

## SCOTLAND OFFERS BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE THAN ENGLAND - NEW REGIONAL SOCIAL PROGRESS INDEX

- *Scotland & Northern Ireland outperform England on social progress measures*
  - *New regional index ranks Inner London behind 21 other UK regions*

**(00.01, October 11th 2016, BST)** Scotland offers a better quality of life than England according to a new index published today. The Social Progress Index assesses some of the key factors that shape people's lives including measures of health, safety, access to education and personal rights. It finds that England trails behind both Scotland and Northern Ireland, beating only Wales among the home nations. The findings - based on data collected from across 37 regions of the UK - are part of the EU Regional Social Progress Index, a new pan-EU initiative spearheaded by the European Commission and the Social Progress Imperative.

### Scotland tops the home nations, Wales finishes bottom

Rank	UK nation	Average SPI score* (out of 100)
1	Scotland	74.01
2	Northern Ireland	73.18
<i>n/a</i>	<i>London</i>	<i>72.82</i>
3	England (incl. London)	72.68
4	Wales	72.04

*\*The average score of regions within each nation.*

### Why is Scotland more socially progressive than England?

There are a number of measures on which Scots enjoy a better quality of life than the English:

- **Tolerance:** Defined a by wide range of indicators including tolerance towards minorities and homosexuals, attitudes towards people with disabilities and the extent of the gender gap, Scotland comes out on top.
- **Education:** On key measures including the attainment of degree-level (or equivalent) qualifications, the extent of lifelong learning (beyond formal education) and school enrollment rates both the Scots and Northern Irish outperform the English.
- **The environment:** The findings uncover a significant gap between Scotland and England on environmental quality, which looks at factors like air pollution and the degree to which natural habitats are protected. In fact, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland all perform better than England on this measure.
- **Personal freedom:** English people also enjoy less freedom. Defined by measures including the extent of young people not in education, employment or training and people's satisfaction with freedom to make life choices, Scots have the greatest personal freedom, again finishing top among the home nations. Northern Ireland is ranked 2nd on freedom, ahead of England in 3rd and Wales in 4th.

### But it's not all doom and gloom for the English

On several quality of life indicators England does outperform Scotland. On 'access to communications', which looks at things like whether people have home internet and broadband, England fares better than Scotland. Whilst, on personal safety measures (including traffic deaths), Scots are the worst performing nation in the UK (Wales finishes top on personal safety).

### How do Brits fare across the UK regions on key measures like broadband access, teenage pregnancy and life expectancy?

The data takes in a total of 50 separate indicators from measures including infant mortality, overcrowding, murder rates, access to residential broadband, air quality and tolerance. In other words, many of those things that define quality of life. Looking at three of these - broadband access, teenage pregnancies and life expectancy - how do the UK's regions differ?

- **Residential broadband access:** Londoners are most likely to have home broadband (94%). In Northern Ireland 87% have residential broadband. In the North East, however, the numbers drop significantly. In both Northumberland and Tyne and Wear, and Tees valley and Durham just 77% of households have broadband. The Government's Digital Economy Bill - currently going through Parliament - is designed to address poor broadband access, in order to 'provide better connectivity so that everyone has access to broadband wherever they live', according to the Government.

- **Teenage pregnancy:** Berkshire, Surrey, Sussex and Outer London see the lowest levels of teenage pregnancy where the birth rate among 15-19 year-olds is 1.5%. However the worst performing UK regions see the teenage pregnancy rates double: in the Tees Valley, Durham, East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire the birth rate among 15-19 year-olds is as high as 3%.
- **Life expectancy:** People living in Dorset and Somerset enjoy the highest life expectancy (over 82 years) but this falls dramatically for those living in some parts of Northern England and Scotland. In South Western Scotland life expectancy in the UK is at its lowest (78 years) with Greater Manchester, Eastern Scotland and Merseyside not far behind (around 79.5 years on average).

### London's social progress is "distinctly average"

Inner London, Europe's richest region, is "**distinctly average**" in its social progress outcomes according to Michael Green, Executive Director of the Social Progress Imperative. Home to Europe's financial centre and some of the world's most expensive properties, Inner London ranks 22nd out of the 37 UK regions assessed, behind regions including North Eastern Scotland, Devon and the Tees Valley and Durham. Of the 272 EU regions measured by the survey, Inner London finishes just 81st. This trend is repeated across Europe's capital cities: 8 out of 14 capital cities perform worse on average than their country's regions including: Brussels (Belgium), Ile de France (Paris, France), Lazio (Rome, Italy), Athens (Greece) and Prague (Czech Republic).

