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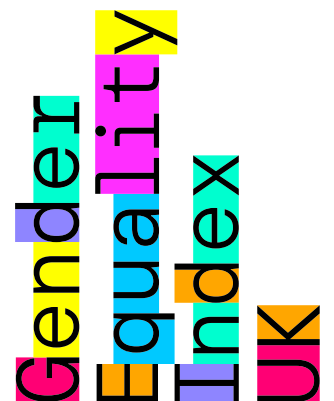
# Mapping progress: findings from the Gender Equality Index UK

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Caitlin Schmid led the development of the GEIUK, assisted by Chimdimma Noelyn Onah and Minna Cowper-Coles, and in close collaboration with Anne Laure Humbert (University of Gothenburg) and Victor Sojo (University of Melbourne). At GIWL, Heejung Chung, Rosie Campbell, Rose Cook and George May advised on the project.

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# Foreword



Professor Heejung Chung

DIRECTOR OF THE GLOBAL INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

The United Kingdom stands at a crossroads, facing economic challenges, regional disparities and persistent inequalities that define the socioeconomic landscape of our time. Such challenges demand tools that can reveal not only the problems we face but also the pathways to a better future. The Gender Equality Index UK (GEIUK) is precisely such a tool, shedding light on the interwoven threads of gender, social inequalities and geography that shape lives across the United Kingdom.

As the first index to measure, map and analyse the socioeconomic outcomes of women and men across all UK local authorities, the GEIUK represents a transformative step forward. It captures the nuanced realities of gender disparities, extending beyond traditional metrics to address unpaid work, participation in leadership and the health of our communities. This comprehensive approach is vital as we confront pressing challenges: the persistent North-South divide, the ongoing economic recovery from pandemic disruptions and the urgent need to address stagnant productivity.

The findings of the GEIUK are stark yet hopeful: while no local authority has achieved full gender equality, those that come closest also experience higher socioeconomic outcomes for all. This suggests a profound opportunity - not just to close gender gaps, but to drive inclusive regional growth and shared prosperity.

The GEIUK does not present an abstract challenge; it provides actionable insights for policymakers, advocates and communities to bridge the divides that persist. In doing so, it invites us to see gender equality not as an isolated goal but as a foundation for resilient, equitable and thriving local economies.

Achieving these outcomes will require bold leadership, innovative policy solutions and a collective commitment to address entrenched barriers to equity. As we look to the future, let this report inspire the courage to think innovatively, act decisively and prioritise fairness in all that we do. The journey to gender equality is also the journey to a stronger United Kingdom.

# Executive summary

The Gender Equality Index UK (GEIUK) is the first index to comprehensively measure, map and analyse the socioeconomic outcomes of women and men across all local authorities in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Combining existing data from 2021 to 2023, the GEIUK provides an innovative data tool to compare outcomes across six key domains: **paid work, unpaid work, money, power & participation, education and health**. It is unique in highlighting how gender and geographic inequalities intersect to shape women's and men's outcomes in both public and private spheres. Table 1 summarises the indicators within each domain.

In addition to its national scope, granularity and comprehensive framework, the GEIUK is novel in that it goes beyond simply comparing women's and men's outcomes. Rather, it contextualises gender gaps by additionally measuring how well both women and men locally fare compared to the national average. This approach is especially important given the persistent gender and geographic disparities in the United Kingdom (UK).

The GEIUK achieves this by offering three distinct but complementary measures to capture inequalities both between and among women and men:

- **Gender Equality Measure: Highlights gaps between women and men locally, irrespective of the direction of (dis)advantage.**

- **Women's Outcomes Measure: Highlights gaps between women locally and women nationally.**

- **Men's Outcomes Measure: Highlights gaps between men locally and men nationally.**

The GEIUK reveals that while no local authority has achieved parity between women and men, the evidence suggests that greater gender equality benefits everyone. Higher levels of gender equality often coincide with higher socioeconomic outcomes for both women and men, while lower gender equality is usually linked to poorer outcomes. Moreover, areas with higher equality tend to show greater economic activity, higher productivity, better wages and lower deprivation levels. These findings underscore that gender equality should not only be pursued as a goal in itself but as a pathway to inclusive growth and regional development.

The interactive website ([genderequalityindex.uk](http://genderequalityindex.uk)) visualises the magnitude of gender and geographic inequalities, enabling policymakers, researchers, advocates and the general public to explore the uneven geography of gender equality across the UK. It provides a robust and accessible evidence base to inform local and national initiatives aimed at bridging gender and geographic divides by identifying where inequalities are most pronounced, where gains can be made and how targeted interventions ensure that economic and social benefits are equitably distributed across the UK.

Table 1. Overview of domains, subdomains and indicators constituting the GEIUK.

Domain	Subdomain	Indicator
PAID WORK	Employment	Employment rate
		Supervisors and professionals
	Quality of work	Progression opportunities
		Involvement in decision-making
UNPAID WORK	Care and domestic work	Daily childcare
		Weekly domestic work
MONEY	Pay	Weekly median pay
		Not in low pay
	Home equity	Homeowners with a mortgage
POWER & PARTICIPATION	Leadership	Company leadership
		Councillors
	Participation	Participation in civil society
		Voted in the general election
EDUCATION	Qualifications	Level 4 qualifications or above
	Skills	English GCSE
		Maths GCSE
HEALTH	Life expectancy and good health	Life expectancy
		Healthy life years
		Good health

# Key findings from the Gender Equality Index UK

1.

No local authority in the UK has achieved full gender equality.

2.

Gender equality is greatest in London and the North West, but it is not all good news.

3.

Gender equality is lowest in areas where both women and men are falling behind.

4.

Four distinct types of gender equality exist across the UK: from 'Prime parity' and 'Equal erosion' to 'Partial progress' and 'Deep disparities'.

5.

Gender equality is not a zero-sum game - it flourishes where both women and men do well.

6.

Gender equality is associated with greater productivity and economic activity, but not with levels of deprivation.

7.

Gender inequalities are especially large in the domain of Unpaid Work and Power & Participation.

8.

Men spending more time on unpaid work is associated with greater gender equality and higher outcomes for men.

9.

Great divergence in socioeconomic outcomes confirms the North-South divide.

# Findings in detail

1.

The GEIUK shows that no local authority in the UK has achieved parity between women and men. Substantial disparities exist across localities, as illustrated in Figure 1 with darker shades representing greater gender equality. On average, men show higher outcomes in Paid Work, Money and Power & Participation than women. Conversely, women's outcomes are higher in Education and Health, and they spend more time on Unpaid Work, including childcare and domestic work.

