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PROSPERITY INDEX

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The United Kingdom Prosperity Index

2021

ATLAS NETWORK 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.

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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.

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 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.

Matthew Goodwin

Professor Matthew Goodwin
Director of the Centre for UK Prosperity

Prosperity in the UK had improved from 2011, but has plateaued since 2018.

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

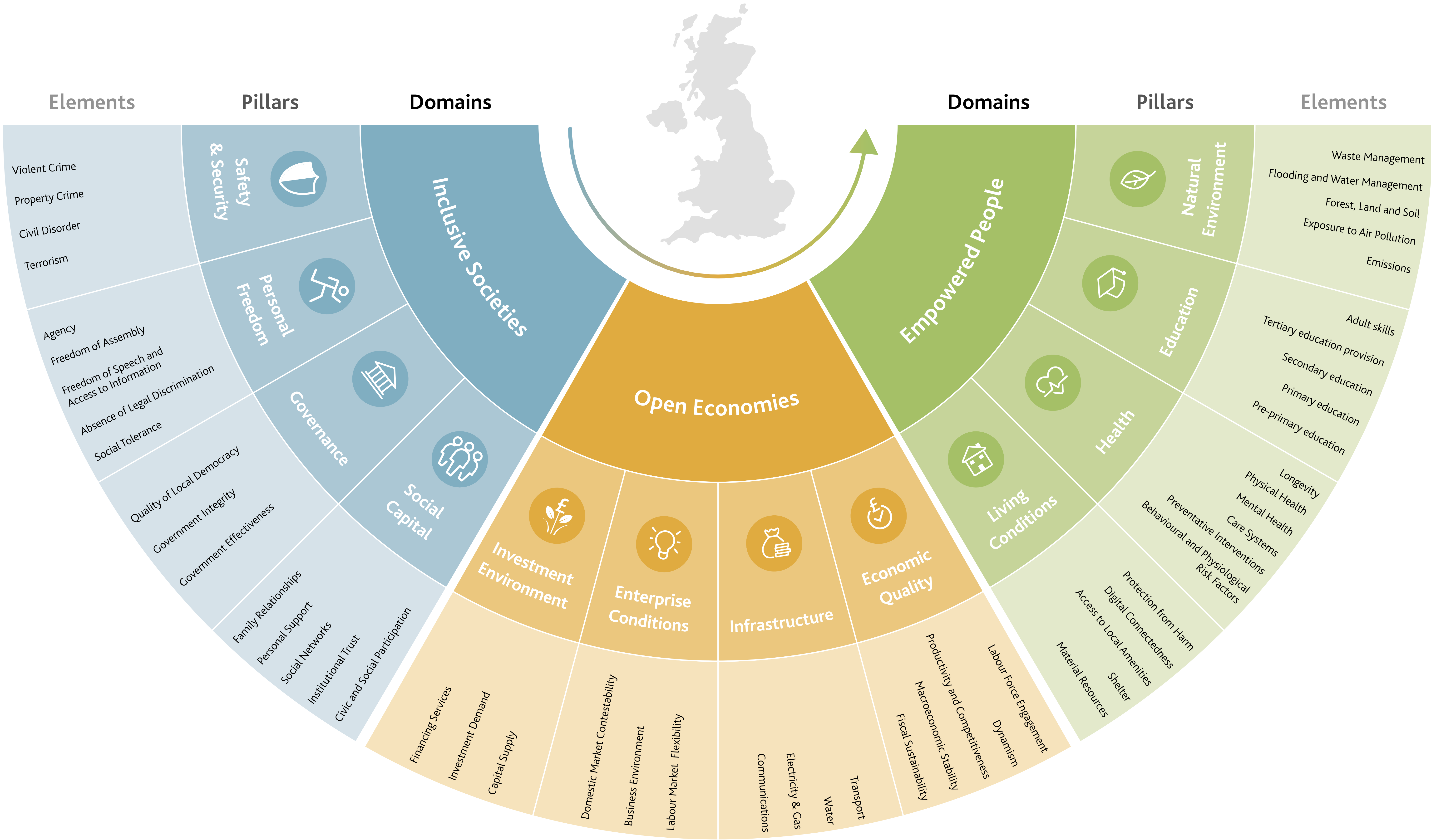
The UK Prosperity Index is based on publicly available and verifiable data, which means it can be a powerful resource for those who want to hold up a mirror to those in power and society at large. Holding national and local leaders to account is a crucial role for both journalists and civil society. 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
Living Conditions
Material Resources
Shelter
Access to Local Amenities
Digital Connectedness
Protection from Harm
Health
Behavioural and Physiological Risk Factors
Preventative Interventions
Care Systems
Mental Health
Physical Health
Longevity
Education
Pre-primary education
Primary education
Secondary education
Tertiary education provision
Adult skills
Natural Environment
Emissions
Exposure to Air Pollution
Forest, Land and Soil
Flooding and Water Management
Waste Management

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, the effectiveness of local governance. Much of this is missed in a levelling up debate that focuses narrowly on 'bridges and trains'.**

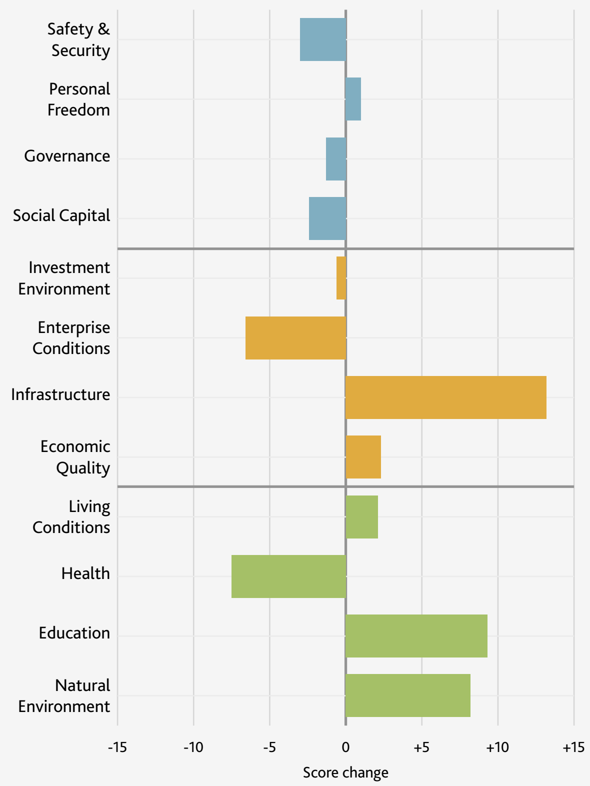
- **Drilling down into the regional and local drivers of prosperity also reveals why the conversation about levelling up the UK is too simplistic. Crude distinctions between 'north and south' or 'cities and small towns' gloss the considerable variation that exists both between and within regions and 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 2018, 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% to 3.9%. 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, 43 of the 50 areas with the strongest investment environments are in London and the South East, while 27 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 Scotland, 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 more than 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).

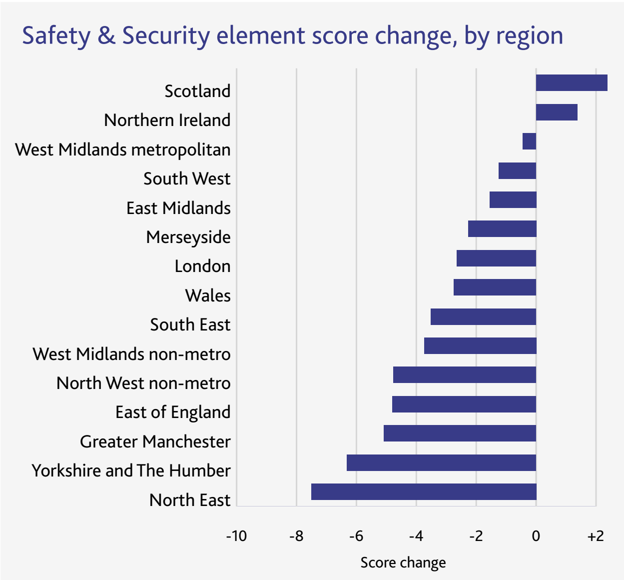
Key aspects of social capital are also deteriorating. The strength of families appears to be weakening. There are rising numbers of looked after children and children on protection plans, as well as a slight decline in the number of times a week that families eat together. Before Covid-19, there was 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, 31 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.

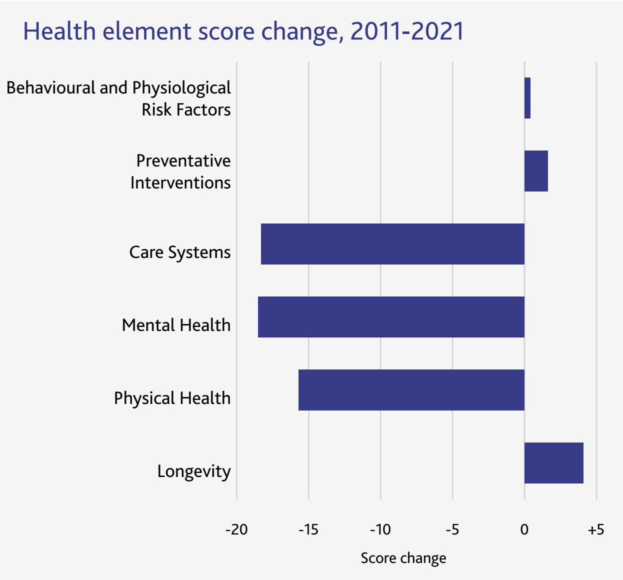
The quality of local governance is also declining, largely due to reductions in local election turnout and the collapse of political choice, measured as a lack of change in overall political control. The number of authorities that have not seen any change in the ruling party over the last twenty years has increased from 42 a decade ago to 66 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 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. Of the 50 authorities that have improved the most for natural environment, 35 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, Cambridge, 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, 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.

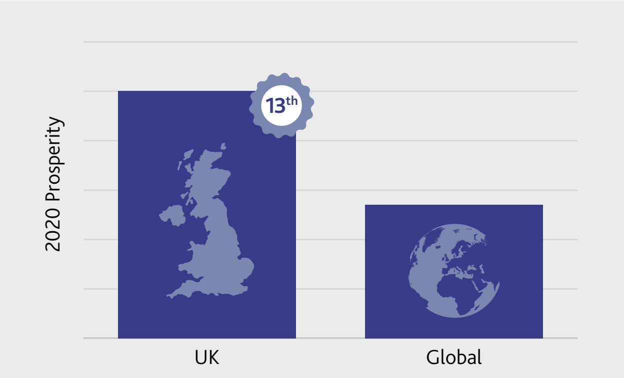
Before Covid-19, UK citizens enjoyed significant improvements in education and the environment.

Credit: shutterstock.com

Key findings

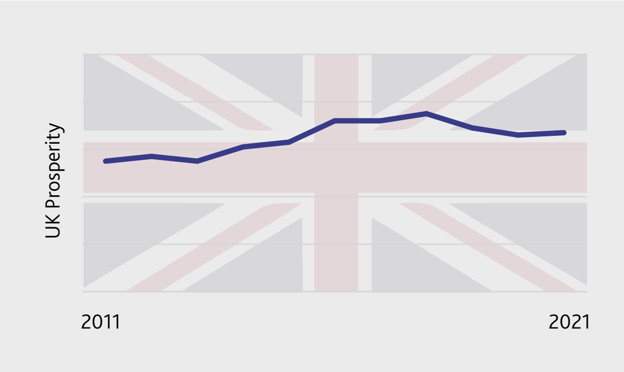
The United Kingdom is one of the most prosperous nations in the world, ranked 13th in the Legatum Prosperity Index™.

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.



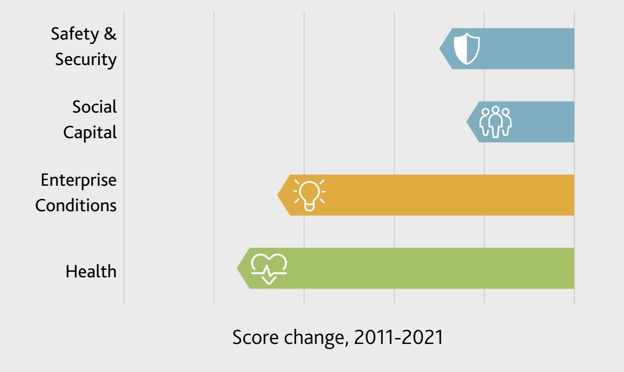
While overall prosperity increased in the first half of the 2010s, it has since stagnated.

Only London, the South East, the East Midlands and West Midlands metropolitan region have seen rising overall prosperity. Eleven of 15 UK regions have seen prosperity decline in recent years, with the sharpest deteriorations in the North West and West Midlands non-metropolitan regions.



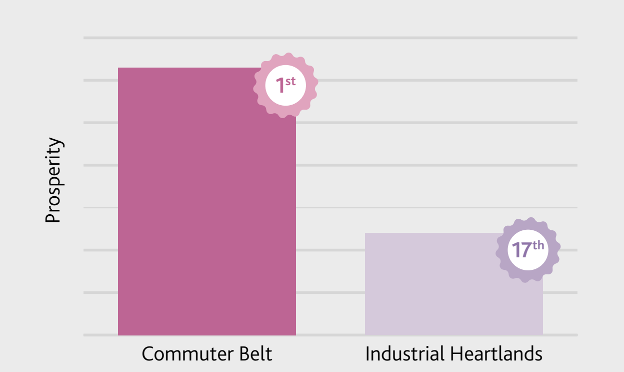
Prosperity is currently being undermined by factors that lie outside of the traditional focus on 'bridges and trains'.

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.



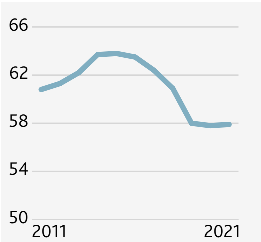
The national conversation about levelling up is far too simplistic.

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.

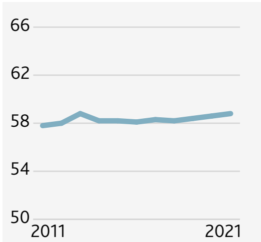


The pillars at a glance

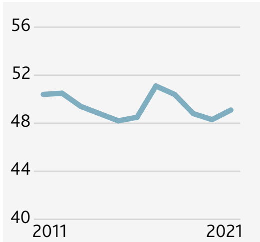
The **Safety and Security** pillar measures the degree to which violent crime, property crime, civil disorder, and terror have destabilised the security of individuals, both immediately and through longer lasting effects.



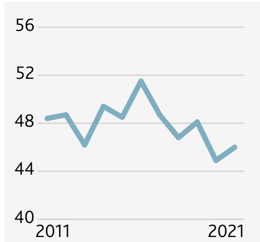
The **Personal Freedom** pillar measures progress towards basic legal rights, individual liberties, and social tolerance.



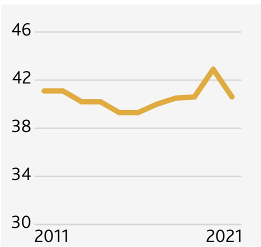
The **Governance** pillar measures the quality of local democracy, whether politicians are trusted, and effectiveness of local government services.



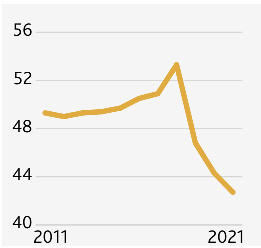
The **Social Capital** pillar measures the strength of family, personal and social relationships, institutional trust, and civic participation in a country.



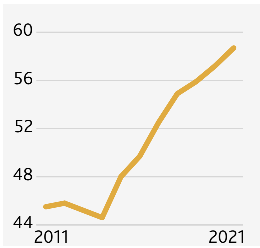
The **Investment Environment** pillar measures the extent to which investment capital is readily accessible and in demand.



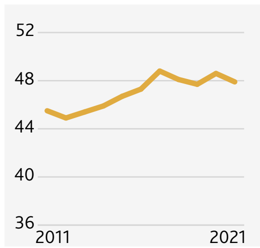
The **Enterprise Conditions** pillar measures the degree to which regulations enable businesses to start, compete, and expand.



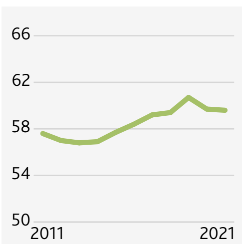
The **Infrastructure** pillar measures the quality of the infrastructure that enables commerce and business activity.



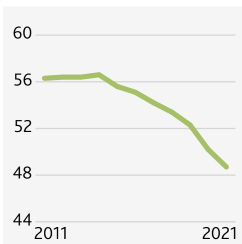
The **Economic Quality** pillar measures how well a local economy is equipped to generate wealth sustainably and with the full engagement of the workforce.



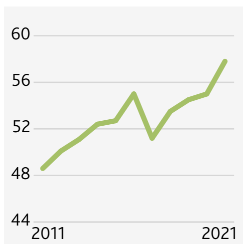
The **Living Conditions** pillar measures the quality of life experienced by people, including material resources, shelter, digital connectivity, access to local amenities, and protection from harm.



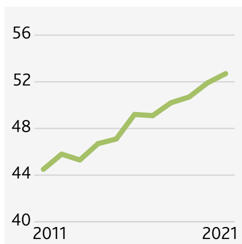
The **Health** pillar measures the extent to which people are healthy and have access to the necessary services to maintain good health. It includes health outcomes, health systems, illness and risk factors, and mortality rates.



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 (41st) is the most prosperous local authority in Scotland. It has seen improvements in Natural Environment (6th), Safety and Security (5th), and Governance (79th).

Belfast (355th) is the least prosperous local authority in Northern Ireland, performing poorly in Health (365th), Governance (338th), and Enterprise Conditions (341st). However, it has benefited from a number of improvements, including its Infrastructure (167th).

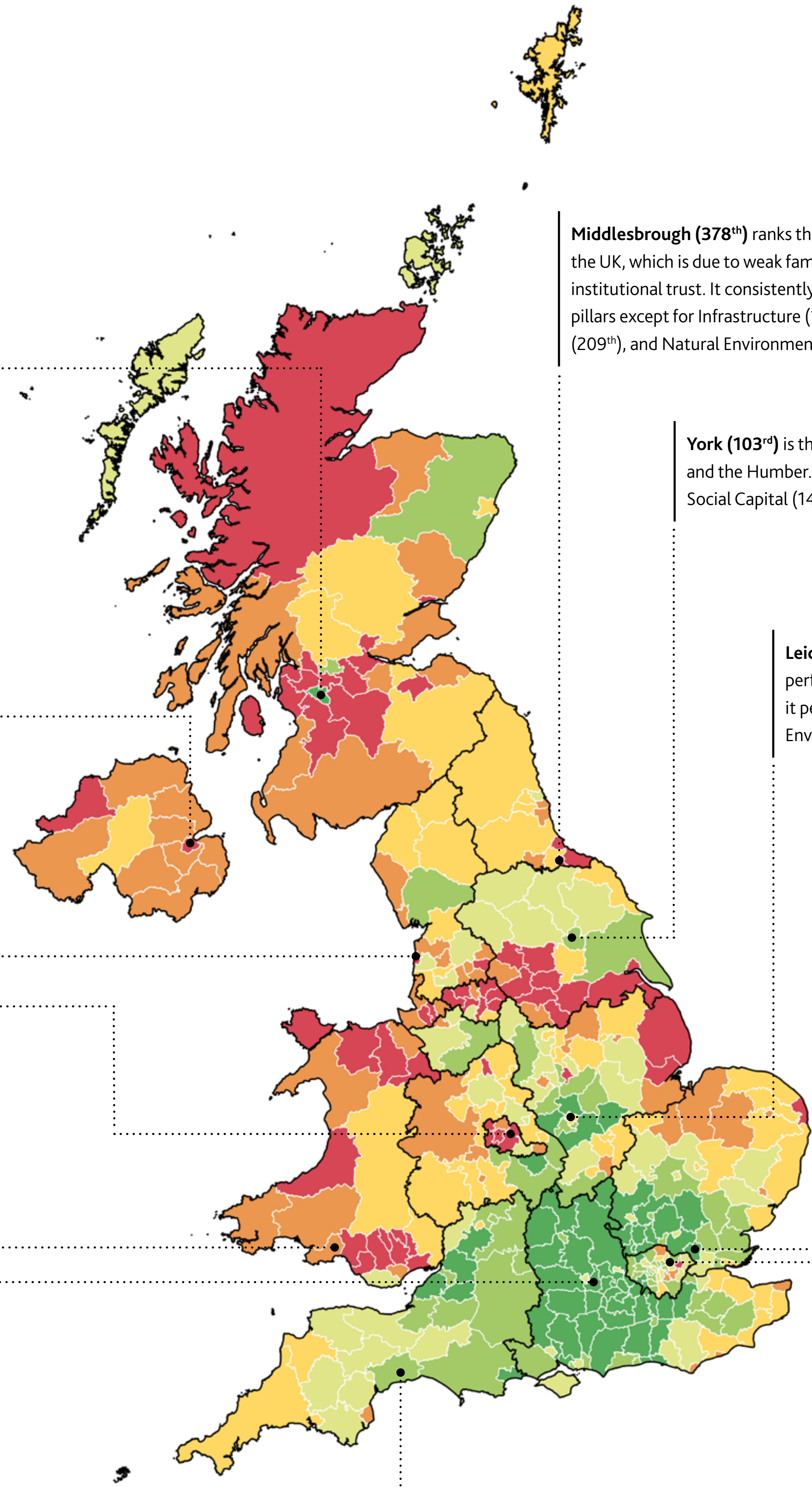
Blackpool (379th) is the least prosperous local authority in the UK, ranking in the bottom quartile for 9 out of 12 pillars. It is also the weakest of all local authorities for Health, due to poor mental and physical Health.

Wolverhampton (366th) is the least prosperous local authority in the West Midlands. However, it has seen improvements in its Investment Environment (141st), Infrastructure (17th), and Education (293rd).

Swansea (285th) is one of the most improved local authorities in Wales, having seen improving Natural Environment (67th), Education (104th), and Living Conditions (326th).

Wokingham (1st) is the most prosperous local authority in the UK. It performs strongly in Living Conditions (1st), Health (2nd), and Enterprise Conditions (10th).

East Devon (102nd) has seen the largest improvement in overall prosperity within the South West over the last 10 years. It has seen improvements including Governance (241st), Personal Freedom (179th), and Natural Environment (56th).



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 (148th), Investment Environment (209th), and Natural Environment (195th).

York (103rd) is the most prosperous local authority in Yorkshire and the Humber. It has seen improvements in Education (45th), Social Capital (146th), and Infrastructure (115th).

Leicester (215th) 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 (36th) 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 (187th) 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 (121st).

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
5	2	1	Wokingham	S East	43	189	86	13	211	10	128	22	1	2	17	222
4	3	2	Waverley	S East	50	127	85	3	10	46	259	110	33	3	50	24
2	7	3	Elmbridge	S East	103	127	35	35	21	189	82	6	44	5	68	201
21	4	4	Epsom and Ewell	S East	93	127	2	52	96	269	75	18	3	30	37	60
7	6	5	Woking	S East	155	127	36	37	15	163	95	51	7	25	69	29
25	10	6	Hart	S East	110	269	7	63	12	157	51	58	34	55	65	87
40	12	7	Richmond upon Thames	London	302	297	72	195	19	34	8	16	186	6	3	231
17	5	8	St Albans	E Eng	210	163	17	4	167	4	67	122	12	8	36	155
30	18	9	Surrey Heath	S East	105	127	214	25	14	108	91	19	30	9	136	63
16	17	10	Guildford	S East	124	127	119	18	5	178	83	74	54	11	111	42
1	9	11	Mole Valley	S East	68	127	33	9	82	115	165	27	105	7	58	53
37	16	12	Rutland	E Mid	12	86	15	80	81	65	247	175	32	54	25	125
14	11	13	Winchester	S East	74	269	10	21	6	30	166	167	144	64	56	207
10	1	14	Three Rivers	E Eng	188	163	13	14	158	134	28	17	27	31	46	148
36	24	15	East Hampshire	S East	35	269	23	82	7	128	207	95	119	86	80	105
46	13	16	Fareham	S East	49	269	27	99	59	47	64	160	26	120	74	154
42	32	17	Runnymede	S East	184	127	183	59	13	191	62	44	24	39	59	255
19	8	18	Windsor and Maidenhead	S East	168	189	19	2	206	181	129	31	5	4	54	259
12	25	19	Reigate and Banstead	S East	116	127	200	42	90	183	80	26	6	27	70	122
24	45	20	City of London	London	378	121	51	301	1	17	288	1	62	87	1	379
32	43	21	Mid Sussex	S East	71	127	120	29	76	116	152	33	14	92	216	58
6	19	22	Hertsmere	E Eng	240	163	41	33	126	81	2	8	79	41	143	313
8	22	23	Tandridge	S East	125	127	249	30	86	79	71	142	25	14	63	192
38	50	24	Horsham	S East	82	127	114	27	74	73	191	25	95	24	230	81
48	37	25	Rushmoor	S East	110	269	37	127	16	268	93	60	114	217	92	48
83	27	26	Harborough	E Mid	58	86	78	54	89	32	225	141	28	22	94	261
22	28	27	Bath and North East Somerset	S West	79	35	11	72	109	66	266	330	40	16	53	109
39	36	28	Basingstoke and Deane	S East	98	269	30	60	28	190	157	72	50	197	119	151
11	14	29	East Hertfordshire	E Eng	191	163	132	6	156	35	118	24	82	17	47	312
34	54	30	South Gloucestershire	S West	67	35	165	109	115	88	146	157	16	34	72	164
60	29	31	Milton Keynes	S East	197	189	59	46	173	48	9	20	140	95	112	143
57	20	32	West Berkshire	S East	64	189	18	41	230	83	211	82	70	13	78	212
33	26	33	Watford	E Eng	297	163	152	19	132	176	3	121	4	99	42	68
62	42	34	Eastleigh	S East	88	269	113	108	56	56	163	79	49	62	210	133
61	65	35	Test Valley	S East	69	269	63	128	8	244	181	146	154	33	186	179
20	30	36	North Hertfordshire	E Eng	150	163	77	22	193	137	86	36	84	12	117	224
50	53	37	Harrow	London	322	297	31	324	23	38	48	30	249	173	10	242
15	21	38	West Oxfordshire	S East	37	189	101	23	91	91	267	163	75	44	116	157
28	33	39	Bracknell Forest	S East	108	189	115	132	210	177	137	65	8	38	57	86
9	49	40	B'mouth, C'church and Poole	S West	152	47	67	242	52	107	285	129	21	192	44	74
93	41	41	East Renfrewshire	Scot	4	283	79	163	359	276	219	325	117	19	14	6
49	39	42	Isles of Scilly	S West	6	343	179	5	219	36	373	210	11	1	173	17
27	23	43	South Oxfordshire	S East	57	189	54	50	93	60	257	120	81	28	246	182
26	51	44	Brentwood	E Eng	257	72	178	32	164	142	108	7	2	100	85	238
90	46	45	Charnwood	E Mid	130	86	46	83	99	59	144	206	35	53	106	325
18	15	46	Vale of White Horse	S East	27	189	74	53	104	180	284	145	43	23	157	191
58	64	47	Buckinghamshire	S East	76	189	65	86	127	144	275	93	53	18	87	223
88	66	48	Chichester	S East	140	127	123	31	54	31	269	29	99	79	312	163
29	34	49	Dacorum	E Eng	242	163	50	11	168	162	131	52	87	67	81	120
79	94	50	Adur	S East	107	127	116	61	84	256	92	80	19	112	249	158
68	60	51	Spelthorne	S East	169	127	270	45	17	315	79	59	13	104	91	336
45	79	52	North Somerset	S West	120	35	32	119	92	54	241	282	71	85	89	198
53	58	53	Welwyn Hatfield	E Eng	253	163	81	7	172	121	32	123	110	20	115	203
121	96	54	Brighton and Hove	S East	260	127	57	203	70	49	87	154	116	60	62	206
101	77	55	Central Bedfordshire	E Eng	227	163	8	62	192	214	70	46	51	37	175	329
59	59	56	Epping Forest	E Eng	251	72	177	43	165	94	90	14	31	45	202	273

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
76	61	57	Uttlesford	E Eng	199	72	109	1	137	271	221	45	45	29	76	294
3	31	58	Stroud	S West	44	35	94	173	153	105	299	126	118	82	77	54
71	84	59	Sevenoaks	S East	248	102	215	12	102	5	183	75	139	58	159	213
99	35	60	Hinckley and Bosworth	E Mid	83	86	125	141	94	61	227	169	55	50	149	237
75	80	61	Kingston upon Thames	London	315	338	279	282	51	52	43	103	209	15	16	184
69	68	62	Warwick	W Mid	217	151	141	148	105	53	72	125	146	102	73	144
41	48	63	Cherwell	S East	104	189	106	71	95	194	214	139	58	36	109	277
110	72	64	Melton	E Mid	62	86	95	73	71	80	281	244	52	132	178	119
115	74	65	Merton	London	329	338	253	320	42	39	19	38	257	21	19	264
66	52	66	New Forest	S East	72	269	61	85	50	106	276	174	218	127	103	132
108	111	67	Crawley	S East	288	127	122	84	87	258	6	15	72	241	218	124
127	95	68	Colchester	E Eng	245	72	29	34	185	86	141	140	29	202	163	94
77	69	69	Havant	S East	113	269	28	125	65	55	52	303	133	277	278	80
187	91	70	Broxtowe	E Mid	143	315	62	220	122	169	73	248	18	123	60	281
123	108	71	Camden	London	373	121	181	353	3	28	25	2	285	63	20	311
119	86	72	Rushcliffe	E Mid	141	315	298	138	117	57	125	214	47	65	32	293
95	57	73	Blaby	E Mid	75	86	203	68	125	97	162	255	9	94	177	262
74	107	74	Worthing	S East	194	127	104	87	72	223	81	159	17	152	314	91
52	120	75	Cheshire East	N West	154	176	25	114	247	12	147	118	193	196	61	226
173	148	76	Bromley	London	316	338	339	259	53	16	34	130	183	26	26	236
65	44	77	South Cambridgeshire	E Eng	147	213	87	47	67	355	222	12	102	56	214	335
72	88	78	Barnet	London	348	297	176	251	11	127	114	89	268	97	6	337
130	126	79	Wandsworth	London	341	121	287	293	24	257	44	135	199	10	11	310
54	73	80	Tunbridge Wells	S East	208	102	158	51	169	95	274	117	92	69	131	52
112	55	81	Oadby and Wigston	E Mid	97	86	124	177	129	76	203	289	64	146	134	75
182	161	82	Islington	London	371	64	56	350	9	13	41	4	327	76	34	347
141	63	83	Aberdeenshire	Scot	5	256	42	196	267	21	362	112	172	51	252	49
92	110	84	Sutton	London	304	338	321	312	47	85	31	168	222	68	12	160
91	83	85	Tonbridge and Malling	S East	243	102	96	24	159	69	138	109	61	98	192	297
163	124	86	Hounslow	London	359	297	155	321	37	33	15	11	332	159	23	271
56	85	87	Rochford	E Eng	91	72	317	56	191	293	193	42	20	42	170	166
23	47	88	Tewkesbury	S West	26	35	84	170	175	173	287	101	123	137	110	263
47	82	89	Broxbourne	E Eng	259	163	137	57	151	279	46	138	131	49	164	90
230	131	90	Tower Hamlets	London	366	64	99	334	25	23	126	5	340	105	8	369
35	38	91	Cotswold	S West	36	35	142	160	111	63	301	108	203	114	240	175
13	40	92	Cheltenham	S West	121	35	265	165	152	145	195	179	41	134	120	114
254	162	93	Hammersmith and Fulham	London	369	121	222	347	18	43	50	21	305	66	5	356
44	76	94	Dorset	S West	52	47	73	194	49	231	359	250	106	156	114	159
63	101	95	Chelmsford	E Eng	255	72	217	26	166	229	94	98	42	48	203	247
136	62	96	North West Leicestershire	E Mid	86	86	182	140	108	129	177	147	98	115	155	346
137	137	97	Ealing	London	357	297	97	308	2	103	58	87	342	158	15	314
129	98	98	South Northamptonshire	E Mid	204	86	38	150	197	126	329	68	38	70	146	266
131	233	99	South Lakeland	N West	53	258	352	133	182	1	212	128	187	131	99	126
98	93	100	Gosport	S East	85	269	47	112	66	149	196	307	57	351	303	35
81	122	101	Maldon	E Eng	109	72	82	16	176	266	309	69	67	138	244	205
180	114	102	East Devon	S West	13	179	241	126	48	310	355	213	157	103	171	56
146	71	103	York	Yrk & Hum	48	248	92	146	342	196	115	262	168	43	45	234
233	106	104	Redbridge	London	344	308	284	302	26	155	21	50	315	72	13	358
96	132	105	Rugby	W Mid	246	151	147	180	107	147	104	99	228	80	66	326
132	150	106	Derbyshire Dales	E Mid	66	315	170	205	62	70	314	314	69	130	181	219
150	78	107	Mendip	S West	101	47	16	89	78	262	361	184	155	59	316	250
64	67	108	Stevenage	E Eng	285	163	89	81	183	312	57	190	23	182	160	88
138	87	109	East Dunbartonshire	Scot	10	283	314	202	365	232	130	245	109	83	29	26
105	146	110	Bristol, City of	S West	250	35	202	169	98	89	170	249	83	117	200	193
67	103	111	Oxford	S East	241	189	198	113	100	295	186	252	10	32	273	161
55	75	112	Wiltshire	S West	38	35	264	100	194	143	297	212	91	47	176	249