### Some UK regions show impressive over-performance compared to their wealth

The Index measures each region against a group of 15 other regions most similar in GDP per capita (PPP), providing a comparison of how well regions are performing on social progress vis-a-vis regions of a similar economic strength. Across the 272 EU regions in the study, the two most overperforming regions are both in the UK - West Wales and the Valleys and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Cornwall, with a GDP per capita of €16,200 has an almost identical level of social progress to Luxembourg (classified as a region in this study) with €66,700 GDP per capita. Michael Green said: "**The quality of life experienced by many people in West Wales is remarkable given the wealth of the region. Ranked 94<sup>th</sup> overall, only just behind Inner London, and a significant over-performer compared to its economic peers, it is an encouraging barometer suggesting that well-directed resources can pave the way for improved quality of life.**"

### The four home nations score within a tight margin

Despite England's third-place ranking among the regions of the UK's home nations, researchers say that the margins between Scotland, Northern Ireland, England and Wales were relatively small. The 37 regions of the UK score in a narrow range of 6.32 points, from 68.99 to 75.3. Michael Green said: "**Perhaps the most surprising finding is that the Brexit narrative of a divided United Kingdom, split between the privileged 'London Bubble' and more deprived regions, is not evident in terms of quality of life. Inner London, despite being the richest region of the EU, ranks just 81st out of 272 regions on social progress. GDP per capita in Cornwall and West Wales may be much lower but their social progress is on a par with Inner London. In fact when we look at the difference in scores between the four home nations, only marginal differences separate them.**"

### Across the rest of the EU

- **Wide variation between best & worst performing regions:** There is a wide divergence in levels of social progress across the EU. The highest performing region, Upper Norrland in Sweden, scores 82.33 out of 100 and the lowest scoring region, South East Bulgaria, just 39.72.
- **Top and bottom 10:** All of the regions in the top 10 are in Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden. The lowest performing regions are in either Romania or Bulgaria.
- **Over and underperformers:** The Index measures each region against a group of 15 regions most similar in GDP per capita (PPP) based on a three-year average: among the regions most over-performing on this basis are 'West Wales and the Valleys' (UK) and 'Etela-Suomi' (Finland). București - Ilfov (Romania) and Notio Aigaio (Greece) are the biggest under-performers.

David Cruickshank, Deloitte Global Chairman, said: "**To drive sustainable and equitable growth we need to focus on measurements which go beyond GDP. This is not to side line or ignore economic data and policies, but to put a country's, and in this case a region's, societal well-being on an equal footing with dominant economic indicators that are commonly used. The EU Regional Social Progress Index does this by providing a revealing picture of the economic and social progress of the 28 EU member states. It highlights success wherever it exists and shows that societal improvements can be made at every level of development. It also highlights the unique role that business can play as well. Many chief executives understand that doing business better not only improves returns, but helps restore public trust in business and adds value to society. Social advancement and economic development are dependent on, and enhance, each other, and this Index provides EU leaders a roadmap that can be used to navigate the pressures and opportunities facing Europe.**"

The EU Regional Social Progress Index is a joint project of Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy of the European Commission (DG Regio), Orkestra, and the Social Progress Imperative.

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### Notes to editors:

#### The European Union Regional Social Progress Index

The European Union Regional Social Progress Index offers a detailed picture of where each of 272 regions stands on social progress. The full, interactive dataset from the Index will be available [HERE](#) from 11th October 2016 at 00.01, BST. It captures 50 separate indicators from measures like infant mortality, overcrowding, murder rates, access to residential broadband, air quality and tolerance - in other words, many of the factors that define quality of life. Regions' overall scores and scores for the different aspects of social progress data are graded on a scale of 1 - 100. The EU-SPI is a three-year collaborative project carried out by the Social Progress Imperative, Orkestra (a research institute on competitiveness in the Basque region) and the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy of the European Commission. The Index builds on the global Social Progress Index developed by the Social Progress Imperative, a non-profit, non-governmental organization based in Washington DC.

The regional EU-SPI aims at providing consistent, comparable and actionable measures of social and environmental issues for the regions in the 28 EU Member States (272 regions in total). Please note that this Index is not created for the purpose of funding allocation and does not bind the European Commission.

#### Full UK regions - results table

Region	GDP per capita (€)	Region's SPI score	Ranking
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	25600	75.31	1
Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire	35900	75.05	2
Eastern Scotland	24500	74.87	3
North Eastern Scotland	39900	74.73	4
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	26800	74.70	5
Devon	20200	74.70	6
Dorset and Somerset	21100	74.51	7
Surrey, East and West Sussex	26800	74.43	8
North Yorkshire	22400	74.11	9
Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Bristol/Bath area	27500	74.06	10
Highlands and Islands	20100	73.57	11
Outer London	22500	73.28	12
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	16200	73.26	13
Leicestershire, Rutland and Northamptonshire	23200	73.18	14
Northern Ireland	19700	73.18	15
East Anglia	23600	73.06	16
Cheshire	29600	73.03	17
Lancashire	19600	73.02	18
Northumberland and Tyne and Wear	20800	72.88	19
South Western Scotland	22300	72.88	20
Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire	21200	72.76	21
Inner London	80400	72.35	22
Tees Valley and Durham	17900	72.30	23
Cumbria	20900	72.21	24
East Wales	22900	72.21	25
Greater Manchester	22600	72.08	26
Kent	21200	71.98	27
Essex	21500	71.88	28
West Wales and The Valleys	16100	71.87	29
Merseyside	20200	71.58	30
Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Warwickshire	22400	71.54	31
Lincolnshire	18500	71.39	32
West Yorkshire	23300	71.22	33
South Yorkshire	18700	71.03	34
Shropshire and Staffordshire	19300	70.54	35
East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	20100	70.01	36

West Midlands	21800	68.99	37
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**What is social progress?**

Social progress is defined as *the capacity of a society to meet the basic human needs of its citizens, establish the building blocks that allow citizens to improve their lives, and create the conditions for individuals and communities to meet their full potential.*

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