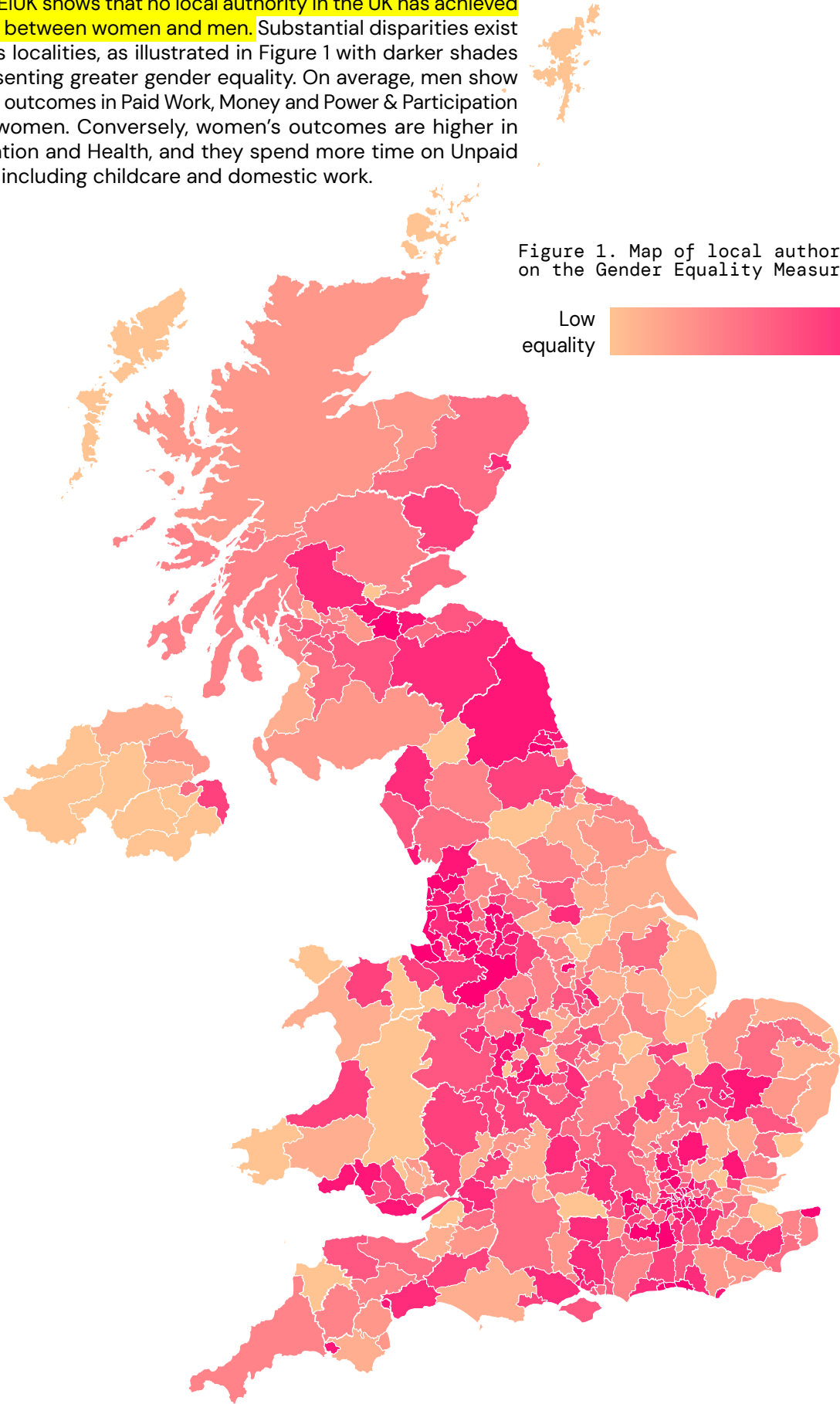


Figure 1. Map of local authority scores on the Gender Equality Measure

Low equality  High equality

**2.** Gender equality is greatest in London and the North West, but it is not all good news. The 10 most gender-equal local authorities are concentrated in London and the North West, as shown in Table 2. However, the dynamics differ significantly between these localities, illustrating that a narrow gender gap in and of itself is not necessarily a good thing – it depends on the overall outcomes for both women and men. Considering gender gaps in conjunction with women’s and men’s local outcomes exposes different ‘types of gender equality’, explained in more detail below.

In London, areas like Kingston upon Thames and Hammersmith and Fulham showcase high gender equality and high outcomes for both women and men,

reflecting shared progress. They therefore fall into the category of places we describe as ‘Prime parity’ – areas where both gender equality and women’s and men’s outcomes are particularly high.

Conversely, in the North West, areas such as Blackpool, Manchester and the Wirral achieve high gender equality but only because women and men there have similarly poor outcomes – hence they are in our category of places experiencing ‘Equal erosion’.

Finally, we find high levels of gender equality with moderate outcomes for women and men in South Ribble, Worthing and Wyre – examples of ‘Partial progress’.

Table 2. Top and bottom 10 local authorities for gender equality.

Local authority	Region	Type of gender equality
<b>Top 10</b>		
Hammersmith and Fulham	London	Prime parity
Kingston upon Thames	London	Prime parity
Lambeth	London	Prime parity
Waltham Forest	London	Prime parity
Blackpool	North West	Equal erosion
Manchester	North West	Equal erosion
Wirral	North West	Equal erosion
South Ribble	North West	Partial progress
Worthing	South East	Partial progress
Wyre	North West	Partial progress
<b>Bottom 10</b>		
Clackmannanshire	Scotland	Deep disparities
Derry City and Strabane	Northern Ireland	Deep disparities
East Lindsey	East Midlands	Deep disparities
Fenland	East of England	Deep disparities
Fermanagh and Omagh	Northern Ireland	Deep disparities
Merthyr Tydfil	Wales	Deep disparities
Mid Ulster	Northern Ireland	Deep disparities
Na h-Eileanan Siar (Outer Hebrides)	Scotland	Deep disparities
Orkney Islands	Scotland	Deep disparities
Richmondshire	Yorkshire and The Humber	Deep disparities

**3.** In contrast, gender equality is lowest in areas where both women and men are falling behind. The bottom 10 local authorities exhibit consistently low gender equality scores with a notable trend: women’s and men’s outcomes are also well below the national average. These areas exemplify a type of gender equality we term ‘Deep disparities’, where gender equality is low, along with both women’s and men’s socioeconomic outcomes.

Spread across the four nations, many of these bottom-ranking local authorities share economic challenges following the decline of their traditional industries, such as manufacturing, agriculture or fishing. The patterns exposed by the GEIUK highlight a pressing need for targeted investment to raise gender equality levels while improving the economic and structural conditions in an area.