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
259	149	113	Hackney	London	374	64	145	351	22	8	61	9	363	107	22	352
128	147	114	Dartford	S East	324	102	173	101	135	93	20	115	80	167	139	315
144	166	115	Hillingdon	London	345	297	144	343	33	75	11	70	313	154	31	338
116	139	116	Arun	S East	158	127	267	66	83	237	235	96	97	93	300	218
85	153	117	Stratford-on-Avon	W Mid	213	151	128	123	116	68	242	114	248	90	150	285
87	128	118	Castle Point	E Eng	163	72	308	75	195	282	110	127	46	135	280	30
153	182	119	Kensington and Chelsea	London	377	121	238	261	20	41	99	105	274	118	2	366
102	133	120	Ashford	S East	266	102	172	90	163	123	253	132	142	71	238	57
82	116	121	Bromsgrove	W Mid	233	151	234	192	305	19	35	13	164	208	189	232
159	144	122	East Riding of Yorkshire	Yrk & Hum	157	304	20	115	134	119	217	264	233	148	79	363
84	129	123	Maidstone	S East	267	102	69	55	145	67	208	218	148	201	219	170
78	121	124	Swindon	S West	128	35	281	296	186	161	206	133	39	96	193	190
139	92	125	Sedgemoor	S West	101	47	21	158	58	285	308	193	169	214	343	211
86	140	126	Braintree	E Eng	177	72	167	10	178	253	250	28	85	161	279	305
104	127	127	Slough	S East	249	189	221	208	222	302	53	40	111	210	28	334
178	178	128	Westminster	London	379	121	262	244	4	9	74	3	328	89	4	378
113	186	129	Havering	London	340	308	163	325	60	113	1	165	304	77	48	306
226	164	130	Bedford	E Eng	295	163	9	38	201	110	151	104	94	215	339	260
134	97	131	Harrogate	Yrk & Hum	30	248	303	8	347	109	279	113	247	57	64	128
183	90	132	Babergh	E Eng	32	213	14	20	291	182	335	200	89	113	274	317
149	102	133	Ribble Valley	N West	33	366	206	174	306	250	295	23	122	140	55	145
155	70	134	Craven	Yrk & Hum	21	248	105	28	339	301	197	176	319	84	82	123
100	115	135	South Hams	S West	15	179	223	93	46	353	371	188	210	179	86	101
196	180	136	Gedling	E Mid	143	315	324	227	114	219	158	294	22	81	128	258
151	154	137	Harlow	E Eng	312	72	242	70	179	324	5	81	48	189	289	97
206	130	138	Richmondshire	Yrk & Hum	19	248	88	15	265	92	367	274	227	126	132	45
106	169	139	Basildon	E Eng	292	72	278	58	177	238	42	64	65	147	306	210
162	113	140	South Somerset	S West	100	47	148	167	75	284	364	192	96	149	284	112
70	105	141	Chorley	N West	87	366	44	247	350	236	96	61	151	271	148	38
133	202	142	Portsmouth	S East	218	269	135	215	64	15	120	323	149	184	330	309
43	145	143	Warrington	N West	216	176	269	213	263	184	4	73	225	188	39	321
154	141	144	Wealden	S East	63	127	151	111	112	230	323	234	103	243	265	141
172	193	145	Bexley	London	321	308	290	304	36	254	56	197	236	88	35	257
234	136	146	Hambleton	Yrk & Hum	22	248	309	17	190	62	312	211	284	122	95	228
193	112	147	Somerset West and Taunton	S West	106	47	53	144	63	326	357	270	115	177	299	115
156	155	148	Daventry	E Mid	206	86	140	156	198	154	271	37	181	106	272	239
191	170	149	Amber Valley	E Mid	159	315	187	238	130	133	233	239	130	176	108	272
31	125	150	Forest of Dean	S West	31	35	98	197	144	111	365	265	73	261	298	130
89	123	151	Huntingdonshire	E Eng	181	213	292	105	85	356	192	144	127	52	161	342
117	100	152	East Cambridgeshire	E Eng	136	213	175	67	61	373	293	92	188	75	242	330
219	208	153	Isle of Wight	S East	78	269	70	219	55	58	311	299	192	346	287	136
229	213	154	Southwark	London	372	64	154	335	30	220	76	41	358	141	9	292
245	104	155	Na h-Eileanan Siar	Scot	1	6	60	98	282	328	376	83	306	185	296	25
111	156	156	Reading	S East	261	189	133	188	228	317	172	85	86	61	126	270
125	199	157	Gravesham	S East	324	102	136	110	140	51	106	225	135	171	234	267
220	160	158	Vale of Glamorgan	Wales	134	13	149	230	288	216	190	360	198	46	43	187
114	99	159	Cambridge	E Eng	303	213	157	64	77	378	109	136	63	191	204	181
247	176	160	South Derbyshire	E Mid	94	315	296	234	118	221	258	143	15	249	113	324
118	197	161	Lichfield	W Mid	96	237	260	266	311	24	98	150	200	190	137	183
214	135	162	Ryedale	Yrk & Hum	22	248	121	49	207	130	358	149	353	142	67	284
213	81	163	Mid Suffolk	E Eng	34	213	127	48	243	249	342	90	124	129	264	301
143	175	164	Thurrock	E Eng	264	72	39	166	199	374	45	124	76	143	152	360
225	172	165	Mid Devon	S West	13	179	220	131	44	335	374	186	160	200	229	150
124	117	166	South Kesteven	E Mid	139	290	26	69	273	193	294	187	101	232	187	308
142	143	167	Orkney Islands	Scot	2	6	286	95	283	203	379	170	345	40	261	10
171	177	168	North Tyneside	N East	178	115	259	300	203	139	119	203	159	308	93	66
175	204	169	Lewes	S East	118	127	68	77	128	305	265	315	66	292	335	140
316	219	170	Waltham Forest	London	355	308	188	337	41	207	14	100	350	78	27	372
207	163	171	Southampton	S East	280	269	34	264	57	227	200	328	165	166	286	174
80	165	172	Cheshire West and Chester	N West	149	176	76	129	255	217	270	111	246	157	168	173
184	159	173	Teignbridge	S West	15	179	276	104	79	309	353	285	156	231	250	82
152	223	174	Solihull	W Mid Met	313	359	205	254	319	99	12	66	224	111	38	227

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
157	190	175	High Peak	E Mid	165	315	169	198	110	87	263	308	129	254	172	282
109	109	176	North Kesteven	E Mid	54	290	1	151	343	228	319	257	112	307	212	349
224	188	177	West Devon	S West	15	179	207	44	38	322	375	318	242	267	243	14
188	215	178	Brent	London	362	297	295	326	27	188	63	49	339	151	24	328
94	174	179	Fylde	N West	59	366	110	256	358	156	246	47	174	263	130	65
275	224	180	Erewash	E Mid	182	315	266	255	143	160	139	291	37	237	191	286
192	205	181	Exeter	S West	126	179	316	153	69	350	256	306	108	269	199	36
200	183	182	Luton	E Eng	320	163	80	168	196	342	33	35	120	170	275	290
148	142	183	Trafford	Gtr Manch	335	349	304	201	285	208	85	34	208	240	7	172
140	195	184	Stafford	W Mid	119	237	239	228	225	101	210	180	253	230	127	131
242	239	185	North East Derbyshire	E Mid	84	315	345	258	142	102	282	242	137	162	179	111
250	181	186	North Devon	S West	41	179	230	76	35	306	372	221	278	187	311	102
335	217	187	Newham	London	364	64	164	317	45	263	37	94	335	121	21	377
204	212	188	Lambeth	London	368	64	174	344	31	357	30	84	307	136	18	348
167	222	189	Tamworth	W Mid	160	237	150	303	351	168	27	57	153	347	251	118
176	259	190	Eden	N West	46	258	91	137	150	218	369	91	359	287	153	72
177	201	191	South Staffordshire	W Mid	77	237	258	278	274	135	161	67	270	205	98	280
166	236	192	Redditch	W Mid	231	151	108	243	330	98	122	62	180	303	309	64
251	206	193	Northampton	E Mid	339	86	111	211	213	132	168	107	36	178	305	244
232	56	194	Broadland	E Eng	80	213	236	103	307	222	302	97	128	110	241	298
126	167	195	Southend-on-Sea	E Eng	281	72	199	200	189	332	248	229	56	228	75	188
222	240	196	Staffordshire Moorlands	W Mid	70	237	58	274	226	84	338	131	292	262	211	186
179	185	197	Torridge	S West	41	179	48	117	34	320	377	337	303	273	355	9
262	214	198	East Northamptonshire	E Mid	234	86	204	157	218	170	252	152	78	235	319	178
73	189	199	Malvern Hills	W Mid	222	151	45	179	262	40	336	71	310	238	247	153
161	134	200	East Suffolk	E Eng	92	213	40	65	281	213	318	198	134	209	295	323
120	187	201	Canterbury	S East	290	102	55	88	149	321	240	338	189	73	227	288
315	191	202	Aberdeen City	Scot	207	256	126	310	352	82	300	178	147	109	297	23
252	246	203	Cornwall	S West	45	343	194	143	171	122	337	313	221	223	226	215
221	230	204	Shetland Islands	Scot	3	6	288	134	361	72	378	298	361	35	262	15
189	280	205	Gateshead	N East	220	115	302	368	216	3	113	317	238	330	100	61
239	157	206	Northumberland	N East	133	115	240	327	184	148	291	272	237	291	133	41
158	203	207	Rother	S East	145	127	117	102	180	243	316	333	158	284	268	162
274	294	208	Chesterfield	E Mid	212	315	344	269	139	77	176	357	104	225	174	116
190	89	209	South Norfolk	E Eng	89	213	83	96	251	288	332	231	141	119	270	322
186	275	210	East Staffordshire	W Mid	142	237	159	221	310	37	296	162	150	279	258	225
304	151	211	Stirling	Scot	123	53	233	212	373	272	255	268	196	155	206	4
235	209	212	Newcastle upon Tyne	N East	268	115	190	374	200	167	102	332	245	165	101	31
243	231	213	Newark and Sherwood	E Mid	187	315	255	191	103	125	209	300	125	234	222	367
265	158	214	Monmouthshire	Wales	115	13	184	294	261	112	307	311	354	145	40	189
307	256	215	Leicester	E Mid	274	86	254	223	97	6	175	277	202	257	334	341
231	210	216	Medway	S East	305	102	256	207	154	171	160	235	77	204	183	343
310	306	217	Ashfield	E Mid	247	315	300	260	124	206	121	296	74	163	310	204
181	251	218	North Warwickshire	W Mid	239	151	285	181	123	298	89	173	295	150	235	300
135	198	219	Folkestone and Hythe	S East	277	102	216	91	146	338	205	208	175	218	260	194
103	118	220	South Ribble	N West	287	366	209	262	341	234	164	10	176	245	121	110
205	138	221	West Suffolk	E Eng	28	213	52	118	250	365	322	181	100	124	342	350
122	228	222	Wychavon	W Mid	223	151	210	154	264	22	310	48	263	168	271	319
51	173	223	Gloucester	S West	196	35	332	245	170	267	154	260	179	239	254	83
331	315	224	Haringey	London	376	64	180	316	32	120	49	171	365	153	30	345
198	293	225	Cannock Chase	W Mid	175	237	337	319	270	18	142	164	184	331	224	55
236	243	226	Peterborough	E Eng	300	213	131	193	88	336	54	217	161	212	367	268
209	249	227	Nuneaton and Bedworth	W Mid	284	151	246	236	133	251	18	276	255	260	215	276
240	274	228	Newcastle-under-Lyme	W Mid	173	237	195	295	233	151	237	220	201	293	208	89
107	196	229	West Lancashire	N West	99	366	191	270	294	296	112	77	145	336	232	134
164	234	230	Swale	S East	294	102	228	74	147	150	198	215	162	229	332	316
288	227	231	Scottish Borders	Scot	7	1	273	178	293	300	366	324	282	139	322	28
281	192	232	Powys	Wales	11	13	93	276	229	64	360	353	375	216	107	103
212	221	233	Perth and Kinross	Scot	40	53	283	209	349	90	325	269	223	128	350	16
211	309	234	Carlisle	N West	189	258	185	237	202	159	324	196	289	312	263	7
170	179	235	West Lindsey	E Mid	148	290	4	136	327	226	317	261	143	310	220	357
285	271	236	Herefordshire, County of	W Mid	180	151	22	189	157	114	370	322	346	258	147	252

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97	226	237	Stockport	Gtr Manch	337	349	250	185	259	172	140	86	231	181	102	78
223	225	238	Lancaster	N West	171	366	160	253	268	212	77	195	261	348	158	69
165	216	239	Dover	S East	263	102	208	78	148	367	218	227	220	250	185	197
216	237	240	Kettering	E Mid	283	86	156	206	217	259	224	199	121	203	337	220
270	320	241	Bolsover	E Mid	170	315	320	283	119	179	239	281	107	253	281	283
297	218	242	City of Edinburgh	Scot	282	53	329	233	357	197	101	232	138	74	184	185
257	245	243	Scarborough	Yrk & Hum	22	248	146	40	256	158	321	251	336	280	353	147
253	283	244	Croydon	London	361	338	364	373	43	29	36	233	348	91	52	269
241	263	245	Plymouth	S West	193	179	348	218	73	361	278	304	90	302	231	77
201	276	246	Stockton-on-Tees	N East	279	332	274	359	205	164	107	158	287	199	96	221
276	232	247	Corby	E Mid	310	86	112	190	221	270	134	119	59	344	369	168
227	295	248	Tendring	E Eng	244	72	197	36	188	141	280	224	60	370	361	303
244	119	249	North Norfolk	E Eng	81	213	43	94	317	233	348	283	171	211	292	344
228	253	250	Mid Ulster	N Ire	132	202	327	97	240	368	305	259	269	101	123	50
261	252	251	Telford and Wrekin	W Mid	273	237	107	323	249	275	103	228	232	327	154	152
256	300	252	Allerdale	N West	127	258	143	210	160	204	352	310	296	357	197	62
286	171	253	Selby	Yrk & Hum	29	248	277	39	309	286	303	153	254	233	259	318
317	290	254	County Durham	N East	256	332	306	288	223	2	264	273	272	297	145	137
318	220	255	Cardiff	Wales	254	13	227	272	279	224	116	350	334	116	71	289
309	297	256	Lewisham	London	365	64	90	339	39	343	55	223	368	160	41	361
347	340	257	Coventry	W Mid Met	327	359	263	322	131	78	38	191	279	195	196	333
323	310	258	Greenwich	London	363	308	328	355	40	337	40	137	312	174	33	332
199	307	259	Wirral	M'side	201	231	319	330	257	245	78	185	207	299	213	127
311	264	260	South Ayrshire	Scot	95	1	245	252	363	316	254	320	308	319	253	5
266	272	261	South Tyneside	N East	200	115	294	349	204	247	97	355	241	286	142	95
160	267	262	Worcester	W Mid	223	151	193	241	280	140	226	226	214	272	315	142
217	254	263	Sefton	M'side	225	231	305	290	258	304	24	237	211	335	169	146
174	260	264	Wyre	N West	65	366	280	235	322	124	261	55	230	367	221	107
185	257	265	Halton	N West	235	231	325	285	252	277	22	56	197	322	336	177
202	152	266	Ipswich	E Eng	278	213	138	145	286	314	185	236	132	300	326	92
278	296	267	Bassetlaw	E Mid	221	315	310	159	101	329	238	292	88	222	276	359
273	288	268	Sunderland	N East	238	115	315	378	227	27	88	267	266	270	239	96
280	285	269	Hastings	S East	271	127	225	172	181	205	289	342	173	334	307	32
210	250	270	Moray	Scot	8	6	333	182	346	289	356	340	267	175	358	1
295	346	271	Barrow-in-Furness	N West	174	258	349	162	215	20	333	156	178	362	313	79
319	238	272	West Lothian	Scot	56	53	293	246	376	370	124	247	170	144	356	19
325	242	273	Pembrokeshire	Wales	39	20	24	229	231	240	345	364	376	226	245	199
282	301	274	Darlington	N East	296	332	299	342	224	96	84	253	288	305	84	98
145	207	275	Rossendale	N West	172	366	192	240	340	303	273	39	163	320	190	230
260	273	276	Lisburn and Castlereagh	N Ire	179	202	363	232	239	351	244	243	219	125	97	104
264	277	277	Ards and North Down	N Ire	153	202	359	120	242	344	251	280	239	172	141	85
147	304	278	Wyre Forest	W Mid	231	151	64	187	312	117	171	238	309	325	331	229
305	284	279	Angus	Scot	60	53	354	222	354	74	326	336	217	108	360	8
263	268	280	Shropshire	W Mid	167	237	291	248	187	118	341	312	283	276	122	243
271	282	281	Antrim and Newtownabbey	N Ire	211	202	318	152	237	348	223	279	234	227	144	121
169	308	282	Bury	Gtr Manch	342	349	244	231	276	198	132	177	215	194	162	76
291	229	283	Argyll and Bute	Scot	25	6	186	214	355	187	354	316	349	350	283	13
277	279	284	Wellingborough	E Mid	328	86	252	184	220	209	179	102	93	275	363	278
342	289	285	Swansea	Wales	183	20	189	346	323	201	202	377	326	224	104	67
168	247	286	Hyndburn	N West	230	366	232	298	326	313	149	88	177	326	195	117
334	270	287	Carmarthenshire	Wales	18	20	134	199	253	246	344	369	379	283	124	129
287	337	288	Enfield	London	367	308	326	328	29	166	65	134	371	251	51	355
353	235	289	East Lothian	Scot	9	53	323	226	356	311	339	302	167	180	348	39
346	262	290	Fife	Scot	117	53	334	265	375	11	213	207	216	281	357	196
293	342	291	Derby	E Mid	293	315	313	329	138	45	215	263	205	264	301	295
284	266	292	Torbay	S West	161	179	211	291	106	352	349	375	136	366	166	51
343	319	293	Mansfield	E Mid	272	315	335	280	120	215	178	329	166	248	318	240
279	194	294	Norwich	E Eng	317	213	196	171	345	195	173	240	113	294	340	139
302	261	295	Flintshire	Wales	138	13	102	239	298	265	330	286	299	242	237	307
267	302	296	Armagh C, B'bridge and Craigavon	N Ire	202	202	350	149	245	349	249	327	250	133	151	106
195	244	297	Pendle	N West	176	366	75	273	335	290	272	53	190	324	362	149
330	265	298	Gwynedd	Wales	185	20	139	267	284	239	327	378	341	220	105	71

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203	287	299	St. Helens	M'side	276	231	251	286	266	347	16	166	240	329	248	246
296	345	300	Copeland	N West	73	258	275	186	208	333	328	266	316	377	194	27
268	184	301	Breckland	E Eng	151	213	226	92	272	281	350	216	226	206	341	279
237	281	302	Calderdale	Yrk & Hum	343	264	272	175	353	100	135	172	262	318	88	235
313	335	303	Sheffield	Yrk & Hum	301	345	311	225	337	25	169	241	258	169	223	233
338	365	304	Walsall	W Mid Met	326	359	248	365	121	26	26	182	337	360	277	302
197	248	305	Preston	N West	203	366	347	284	321	202	174	63	204	345	236	93
269	318	306	Mid and East Antrim	N Ire	228	202	312	124	236	362	236	359	314	246	129	44
283	303	307	Fenland	E Eng	226	213	218	107	80	372	320	305	185	183	345	374
218	255	308	Lincoln	E Mid	314	290	12	142	338	307	199	366	68	374	290	202
208	286	309	Thanet	S East	332	102	130	106	162	364	188	352	213	314	291	216
215	168	310	South Holland	E Mid	129	290	5	79	234	346	343	301	194	356	328	375
272	200	311	King's Lynn and West Norfolk	E Eng	156	213	168	135	260	192	347	258	191	265	323	371
246	317	312	Eastbourne	S East	237	127	301	130	136	354	268	356	195	358	325	43
292	313	313	Newry, Mourne and Down	N Ire	198	202	361	121	244	345	313	321	286	193	135	46
194	241	314	Blackburn with Darwen	N West	236	366	153	311	315	327	159	116	323	369	83	135
329	323	315	Dumfries and Galloway	Scot	61	1	224	216	320	334	346	351	330	207	352	108
238	305	316	Fermanagh and Omagh	N Ire	146	202	289	204	235	377	331	331	302	274	125	20
290	316	317	Causeway Coast and Glens	N Ire	192	202	365	139	238	308	283	362	276	244	140	47
249	269	318	East Lindsey	E Mid	190	290	3	122	299	146	351	354	182	363	324	373
339	328	319	Conwy	Wales	195	20	71	287	289	291	290	376	364	259	180	100
301	355	320	Dudley	W Mid Met	306	359	229	345	161	200	10	194	259	301	370	304
322	338	321	South Lanarkshire	Scot	209	1	362	263	364	273	229	293	252	221	349	40
314	322	322	Wigan	Gtr Manch	336	349	271	224	300	292	69	205	235	309	205	169
341	311	323	Bridgend	Wales	137	20	213	367	292	280	260	343	370	296	138	176
289	258	324	Highland	Scot	47	6	100	147	379	210	363	319	366	315	375	18
255	299	325	Kirklees	Yrk & Hum	333	264	219	155	334	185	133	204	281	268	233	351
298	278	326	Leeds	Yrk & Hum	346	264	268	164	325	211	123	183	265	186	257	339
328	327	327	Derry City and Strabane	N Ire	262	202	336	217	241	299	234	334	351	285	165	34
326	291	328	Ceredigion	Wales	20	20	103	309	232	325	368	379	378	328	49	84
333	325	329	Denbighshire	Wales	252	20	49	289	278	264	304	371	377	266	201	99
248	331	330	Bolton	Gtr Manch	353	349	282	275	290	186	23	151	298	338	188	171
306	312	331	Redcar and Cleveland	N East	275	332	257	363	212	248	194	275	273	352	167	254
336	351	332	Barnsley	Yrk & Hum	299	345	367	277	344	50	150	161	256	164	282	209
308	211	333	Boston	E Mid	166	290	6	116	254	375	334	358	152	373	321	370
258	314	334	Burnley	N West	289	366	161	281	328	261	136	43	325	375	347	73
350	329	335	Isle of Anglesey	Wales	90	20	129	361	304	319	340	349	374	298	118	167
362	324	336	Caerphilly	Wales	186	20	322	313	297	283	182	339	324	288	228	251
367	358	337	Nottingham	E Mid	307	315	366	354	113	42	143	363	206	290	288	320
374	341	338	Midlothian	Scot	51	53	374	249	369	330	306	287	126	198	376	21
359	343	339	Newport	Wales	286	13	356	268	287	165	184	344	338	247	156	296
300	298	340	North Lincolnshire	Yrk & Hum	269	304	66	161	314	358	298	256	271	278	207	376
327	321	341	Falkirk	Scot	164	53	358	271	370	366	111	209	229	255	354	165
337	292	342	Renfrewshire	Scot	205	283	351	292	374	371	105	271	260	252	302	22
365	334	343	Rhondda Cynon Taf	Wales	112	20	231	375	303	278	231	368	293	316	308	180
344	330	344	Wrexham	Wales	229	13	201	315	324	255	292	341	343	311	285	200
303	344	345	Liverpool	M'side	308	231	343	348	269	225	47	189	264	371	256	245
356	339	346	Torfaen	Wales	219	20	237	360	302	260	216	370	372	219	266	214
360	333	347	North Ayrshire	Scot	55	6	346	338	377	340	232	335	277	349	365	11
349	371	348	Barking and Dagenham	London	370	308	377	370	68	131	29	148	367	213	90	353
372	361	349	Neath Port Talbot	Wales	131	20	243	318	336	323	220	346	347	282	320	331
355	362	350	Kingston upon Hull, City of	Yrk & Hum	347	304	212	369	174	44	59	365	373	361	209	354
345	348	351	Inverclyde	Scot	162	283	166	314	371	379	153	347	294	364	359	2
371	374	352	Sandwell	W Mid Met	334	359	357	372	155	152	13	106	322	337	346	364
351	363	353	Birmingham	W Mid Met	349	359	331	297	332	14	7	222	360	355	217	365
375	352	354	East Ayrshire	Scot	135	1	375	332	366	287	262	348	243	354	377	3
364	357	355	Belfast	N Ire	331	202	338	183	246	341	167	219	331	365	198	265
378	336	356	Clackmannanshire	Scot	122	53	368	250	378	360	286	54	311	236	379	33
373	347	357	Merthyr Tydfil	Wales	114	20	118	377	295	363	230	373	344	342	368	59
324	360	358	Hartlepool	N East	323	332	247	371	214	241	155	254	317	376	255	275
358	369	359	Stoke-on-Trent	W Mid	291	237	162	366	248	104	201	295	352	378	351	256
299	353	360	Knowsley	M'side	258	231	360	336	271	339	39	32	321	359	378	253

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
369	350	361	North Lanarkshire	Scot	270	283	370	299	368	153	68	288	291	256	374	156
357	359	362	Salford	Gtr Manch	360	349	340	358	275	199	60	76	244	323	329	291
321	356	363	Rochdale	Gtr Manch	358	349	297	341	308	242	66	155	275	353	327	138
340	364	364	Rotherham	Yrk & Hum	298	345	342	357	348	71	156	290	300	339	269	299
294	349	365	Bradford	Yrk & Hum	352	264	235	257	333	297	145	278	280	332	338	274
354	378	366	Wolverhampton	W Mid Met	338	359	376	364	141	174	17	246	355	372	293	287
352	332	367	Wakefield	Yrk & Hum	330	264	307	306	277	331	187	284	301	317	294	340
376	372	368	Blaenau Gwent	Wales	215	20	261	356	316	318	277	372	357	313	364	113
320	367	369	Tameside	Gtr Manch	350	349	373	362	313	235	117	201	297	340	182	208
348	326	370	Great Yarmouth	E Eng	265	213	341	176	331	294	315	361	212	304	371	327
366	373	371	Manchester	Gtr Manch	375	349	371	340	301	138	127	78	320	321	225	217
370	366	372	Dundee City	Scot	318	53	372	305	367	136	204	374	290	306	366	37
361	370	373	Doncaster	Yrk & Hum	319	345	330	279	318	274	189	230	329	333	304	368
312	354	374	North East Lincolnshire	Yrk & Hum	309	304	171	333	329	369	245	367	333	295	267	362
332	375	375	Oldham	Gtr Manch	356	349	369	331	296	252	228	202	251	343	317	241
377	368	376	West Dunbartonshire	Scot	214	283	379	307	372	376	180	326	318	341	373	12
379	376	377	Glasgow City	Scot	351	283	378	352	362	175	100	309	356	289	372	248
368	377	378	Middlesbrough	N East	354	332	353	379	209	359	148	297	369	368	333	195
363	379	379	Blackpool	N West	311	366	355	376	360	7	243	345	362	379	344	70

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.

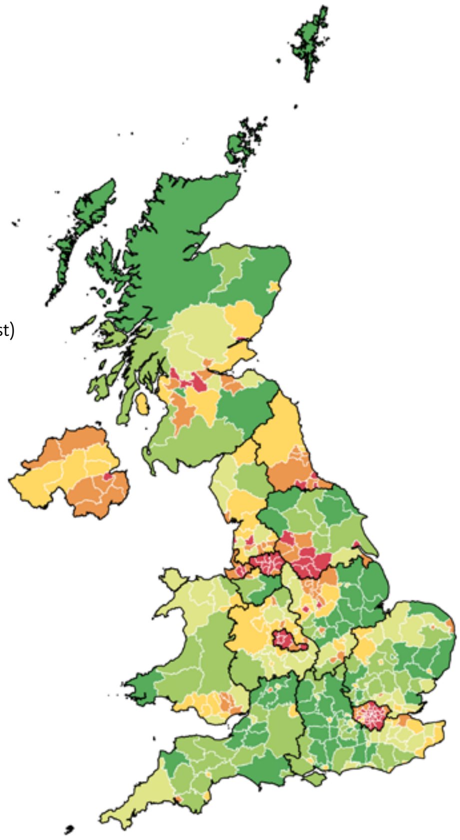
Governance measures the extent to which there are checks and restraints on power, and whether government operates effectively and without corruption. The nature of an area's governance has a material impact on its prosperity. The quality of local democracy and government integrity contribute significantly 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	North Kesteven (E Mid)
3	Babergh (E Eng)
4	Epsom and Ewell (S East)
5	Rutland (E Mid)
6	Orkney Islands (Scot)
7	Aberdeenshire (Scot)
8	Bath and North East Somerset (S West)
9	East Renfrewshire (Scot)
10	Winchester (S East)
11	West Berkshire (S East)
12	Shetland Islands (Scot)
13	Mole Valley (S East)
14	Isles of Scilly (S West)
15	Mendip (S West)
16	East Hampshire (S East)
17	Scottish Borders (Scot)
18	Hart (S East)
19	South Holland (E Mid)
20	Windsor and Maidenhead (S East)



Bottom 20 Local Authorities

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

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 have 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 homicide rate has increased from 15 to 22 per 100,000 over 10 years. London is the 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.

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 35%. Turnout for national elections is higher than for local elections. Furthermore, few councils see changes in the party with overall control; in 66 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.

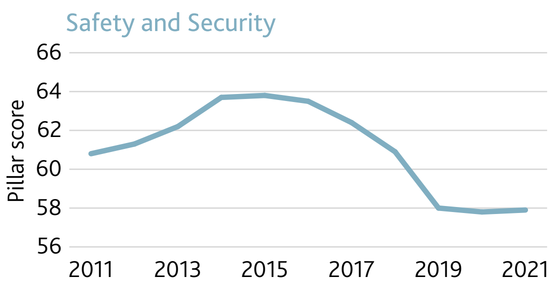
Within family relationships, there are mixed outcomes. There has been a large fall in underage pregnancy and the percentage of lone parent families has also decreased slightly. The number of teenage pregnancies, for example, has fallen from 7 per 10,000 girls aged 13-16 to just 3. However, there are 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.

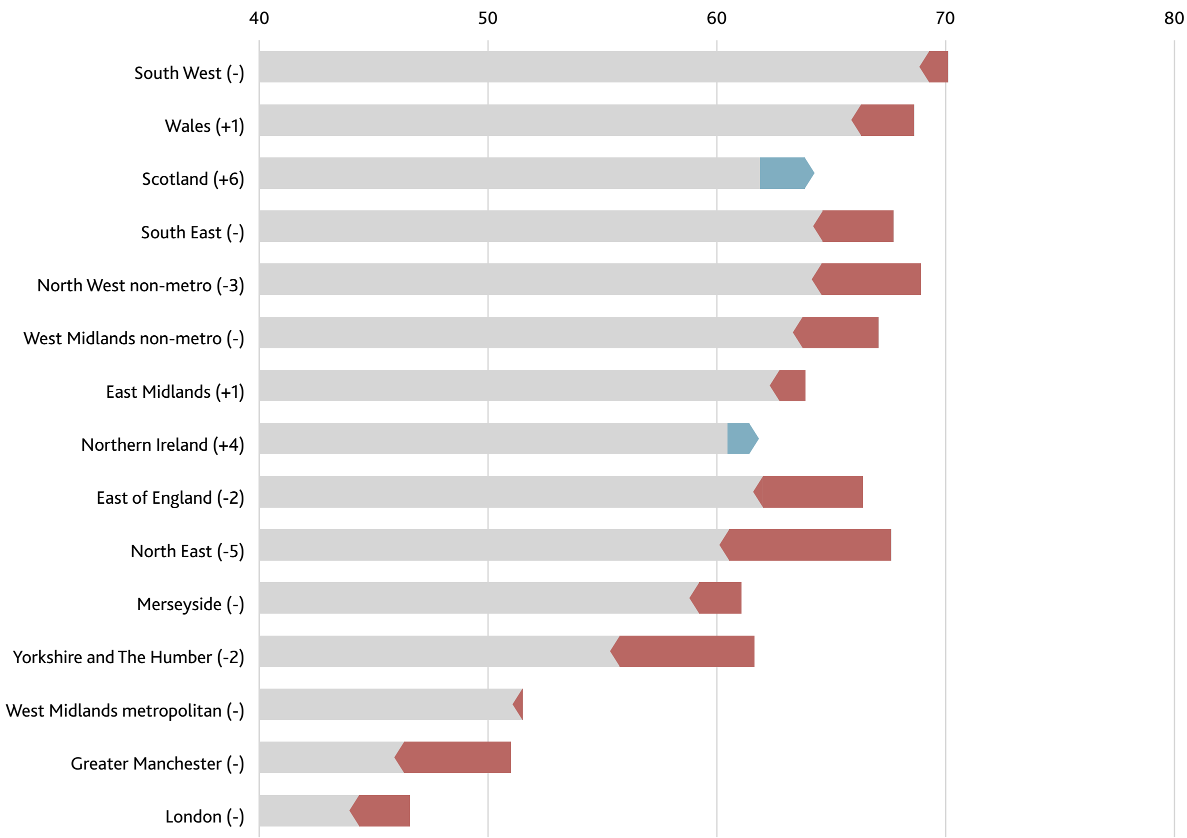
Credit: shutterstock.com

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.

