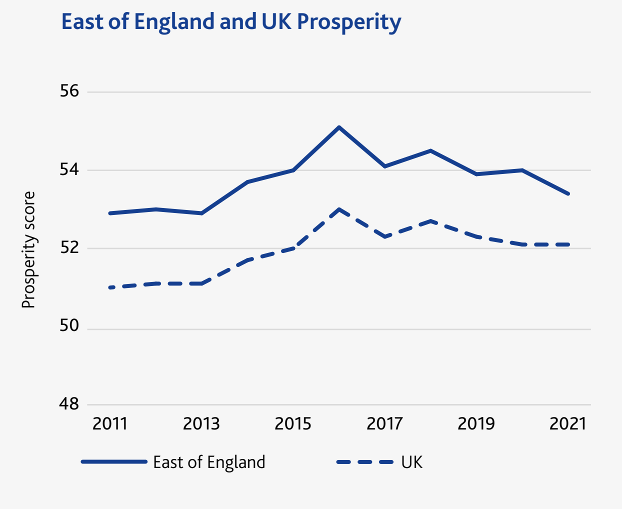
Empowered People

- Homelessness, over-indebtedness, and deep poverty are significant problems, especially in Central London; 29% of the population is in poverty, 12% in deep poverty, and 43% of children live in households that experience poverty, compared with the UK averages of 22% in poverty, 7% in deep poverty, and 33% of children in poverty.
- Londoners enjoy relatively good health, with 65-year-olds on average expected to live another 21 years. There is also good physical health, and mental health. Prevalence of cardiovascular conditions, for example, is just 1.2%, the lowest in the UK. It also has the lowest adult obesity rates. However, preventative measures are weak. For example, vaccination coverage (before Covid) and cancer screenings are much lower than the UK average. The bottom 22 ranked authorities for Preventative Interventions are all in London.
- London has best Education in the UK, with all boroughs in the top 100 nationally. Primary and secondary education are especially strong. The adult skill level of the working age population is also strong, with over 93% of people holding some type of qualification.
- London's Natural Environment is of lower quality than the rest of the UK. London has the highest concentrations of particulate matter and nitrogen oxides in the country. Concentration of fine particulate matter is, on average, 12 μg/m^3, compared with the UK average of 9 μg/m^3. An estimated 6.4% of adult deaths are from air pollution, compared with 5% nationally.

East of England (4th)

Local Authority	Rank
St Albans	9
Three Rivers	13
Hertsmere	24
East Hertfordshire	31
North Hertfordshire	39
Watford	44
Brentwood	46
Dacorum	47
Welwyn Hatfield	49
Epping Forest	51
Uttlesford	60
Colchester	72
Central Bedfordshire	76
South Cambridgeshire	81
Chelmsford	86
Broxbourne	91
Rochford	97
Stevenage	98
Braintree	111
Maldon	116
Basildon	122
Castle Point	125
Bedford	128

Local Authority	Rank
Harlow	129
Babergh	140
Cambridge	145
Thurrock	152
Huntingdonshire	158
East Cambridgeshire	159
Mid Suffolk	160
Broadland	185
Southend-on-Sea	189
East Suffolk	194
South Norfolk	195
Peterborough	215
Luton	222
Tendring	237
West Suffolk	240
North Norfolk	266
Ipswich	272
King's Lynn and West Norfolk	298
Norwich	304
Breckland	310
Fenland	326
Great Yarmouth	374



OVERVIEW

Prosperity in the East of England is higher than average in the UK. Its Commuter Belt includes some of the most prosperous areas in the country, where its economic strength is located. Beyond this, the region has a relatively poor Investment Environment and weak Enterprise Conditions. Furthermore, its rural areas, Mid-Sized Urban Hubs, and Coastal Towns have areas of deprivation and low performance. Prosperity in the region overall has been deteriorating in recent years. While its Infrastructure, Education and Natural Environment have all been improving, it has been losing ground in Health, Safety and Security, and in Enterprise Conditions.

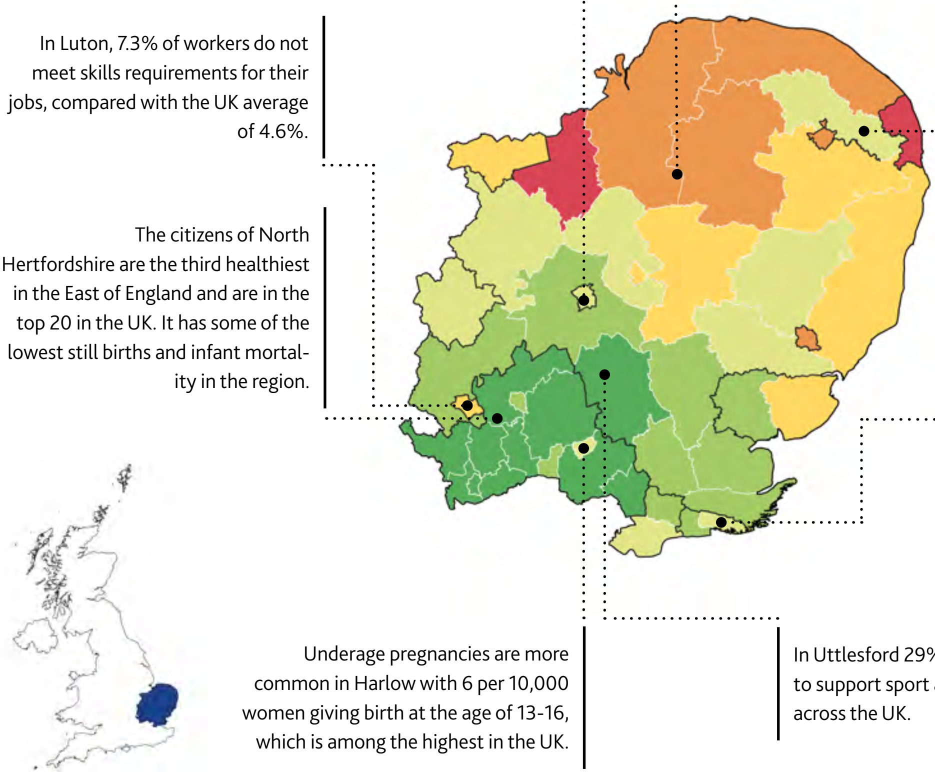
Some of the slowest download speeds in the region are in Breckland and King's Lynn, both under 45 Mb/s, compared with the UK average of 72 Mb/s.

Cambridge has the highest rate of theft in the region at 64%.

In Broadland, the percentage of working-age women who are either in work or actively seeking it is the highest in the region at 89%.

In Luton, 7.3% of workers do not meet skills requirements for their jobs, compared with the UK average of 4.6%.

The citizens of North Hertfordshire are the third healthiest in the East of England and are in the top 20 in the UK. It has some of the lowest still births and infant mortality in the region.



Southend-on-Sea has the longest journey delays in the East of England during the weekdays at 69 seconds per vehicle mile.

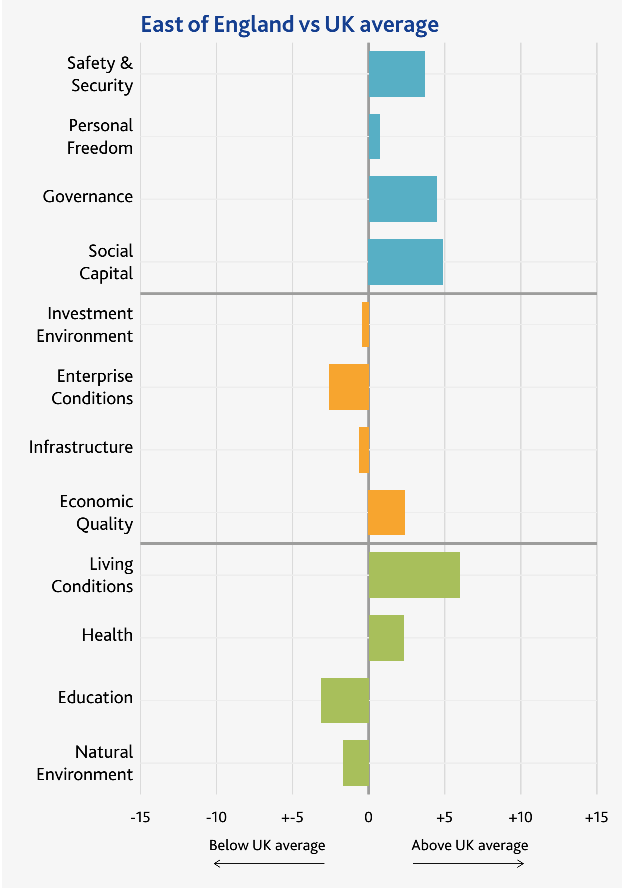
Underage pregnancies are more common in Harlow with 6 per 10,000 women giving birth at the age of 13-16, which is among the highest in the UK.

In Uttlesford 29% of adults aged 16+ volunteer regularly to support sport and physical activity, compared with 13% across the UK.

Performance of East of England across the three Prosperity domains

Inclusive Societies

- The East of England is relatively safe and secure, although the picture has been deteriorating in recent years. It has lower than average levels of violent crime and property crime. Babergh is the safest area in this region, while Mid-Sized Urban Hubs such as Luton, Bedford, and Norwich are the least safe. They all have a higher theft rate than the UK average of 30 offences per 1,000 people.
- The region is above the UK average for Social Tolerance, and people are most tolerant when asked of their views toward different classes.
- The East of England has strong Governance and the highest levels of government effectiveness in the UK. Local governments are very competent at managing housing benefits, council tax and planning appeals. However, local election turnout is also often low, with 38 local authorities falling below the national average of 39%. In Coastal Towns such as Great Yarmouth and Castle Point the quality of government is lower.
- One of its main strengths is Social Capital; 33 out of 45 local authorities are in the top 100 nationally. Uttlesford, St Albans, and East Hertfordshire have the strongest levels of Social Capital in the UK. The main strengths are low levels of loneliness and strong families, with the proportion of lone parent families, at 19% of all families, the second lowest in the UK.



Open Economies

- The quality of the Investment Environment in the East of England is below average. Norwich, Great Yarmouth and North Norfolk have some of the weakest Investment Environments in the UK, characterised by little investment demand and few plans for business expansion. Just 8% of small businesses attempted to raise finance for new products, compared with the UK average of 14%.
- The region as a whole has some of the weakest Enterprise Conditions in the country, although the Commuter Belt has strong Enterprise Conditions. This is due to factors like high property costs, low awareness of local enterprise partnerships, and many businesses reporting that legislation and tax compliance are major barriers to doing business. For example, just 29% of small business owners are aware of their local enterprise partnership and its services, compared with a UK average of 37%.
- Infrastructure in the Commuter Belt and Mid-Sized Urban Hubs is better than in rural areas and Coastal Towns. Many authorities are some distance from major transport hubs. The average distance from the nearest major rail station is 62 minutes, and 102 minutes to the nearest airport, which are both slightly more than the UK average.
- The region's strong economic outcomes are driven by local authorities in the Commuter Belt. The Commuter Belt has a large number of high-tech businesses, high productivity and a diverse workforce, making it productive and competitive. Across the East of England, GVA per hour is £33, which is similar to the UK average. Coastal Towns, in sharp contrast, suffer from low productivity and competitiveness as well as higher unemployment rates.

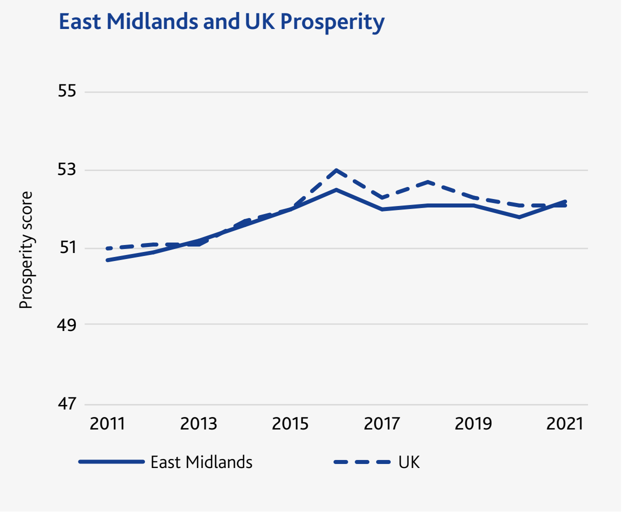
Empowered People

- Living Conditions in the East of England are among the best in the country, with most areas enjoying strong digital connectedness, protection from harm, and a poverty rate of 18%, the third lowest. However, many rural local authorities lack access to basic amenities, with travel times to supermarkets, secondary schools, and GPs longer than the UK average (although these issues are typical for rural communities).
- People who live in the East of England tend to be healthier than the rest of the UK. For example, St Albans and North Hertfordshire are among the top 15 areas for Health in the UK. However, Coastal Towns have some of the weakest health and care systems in the country. Tendring and Colchester have 18 and 23 suicide deaths per 100,000 respectively, compared with the UK average of 10.
- Outside of the Commuter Belt, most areas in the region are struggling with Education. Attainment and also attendance in areas such as Peterborough and Great Yarmouth are among the lowest in the country. Out of 32 local authorities outside the commuter belt, 21 are below the UK average attainment rate for literacy, while all 30 authorities are below the UK average for maths attainment. In the Commuter Belt, all authorities are above average for literacy.
- Nearly half of all authorities are in the bottom quartile for Natural Environment with only two in the top 100—Castle Point and Colchester. The main contributing factor to the weak performance is high exposure to air pollution and the reduced access to green spaces. Average concentration of coarse particulate matter is 16 μg/m^3 compared with the UK average of 13 μg/m^3.

East Midlands (5th)

Local Authority	Rank
Rutland	14
Harborough	28
Charnwood	40
Hinckley and Bosworth	54
Blaby	73
Broxtowe	75
Melton	82
Rushcliffe	83
Oadby and Wigston	88
North West Leicestershire	96
Derbyshire Dales	103
South Northamptonshire	120
Amber Valley	143
South Derbyshire	148
Gedling	155
Daventry	167
South Kesteven	173
High Peak	181
North East Derbyshire	183
Erewash	184

Local Authority	Rank
North Kesteven	187
Northampton	200
Leicester	205
Ashfield	206
East Northamptonshire	211
Chesterfield	220
Newark and Sherwood	221
West Lindsey	244
Bolsover	247
Kettering	260
Bassetlaw	268
Corby	276
Derby	281
Mansfield	300
Wellingborough	303
South Holland	314
Lincoln	325
East Lindsey	327
Nottingham	332
Boston	339



OVERVIEW

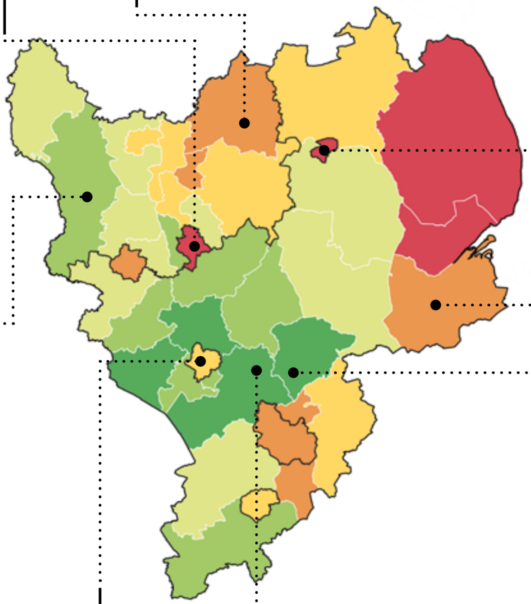
Prosperity across the East Midlands is varied. Overall, the East Midlands has low crime, high levels of personal connectedness, low rates of poverty, good provision of housing and low rates of mental ill-health. Living Conditions in the East Midlands are better than average—but Health, Education and the Natural Environment are weaker than average. Rural England areas and the North Midlands are more prosperous than the UK average, while urban areas have lower prosperity.

