LEVELLING UP

Ipsos Levelling Up Index

Public opinion

Fieldwork May 2022

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Executive Summary (1)

In February 2022, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) published the White Paper *Levelling Up the United Kingdom.*

These are the results of second Ipsos' Levelling Up Index (fieldwork February 2022), designed to track public perceptions against each of the 12 missions within the White Paper.

In May, we asked 12,088 members of the public on Ipsos' online random probability UK KnowledgePanel about their perceptions of Levelling Up, what they would prioritise to address the inequalities in their local areas, and their attitudes, opinions and behaviours against each of the missions. This has enabled us to create a score for each mission and to put the results into context.

The general public continue to feel that there is an imbalance in Government spending at a local level, particularly in Wales, Northern Ireland and the North of England, and also in rural and post-industrial areas. While awareness of the Government's Levelling Up strategy increased up until February, the latest findings show it has remained stable. Many remain sceptical that it will make a positive impact on regional inequalities over the coming years.

For their local areas, the public still prioritise reducing crime, improving mental health and wellbeing, and increasing wages and job opportunities. However, priorities vary by geography, with public transport a greater priority for residents in the South West and North West of England, wages and jobs for residents in the North East, and crime for residents in London and the West Midlands.

Overall, the Index scores are most positive for the missions on internet provision, primary schools, wellbeing and life expectancy, and most negative for devolution, R&D investment, crime and homes.

Analysis by deprivation highlights the inequalities which the missions seek to address, for example pride in place scores +55 in the *least* deprived areas vs. +13 in the *most* deprived. Similarly, the score for the pay, employment and productivity mission ranges from +35 in the least deprived areas to -12 in the most deprived.

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Executive Summary (2)

Although on several missions rural areas are happier, **the biggest gaps are where rural areas may feel naturally disadvantaged, namely their Index scores on public transport and internet provision which are much worse than in urban areas.**

There are also clear regional differences. Economic missions such as pay and employment, investment and skills tend to have a lower Index score in the North of England (particularly the North East, which also scores lowest on the **pride in place** measure), and also in Wales, while perceptions of investment are also slightly lower in the North of England as well as Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Index scores for **public transport** are lower in Northern Ireland and Wales, and also the South West and Yorkshire. London, meanwhile, scores lower than average Index scores in the missions for **crime as well as homes (along with the South West and South East)**.

There is a similar pattern when looking at different types of area (using the ONS area classification groupings). The Services and Industrial Legacy grouping in **traditional mining areas** also scores lower across the **economic missions** of pay, employment & productivity and R&D investment, and also for **pride in place**.

The **more rural** Countryside Living areas score lower on **internet provision and public transport** (which also scores poorly in the less densely populated Town and Country Living grouping).

The **more urban groupings** score better on public transport, but London Cosmopolitan scores lowest on homes (even though it does well on pride and place), while other metropolitan areas outside inner London have the lowest Index score on the crime mission.

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Introduction

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Ipsos Levelling Up Index

The “Levelling Up” programme was a key policy commitment in the Government’s election manifesto at the last general election. It is described as:

“a moral, social and economic programme for the whole of government”.

The White Paper *Levelling Up the United Kingdom* was published in February 2022 by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. It sets out how the government intends to spread opportunity more equally across the UK, and identifies **12 missions** as specific policy objectives.

Ipsos has devised a Levelling Up Index to measure public perceptions against each of the 12 missions within the Government’s Levelling Up White Paper.

The Index consists of a separate score for each of the 12 missions based on a number of different questions relevant to each mission. The results have been analysed by geography and key demographic groups, allowing us to see how performance is being judged within different areas of the country and by different groups of the population.

The intention is to track changes in these scores over time. **This is the second release of our Ipsos Levelling Up tracker.** As we learn more about the Government’s ambition, we will refine the metrics to support policy makers and to help the general public make sense of the UK’s progress towards Levelling Up.

We have slightly altered the metrics for three missions (internet provision, primary schools, and devolution) since our first release in February.

Overall perceptions …

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Overall perceptions of Levelling Up and its aims

Knowledge of the Government's Levelling Up strategy remains stable compared to February 2022, with only a quarter saying they know at least a fair amount about it.

Across the UK, **nearly half feel that their area gets less of a share of government spending** than other areas. There are distinct regional differences in perceptions, with **people in Wales, Northern Ireland and across the North of England most likely to believe that the Westminster Government spends less** on their area than other places.

When presented with the issues the Government has identified for improvement, **the public remain most likely to prioritise reducing crime, improving mental health and wellbeing, and increasing wages and job opportunities**, as they were in February, for their own local area**.** There is considerable diversity in people's opinions depending on where they live. For example, increasing wages and improving job opportunities are seen as a priority in the North East whilst crime and anti-social behaviour are more of a priority in the West Midlands and London.

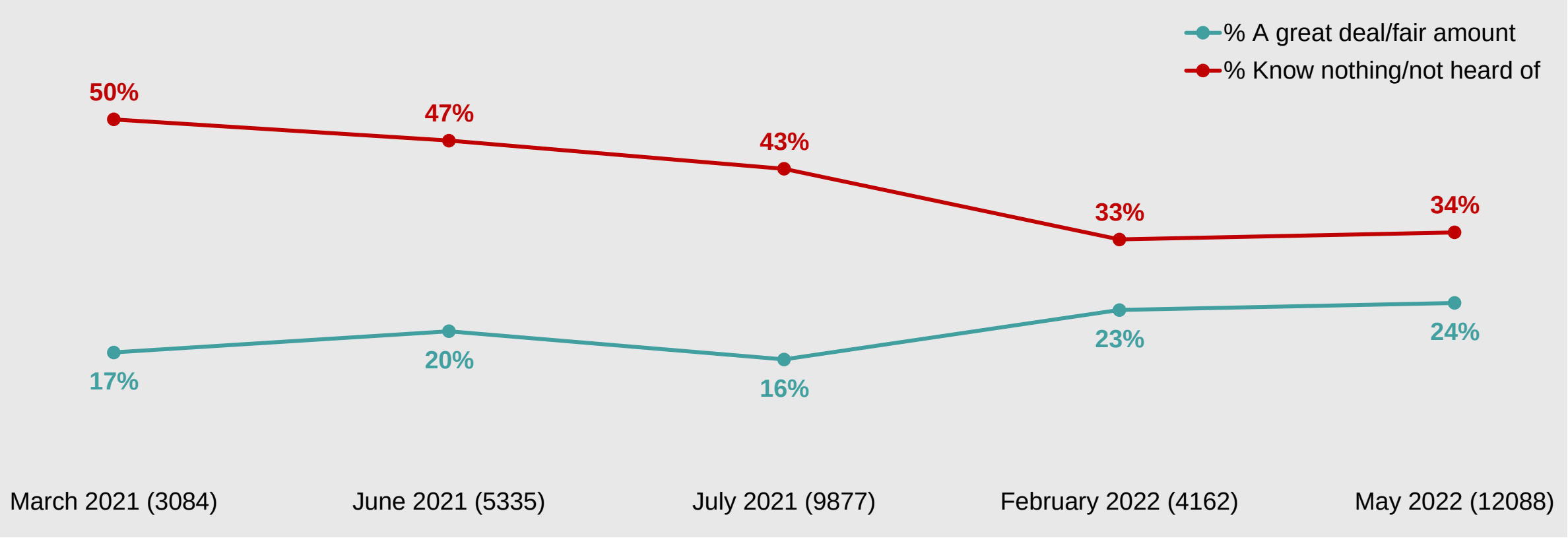
The public remain mostly pessimistic about the success of the Levelling Up strategy: few believe that the Government will make a positive difference to their area in the next few years, and a majority think it unlikely that the government's strategy will reduce inequalities within the next 20 years. Most do not believe the government cares much about their area.

There is a clear mandate for local decision-making with more in support of LAs being given more control over local decisions than those opposed and while there also broad support for directly elected mayors this has slightly decreased since February.

The charts that follow set out these findings in more detail.

Awareness of Levelling Up is changed little with a third saying they know nothing about or have not heard of it

How much, if anything, would you say you know about the current government's 'levelling up' strategy?



Base: All UK adults 16+
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

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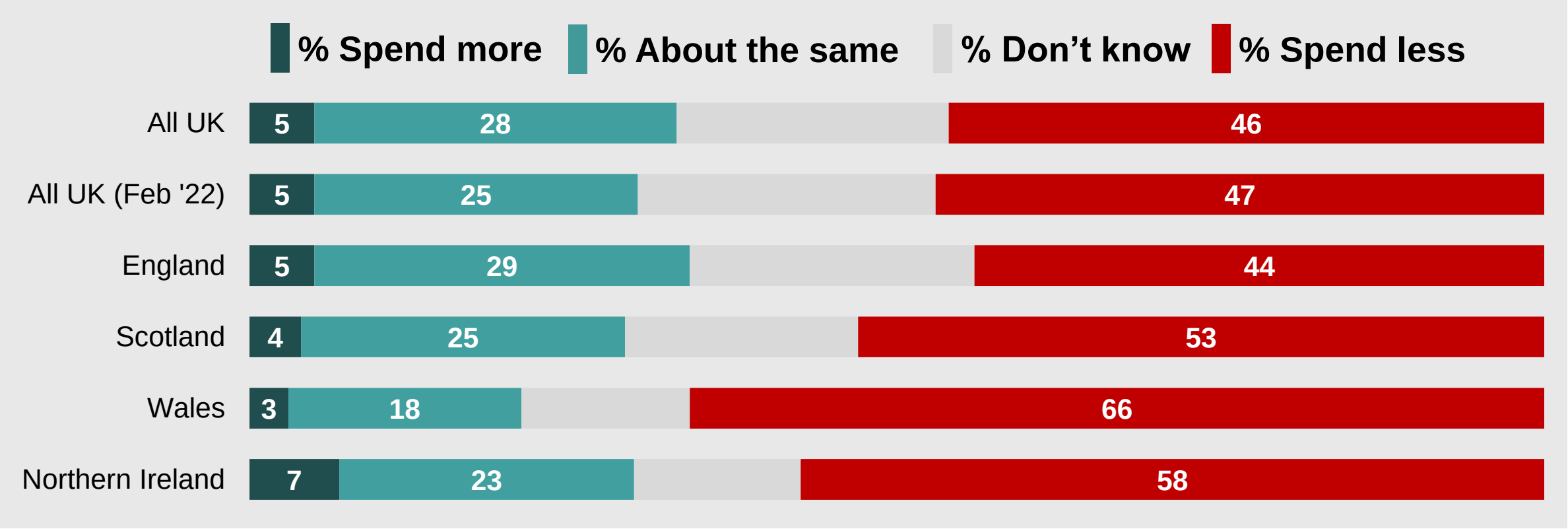
Perceived imbalance in government spending more acutely felt by residents in the devolved nations

In your opinion, does the national government in Westminster spend more, spend less or about the same on your area, as it does on other local areas?



Base: All UK adults 16+ (12088): England (8703); Scotland (1949); Wales (588); Northern Ireland (848)
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

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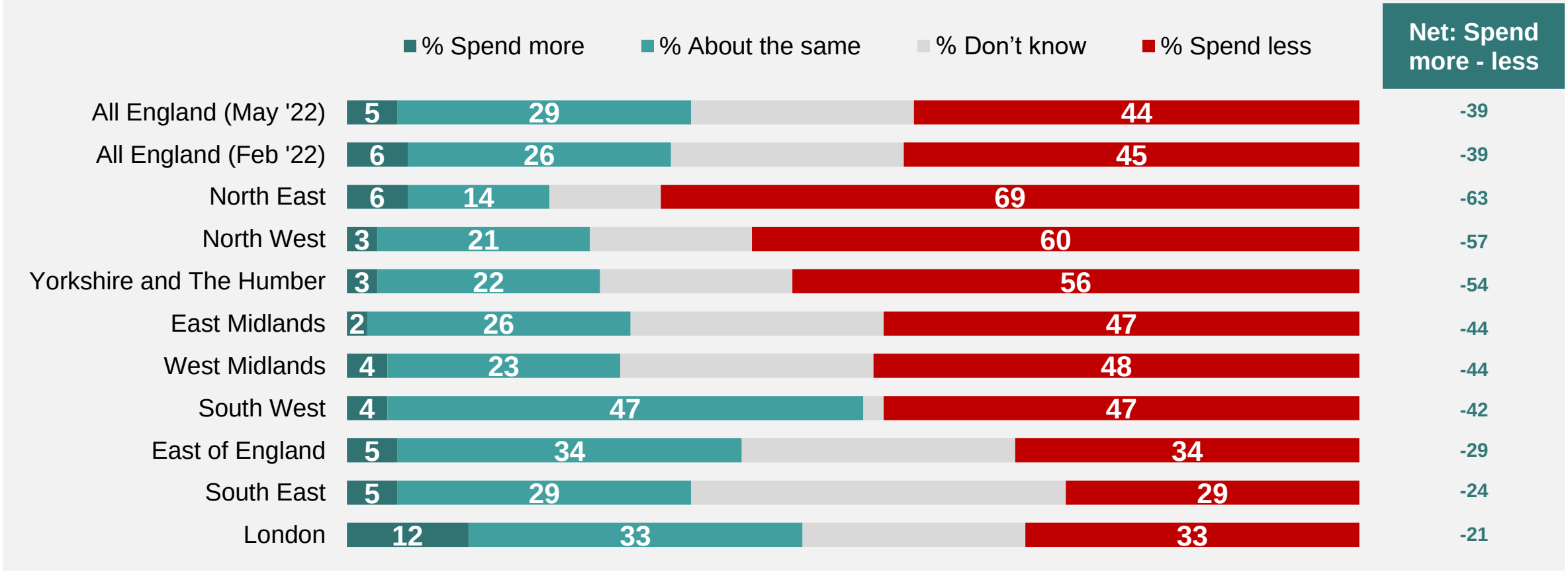
In England, perceived imbalance in government spending is most pronounced in the North of England

In your opinion, does the national government in Westminster spend more, spend less or about the same on your area, as it does on other local areas?