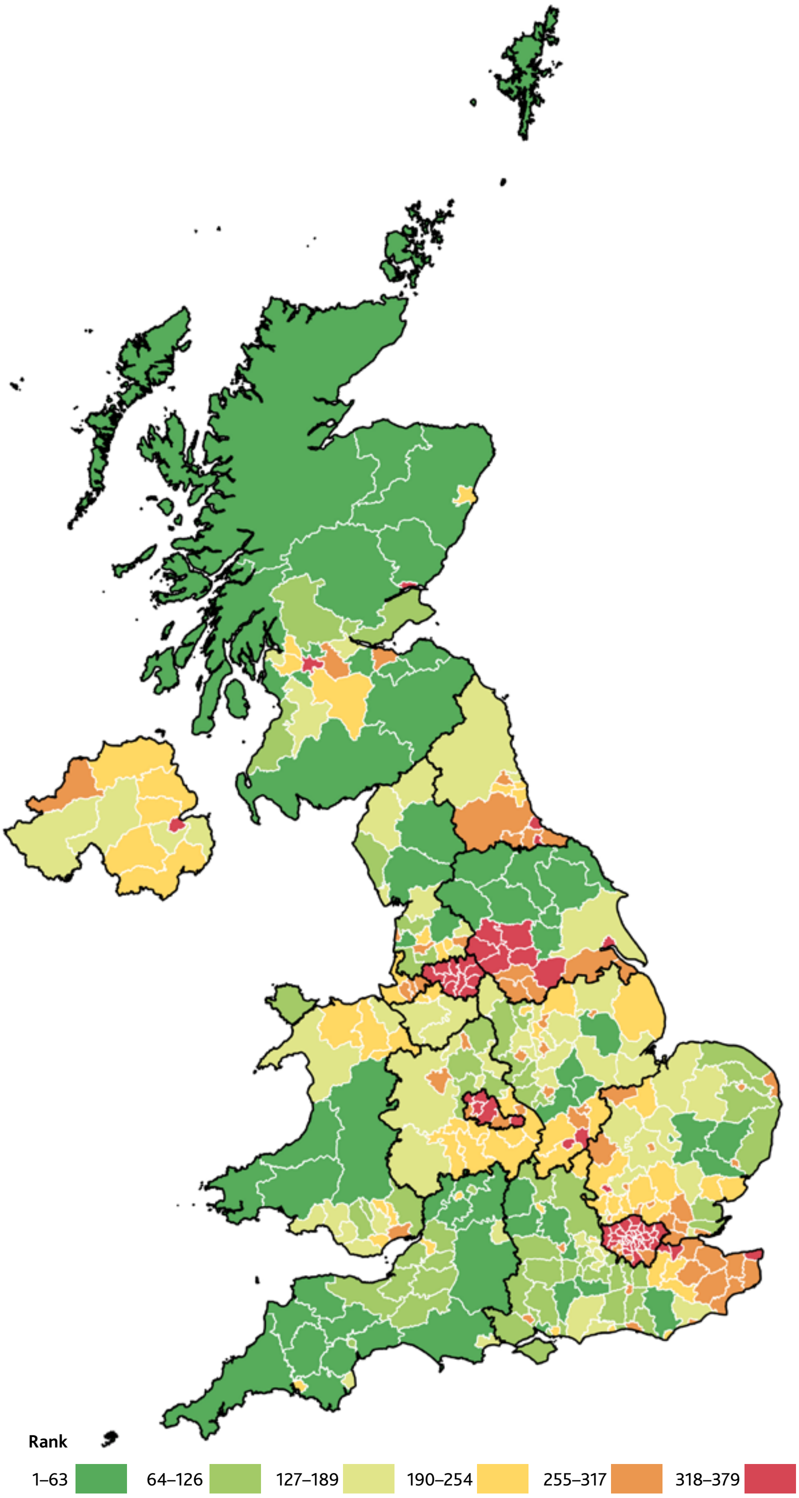
Safety and Security 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

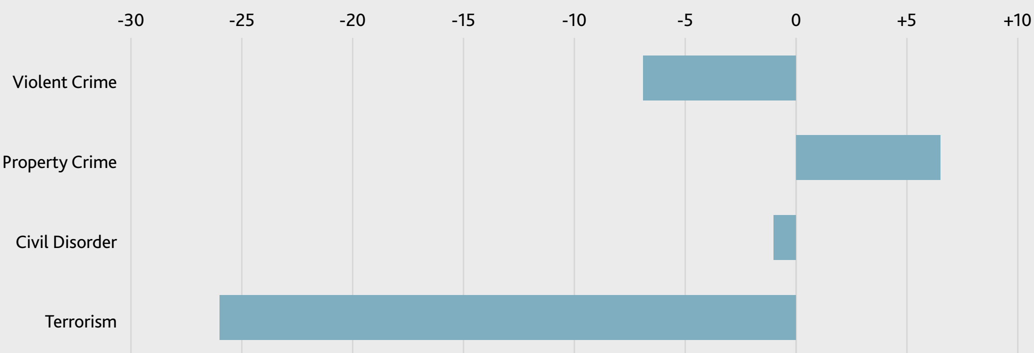
Rank	Local Authority
1	Na h-Eileanan Siar (Scot)
2	Orkney Islands (Scot)
3	Shetland Islands (Scot)
4	East Renfrewshire (Scot)
5	Aberdeenshire (Scot)
6	Isles of Scilly (S West)
7	Scottish Borders (Scot)
8	Moray (Scot)
9	East Lothian (Scot)
10	East Dunbartonshire (Scot)
11	Powys (Wales)
12	Rutland (E Mid)
13	East Devon (S West)
13	Mid Devon (S West)
15	South Hams (S West)
15	Teignbridge (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	Croydon (London)
362	Brent (London)
363	Greenwich (London)
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	Manchester (Gtr Manch)
376	Haringey (London)
377	Kensington and Chelsea (London)
378	City of London (London)
379	Westminster (London)

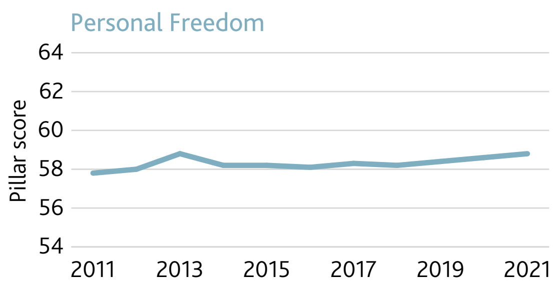


Change in Safety & Security, 2011-2021

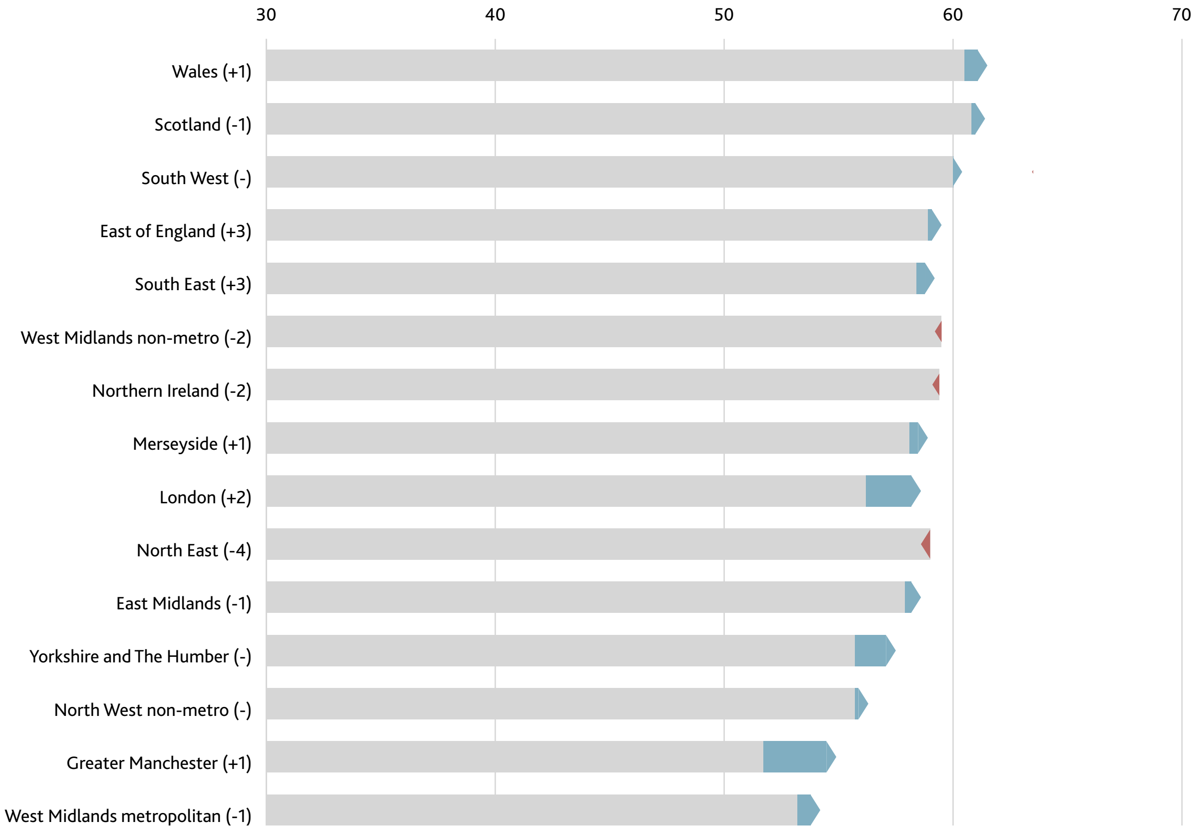


Personal Freedom

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 national level data only.

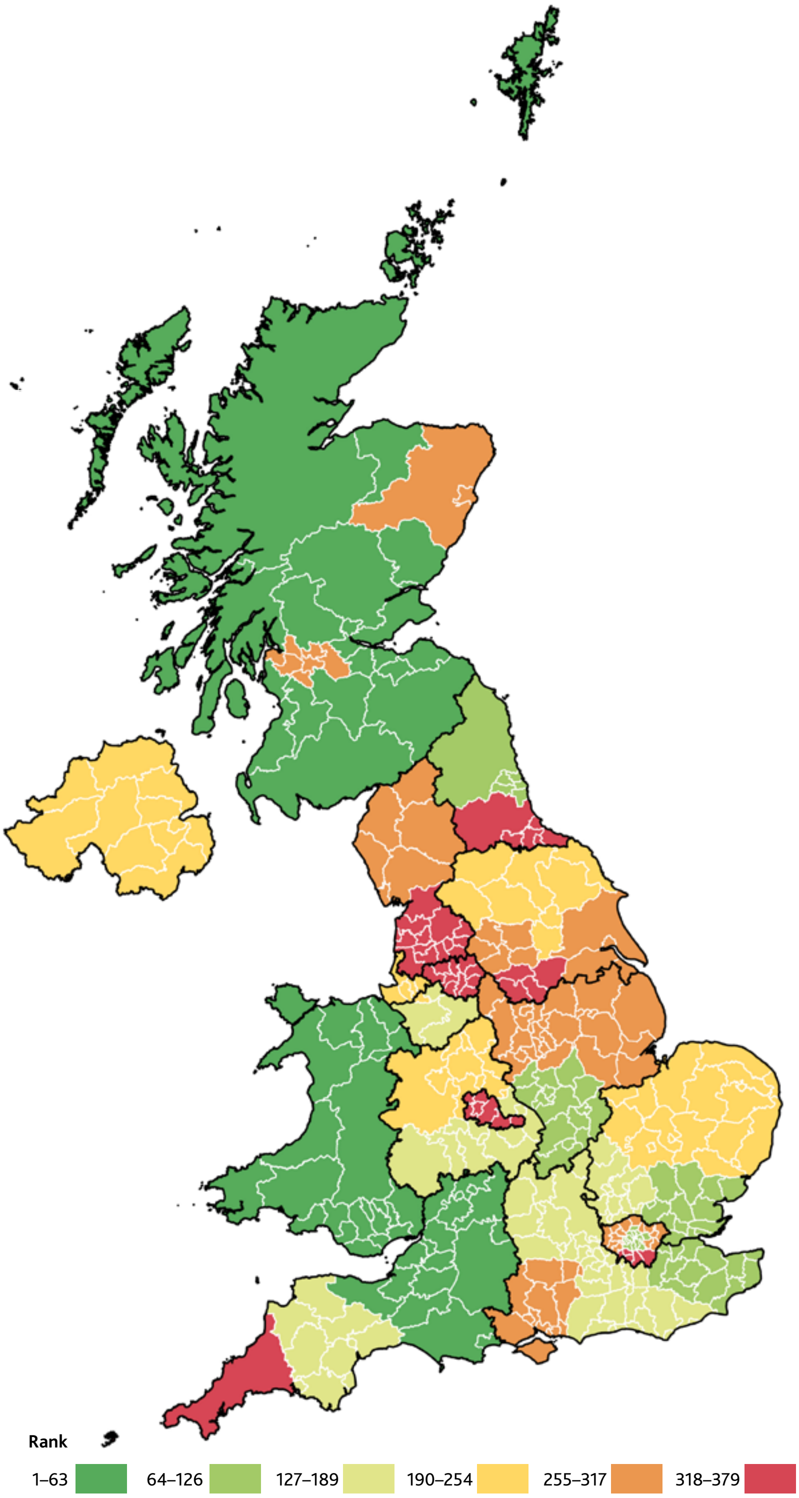
Personal Freedom 2021

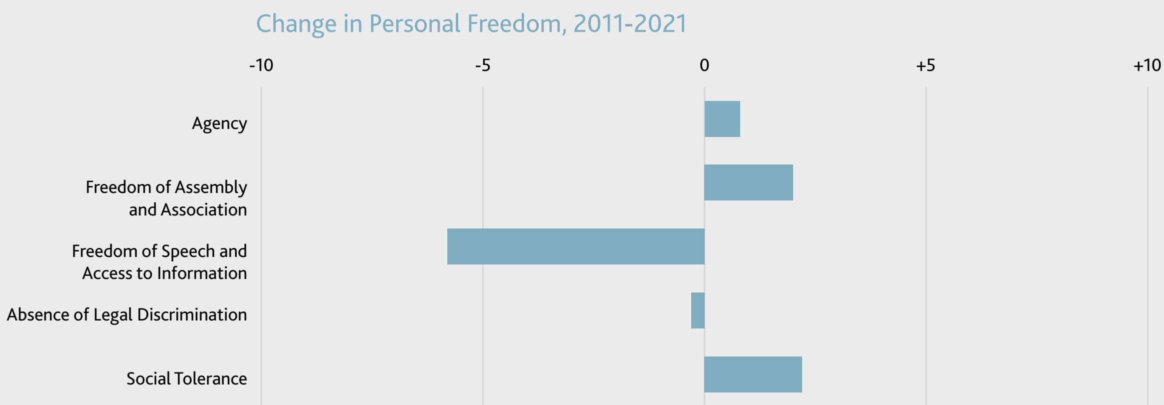
Top 20 Local Authorities

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

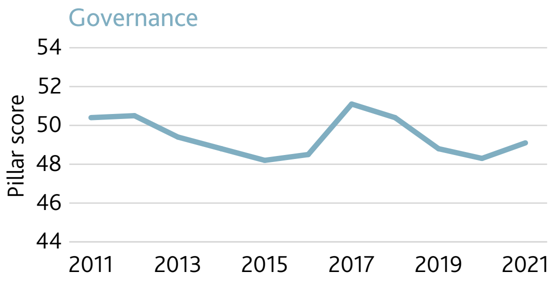
Rank	Local Authority
359	Dudley (W Mid Met)
359	Walsall (W Mid Met)
359	Coventry (W Mid Met)
359	Sandwell (W Mid Met)
359	Wolverhampton (W Mid Met)
359	Birmingham (W Mid Met)
366	Ribble Valley (N West)
366	Fylde (N West)
366	Wyre (N West)
366	Chorley (N West)
366	West Lancashire (N West)
366	Lancaster (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)



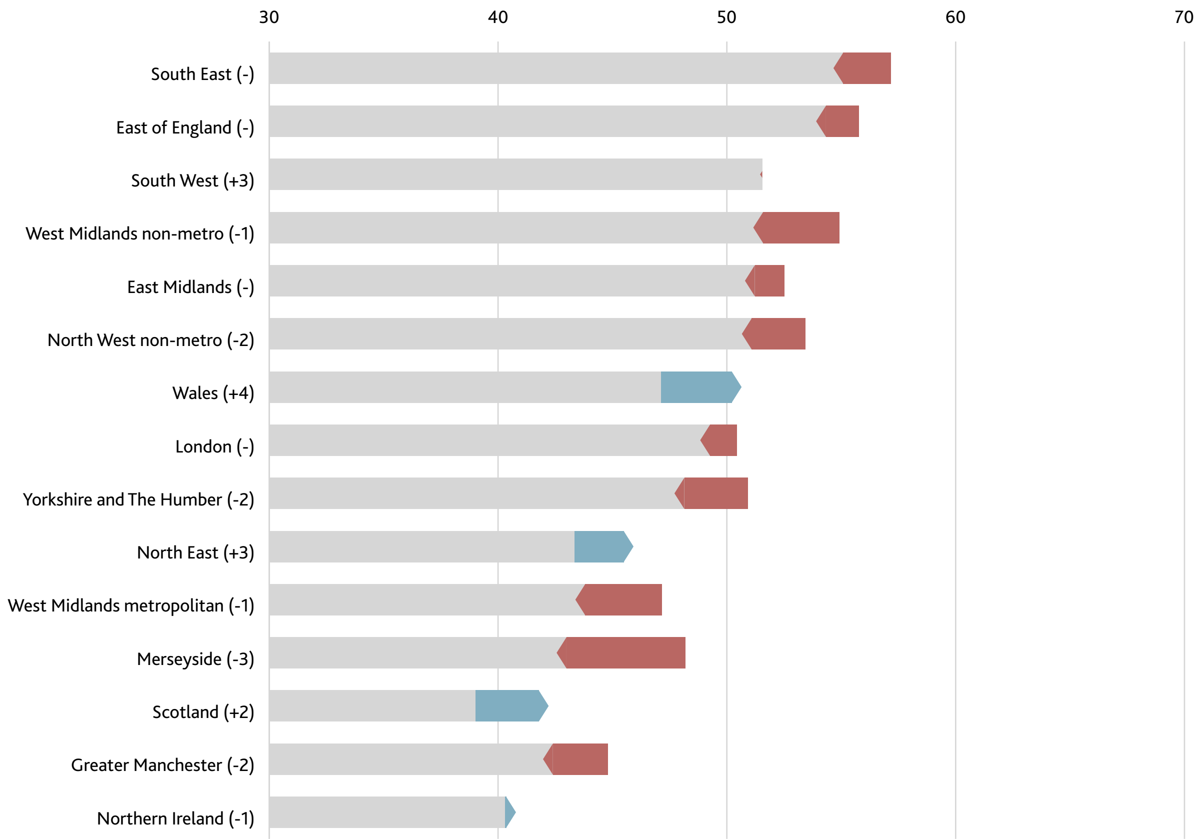


Governance

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.

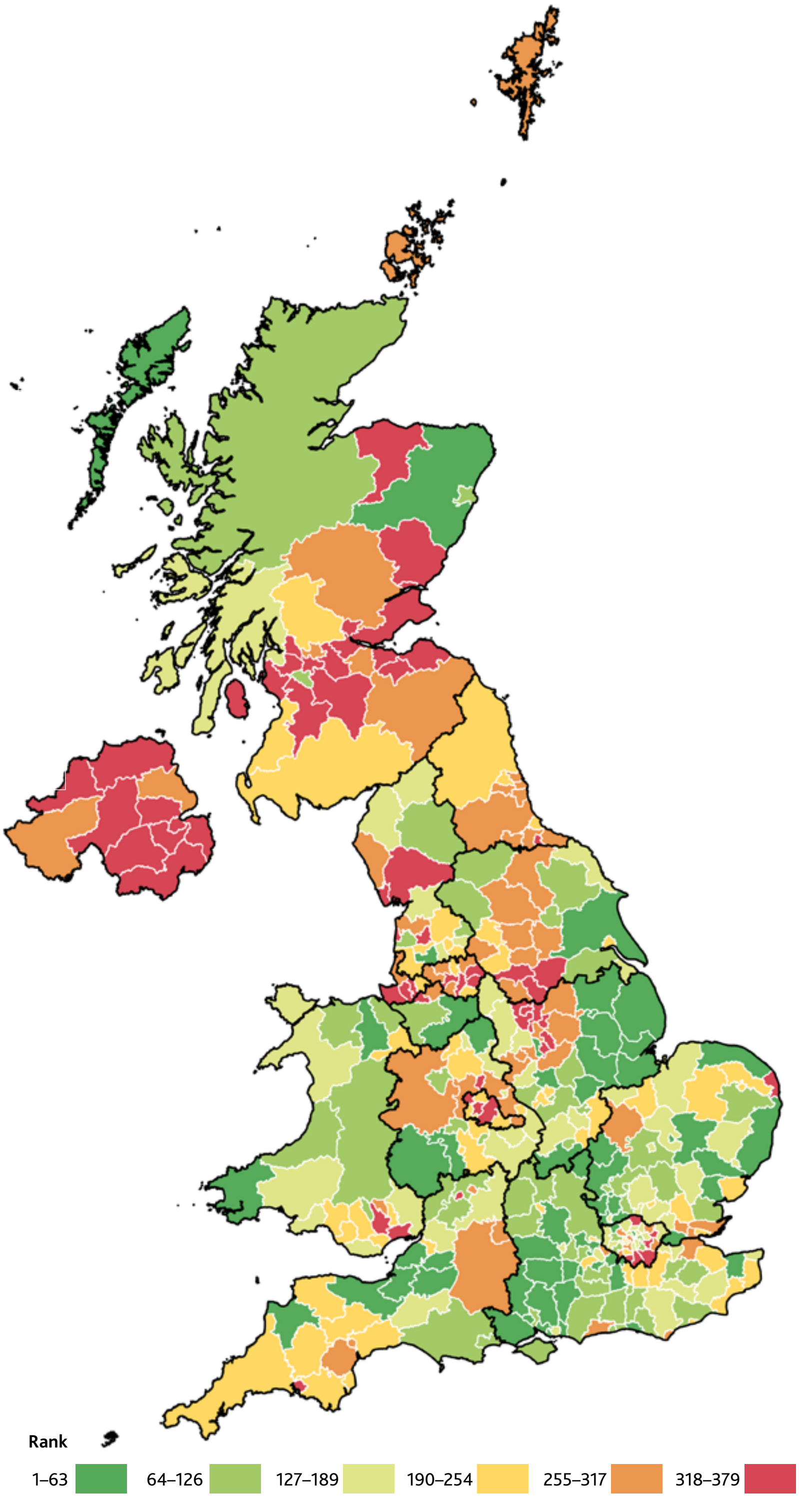
Governance 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

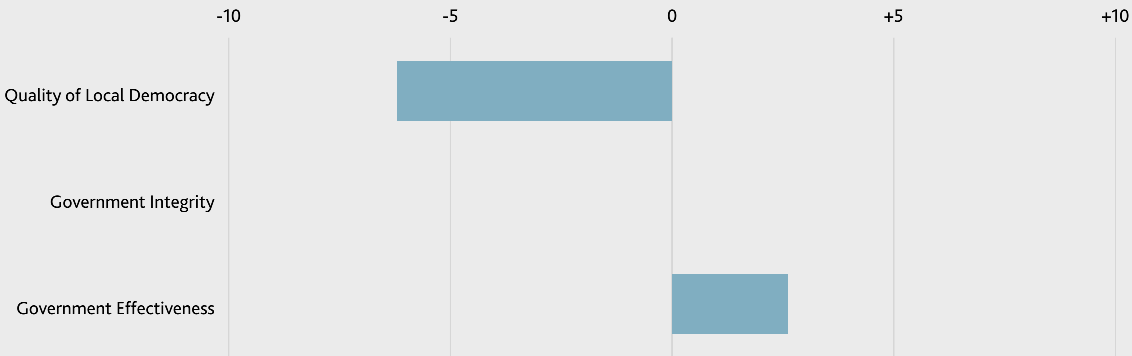
Rank	Local Authority
1	North Kesteven (E Mid)
2	Epsom and Ewell (S East)
3	East Lindsey (E Mid)
4	West Lindsey (E Mid)
5	South Holland (E Mid)
6	Boston (E Mid)
7	Hart (S East)
8	Central Bedfordshire (E Eng)
9	Bedford (E Eng)
10	Winchester (S East)
11	Bath and North East Somerset (S West)
12	Lincoln (E Mid)
13	Three Rivers (E Eng)
14	Babergh (E Eng)
15	Rutland (E Mid)
16	Mendip (S West)
17	St Albans (E Eng)
18	West Berkshire (S East)
19	Windsor and Maidenhead (S East)
20	East Riding of Yorkshire (Yrk & Hum)

Bottom 20 Local Authorities

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

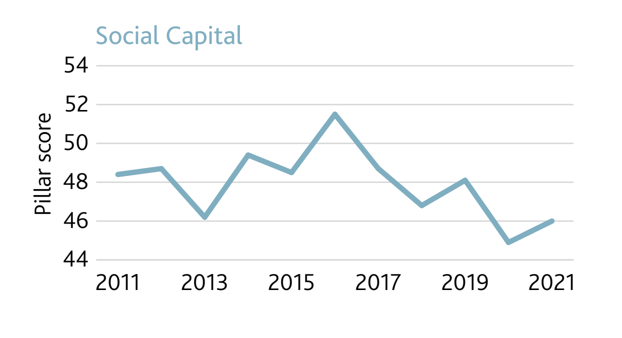


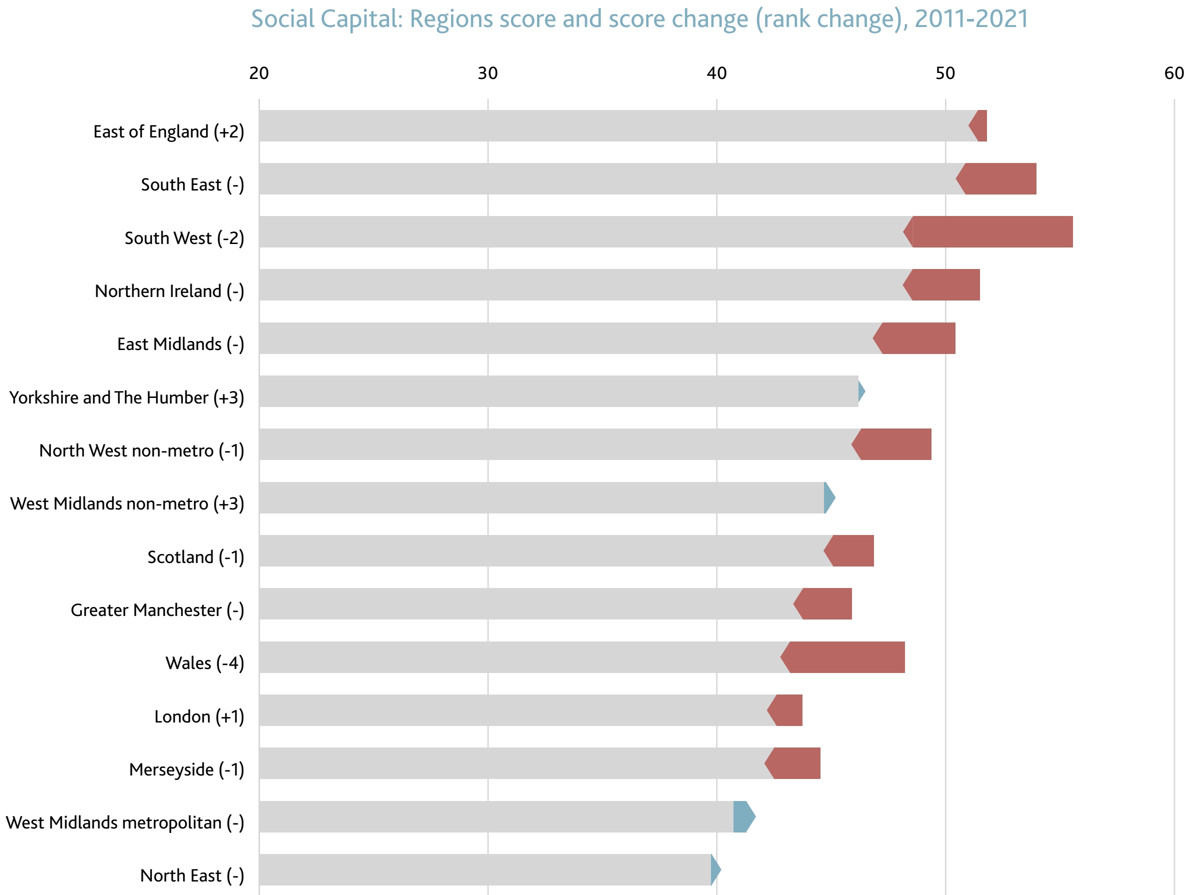
Change in Governance, 2011-2021



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.





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.

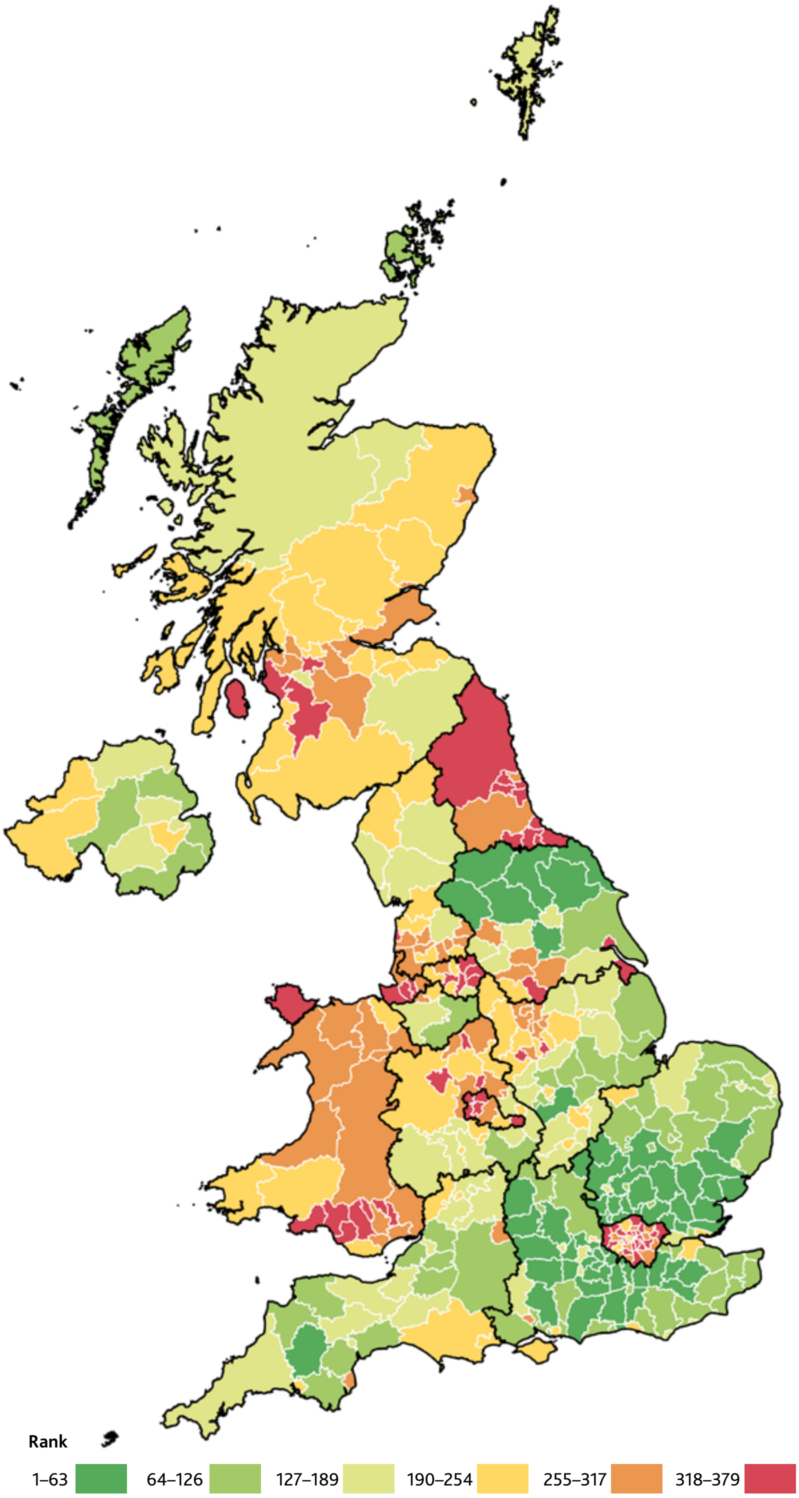
Social Capital 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

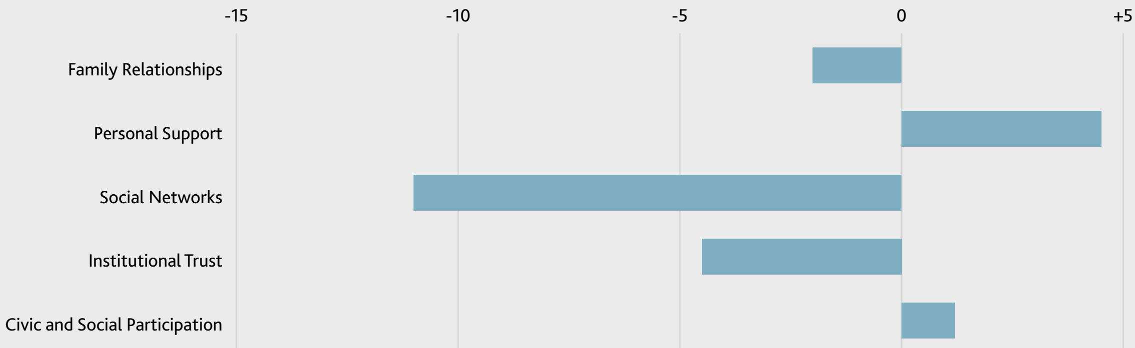
Rank	Local Authority
1	Uttlesford (E Eng)
2	Windsor and Maidenhead (S East)
3	Waverley (S East)
4	St Albans (E Eng)
5	Isles of Scilly (S West)
6	East Hertfordshire (E Eng)
7	Welwyn Hatfield (E Eng)
8	Harrogate (Yrk & Hum)
9	Mole Valley (S East)
10	Braintree (E Eng)
11	Dacorum (E Eng)
12	Sevenoaks (S 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 how easy it is for businesses to start, compete, and expand. 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.

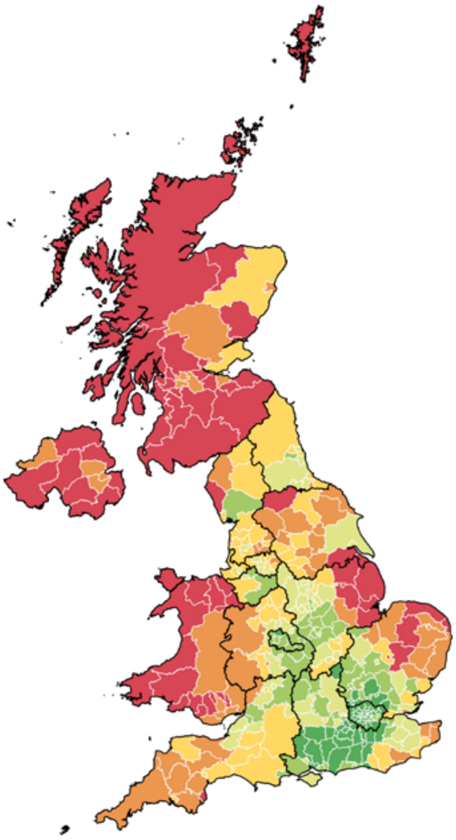
Infrastructure captures the quality of the infrastructure that enables commerce. Businesses require infrastructure that allows for efficient communication, adequate provision of water and electricity, and connects them to transport hubs and economic centres. This leads to more competitive and efficient 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	Westminster (London)
4	Islington (London)
5	Hackney (London)
6	Richmond upon Thames (London)
7	Hounslow (London)
8	Tower Hamlets (London)
9	Hammersmith and Fulham (London)
10	Harrow (London)
11	Merton (London)
12	Surrey Heath (S East)
13	Elmbridge (S East)
14	Ealing (London)
15	Hillingdon (London)
16	Hart (S East)
17	Redbridge (London)
18	Runnymede (S East)
19	Hertsmere (E Eng)
20	Bromley (London)



Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
360	Conwy (Wales)
361	Orkney Islands (Scot)
362	Midlothian (Scot)
363	Blaenau Gwent (Wales)
364	Gwynedd (Wales)
365	East Lothian (Scot)
366	North Ayrshire (Scot)
367	Merthyr Tydfil (Wales)
368	Isle of Anglesey (Wales)
369	Scottish Borders (Scot)
370	West Dunbartonshire (Scot)
371	Fermanagh and Omagh (N Ire)
372	Moray (Scot)
373	North East Lincolnshire (Yrk & Hum)
374	Dumfries and Galloway (Scot)
375	Boston (E Mid)
376	Highland (Scot)
377	Shetland Islands (Scot)
378	Inverclyde (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), Fife (231st), and Belfast (280th). 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 the West Midlands (excluding Birmingham) have the worst transport infrastructure, while thanks to the connected nature of the Mersey travel network, Merseyside now has the best transport connectivity outside London.

