



# REBUILDING PROSPERITY

Delivering Prosperity in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

## A 'Secure Livelihood' for Levelling-Up

- The levelling-up white paper published by the Government on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> of February 2022 by the Secretary of State proposed 12 missions to 'level-up' the UK. The IGP calls on Government to focus the levelling-up agenda on 'Secure Livelihoods' if it genuinely seeks to 'level-up', tackle deep-seated regional inequalities both across and within regions and bring the different regions up to parity.
- Secure livelihoods was consistently identified in our research as the foundation for people to thrive and prosper while it also forms a central pillar of the [first citizen-led prosperity index for the UK](#) based on research in [east London](#).
- Our analysis uses secondary data to analyse how the 9 regions of England<sup>1</sup> are performing in the domains of livelihood security depicted in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1 - Infrastructure for Secure Livelihoods (IGP, 2022)

<sup>1</sup> North East, North West, Yorkshire and the Humber, West Midlands, East Midlands, East, London, South West and South East

- Livelihood security depends on a set of interconnected, interdependent 'assets' and cannot be reduced solely to income and work.
- Due to the interconnected and independent nature of these assets, people require each of these 5 assets to flourish and this contrasts the view that only jobs and employment are the routes to poverty evasion.
- The assets that make up the infrastructure for secure livelihoods in Figure 1 are:

1. Access to key basic services: public transport and childcare
2. Food and energy security
3. Secure income and good quality work
4. Economic, financial, social and digital inclusion
5. Secure and genuinely affordable housing

### **1. Access to key basic services: public transport and childcare**

Our research in east London identified that access to and the affordability of critical, key public services and social infrastructure such as transport (to travel to work, school and hospitals), childcare, healthcare (to stay in good shape and maintain a healthy lifestyle), education (access to public nurseries), digital services and the environment (public spaces) are important drivers of a secure livelihood and prosperity.

### **2. Food and energy security**

With inflation reaching a 40-year high, rising food and energy bills, tax rises, and with forecasts of even higher inflation and the energy price cap expected to increase further this Autumn, the cost of living crisis will deepen and impact the poorest households disproportionately. The choice between food and heating homes is an evident reality.

### **3. Secure income and good quality work**

Despite record levels of low unemployment and people on the payroll, our research concludes that work itself does not determine whether one is leading a fulfilling life but rather it is the type, security and quality of work and income that is key. The incumbent cost of living crisis heightens the need for income and job security with wages and benefits currently lagging significantly behind inflation.

#### **4. Economic, financial, social and digital inclusion**

This means having a sense of belonging where you live and is associated with strong local social and community networks. Inclusion also relates to being digitally and financially included within a society that is currently undergoing rapid transformation in such areas. The importance of digital inclusion was also brought to the forefront during the pandemic due to the shift to remote working, education switching online, and as we sought to connect and stay in touch with loved ones.

#### **5. Secure and genuinely affordable homes**

House prices and rent have substantially risen in recent years thus, ensuring housing security and a genuinely affordable home that can be maintained without accumulating unsustainable debt is a key aspect of livelihood security. Our research in east London showed that having an affordable and secure home is important to one's sense of prosperity.

To read our full report on livelihood security, click [here](#).

For further information about IGP's research, visit our website: [www.seriouslydifferent.org](http://www.seriouslydifferent.org)

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#### **Data disclaimer**

*This data analysis was carried out by Rayhaan Lorgat (IGP) and Amos Tirra (IGP).*

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#### **About the IGP**

*The Institute for Global Prosperity (IGP), University College London (UCL) is a world leading multi-disciplinary academic institution with a central mission to rebuild and redefine prosperity fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Our work in the UK focuses on inequalities, on how to repurpose our economy to deliver quality of life, secure livelihoods and economic and social wellbeing for people and the planet as part of a redefined notion of prosperity, away from GDP and economic growth.*