Base: All aged 16+ in England (8703); North East (421); North West (1140); Yorkshire and the Humber (859); East Midlands (782); West Midlands (848); East of England (1026); South East (1499); South West (1074); London (1054)
Methodology: The KnowledgePanel, Levelling Up Tracker | Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022 |

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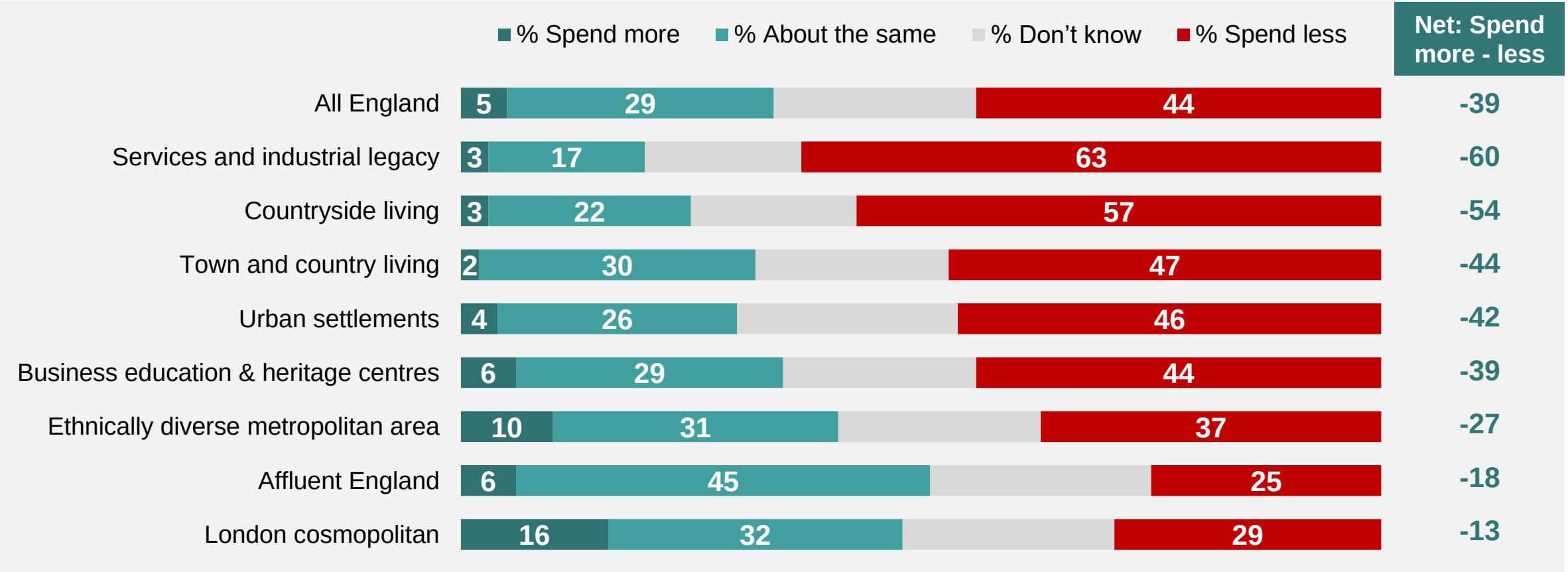
Rural and post industrial areas are more likely to think the government spends less in their area

In your opinion, does the national government in Westminster spend more, spend less or about the same on your area, as it does on other local areas?



Base: All aged 16+ in England (8703); Affluent England (1133); Business, education & heritage centres (2110); Countryside living (2197); Ethnically diverse metropolitan living (728); London cosmopolitan (343); services and industrial legacy (1927); Town and country living (2290); Urban settlements (1360). | Methodology: The KnowledgePanel, Levelling Up Tracker | Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

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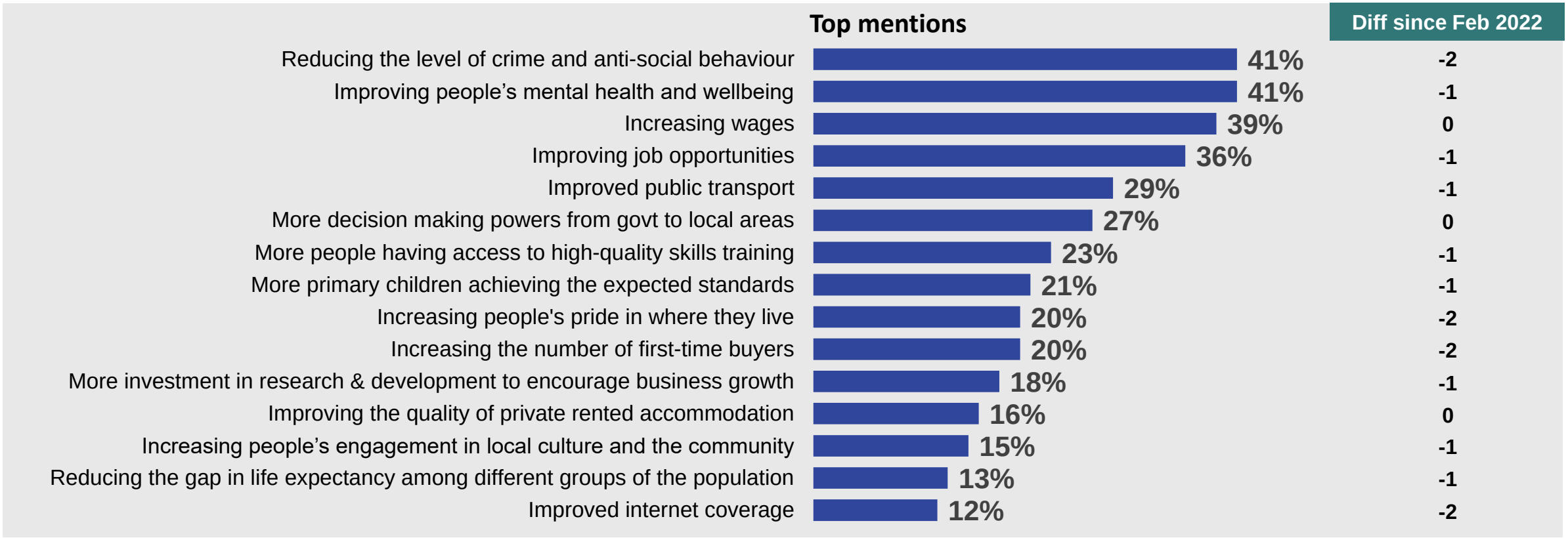
Public priorities for Levelling Up are to reduce crime and improve mental health and wellbeing, alongside economic improvements

The government's plans for reducing regional inequalities (or Levelling Up) includes a number of objectives. Which three or four of the following, if any, do you consider to be the main priorities for improvement in your local area?



Base: All UK adults 16+ (12088)
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

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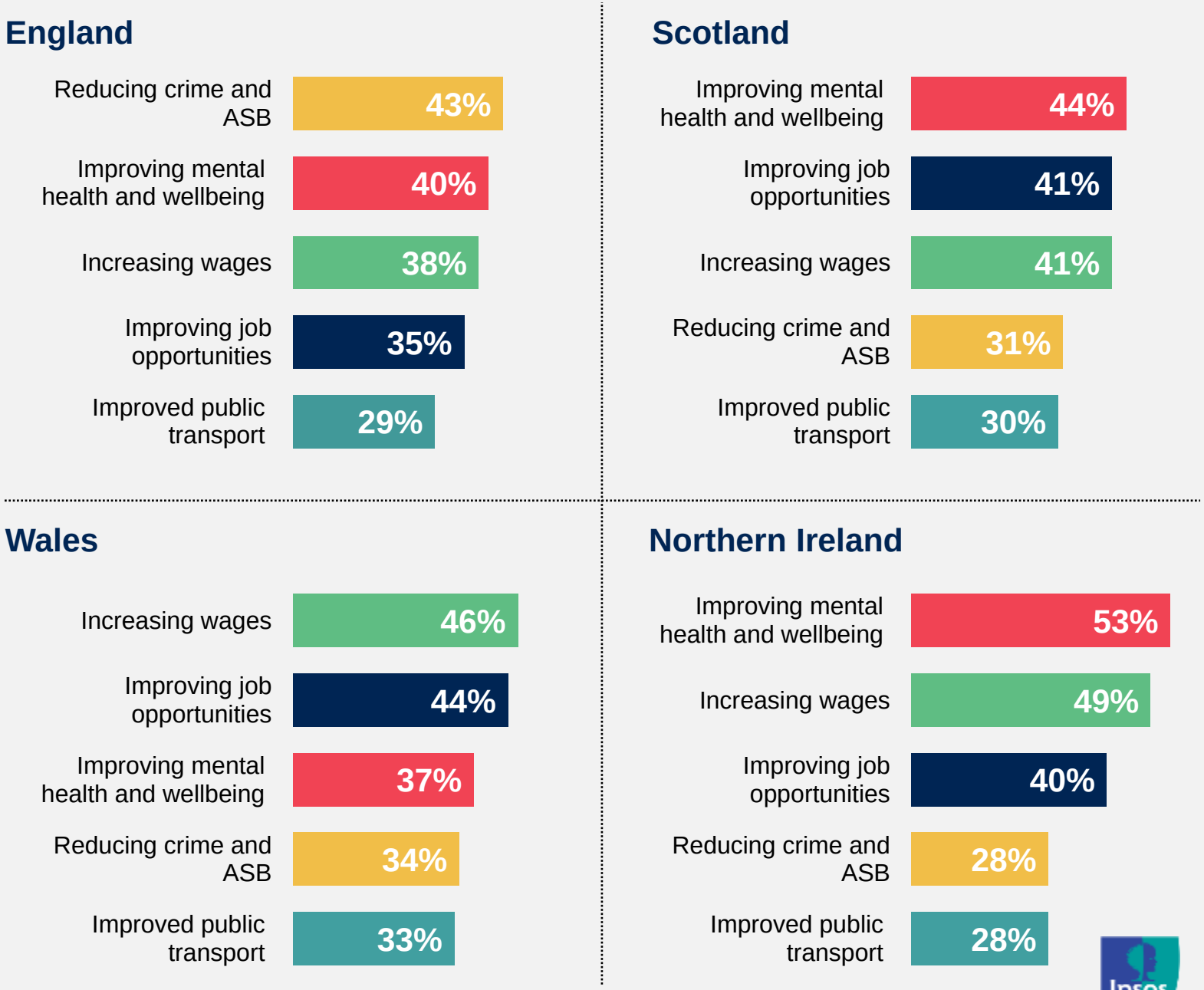
Some differences between nations in emphasis: crime the biggest issue in England; wellbeing, jobs, wages elsewhere

The government's plans for reducing regional inequalities (or levelling-up) includes a number of objectives. Which three or four of the following, if any, do you consider to be the main priorities for improvement in your local area?

Top five answers in each nation



Base: All UK adults 16+ (12088): England (8703); Scotland (1949); Wales (588); Northern Ireland (848)
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

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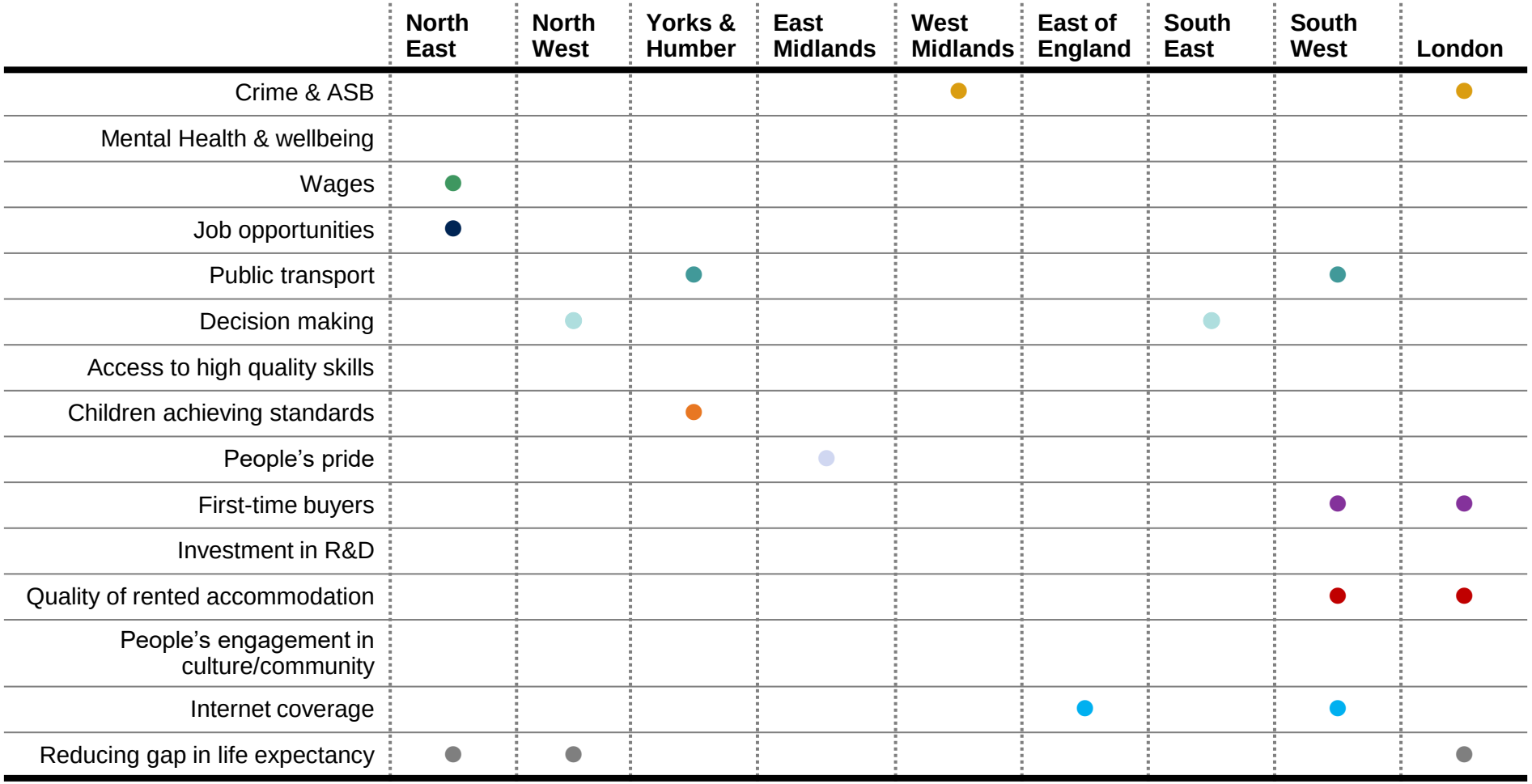
Whilst most regions share many priorities, there are differences in emphasis across England, such as a greater focus on wages and jobs in the North East, crime in London and West Midlands, and public transport in South West and Yorkshire & the Humber

The government`s plans for reducing regional inequalities (or levelling-up) includes a number of objectives. Which three or four of the following, if any, do you consider to be the main priorities for improvement in your local area?