Economic Quality (Global Rank: 16th)

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%. 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.

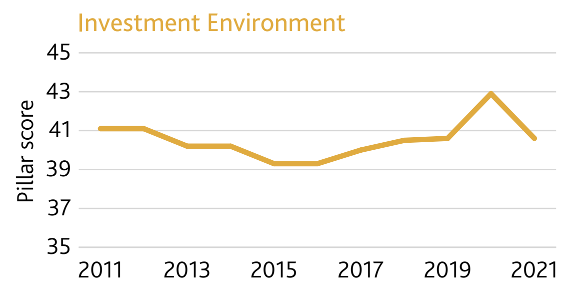
Throughout the 10 years prior to the pandemic, financial pressure on local authorities throughout the UK had been increasing following the post-financial crash austerity policies. The total percentage of service expenditure spent on social care has increased from an average of 28% to 35%. These pressures 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 31 businesses per 10,000 people for Scotland, 28 for Wales, and 23 for Northern Ireland, compared with the UK average of 44.

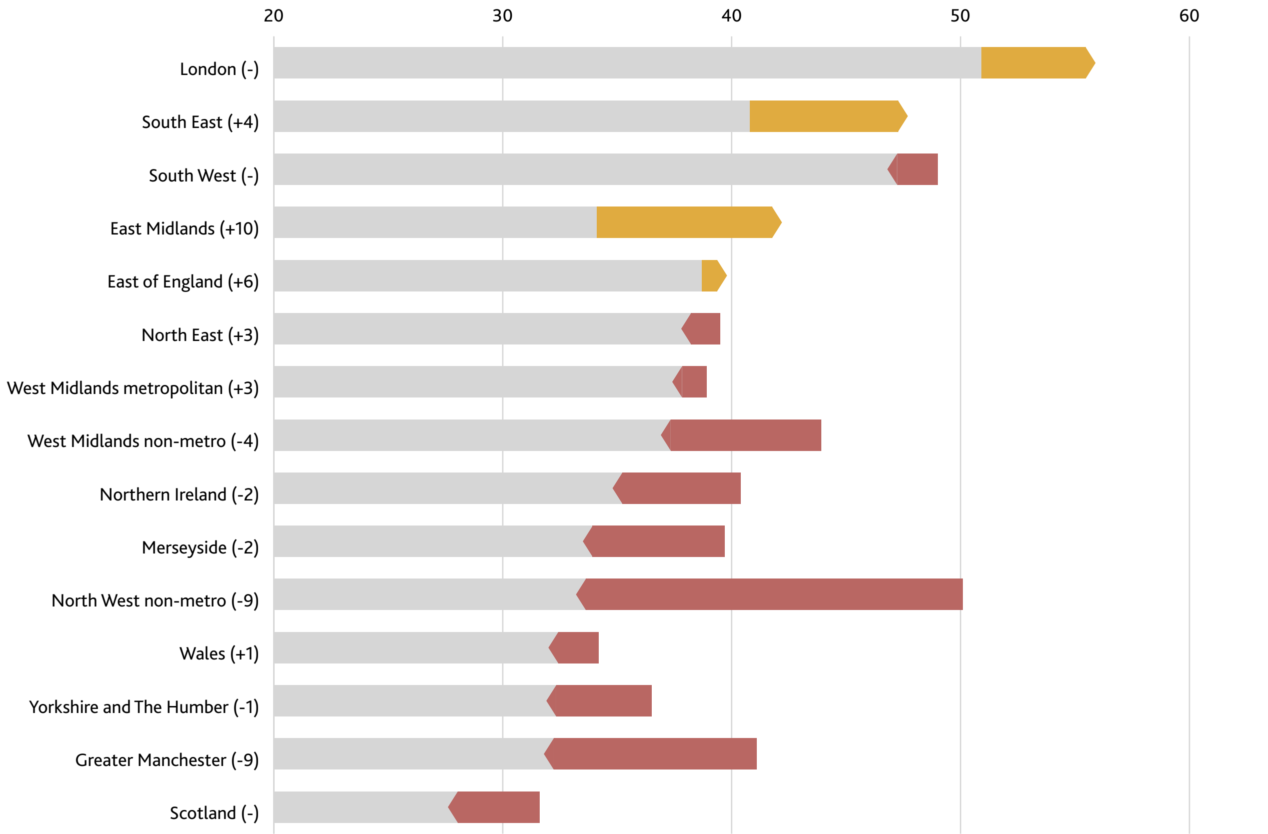
Credit: shutterstock.com

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.

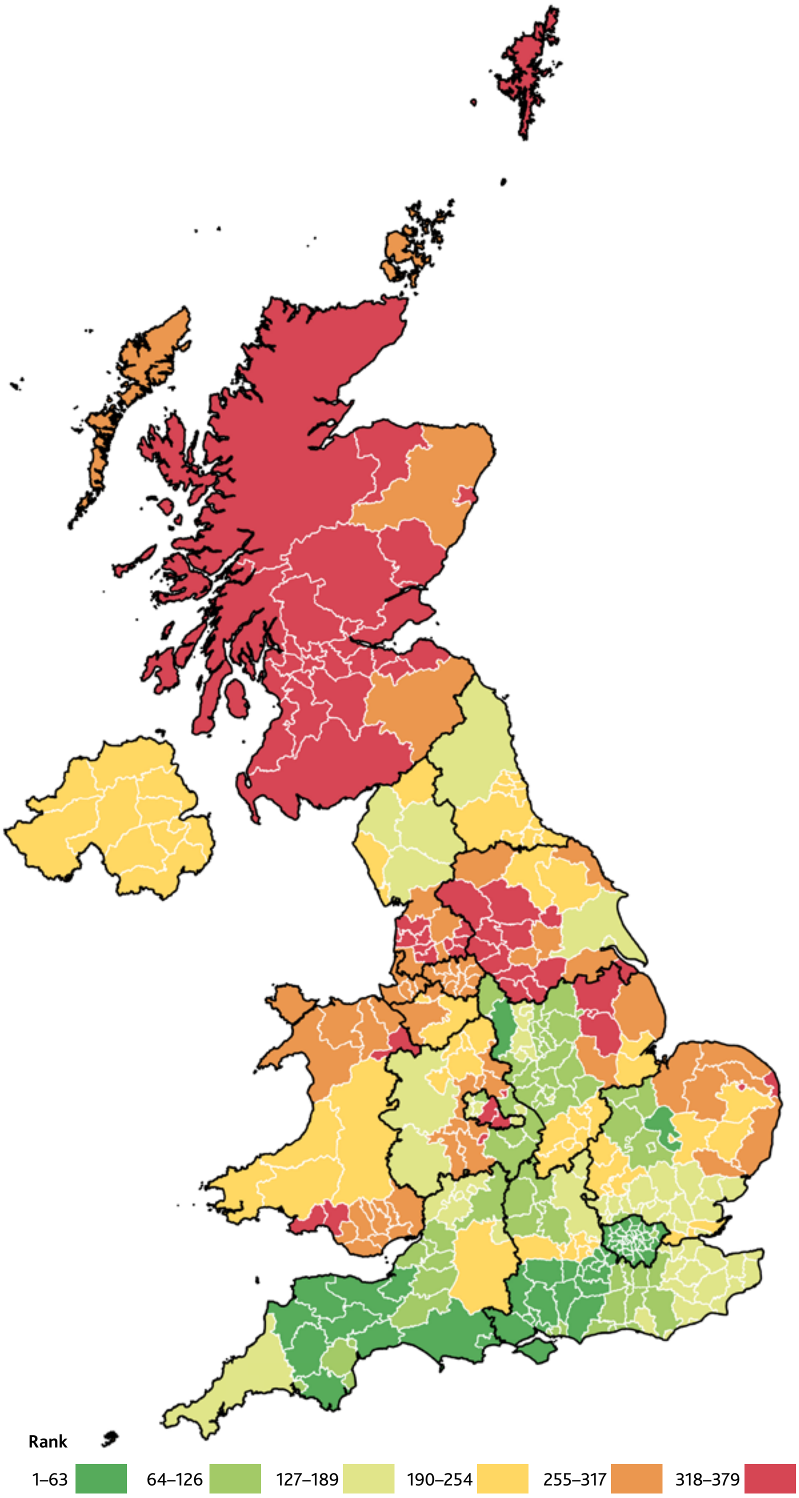
Investment Environment 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

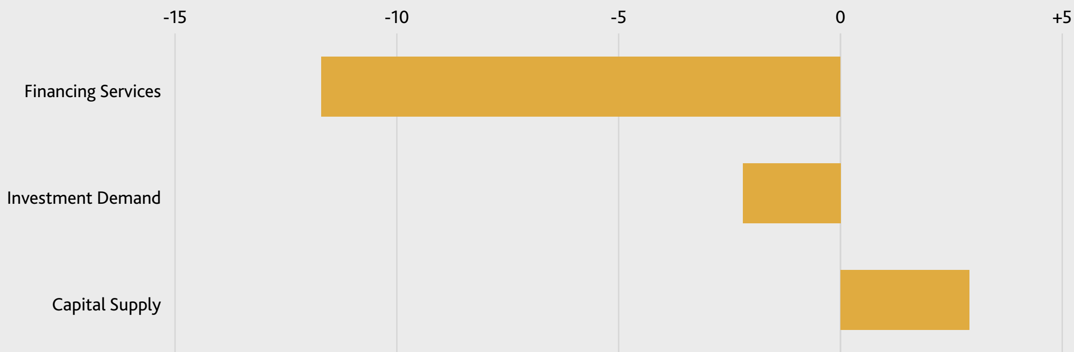
Rank	Local Authority
1	City of London (London)
2	Ealing (London)
3	Camden (London)
4	Westminster (London)
5	Guildford (S East)
6	Winchester (S East)
7	East Hampshire (S East)
8	Test Valley (S East)
9	Islington (London)
10	Waverley (S East)
11	Barnet (London)
12	Hart (S East)
13	Runnymede (S East)
14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

Bottom 20 Local Authorities

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

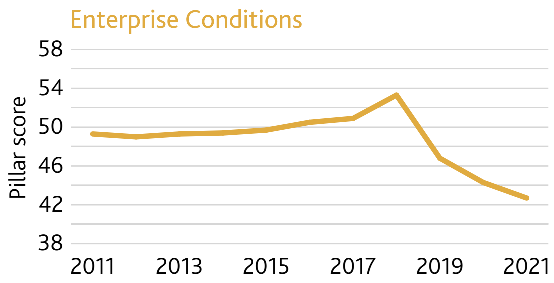


Change in Investment Environment, 2011-2021

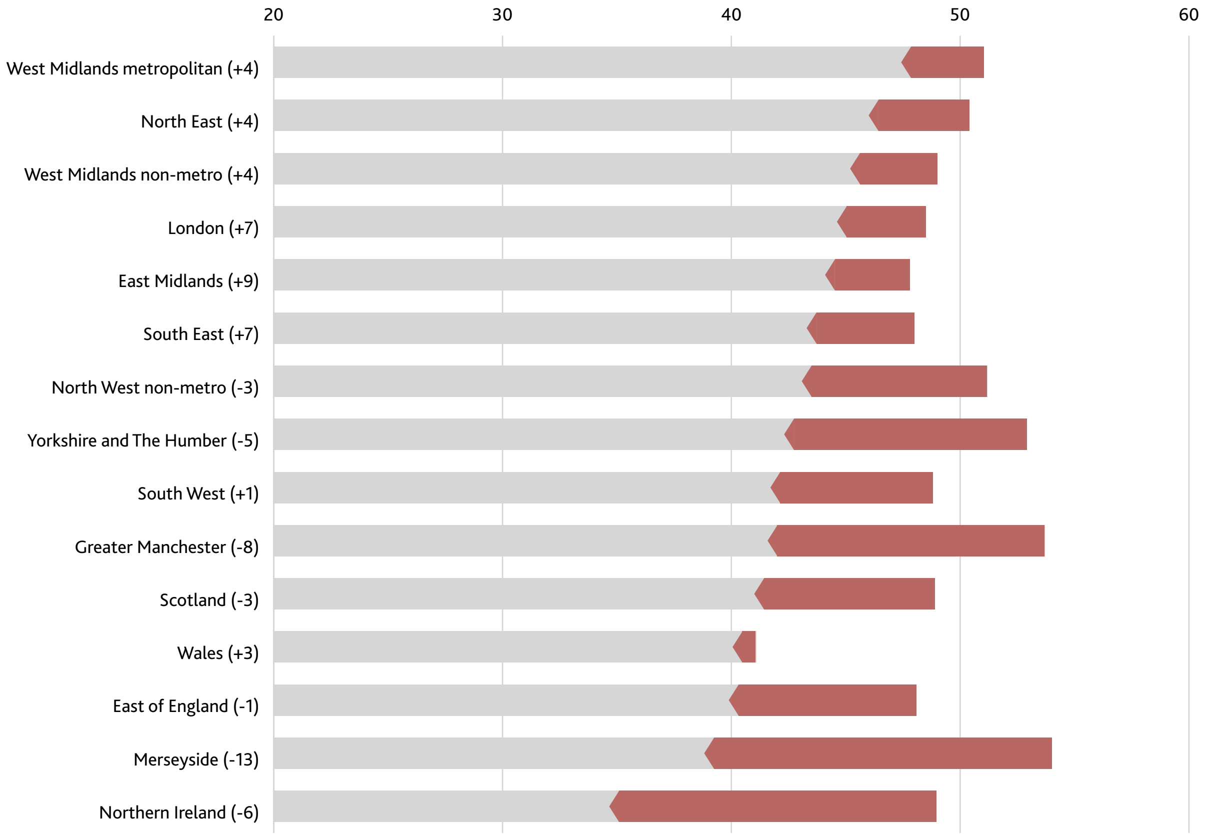


Enterprise Conditions

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.



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



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.

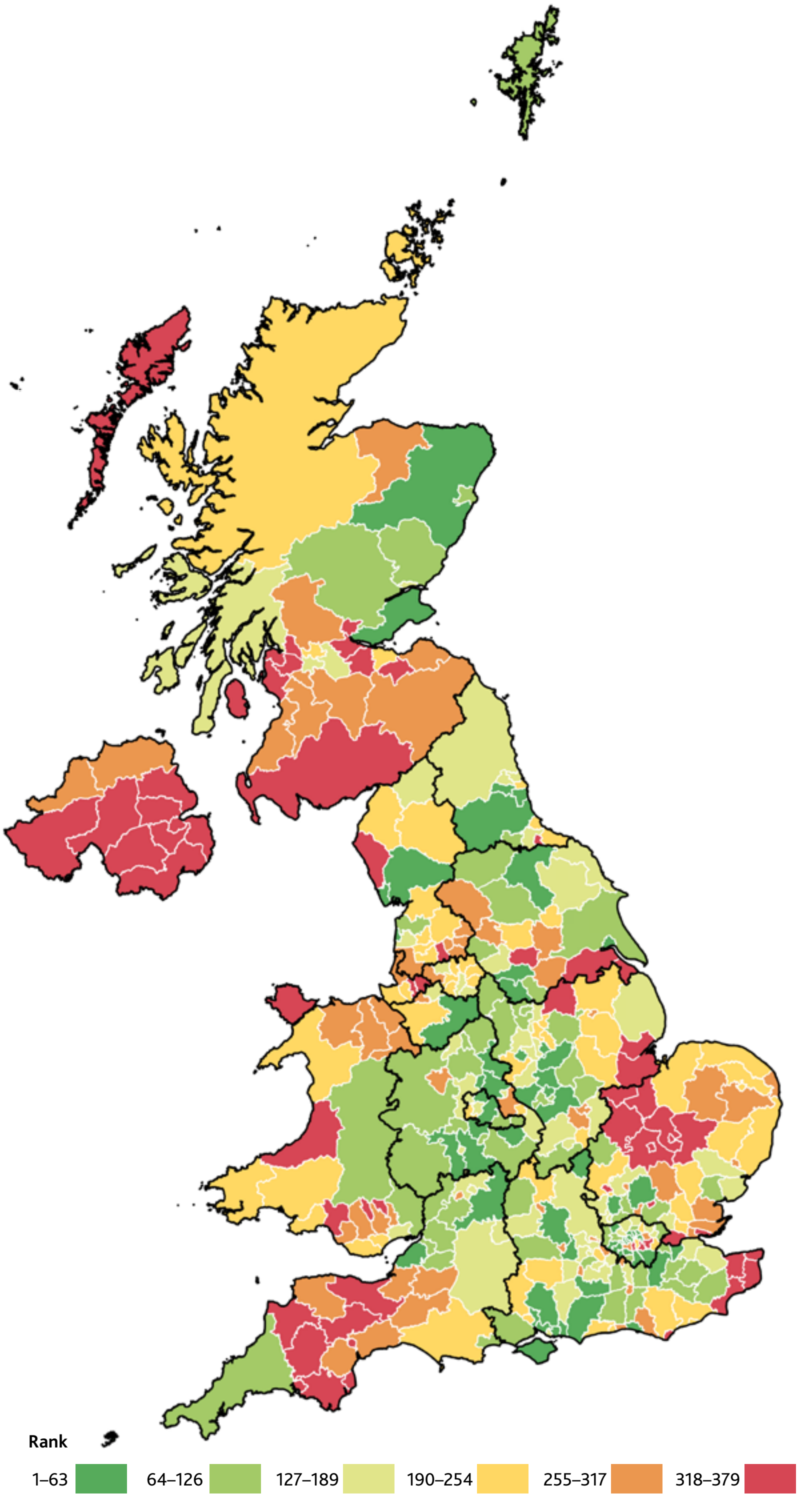
Enterprise Conditions 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

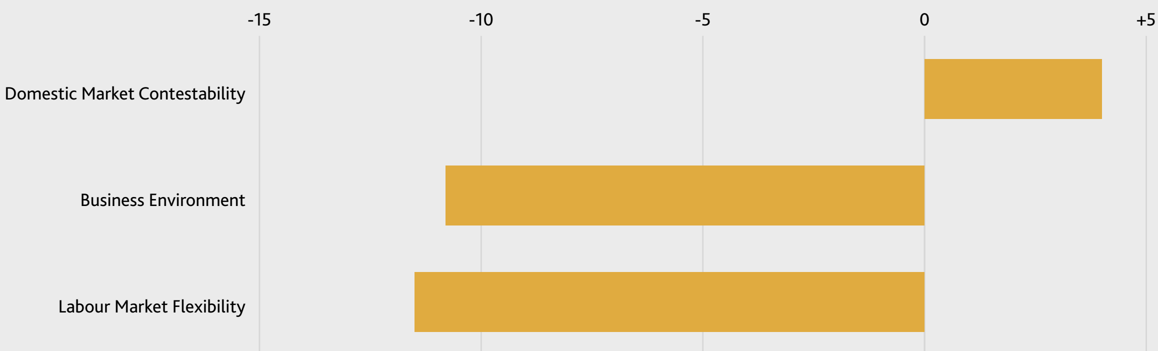
Rank	Local Authority
1	South Lakeland (N West)
2	County Durham (N East)
3	Gateshead (N East)
4	St Albans (E Eng)
5	Sevenoaks (S East)
6	Leicester (E Mid)
7	Blackpool (N West)
8	Hackney (London)
9	Westminster (London)
10	Wokingham (S East)
11	Fife (Scot)
12	Cheshire East (N West)
13	Islington (London)
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	Clackmannanshire (Scot)
361	Plymouth (S West)
362	Mid and East Antrim (N Ire)
363	Merthyr Tydfil (Wales)
364	Thanet (S East)
365	West Suffolk (E Eng)
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)

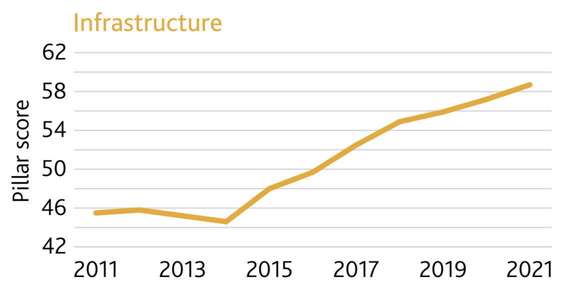


Change in Enterprise Conditions, 2011-2021

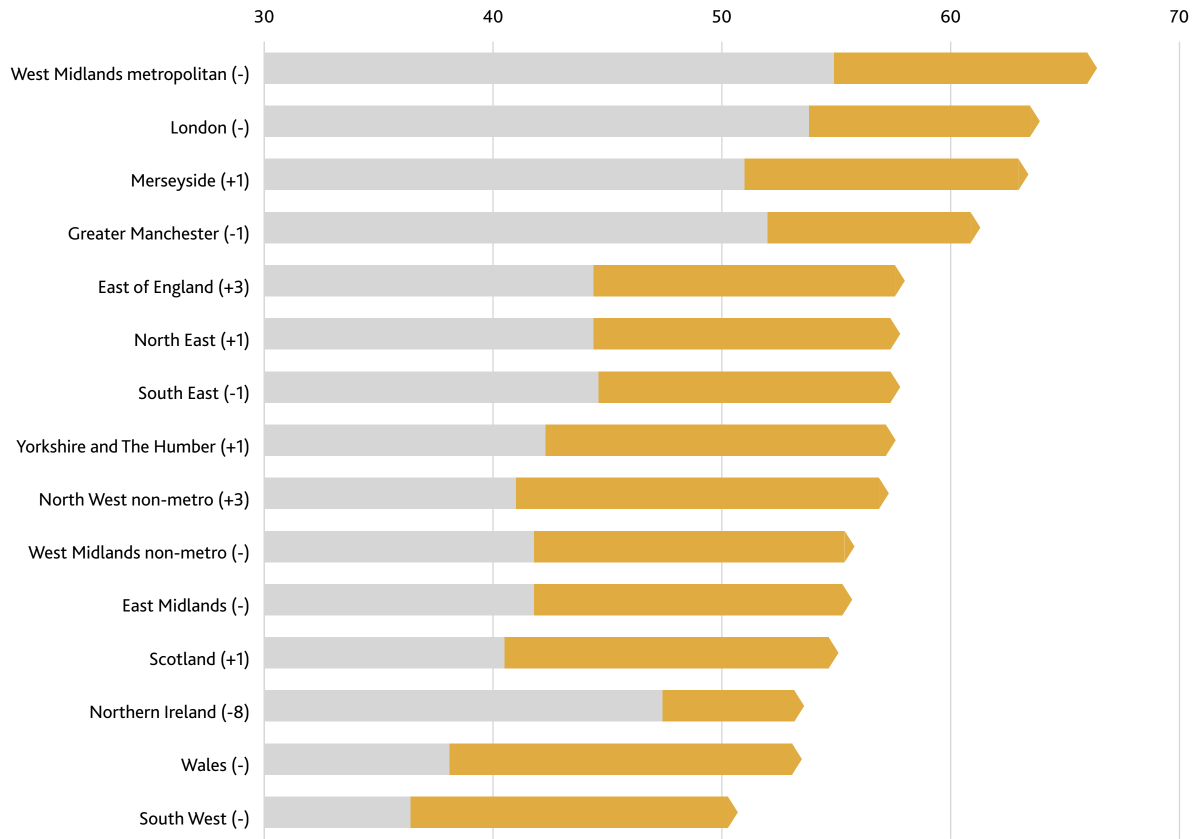


Infrastructure

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.

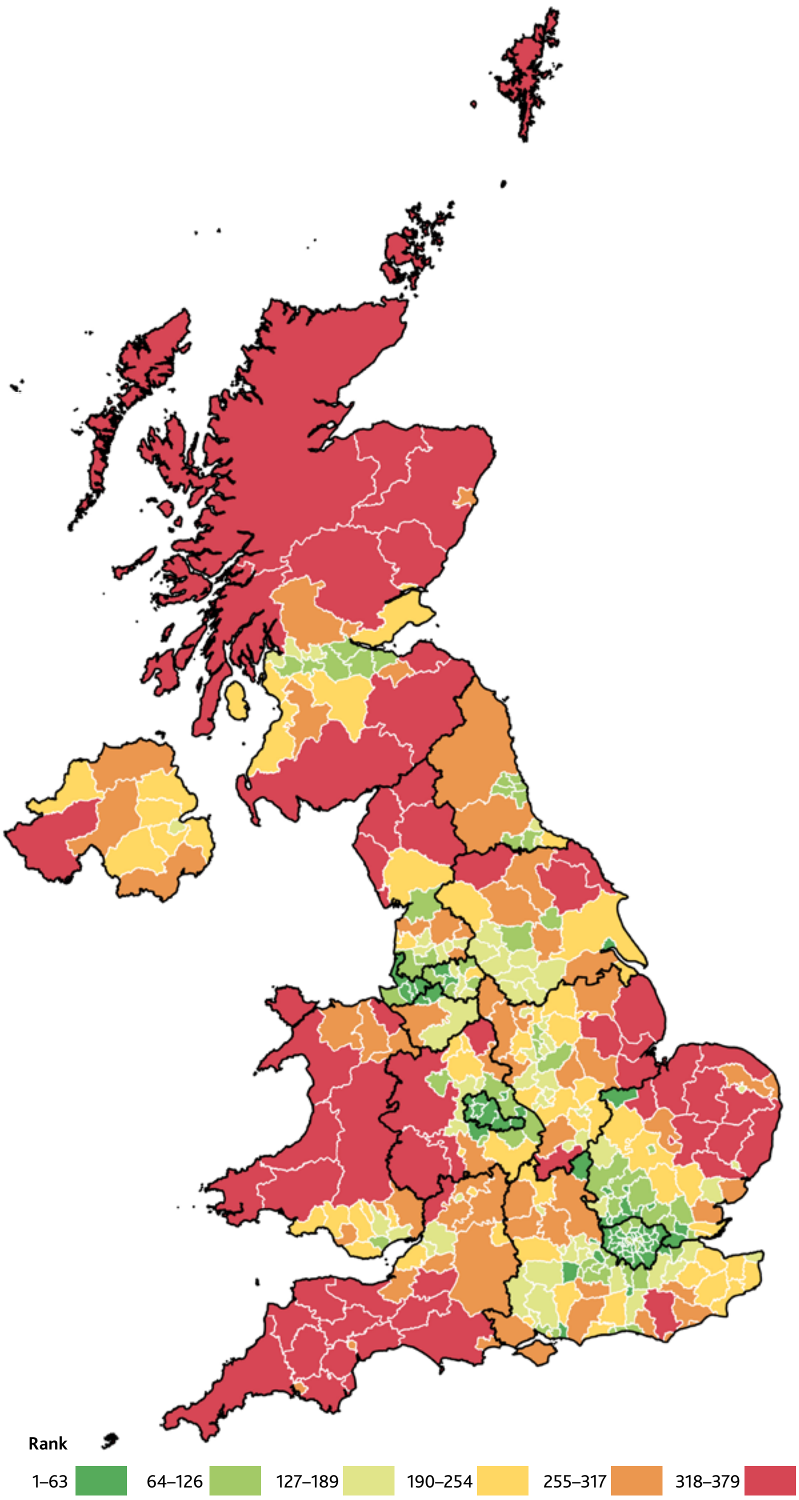
Infrastructure 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

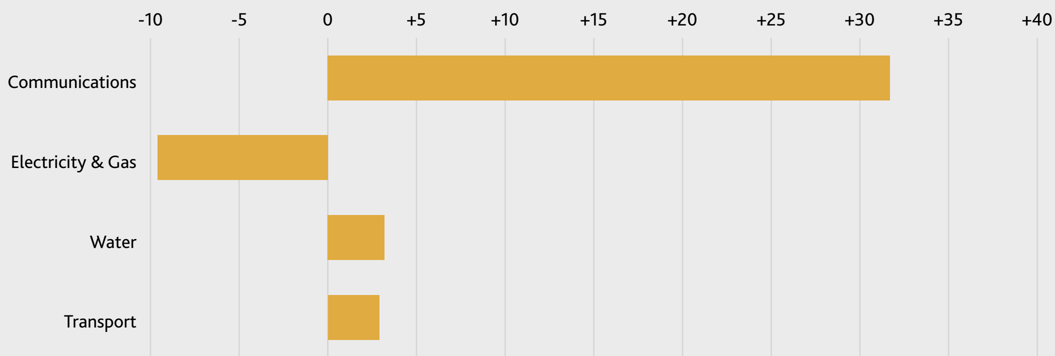
Rank	Local Authority
1	Havering (London)
2	Hertsmere (E Eng)
3	Watford (E Eng)
4	Warrington (N West)
5	Harlow (E Eng)
6	Crawley (S East)
7	Birmingham (W Mid Met)
8	Richmond upon Thames (London)
9	Milton Keynes (S East)
10	Dudley (W Mid Met)
11	Hillingdon (London)
12	Solihull (W Mid Met)
13	Sandwell (W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

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	Isles of Scilly (S West)
374	Mid Devon (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)

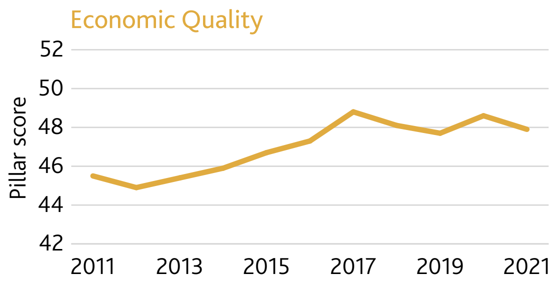


Change in Infrastructure, 2011-2021

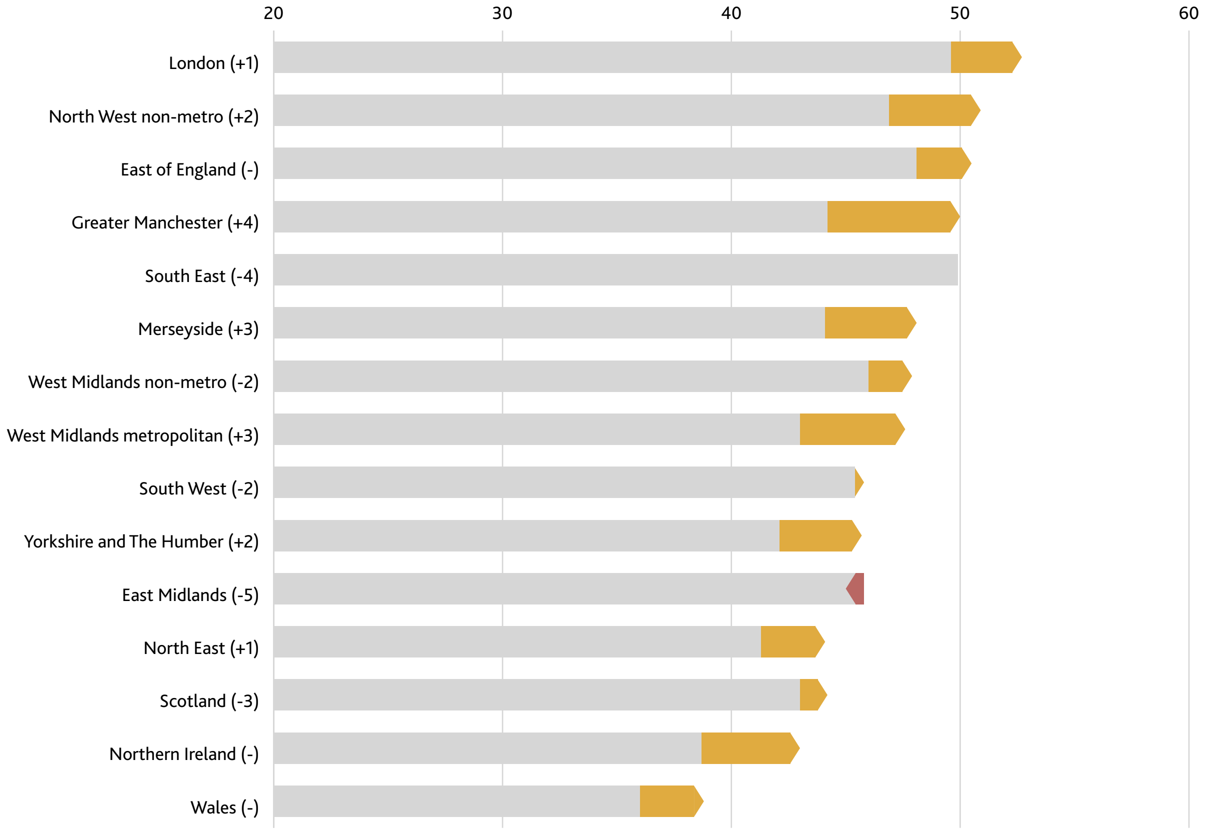


Economic Quality

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.



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



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.