Nottingham has seen the number of sexual offences per 1,000 population double, from 2 to 4 in the last decade.

Drivers in Bassetlaw lose only an average of 4 hours per year in urban congestion, which is one of the lowest in the UK.

Prior to Covid-19, Lincoln had one of the highest unemployment rates across the UK at 5.5%.

With a loan supply of over £16,300 per capita and no businesses reporting delays or cancellations to projects due to a lack of finance, the Derbyshire Dales has one of the best investment environments outside London and the South East.



South Holland has some of the slowest internet speeds in the UK, with download speeds of just over 40Mb/s compared with the UK average of 72Mb/s.

Derbyshire Dales has one of the lowest percentages of adults classified as overweight or obese in East Midlands, at 56%.

Rutland is the safest local authority in East Midlands. Criminal damage offences are exceptionally low at 4.7 offences per 1,000 population.

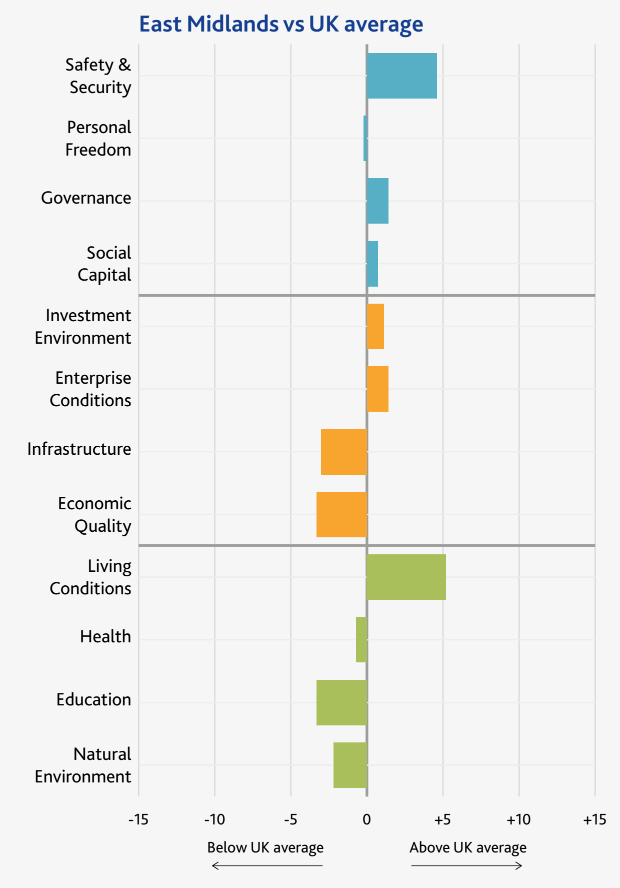
Leicester ranks 349th for Preventative Interventions, with an HPV vaccination rate of just 81%, compared with the UK average of 88%.

In Harborough, citizens are more active when it comes to volunteering to support sport and physical activity, with 20% of the population volunteering at least twice in the last 12 months, compared with the UK average of 13%.

Performance of East Midlands across the three Prosperity domains

Inclusive Societies

- While crime rates are increasing, the East Midlands has low overall crime rates. The homicide rate is 9.1 per 100,000 people, compared with the UK average of 11.2. However, Mid-Sized Urban Hubs, as well as the Industrial Heartlands areas of Derby and Nottingham, have higher rates of crime. For example, Lincoln has 5.8 sexual offences per 1,000 people, compared with the regional average of 2.6.
- Whilst there is a high level of tolerance for individuals of different ethnicities in the East Midlands, people are less likely than average to be tolerant when asked about different classes and religions.
- The average quality of governance in the East Midlands is above the UK average. The effectiveness of local government is strong and improving; 90% of planning decisions go through on time, compared with the UK average of 85%. However, the quality of local democracy has declined. Half of all local authorities have had the same party in control for at least 16 of the last 20 years. Leicester and Nottingham are notable exceptions to other areas, having seen increases in local turnout.
- The East Midlands is ranked 5th in the UK for social capital. Its residents have a sense of companionship and are unlikely to feel lonely. Just 7% of people feel lonely, the third lowest in the UK. There are also high levels of institutional trust, particularly in Parliament and government.



Open Economies

- Two thirds of authorities in the East Midlands have a stronger than average Investment Environment. The Investment Environment has also been improving, countering the declining UK trend. For example, 25% of small businesses sought financing for new processes, up from 8% a few years ago.
- The East Midlands has good Enterprise Conditions and is only marginally behind London. Nottingham and Derby typify supportive business environments in the region, with few frustrations around tax compliance or local government restrictions. There are encouraging signs of a healthy labour market in the East Midlands, with hard to fill vacancies at less than 30%, lower than the UK average of 38%.
- The East Midlands has weak Infrastructure. Rural areas and the North Midlands lack high quality internet connections, and the region, particularly in rural areas, is poorly connected to rail and airport hubs. The average train station is more than 76 minutes from homes in the East Midlands, compared with the UK average of 59. There are around five rail passenger journeys per capita per year, compared with the UK average of 23.
- Economic Quality in the East Midlands is poor. There is particularly weak Fiscal Sustainability, with an increasing share of expenditure put towards social care spending, while spending power per dwelling has also declined. The region lacks competitiveness, having one of the lowest export rates for small businesses and only 8% of all businesses being high-tech, compared with the UK average of 10%.

Empowered People

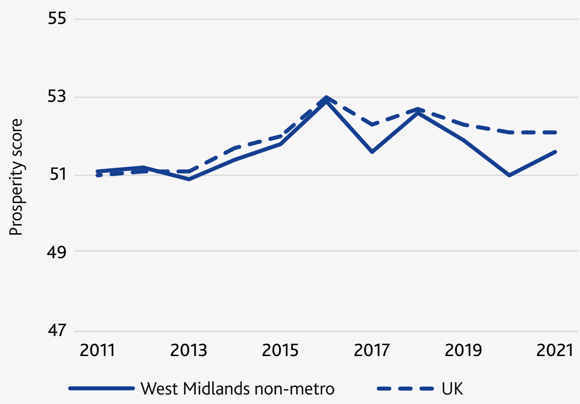
- Living Conditions across the East Midlands are stronger than all regions, except the South East and East of England. The East Midlands has strong digital connectedness and low poverty. Only 3% of households do not have a mobile phone and only 1% of residents are unbanked. However, in the urban areas of Leicester, Derby and Nottingham, homelessness, income deprivation and overcrowding are more prevalent.
- Health in the East Midlands is just below the UK average. The main area of poor performance is the region's care systems, with just 73% of A&E attendances dealt within four hours, compared with the UK average of 79%. Individuals in rural areas and the North Midlands enjoy better health than residents in urban areas. This urban-rural divide is most noticeable when considering mental health outcomes. For example, the suicide rate is only 5.3 per 100,000 in rural Harborough and over 12 per 100,000 in both Lincoln and Nottingham.
- Across all stages of school education, the East Midlands performs poorly, especially in urban areas, with only Rutland, Rushcliffe and Broxtowe in the top quartile nationally. Less than 40% of pupils in low-income households pass GCSE English and maths, which is one of the lowest rates in the UK. Furthermore, adults in this region have low levels of qualifications. The most successful aspect of education in this region is the progression of school leavers to both apprenticeships and further education courses.
- The quality of the Natural Environment of the East Midlands is below the UK average, primarily due to a lack of green spaces and significant exposure to air pollution. It has the fifth worst rate of exposure to fine particulate matter, at 8.9 μg/m³.

West Midlands non-metro (6th)

Local Authority	Rank
Warwick	57
Stratford-on-Avon	102
Rugby	119
Bromsgrove	127
Lichfield	166
Stafford	169
Redditch	193
Tamworth	197
East Staffordshire	204
Staffordshire Moorlands	207
North Warwickshire	214
South Staffordshire	217

Local Authority	Rank
Wychavon	223
Cannock Chase	225
Malvern Hills	232
Nuneaton and Bedworth	234
Newcastle-under-Lyme	241
Herefordshire, County of	248
Telford and Wrekin	249
Shropshire	274
Wyre Forest	277
Worcester	280
Stoke-on-Trent	356

West Midlands non-metropolitan and UK Prosperity



OVERVIEW

Prosperity in the West Midlands non-metropolitan area is similar to the UK average. The region is a predominantly rural area, with Worcester and Stoke-on-Trent the only authorities that are classically urban archetypes—a Mid-Sized Urban Hub and Post-Industrial Urban area, respectively. The strengths of this region include the quality of Governance, its Safety and Security, and high Social Tolerance. There is a contrasting trend in Infrastructure, Education, and the Natural Environment where, despite improvements, the region still performs worse than the UK average.

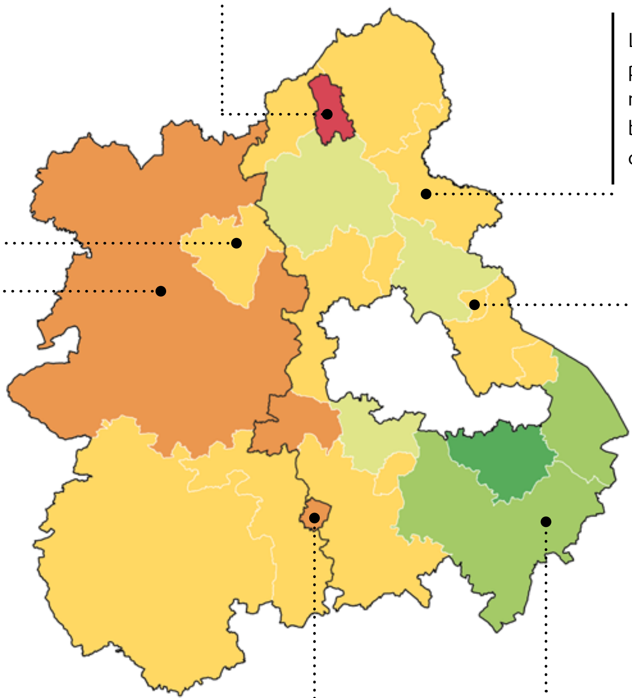
Stoke-on-Trent experiences the highest rates of crime and civil disorder in the region. Sexual offences have increased from 1.4 to 4 per 1,000 people in the past decade, one of the highest rates in the UK.

Telford and Wrekin is one of the most effective local councils in the area, dealing with housing benefit claims within 10 days on average and dealing with 95% of development decisions in a timely manner.

Lichfield is one of the highest performing local authorities in the region with a high proportion of small businesses accessing public sector contracts.

Shropshire has the highest rate of obesity in the region, with 72% of adults over-weight or obese.

Tamworth is the sole local authority in the region that has seen a reduction in crime. The number of domestic abuse incidents decreased from 12 to 10 incidents per 1,000 population.



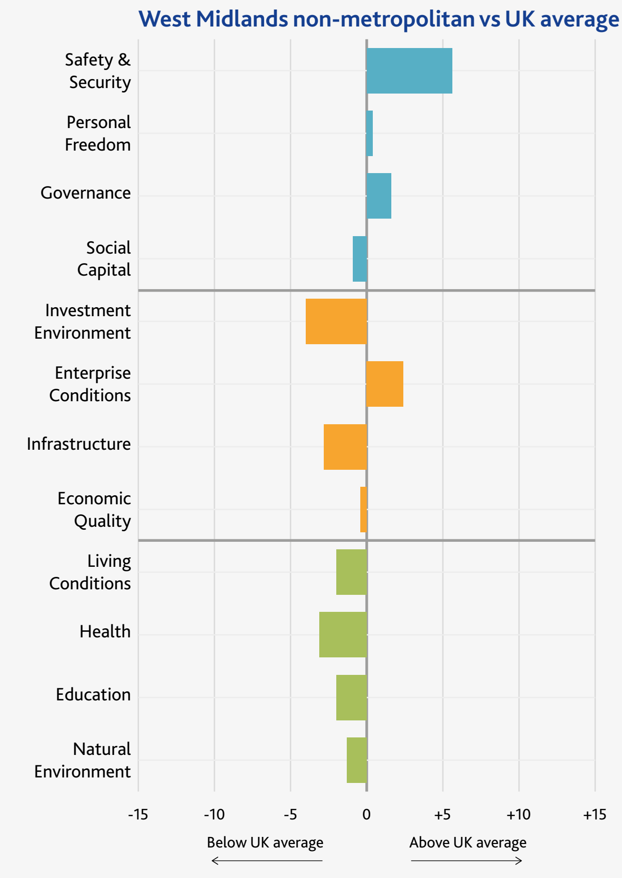
Worcester has 98.9% superfast broadband availability, the 10th highest in the UK.

The percentage of state-funded school leavers who go on to higher education is the highest among students in Stratford-on-Avon at 36%.

Performance of West Midlands non-metropolitan across the three Prosperity domains

Inclusive Societies

- Overall crime rates in this region are low. It has one of the lowest rates of criminal damage offences, at just 8 offences per 1,000 people, compared with the national average of 9. The highest rates of crime are in local authorities adjacent to Birmingham and in Stoke-on-Trent.
- This is overall a tolerant region compared with the UK average, with the greatest tolerance when asked about different classes, followed by those of different ethnicities and religions.
- Governance is strong within the West Midland non-metropolitan area, ranking 5th overall in the UK. National election turnouts are high, with Stratford-on-Avon ranked 11th nationally with a turn-out of over 75%. However, there has been a decline in the quality of local democracy, driven in part by an increasing number of local authorities that have had little change in political power.
- The Social Capital of West Midlands non-metropolitan area is weak. Just three local authorities have better social capital than the UK average. In this region, 6% of people feel left out and 8.4% of people feel lonely, which is similar to the UK averages.



Open Economies

- The Investment Environment in this region is weak, with low demand for new investment. Just 2% of small businesses tried to raise capital to fund new products, the second lowest in the UK, and only 4% tried to raise capital for new processes, the third lowest.
- The conditions for local enterprise in this region are generally strong; it is ranked 3rd in the UK. Few small businesses feel that the living wage legislation is a barrier to their business, and there are few skills gaps among employees. However, attracting new skilled employees is a challenge, with 43% of vacancies deemed hard to fill, the second highest in the UK.
- Overall Infrastructure is poor, with the region ranked 10th in the UK. The average download speed is just 65 Mb/s. Transport infrastructure is also poor. There are a low number of passengers using rail stations (6.6 journeys per person per year) and road conditions are poor. These problems are most pronounced in Herefordshire, which has slow broadband speeds, few houses connected to the gas network, few superfast broadband connections, and poor road conditions, and the average journey time to a rail hub by public transport is over two hours.
- The region is ranked 8th in the UK for its Economic Quality. Stoke-on-Trent and Remote Rural areas of the region show few signs of dynamism or competition. Labour Force Engagement is third-highest in the UK, with high economic activity rates for men and women of 86% and 77%. However, SME growth and GVA growth are both low.