Priorities that are given more emphasis than the average highlighted in the table



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Methodology: The KnowledgePanel, Levelling Up Tracker | Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022 |

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Similarly, public priorities for Levelling Up also vary in emphasis by area type: greater focus on crime in urban and metropolitan areas; wages and jobs in Services & Industrial Legacy areas; and jobs and public transport in Countryside Living grouping

The government`s plans for reducing regional inequalities (or levelling-up) includes a number of objectives. Which three or four of the following, if any, do you consider to be the main priorities for improvement in your local area?

Priorities that are given more emphasis than the average highlighted in the table

	Affluent England	Business, Education and Heritage Centres	Countryside Living	Ethnically Diverse Metropolitan Living	London Cosmopolitan	Services and Industrial Legacy	Town and Country Living	Urban Settlements
Crime & ASB				●				●
Mental Health & wellbeing		●		●				●
Wages						●		
Job opportunities			●			●		●
Public transport			●				●	
Decision making								
Access to high quality skills			●					
Children achieving standards				●				
People's pride						●		
First-time buyers	●							
Investment in R&D			●			●		
Quality of rented accommodation		●			●			
People's engagement in culture/community								
Internet coverage			●				●	
Reducing gap in life expectancy		●			●			

Base: All aged 16+ in England (8703); North East (421); North West (1140); Yorkshire and the Humber (859); East Midlands (782); West Midlands (848); East of England (1026); South East (1499); South West (1074); London (1054)
Methodology: The KnowledgePanel, Levelling Up Tracker | Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022 |

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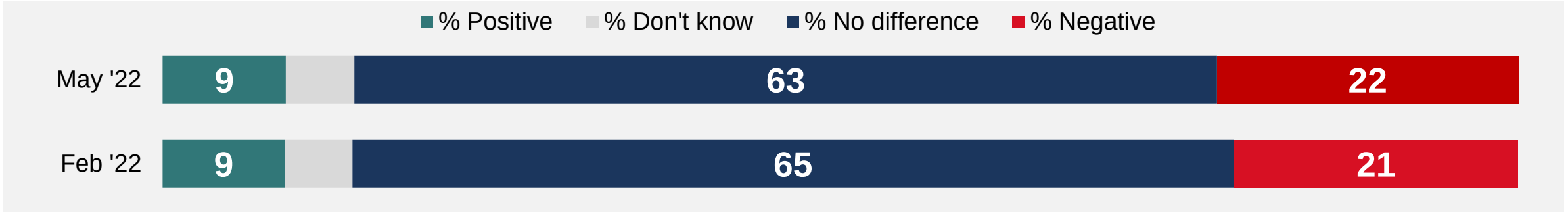
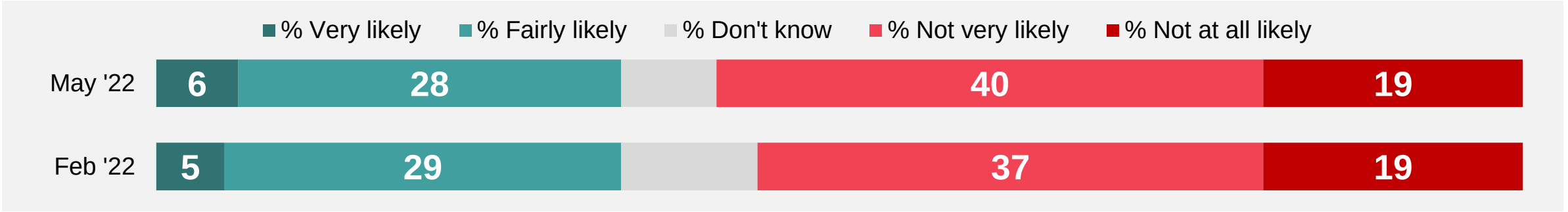
Public remains sceptical that the government's policies will make a positive difference to their area in both the short and long term

Thinking about the next few years, do you think the government will make a positive difference to your local area, a negative difference, or will it make no difference?



How likely, if at all, do you think that the current government's policies on reducing inequalities between different regions of the country will have a positive impact within the next 20 years?



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Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

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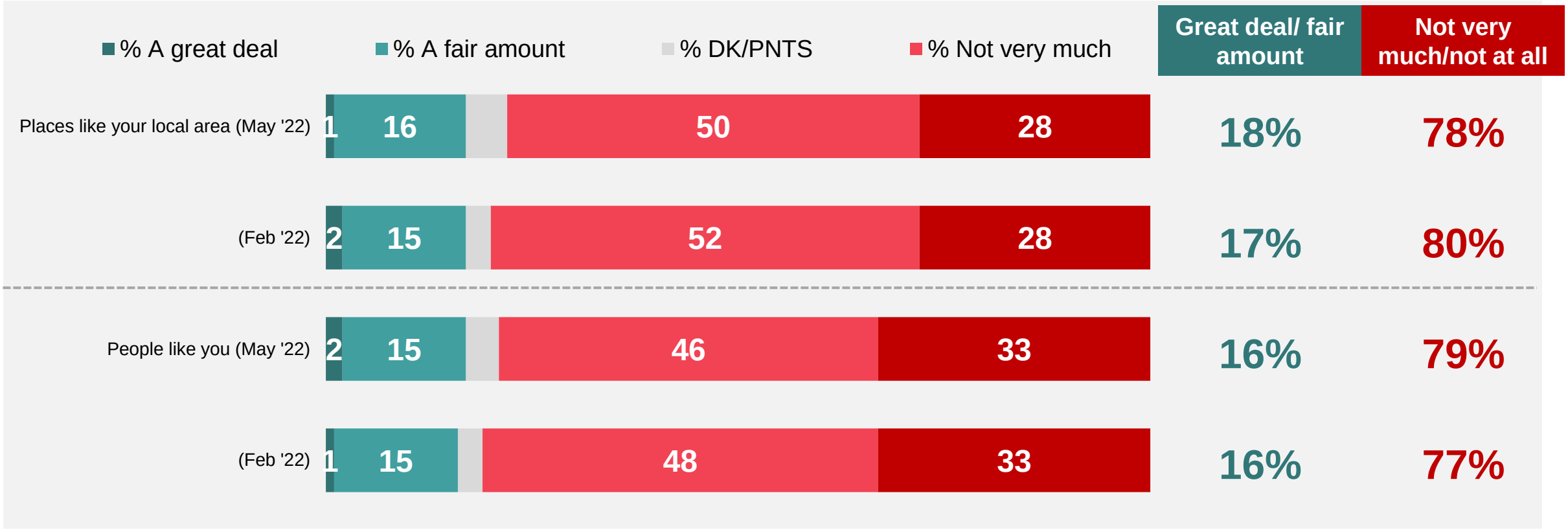
Eight in ten believe the government doesn't care very much about people like them or places like their local area

How much, if at all, do you think the government cares about each of the following?



Base: All UK adults 16+ (12088)
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

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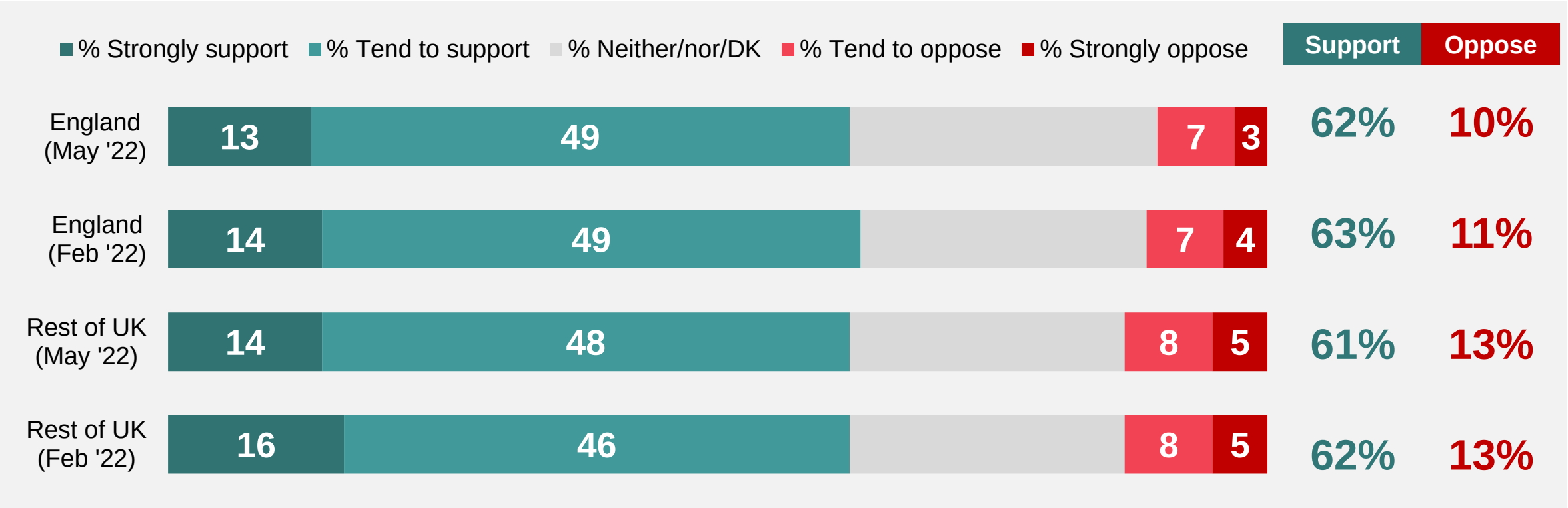
There is a mandate for local decision making, both in England and for the rest of the UK

To what extent, if at all, would you support or oppose each of the following? Local authorities in your region being given more control over decisions such as public spending in your local area, and over local public transport and public services like policing



Base: All UK adults 16+ (12088): England (8703), rest of UK (3385)| Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

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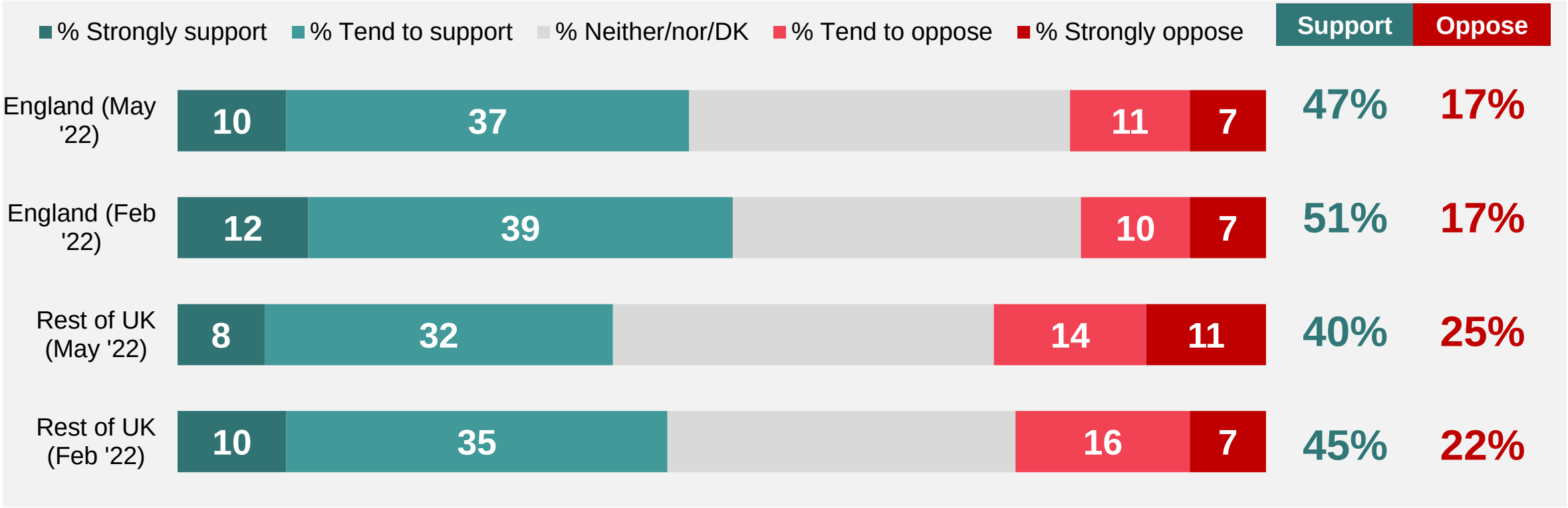
Half support directly-elected Mayors, though this has slightly decreased

To what extent, if at all, would you support or oppose each of the following? Having a directly elected mayor in your region or county with more control over decisions such as public spending in your local area, and over local public transport and public services like policing



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How did we put together the Index?

In the next section, we present the **Ipsos Levelling Up Index**, which consists of a score (between +200 and -200) for each of the 12 missions, which can be measured nationally, regionally or for sub-sections of the population.

The Index scores are based on **a survey of the general public on Ipsos' online random probability UK KnowledgePanel.** The most recent data shown in this report was collected between 19-25 May 2022.

Some of the survey questions measure respondents' **attitudes and opinions**, others their **reported behaviour**. Responses to the questions relevant to each mission are combined to calculate the overall scores. (Further details of how these are calculated are provided later in this report.)

We believe this Index will help to gauge the **impact and progress of the Levelling Up missions**. Some of the missions are directly related to public perceptions, while others are ultimately based on more objective targets, but nevertheless the public's satisfaction with the progress being made is one useful indicator of whether the policy is going well or badly.

The tables on the next pages show the questions which have been asked to measure each mission, followed by an **overview of the index scores for the 12 missions** for the UK as a whole.

In each case, **the higher the score, the more positive** the public perceptions associated with that mission. Broadly speaking, a score above zero indicates that positive perceptions outweigh the negative ones and vice versa.

Because of the diverse nature of the various missions, the survey questions associated with each are different, and the score on one mission cannot be considered directly comparable to the score on another; nevertheless, where scores are high on one mission and low on another this is indicative of comparative performance or the scale of the challenges to be faced.

It should be borne in mind that although the measurements have been made across the UK in each case, some of the missions cover devolved issues where the UK government's responsibility extends only to England.