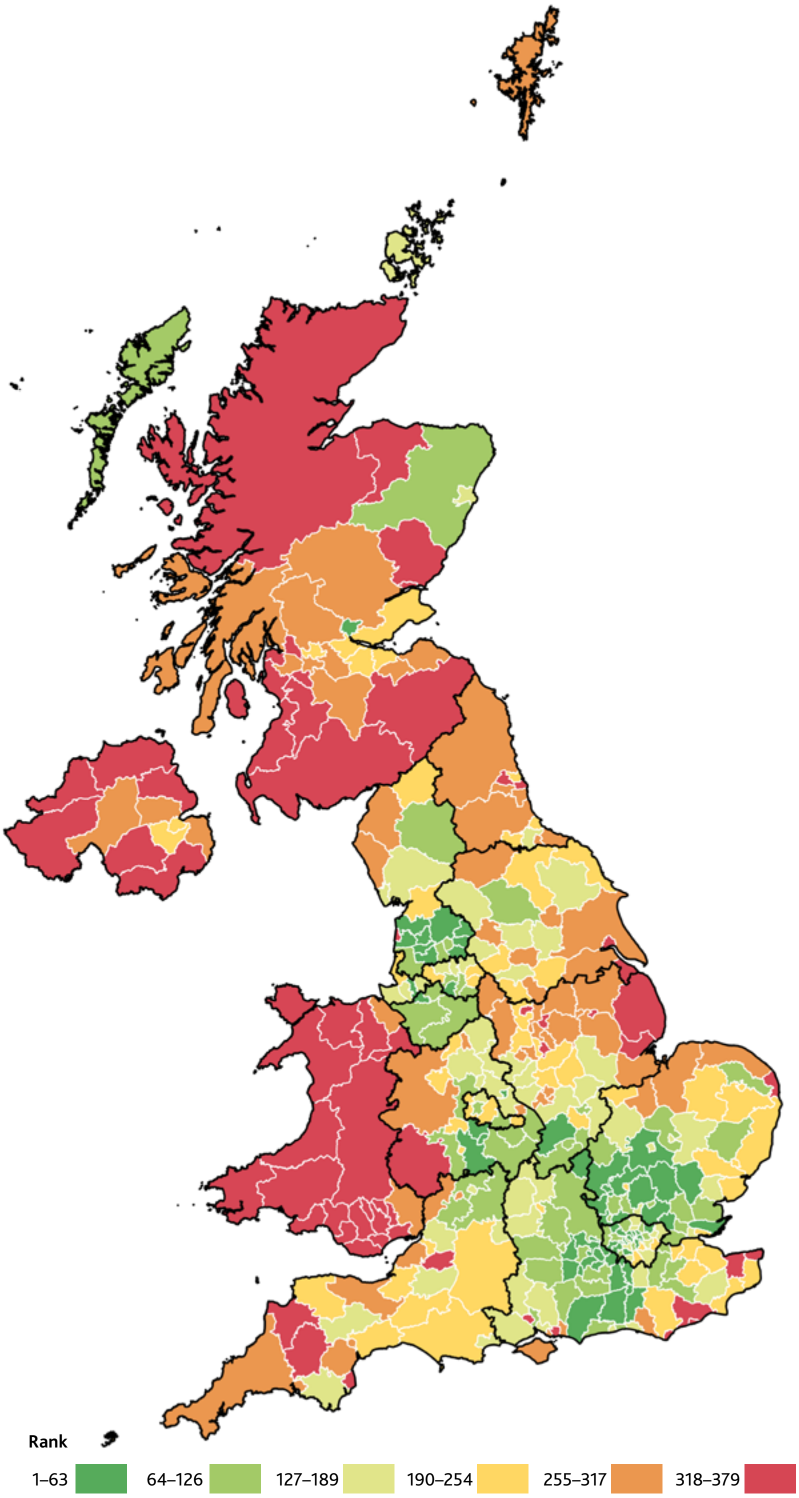
Economic Quality 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

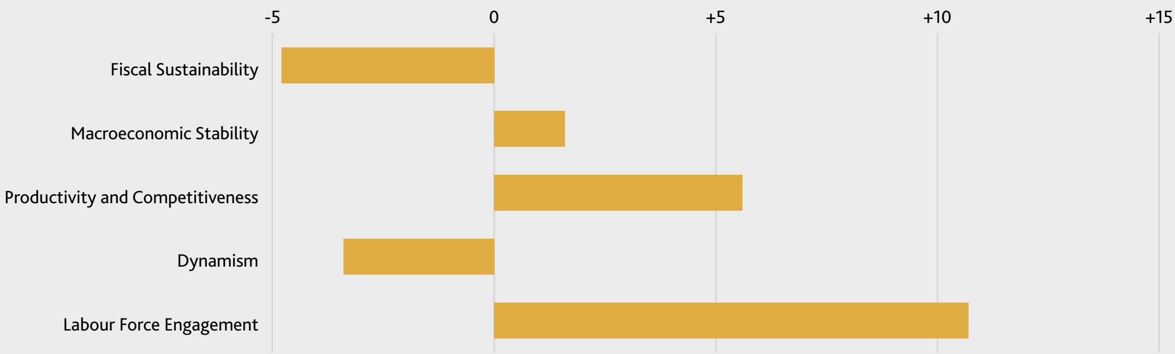
Rank	Local Authority
1	City of London (London)
2	Camden (London)
3	Westminster (London)
4	Islington (London)
5	Tower Hamlets (London)
6	Elmbridge (S East)
7	Brentwood (E Eng)
8	Hertsmere (E Eng)
9	Hackney (London)
10	South Ribble (N West)
11	Hounslow (London)
12	South Cambridgeshire (E Eng)
13	Bromsgrove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

Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
360	Vale of Glamorgan (Wales)
361	Great Yarmouth (E Eng)
362	Causeway Coast and Glens (N Ire)
363	Nottingham (E Mid)
364	Pembrokeshire (Wales)
365	Kingston upon Hull, City of (Yrk & Hum)
366	Lincoln (E Mid)
367	North East Lincolnshire (Yrk & Hum)
368	Rhondda Cynon Taf (Wales)
369	Carmarthenshire (Wales)
370	Torfaen (Wales)
371	Denbighshire (Wales)
372	Blaenau Gwent (Wales)
373	Merthyr Tydfil (Wales)
374	Dundee City (Scot)
375	Torbay (S West)
376	Conwy (Wales)
377	Swansea (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.

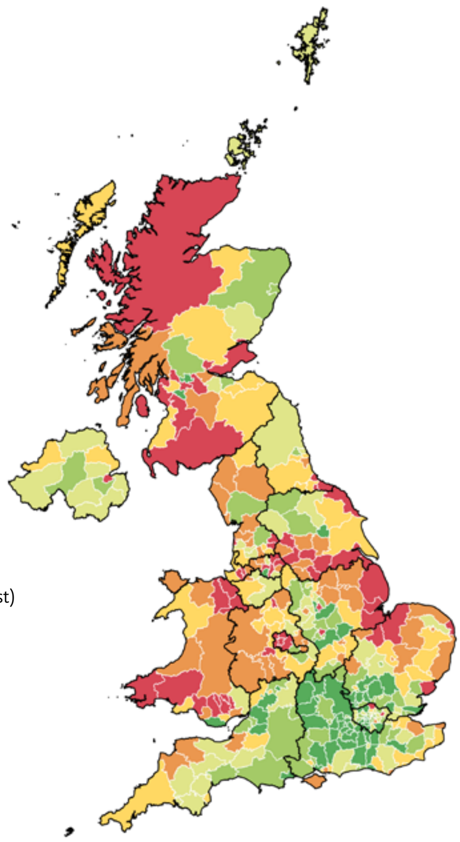
Education This captures the enrolment, attendance, and attainment outcomes at four different stages of the education system—pre-primary, primary, secondary, and tertiary. It also includes the level of adult skills in the population. Education allows people to lead more fulfilling lives and a more educated 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	Epsom and Ewell (S East)
6	Isles of Scilly (S West)
7	St Albans (E Eng)
8	Woking (S East)
9	Rutland (E Mid)
10	Windsor and Maidenhead (S East)
11	East Dunbartonshire (Scot)
12	Mole Valley (S East)
13	City of London (London)
14	Watford (E Eng)
15	Kingston upon Thames (London)
16	Bracknell Forest (S East)
17	Reigate and Banstead (S East)
18	Elmbridge (S East)
19	Bath and North East Somerset (S West)
20	Guildford (S East)



Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
360	Neath Port Talbot (Wales)
361	Burnley (N West)
362	Great Yarmouth (E Eng)
363	Hartlepool (N East)
364	Blaenau Gwent (Wales)
365	Boston (E Mid)
366	Dudley (W Mid Met)
367	Walsall (W Mid Met)
368	East Lindsey (E Mid)
369	South Holland (E Mid)
370	Birmingham (W Mid Met)
371	Glasgow City (Scot)
372	Doncaster (Yrk & Hum)
373	Wolverhampton (W Mid Met)
374	Middlesbrough (N East)
375	Kingston upon Hull, City of (Yrk & Hum)
376	Sandwell (W Mid Met)
377	Knowsley (M'side)
378	Stoke-on-Trent (W Mid)
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. Merseyside has seen the greatest improvement in overall living conditions, including a reduction in the proportion of people living in poverty, from 26% to 23%. 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] 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 4.2.

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)

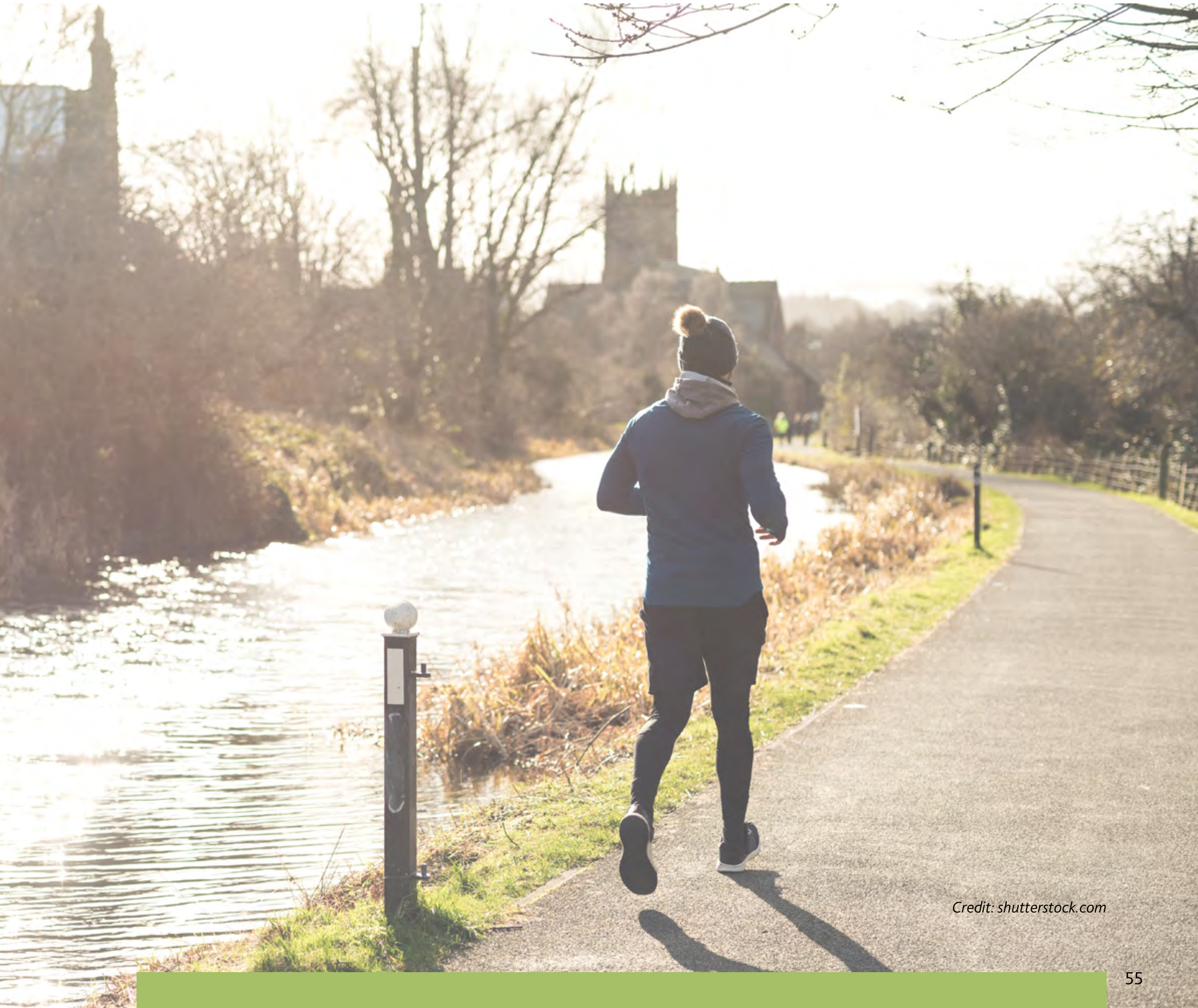
Educational standards have improved throughout the decade. All regions have experienced improvements in educational outcomes at secondary level and in the skill levels of the adult population. However, there are still significant discrepancies in the educational achievement of low-income students at 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] Greater Manchester is the region that has seen the greatest improvement for emissions.

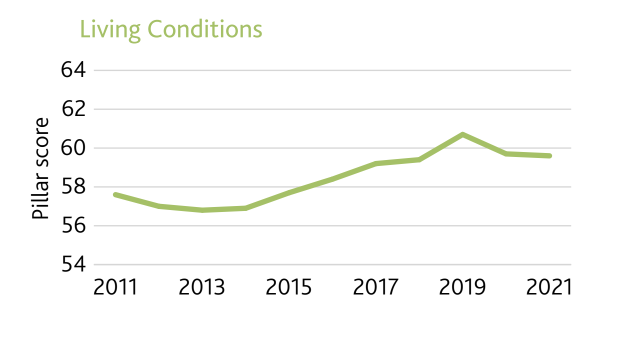
Scotland has had a fourfold increase in the area of woodland that is being planted. As a result, it is the region that has seen the greatest improvement in the natural environment. With the UK Government having pledged to plant an additional 75,000 acres of trees a year by the end of the next Parliament, 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.

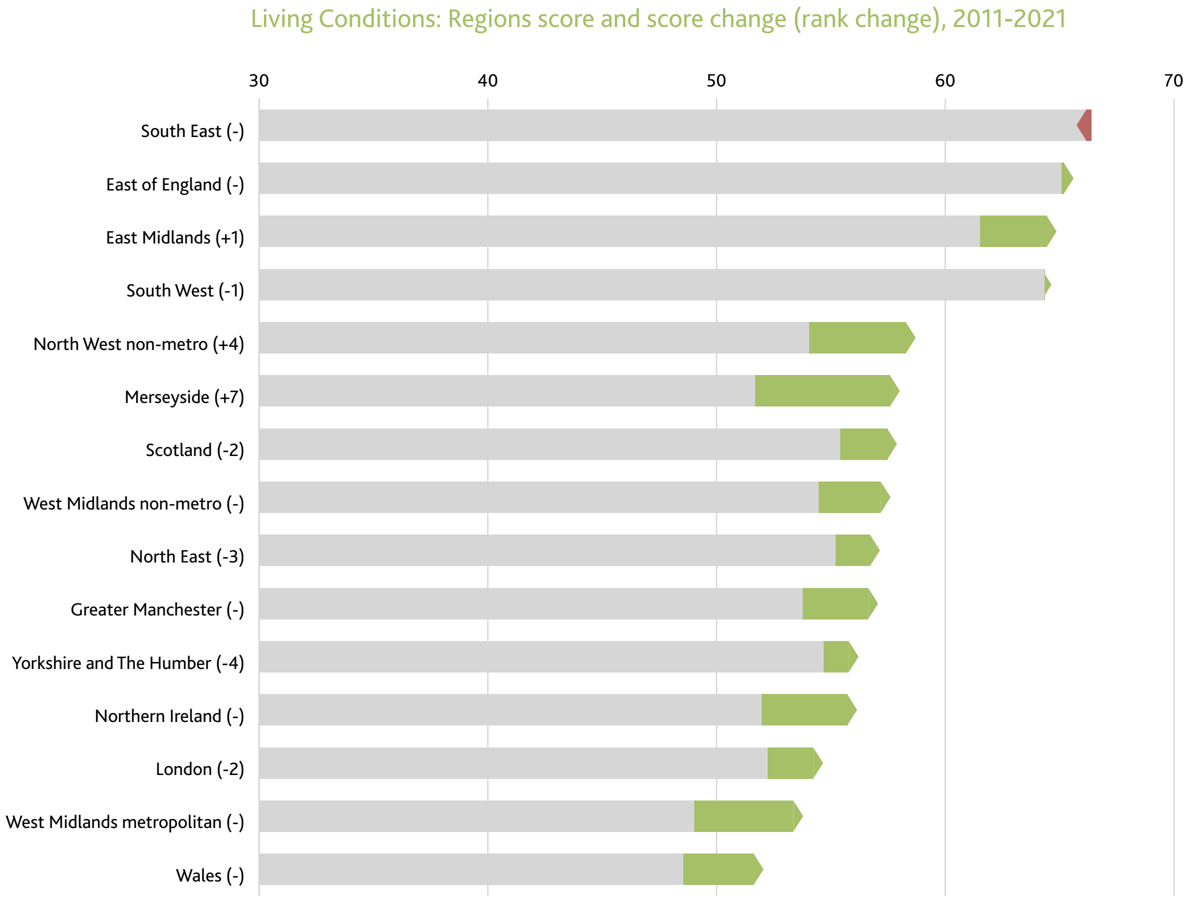


Credit: shutterstock.com

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.

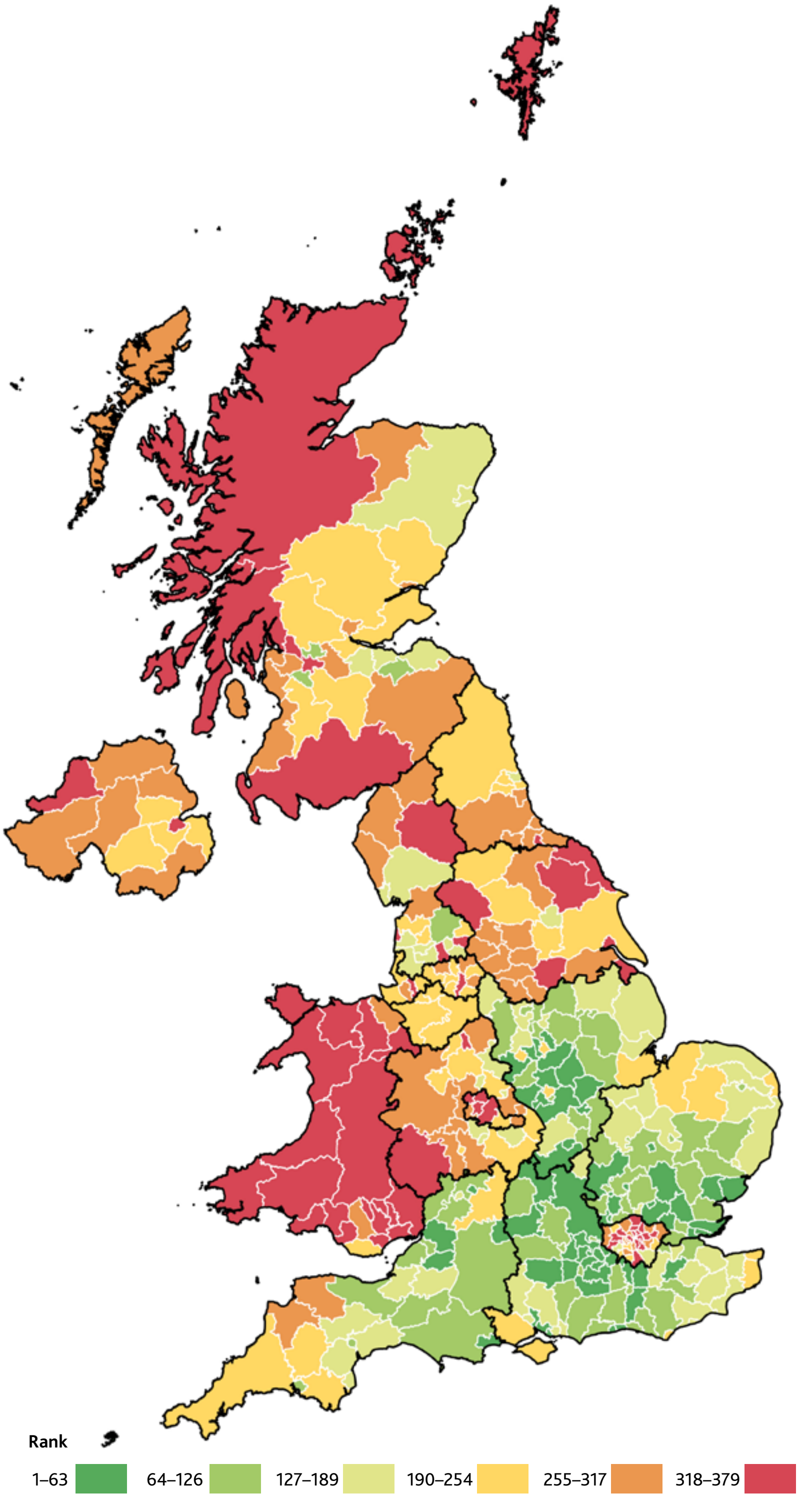
Living Conditions 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

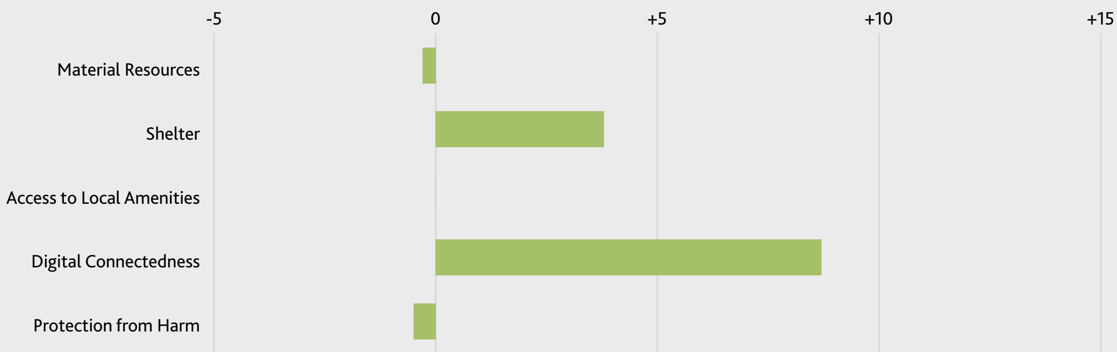
Rank	Local Authority
1	Wokingham (S East)
2	Brentwood (E Eng)
3	Epsom and Ewell (S East)
4	Watford (E Eng)
5	Windsor and Maidenhead (S East)
6	Reigate and Banstead (S East)
7	Woking (S East)
8	Bracknell Forest (S East)
9	Blaby (E Mid)
10	Oxford (S East)
11	Isles of Scilly (S West)
12	St Albans (E Eng)
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)

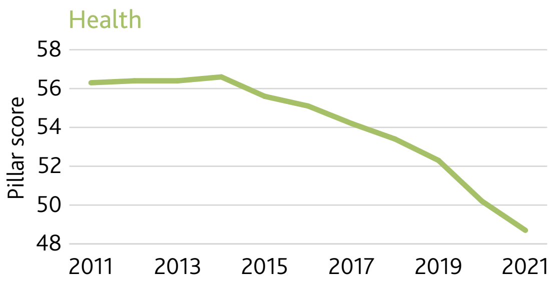


Change in Living Conditions elements, 2011-2021

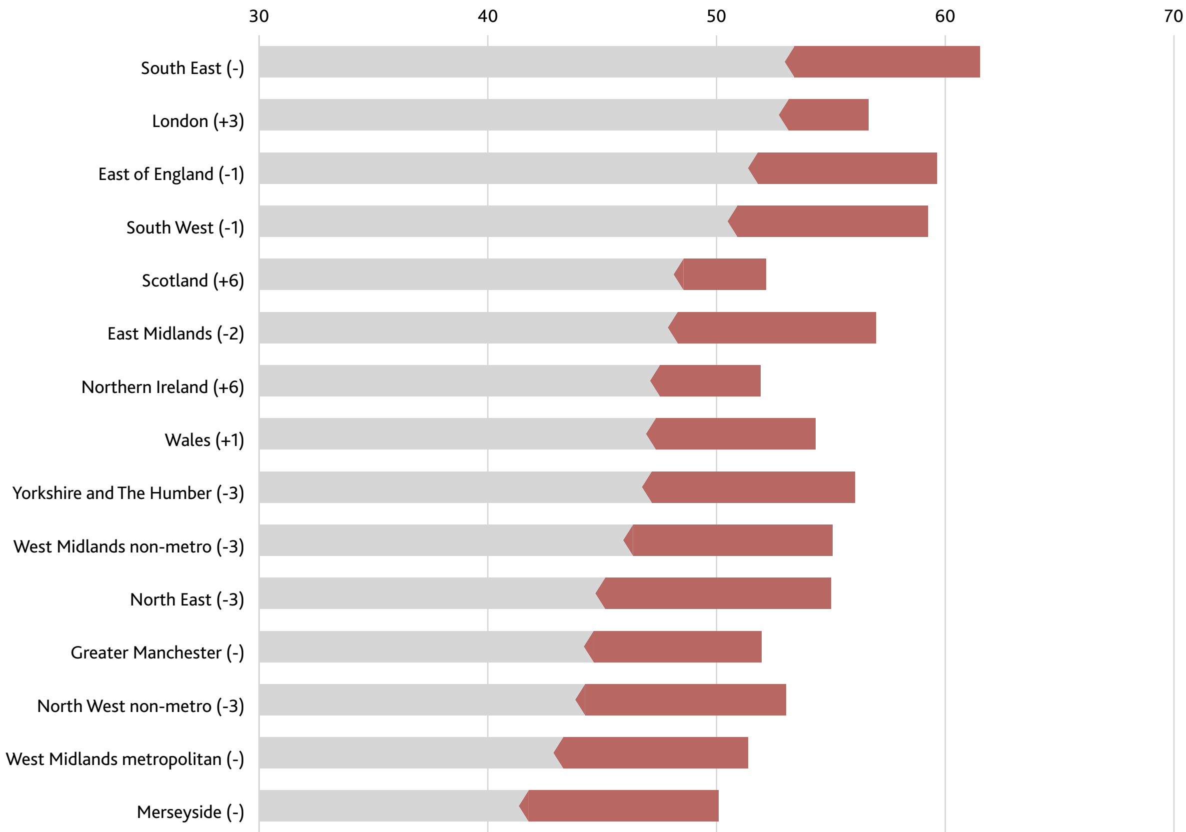


Health

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.

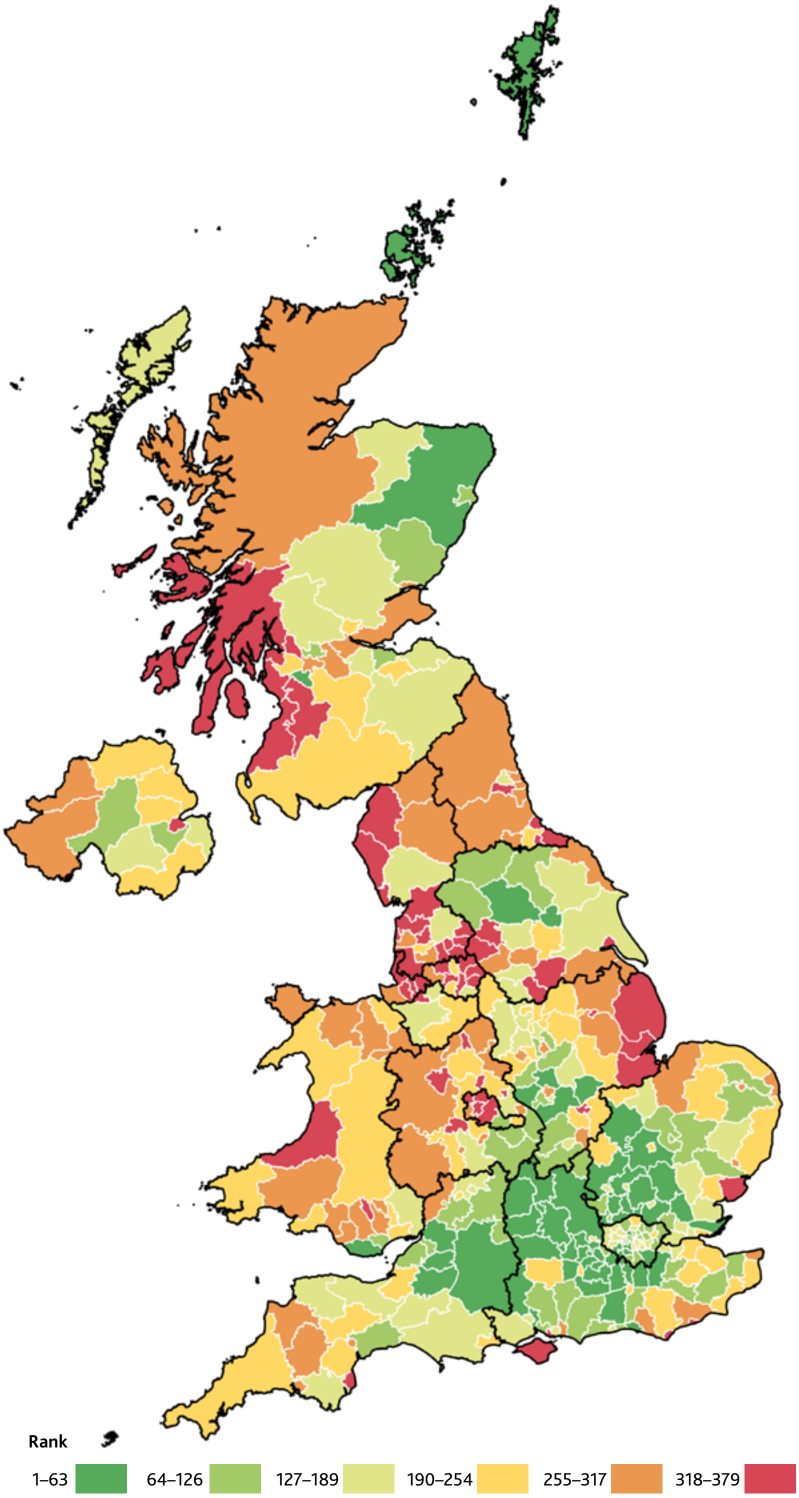
Health 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

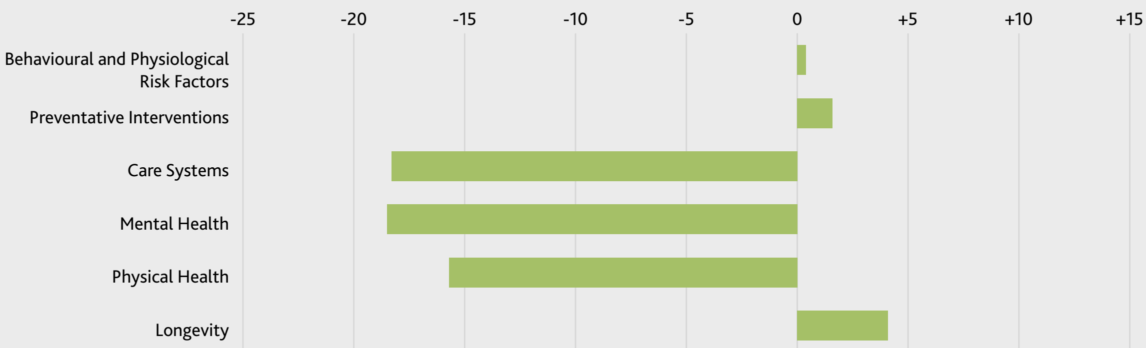
Rank	Local Authority
1	Isles of Scilly (S West)
2	Wokingham (S East)
3	Waverley (S East)
4	Windsor and Maidenhead (S East)
5	Elmbridge (S East)
6	Richmond upon Thames (London)
7	Mole Valley (S East)
8	St Albans (E Eng)
9	Surrey Heath (S East)
10	Wandsworth (London)
11	Guildford (S East)
12	North Hertfordshire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

Bottom 20 Local Authorities

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

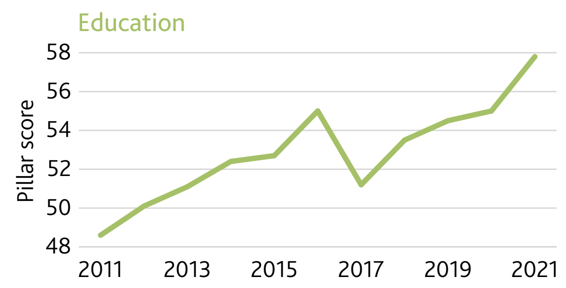


Change in Health elements, 2011-2021

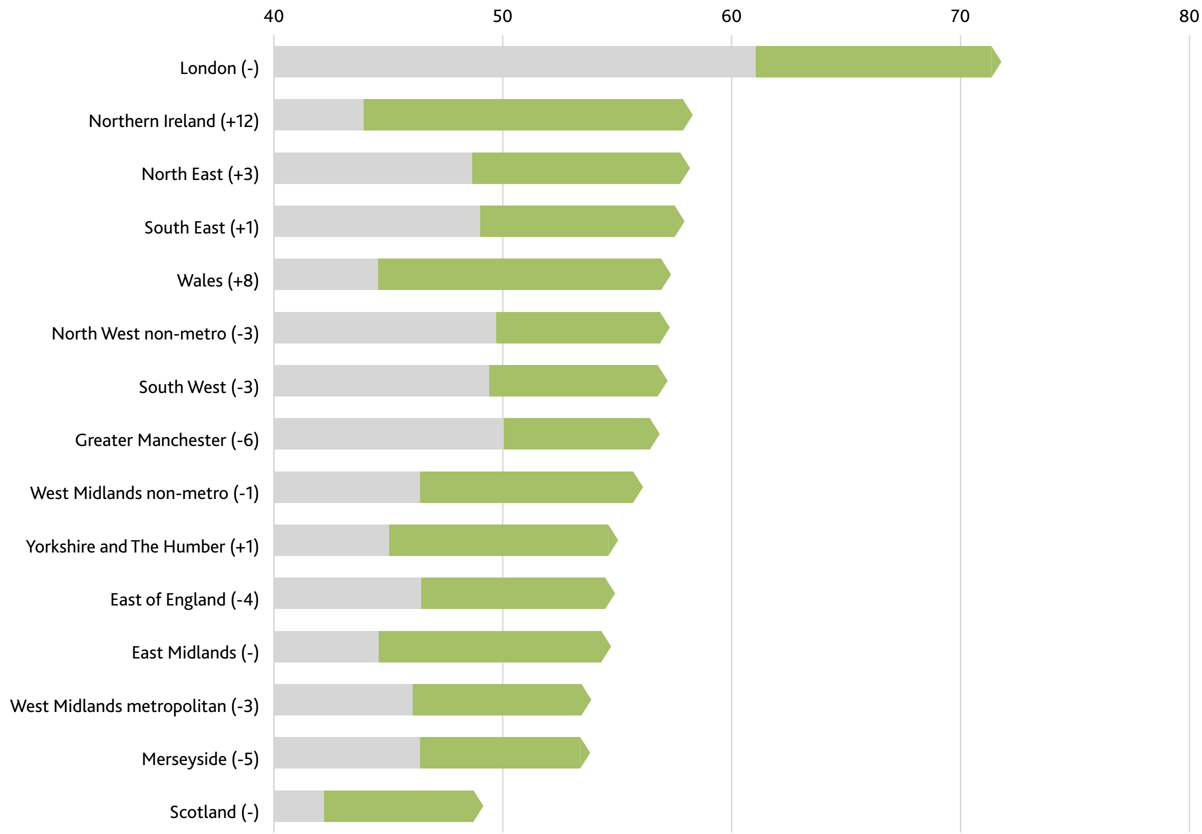


Education

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.



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.