4. The rankings of local authorities exemplify four distinct 'types of gender equality' existing across UK local authorities that emerge when analysing the GEIUK measures in combination. These are summarised in Table 3 and mapped across the UK in Figure 2. The types underscore the diverse ways in which gender equality manifests within the socioeconomic landscapes of different regions. The four types of gender equality comprise:

## Prime parity

This indicates local authorities where both women and men experience the highest socioeconomic outcomes alongside the highest levels of gender equality. Concentrated in the East of England (e.g. St Albans), London (e.g. Wandsworth) and the South East (e.g. Guildford), these areas benefit from robust local productivity and high economic activity among women and men, paired with low levels of deprivation. This type highlights the potential for aligning gender equality with prosperity for both genders.

## Equal erosion

While the second type also shows higher levels of gender equality, these sit alongside poor outcomes for both women and men. Predominantly found in the North West (e.g. Blackpool), Wales (e.g. Neath Port Talbot) and the West Midlands (e.g. Stoke-on-Trent), these areas face higher levels of deprivation and lower local productivity. This type illustrates that a narrow gender gap can also emerge from shared challenges.

## Partial progress

This describes local authorities where women and men achieve moderate outcomes and exhibit moderate levels of gender equality. This is the most widespread type, with significant representation across all four nations. However, it is particularly concentrated in Scotland (e.g. Midlothian), the South East (e.g. Canterbury) and the South West (e.g. South Somerset). These areas typically show average productivity, economic activity rates and deprivation levels, pointing to opportunities for further progress.

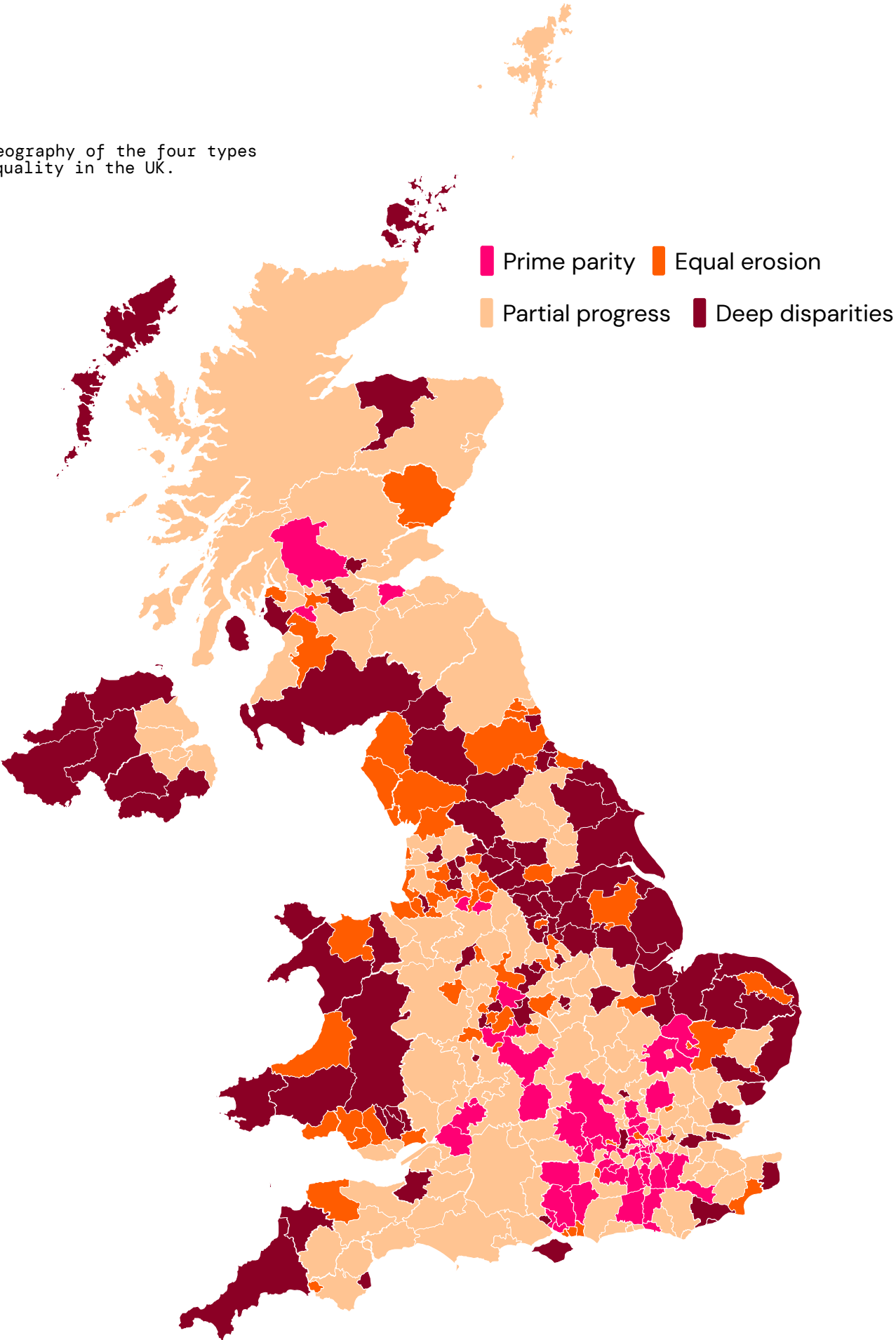
## Deep disparities

The final type represents local authorities where both women and men fare poorly, while the gender gap remains significant. Concentrated in Northern Ireland (e.g. Derry City and Strabane), Wales (e.g. Merthyr Tydfil) and Yorkshire and the Humber (e.g. Bradford), these regions face the highest levels of deprivation, low economic activity of both genders and, in turn, low local productivity. In these areas, government intervention and investment are urgently needed to equitably raise the living standards of both women and men.

Table 3. Four types of gender equality in the UK and their characteristics.