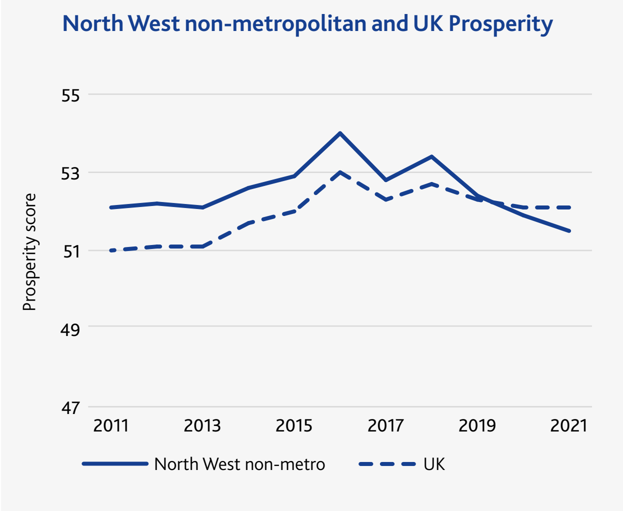
Empowered People

- Living Conditions are below the UK average. Travel times to local amenities are longer than most other areas in the UK, and there are also high rates of accidents. There are 305 non-fatal injuries for every 100,000 employees each year, compared with the UK average of 263. In the urban areas such as Worcester and Stoke-on-Trent, there are also high rates of homelessness.
- Health is also poor. The quality of care systems and people's physical health are significantly worse than the UK average. Just 71% of cancer referrals are able to start treatment within the 62-day target, compared with the UK average of 78%.
- Education outcomes are lower than the UK average. Secondary attainment among students from low-income families is just 39%, compared with the UK average of 44%. Rural areas have high levels of skills within the working age population, particularly Stafford, where over 97% of the population have some qualifications. Stoke-on-Trent and Worcester are among the weakest performers in the region—in both regions, less than 88% of adults have some qualifications.
- There are high levels of emissions from industry and transport, although the concentrations of nitrogen oxides are lower than the UK average. Despite its rurality, the average size of the nearest green spaces close to residential areas in Shropshire, South Staffordshire and Stratford-on-Avon are particularly small; in Stratford-on-Avon it is under 70,000m², whereas the UK average is over 385,000m².

North West non-metro (7th)

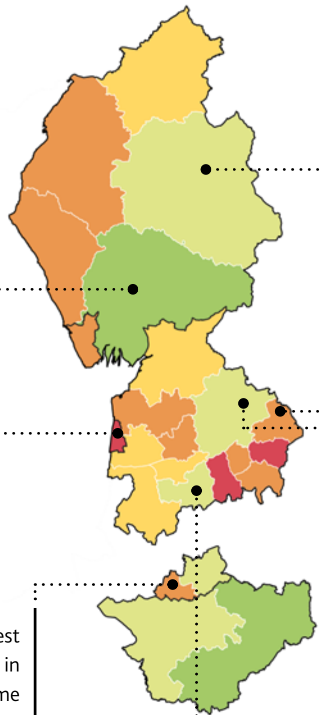
Local Authority	Rank
Cheshire East	84
South Lakeland	101
Warrington	137
Ribble Valley	144
Chorley	156
Cheshire West and Chester	178
Eden	186
Fylde	199
South Ribble	224
Lancaster	235
Carlisle	238
West Lancashire	246

Local Authority	Rank
Allerdale	263
Halton	269
Barrow-in-Furness	278
Wyre	285
Pendle	290
Rossendale	296
Hyndburn	301
Copeland	305
Preston	307
Blackburn with Darwen	321
Burnley	336
Blackpool	379



OVERVIEW

The North West non-metropolitan region is below average in prosperity. Its strengths lie in the quality of local governance and the stable, if relatively unproductive, economy. It has the local authority with the lowest level of prosperity in the UK, Blackpool, which performs poorly across most pillars. Generally, better performing areas are located in the rural areas and have better education and health. The rest of the local authorities, such as the Remote Rural areas, Lancashire and the Industrial Heartlands suffer from poor mental health and low rates of further education. The rural areas have stronger societal relationships than the more urban zones.



South Lakeland has 44 properties per 1,000 population at a medium risk of flooding and 28 properties per 1,000 population at a high risk of flooding. These figures are among the highest in the UK.

In Eden life expectancy at 65 is 22 years, compared with the UK average of 20 years.

In Pendle, more than 20% of the adult population have no qualification, compared with 8% across the UK. Just 60% have level 2 qualifications or higher and 28% have level 4 qualifications, compared with the UK average of 76% and 40%.

In Blackpool the accidental death rate is more than twice the UK average.

Ribble Valley is one of the safest local authorities in the region, with no offences for possession of weapons recorded in recent years.

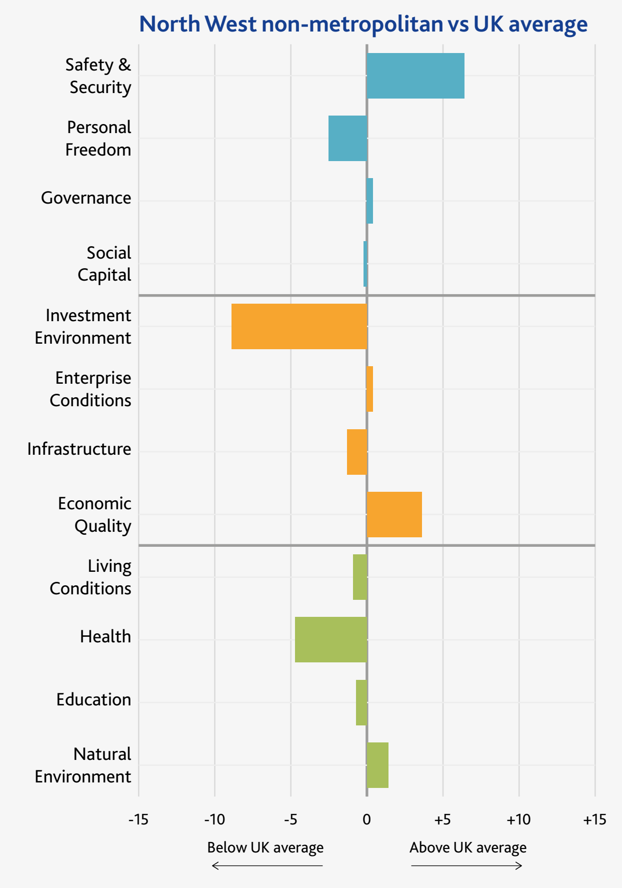
Halton has some of the best transport infrastructure in the region, with average time to the nearest major airport just 47 minutes, compared with the UK average of 94 minutes.

Chorley is the highest ranked authority for Governance in the region, with over 99% of planning decisions delivered in a timely manner.

Performance of North West non-metropolitan across the three Prosperity domains

Inclusive Societies

- Safety and Security in this region is good. It also has the lowest rate of domestic abuse, with just 5 incidents per 1,000 people. However, violent crimes, especially sexual offences, have increased. Furthermore, its overall homicide rate is 13 homicides per 100,000 people, compared with the UK average of 11.
- The region is the least socially tolerant area in the UK, across ethnicity, classes and religions.
- Governance is similar to the UK average and there is significant regional variation. For example, while local election voter turnout is high in places such as South Lakeland, at 45%, 20 (out of 24) local authorities have a turnout rate below the national average of 36%.
- Social Capital is relatively weak and deteriorating, compared with the rest of the UK. There is a significant challenge with family breakdown. It also has one of the highest rates of lone parent families, with 26% of all families being lone parent, compared with the UK average of 22%. The number of children in need and looked after children are both higher than the UK average. Trust in government and institutions is low, while civic and social participation is declining.



Open Economies

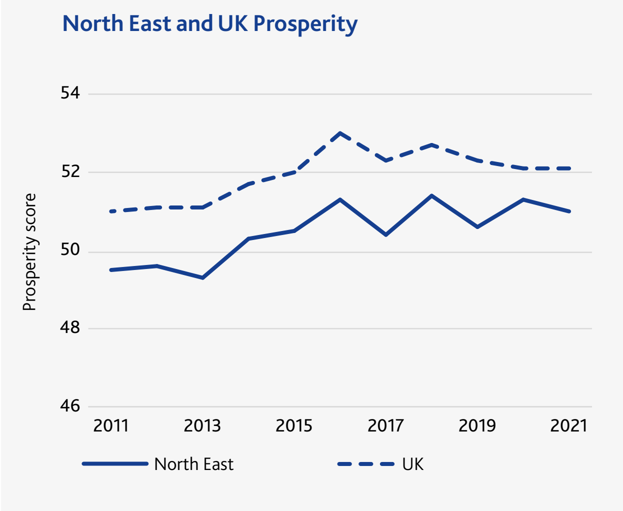
- The region has one of the weakest Investment Environments in the UK and has been weakening over time. The percentage of small businesses making use of equity financing or loans from either banks, other businesses, or connections such as angel investors is at 20%, decreasing from 28% over the last 10 years, which is low compared with the UK average. There is little real appetite for investment for overseas expansion for future projects, with just 1.9% of small businesses attempting to raise finance for expansion into new overseas markets.
- The environment for starting and running a business is good—there are low property costs, awareness of local enterprise partnerships, and low regulatory barriers. However, there are major challenges in the labour market—many firms report skill shortages and skill gaps, with 31% of vacancies due to skills shortages, the highest in the UK.
- The region has below-average Infrastructure, with especially poor water provision. It has high rates of leakage and a large number of supply interruptions. Several authorities are disconnected from major transport hubs, with most of the remote rural areas more than the UK average of 60 minutes from a major railway station.
- The region has benefited from relatively prudent management of local authority finances, good labour force engagement, and little economic volatility. Eleven local authorities have more than 100% of their expenditure in reserves. However, there is low diversity in its workforce, and the share of firms in industries with high research and development expenditure is minimal.

Empowered People

- The region's Living Conditions are just below average. There is poor access to local amenities and some danger from accidents. Travel times to nearby local amenities are also relatively long, and the 21% of people live in food deserts, the second highest in the UK.
- The region's low Health ranking is driven by poor mental and physical health. The percentage of patients with depression the second highest in the UK, with 14% of patients on GP lists being diagnosed (compared with the UK average of 11%). The region also has the second highest prevalence of cardiovascular conditions and dementia, with rates of 2.4% and 0.9% respectively.
- Education is slightly below average. Pre-primary enrolment is below the national average of 72%. The region has a high number of students going into apprenticeships, but a relatively low enrolment of 15% in higher education, compared with the national average of 23%. In Lancashire and the urban areas, few students go onto higher education, and the level of adult skills is among the lowest in the country.
- The quality of the Natural Environment is above average, with relatively low emissions rates and low exposure to air pollution across the whole region. For example, the concentration of coarse particulate matter, at just 10 μg/m^3, is the third lowest in the UK. It is within the Remote Rural areas where there are major issues with flooding and water management, with high risk levels of floods.

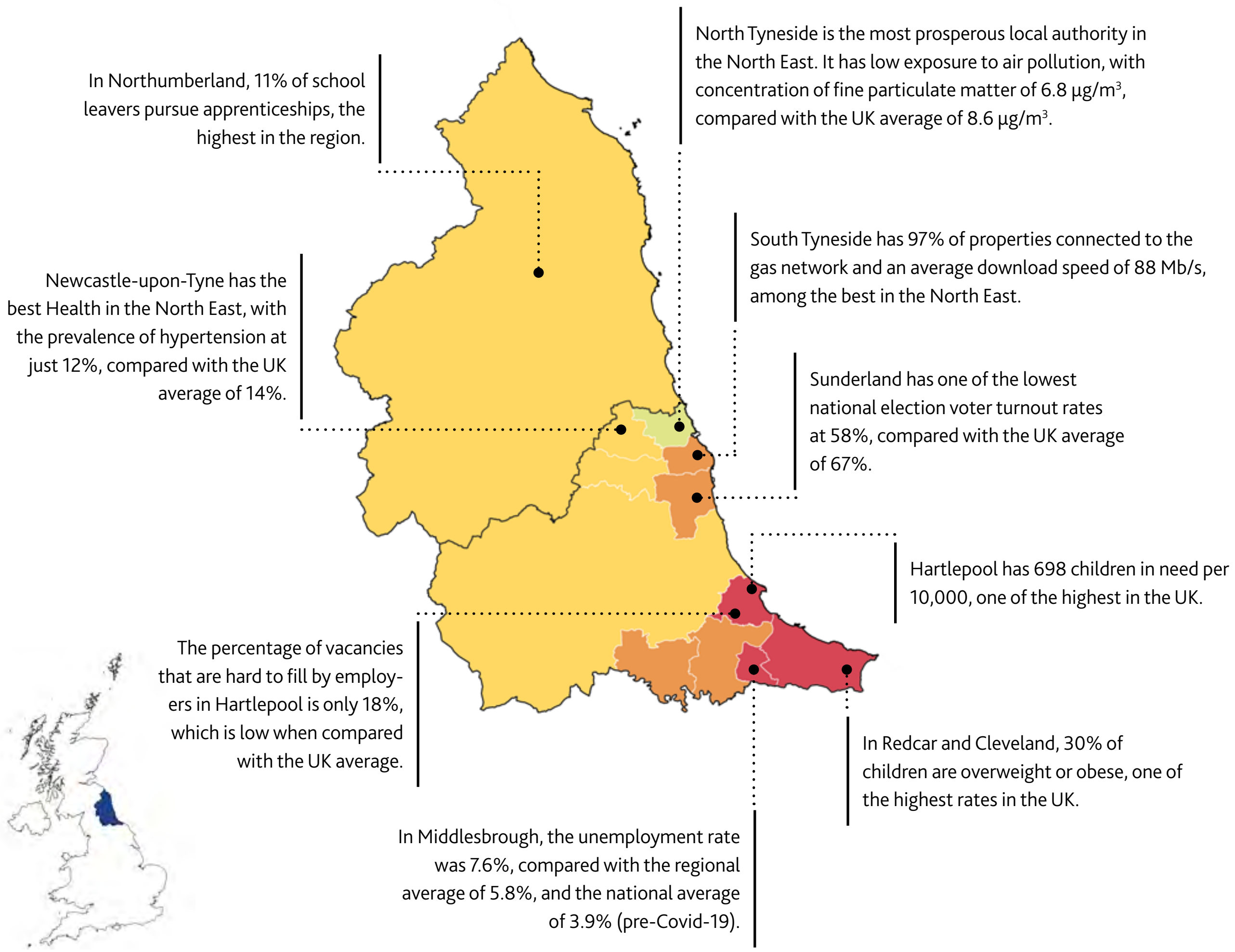
North East (8th)

Local Authority	Rank
North Tyneside	151
Northumberland	192
Newcastle upon Tyne	198
Gateshead	212
County Durham	251
Sunderland	258
Stockton-on-Tees	259
South Tyneside	279
Darlington	293
Redcar and Cleveland	333
Hartlepool	361
Middlesbrough	378



OVERVIEW

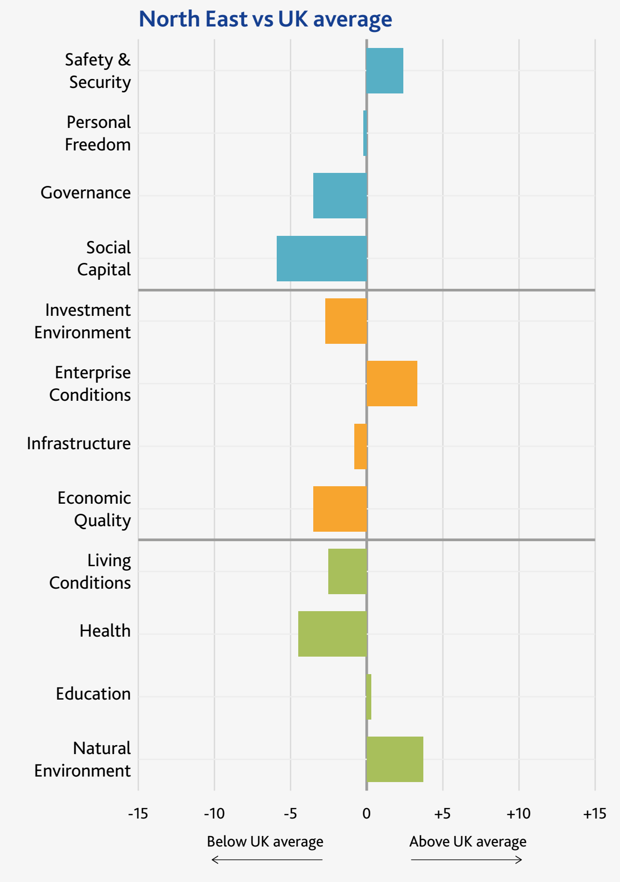
The North East is less prosperous than the UK average. With the exception of Northumberland, it is made up entirely of Post-Industrial Urban local authorities. Its greatest challenge lies in its social capital, where there have been high levels of family breakdown. It has seen a decline in trust in societal institutions, from local members of parliament to courts. While it has relative strengths such as good infrastructure, it still underperforms economically, especially in labour market engagement. There are major challenges in health outcomes and poverty rates, which are among the weakest in the UK.