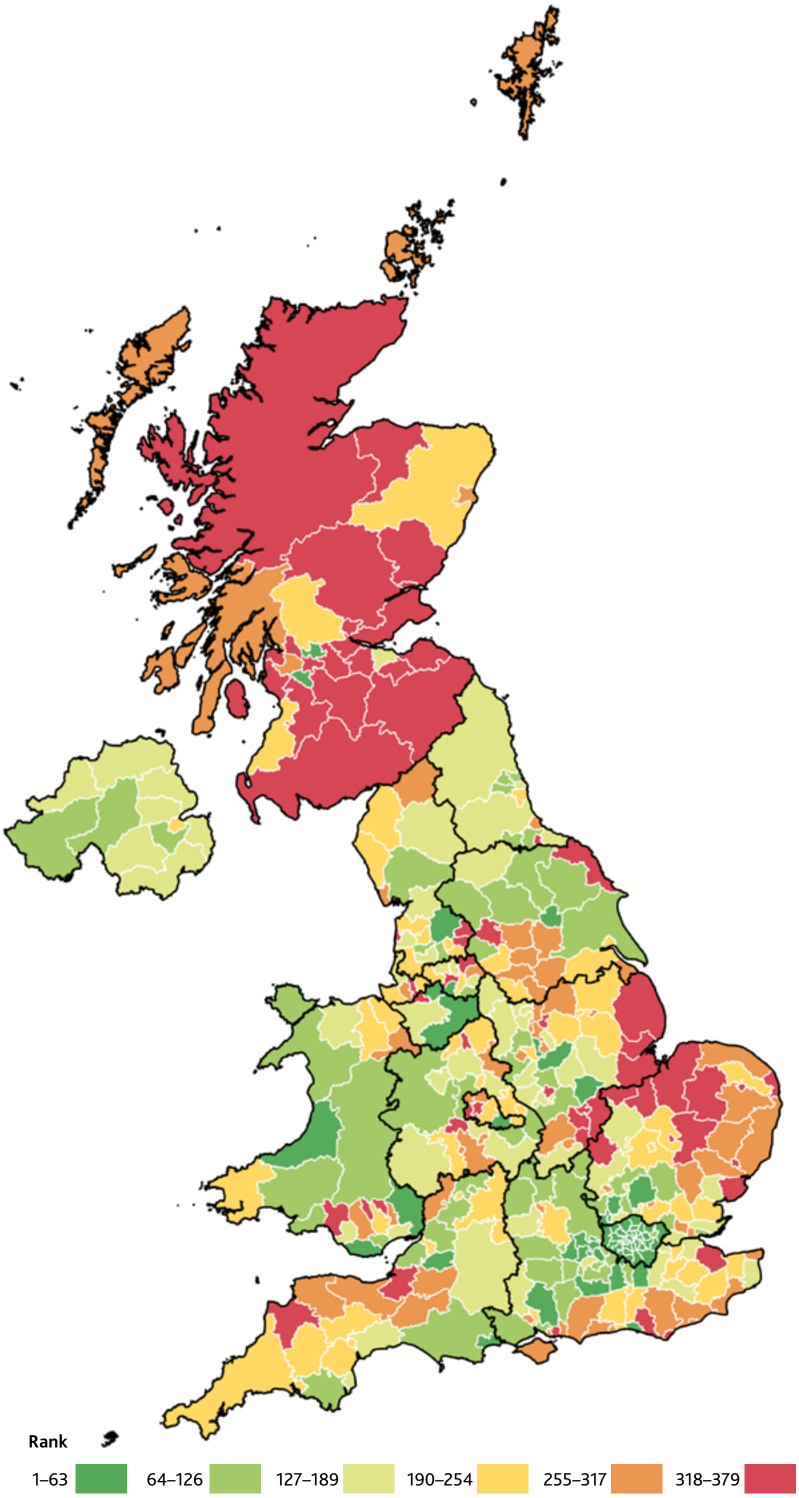
Education 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

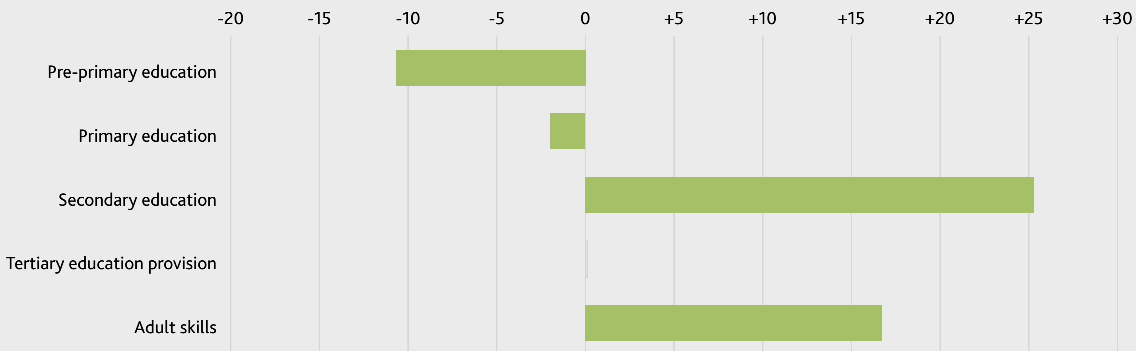
Rank	Local Authority
1	City of London (London)
2	Kensington and Chelsea (London)
3	Richmond upon Thames (London)
4	Westminster (London)
5	Hammersmith and Fulham (London)
6	Barnet (London)
7	Trafford (Gtr Manch)
8	Tower Hamlets (London)
9	Southwark (London)
10	Harrow (London)
11	Wandsworth (London)
12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

Bottom 20 Local Authorities

Rank	Local Authority
360	Angus (Scot)
361	Tendring (E Eng)
362	Pendle (N West)
363	Wellingborough (E Mid)
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	Great Yarmouth (E Eng)
372	Glasgow City (Scot)
373	West Dunbartonshire (Scot)
374	North Lanarkshire (Scot)
375	Highland (Scot)
376	Midlothian (Scot)
377	East Ayrshire (Scot)
378	Knowsley (M'side)
379	Clackmannanshire (Scot)

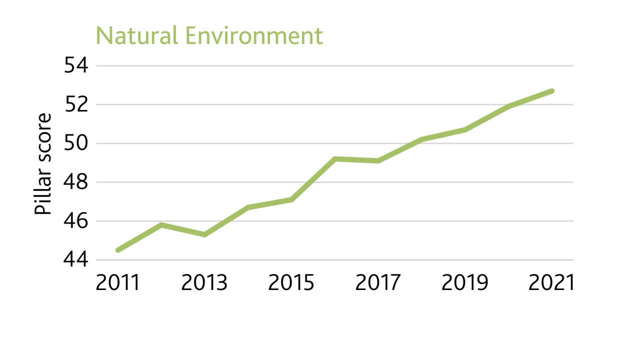


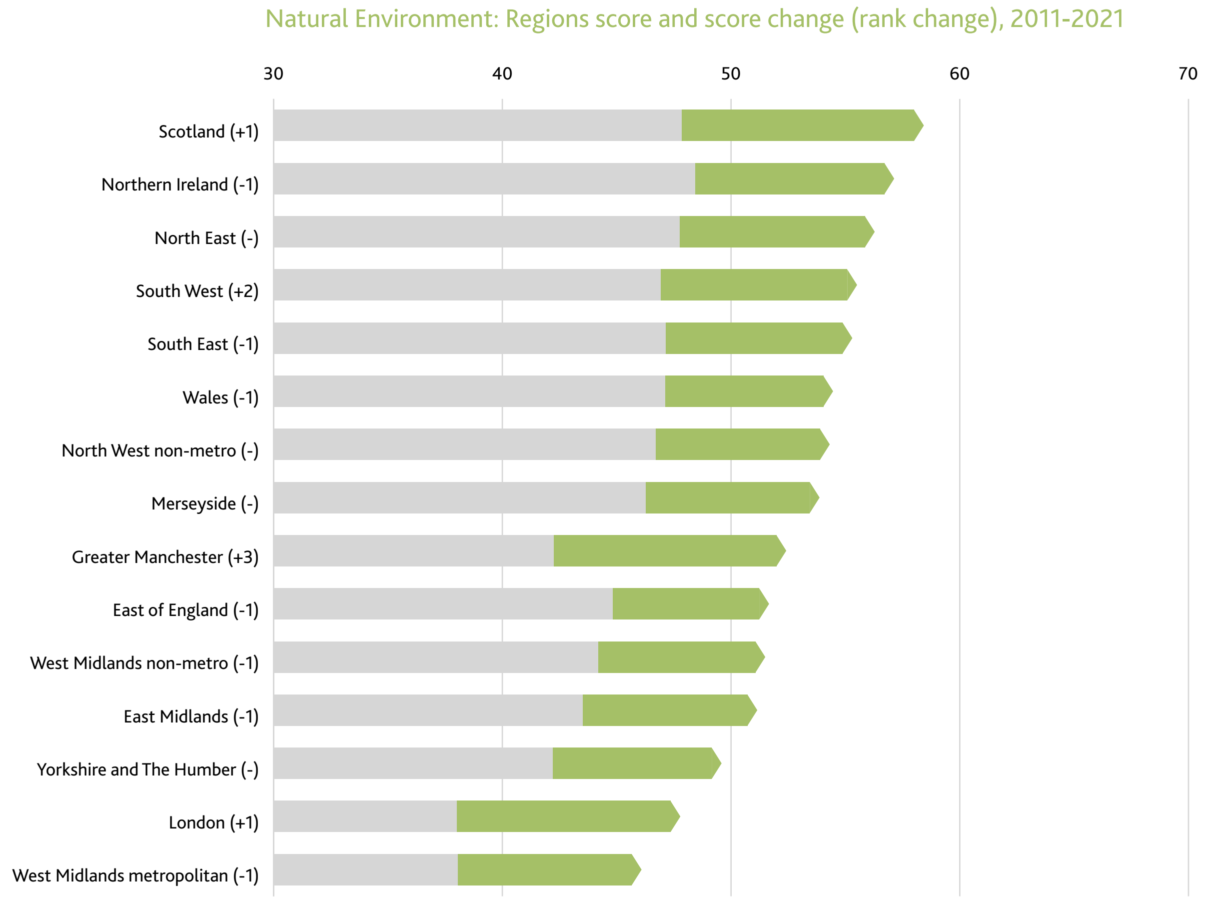
Change in Education elements, 2011-2021



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.





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.

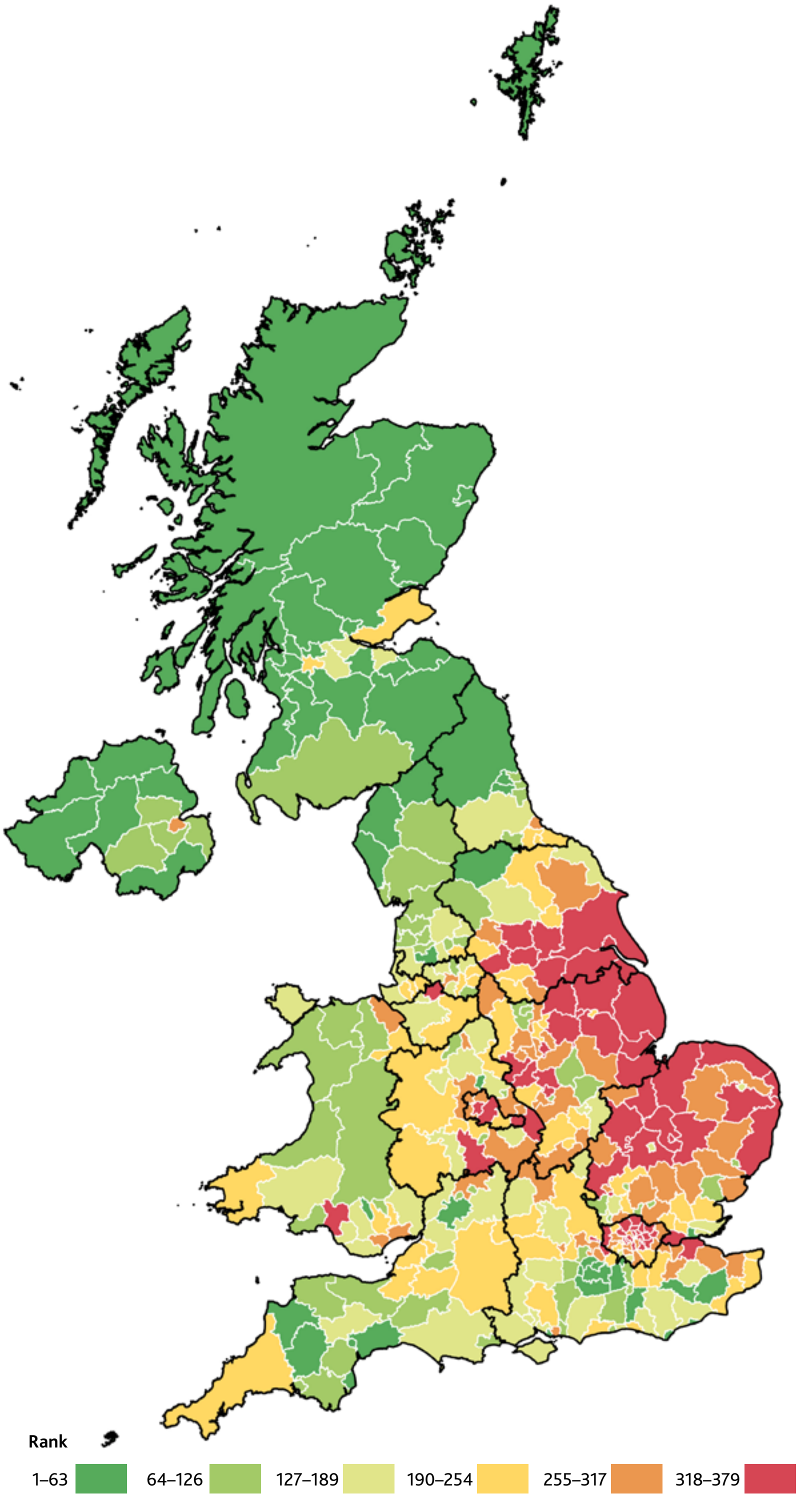
Natural Environment 2021

Top 20 Local Authorities

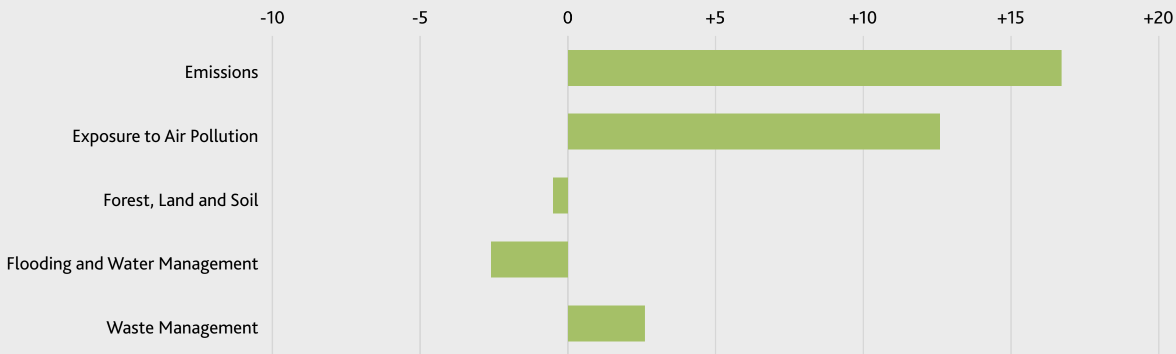
Rank	Local Authority
1	Moray (Scot)
2	Inverclyde (Scot)
3	East Ayrshire (Scot)
4	Stirling (Scot)
5	South Ayrshire (Scot)
6	East Renfrewshire (Scot)
7	Carlisle (N West)
8	Angus (Scot)
9	Torridge (S West)
10	Orkney Islands (Scot)
11	North Ayrshire (Scot)
12	West Dunbartonshire (Scot)
13	Argyll and Bute (Scot)
14	West Devon (S West)
15	Shetland Islands (Scot)
16	Perth and Kinross (Scot)
17	Isles of Scilly (S West)
18	Highland (Scot)
19	West Lothian (Scot)
20	Fermanagh and Omagh (N Ire)

Bottom 20 Local Authorities

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



Change in Natural Environment elements, 2011-2021



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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 34% 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 (304th), if this trajectory were to continue for the next decade it would become as prosperous as Westminster (205th) 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 resident 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 Lewisham, 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 two pillars. Some local authorities within this archetype, such as Wokingham (1st), St Albans (5th), and Hart (8th) 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 Scotland Rural Northern Ireland
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).

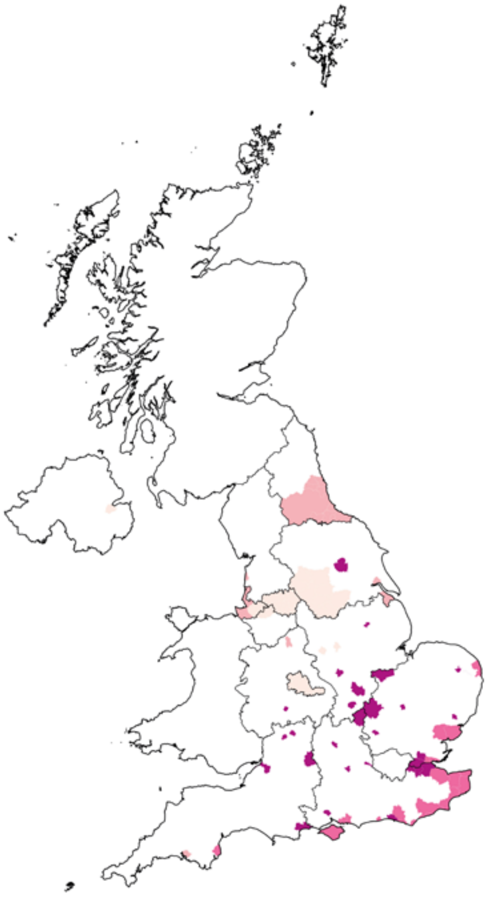
Central London

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 capita, 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 71% 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; 20% 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 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.

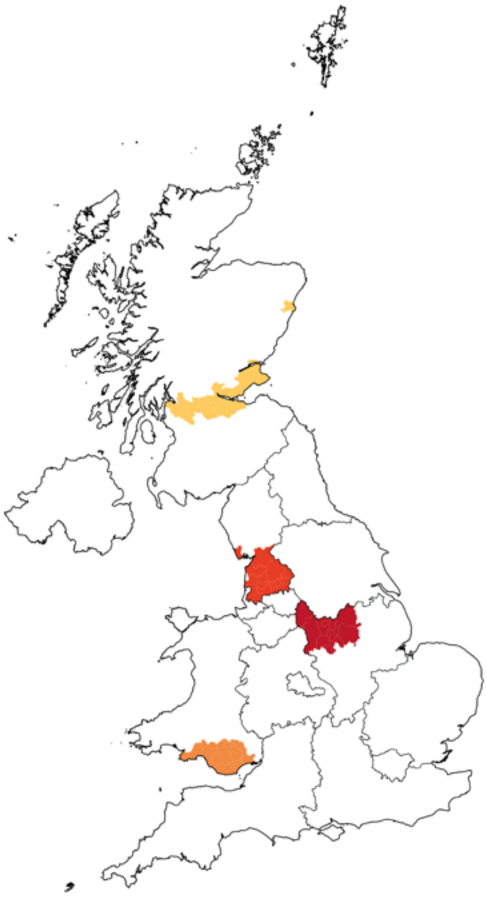
Industrial Heartlands

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 34%, 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, diabetes, 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 £1,379 per capita, tenfold higher than the UK average of £124 per capita. The gross value-added per capita 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 89% 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 capita, lower than the UK average of £4,560.

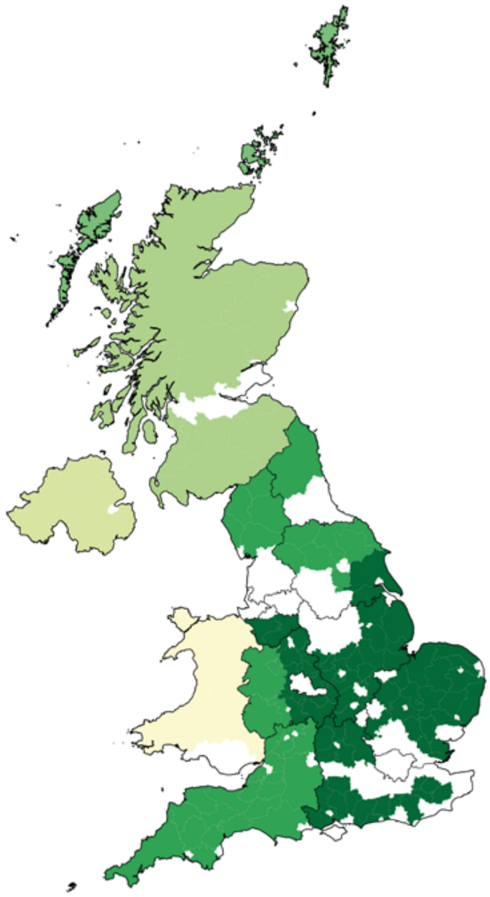
Central-Belt Scotland

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 Scotland
	Rural Northern Ireland
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 356 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; 24% of properties are at a medium or high flood risk. Furthermore, education provision is weak with only 57% 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 43% 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 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 travel 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 Scotland

Example LAs: Aberdeenshire, Perth and Kinross, Highland

While Rural Scotland has the second-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. Thirteen 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 highest turnout national elections (72%).

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 44% of school leavers to higher education, the greatest proportion in the UK.

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 36 new businesses per 10,000 people, much lower than the UK average of 59; 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

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.

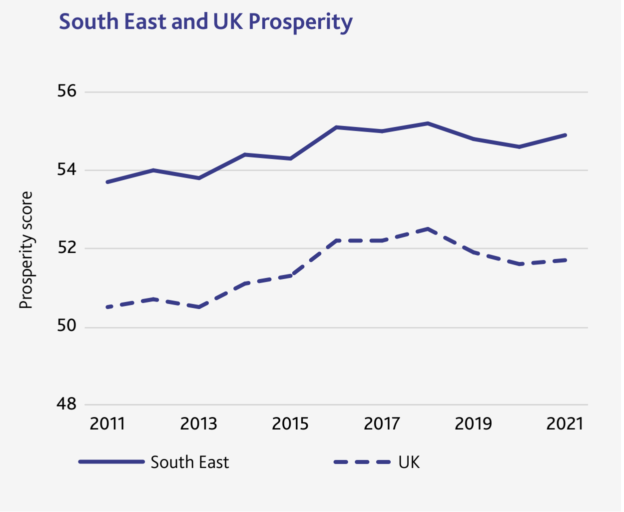
Regional Rankings

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	5	1	1	4	5
South West	2	1	3	3	3	3	9	15	9	4	4	7	4
East of England	3	9	4	2	1	5	13	5	3	2	3	11	10
London	4	15	9	8	12	1	4	2	1	13	2	1	14
East Midlands	5	7	11	5	5	4	5	11	11	3	6	12	12
West Midlands non-metro	6	6	6	4	8	8	3	10	7	8	10	9	11
North West non-metro	7	5	13	6	7	11	7	9	2	5	13	6	7
North East	8	10	10	10	15	6	2	6	12	9	11	3	3
Wales	9	2	1	7	11	12	12	14	15	15	8	5	6
Northern Ireland	10	8	7	15	4	9	15	13	14	12	7	2	2
Scotland	11	3	2	13	9	15	11	12	13	7	5	15	1
Merseyside	12	11	8	12	13	10	14	3	6	6	15	14	8
Yorkshire and The Humber	13	12	12	9	6	13	8	8	10	11	9	10	13
West Midlands metropolitan	14	13	15	11	14	7	1	1	8	14	14	13	15
Greater Manchester	15	14	14	14	10	14	10	4	4	10	12	8	9

South East (1st)

Local Authority	Rank
Wokingham	1
Waverley	2
Elmbridge	3
Epsom and Ewell	4
Woking	5
Hart	6
Surrey Heath	9
Guildford	10
Mole Valley	11
Winchester	13
East Hampshire	15
Fareham	16
Runnymede	17
Windsor and Maidenhead	18
Reigate and Banstead	19
Mid Sussex	21
Tandridge	23
Horsham	24
Rushmoor	25
Basingstoke and Deane	28
Milton Keynes	31
West Berkshire	32
Eastleigh	34
Test Valley	35
West Oxfordshire	38
Bracknell Forest	39
South Oxfordshire	43
Vale of White Horse	46
Buckinghamshire	47
Chichester	48
Adur	50
Spelthorne	51

Local Authority	Rank
Brighton and Hove	54
Sevenoaks	59
Cherwell	63
New Forest	66
Crawley	67
Havant	69
Worthing	74
Tunbridge Wells	80
Tonbridge and Malling	85
Gosport	100
Oxford	111
Dartford	114
Arun	116
Ashford	120
Maidstone	123
Slough	127
Portsmouth	142
Wealden	144
Isle of Wight	153
Reading	156
Gravesham	157
Lewes	169
Southampton	171
Canterbury	201
Rother	207
Medway	216
Folkestone and Hythe	219
Swale	230
Dover	239
Hastings	269
Thanet	309
Eastbourne	312



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 11 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.

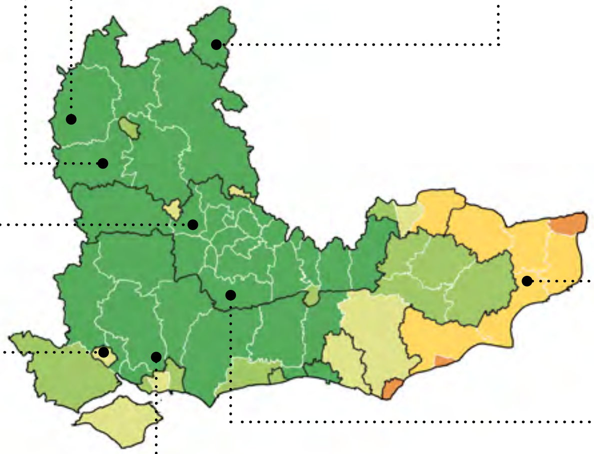
The Vale of White Horse is ranked 27th for Safety and Security and has the lowest rate of domestic violence in the UK.

West Oxfordshire has seen the greatest reduction in emissions in the South East. Domestic CO_2 emissions have fallen from 2.9 tonnes per person to 1.7 over 10 years.

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

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%.

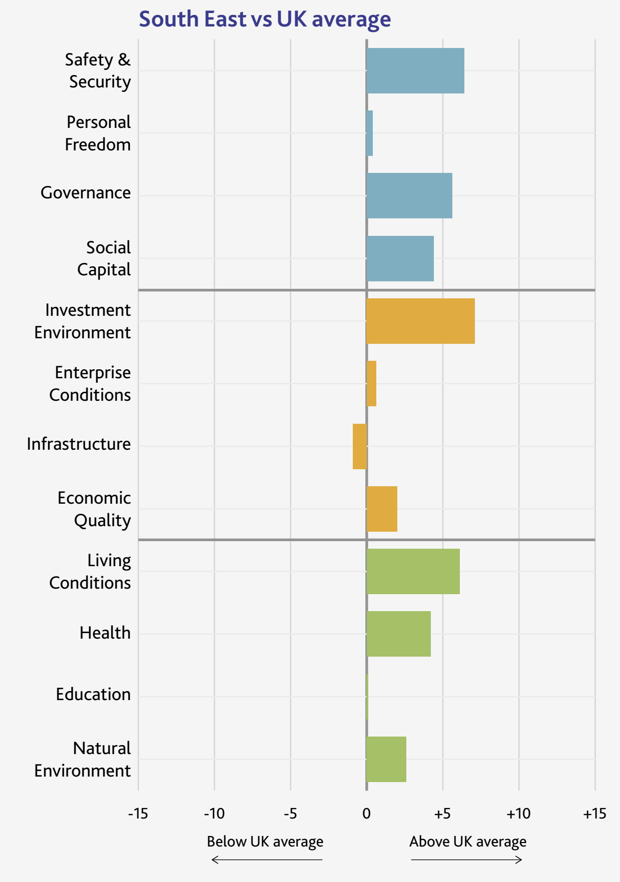
Southampton has seen the greatest reduction in exposure to air pollution in the region. The concentration of coarse particulate matter has decreased from 19 µg/m³ to 15 µg/m³.

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 strong 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 5th 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.

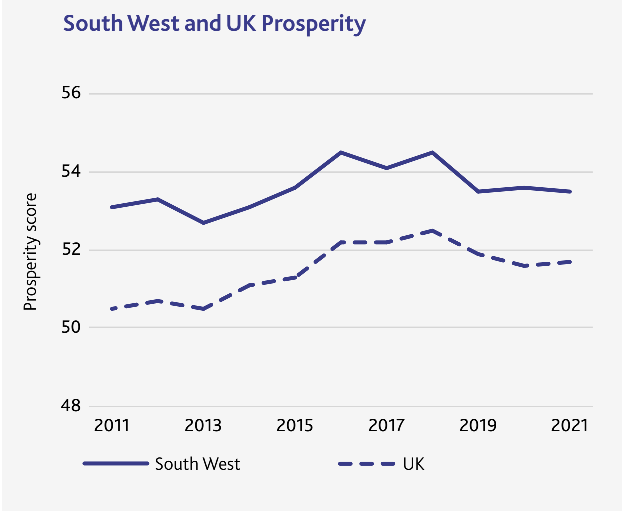
Empowered People

- 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 strong across the region, with relatively low levels of industry CO_2 emissions. Industry CO_2 emissions have more than halved, falling from 18 tonnes per unit of GVA to just 7 tonnes since 2011. Exposure to air pollution in the form of particulate matter is also decreasing over time.

South West (2nd)

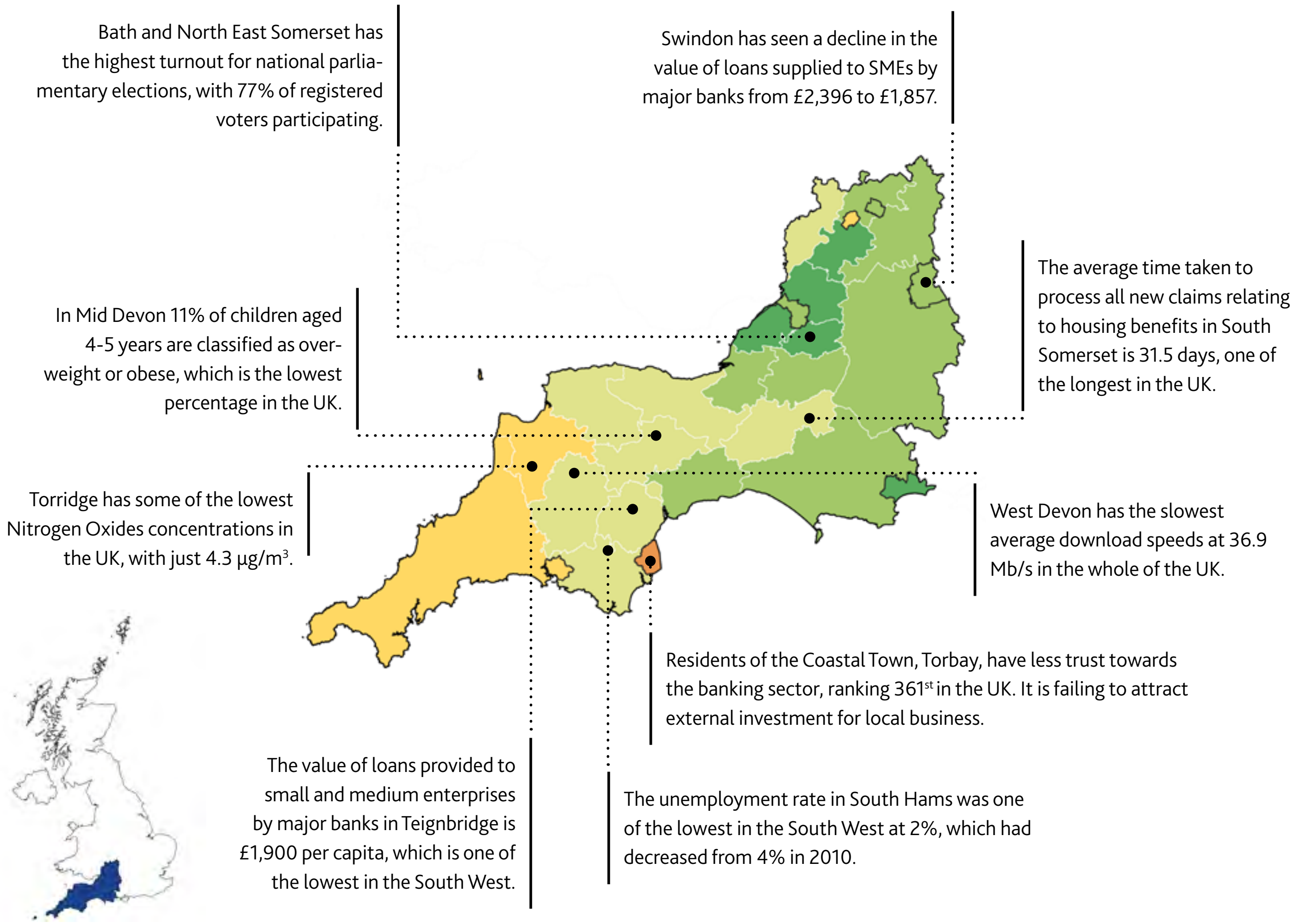
Local Authority	Rank
Bath and North East Somerset	27
South Gloucestershire	30
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	40
Isles of Scilly	42
North Somerset	52
Stroud	58
Tewkesbury	88
Cotswold	91
Cheltenham	92
Dorset	94
East Devon	102
Mendip	107
Bristol, City of	110
Wiltshire	112
Swindon	124

Local Authority	Rank
Sedgemoor	125
South Hams	135
South Somerset	140
Somerset West and Taunton	147
Forest of Dean	150
Mid Devon	165
Teignbridge	173
West Devon	177
Exeter	181
North Devon	186
Torridge	197
Cornwall	203
Gloucester	223
Plymouth	245
Torbay	292



OVERVIEW

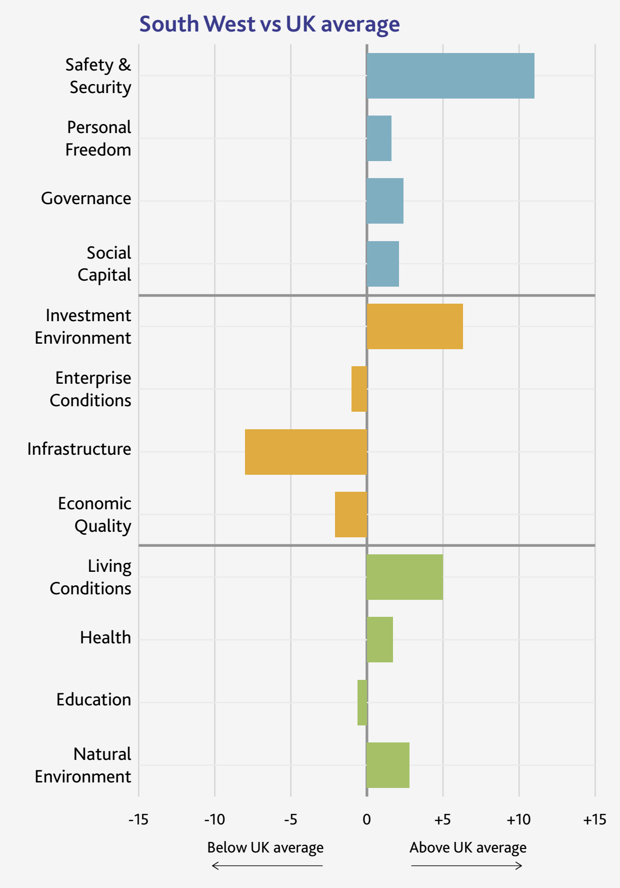
The South West is the second most prosperous region in the UK; 25 out of its 30 local authorities are found in the top half of the Index. It has strong institutions, social capital and health and relatively low rates of poverty. Its major weakness is economic: local employers face skill shortages, there 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.