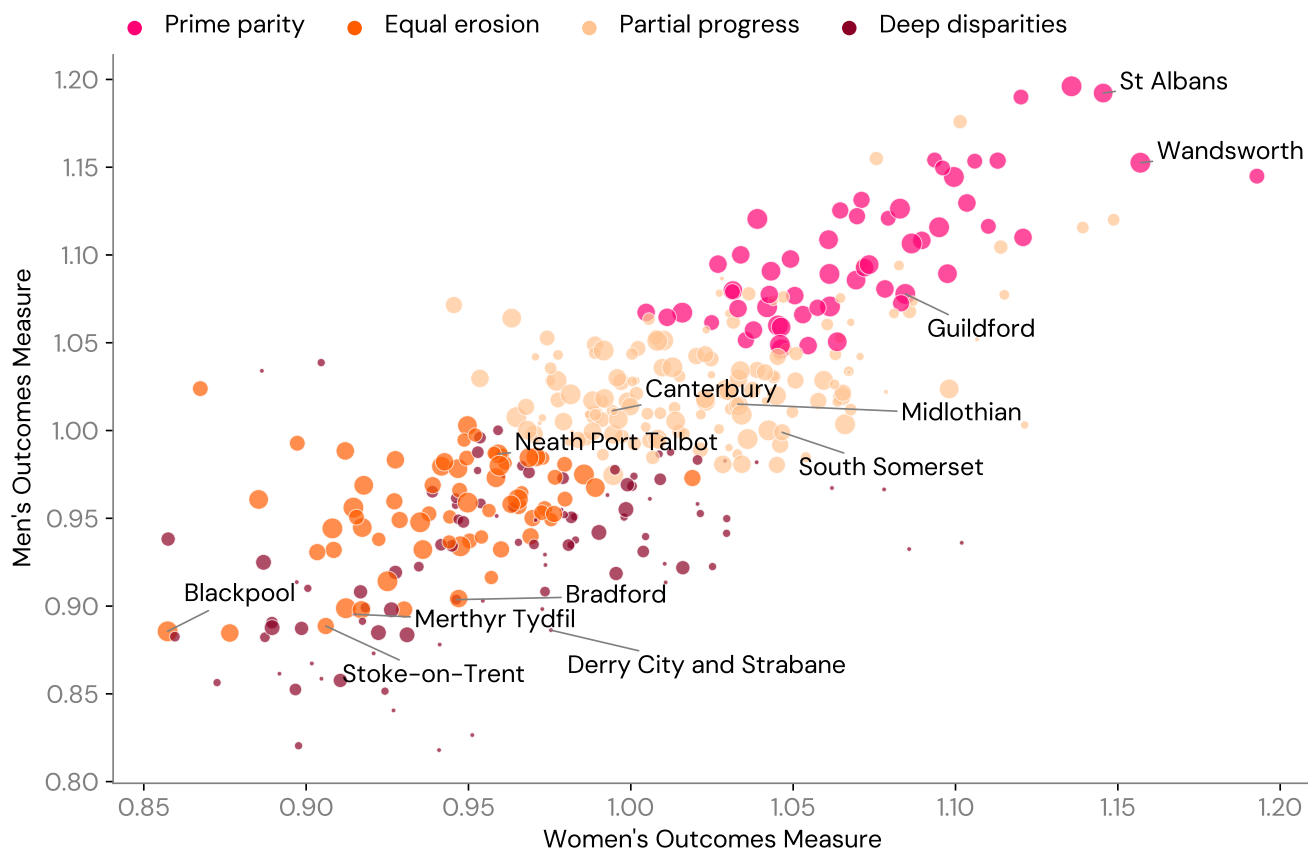
Type of gender equality	Prime parity	Equal erosion	Partial progress	Deep disparities
Description	Highest gender equality and outcomes	High gender equality but poor outcomes	Moderate gender equality and outcomes	Low gender equality and poor outcomes
Example local authority	Guildford, St Albans, Wandsworth	Blackpool, Birmingham, Swansea	Canterbury, Midlothian, South Somerset	Bradford, Merthyr Tydfil, Derry City and Strabane
Top regional concentration	East of England, London, South East	North West, Wales, West Midlands	Scotland, South East, South West	Northern Ireland, Wales, Yorkshire and the Humber
Gender Equality Measure	High	High	Medium	Low
Women's Outcomes Measure	High	Low	Medium	Low
Men's Outcomes Measure	High	Low	Medium	Low
Productivity	High	Low	Medium	Low
Deprivation	Low	High	Medium	High

Figure 2. Geography of the four types of gender equality in the UK.



5. These types show that **gender equality is not a zero-sum game: it flourishes where women and men do well.** Conversely, lower outcomes for women and men often coincide with lower gender equality. Importantly, no 'type of gender equality' combines high outcomes for both women and men with low gender equality levels. Figure 3 plots the Women's Outcomes Measure against the Men's Outcomes Measure to visualise this relationship.

Figure 3. Local authorities plotted according to their GEIUK scores and type of gender equality. Larger dots indicate higher scores on the Gender Equality Measure.



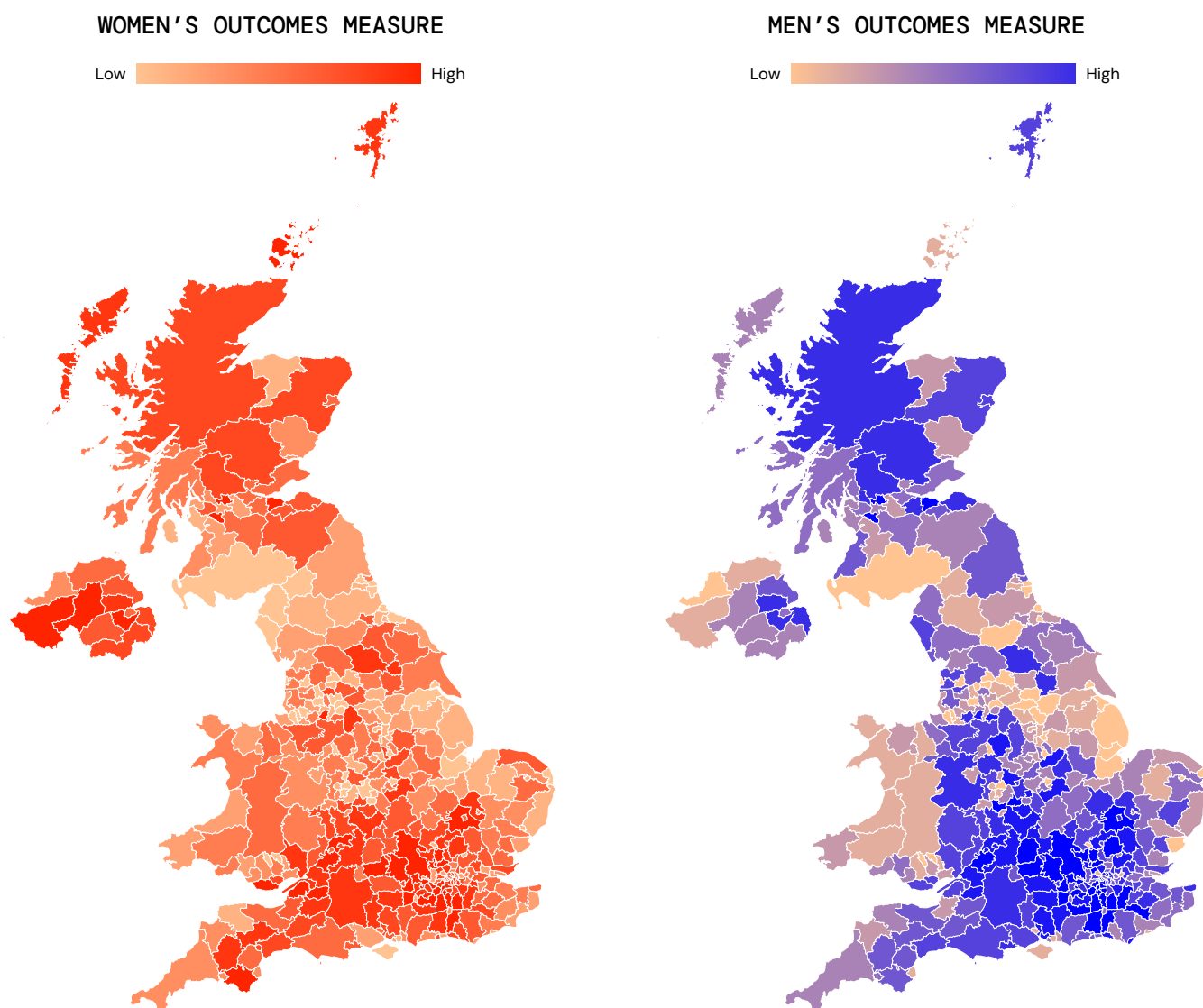
6. The GEIUK provides evidence of a **positive association between gender equality and greater local productivity and economic activity,** highlighting the wider socioeconomic benefits of gender equality. Interestingly, it finds no linear relationship between gender equality and deprivation, as indicated by the four types of gender equality. Highlighting where gender and geographical inequalities exist and how they may limit growth offers early insights into untapped productivity potential across the UK. Moving forward, integrating gender equality into regional development strategies will be crucial to ensuring that economic gains are equitably distributed across the UK's diverse local areas.