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Survey questions used for each mission:

Pay, employment & productivity	R&D investment	Public transport	Internet	Primary schools	Skills training
Pay: How you feel about your household's income nowadays?	Satisfaction with how much research and innovation there seems to be in projects that improve the economy in your local area	Frequency of travel in and around your local area using rail links, local bus services	Satisfaction with internet access in your local area	Satisfaction with the quality of local primary schools	Satisfaction with opportunities for work placements, apprenticeships and training for 16-24 year-olds
How your household income compares to... …the average for other people in your local area …the national average	Satisfaction with government spending on the economy in your area	Rating of public transport in 'your region' for each of: • The ease of making journeys within your local area using public transport • The cost of making journeys within your local area using public transport • The time it takes to make journeys within your local area using public transport	How do you access the internet when you are outside your home? 3G/4G/5G mobile data	To what extent do you think primary schools in your local area are good or poor at ensuring children reach a good standard in reading, writing and maths?	Satisfaction with further education for adults (including those without A-levels or equivalent opportunities) to develop their skills and training in the local area
Employment: Satisfaction with the availability of jobs in local area		Satisfaction with each of the following in your local area: • Motorways and A-roads • Quality of local cycle routes			
Satisfaction with the opportunities for work placements, apprenticeships and training for 16-24 year-olds		Agreement that you feel able to walk or cycle to work or for leisure from home			

Those in green represent added/amended questions to the index from the baseline wave in February.

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Survey questions used for each mission:

Life expectancy	Wellbeing	Pride in place	Homes	Crime	Devolution
In general, how would you describe your physical health	On a scale of '0' to '10', … • how satisfied are you with your life nowadays? • to what extent do you feel that things you do in your life are worthwhile? • how happy did you feel yesterday? • how anxious did you feel yesterday?	Satisfaction with… • your nearest town centre • cultural facilities such as museums, theatres and events in my local area	**First time buyers** Satisfaction with: • affordability of housing • the choice of housing	How worried, if at all, are you personally about being a victim of crime?	Support for local authorities in your region or county with more control over decisions such as public spending in your local area, and over local public transport and public services like policing
Satisfaction with: • access to NHS services when you need them in your local area • the quality of your GP • the quality of NHS hospitals • air quality in your local area • leisure centres • local cycle routes	In general, how would you describe your mental health?	Agreement that there are opportunities to take part in cultural events and activities in my local area	**Quality of (rented) homes** Satisfaction with: • the quality of your home • the warmth of your home • the energy efficiency of your home	What do you think has happened to crime over the past 12 months... • in the country as a whole? • in your local area ?	Support for having a directly-elected mayor in your region or county with more control over decisions such as public spending in your local area, and over local public transport and public services like policing
Frequency of cycling or walking in and around your local area	Satisfaction with your neighbourhood as a place to live	Agreement that…. • people in my local area pull together to improve it • people from different backgrounds get on well together in my local area • I am proud to live in my local area		What do you think has happened to the following types of crime over the past 12 months in your local area? Drug use, Robbery or theft, Anti-social behaviour, Burglary, Murder and manslaughter, Car crime, Gun crime, Sexual offences, Knife crime, Domestic abuse	How much, influence, if any, do you feel you have over decision making in... • your local area? • the country as a whole?
Agreement that I feel able to walk or cycle to work or for leisure from where I live	Satisfaction with access to green space in your local area	I would recommend my local area as a good place to live		Satisfaction with the quality of service provided by the Police	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your local Council runs things

Those in green represent added/amended questions to the index from the baseline wave in February.

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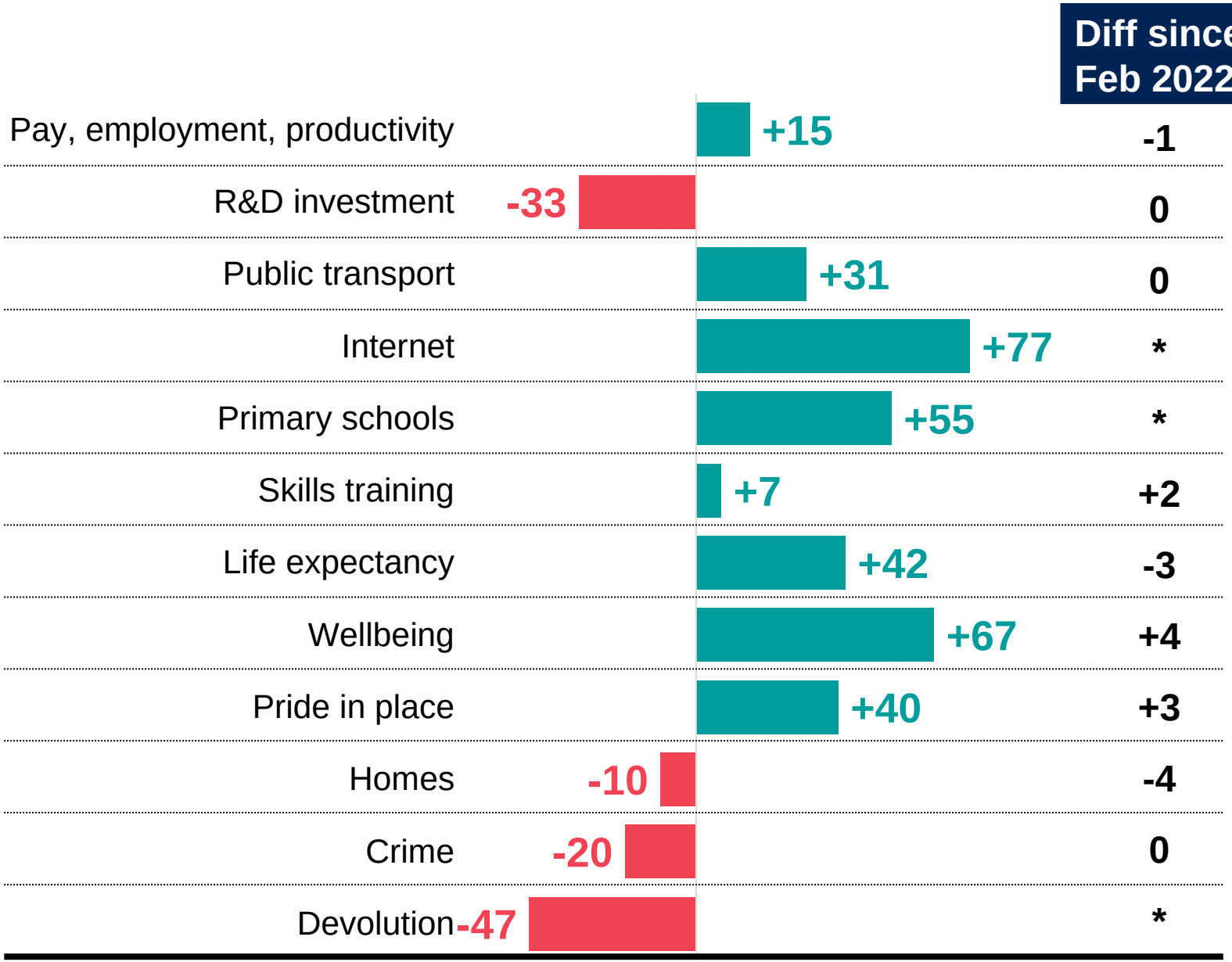
Overview: Index scores for the 12 missions

Overall, the Index scores for eight of the twelve missions remain positive, while the other four are negative.

The mission with the most negative score is *devolution*, followed by *R&D investment*, *crime*, and *homes*. *Internet*, *wellbeing* and *primary schools* have the most positive evaluations.

Moreover, it should be borne in mind that a high score does not necessarily indicate that completing that mission will be easier or is less urgent, since some of the missions aim explicitly at *improvement* of the existing situation. Satisfaction which is widespread but not universal may be a sign of precisely the inequalities that Levelling Up is intended to tackle.

The following charts look at each of the twelve missions in turn, and how views differ across the country.



Base: All UK adults 16+ (12088) | Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

**** Questions used for these mission index calculations have been amended between February and May 2022. When observing the original calculations the changes are as follows: Internet (-1), Primary schools (-4), Devolution (-4)***

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Mission 1:
Pay, employment & productivity

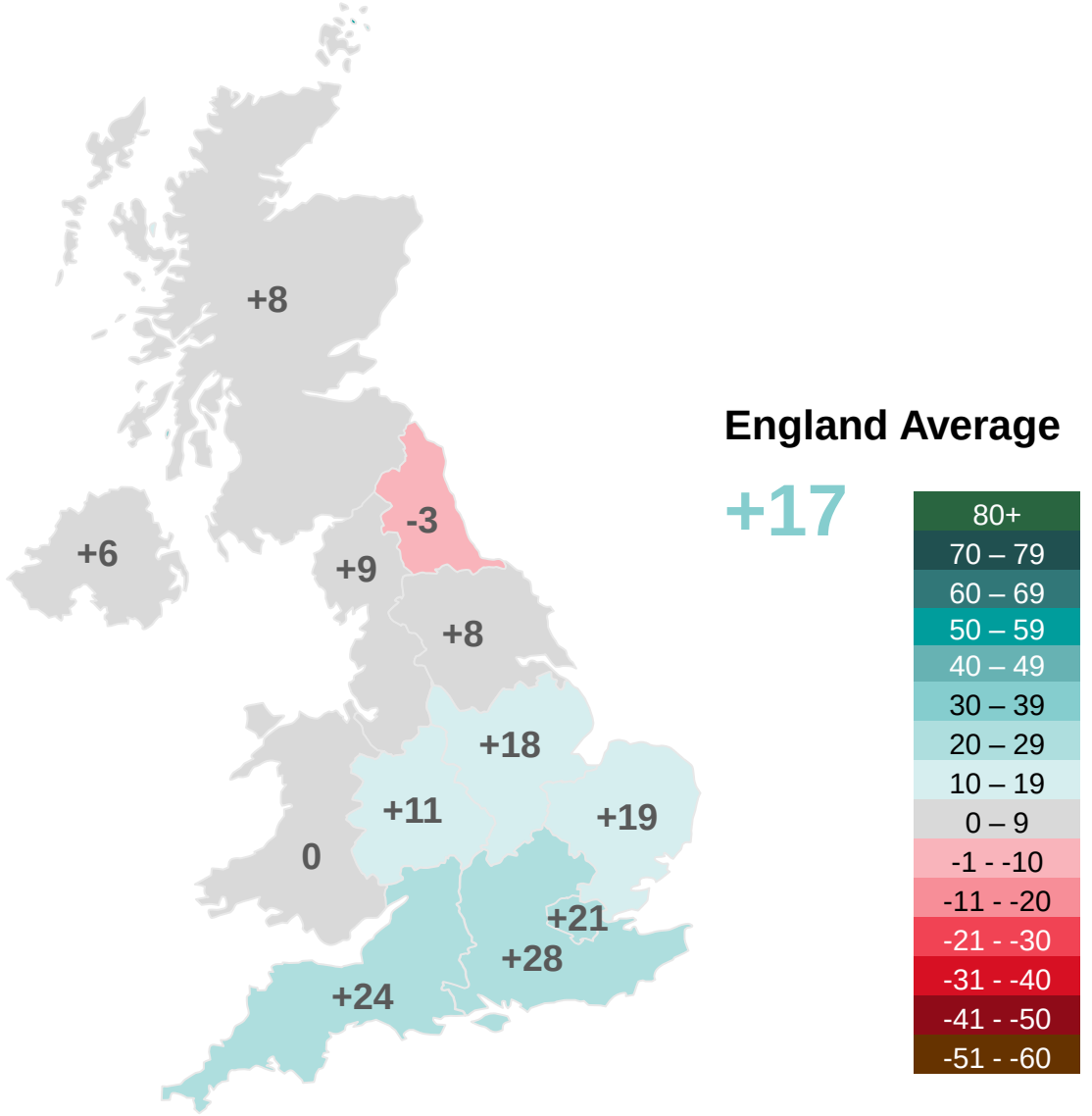
> *"By 2030, pay, employment and productivity will have risen in every area of the UK, with each containing a globally competitive city, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing."*

By nation, scores on the pay, employment and productivity mission are slightly positive, with the exception of Wales

Across Wales, satisfaction scores are now neutral (0), a 10 point improvement in the mission score since February 2022. There was little change overall in England and Scotland.

Across England scores are mostly positive apart from the North East, but there were noticeable decreases in the East of England (down 12 pts) and Yorkshire and the Humber (down 8pts).

More deprived areas are also notably more critical on this mission, by a score of -11 in the most deprived quintile compared to +34 in the least deprived.



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Methodology: The KnowledgePanel, Levelling Up Tracker
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

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Mission 2:
R&D investment

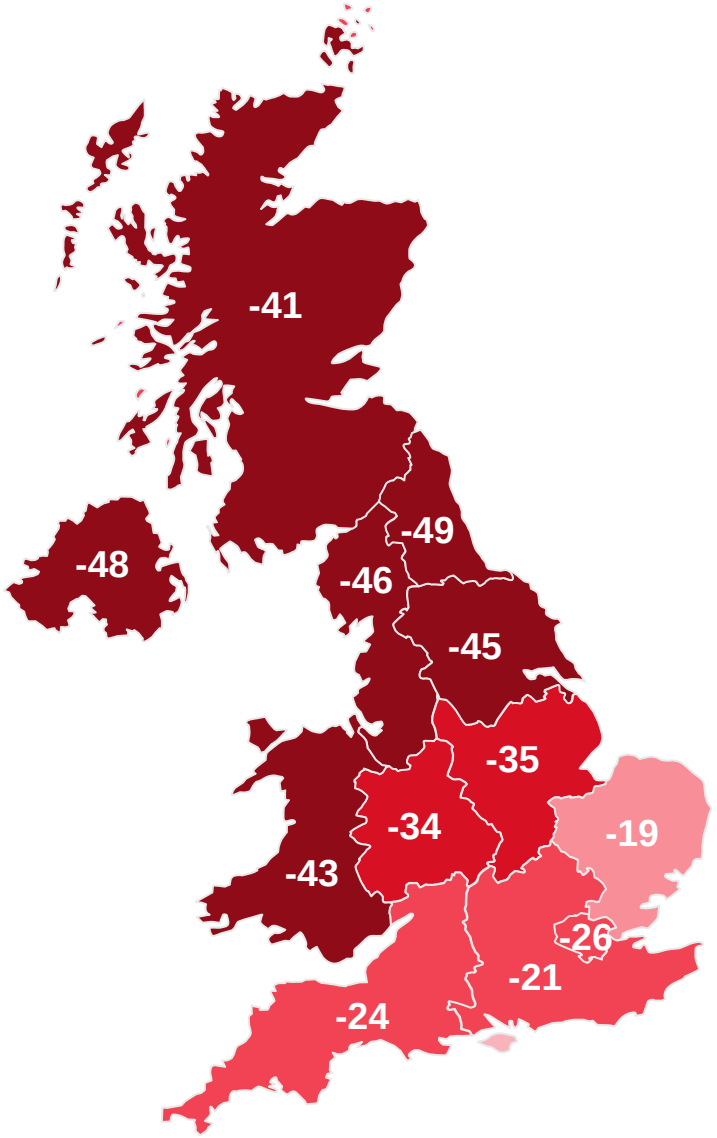
> *"By 2030, domestic public investment in R&D outside the Greater South East will increase by at least 40%, and over the Spending Review period by at least one third. This additional government funding will seek to leverage at least twice as much private sector investment over the long term to stimulate innovation and productivity growth."*

Perceptions of R&D investment are net negative across all UK nations (especially in Northern Ireland) and English regions (especially the North).