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 just4 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. Other than the City of Bristol, transport in the South West is 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%).

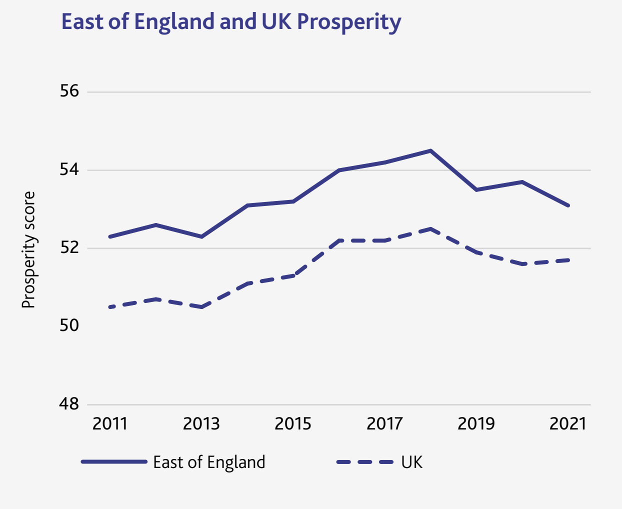
Empowered People

- 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 being 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.

East of England (3rd)

Local Authority	Rank
St Albans	8
Three Rivers	14
Hertsmere	22
East Hertfordshire	29
Watford	33
North Hertfordshire	36
Brentwood	44
Dacorum	49
Welwyn Hatfield	53
Central Bedfordshire	55
Epping Forest	56
Uttlesford	57
Colchester	68
South Cambridgeshire	77
Rochford	87
Broxbourne	89
Chelmsford	95
Maldon	101
Stevenage	108
Castle Point	118
Braintree	126
Bedford	130
Babergh	132

Local Authority	Rank
Harlow	137
Basildon	139
Huntingdonshire	151
East Cambridgeshire	152
Cambridge	159
Mid Suffolk	163
Thurrock	164
Luton	182
Broadland	194
Southend-on-Sea	195
East Suffolk	200
South Norfolk	209
West Suffolk	221
Peterborough	226
Tendring	248
North Norfolk	249
Ipswich	266
Norwich	294
Breckland	301
Fenland	307
King's Lynn and West Norfolk	311
Great Yarmouth	370



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.

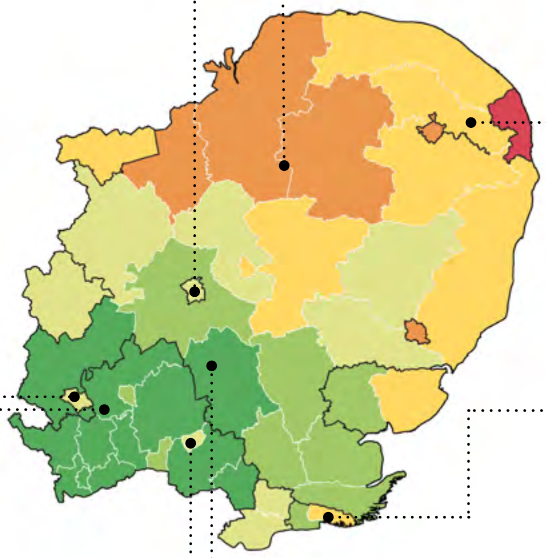
Some of the slowest download speeds in the region are in Breckland and King's Lynn, both under 45 Mb/s, compared with the UK average of 72 Mb/s.

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 second health-iest 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.

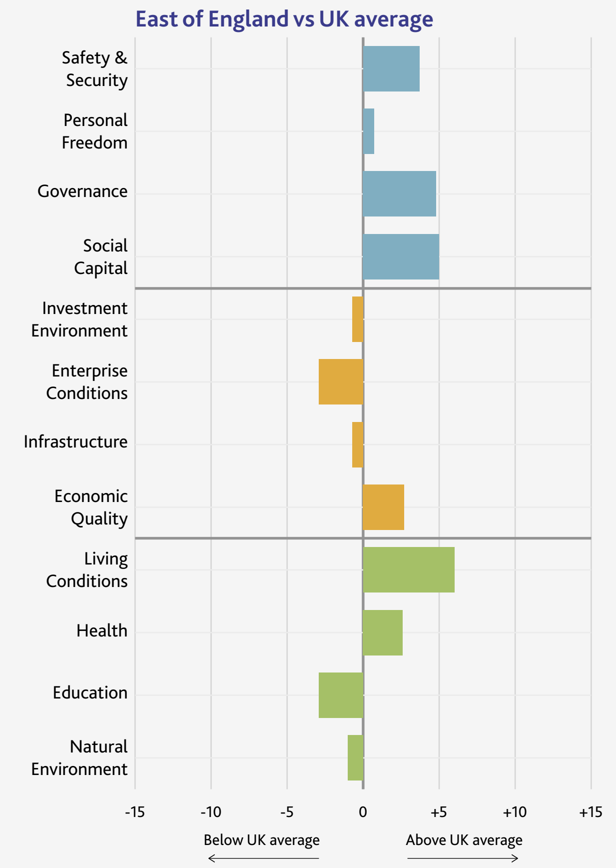
Underage pregnancies are more common in Harlow with 6 per 10,000 women giving birth at the age of 13-16, which is among the highest in the UK.

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. West Suffolk 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 £2,301, compared with the UK average of £2,147. Coastal Towns, in sharp contrast, suffer from low productivity and competitiveness as well as higher unemployment rates.

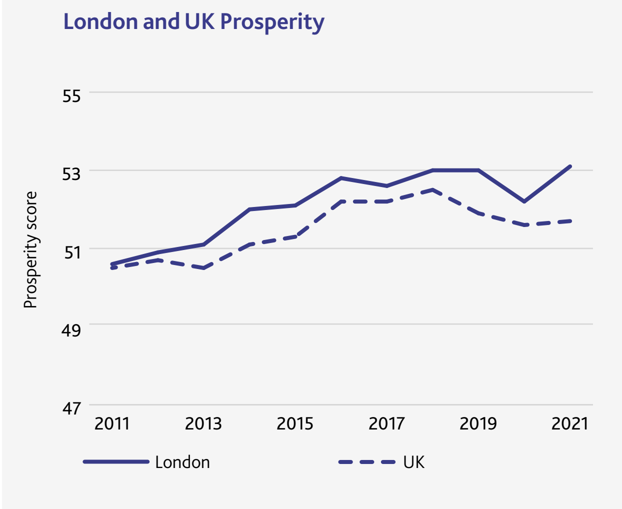
Empowered People

- 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 7 in the top 100—Castle Point, Watford and Stevenage. 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 15 µg/m^3 compared with the UK average of 13 µg/m^3.

London (4th)

Local Authority	Rank
Richmond upon Thames	7
City of London	20
Harrow	37
Kingston upon Thames	61
Merton	65
Camden	71
Bromley	76
Barnet	78
Wandsworth	79
Islington	82
Sutton	84
Hounslow	86
Tower Hamlets	90
Hammersmith and Fulham	93
Ealing	97
Redbridge	104
Hackney	113

Local Authority	Rank
Hillingdon	115
Kensington and Chelsea	119
Westminster	128
Havering	129
Bexley	145
Southwark	154
Waltham Forest	170
Brent	178
Newham	187
Lambeth	188
Haringey	224
Croydon	244
Lewisham	256
Greenwich	258
Enfield	288
Barking and Dagenham	348



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.

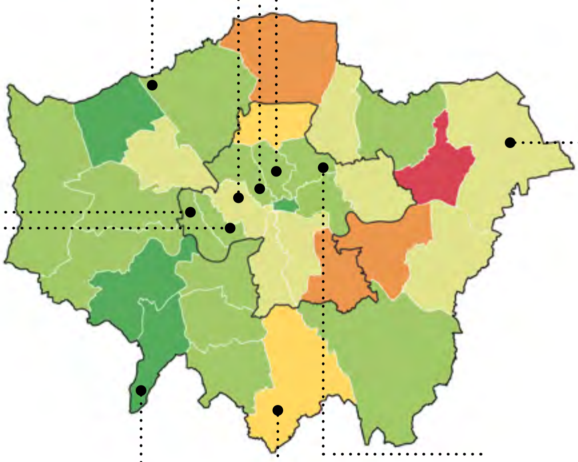
Secondary education in Barnet is the strongest in London and the second best in the UK. The percentage of pupils that are awarded level 2 qualifications in English and mathematics is among the highest at 81%.

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 192 per 10,000 population, compared with the UK average of 44.

Hammersmith and Fulham has the lowest rates 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 has the lowest local election voter turnout rates in London at 30%, compared with Tower Hamlets at 47%.

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

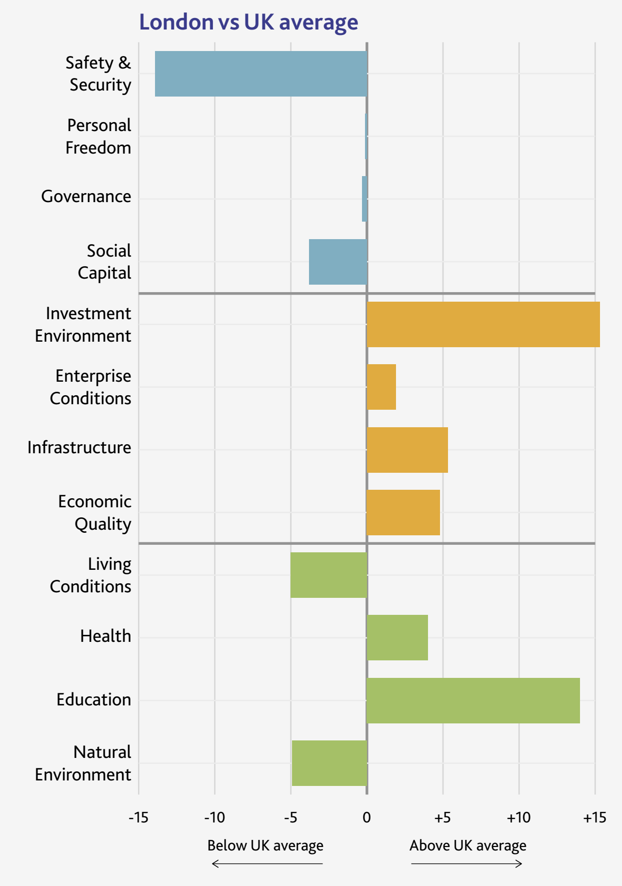
The vaccination rate for the 6-in-1 vaccination is only 80% in Hackney, compared with the UK average of 95%.

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 (119 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%.

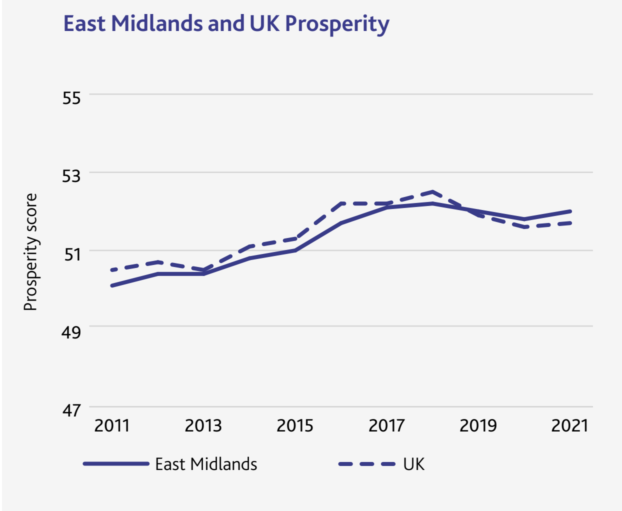
Empowered People

- 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, excluding the West Midlands metropolitan areas. London has the highest concentrations of particulate matter and nitrogen oxides in the country. Concentration of fine particulate matter is, on average, 12 $\mu g/m^3$, compared with the UK average of 9 $\mu g/m^3$. An estimated 6.4% of adult deaths are from air pollution, compared with 5% nationally.

East Midlands (5th)

Local Authority	Rank
Rutland	12
Harborough	26
Charnwood	45
Hinckley and Bosworth	60
Melton	64
Broxtowe	70
Rushcliffe	72
Blaby	73
Oadby and Wigston	81
North West Leicestershire	96
South Northamptonshire	98
Derbyshire Dales	106
Gedling	136
Daventry	148
Amber Valley	149
South Derbyshire	160
South Kesteven	166
High Peak	175
North Kesteven	176
Erewash	180

Local Authority	Rank
North East Derbyshire	185
Northampton	193
East Northamptonshire	198
Chesterfield	208
Newark and Sherwood	213
Leicester	215
Ashfield	217
West Lindsey	235
Kettering	240
Bolsover	241
Corby	247
Bassetlaw	267
Wellingborough	284
Derby	291
Mansfield	293
Lincoln	308
South Holland	310
East Lindsey	318
Boston	333
Nottingham	337



OVERVIEW

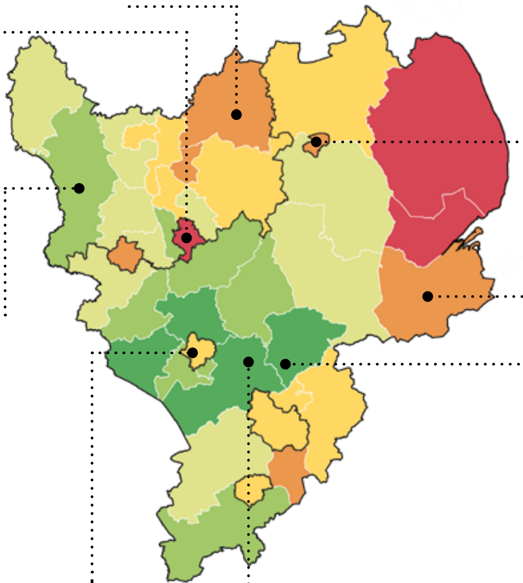
Prosperity across the East Midlands is varied. Overall, the East Midlands has low crime, high levels of personal connectedness, low rates of poverty, good provision of housing and low rates of mental ill-health. Living Conditions in the East Midlands are better than average—but Health, Education and 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 £16,000 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.

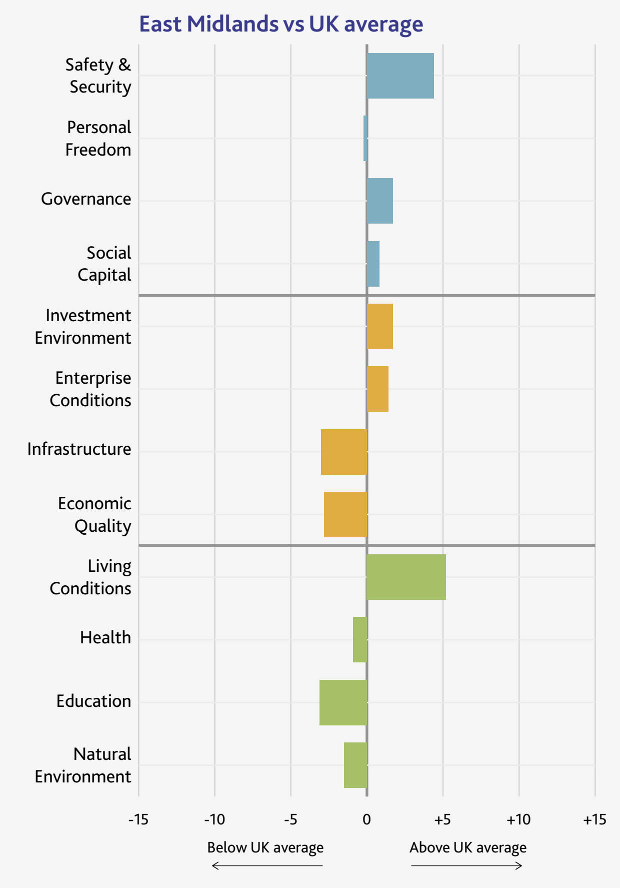
Leicester ranks 349th for Preventative Interventions, with an HPV vaccination rate of just 81%, compared with the UK average of 88%.

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 2.7.
- 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%.

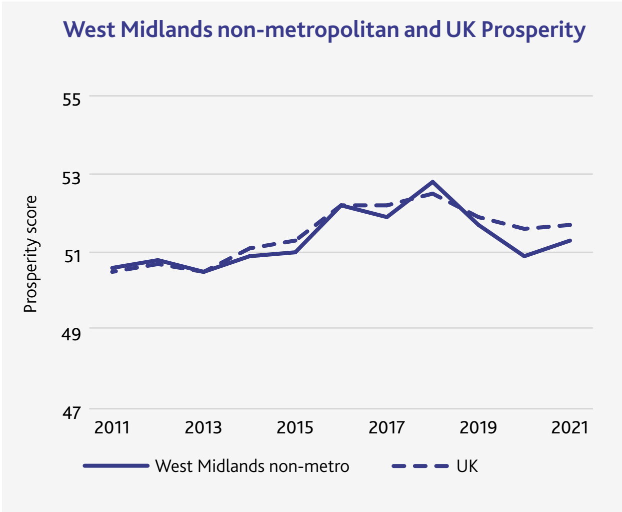
Empowered People

- 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 with in 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 5.5 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 pupils in 40% of 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 fourth worst rate of exposure to fine particulate matter, at 9.9 μg/m^3.

West Midlands non-metro (6th)

Local Authority	Rank
Warwick	62
Rugby	105
Stratford-on-Avon	117
Bromsgrove	121
Lichfield	161
Stafford	184
Tamworth	189
South Staffordshire	191
Redditch	192
Staffordshire Moorlands	196
Malvern Hills	199
East Staffordshire	210

Local Authority	Rank
North Warwickshire	218
Wychavon	222
Cannock Chase	225
Nuneaton and Bedworth	227
Newcastle-under-Lyme	228
Herefordshire, County of	236
Telford and Wrekin	251
Worcester	262
Wyre Forest	278
Shropshire	280
Stoke-on-Trent	359



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.

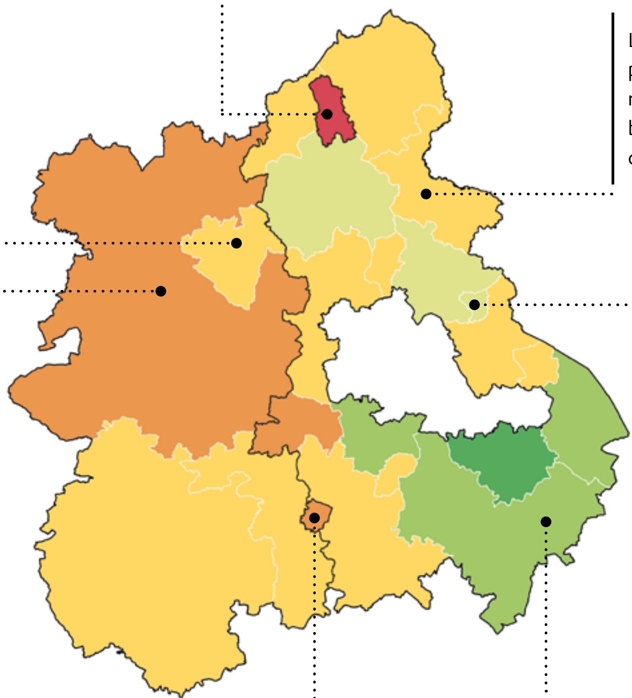
Stoke-on-Trent experiences the highest rates of crime and civil disorder in the region. Sexual offences have increased from 1.4 to 4 per 1,000 people in the past decade, one of the highest rates in the UK.

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 overweight 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.



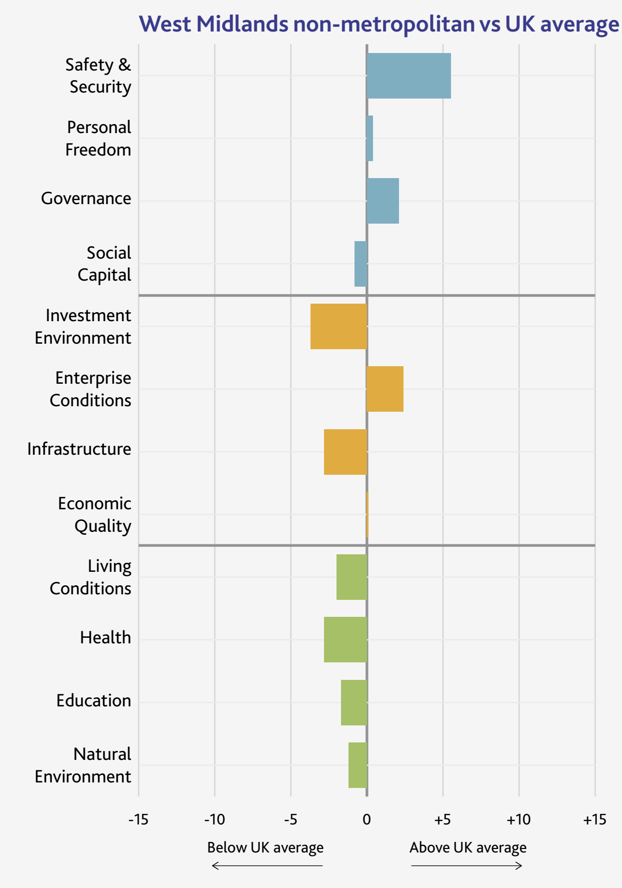
Worcester has 98.9% superfast broadband availability, the 10th highest in the UK.

The percentage of state-funded school leavers who go on to higher education is the highest among students in Stratford-on-Avon at 33%.

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 4th 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, 8.8% 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 connec-tions, and poor road conditions, and the average journey time to a rail hub by public transport is over two hours.
- The region is ranked 7th 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 better than any other region, with high economic activity rates for men and women of 86% and 77%. However, SME growth and GVA growth are both low.

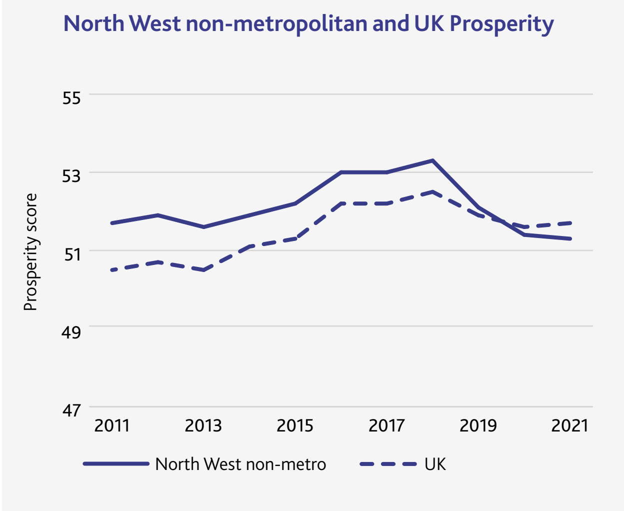
Empowered People

- 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, partic-ularly 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.
- As a predominantly rural region, there are low levels of emissions from industry and transport, and the concentrations of nitrogen oxides are also low. 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 70,000m^2, whereas the UK average is over 385,000m^2.

North West non-metro (7th)

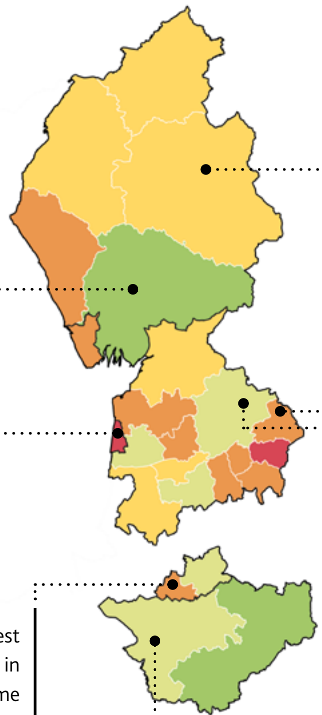
Local Authority	Rank
Cheshire East	75
South Lakeland	99
Ribble Valley	133
Chorley	141
Warrington	143
Cheshire West and Chester	172
Fylde	179
Eden	190
South Ribble	220
West Lancashire	229
Carlisle	234
Lancaster	238

Local Authority	Rank
Allerdale	252
Wyre	264
Halton	265
Barrow-in-Furness	271
Rossendale	275
Hyndburn	286
Pendle	297
Copeland	300
Preston	305
Blackburn with Darwen	314
Burnley	334
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.

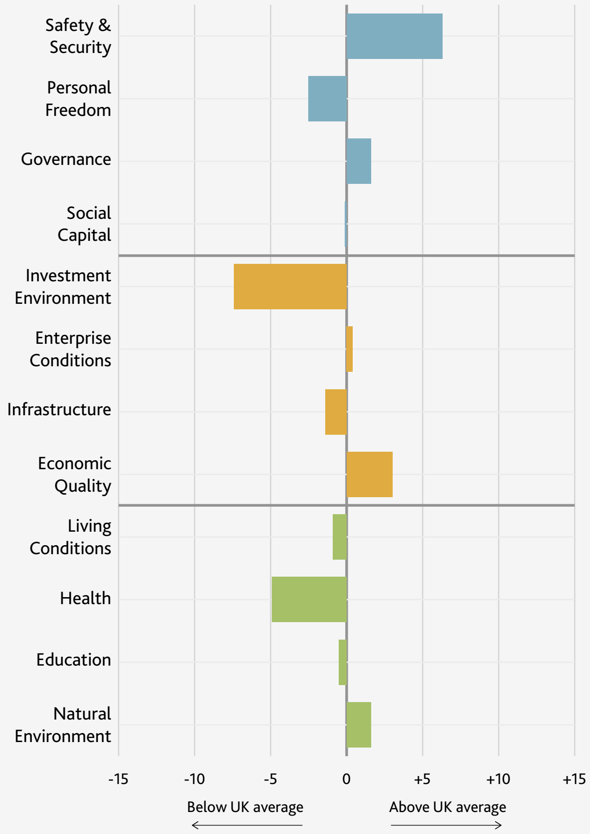
Cheshire West and Chester has the region's highest local election voter turnout rate at 68% in 2018 and has seen an improvement in the last 10 years with nearly 25% more of the electorate voting.

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 relatively strong, particularly for the effectiveness of local government. The region has the highest local election turnout in England, at 44%. There is significant regional variation across Governance. For example, while local election voter turnout is high in places such as Cheshire East at 67%, eight (out of 24) local authorities have a turnout rate below the national average of 34%.
- 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.

North West non-metropolitan vs UK average



Open Economies

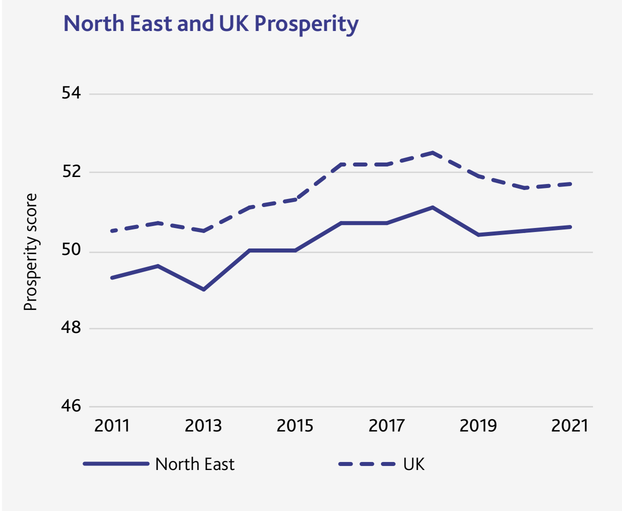
- The region has one of the weakest Investment Environments in the UK and has been weakening over time. The percentage of small businesses making use of equity financing or loans from either banks, other businesses, or connections such as angel investors is at 20%, decreasing from 28% over the last 10 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 provision 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 $\mu g/m^3$, is the second 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.

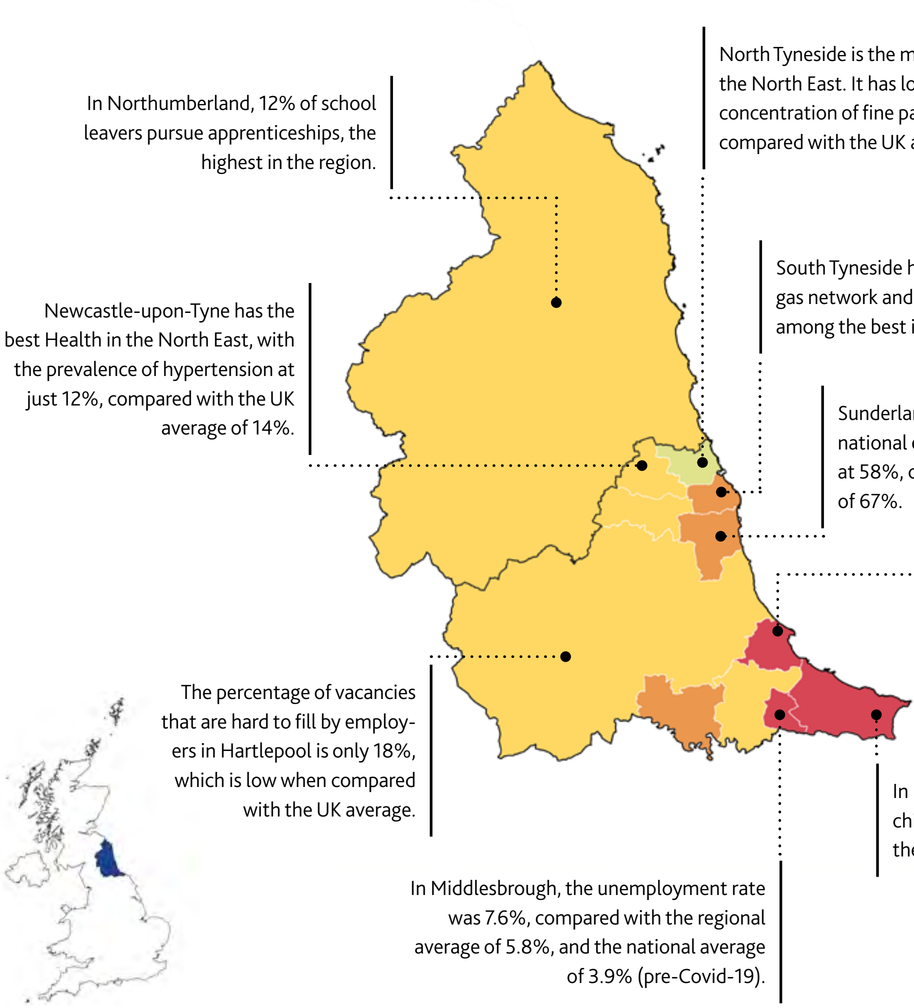
North East (8th)

Local Authority	Rank
North Tyneside	168
Gateshead	205
Northumberland	206
Newcastle upon Tyne	212
Stockton-on-Tees	246
County Durham	254
South Tyneside	261
Sunderland	268
Darlington	274
Redcar and Cleveland	331
Hartlepool	358
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.



In Northumberland, 12% of school leavers pursue apprenticeships, the highest in the region.

North Tyneside is the most prosperous local authority in the North East. It has low exposure to air pollution, with concentration of fine particulate matter of 6.5 μg/m^3, compared with the UK average of 9 μg/m^3.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne has the best Health in the North East, with the prevalence of hypertension at just 12%, compared with the UK average of 14%.

South Tyneside has 97% of properties connected to the gas network and an average download speed of 88 Mb/s, among the best in the North East.

Sunderland has one of the lowest national election voter turnout rates at 58%, compared with the UK average of 67%.

Hartlepool has 698 children in need per 10,000, one of the highest in the UK.

The percentage of vacancies that are hard to fill by employers in Hartlepool is only 18%, which is low when compared with the UK average.

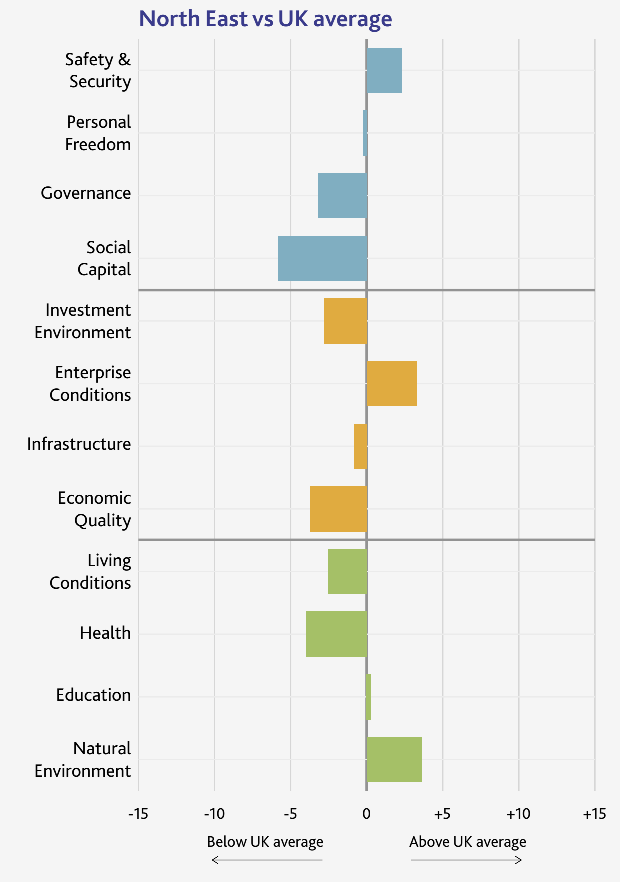
In Redcar and Cleveland, 30% of children are overweight or obese, one of the highest rates in the UK.