7. **Gender inequalities are especially large in the domain of Unpaid Work** (e.g. childcare and domestic tasks), where women show greater involvement, **and Power & Participation** (e.g. political voice, business leadership and civic engagement), where they are trailing behind men. In contrast, gender inequalities in the domains of Health, Money, Education and Paid Work tend to be narrower. This pattern reflects a 'stalled revolution': although women have made significant strides in education and the labour market, deeply rooted gender inequalities persist in care responsibilities and leadership roles.

8. In addition to its links with gender equality, we find that **men's greater involvement in Unpaid Work is positively associated with higher socioeconomic outcomes for men.** Within the framework of the GEIUK, this indicates that childcare and domestic work contribute to men's overall socioeconomic outcomes. In contrast, the association is negligible for women, suggesting that childcare and domestic work have little impact on women's socioeconomic status, though it does negatively affect gender equality. While these findings reveal meaningful patterns, they do not establish causality and should be understood as significant relationships that merit further investigation into the dynamics at play.

9. Finally, the GEIUK provides evidence of **a great divergence in outcomes that confirms the North-South divide.** Women and men tend to exhibit above-average outcomes in the South of England, while those in the North of England and Wales more often fall behind. Patterns in Northern Ireland and Scotland are more mixed, with the gap between local and national outcomes often larger for men than for women. Further, men's higher outcomes are more geographically concentrated than women's outcomes, as illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Maps of local authority scores on Women's Outcomes Measure and Men's Outcomes Measure, with darker shades indicating higher outcomes.



# Insights for policy and data collection

## 1. ACCELERATE PROGRESS BY REDUCING GENDER INEQUALITIES IN THE DOMAINS OF UNPAID WORK AND POWER & PARTICIPATION

Greater efforts are needed to reduce gender inequalities in time spent on unpaid care and domestic work, and in leadership, engagement and voice. A more equal gender division of unpaid work can be supported by greater access to flexible working arrangements, better-paid shared parental and paternity leave and greater access to affordable childcare.

A more gender equal division of unpaid work can also positively impact women's ability to engage in political and community activities, although additional support structures must be put in place. For example, national and local government and political parties can support women's political representation at different levels by committing to a balanced selection of candidates for councillors, ensured by the collection and publication of

data on the diversity of candidates, as called for by the Fawcett Society and the Electoral Reform Society. Once in post, women councillors can be better supported by the introduction of parental leave and the provision of support for childcare and adult care costs.

Women also require better support to start and scale up businesses, which can stimulate employment growth, innovation and productivity. Greater efforts are needed to improve access to capital, care support and professional networks, as identified by the Rose Review (2019). Additionally, there is much scope to strengthen self-employment rights, for example, by bringing maternity pay, parental leave allowance, sick pay and pension contributions closer into line with those enjoyed by employees.

## 2. GREATER INVOLVEMENT IN CHILDCARE AND DOMESTIC WORK BENEFITS MEN, SO WE MUST ENCOURAGE IT

Increasing men's involvement in childcare and domestic work requires extending the right to request and access flexible working arrangements but also the introduction of non-transferrable parental leave and extensions to paid paternity leave – to a minimum of six weeks in the UK as currently being advocated by organisations including the Fatherhood Institute, The Dad Shift and Pregnant Then Screwed.

Further, campaigns to challenge traditional gender norms and stereotypes and family-friendly workplace policies can encourage men's greater involvement in caregiving responsibilities. By removing logistical and cultural barriers, policymakers at both the national and local levels can encourage more egalitarian norms in unpaid work, ultimately benefiting individuals, families and broader communities alike.

## 3. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES WILL BENEFIT FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Reducing gender and regional inequalities can help stimulate economic growth. The GEIUK shows that local authorities with greater gender equality tend to exhibit higher economic activity, increased full-time employment and greater local productivity. Embedding gender-focused strategies into regional policies can foster more equitable and sustainable economic growth.

Labour markets are inherently gendered. A comprehensive gender analysis of both supply-side factors (such as health, education and caregiving responsibilities) and demand-side factors (including prevalent local sectors and workplace flexibility) can help identify untapped economic potential and areas for reform. This approach enables targeted investments in gender-inclusive initiatives and ensures that regional development strategies address contextual barriers.

The GEIUK provides a powerful framework for advancing these goals, offering a nuanced understanding of gender dynamics by examining differences both between and among women and men. These insights should guide the integration of gender equality objectives into national policies, including the government's mission to Kick-start the economy and the delivery of the Invest 2035 industrial strategy. The GEIUK can inform the design of evidence-based, context-specific interventions to unlock significant economic and social benefits while addressing persistent inequalities across the UK.

## 4.

### ADDRESS STRUCTURAL BARRIERS ASSOCIATED WITH PART-TIME WORK FOR WOMEN

The GEIUK shows that women's part-time work is negatively associated with women's socioeconomic outcomes and gender equality. Cultural changes are needed to counter stigmas around part-time work that result in negative outcomes for workers' well-being and productivity.