Performance of North East across the three Prosperity domains

Inclusive Societies

- The region performs above average for Safety and Security, although it still ranks 10th, with high rates of violent crime. Domestic abuse is high across the region, with 16 incidents per 1,000 population, almost twice the UK average. There are also a high number of sexual offences and homicides, with four authorities (Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton-on-Tees, Hartlepool, and Middlesbrough) having the third highest homicide rates in the country (26 homicides per 100,000 population).
- Governance is poor in the North East. While local governments are relatively effective, there is weak government integrity. Engagement in local democracy is more mixed: average local election turnout is 35%, similar to the UK average, but there is a general cynicism around how much one's vote actually makes a difference. Furthermore, in 6 out of 12 local authorities, there has been virtually no change in the party that holds power in the last 20 years.
- The North East has the weakest Social Capital out of any region. It is weak in the amount of personal support people receive and the strength of families. It has the highest rates of teen pregnancies and lone parent families in the UK, with 26.8% compared with the UK average of 22.3%. Trust in institutions is also low, with trust in members of Parliament the lowest in the country.



Open Economies

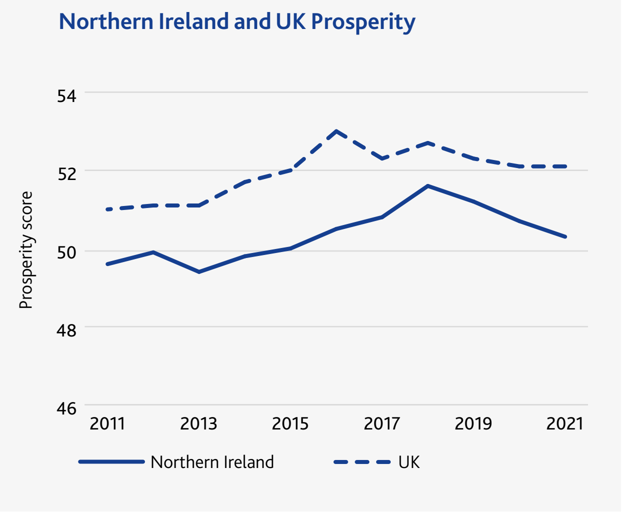
- The North East's Investment Environment is weaker than the UK average. The average loan supplied, which is £3,035, is much lower than the UK average of £4,560. The percentage of small business managers who trust the banking sector is just 60%, which is just below the UK average of 63%. One strength is the supply of capital—there are very few projects that are stopped or delayed because of lack of capital.
- The North East has good Enterprise Conditions. Its major strength is labour market flexibility—employers generally report there being few barriers to employing workers and recruiting. For example, just 6% of businesses see the living wage as a barrier, compared with the UK average of 11%.
- There is good infrastructure in the North East, with a reliable and affordable energy and water network, in addition to good road conditions. Northumberland and County Durham have slower internet speeds (both less than 46 Mb/s) and worse transport links than most urban areas. One weakness across all areas is a lack of access to major railway stations or airports. In every local authority, the average travel time to the nearest major airport (Newcastle) is more than the UK average of 100 minutes.
- The North East's Economic Quality is generally low. The region's economy lacks dynamism. The number of new businesses starting is at 35 per 10,000 population (compared with the UK average of 56), and only 27 new businesses per 10,000 population survive to their second year (compared with the UK average of 41). Male and female participation in the labour force is also lower than in other parts of the country, and 7% of those aged 16-18 are not in employment, education or training, compared with the UK average of 5%.

Empowered People

- One of the North East's major challenges is its persistent and widespread poverty. Its poverty rate of 26% is second only to London's, and it has one of the highest number of students eligible for free school meals. The region also has one of the highest accident death rates in the UK.
- Health outcomes are poor. Risk factors, such as drug misuse, hypertension, and alcohol misuse, are high, with drug-related deaths at 12 per 100,000, one of the highest levels in the UK. The region also has the poorest physical health in the country, including the highest rates of cardiovascular conditions, respiratory conditions, disability and dementia. These outcomes are poor across all local authorities. However, the region does have some of the best healthcare systems in the country, with a high number of care home beds, and relatively short waiting times.
- The North East has a good education system for pre-primary and primary aged children, with high rates of literacy and numeracy attainment at primary level. The region's major challenge is the low level of qualifications in the adult population. Just 32% of the adult population have level 4 qualifications, compared with the UK average of 40%.
- The region outperforms the UK average for its Natural Environment. While the North East has higher industry and transport CO_2 emissions rates compared with other regions, there is low exposure to air pollution and fewer issues with flooding management. There is a high amount of waste produced per person and low recycling rate, at just 36%, compared with the UK average of 41%.

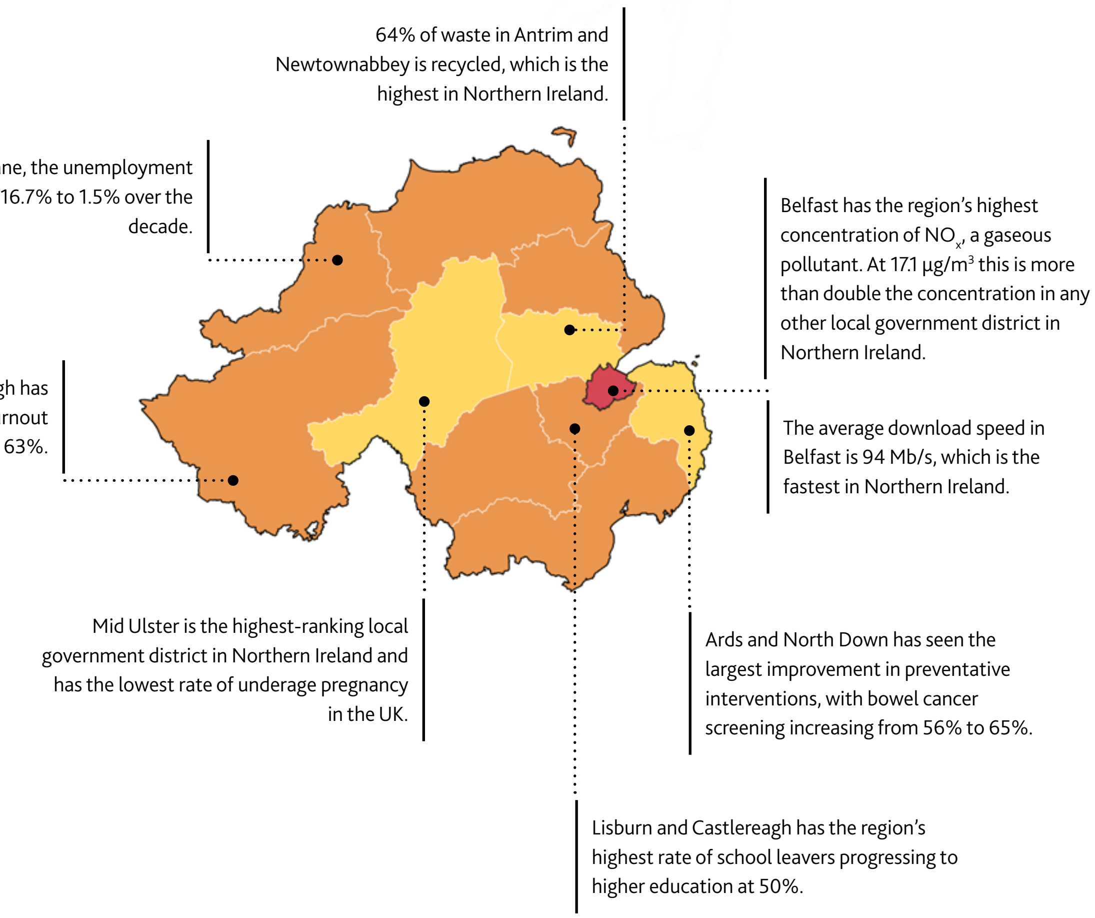
Northern Ireland (9th)

Local Authority	Rank
Mid Ulster	227
Ards and North Down	250
Antrim and Newtownabbey	252
Lisburn and Castlereagh	255
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	271
Mid and East Antrim	273
Fermanagh and Omagh	291
Causeway Coast and Glens	292
Newry, Mourne and Down	295
Derry City and Strabane	309
Belfast	351



OVERVIEW

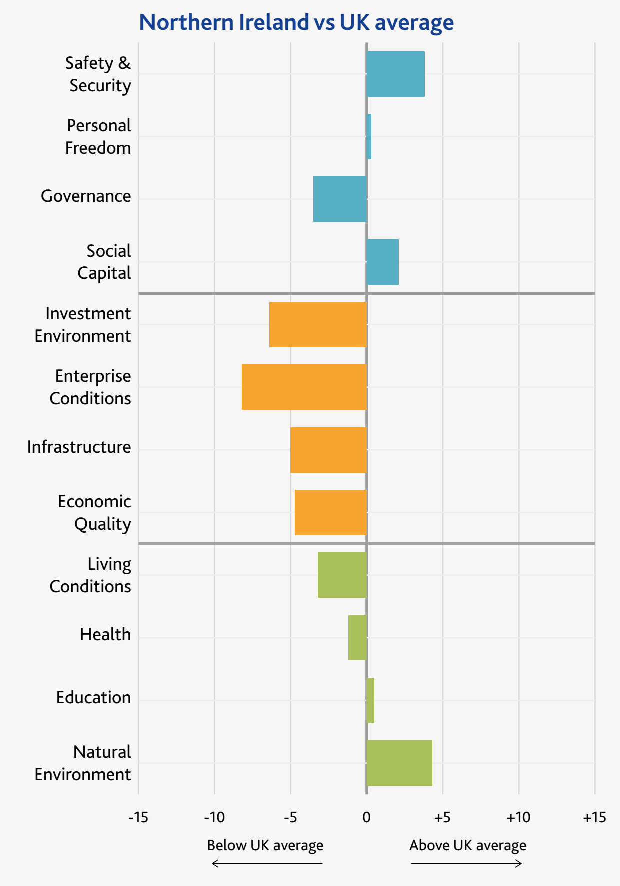
Prosperity in Northern Ireland is lower than the UK average. Belfast, which can be classified as a typical Industrial Heartland local government district, has lower overall prosperity than the rest of Northern Ireland (Rural Northern Ireland). Northern Ireland's weakest pillars are Governance, Enterprise Conditions, and Economic Quality. It has strengths in Social Capital, Education, and the Natural Environment.



Performance of Northern Ireland across the three Prosperity domains

Inclusive Societies

- Northern Ireland has low overall rates of crime. For example, the number of sexual offenses is 1.9 per 1,000 people, and the rate of theft offenses is 11 per 1,000 people, both the lowest rates in the UK. Crime rates are highest in Belfast. For example, there are 23.3 thefts per 1,000 people in Belfast, more than double the rate in any other Northern Irish local government district. Northern Ireland has experienced a reduction in property crime, although there has been an increase in terrorist incidents over the last decade.
- Governance is weak in Northern Ireland. While Northern Ireland has the highest average local election voter turnout out of all regions, at 53%, it has the second-lowest turnout in national elections, with just 62% voting. Local councils are also poor at returning planning applications—just 55% of all plans are returned in a timely manner, compared with the UK average of 85%.
- Social Capital is Northern Ireland's highest-ranking pillar (4th). Northern Ireland has less than 7% of people reporting feelings of isolation or loneliness. It also has strong Civic and Social Participation, with the largest average donation amount (£343) and highest frequency of charitable donations in the UK.



Open Economies

- Northern Ireland has low levels of private sector investment. The value of venture capital invested per head of the population is just £20, much lower than the UK, which averages £146. Increasing numbers of businesses in Northern Ireland are delaying projects due to a lack of external financing.
- Businesses in Northern Ireland face challenges with regulatory barriers and finding skilled workers. Around 30% of small business owners say recruitment and retainment are a barrier, the highest proportion in the UK.
- Infrastructure is poor in Northern Ireland. Overall internet download speed is slow. There is disparity in internet connectivity between Belfast and the rest of Northern Ireland, with download speeds in Rural Northern Ireland at most 72 Mb/s, the same as the UK average, whereas the average speed in Belfast is 94 Mb/s. There is also major urban congestion, with urban drivers losing on average 65 hours per year in congestion in the nearest urban centre.
- Northern Ireland is the second-weakest region for Economic Quality. It has the lowest high-tech business share with just 5.1% and the lowest rates of business creation. However, it does have high labour force engagement, with the lowest unemployment before Covid-19 in the UK (2.4%) and the highest job satisfaction (90%). In Derry City and Strabane, unemployment rates have fallen and the NEET rate has also fallen, resulting in it seeing the greatest improvement in Economic Quality in Northern Ireland.

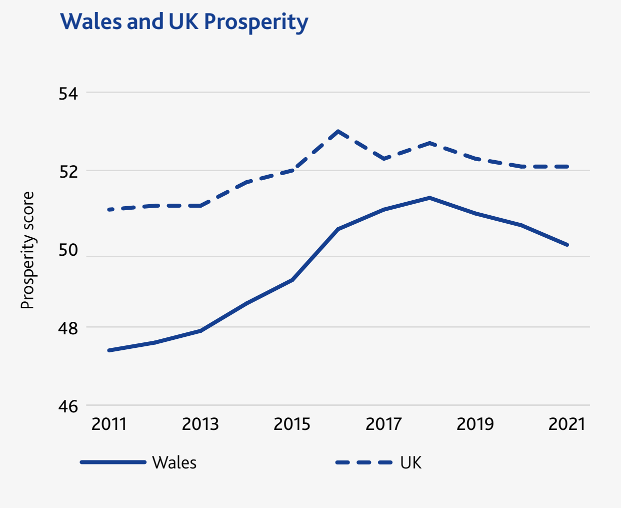
Empowered People

- Living Conditions in Northern Ireland is below the UK average. Although the persistent poverty rate has decreased from 17% to 15%, it is still the highest level outside London. Only 64% of properties have indoor coverage for 4G, which is the lowest for any region in the UK.
- Overall morbidity and the quality of healthcare systems in Northern Ireland are weaker than the rest of the UK, with Belfast the weakest performing of all districts. There has also been a decline in the quality of healthcare systems, illustrated by the decrease from 83% to 68% of A&E attendances that are admitted, transferred or discharged within four hours. Similarly, the percentage of patients starting cancer treatment within 62 days of GP referral has decreased from 88% to 57%.
- Northern Ireland has good education provision. It is ranked 2nd for Secondary Education and 1st for Tertiary Education Provision. Northern Ireland has a high proportion of low-income students attaining level 2 qualifications in English and mathematics, ranked 2nd as a region behind London. However, its low levels of adult skills are in stark contrast to its strengths in the rest of the pillar. However, the qualifications of the working age population have improved; the proportion with level 4 qualifications has increased from 27% to 36% in the last decade.
- The Natural Environment in Northern Ireland has improved over the last decade, primarily due to its reduction in CO_2 emissions and a decrease in the concentrations of particulate matter and nitrogen oxides, and it now has the lowest concentrations of atmospheric nitrogen oxides. Overall recycling rates in Northern Ireland are the highest in the UK.