In Middlesbrough, the unemployment rate was 7.6%, compared with the regional average of 5.8%, and the national average of 3.9% (pre-Covid-19).

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: local election turnout is relatively high in many authorities, with an overall turnout average of 41%, 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 36 per 10,000 population (compared with the UK average of 59), and only 28 new businesses per 10,000 population survive to their second year (compared with the UK average of 44). 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%.

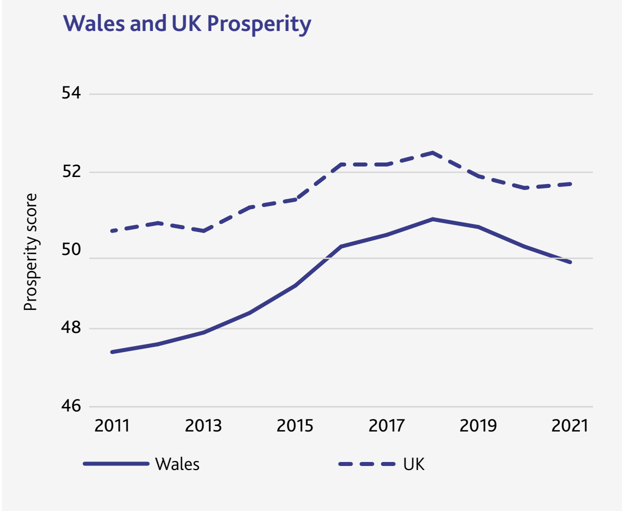
Empowered People

- 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 13 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 education 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 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%.

Wales (9th)

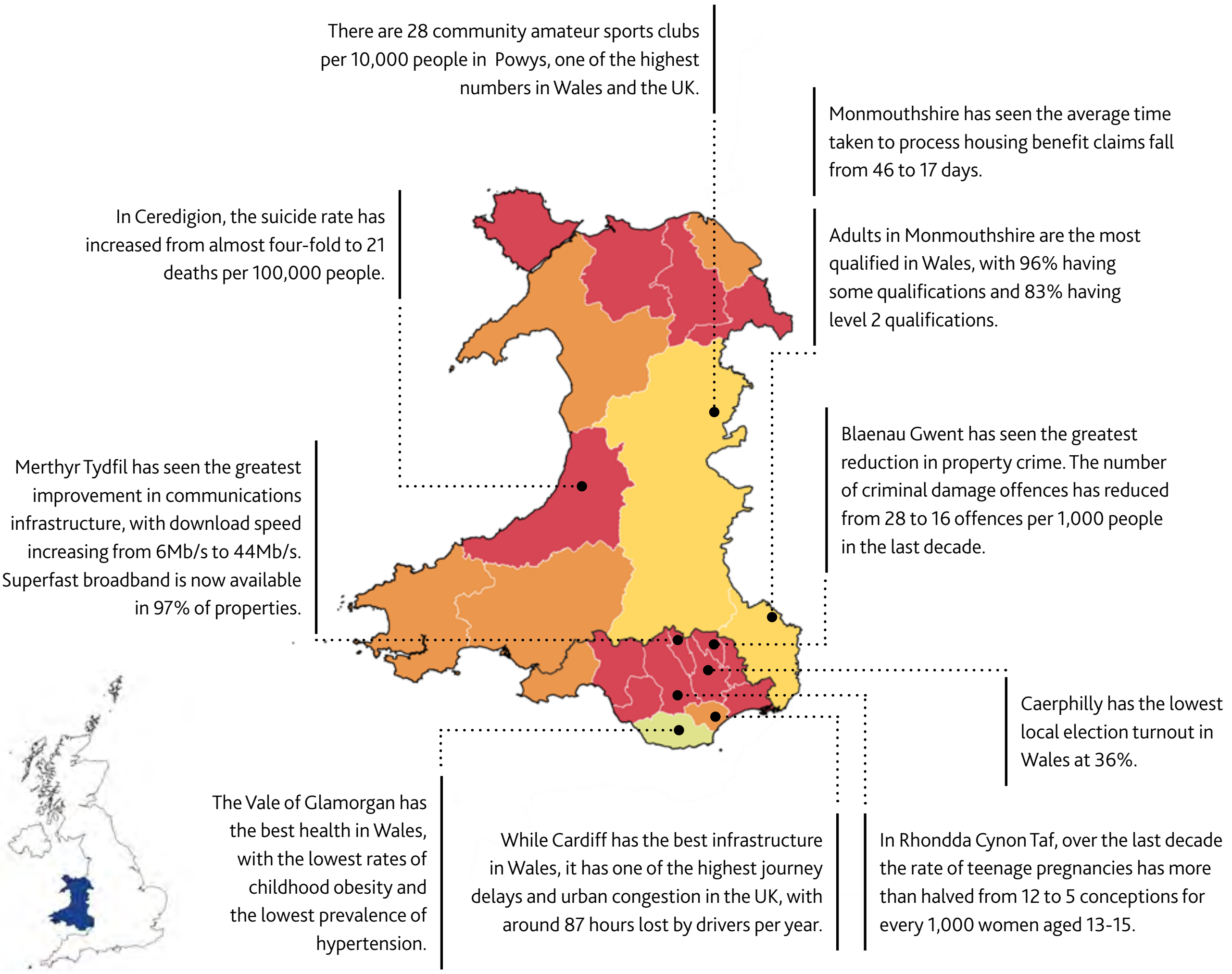
Local Authority	Rank
Vale of Glamorgan	158
Monmouthshire	214
Powys	232
Cardiff	255
Pembrokeshire	273
Swansea	285
Carmarthenshire	287
Flintshire	295
Gwynedd	298
Conwy	319
Bridgend	323

Local Authority	Rank
Ceredigion	328
Denbighshire	329
Isle of Anglesey	335
Caerphilly	336
Newport	339
Rhondda Cynon Taf	343
Wrexham	344
Torfaen	346
Neath Port Talbot	349
Merthyr Tydfil	357
Blaenau Gwent	368



OVERVIEW

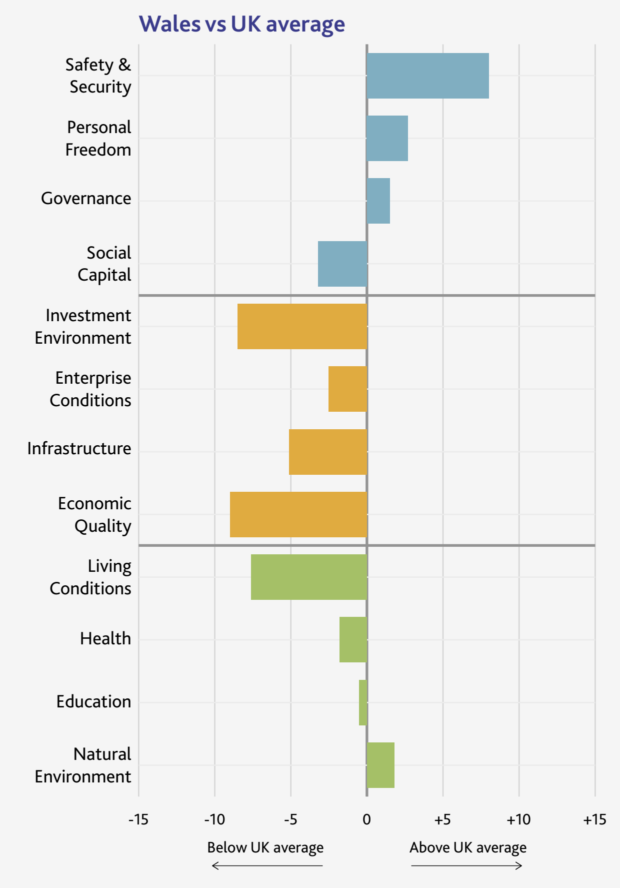
Prosperity in Wales was improving, and it has risen from 14th to 9th in the regional rankings, but since 2018 prosperity has been in decline, driven primarily by weakening Health and a deterioration in the quality of the Investment Environment. Overall, the Welsh economy is weak and is undermined by 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.



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

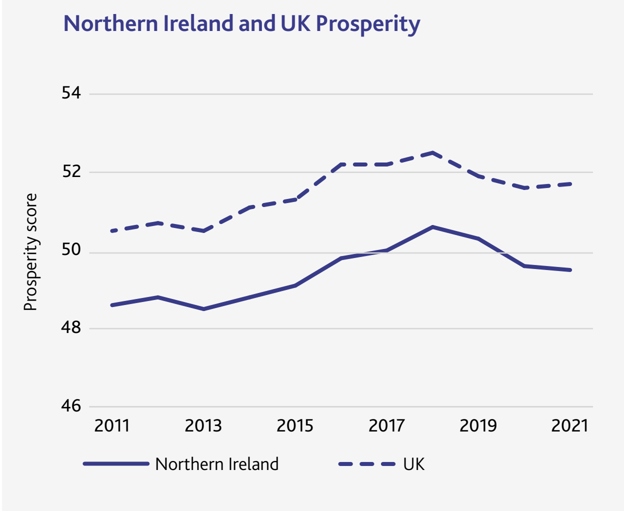
- Businesses in Wales have a weak Investment Environment with low capital supply, little demand for expansion, and 31% of projects are delayed due to a lack of financing, the highest rate in the UK. In the Welsh Valleys, the value of loans provided to SMEs by major banks per head of the population is £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 at 4.1%, it is still above 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 attendance and attainment are higher than the UK average, whereas at secondary level attendance and attainment at the GCSE level is 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 6.7 μg/m^3 over the last decade.

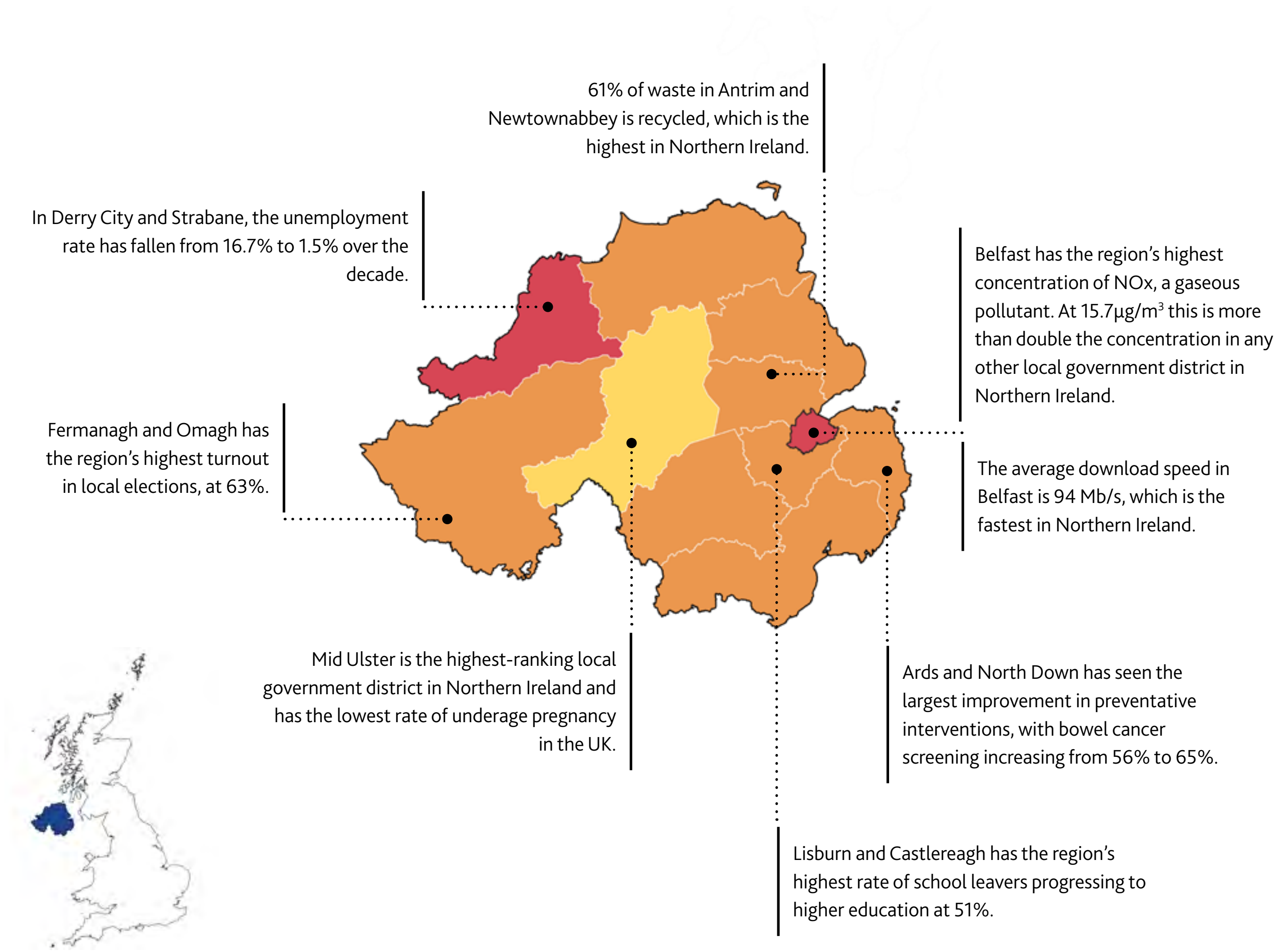
Northern Ireland (10th)

Local Authority	Rank
Mid Ulster	250
Lisburn and Castlereagh	276
Ards and North Down	277
Antrim and Newtownabbey	281
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	296
Mid and East Antrim	306
Newry, Mourne and Down	313
Fermanagh and Omagh	316
Causeway Coast and Glens	317
Derry City and Strabane	327
Belfast	355



OVERVIEW

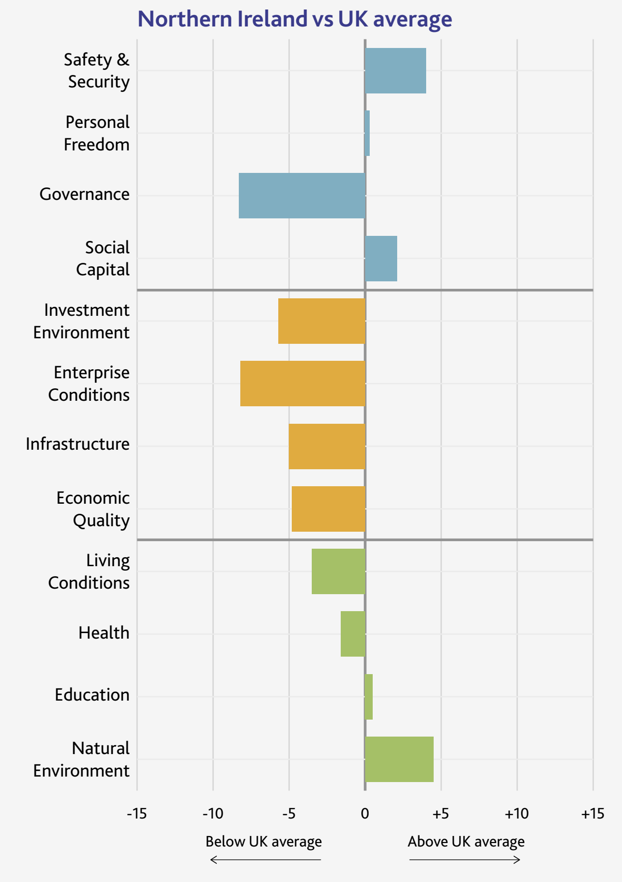
Prosperity in Northern Ireland is lower than the UK average. Belfast, which can be classified as a typical Industrial Heartland local government district, has lower overall prosperity than the rest of Northern Ireland (Rural Northern Ireland). Northern Ireland's weakest pillars are Governance, Enterprise 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 10 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 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.

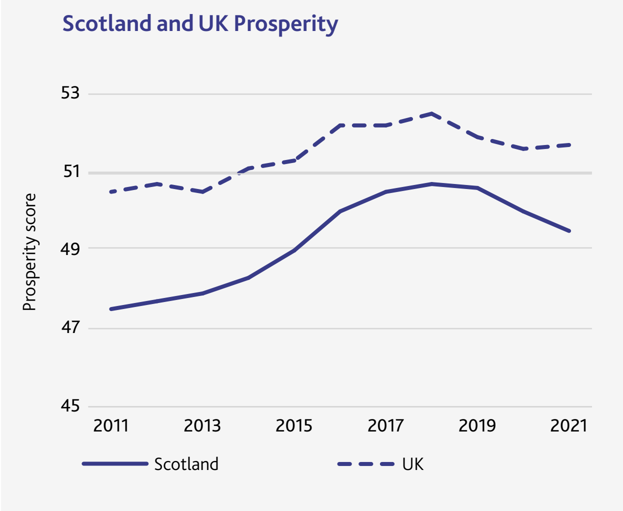
Empowered People

- 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.

Scotland (11th)

Local Authority	Rank
East Renfrewshire	41
Aberdeenshire	83
East Dunbartonshire	109
Na h-Eileanan Siar	155
Orkney Islands	167
Aberdeen City	202
Shetland Islands	204
Stirling	211
Scottish Borders	231
Perth and Kinross	233
City of Edinburgh	242
South Ayrshire	260
Moray	270
West Lothian	272
Angus	279
Argyll and Bute	283

Local Authority	Rank
East Lothian	289
Fife	290
Dumfries and Galloway	315
South Lanarkshire	321
Highland	324
Midlothian	338
Falkirk	341
Renfrewshire	342
North Ayrshire	347
Inverclyde	351
East Ayrshire	354
Clackmannanshire	356
North Lanarkshire	361
Dundee City	372
West Dunbartonshire	376
Glasgow City	377

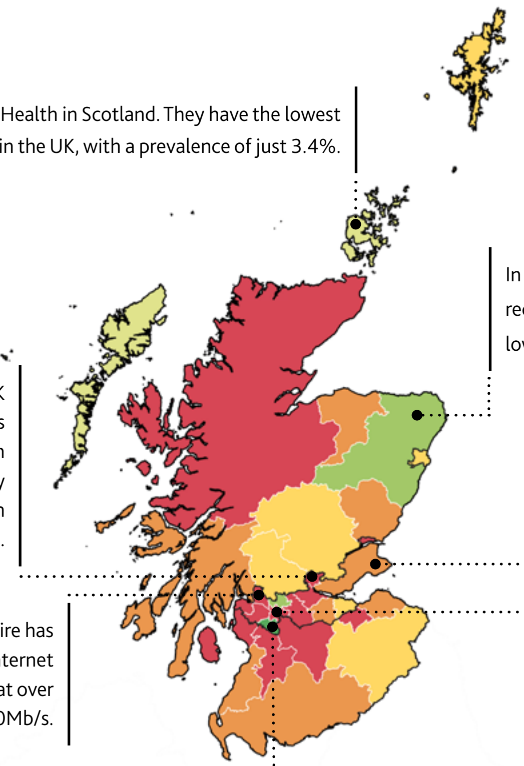


OVERVIEW

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.

The Orkney Islands has the best Health in Scotland. They have the lowest rate of depression in the UK, with a prevalence of just 3.4%.

In Aberdeenshire, 63% of premises do not receive good 4G coverage outdoors, one of the lowest in the UK.



Clackmannanshire ranks fourth in the UK for dynamism, with high rates of business start-ups and large numbers of high growth businesses. New business density is 548 per 10,000 people, the highest in the UK.

In Fife, just 11% of small business owners see government not supporting their business, compared with the UK average of 18%.

West Dunbartonshire has some of the fastest internet speeds in the UK at over 100Mb/s.

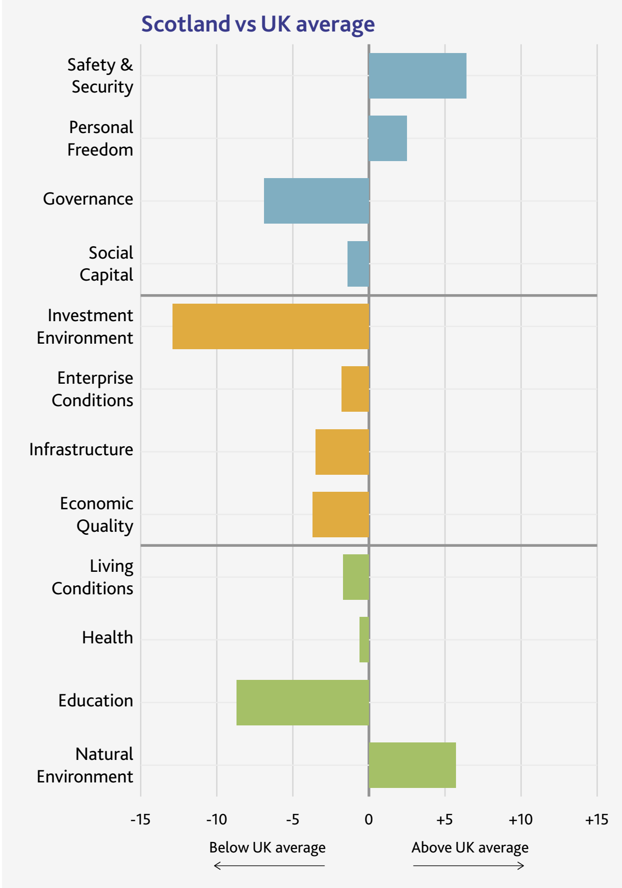
There are 21 homicides per 100,000 population in Glasgow, compared with 5.4 homicides per 100,000 population in Fife.

East Renfrewshire is one of two Scottish local authorities in the top quartile for Education. Primary literacy attainment is 86%, the highest in the UK.

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. They are particularly weak in the Central Belt. 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 39 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%.

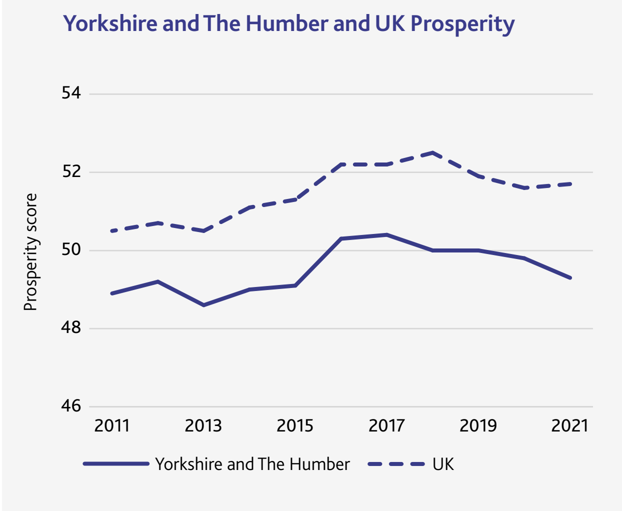
Empowered People

- 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 (18%) compared with the UK average (14%) 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 70%, 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 26 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 1.5.

Yorkshire and The Humber (13th)

Local Authority	Rank
York	103
East Riding of Yorkshire	122
Harrogate	131
Craven	134
Richmondshire	138
Hambleton	146
Ryedale	162
Scarborough	243
Selby	253
Calderdale	302
Sheffield	303

Local Authority	Rank
Kirklees	325
Leeds	326
Barnsley	332
North Lincolnshire	340
Kingston upon Hull, City of	350
Rotherham	364
Bradford	365
Wakefield	367
Doncaster	373
North East Lincolnshire	374



OVERVIEW

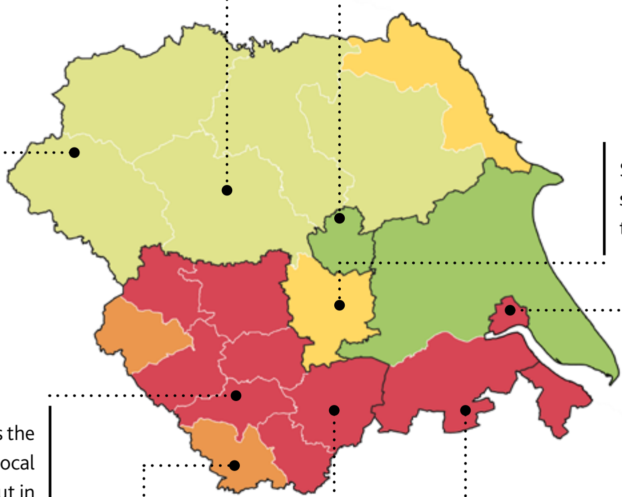
Despite prosperity increasing over the last 10 years, Yorkshire and the Humber remains a region with comparatively low prosperity. Due to other regions rising over the last decade, it has fallen in the regional rankings from 10th to 13th. The region is made up of Rural areas, Remote Rural areas, Industrial 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 160 Mb/s, which is the fastest in the UK.

Barnsley has the second-lowest local election voter turnout in the region, at only 27% 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.

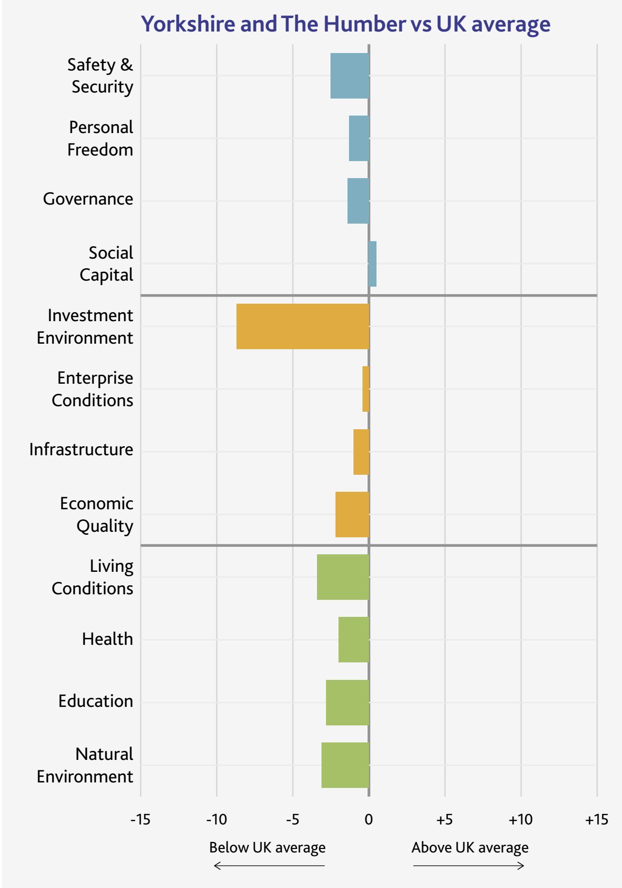
In Doncaster, just 24% of adults have level 4 qualifications or higher, compared with the UK average of 40%.

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 roughly equivalent to 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 25th nationally for Labour Market Flexibility, as it has few vacancies that are hard to fill, and North East Lincolnshire, ranking 369th with extremely poor labour market flexibility.
- The region is roughly equivalent to 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 £124. 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

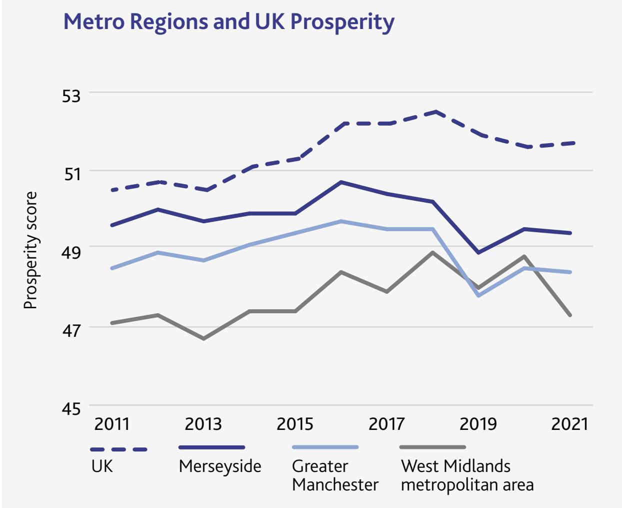
- Living Conditions are weaker than the UK average. In industrial areas, poverty is particularly high; in many industrial and post-industrial towns, more than 20% of secondary school children receive free school meals, compared with the UK average of 16.5%. Despite good digital infrastructure, with 80% 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 (12th), West Midlands Metropolitan Area (14th), Greater Manchester (15th)

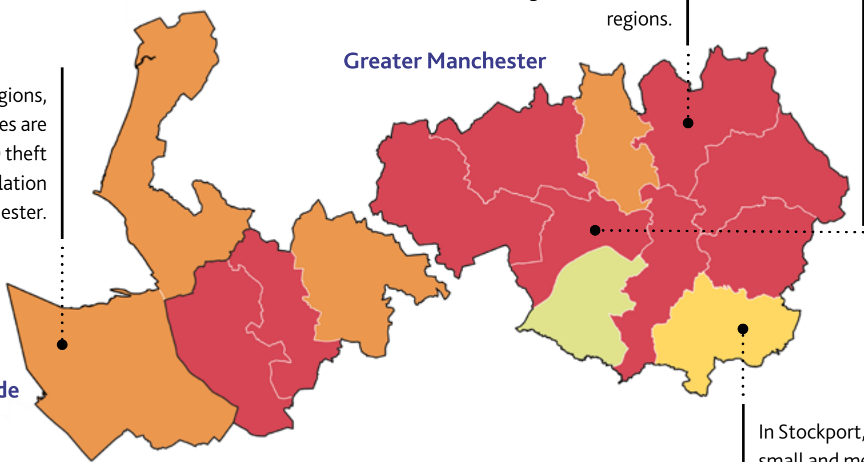
Local Authority	Rank
Solihull (W Mid metro)	174
Trafford (G Manchester)	183
Stockport (G Manchester)	237
Coventry (W Mid metro)	257
Wirral (Merseyside)	259
Sefton (Merseyside)	263
Bury (G Manchester)	282
St. Helens (Merseyside)	299
Walsall (W Mid metro)	304
Dudley (W Mid metro)	320
Wigan (G Manchester)	322
Bolton (G Manchester)	330

Local Authority	Rank
Liverpool (Merseyside)	345
Sandwell (W Mid metro)	352
Birmingham (W Mid metro)	353
Knowsley (Merseyside)	360
Salford (G Manchester)	362
Rochdale (G Manchester)	363
Wolverhampton (W Mid metro)	366
Tameside (G Manchester)	369
Manchester (G Manchester)	371
Oldham (G Manchester)	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.

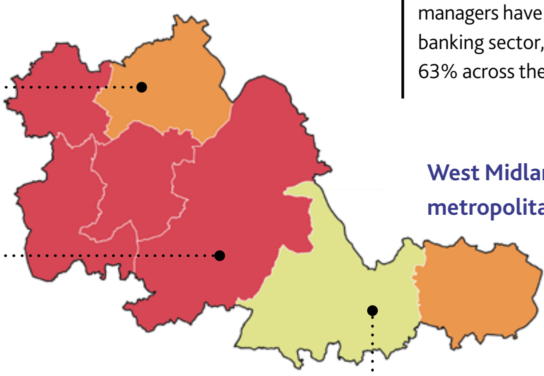


Rochdale has 17.9% of GP patients with depression, the worst figure across these regions.

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.

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.

In Stockport, only 53% 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.

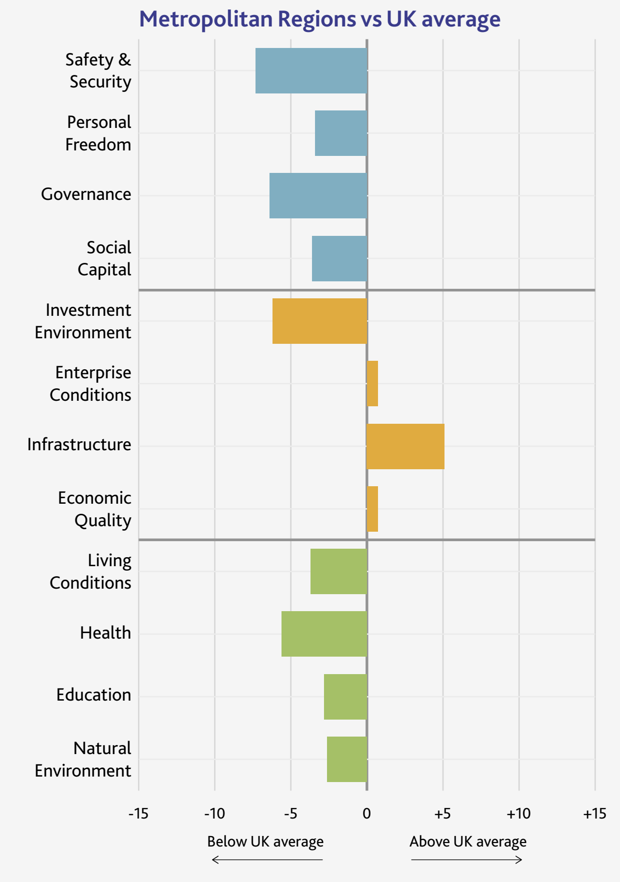
In Birmingham, 9% of households are overcrowded, compared with 5% across the UK.

In Solihull, the enrolment rate of children attending state-run nursery schools is at 95%, 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 41% 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 117 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 90 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 80 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 84% 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 30% 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 (0.4 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 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.

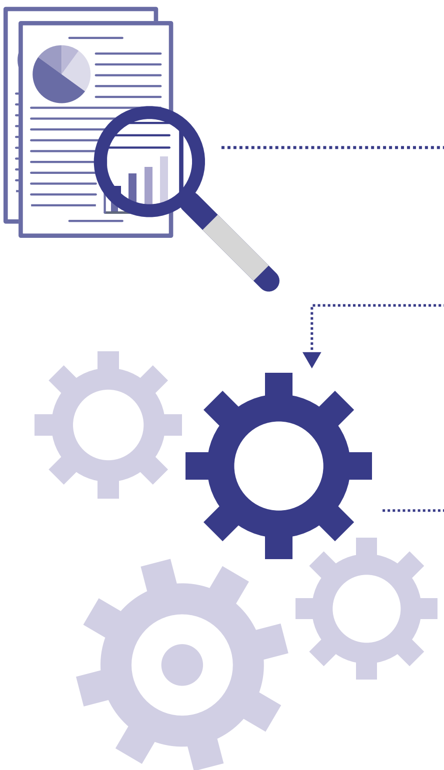
To capture institutional, economic and social wellbeing, and not just one or the other, the UK Prosperity Index faces the challenge of finding meaningful measures of success at the local authority level. We have endeavoured to create an Index that is methodologically sound. This is something that the 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 one 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.

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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/
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

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The United Kingdom Prosperity Index Team

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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.

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Endnotes

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