Better access to flexible working arrangements – flexitime and remote working – can help women out of part-time employment. Similarly, increasing access to affordable and high-quality childcare and expanding the availability of free breakfast and after-school clubs can support parents, especially mothers, in maintaining greater labour market participation.

## 5.

### IMPROVEMENTS TO THE UK GENDER DATA LANDSCAPE WILL STRENGTHEN THE GEIUK

The development of the GEIUK offered insight into the quality of the UK gender data landscape, uncovering key gaps that require addressing to strengthen our understanding of gender and geographical inequalities. As the first iteration, the GEIUK sets a foundation and improvements to the UK's gender data landscape will in turn further strengthen its validity, application and potential for impact.

Greater efforts are required to further collect harmonised data across the four nations using consistent concepts and methodologies and sufficiently large sample sizes that permit granular analysis below the regional level. Adequately funding statistical agencies across the UK's four nations is a prerequisite to this.

Further, improvements to data on time spent on different forms of unpaid care, including child, grandchild and adult care, are needed. This calls for more frequent time-use surveys with larger sample sizes covering all four nations at the local level to monitor changes in the time spent on childcare, domestic work and leisure time. This could help advance the GEIUK's measurement of the domain of Unpaid Work.

Improvements to individual-level private wealth indicators, such as savings and pension wealth, at the local authority level and across the four nations, would provide an enhanced measure of gender wealth inequalities in the domain of Money.

Additionally, collecting more multivariate data beyond sex-disaggregated data for intersectional analysis across age, ethnicity and other protected characteristics can enable deeper insights into gender and social inequalities across the UK.

Finally, data on violence against women and girls should be improved in line with recommendations put forward in our previous report (Schmid et al., 2024). This would allow the inclusion of a domain of Violence in future iterations of the GEIUK to examine the relationship between varying levels of gender equality, women's and men's socioeconomic status and incidences of violence against women and girls.

# Conclusion

The GEIUK is the first index to bring together comprehensive sex-disaggregated data and provide a granular picture of women's and men's socioeconomic outcomes across the UK's four nations. As the inaugural iteration, the GEIUK highlights gender and geographic inequalities at the local level and establishes a robust foundation for further research into the dynamics driving these disparities. Future iterations of the GEIUK would benefit from improvements to the gender data landscape, strengthening both its precision and its potential to drive meaningful change.

The GEIUK's findings are sobering and instructive. While no local authority has yet achieved full gender equality, those that come closest also demonstrate higher socioeconomic outcomes for all. These insights highlight a crucial opportunity to reduce gender disparities and advance inclusive regional development and shared prosperity.

More than a measurement tool, the GEIUK offers a roadmap to policymakers, advocates and communities. It pinpoints where inequalities are most pronounced, identifies pathways for progress and demonstrates how targeted interventions can lead to a more equitable distribution of social and economic benefits. By placing gender equality in the context of women's and men's overall outcomes, the GEIUK serves as a guide for building more resilient, inclusive and thriving local economies across the UK.

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## 1 Introduction

In the United Kingdom (UK), despite considerable progress over the past decades, gender inequalities persist (Francis-Devine and Hutton, 2024; Andrew et al., 2021) alongside deepening regional inequalities (Gal and Egeland, 2018; Davenport and Zaranko, 2020; McCann, 2020). Further, evidence suggests that socioeconomic outcomes vary even at the neighbourhood level (Pinchevsky and Wright, 2012; Stafford et al., 2005). A better understanding of the interaction between gender and geography in the UK at the local area level is required to support the design and implementation of tailored policies to strengthen the economy and raise living standards across the four nations.

The Gender Equality Index UK (GEIUK) offers an innovative tool for measuring, mapping and analysing differences in women's and men's outcomes across 372 local authorities in the four nations of the UK: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The first of its kind, it combines existing sex-disaggregated data produced in the period between 2021 and 2023 to measure socioeconomic outcomes related to six domains of women's and men's lives: *Paid Work, Unpaid Work, Money, Power & Participation, Education and Health*. The choice of domains is based on their conceptual importance in understanding gender equality as identified in academic literature, as well as their affinities with the UK government's policy priorities and commitments.

By uncovering geographical and gender inequalities in outcomes across the four nations, the GEIUK provides policymakers, non-governmental organisations, researchers and the public with detailed and comparative data to better understand the state of gender equality across the UK.

This report documents the construction of the GEIUK and its findings on the state of gender equality across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. In Chapter 1, we introduce the benefits offered by the GEIUK for policy and which government priorities it speaks to. Further, we offer a discussion of the high levels of gender and geographic inequalities in the UK, which call for the evidence base provided by the GEIUK to inform effective and tailored policy interventions. Next, we discuss existing gender equality indices to argue that these are inadequate for understanding gender inequalities at the local area level in the UK, requiring the development of the GEIUK. We also define what we mean by sex, gender and equality, allowing us to argue for the development of three distinct but complementary measures. The section ends with a discussion of the importance of intersectionality and how the current lack of disaggregated data makes the adoption of such an approach to the GEIUK impossible at this stage.

In Chapter 2, we outline the conceptual development of the GEIUK, present the six constituting domains and discuss their relevance for understanding gender inequalities and their geographic variation across the UK. Chapter 3 complements this discussion by introducing the selected indicators for each domain and providing a descriptive account of women's and men's outcomes on each of these indicators. Chapter 4 documents the

methodology applied to calculate each of the three GEIUK measures, including the chosen metrics, approach to aggregation and weighting, imputation of missing data and outlier checks and the assessment of the GEIUK's correlation structures to confirm robustness.

Findings from the GEIUK are presented in Chapter 5. First, we map the overall scores of each GEIUK measure to show where women and men differ from each other and where they are thriving or falling behind. Next, we look below the headline score to reveal which domains are driving the inequalities captured by the three GEIUK measures to better understand how inequalities *between* as well as *among* women and men, respectively, might be addressed.

Furthermore, we plot the three measures against each other to investigate whether there is a relationship between gender equality levels and women's and men's socioeconomic outcomes. We also investigate how the GEIUK scores map onto local authorities' demographic and wider socioeconomic profiles, including age and ethnic profiles, degrees of urbanity, local productivity levels and economic activity levels. Finally, we introduce four 'types of gender equality' that local authorities can be classified into based on their combined scores across the GEIUK measures and describe their geographical concentration and wider socioeconomic characteristics.

In Chapter 6, we summarise the key takeaways from these findings and discuss their implications for policy, research and advocacy. Further, we outline what improvements to the UK data landscape are required for gender data gaps to be addressed to improve the GEIUK in the future. Finally, we set out future research questions that the GEIUK can help address, before concluding in Chapter 7.