Wales (10th)

Local Authority	Rank
Vale of Glamorgan	146
Monmouthshire	216
Powys	230
Cardiff	236
Swansea	275
Carmarthenshire	287
Pembrokeshire	288
Flintshire	289
Gwynedd	317
Bridgend	322
Conwy	323

Local Authority	Rank
Denbighshire	328
Caerphilly	330
Rhondda Cynon Taf	334
Ceredigion	337
Isle of Anglesey	338
Newport	341
Torfaen	346
Wrexham	347
Neath Port Talbot	350
Merthyr Tydfil	365
Blaenau Gwent	369



OVERVIEW

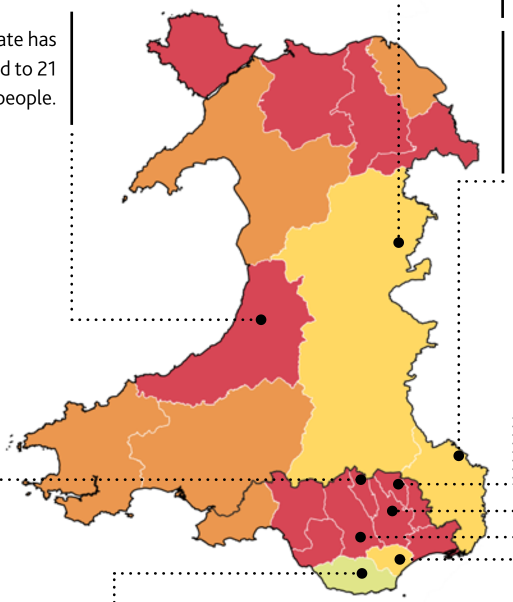
Prosperity in Wales was improving, and it has risen from 15th to 10th in the regional rankings, but since 2018 prosperity has been in decline, driven primarily by weakening Health and a deterioration in the quality of the Investment Environment. Overall, the Welsh economy is weak and is undermined by insufficient Infrastructure and poor conditions for enterprise. Compared with the rest of the UK, the performance of Wales in Health, the living conditions of its people and the quality of its education is generally poor. Rural Wales tends to perform more strongly than the Welsh Valleys, being safer, better governed and having higher levels of social capital.

There are 28 community amateur sports clubs per 10,000 people in Powys, one of the highest numbers in Wales and the UK.

Monmouthshire has seen the average time taken to process housing benefit claims fall from 46 to 17 days.

In Ceredigion, the suicide rate has increased from almost four-fold to 21 deaths per 100,000 people.

Adults in Monmouthshire are the most qualified in Wales, with 96% having some qualifications and 83% having level 2 qualifications.



Merthyr Tydfil has seen the greatest improvement in communications infrastructure, with download speed increasing from 6Mb/s to 44Mb/s. Superfast broadband is now available in 97% of properties.

Blaenau Gwent has seen the greatest reduction in property crime. The number of criminal damage offences has reduced from 28 to 16 offences per 1,000 people in the last decade.

Caerphilly has the lowest local election turnout in Wales at 36%.

The Vale of Glamorgan has the best health in Wales, with the lowest rates of childhood obesity and the lowest prevalence of hypertension.

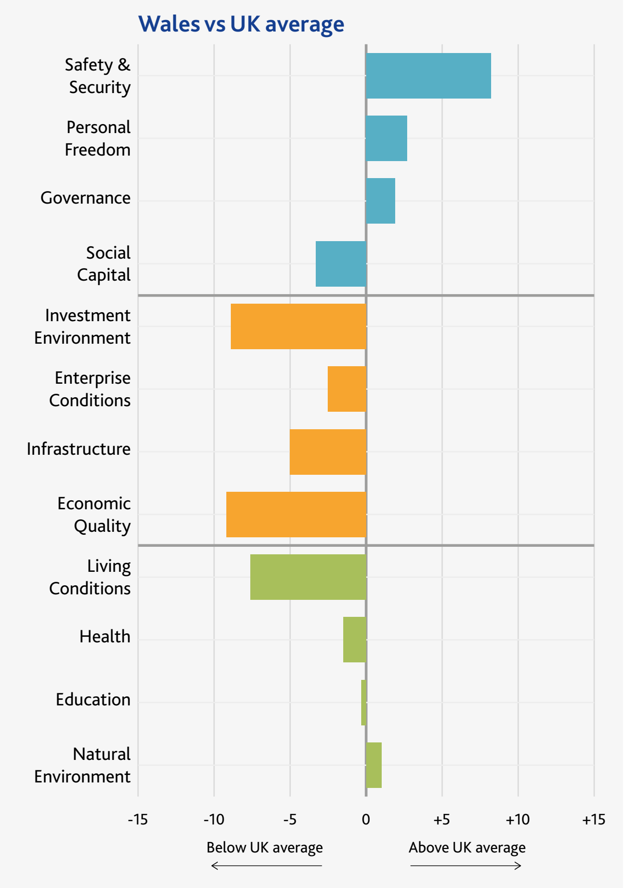
While Cardiff has the best infrastructure in Wales, it has one of the highest journey delays and urban congestion in the UK, with around 87 hours lost by drivers per year.

In Rhondda Cynon Taf, over the last decade the rate of teenage pregnancies has more than halved from 12 to 5 conceptions for every 1,000 women aged 13-15.

Performance of Wales across the three Prosperity domains

Inclusive Societies

- Wales has low rates of crime, although there have been increasing amounts of civil disorder and violent crime in recent years. The homicide rate across Wales is 7 per 100,000 population, compared with the UK average of 11. Whilst there are higher rates of violent and property crime in the Welsh Valleys than Rural Wales, these areas are still safer than the UK average. One exception is found in the Welsh Valleys where domestic abuse, at 16 incidents per 1,000 population, is higher than the UK average of 9 incidents.
- Compared with their peers in other regions, people in Wales enjoy the highest levels of Social Tolerance, especially toward different religions.
- The quality of local Governance in Wales has also improved over the last decade. It has strong local democracy, high turnout and people who believe that voting makes a difference. Average turnout in local elections was high, at 42%. The effectiveness of local government has also recently improved.
- However, prosperity in Wales is being undermined by an erosion of Social Capital. Wales has a large number of underage pregnancies and looked after children, with 108 looked after children per 10,000. Family relationships are stronger in Rural Wales than in the Welsh Valleys. Rural Wales has lower rates of looked after children, children in need, and children on child protection plans.



Open Economies

- Businesses in Wales have a weak Investment Environment with low capital supply, little demand for expansion, and 30% of projects are delayed due to a lack of financing, the highest rate in the UK. In the Welsh Valleys, the value of loans provided to SMEs by major banks per head of the population is £2,714, much lower than in Rural Wales, which is £9,516.
- There is little local competition, which limits business innovation. Commerce is dominated by a small number of businesses, when measured both in terms of the employment share and the turnover share. Just 0.3% of public sector contracts are fulfilled by small businesses, compared with 1.5% across the UK.
- Infrastructure is also weak. The region's broadband lags behind other regions, with average download speed just 58 Mb/s, compared with the national average of 71. Far more properties lack access to electricity and gas in Rural Wales, where 37% of houses lack a connection to the gas network, which is six times higher than in the Welsh Valleys. In Carmarthenshire, Powys, Gwynedd, and the Isle of Anglesey, over 50% of properties lack connections to these networks.
- All Welsh authorities are in the bottom 100 for Economic Quality. Wales is the weakest performing region in terms of productivity and competitiveness, and the fiscal sustainability of its local authorities. Just 6.7% of Welsh businesses are high-tech, which is the second lowest in the UK. Welsh local authorities have, on average, the lowest reserve to expenditure ratio in the UK. While unemployment in Wales has decreased over the last decade, economic activity rates (those in work or actively seeking it) are still below the UK average.

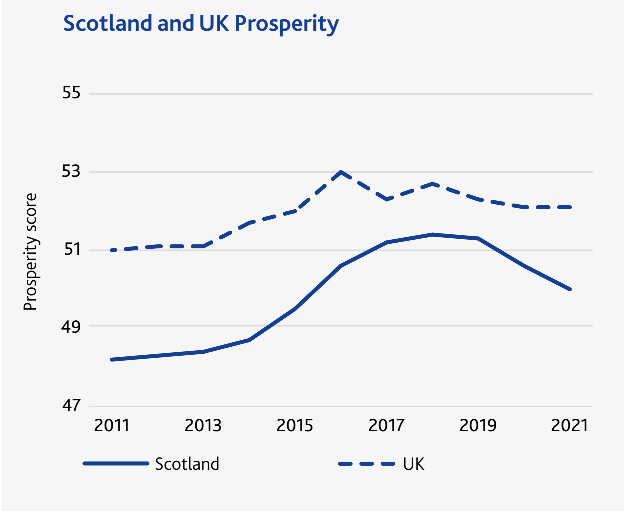
Empowered People

- Living Conditions are below the UK average. More than 1 in 20 households experience deep poverty, which is the highest proportion outside London. The percentage of children who are living in households experiencing poverty has decreased from 37% to 31%.
- The quality of Health in Wales is slightly below average. It has low vaccination rates and the second highest childhood obesity rate, at 26%. However, the prevalence of diabetes is just 6%, which is the second lowest in the UK. Wales has also recorded slight improvements in uptake of the MMR vaccine and bowel cancer screening increasing from 92% to 94.5% and from 52.3% to 55.5%, respectively.
- Wales has a large discrepancy in educational performance between primary and secondary levels. Primary attainment is higher than the UK average, whereas at secondary level attendance and attainment at the GCSE level are both far below the UK average, although the difference in curriculum might explain some of the variation. All local authorities in Wales are ranked in the bottom 50 for secondary education, with no more than 34% of low-income students achieving GCSE qualifications in English and maths.
- The quality of the Natural Environment in Wales is better than the UK average, with its main strengths in low emissions and low air pollution. There has been a substantial reduction in nitrogen dioxide concentration from 10.2 µg/m^3 to 7.0 µg/m^3 over the last decade.

Scotland (11th)

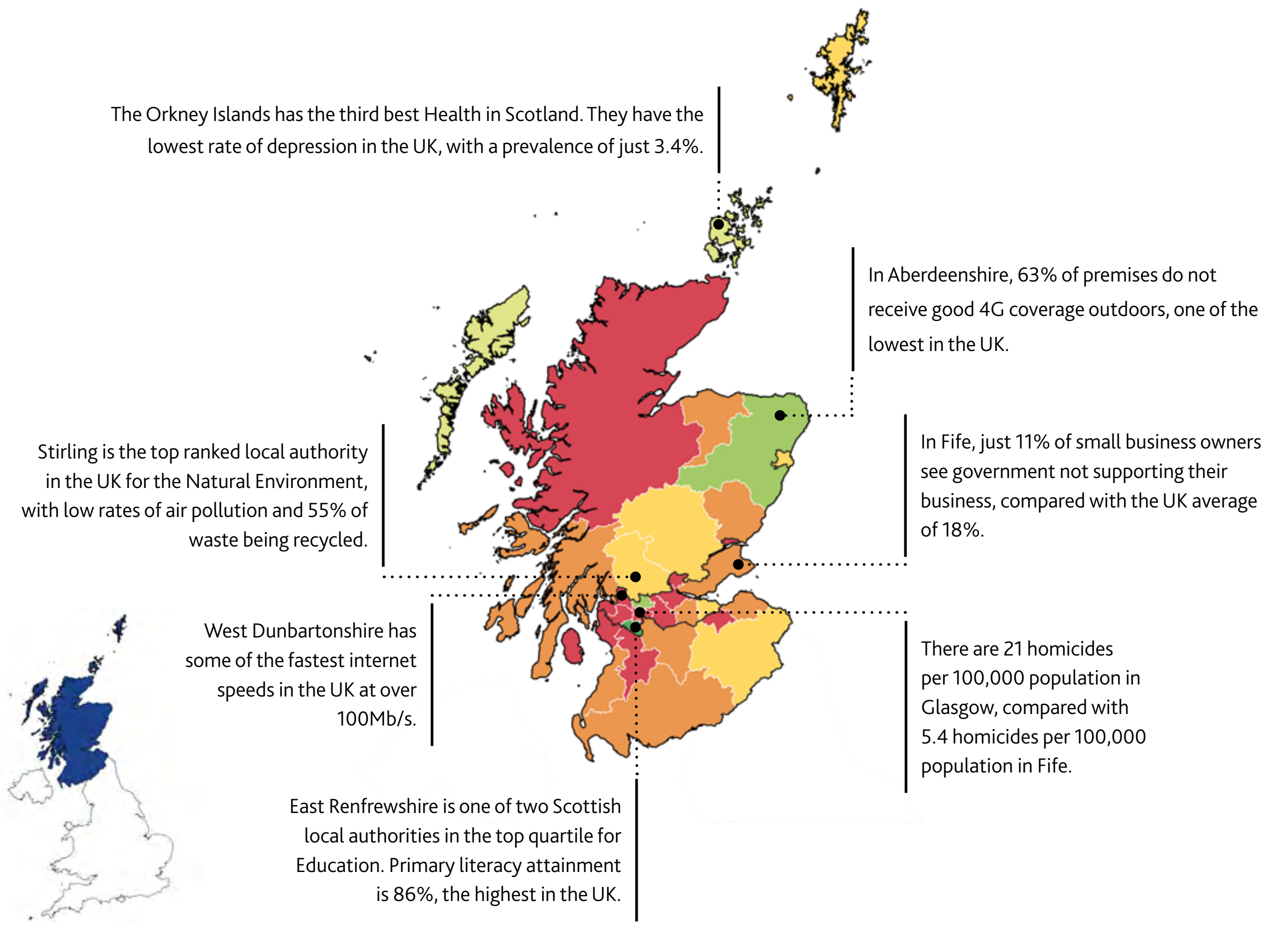
Local Authority	Rank
East Renfrewshire	45
Aberdeenshire	78
East Dunbartonshire	115
Orkney Islands	171
Na h-Eileanan Siar	188
City of Edinburgh	190
Aberdeen City	191
Stirling	209
Shetland Islands	213
Perth and Kinross	218
Scottish Borders	233
West Lothian	261
Moray	265
South Ayrshire	267
Angus	270
Fife	283

Local Authority	Rank
East Lothian	284
Argyll and Bute	286
Dumfries and Galloway	313
South Lanarkshire	316
Highland	319
Midlothian	335
Renfrewshire	340
Falkirk	344
North Ayrshire	348
North Lanarkshire	353
Inverclyde	358
East Ayrshire	359
Clackmannanshire	368
Dundee City	370
West Dunbartonshire	376
Glasgow City	377



OVERVIEW

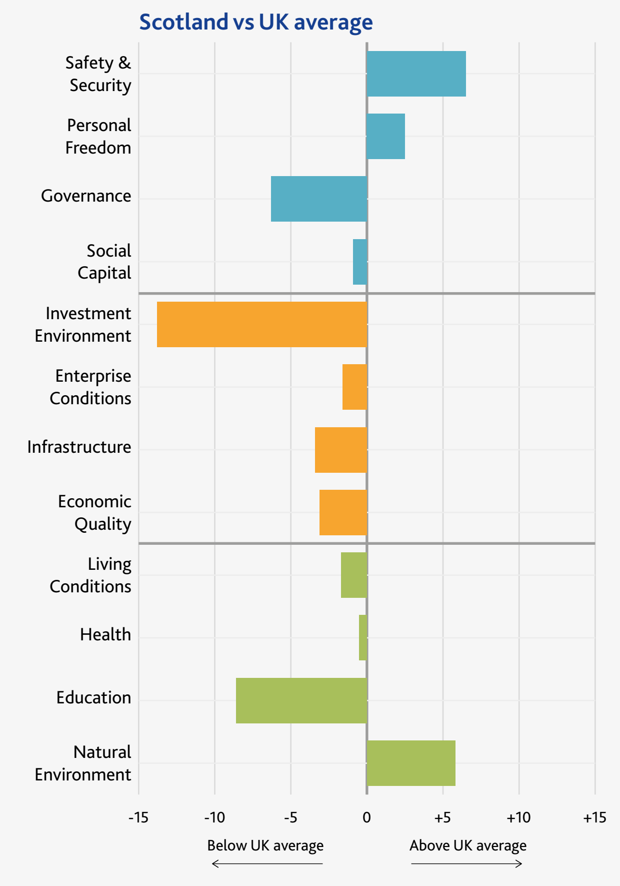
Scotland performs just below the UK average. Outside of urban areas it has low crime and its air quality is good, with low concentrations of particulate matter. It is ranked first in the UK for its healthcare systems, with over 90% of A&E attendances being treated, admitted or transferred within four hours. Scotland's main challenge is improving its Education and economic environment, such as its Investment Environment for businesses, which is the weakest in the UK. Prosperity in Scotland is also being undermined by weak local governance, with councils struggling to deliver key government services. The Scottish Islands are, on average, more prosperous than Rural Scotland and the Central Belt of Scotland. Rural areas tend to be safer, more inclusive, and healthier.