Perceptions in Northern Ireland have improved by a score of 9 pts, but remains amongst the most negative nation overall.

Those in the East of England have become more negative since February 2022 (-10 pts) although remain the least negative of all regions. On the other hand, the South West has seen an 8 pt improvement.

Again, residents in more deprived areas are particularly dissatisfied, with a score of -42 compared to -23 in the least deprived areas.



England Average

-32

80+
70 – 79
60 – 69
50 – 59
40 – 49
30 – 39
20 – 29
10 – 19
0 – 9
-1 - -10
-11 - -20
-21 - -30
-31 - -40
-41 - -50
-51 - -60

Base: All aged 16+ in England (8703); North East (421); North West (1140); Yorkshire and the Humber (859); East Midlands (782); West Midlands (848); East of England (1026); South East (1499); South West (1074); London (1054); Scotland (1949); Northern Ireland (848); Wales (588)
Methodology: The KnowledgePanel, Levelling Up Tracker
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

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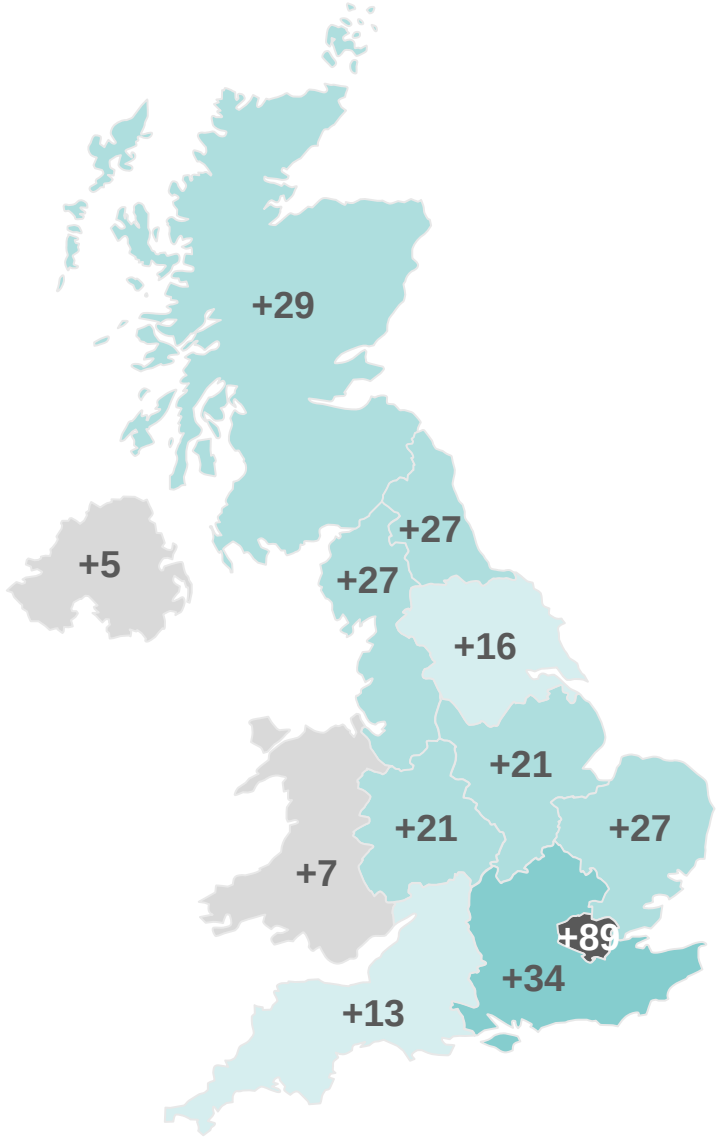
Mission 3:
Public transport

> *"By 2030, local public transport connectivity across the country will be significantly closer to the standards of London, with improved services, simpler fares and integrated ticketing."*

It is Wales, Northern Ireland and the South West where the score on the public transport mission is lowest. Scotland has seen a 10 pt improvement since February 2022.

Within England, London still has a far higher score than any other region as it did in February 2022. Residents in the South West are least content (public transport is a high priority for this group), followed by those living in Yorkshire and the Midlands.

Rural areas unsurprisingly continue to score much worse (-8) than urban areas (+41), and the most deprived groups score fractionally better than the least deprived (reflecting the fact that regular public transport use counts positively in calculating the Index score).



England Average

+34

80+
70 – 79
60 – 69
50 – 59
40 – 49
30 – 39
20 – 29
10 – 19
0 – 9
-1 - -10
-11 - -20
-21 - -30
-31 - -40
-41 - -50
-51 - -60

Base: All aged 16+ in England (8703); North East (421); North West (1140); Yorkshire and the Humber (859); East Midlands (782); West Midlands (848); East of England (1026); South East (1499); South West (1074); London (1054); Scotland (1949); Northern Ireland (848); Wales (588)
Methodology: The KnowledgePanel, Levelling Up Tracker
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

Mission 4:
Internet *

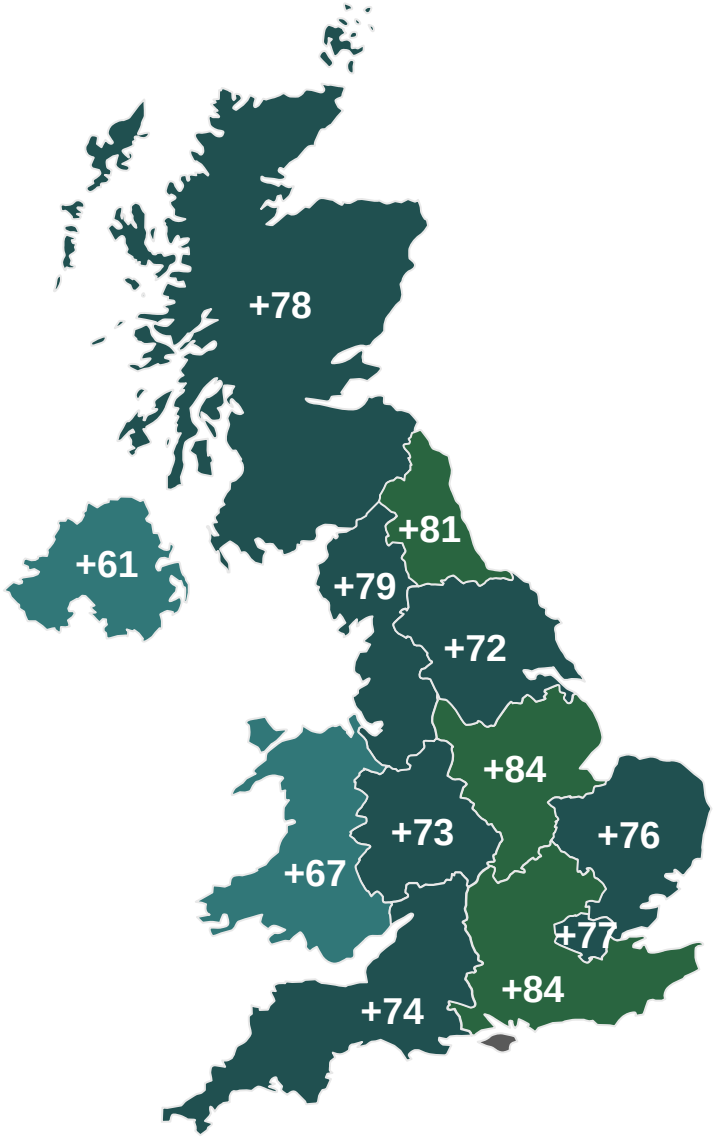
> *"By 2030, the UK will have nationwide gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage, with 5G coverage for the majority of the population."*

Mission 4 remains on the most positively evaluated mission with Scotland and England as whole having the highest scores while slightly lower in Wales and Northern Ireland.

The England average is +78 with the South-East and East Midlands posing the highest scores (+84 each) with the lowest score in Yorkshire (+72). This is still higher however than Wales (+67) and Northern Ireland (+61).

There is a slightly bigger gap between urban and rural dwellers, +81 compared to +58.

Questions for this mission's index calculations have been amended between February and May 2022. When observing the original calculations the overall score for this mission changed by -1 from February.



Base: All aged 16+ in England (8703); North East (421); North West (1140); Yorkshire and the Humber (859); East Midlands (782); West Midlands (848); East of England (1026); South East (1499); South West (1074); London (1054); Scotland (1949); Northern Ireland (848); Wales (588)
Methodology: The KnowledgePanel, Levelling Up Tracker
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

Mission 5:
Primary schools *

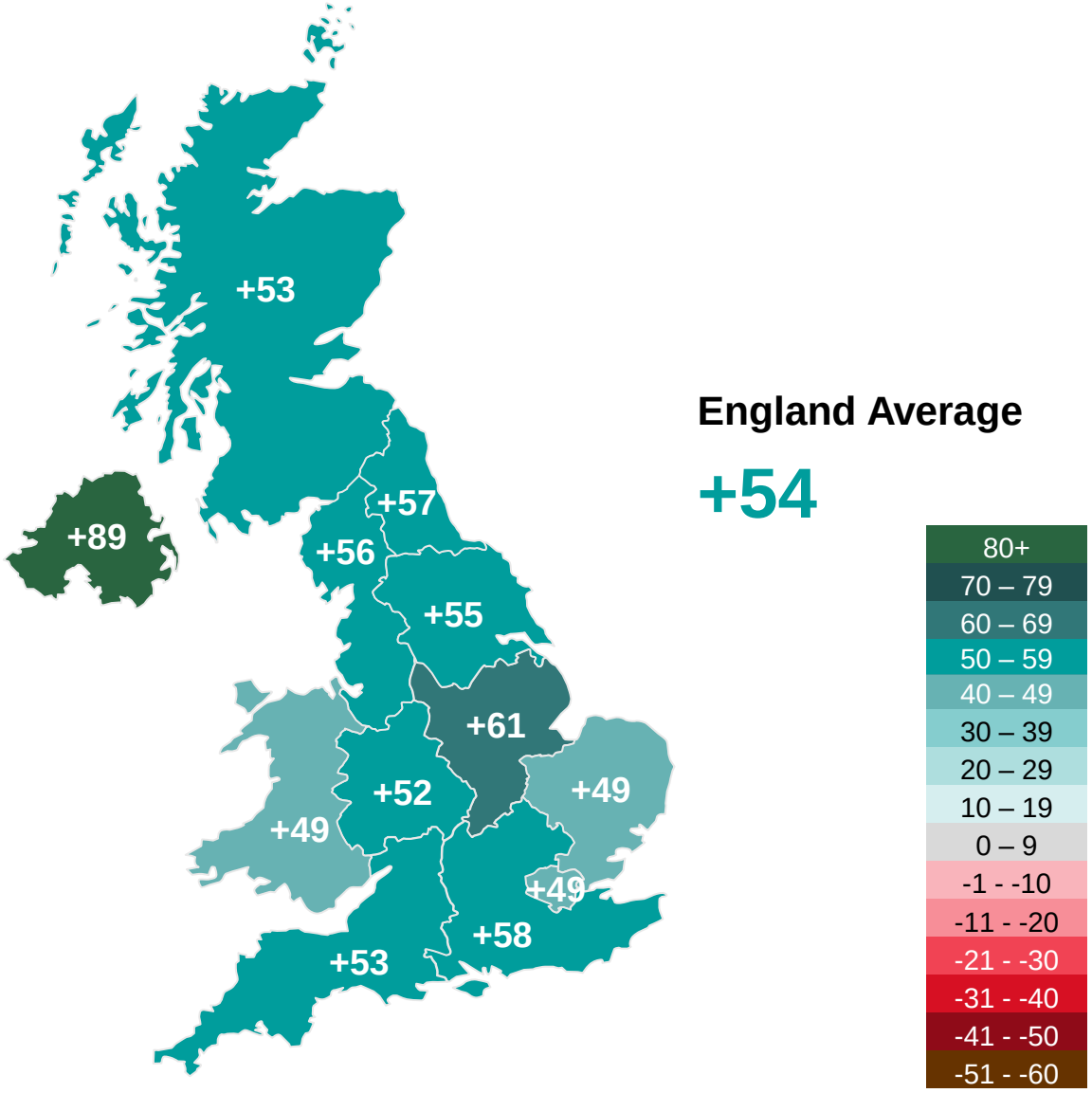
> *"By 2030, the number of primary school children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths will have significantly increased. In England, this will mean 90% of children will achieve the expected standard, and the percentage of children meeting the expected standard in the worst performing areas will have increased by over a third"*

Although positive, there is some variation amongst the various regions of the UK within mission 5. While England (+54) and Scotland (+53) share similar scores, Wales is slightly lower (+49) while Northern Ireland is much higher (+89).

Within England, the East Midlands maintains the highest mission 5 index score (+61) while London and the East of England have the lowest (+49 each).

Deprivation is also a significant factor for the mission 5 index score, ranging from +42 within the most deprived places to +69 for the least deprived.

Questions for this mission's index calculations have been amended between February and May 2022. When observing the original calculations the overall score for this mission changed by -4 from February.