## 1.1 Benefits for policy, research and advocacy

The GEIUK supports the idea that gender equality – *between* as well as *among* women and men – needs to be an integral part of efforts to raise living standards and promote more balanced regional development. Unlike traditional gender equality measures, such as gender pay gap reporting or monitoring women's representation on boards, the GEIUK captures a broader spectrum of gendered experiences, spanning both so-called public and private domains. The GEIUK data, visualised on the project website ([genderequalityindex.uk](https://genderequalityindex.uk)), can inform policy, research and advocacy aimed at increasing gender and geographical equality in the UK.

Since the UK labour market shows gendered patterns in employment rates, working hours and occupational segregation (Francis-Devine and Hutton, 2024), growth strategies pursued through *Invest 2035: The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy* (UK Government, 2024) require both a geographical and gender lens to identify untapped and uneven productivity potential in local areas. The GEIUK results are combined with data on local productivity, thus providing evidence for tailored interventions in support of the Government's growth strategy. By improving labour market participation and educational outcomes for both

women and men, we can not only drive economic growth but also address critical social challenges, such as reducing the prevalence of intimate partner violence (Gómez-Casillas et al., 2023). This directly supports the Government's pledge to halve incidences of gender-based violence over the next decade.

The GEIUK's evidence on gender and geographic inequalities supports the *Devolution Revolution*, which seeks to strengthen local capacity to spread opportunity and prosperity across the UK. While national policies set the overall agenda, interventions can be more effective if tailored to the local context to account for the unique challenges faced by different localities. The GEIUK's granular focus makes it a powerful tool for local authorities and grassroots organisations, enabling them to identify and address the specific gender inequalities that shape economic and social outcomes in their communities.

Local authorities can use the GEIUK to compare inequalities in outcomes across regions, helping them benchmark their area against others. This comparative approach enables councils to learn from best practices in higher-performing areas, ensuring that policies are informed by evidence of what works in similar contexts.

Further, local authorities can use the GEIUK to assess in which domains they perform well, where greater efforts are needed and which aspects to prioritise with additional resources. Whether addressing employment, pay gaps or public service provision, the GEIUK data equips local authorities with the insights needed to design policies that respond to the specific gender dynamics of their region. The GEIUK can help councils to target interventions more effectively and evaluate these with improved data for the mandatory *Equality Impact Assessments* of new and existing policy.

Finally, at the international level, the GEIUK measures gender equality progress in line with the UK's commitments to global frameworks, including the UN *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* and the *Sustainable Development Goals*, especially Goal 5 on achieving gender equality.

Overall, the GEIUK enable policymakers, researchers, advocates and the public to pinpoint how and where women and men fare differently, identify localities where both women and men fall behind or pull ahead and track the magnitude of gender inequalities. As such, the GEIUK enriches the current understanding of gender and geographic inequalities to inform initiatives promoting sustainable and inclusive development throughout the UK's diverse localities.

## 1.2 Geographical and gender inequalities in the UK

The UK is characterised by strong and persistent geographic inequalities. Among industrialised nations, it has some of the highest levels of regional inequalities (Gal and Egeland, 2018; Davenport and Zaranko, 2020; McCann, 2020; NIESR, 2025), with variations in real income growth, employment rates, disposable incomes, educational attainment and life expectancy (Overman and Xu, 2022; Marmot et al., 2020; Farquharson et al., 2022).

Gender inequalities vary across regions too: for example, in 2023, while men's employment rate was seven percentage points higher than women's at the national level, this difference varied between three percentage points in the North East to 12 percentage points in the East Midlands (Francis-Devine and Hutton, 2024).

It is well established that gender and income inequalities hamper economic growth, as shown by the OECD (Soldani et al., 2024) and the IMF (Ostry et al., 2014; Berg and Ostry, 2017; Dabla-Norris and Kochhar, 2015; Elborgh-Woytek et al., 2013; Dollar and Gatti, 1999; Soldani et al., 2024). International comparisons suggest that the lack of economic growth in the UK is in part explained by its high level of regional inequalities (Carrascal-Incera et al., 2020). Alarming, rather than reversing, regional inequalities in living standards between the poorer areas (such as Northern Ireland and the North East of England) and richer areas (such as pockets in London and the South East) have deepened and are now larger than before the COVID-19 pandemic and the financial crisis (NIESR, 2024).

In addition to *inter*-regional inequalities, there is evidence of strong *intra*-regional inequalities. For example, while gender difference in employment in 2024 stood at 8.6 percentage points in Manchester, it is nearly double that at 16.2 percentage points in the neighbouring local authority of Salford (Office for National Statistics, 2024a). Moreover, there is growing research into the effect of neighbourhood characteristics on socioeconomic outcomes, including health and violence (Stafford et al., 2005; Pinchevsky and Wright, 2012; Sampson et al., 2002; Durlauf, 2004). The evidence of regional and local inequalities in the United Kingdom highlights the need for a gender equality measure that is sensitive to geographical inequalities at the local area level.

The composition of the United Kingdom as four constituent countries – England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland – creates complexity in data collection and comparative analysis. The remit for policy work on gender equality is shared across multiple levels of government and various institutions. The UK government holds overarching responsibility at the national level, with specific departments, such as the Office for Equality and Opportunity, leading nationwide initiatives. In addition, devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have distinct, country-specific policies and initiatives tailored to their local contexts and priorities.

Differences in legislative frameworks, policy approaches and data collection methodologies among these jurisdictions complicate consistent data gathering and reliable comparative analyses across the UK. Nonetheless, the GEIUK is the first index to combine and harmonise existing sex-disaggregated measures of women's and men's socioeconomic outcomes at the local level across the UK four nations. It is measured at

Local Authority Districts (LAD)<sup>1</sup>, offering a balanced approach to data availability, sample sizes and granularity. There are 374 LADs across the UK, each covering a population between 2,200 and 1,074,000 people. In 2021, there were 309 LADs in England, 22 in Wales, 32 in Scotland (i.e., Council Areas) and 11 in Northern Ireland (i.e., Local Government Districts).

Since local authorities are the administrative bodies responsible for providing local services and governance, they have the potential to play an important role in promoting gender equality within their jurisdiction. For example, they are required to ensure that policies and local services such as education, social care, housing or public health services are accessible and equitable for everyone. They can also significantly contribute to enforcing national and regional equality policies and initiatives, such as those related to employment or gender-based violence. By working with community groups, NGOs and other stakeholders, they can play a key role in translating national gender equality goals into practical actions and initiatives that address specific local needs and contexts.