Performance of Scotland across the three Prosperity domains

Inclusive Societies

- Safety and Security is a strength for Scotland, with Rural Scotland and the Islands benefitting from low crime rates. Crime, especially violent crime, is worse in the Central Belt. For example, there are around 5 knife crime offences per 10,000 people in Rural Scotland, compared with 11 offences in the Central Belt. Glasgow has some of the highest rates of knife crime, domestic abuse and homicides, consistently ranking in the bottom 30 local authorities in the UK for all three indicators.
- Scotland exhibits more Social Tolerance than the UK average, and is second only to Wales. Tolerance is stronger in Rural Scotland.
- The quality of local Governance is weak, with low tax collection and slow planning processes. Only 61% of all development decisions in Scotland were made in a timely manner, which is significantly lower than the UK average (85%). However, it does have high local election turnout and there is a perception that voting makes a difference.
- Scotland is ranked 9th in the UK for Social Capital, with it being dragged down by weak Family Relationships. It has 140 looked after children per 10,000, nearly twice the UK average. However, there are good social networks, with 44% of people believing most people can be trusted, the highest in the UK. There is also high civic and social participation.



Open Economies

- Scotland has the weakest Investment Environment in the UK. It has deteriorated in every area over the past decade, as fewer firms demand new capital and financing services decline. The value of loans provided to small and medium enterprises in Glasgow by major banks is at £2,831 per capita, which is much lower than the UK average £4,560.
- The conditions for local enterprise have also deteriorated. Tax compliance and local government restrictions are more likely to be viewed as a barrier to business—8% of business owners say that local government restrictions are a barrier to business, the highest in the UK.
- Infrastructure is weak in Rural Scotland and the Islands, which have the slowest internet speeds and among the largest number of properties that are not connected to the gas network in the UK. In contrast, council areas in the Central Belt, for example Dundee City, Glasgow City and Inverclyde, have widespread superfast internet access and download speeds between 70 and 90 Mb/s, as well as good transport infrastructure.
- Scotland has below-average Economic Quality. It has low labour productivity and low SME growth. It has the second lowest rate of new businesses starting, at just 38 per 10,000 people. It also has just 1.7 high growth businesses per 10,000 population, which is also the second lowest in the UK. Unsurprisingly, the Central Belt outperforms Rural Scotland and the Islands. The Central Belt is relatively competitive, with 13% of all businesses high-tech, compared with the UK average of 10%.

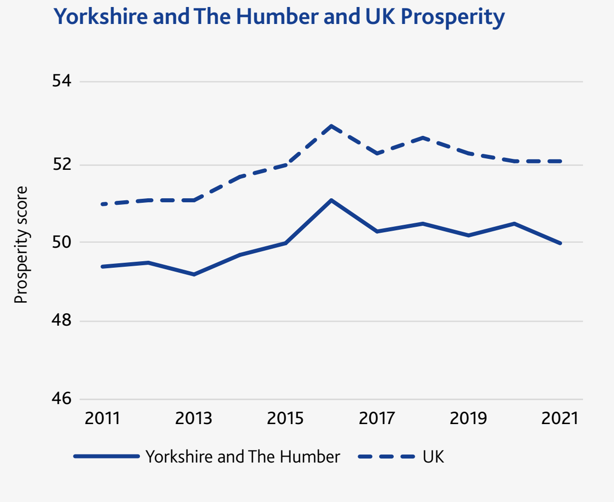
Empowered People

- Scotland has poor Living Conditions, with no local authority in the top 100. People in Scotland are less connected than elsewhere in the UK, with 5% of households having no mobile phone. It also has the second-longest travel time to a local supermarket at 13.5 minutes, which increases to over 21 minutes for those living in Rural Scotland. Scotland has the highest accidental death rate in the UK—there are 43 accidental deaths per 100,000 people, compared with 25 deaths for the UK average. However, it has relatively low rates of poverty and comparatively good housing.
- Overall, Scotland is ranked 5th for Health, which is strongest in the Islands and Rural Scotland. It has strong healthcare systems, with cancer treatments and A&E visits the most likely in the UK to meet their waiting time targets and the highest rates of dental check-ups in the UK. However, Scotland has a large number of smokers (19%) compared with the UK average (15%) and the highest mortality rates for drug and alcohol abuse.
- Scotland is ranked 15th for Education, with particularly poor primary and secondary outcomes. For example, the proportion of primary students achieving the expected standard at the end of primary school is just 71%, 6 percentage points below the UK average.
- Low air pollution and widespread green space mean that Scotland's Natural Environment is the best in the UK, with 28 out of 32 local authorities in the top 100. One area of weakness is Scotland's high carbon dioxide emissions. For example, domestic energy emissions are 1.6 tonnes per person, compared with the UK average of 1.4.

Yorkshire and The Humber (12th)

Local Authority	Rank
York	106
East Riding of Yorkshire	121
Craven	130
Richmondshire	133
Harrogate	134
Hambleton	138
Ryedale	153
Scarborough	219
Selby	243
Sheffield	282
Calderdale	302

Local Authority	Rank
Leeds	306
Kirklees	315
Barnsley	324
North Lincolnshire	343
Kingston upon Hull, City of	354
Rotherham	355
Bradford	360
Wakefield	366
Doncaster	367
North East Lincolnshire	372



OVERVIEW

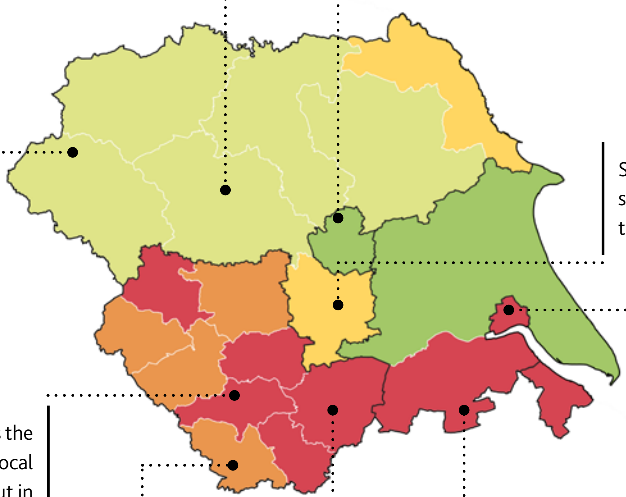
Despite prosperity increasing over the last 10 years, Yorkshire and the Humber remains a region with comparatively low prosperity. Due to other regions rising over the last decade, it has fallen in the regional rankings from 11th to 12th. The region is made up of Rural areas, Remote Rural areas, Industrial Heartlands, and Post-Industrial Urban areas. The region's challenges are particularly acute in the Industrial Heartlands such as Doncaster and Rotherham, as well as the Post-Industrial Urban areas of Kingston upon Hull and Grimsby. There is a stark contrast in the strength of Governance, crime rates and Social Capital between the rural and urban areas.

In Harrogate, people aged 65 years can expect to live for a further 21 years, compared with the UK average of 20 years.

75% of adults in York engage in 150 minutes of physical exercise per week, compared with just 55% in Rotherham.

The average attendance rate of primary school pupils in Craven state schools is 96.4%, the highest in Yorkshire and the Humber.

Selby has one of the largest number of sports clubs per head of population in the UK, with 27 per 10,000 people.



Kingston upon Hull has an average download speed of over 163 Mb/s, which is the fastest in the UK.

Barnsley has the second-lowest local election voter turnout in the region, at only 25% of the electorate.

More than half of small business managers in Sheffield are aware of their local enterprise partnerships and the services it might offer.

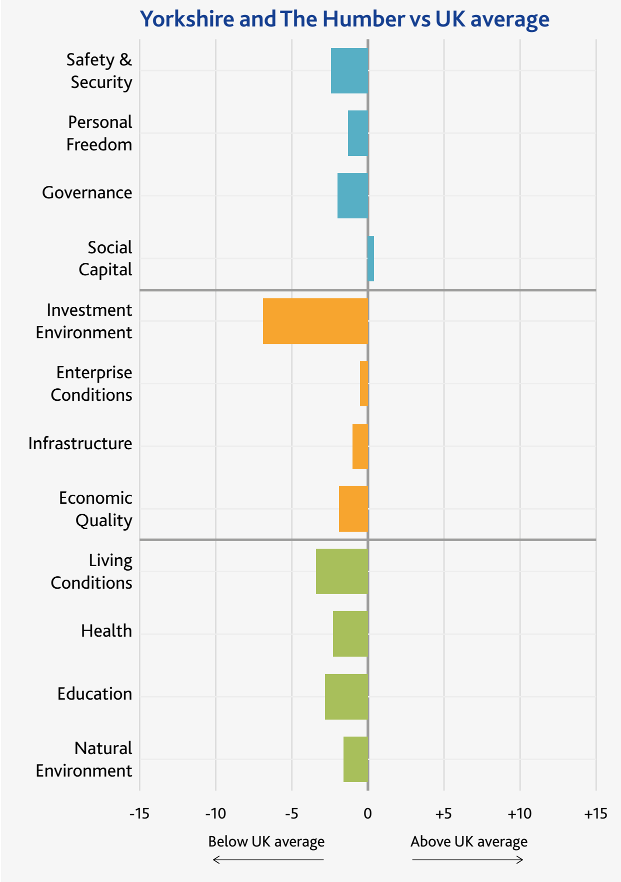
In Doncaster, just 24% of adults have level 4 qualifications or higher, compared with the UK average of 40%.

Nearly 84% of properties in North Lincolnshire are at a medium or high flood risk.

Performance of Yorkshire and The Humber across the three Prosperity domains

Inclusive Societies

- Overall, the region has some of the worst crime rates in the country. For example, it has 8 burglary offences per 1,000 people, compared with the UK average of 5. More crime occurs in the Industrial Heartlands and Post-Industrial Urban areas.
- The region shows low social tolerance when people are asked about different ethnic groups and social classes across the region, although there is a higher tolerance shown for different religions.
- The quality, integrity and effectiveness of government varies widely between rural and urban areas. Compared with other areas of the country, the Industrial Heartlands areas have weaker governance, with particularly low trust in politicians. For example, Barnsley ranks in the bottom 30, while East Riding has the best governance in the region.
- Social Capital is slightly above the UK average, and has improved. It is strongest in Family Relationships, and weakest in Social Networks, where, for example, just 54% of people have access to neighbourly help (compared with the UK average of 59%). The sharpest divides in this region are seen in family relationships, and social and community networks. In Harrogate, for example, there are 23 community amateur sports clubs per 10,000 people, compared with just 2 in Kingston upon Hull.



Open Economies

- The Investment Environment is poor across Yorkshire, with low capital supply. The amount of financing obtained by small businesses has declined in the last two years. The value of loans to small businesses is just £3,721 per capita, compared with the UK average of £4,560.
- Enterprise Conditions in the region are below the UK average. However, they have seen a steeper decline in recent years than has been seen nationally. The areas that have the strongest Enterprise Conditions are shared between the remote rural areas and the Industrial Heartlands. A wide variety is shown with Sheffield ranking 24th nationally for Labour Market Flexibility, as it has few vacancies that are hard to fill, and North East Lincolnshire, ranking 362nd with extremely poor labour market flexibility.
- The region is below the UK average for Infrastructure. Transport is a particular challenge, with the region having significant journey delays, and 16 out of 21 local authorities are more than 100 minutes away from the nearest major airport, compared with the UK average of 94 minutes. In many remote parts of Yorkshire such as Richmondshire internet speeds are as low as 40 Mb/s, compared with the UK average of 72 Mb/s.
- The region ranks poorly for Economic Quality. Local authorities underperform, with public works investment just £21 per person, compared with the UK average of £117. The greatest challenges lie in the Post-Industrial Urban areas, where GVA per hour is low and there are few new businesses and even fewer that sustain operations beyond their second year.

Empowered People

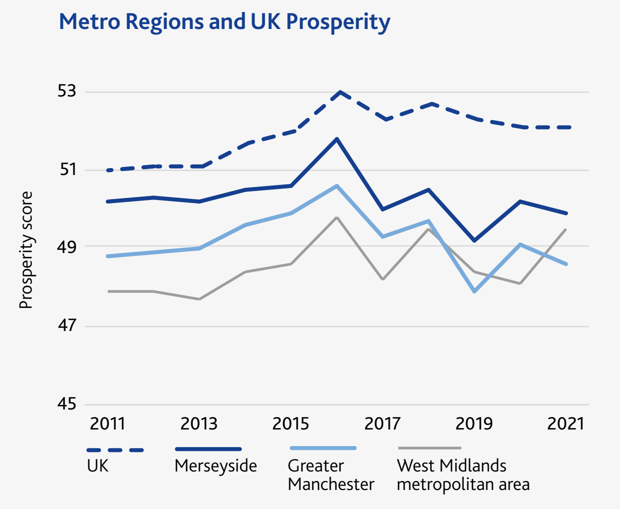
- Living Conditions are weaker than the UK average. In industrial areas, poverty is particularly high; in many industrial and post-industrial towns, more than 20% of secondary school children receive free school meals, compared with the UK average of 16.5%. Despite good digital infrastructure, with 80% of premises having good indoor 4G signal, 6% of households do not have a mobile phone meaning many people are unable to access online services. Across the region there are high rates of accidental deaths and work-related injuries. In rural areas, the journey times to local amenities such as schools and GP surgeries are much longer than the UK average.
- Health is below the UK average. Its weakest area is Mental Health. There are 12 deaths from suicide per 100,000, compared with the UK average of 10. Generally, the Industrial Heartlands and Post-Industrial Urban areas perform far worse for health outcomes than rural areas.
- The region is also weak in Education. Rural areas and the city of York have better education outcomes than the UK average, while other urban areas are failing to achieve good education outcomes. For example, secondary attainment of level 2 qualifications in York was 77%, compared with 63% in Bradford.
- For Natural Environment, the region also falls below the UK average. Despite having lower concentrations of air pollutants that are harmful to health, such as particulate matter, there are high levels of CO_2 emissions, especially in the industrial heartlands and post-industrial urban areas. Green spaces are also smaller than in other areas of the UK.