Base: All aged 16+ in England (8703); North East (421); North West (1140); Yorkshire and the Humber (859); East Midlands (782); West Midlands (848); East of England (1026); South East (1499); South West (1074); London (1054); Scotland (1949); Northern Ireland (848); Wales (588)
Methodology: The KnowledgePanel, Levelling Up Tracker
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

*Questions included in the index calculation for these missions were amended between February and May 2022

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Mission 6:
Skills training

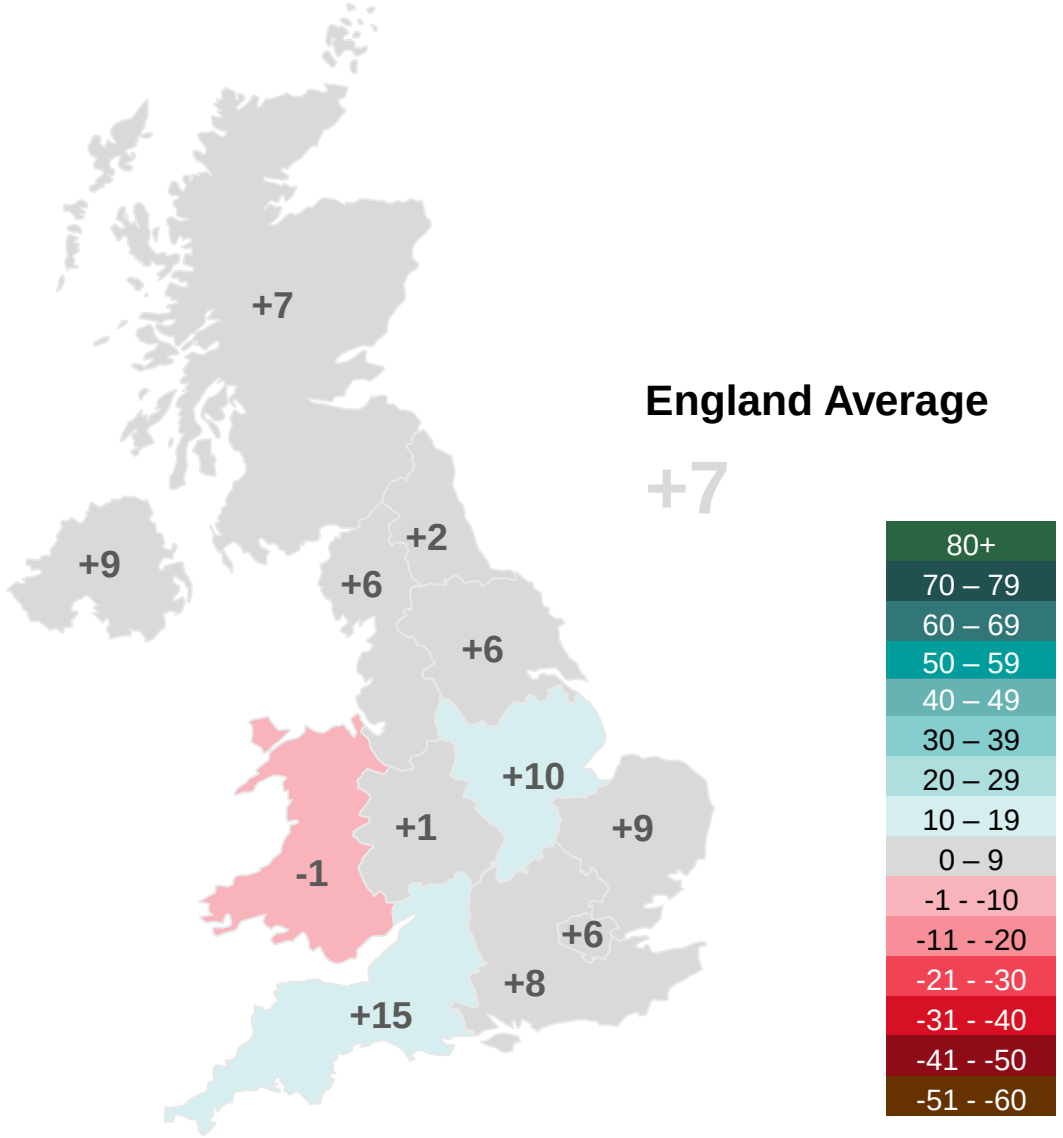
> ""By 2030, the number of people successfully completing high-quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the UK. In England, this will lead to 200,000 more people successfully completing high-quality skills training annually, driven by 80,000 more people completing courses in the lowest skilled areas."

Wales remains the only nation to score marginally negatively on skills and training, although saw an improvement of 9ppts since February 2022.

There have been notable swings in the North of England, with both the North West (+13 pts) and North East (+12 pts) now registering net positive scores compared with net negative scores in February 2022.

A more mixed picture emerged in the South, as the South West saw a 10pt increase, whereas the South East saw a 12 pt decrease.

There are incremental differences in deprivation levels, with the most deprived areas scoring +2 whilst the least deprived areas rated slightly higher at +13.



Base: All aged 16+ in England (8703); North East (421); North West (1140); Yorkshire and the Humber (859); East Midlands (782); West Midlands (848); East of England (1026); South East (1499); South West (1074); London (1054); Scotland (1949); Northern Ireland (848); Wales (588)
Methodology: The KnowledgePanel, Levelling Up Tracker
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

Mission 7:
Life expectancy

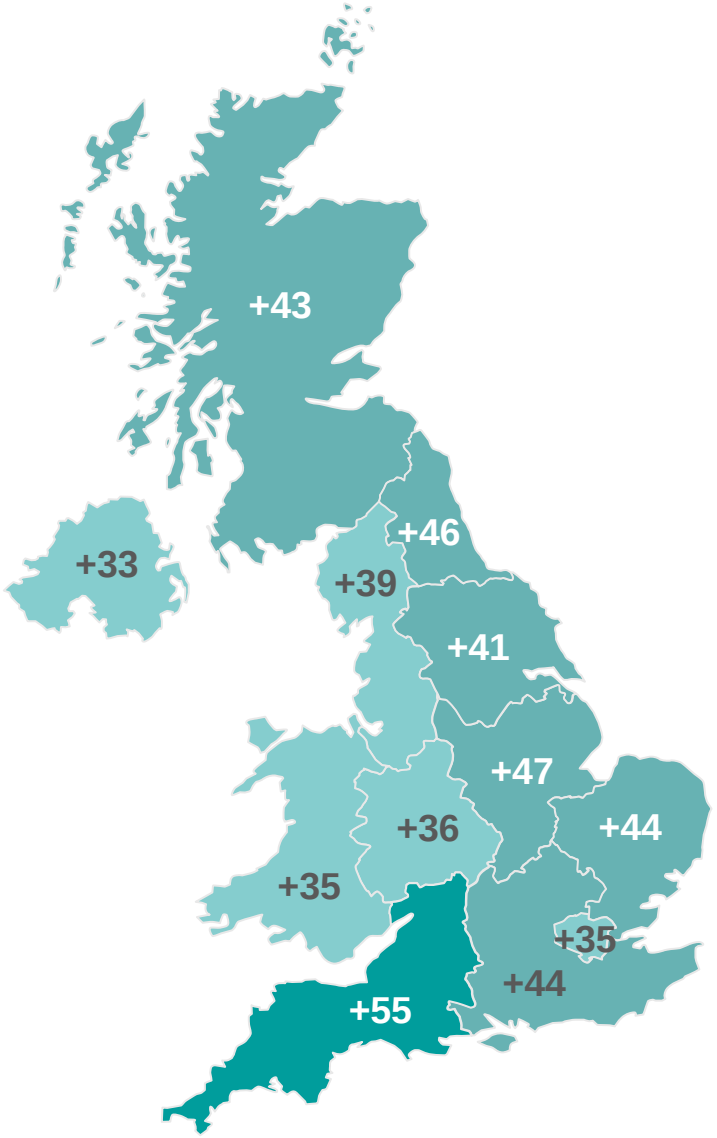
> *"By 2030, the gap in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) between local areas where it is highest and lowest will have narrowed, and by 2035 HLE will rise by five years."*

The mission 7 score draws on a large number of survey questions, combining perceptions of personal health, health service provision and opportunities to lead a healthy lifestyle. Northern Ireland and Wales score lower on this mission, compared with England and Scotland.

Overall country scores, and scores across the England regions remains largely in line with February 2022.

Within England, the South West still scores best, followed by the East Midlands, North East and South East/East of England; but even the worst-scoring regions, London and the West Midlands, are not very far behind.

Scores on this mission are strongly influenced by deprivation: the score for the most deprived quintile is only +25, while for the least deprived it is +50.



England Average

+42

80+
70 – 79
60 – 69
50 – 59
40 – 49
30 – 39
20 – 29
10 – 19
0 – 9
-1 - -10
-11 - -20
-21 - -30
-31 - -40
-41 - -50
-51 - -60

Base: All aged 16+ in England (8703); North East (421); North West (1140); Yorkshire and the Humber (859); East Midlands (782); West Midlands (848); East of England (1026); South East (1499); South West (1074); London (1054); Scotland (1949); Northern Ireland (848); Wales (588)
Methodology: The KnowledgePanel, Levelling Up Tracker
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

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Mission 8:
Wellbeing

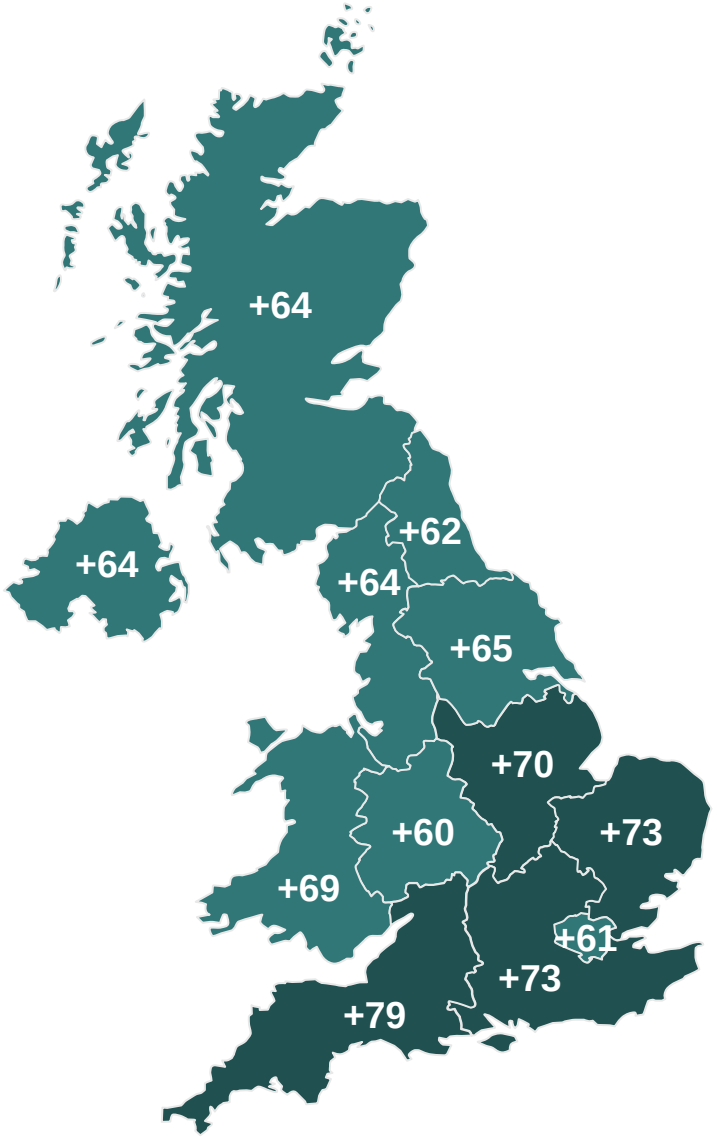
> *"By 2030, wellbeing will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing."*

The wellbeing Index score is another drawing on multiple measures. There is a consistent picture across the nations.

Within England, as is the case for heathy life expectancy, the South West has the top score (+79) which has increased by 5pts since February 2022. Other Southern regions also see the highest scores on this measure, South East +73, East of England +73.

The North East saw the most significant increase in positivity, with a 12pt increase since February 2022, bringing the region in line with much of the rest of the country.

Again, there is a clear difference by deprivation on this mission, with an index score of +43 in the most deprived areas, rising to +81 in the least deprived quintile.



England Average

+68

80+
70 – 79
60 – 69
50 – 59
40 – 49
30 – 39
20 – 29
10 – 19
0 – 9
-1 - -10
-11 - -20
-21 - -30
-31 - -40
-41 - -50
-51 - -60

Base: All aged 16+ in England (8703); North East (421); North West (1140); Yorkshire and the Humber (859); East Midlands (782); West Midlands (848); East of England (1026); South East (1499); South West (1074); London (1054); Scotland (1949); Northern Ireland (848); Wales (588)
Methodology: The KnowledgePanel, Levelling Up Tracker
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

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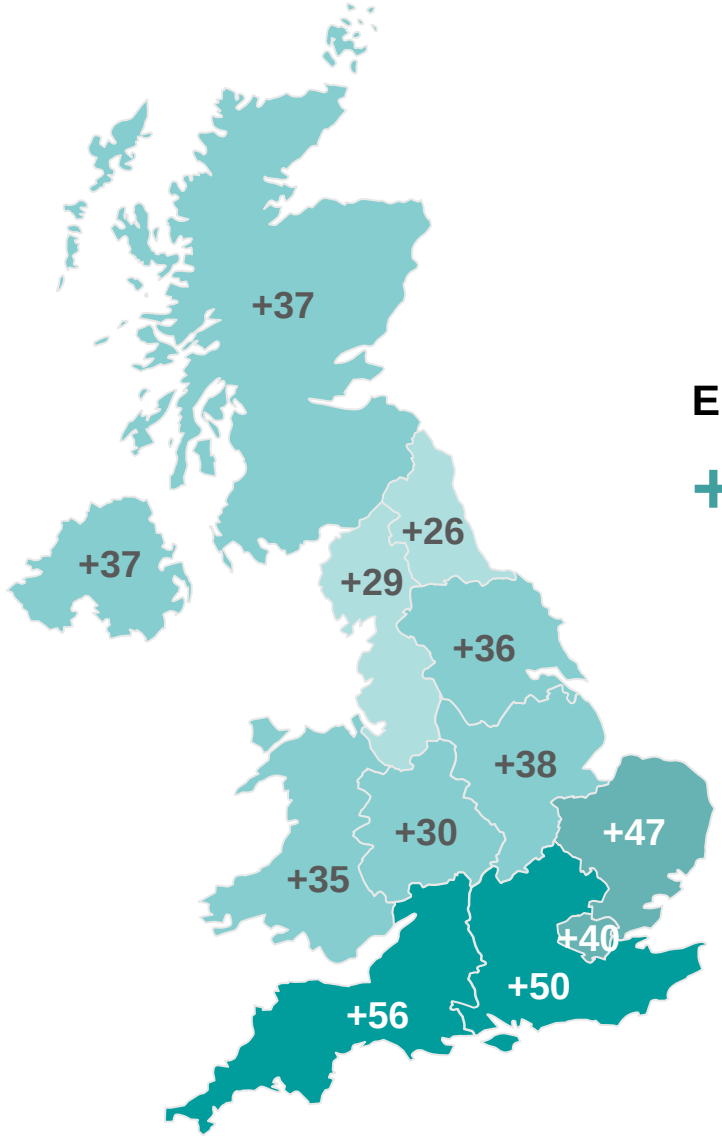
Mission 9:
Pride in place

> *"By 2030, pride in place, such as people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing"*

Whilst the average score across England, Northern Ireland and Scotland remained in line with February 2022, Wales saw a positive increase of 12pts.