Metropolitan Regions

Merseyside (13th), West Midlands Metropolitan Area (14th), Greater Manchester (15th)

Local Authority	Rank
Solihull (W Mid Met)	154
Trafford (Gtr Manch)	179
Stockport (Gtr Manch)	242
Coventry (W Mid Met)	256
Sefton (M'side)	257
Wirral (M'side)	262
Walsall (W Mid Met)	294
Bury (Gtr Manch)	297
St. Helens (M'side)	311
Dudley (W Mid Met)	320
Bolton (Gtr Manch)	329

Local Authority	Rank
Wigan (Gtr Manch)	331
Liverpool (M'side)	342
Birmingham (W Mid Met)	345
Sandwell (W Mid Met)	352
Knowsley (M'side)	357
Salford (Gtr Manch)	362
Wolverhampton (W Mid Met)	363
Rochdale (Gtr Manch)	364
Tameside (Gtr Manch)	371
Manchester (Gtr Manch)	373
Oldham (Gtr Manch)	375



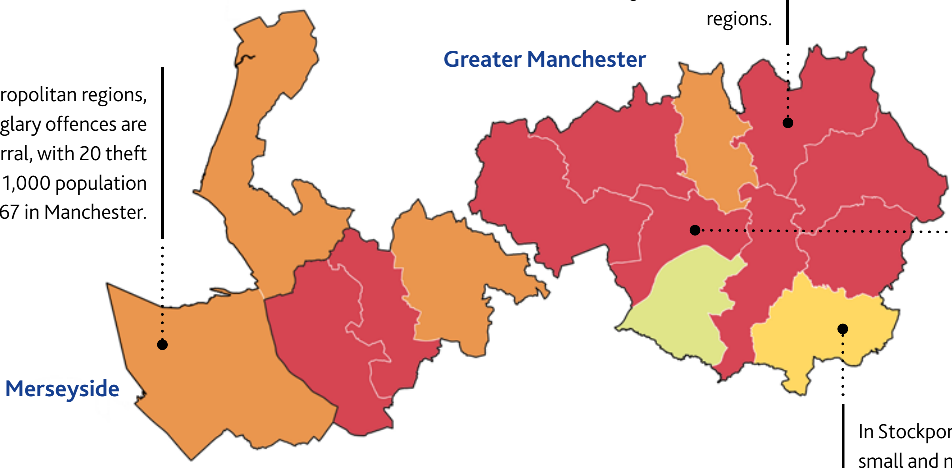
OVERVIEW

The metropolitan areas are the least prosperous in the UK, and are made up primarily of Industrial Heartlands local authorities, and two Post-Industrial Urban local authorities. They have higher crime rates, weaker Social Capital and weaker institutions than other areas of the country. They have reasonably vibrant and dynamic economies, particularly the West Midlands metropolitan area. Furthermore, these areas have high rates of poverty, poor health outcomes, and relatively poor educational outcomes.

Rochdale has 17.9% of GP patients with depression, the worst figure across these regions.

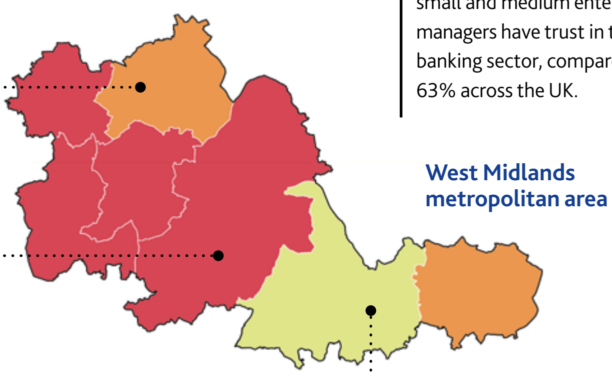
The number of children on a child protection register or a child protection plan in Salford is 86 per 10,000, compared with 43 across the UK.

Within the metropolitan regions, theft and burglary offences are lowest in Wirral, with 20 theft offences per 1,000 population compared with 67 in Manchester.



In Stockport, only 52% of small and medium enterprises managers have trust in the banking sector, compared with 63% across the UK.

In Walsall, 7% of job vacancies are the result of skills shortages, the lowest in the UK.



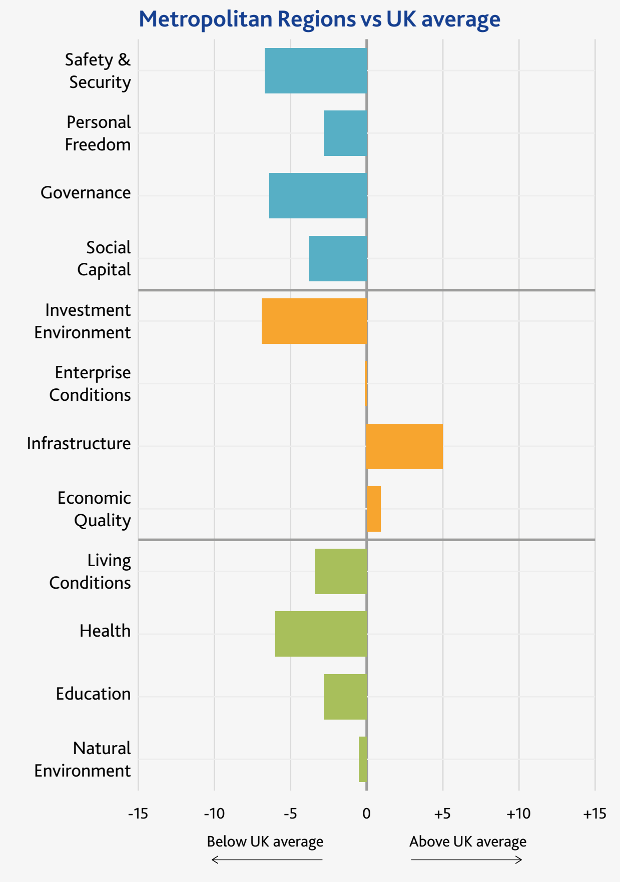
In Birmingham, 9% of households are overcrowded, compared with 5% across the UK.

In Solihull, the enrolment rate of children attending state-run nursery schools is at 94%, compared with the UK average of 72%.

Performance of Metropolitan Regions across the three Prosperity domains

Inclusive Societies

- The metropolitan areas suffer from high rates of violent crime, property crime and civil disorder. In Greater Manchester, the homicide rate of 22 per 100,000 is almost double the national average. The West Midlands metropolitan area has the UK's highest rate of firearms offences and the highest rate of people saying there is a big problem with anti-social behaviour, at 17% (compared with the UK average of 7%).
- All three metropolitan areas show low social tolerance when asked about different classes and ethnic groups, although Merseyside shows more tolerance toward different religions.
- The quality of governance in these areas is low—they have low levels of integrity in local government, low effectiveness and, particularly in Merseyside and Greater Manchester, a sense among voters that voting does not really make a difference. Many local authorities in these areas are among the weakest performers when it comes to their overall effectiveness, such as the collection of council tax and efficiency of housing benefits. In Merseyside, just 94% of council tax is collected. Only Trafford has a higher local election turnout than the UK average, with 39% turnout.
- Social Capital is also low in these areas—they tend to have weak social networks, low rates of civic and social participation and weak family relationships. Merseyside has 121 looked after children per 10,000, the UK's second highest.



Open Economies

- Merseyside and Greater Manchester both have a weak Investment Environment, while the West Midlands Metropolitan area is slightly stronger. Businesses in Greater Manchester have a much lower demand for business financing than in other areas.
- These cities are average for Enterprise Conditions, although, on its own the West Midlands is the best performer, with flexible labour markets and low market dominance by firms. There remain some challenges—for example in Greater Manchester 20% of business owners see the living wage as a major barrier to doing business, compared with the UK average of 10%.
- Infrastructure is an area of strength for these metropolitan areas. The West Midlands metropolitan area has an average download speed of almost 88 Mb/s, and over 97% superfast broadband availability. These areas benefit from extensive road networks, and generally, the roads are in good condition (with the exception of several local authorities in Greater Manchester). There are also good rail links.
- A number of local authorities also perform well on Economic Quality. Greater Manchester has a particularly dynamic economy—with 76 new businesses per 10,000 people started each year (compared with the national average of 56), high use of R&D tax credits, and a large number of high-growth companies. Greater Manchester also has had little volatility in economic activity, and 81% of small businesses recorded a profit in the most recent year before Covid. However, just 9% of businesses are high-tech, compared with 13% in London. Meanwhile, the Merseyside economy lacks dynamism—with low survival rates for new business.

Empowered People

- These metro areas all experience high poverty levels. Each has over 20% of school students receiving free school meals, and more than 35% of children are in poverty. In contrast to the other two metropolitan areas, Merseyside has low rates of homelessness, with 1.6 homeless households per 100,000, compared with the UK average of 2 households.
- These regions have some of the weakest health outcomes in the UK. Preventative interventions, such as cancer screening and vaccinations, are below the UK average. Mental health is also among the worst in the country. The prevalence of depression is high—out of 20 local authorities with the highest prevalence, 9 are in one of these three metro areas.
- Greater Manchester has better educational outcomes than the other two regions—with higher pre-primary enrolment rates and slightly higher attainment scores than the other regions. Nevertheless, none of the local authorities have very strong outcomes. The level of adult skills is low—in the Western Midlands metropolitan area, just 31% of people have qualifications above level 4, with the national average almost 40%.
- The three metropolitan areas diverge when it comes to the Natural Environment. Merseyside has better air quality and lower emissions than the other areas. Greater Manchester produces high emissions, but produces the lowest amount of rubbish per person (0.3 tonnes per year) and the third highest amount that is recycled out of all the regions (46%). The West Midlands produces the highest emissions and has much poorer air quality, with an estimated 6% of deaths from air pollution, the second highest in the UK.

Methodology and Acknowledgements

Credit: shutterstock.com

Methodology

The United Kingdom Prosperity Index has been developed as a practical tool to help identify what specific action needs to be taken to contribute to strengthening the pathways from poverty to prosperity across UK, reflecting both wealth and wellbeing at a national, regional, and local level.

The Index aims to capture the richness of a truly prosperous life, moving beyond traditional macroeconomic measurements of prosperity, which rely solely on indicators of wealth such as average income per person. It seeks to redefine the way we measure success, changing the conversation from what we are getting to who we are becoming. This makes it an authoritative measure of human progress, offering a unique insight into how prosperity is forming and changing across the nation.

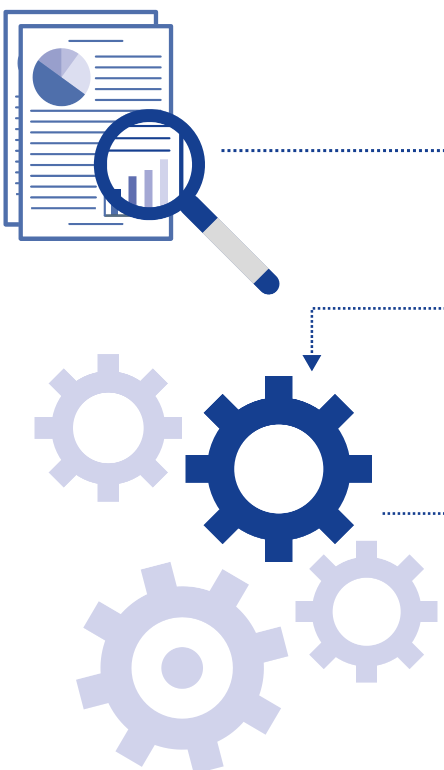
To capture institutional, economic and social wellbeing, and not just one or the other, the UK Prosperity Index faces the challenge of finding meaningful measures of success at the local authority level. We have endeavoured to create an Index that is methodologically sound. This is something that the Legatum Institute has sought to achieve with academic and analytical rigour over the past decade with The Legatum Prosperity Index™ and the US Prosperity Index.

We built upon the structure of the global Prosperity Index and the US Prosperity Index, to develop an appropriate taxonomy that accurately defines prosperity across the UK. We worked with over 40 academic and policy experts (see page 109 for a full listing) with expertise on the different aspects of prosperity in a UK context.

Over multiple iterations, through many meetings and subsequent correspondence, we developed a taxonomy that captured the characteristics across the three domains of prosperity: Open Economies; Inclusive Societies; and Empowered People. The resulting UK-focused Prosperity taxonomy contains 12 pillars and 53 policy-focused elements (see page 8).

Establishing the indicators underpinning the UK Prosperity Index required the identification and application of datasets that captured the different characteristics of prosperity for each of 379 boroughs, council areas and local authorities, for which our expert panel provided invaluable guidance on the most appropriate datasets.

Full details of the Index can be found in the methodology report, available at www.li.com.



Step by Step

1

Selecting the indicators

Having established the taxonomy for measuring prosperity across the UK, the next stage was to identify and capture the variables that best measure the different characteristics of prosperity in the UK at a subnational level.

In constructing the Index, we identified the most relevant indicators within each of the elements, driven by a set of selection criteria as well as advice from external experts on UK data and research on each pillar. We aimed to use an extensive variety of publicly available data sources that accurately reflected what was happening at the local authority level, with coverage of all 379 local authorities. This list was refined based on input from the academic and policy experts on the issues covered in each pillar, who advised on the reliability of data sources, alternative measures, and the credibility of indicators' measurement.

For many indicators, it was possible to find indicators at a local or near local authority level (e.g. Police Force Areas, or County and Unitary Authority level data in England). However, for some indicators the local authority level data was unavailable, due to suppression to preserve anonymity, sample size for survey data, or other similar challenges. Where data was available at regional or other sub-regional level (e.g. NUTS2), we have applied that value equally to all local authorities in that region. In some cases, we have used the UK-wide figure to give a picture of how the UK as a whole is changing through time.

An additional challenge was obtaining consistent data from all four nations that make up the UK. In many cases, we were able to find similarly granular data for all four nations. In other cases, we had to use data at different levels of granularity—for example, applying a national value to all local councils within Northern Ireland.

In other cases, the specification of data collected by nation varied slightly by region. We had to adjust values from different nations to make them more comparable or impute values. Details on these methods and the granularity of data can be found in the methodology document (www.li.com). We hope that over time we can replace this with more granular data.

For the Index, 256 indicators were selected, grouped into 53 discrete policy-focused elements and 12 pillars of prosperity. Each of the 12 pillars captures a fundamental theme of prosperity, and each element helps to capture discrete policy areas measured by the indicators. Each pillar has between three and six elements, and each element has between two and nine indicators.

2

Standardisation

The indicators in the Index are based on many different units of measurement, including numbers of events, years, percentages, and ordinal scales. The indicators need to be normalised for comparison between indicators and countries to be meaningful. We employ a distance to frontier approach for this task. The distance to frontier approach compares a local authority's performance in an indicator with the value of the logical best case, as well as that of the logical worst case. As a result, the distance to frontier score captures a local authority's relative position. This approach also enables us to compare Index scores over time.

3

Indicator and Element weights

Each indicator is assigned a weight within the element, indicating the level of importance it has in affecting prosperity. Four weights are typically used: 0.5, 1, 1.5, or 2, with a default weighting of one. For example, an indicator with a weight of 2 means that it is twice as important in affecting the element as another indicator in that element with a weight of 1. Weights were determined by two factors, ordered by priority: (1) the relevance and significance of the indicator to prosperity, as informed by the academic literature and our experts' opinions, and, to a lesser degree, (2) the degree of independence of the indicator from other indicators in the element.

Analogously, elements are assigned weights within each pillar based on their relative importance, led by the same two factors above. At the element level, percentages rather than factors are used as weights, giving a greater variety of possible weights than at the indicator level.