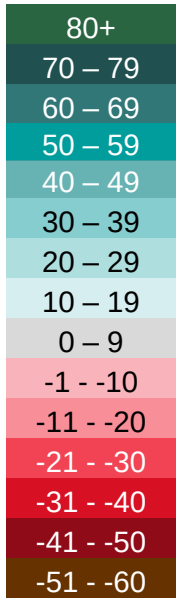
Within England, public perceptions on pride and place is most positive in the South West of England which saw 10 pt increase since February 2022. Overall, the South scored more positively than the North of England.

Of all the Levelling Up missions, this one shows the biggest impact of deprivation: the most deprived quintile scores only +12, while the next quintile (still more deprived than average) scores +32; the least deprived areas average +55.



England Average

+40



Base: All aged 16+ in England (8703); North East (421); North West (1140); Yorkshire and the Humber (859); East Midlands (782); West Midlands (848); East of England (1026); South East (1499); South West (1074); London (1054); Scotland (1949); Northern Ireland (848); Wales (588)
Methodology: The KnowledgePanel, Levelling Up Tracker
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

Mission 10:
Homes

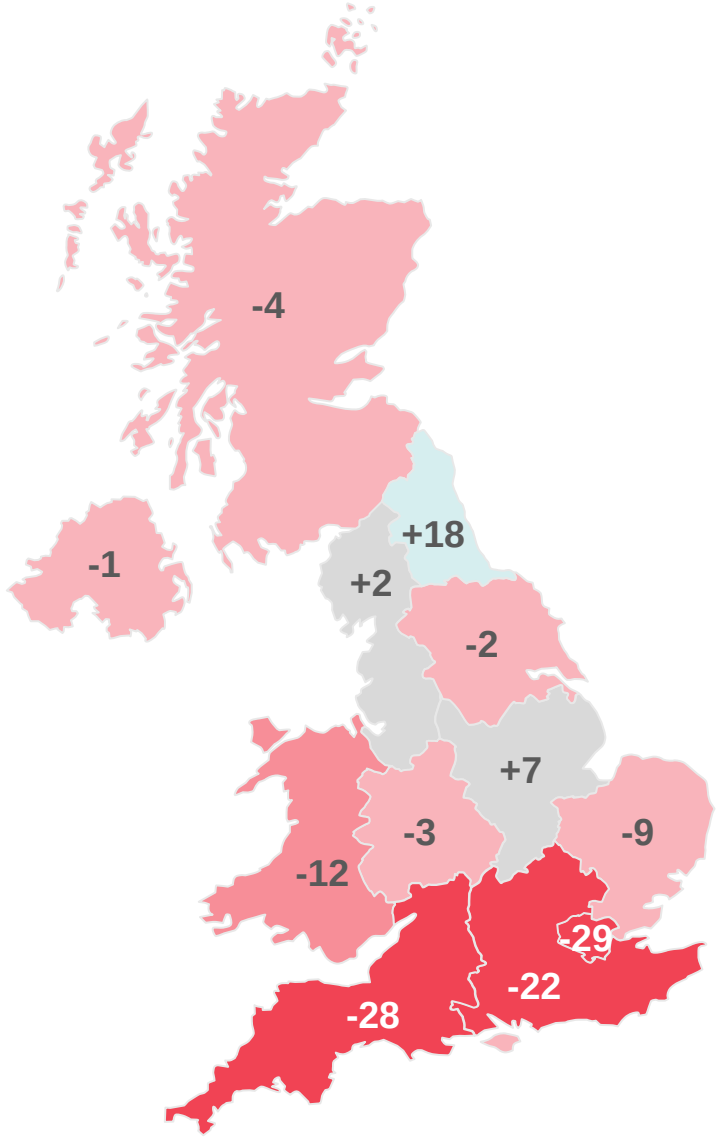
> *"By 2030 renters will have a secure path to ownership with the number of first-time buyers increasing in all areas; and the government's ambition is for the number of non-decent rented homes to have fallen by 50%, with the biggest improvements in the lowest performing areas."*

Northern Ireland was previously the only nation to score positively on this mission (+9 February 2022), but has decreased 10 pts to -1.

Within England, the regional pattern for this mission is distinctive, with scores being higher in the North of England than the outh. London remains the lowest scorer although the South West is just a single point better off having decreased 8 pts since February 2022.

The North East in particular saw a significant increase from net 0, to +18 in the latest index. Similarly, the North West moved to a positive score.

However the West Midlands now scores negatively, as does the East of England- both previously having net positive ratings.



England Average

-11

Base: All aged 16+ in England (8703); North East (421); North West (1140); Yorkshire and the Humber (859); East Midlands (782); West Midlands (848); East of England (1026); South East (1499); South West (1074); London (1054); Scotland (1949); Northern Ireland (848); Wales (588)
Methodology: The KnowledgePanel, Levelling Up Tracker
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

Mission 11:
Crime

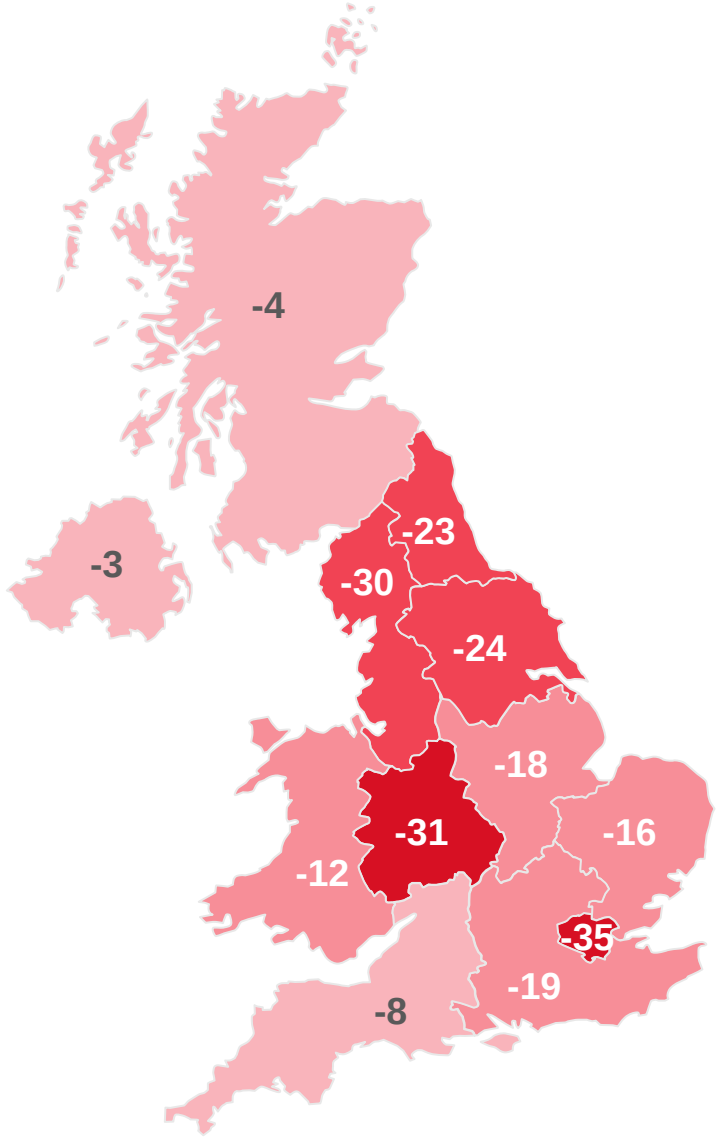
> *"By 2030, homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime will have fallen, focused on the worst-affected areas."*

In line with February 2022, every nation has a net negative score for this mission, but it is England which scores worst on concern about crime; both Scotland and Northern Ireland are particularly better

Within England, London has the worst score of -35 while the North West and the West Midlands also score similarly. However, London and the North East showed signs of marginal improvement since February 2022

Urban areas score worse than rural areas (-24 compared to -4), and more deprived areas worse than less deprived areas (-37 compared to -12).

As in February 2022, in every region, people thought crime had gone up more across the country than in their own area, and although a majority were not personally worried about being a victim of crime, London was not as much of an outlier. Reducing the level of crime and anti-social behaviour was the top cited priority for local area improvement, although saw a 2 pt decrease since February 2022.



Base: All aged 16+ in England (8703); North East (421); North West (1140); Yorkshire and the Humber (859); East Midlands (782); West Midlands (848); East of England (1026); South East (1499); South West (1074); London (1054); Scotland (1949); Northern Ireland (848); Wales (588)
Methodology: The KnowledgePanel, Levelling Up Tracker
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

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Mission 12:
Devolution *

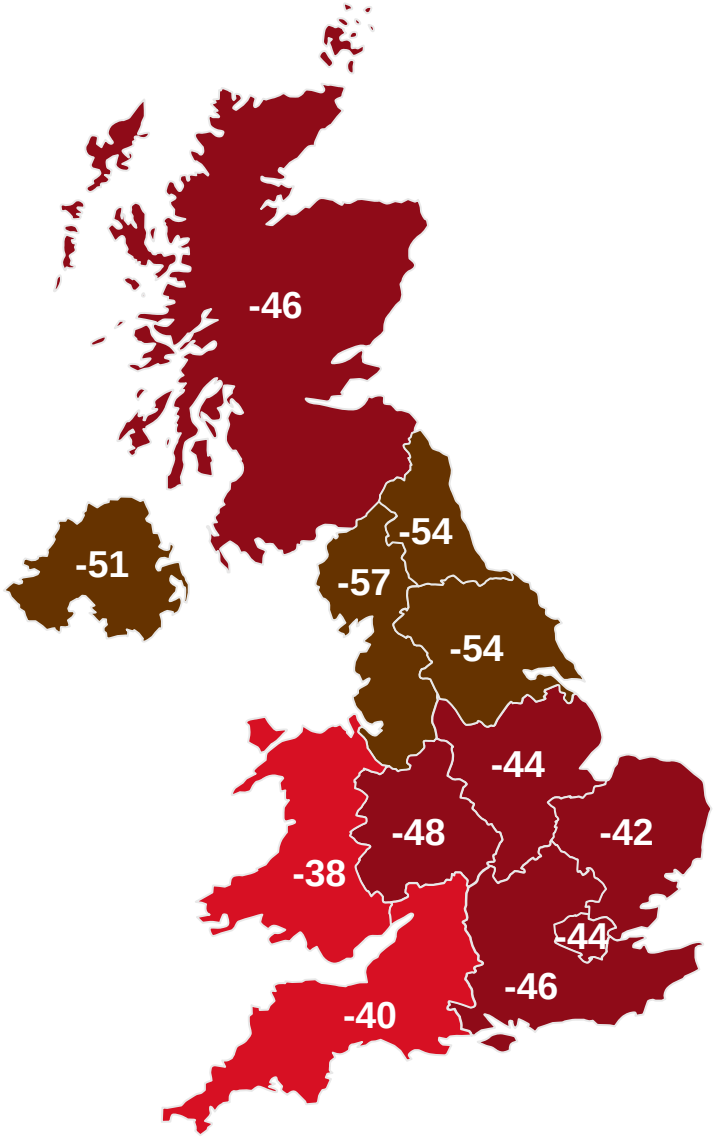
> *"By 2030, every part of England that wants one will have a devolution deal with powers at or approaching the highest level of devolution and a simplified, long-term funding settlement"*

Across the country there is a feeling that current devolution arrangements can be improved amongst the wider public. When looking at the four nations, those in Wales have the least pessimistic score (-38) compared with Scotland (-46), England (-47) and Northern Ireland (-51).

In England, regions in the North score more negatively when compared to those in the South, potentially demonstrating a stronger appetite for improved local decision making. The North West (-57) holds the most negative score while the South West (-40) has the least negative score within England.

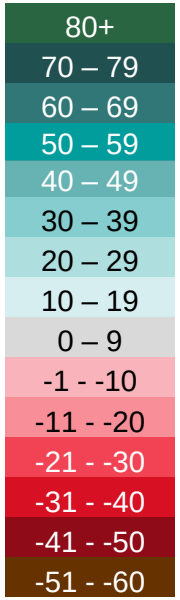
In every region, support for increasing local authority powers is higher than support for mayoral powers.

Questions for this mission's index calculations have been amended between February and May 2022. When observing the original calculations the overall score for this mission changed by -4 from February.



England Average

-47



Base: All aged 16+ in England (8703); North East (421); North West (1140); Yorkshire and the Humber (859); East Midlands (782); West Midlands (848); East of England (1026); South East (1499); South West (1074); London (1054); Scotland (1949); Northern Ireland (848); Wales (588)
Methodology: The KnowledgePanel, Levelling Up Tracker
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

*Questions included in the index calculation for these missions were amended between February and May 2022

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Ipsos Levelling Up Index and rurality

As the chart on the next page shows, there are some substantial differences in scores on the various missions between urban and rural areas.

In many cases rural dwellers are happier than urban dwellers. **But for the missions where rural areas are at a natural disadvantage because of distance and remoteness, rural scores are significantly worse than urban ones**.

This is most true in the case of **public transport**, where the urban score is +42 and the rural score is -9. However, as can be seen in the regional charts, this difference is strongly driven by high scores in London, and the gap between other urban areas and rural areas is smaller.

Similarly, the rural scores surpass the urban ones most substantially on **crime**, where London, the West Midlands and North West stand out as having a worse score than other areas.

The other policy field where rural areas underperform compared to urban areas is **internet** provision (again, understandably).

Perhaps surprisingly, there is no significant difference on **homes**. This reflects perceptions of affordability: the worst scores are in London and the South West.