4

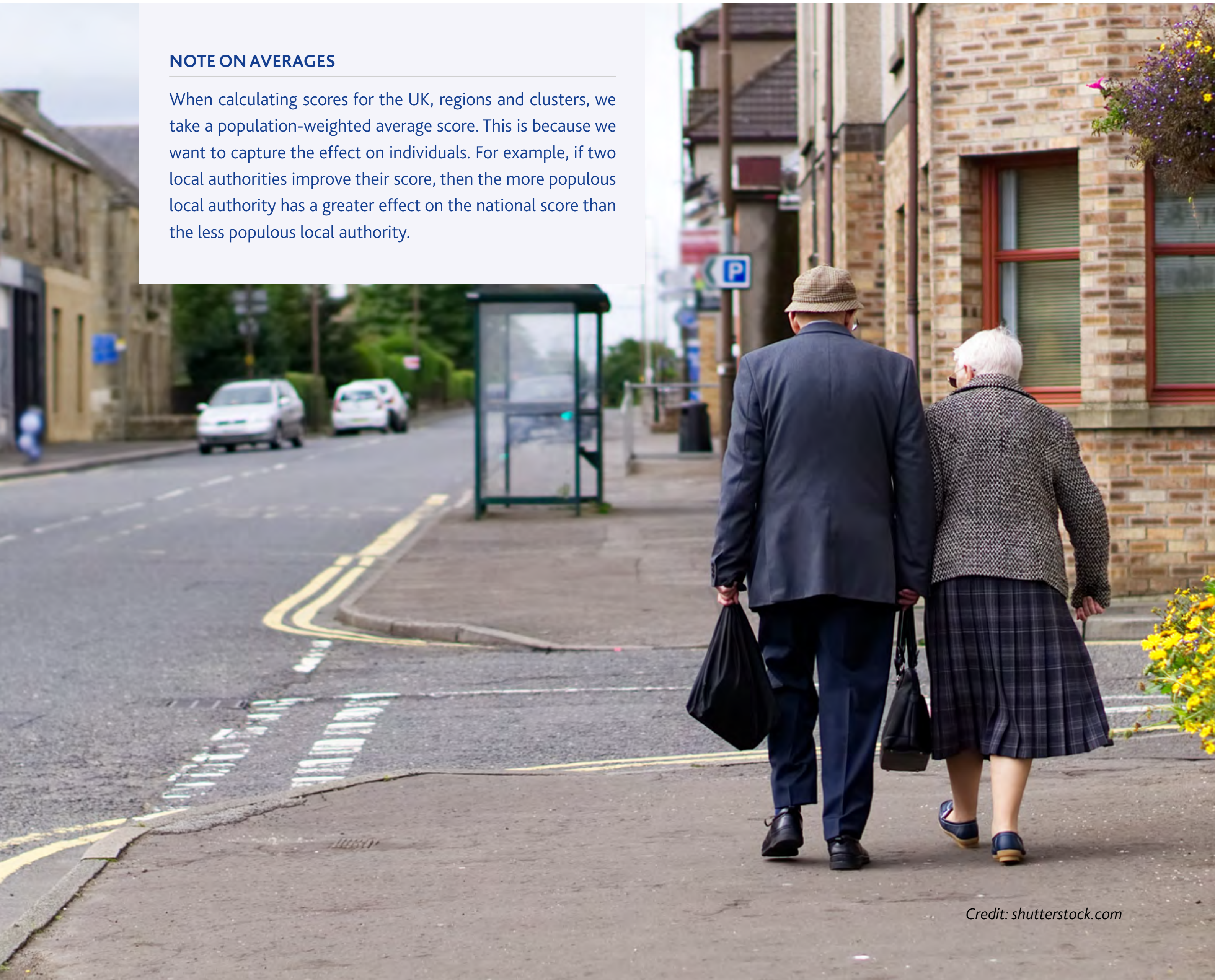
Element and Pillar scores

Element scores are created using a weighted sum of indicator scores using the indicator weights assigned at the previous step. The same process is repeated to determine pillar scores with elements within the pillar, using the percentages discussed at the previous step. Local authorities were then ranked according to their scores in each pillar.

Domain scores are determined by assigning the same weight to each pillar, and the overall Prosperity Index score is determined by assigning equal weight to each domain, as each pillar and domain is as important to prosperity as each other. The mean of the three domain scores yields an overall prosperity score, and ranking, for each local authority. While the Index score provides an overall assessment of a local authority's prosperity, the pillar (and element) scores serve as a reliable guide to how that local authority is performing with respect to different foundations of prosperity.

NOTE ON AVERAGES

When calculating scores for the UK, regions and clusters, we take a population-weighted average score. This is because we want to capture the effect on individuals. For example, if two local authorities improve their score, then the more populous local authority has a greater effect on the national score than the less populous local authority.



Credit: shutterstock.com

Credit: shutterstock.com

Table of sources

Source abbreviation	Source description	Web address
AW	Audit Wales	https://www.audit.wales/
BEIS	Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-business-energy-and-industrial-strategy
BES	British Election Study	https://www.britishelectionstudy.com/
BVA	BVA Group	https://www.bva-group.com/en/
BVCA	British Venture Capital Association	https://www.bvca.co.uk/
CS	Crime Survey	https://www.crimesurvey.co.uk/en/index.html
CWales	Careers Wales	https://careerswales.gov.wales/
DEFRA	Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs
DfE	Department for Education (England)	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education
DFI	Department for Infrastructure (Northern Ireland)	https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/
DfT	Department for Transport	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport
DoE (NI)	Department of Education (Northern Ireland)	https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/
DWater	Discover Water	https://discoverwater.co.uk/
EA	Environment Agency	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency
EC	Electoral Commission	https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/
EEA	European Environment Agency	https://www.eea.europa.eu/
EONI	Electoral Office for Northern Ireland	https://www.eoni.org.uk/
FCA	Financial Conduct Authority	https://www.fca.org.uk/
FH	Freedom House	https://freedomhouse.org/
FR	Forest Research	https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/
Gallup	Gallup	https://www.gallup.com/home.aspx
gov.scot	The Scottish Government	https://www.gov.scot/
gov.uk	gov.uk	https://www.gov.uk/
gov.wales	Welsh Government	https://gov.wales/
GSI	Global Slavery Index	https://www.globalslaveryindex.org/
GTD	Global Terrorism Database	https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/
HCL	House of Commons Library	https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/
Health-ni	Department of Health (Northern Ireland)	https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs
HOff	Home Office	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office
HSE	Health and Safety Executive	https://www.hse.gov.uk/
INRIX	INRIX Global Traffic Scorecard	https://inrix.com/scorecard/
IPO	Intellectual Property Office	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/intellectual-property-office
Kelloggs	Kellogg's	https://www.kelloggs.co.uk/en_GB/home.html
LGA	Local Government Association	https://www.local.gov.uk/
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government
NHS	NHS	https://www.nhs.uk/
NHS digital	NHS digital	https://digital.nhs.uk/

Source abbreviation	Source description	Web address
NIAO	Northern Ireland Audit Office	https://www.niauditoffice.gov.uk/
NIDOJ	Northern Ireland Department of Justice	https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/
NIE	Northern Ireland Elections	https://www.ark.ac.uk/elections/
NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive	https://www.nihe.gov.uk/
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency	https://www.nisra.gov.uk/
Northern Ireland Water	Northern Ireland Water	https://www.niwater.com/home/
NRS	National Records Scotland	https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/
OCD	Open Council Data	http://opencouncildata.co.uk/
OFCOM	Ofcom	https://www.ofcom.org.uk/
ONS	Office for National Statistics	https://www.ons.gov.uk/
ORS	Open Route Service	https://openrouteservice.org/
PHE	Public Health England	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england
PHOF	Public Health Outcomes Framework	https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/public-health-outcomes-framework
PHScot	Public Health Scotland	https://www.publichealthscotland.scot/
PHWales	Public Health Wales	https://phw.nhs.wales/
PRC	Pew Research Center	https://www.pewresearch.org/
PSNI	Police Service Northern Ireland	https://www.psni.police.uk/
PWLB	Public Works Loans Board	https://www.dmo.gov.uk/responsibilities/local-authority-lending
RF	Resolution Foundation	https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/
RQIA	The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority	https://www.rqia.org.uk/
RsF	Reporters Without Borders	https://rsf.org/en
ScotPHO	Scottish Public Health Observatory	https://www.scotpho.org.uk/
Scottish Water	Scottish Water	https://www.scottishwater.co.uk/
SE	Sport England	https://www.sportengland.org/
SMC	Social Metrics Commission	https://socialmetricscommission.org.uk/
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority	https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/70972.html
StatsWales	Statistics for Wales	https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue
TEC	The Elections Centre	http://www.electionscentre.co.uk/
UKF	UK Finance	https://www.ukfinance.org.uk/
US	Understanding Society	https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/
VDEM	Varieties of Democracy	https://www.v-dem.net/en/
WJP	World Justice Project (Rule of Law Index)	https://worldjusticeproject.org/our-work/wjp-rule-law-index

Credit: shutterstock.com

Credit: shutterstock.com

Acknowledgements

The United Kingdom Prosperity Index Team

The following team has worked tirelessly, and with huge passion and rigour, to produce the best possible Prosperity Index and this subsequent report. We pay tribute to them and thank them for all their dedication and hard work.

Matthew Goodwin

Daniel Herring

Matthew Latham

Joshua Lee

Rachel Luney

Beata Stepantchenko

Edward Wickstead

The Legatum Institute would like to thank the following advisors who helped with the review of the methodology and construction of this Index and its component elements. A diverse range of experts were engaged in the work, from academics to researchers and policy leads from a wide variety of universities and other organisations. This broad collaboration enabled a comprehensive range of views to be captured and ensure the best outcome at each stage of the review. In reaching a final position at each stage of the review (e.g. which indicators to include within an element), the Legatum Institute captured and synthesised all the expert views. The views expressed in this report, therefore, are those of the Legatum Institute and do not necessarily reflect the individual views of these advisors.

Inclusive Societies:

Anand Menon, Professor, King's College London

Ben Bradley, Member of Parliament of the United Kingdom

Colin Rallings, Professor, University of Plymouth

Edward Fieldhouse, Professor, University of Manchester

Geoffrey Evans, Professor, Nuffield College, Oxford

Baroness Helen Newlove,
Member of House of Lords of the United Kingdom

Jonathan Mellon, Senior Research Fellow, University of Manchester

Kelly Beaver, Managing Director, Ipsos MORI

Michael McGuire, Senior Lecturer, University of Surrey

Vernon Bogdanor, Professor, King's College London

Open Economies:

Andrés Rodríguez-Pose, Professor, London School of Economics

David Bannister, Professor, University of Oxford

David Rae, Professor, De Montfort University

Jane Green, Professor, University of Oxford

Mark Hart, Professor, Aston Business School

Michael Fell, Senior Research Fellow, University College London

Richard Harris, Professor, Durham University

Richard Kneller, Professor, University of Nottingham

Robert Huggins, Professor, Cardiff University

Stephen Roper, Professor, Warwick Business School

Stuart McIntyre, Senior Lecturer, University of Strathclyde

Todd Landman, Professor, University of Nottingham

Tony Venables, Professor, University of Oxford

Yannis Pierrakis, Associate Professor, Kingston University

Empowered People:

Anthony Seldon, Honorary Visiting Professor, University of Buckingham

Cara Pacitti, Economist, Resolution Foundation

Claudia Hupkau. Professor, London School of Economics

David Laws, Executive Chairman, Education Policy Institute

Edward Davies, Policy Director, Centre for Social Justice

Francis Green, Professor, UCL Institute of Education

Isabelle Hunt, Research Fellow, University of Manchester

Jane Graney, Research Nurse, University of Manchester

Jo Blanden, Professor, London School of Economics

Joe Shalam, Head of the Financial Inclusion Policy Unit,
Centre for Social Justice

John Mohan, Professor, University of Birmingham

Julia Moore, former National Director e-Learning for Healthcare,
Department of Health and Health Education England

Kristine Beuret, Director, Social Research Associates

Lucy Heller, Chief Executive, Ark

Mark Stephens, Professor, Heriot-Watt University

Mary Curnock Cook, Independent Educationalist

Michael Kelly, Professor, University of Cambridge

Nicholas Pleace, Professor, University of York

Richard Lowes, Research Fellow and Lecturer, University of Exeter

Robert Joyce, Deputy Director, Institute of Fiscal Studies

Roy Blatchford, Chief Executive, National Education Trust UK

Unless otherwise stated, all data is from the 2021 United Kingdom Prosperity Index.

All original data sources can be found in the methodology report and online at www.li.com.

@LegatumInst
@ProsperityIndex

Endnotes

1. We use local authority to mean multiple types of local government body, such as district councils, borough councils and unitary councils.
2. Gisela Stuart, and Hugh Carveth, “All politics is local: Strengthening communities, transforming people's lives,” The Legatum Institute, 2018.
3. Harry Benson “Marriage as a social justice issue,” Marriage Foundation, September 2019.
4. Stephen Brien and James Sproule, “Economic Openness: United Kingdom Case Study,” The Legatum Institute, 2019.
5. “Speedtest Global Index – Monthly Comparisons Of Internet Speeds From Around The World,” Speedtest Global Index, accessed March 2021.
6. “Government Launches New £5Bn ‘Project Gigabit’,” GOV.UK, accessed March 2021.
7. “New levelling up and community investments,” Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government and HM Treasury, 3 March 2021.
8. “Infrastructure – NPH,” Northernpowerhouse.gov.uk, accessed March 2021.
9. Michael Marmot, "Health equity in England: the Marmot review 10 years on," BMJ 368, 2020.
10. Michael Marmot, “Health equity in England: the Marmot review 10 years on,” BMJ 368, 2020.
11. “United Kingdom: Country Health Profile 2019, State of Health in the EU,” OECD/European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, 2019.
12. “Prevalence of ongoing symptoms following coronavirus (COVID-19) infection in the UK: 1 April 2021,” Office for National Statistics, 1 April 2021.
13. Douglas M, Katikireddi S V, Taulbut M, McKee M, McCartney G. “Mitigating the wider health effects of covid-19 pandemic response.“ BMJ 369, 2020.
14. “Too long to wait: the impact of COVID-19 on elective surgery,” The Lancet Rheumatology, February 2021.
15. Jon Andrews, David Robinson, and Jo Hutchinson. “Closing The Gap? Trends In Educational Attainment And Disadvantage,” Education Policy Institute, 2017.
16. “2019 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Provisional Figures,” UK Gov and Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 2019.
17. “Get Brexit Done: Unleash Britain’s Potential,” The Conservative and Unionist Party, 2019.
18. “Business Advice and Support,” Pembrokeshire County Council, 16 July 2020.
19. “Rough Sleeping Services Procurement Strategy”, London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham, 4 January 2021.
20. “Newham Council sets out new strategy to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping”, Newham Council, 4 December 2019.

ABOUT THE LEGATUM INSTITUTE

The Legatum Institute is a London-based think-tank with a bold vision to create a global movement of people committed to creating the pathways from poverty to prosperity and the transformation of society. We seek to fulfil our mission by raising up leaders of character, restoring an ethical vitality to all sectors of society, and developing the practical solutions and data tools that will help build inclusive and peaceful societies with open economies and empowered people. Our Centre for Metrics creates indexes and datasets to measure and explain how poverty and prosperity are changing. Our Research Programmes analyse the many complex drivers of poverty and prosperity at the local, national and global level. Our Practical Programmes identify the actions required to enable transformational change. For more information about the United Kingdom Prosperity Index or to speak to one of the Legatum Institute's experts, please email info@li.com.

CREATING THE PATHWAYS FROM POVERTY TO PROSPERITY

LEGATUM INSTITUTE

PROSPERITY INDEX

The Legatum Institute is a London-based think-tank with a bold vision to create a global movement of people committed to creating the pathways from poverty to prosperity and the transformation of society.

Legatum Institute
11 Charles Street
London W1J 5DW
United Kingdom
T: +44 (0) 20 7148 5400

www.li.com
www.prosperity.com

@LegatumInst
@ProsperityIndex

ISBN 978-1-911125-69-3

AUGUST 2021