Urban and rural areas

Base: All UK adults 16+ (12088)
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

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Ipsos Levelling Up Index and deprivation

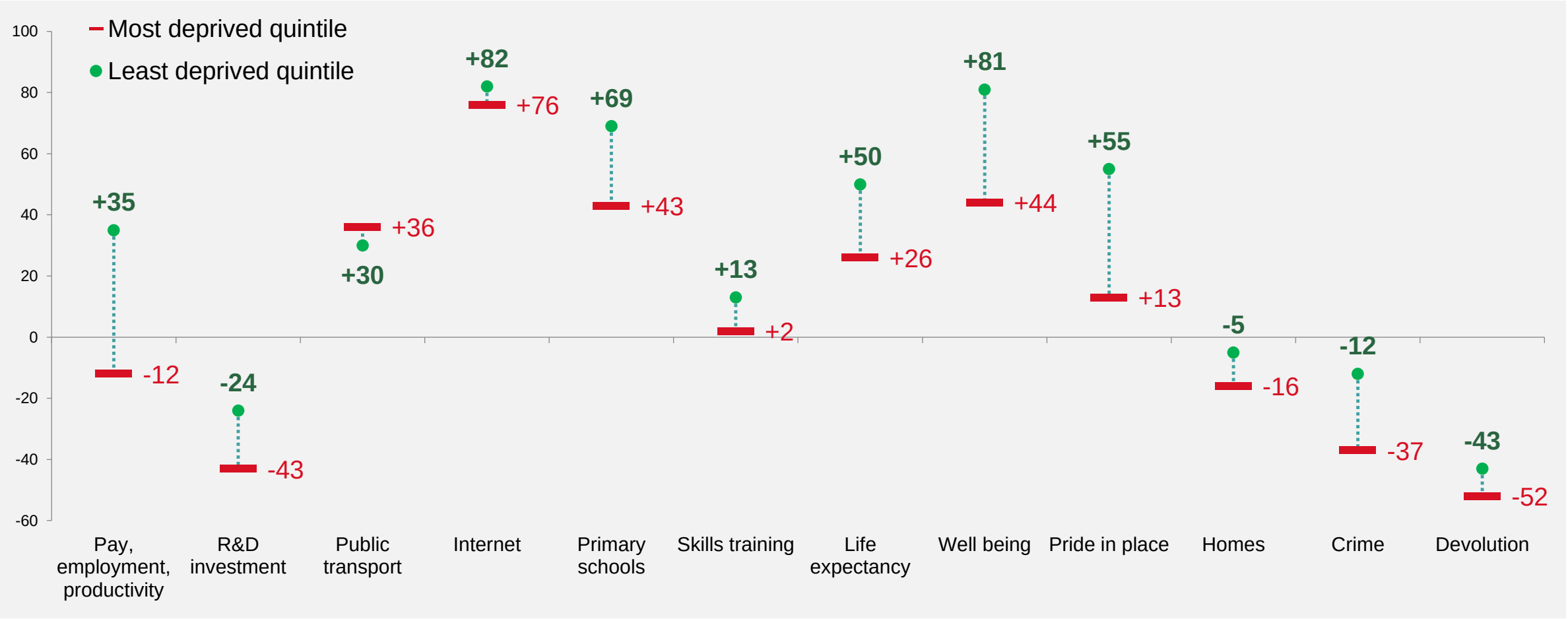
The chart on the next page compares the index scores of the most-deprived and least-deprived areas on each of the twelve missions. As might be expected, there are substantial differences on many of the missions, and in each case **where there is a big difference it is the most deprived areas which have the lowest scores**.

The biggest gap is on **pay, employment and productivity** where those in the least deprived areas are more likely to be more positive and those in the most deprived areas are more likely to have more negative sentiment (which probably directly reflects the personal circumstances of respondents) and on **pride in place** and **wellbeing**.

There is also **a clear difference on primary schools** with those in the least deprived areas much more likely to be satisfied with the schools in their local area than those in the most deprived areas.

On **devolution**, residents in the most deprived areas are slightly more unhappy than those in the least deprived areas, whilst on **internet** provision and public transport they are more similar, with high positive scores.

Most-deprived and least-deprived areas (IMD)



Base: All UK adults 16+ (4162)
Fieldwork dates: 19-25 May 2022

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Ipsos Levelling Up Index and the ONS Area Classifications

Finally, we compare the index scores for the eight ONS Supergroups, a classification of areas on the basis of similarities as judged from the 2011 Census (see appendix for more details).
While the broad pattern of scoring tends to be the same across all these types of neighbourhoods (e.g. internet access and primary schools score relatively well compared to devolution), there is nevertheless still a good deal of variation.

The biggest range by some way is on public transport, where the **most urban areas** (London Cosmopolitan and Ethnically Diverse Metropolitan Living groups) score highest. **The London Cosmopolitan group also scores highly on pride in place** along with Affluent England and Business, Education and Heritage Centres. However, more highly urban areas tend to score worse than average on crime and homes, while the London Cosmopolitan area also gets low scores on primary schools.

The two most rural classifications (**Countryside Living and Town & Country Living**) score worst on public transport.

The **Services and Industrial Legacy group (often traditional mining areas) tends to score lower** across a range of missions, notably the economic ones of pay, employment & productivity and R&D investment, and pride in place.

On the other hand, the **Affluent England** grouping expresses better scores than average on pay, employment & productivity and pride in place.

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Index scores by ONS area classification

Substantially **above** overall average
Substantially **below** overall average

	Pay, employment & productivity	R&D investment	Public transport	Internet	Primary schools	Skills training	Life expectancy	Wellbeing	Pride in place	Homes	Crime	Devolution
All UK	**+15**	**-33**	**+31**	**+77**	**+55**	**+7**	**+42**	**+67**	**+40**	**-10**	**-20**	**-47**
Affluent England	**+36**	**-12**	**+32**	**+83**	**+68**	**+13**	**+49**	**+77**	**+59**	**-23**	**-13**	**-41**
Business, Education and Heritage Centres	**+18**	**-26**	**+46**	**+84**	**+47**	**+16**	**+44**	**+59**	**+55**	**-13**	**-19**	**-49**
Countryside Living	**+12**	**-41**	**+1**	**+66**	**+53**	**0**	**+49**	**+82**	**+50**	**-16**	**-5**	**-45**
Ethnically Diverse Metropolitan Living	**+11**	**-33**	**+74**	**+75**	**+48**	**+3**	**+30**	**+56**	**+25**	**-26**	**-42**	**-45**
London Cosmopolitan	**+26**	**-15**	**+103**	**+76**	**+38**	**+8**	**+44**	**+59**	**+64**	**-37**	**-26**	**-44**
Services and Industrial Legacy	**-1**	**-52**	**+23**	**+78**	**+55**	**+1**	**+35**	**+59**	**+16**	**+4**	**-26**	**-52**
Town and Country Living	**+23**	**-32**	**+11**	**+75**	**+68**	**+8**	**+46**	**+75**	**+41**	**+3**	**-12**	**-46**
Urban Settlements	**+8**	**-37**	**+32**	**+80**	**+49**	**+7**	**+36**	**+64**	**+23**	**-1**	**-34**	**-47**

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Appendix: technical details

The Ipsos Levelling Up Index

Technical Note

- This report presents the findings of the first wave of research. It is intended to repeat these measurements at regular intervals in the future to track the progress of the Levelling Up strategy.
- The first survey was conducted on 19-25 May 2022, using the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel (a random probability internet-based panel)
- Interviews were conducted online with adults aged 16+ across the United Kingdom. A total of 12,088 participants were interviewed, including 8,703 in England, 1,949 in Scotland, 588 in Wales and 848 in Northern Ireland. Data were weighted to match the profile of the population.

Because some of the issues covered by the Levelling Up missions include policy areas where the primary responsibility has been devolved to the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and/or the Northern Ireland Executive, the UK Government may have direct power only over the position in England. Therefore, where relevant, figures are shown for responses across England as well as across the UK as a whole.

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The Ipsos Levelling Up Index

Calculation

- **Each response to a question has a point-score value between +200 and -200**: eg “very satisfied” +200, “fairly satisfied” +100, “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied” 0, “fairly dissatisfied” -100, “very dissatisfied” -200 and “Don’t know” 0.
- **Each Index is calculated as a weighted average of scores on all the questions relevant to that mission** (with a higher weight given for more important questions or those more closely related to the key objectives).
- **The Index score on each mission for any group of the population** (a region, for example, or a demographic group) is simply the average Index score on that mission of all survey participants within that group.
- **The higher the Index score the better.** A positive score (i.e. a score above zero) indicates that there are more and/or stronger satisfied responses than dissatisfied ones. (One “very satisfied” score cancels out two “fairly dissatisfied” scores, and vice versa.)
- **A difference of 1 in the Index score is the equivalent of a one-step difference in responses by 1% of survey participants**. In other words, if 3% of the public were to change from being “fairly satisfied” to “very satisfied” on all the questions related to one of the missions, the overall Index score for that mission would increase by 3 points.

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Deprivation and rurality

Deprivation

Some of the analysis in this report refers to "most deprived" and "least deprived" groups. This is based on the ONS mid year population estimates in 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), which classifies all neighbourhoods in the country on the basis of a number of criteria and gives them a deprivation score. Neighbourhoods are classified into five groups, each having an equal total population, on the basis of this IMD score, from lowest to highest.

Rurality

Reference is made in this report to urban and rural areas. This is based on the ONS 2020 mid-year population estimate urban/rural classifications (based on Lower Super Output Areas, LSOAs) for England. Under this classification, 17.1% of the population in England, lives in rural areas while the remainder live in urban areas.

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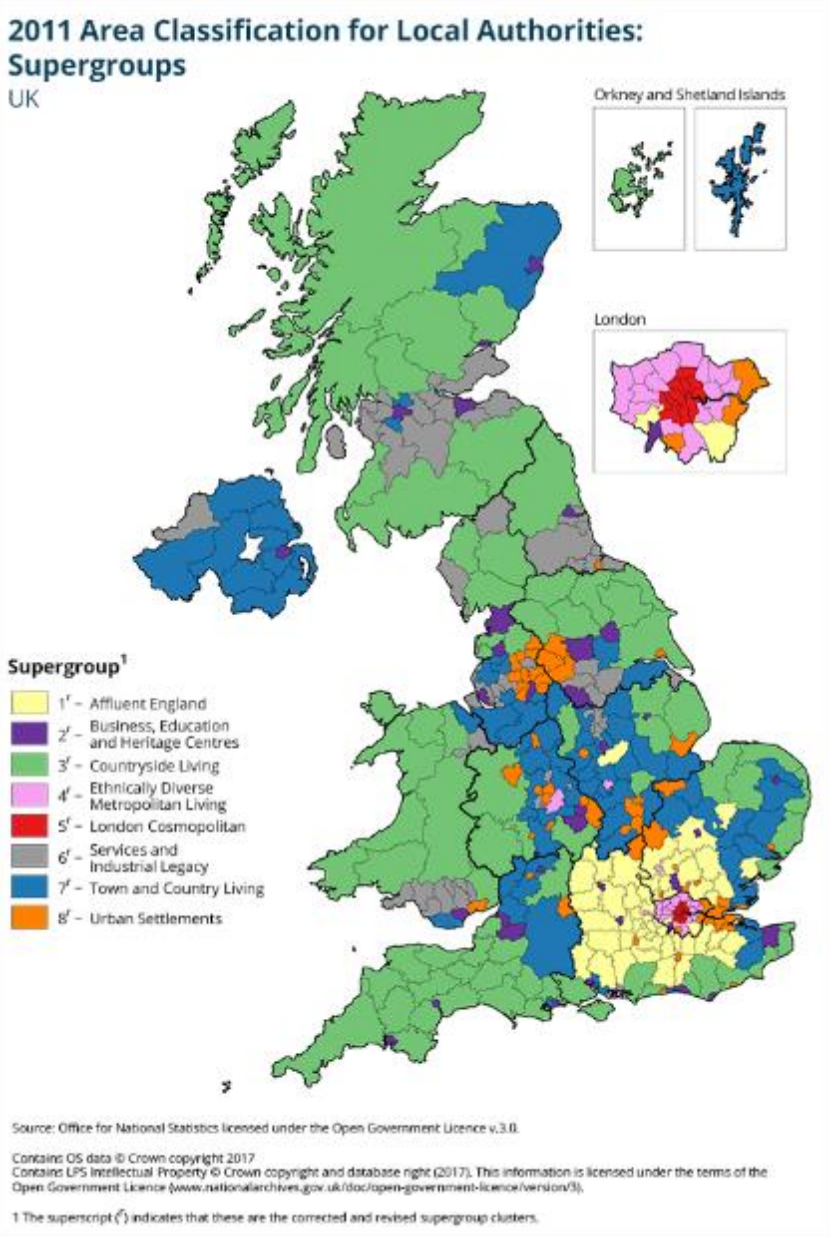
ONS Area Classifications	Brief description
Affluent England	Typically live largely in counties in England near to and around London – Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Kent, Oxfordshire and Surrey
Business, education and heritage centres	Live within larger cities throughout the UK, with either country and/or regional importance.
Countryside living	Characterised by living in rural areas with a low population density and a higher median age compared with the UK as a whole.
Ethnically diverse metropolitan living	Tend to live in Inner and Outer London Boroughs. Areas outside London include Birmingham, Leicester, Luton and Slough
London cosmopolitan	Located within 12 Inner London boroughs, characterised by a very high population density and a relatively low median age
Services and industrial Legacy	Predominately in the Central Belt in Scotland, northern England and south Wales – all traditional mining areas.
Town and country living	Represented within all countries of the UK and English regions with the exception of the North East and London. The population density is below the UK as a whole.
Urban settlements	Confined to the nine English regions and Wales (Newport) only. The areas are characterised by a slightly younger age structure than nationally



In this deck some of the data is broken down using the Office for National Statistics Area Classifications – please see the table and map for more details.

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For more information

Nicola Moss
Director
Public Affairs
Nicola.moss@Ipsos.com

Trinh Tu
Managing Director
Public Affairs
Trinh.tu@Ipsos.com

Gideon Skinner
Director
Public Affairs
Gideon.skinner@Ipsos.com

Glenn Gottfried
Associate Director
Public Affairs
Glenn.gottfried@Ipsos.com

Holly Day
Senior Research Executive
Public Affairs
Holly.day@Ipsos.com