The localised approach offered by the GEIUK is essential given the complexity and variability in socioeconomic and gender inequalities across the UK's diverse localities. A one-size-fits-all approach risks exacerbating existing inequalities, overlooking local dynamics that significantly impact gender equality, such as local labour market conditions, industry profiles, transport links and availability of childcare. Consequently, regional data provided by the GEIUK not only enhances the understanding of localised inequalities but also equips policymakers with the critical evidence needed to tailor policies and interventions.

The policy implications of adopting this regionalised data-driven approach are profound: it enables more targeted, context-sensitive decision-making, optimising resource allocation and delivering policies that are genuinely responsive to the varied needs and realities of local populations. Without embracing this granularity, efforts to advance gender equality in the UK will remain incomplete, inefficient and potentially ineffective.

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<sup>1</sup>The Office for National Statistics (ONS) employs data layers to enhance the collection, processing and analysis of data. These layers help the ONS integrate data from multiple sources, including surveys, administrative records, and commercial data, to produce comprehensive and reliable statistics. As outlined in the ONS's (2023) *Beginners Guide to UK Geography*, there are multiple layers including:

- Output Areas (OAs): These are the smallest geographic units used for census data, with an average of about 125 households. They provide the highest level of detail but can suffer from small sample sizes, making some data less reliable.
- Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs): These are larger than OAs, containing around 400–1,200 households.
- Middle Layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs): These are larger still, with about 2,000–6,000 households.
- Local Authority Districts (LADs) or Lower Tier Local Authorities: These are much larger authorities varying in population size that provide a range of local services.

### 1.3 From global to local: gender indices predating the GEIUK

Over the past 25 years, global and international gender equality indices have proliferated (see Schmid 2021 for an overview). The UK has been included in many of these, such as the UNDP's *Gender Development Index* and *Gender Inequality Index* (United Nations Development Programme, 2019), UN Women and UNDP's *Twin Indices on Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality* (UN Women and UNDP, 2023) and the World Economic Forum's *Global Gender Gap Index* (World Economic Forum, 2024). Before Brexit took legal effect in 2020, the UK was also included in the European Institute for Gender Equality's *Gender Equality Index* (Barbieri et al., 2020).

Existing indices however fall short of providing a nuanced picture of gender inequalities across the UK (Schmid et al., 2023). Often, existing indices are constrained by global or national data availability that comes at the expense of breadth of dimensions and context-specificity. Further, these indices do not permit analyses below the national headline figures that would allow geographical inequalities to be captured.

When composite indicators specific to the UK exist, these do not permit a local-level analysis of gender equality across the four nations. They either fall short in that they do not use sex-disaggregated indicators, focus on the national level, or do not cover all four UK Nations. For example, the *Indices of Multiple Deprivation* are widely used measures of relative deprivation in neighbourhoods in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, revealing stark inequalities in earnings and living conditions between neighbourhoods, but unfortunately do not use sex-disaggregated data.

In contrast, *Scotland's Gender Equality Index* (Scottish Government, 2023) provides a detailed overview of gender differences in socioeconomic areas (that are closely aligned to the domains of the GEIUK). Yet, since it only provides national averages, it does not unpick subnational variation and is limited to Scotland. Finally, the *Feminist Scorecard*, produced by Oxfam Cymru and the Women's Equality Network Wales (2020) measures different aspects of gender inequalities but is limited to Wales, while the *Pankhurst-Fawcett Scorecards* (2025) by GM4Women2028 exclusively focuses on the local authorities of Greater Manchester.

### 1.4 Defining sex, gender and equality

The development of any gender-related index requires a discussion of what is meant by gender equality, as well as other key terms. Sex is understood as a set of biological characteristics, normally observed and attributed to individuals at birth. Sex is often categorised in binary terms, using the categories 'female' and 'male'.

Gender is understood as a social and cultural construction of feminine and masculine roles that describe, prescribe and proscribe norms, attitudes and behaviours about a person's assumed biological sex. There is a spectrum of gender identities, expressions and experiences that fall outside of the stereotypical binary. It is important to collect data on both sex and gender identity, though in practice most, if not all, are collected using binary sex categories. As there is often, but not necessarily, an alignment between sex and gender, the binary categories of 'women' and 'men' are commonly relied upon (Guenther et al., 2018).

Clarifying these terms is important for this project, as the GEIUK relies on sex-disaggregated data, although their interpretation is done from a gender perspective to underline the structural and cultural dynamics producing inequalities. This is referred to by the adage 'sex-disaggregated data but gender statistics' (see, for example, UN Women, 2021 and European Institute for Gender Equality, 2025a). Gender statistics go beyond sex-disaggregated data in that their production and use explicitly draws on concepts, definitions and methods to capture gender roles, relations and inequalities in society (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2025b).

Further, GEIUK is underpinned by the *capability approach* (Sen, 1999, 1995), which emphasises people's freedom to achieve valuable outcomes in life. This theoretical perspective considers gender equality as fundamental to ensuring that individual capabilities are not constrained or predetermined by one's sex or gender identity (Robeyns, 2003). Furthermore, we distinguish between basic capabilities – such as access to healthcare and education – and enhanced capabilities, encompassing higher-order opportunities like meaningful participation in political decision-making, exercising leadership, or achieving financial autonomy (see Conceicao, 2019).

Acknowledging and nurturing these enhanced capabilities is crucial, as they underpin individuals' ability to exert agency and fully realise their potential. Central to our approach is the recognition that structural inequalities, including socioeconomic, cultural and institutional barriers, often disproportionately impact women's opportunities to realise their full capabilities. By focusing on capabilities, the GEIUK supports policy initiatives that not only measure but also actively seek to dismantle systemic barriers, empowering women and men to pursue meaningful, fulfilling lives.

Thus, gender equality refers to the state in which all individuals have equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities and access to resources and decision-making processes in all areas of life regardless of their sex or gender identity (OSAGI, 2001b, 2001a). Gender equality represents a singular, unified ideal and goal. In contrast, gender inequalities are multi-dimensional and refer to the various specific manifestations where gender equality is not achieved. That is, they are manifested across different domains that each contribute to the non-realisation of the goal of gender equality.

The United Nations's *Sustainable Development Goals* recognise gender equality as a fundamental human right, but also as a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world (United Nations, n.d.). There are economic dimensions to gender equality, too. Evidence suggests that reducing gender inequalities in turn can stimulate economic growth (Soldani et al., 2024; André, 2023; Dollar and Gatti, 1999; Elborgh-Woytek et al., 2013). Further, the World Bank estimated in 2018 that closing the gender gap in lifetime earnings could add a total of \$160 trillion to the global wealth of countries (Wodon and de la Brière, 2018).

Ultimately, greater gender equality will benefit individuals, communities and the economy, making it an imperative for sustainable development. The GEIUK contributes to this initiative by providing a robust framework for identifying and addressing gender disparities, enabling evidence-based policies that drive meaningful progress in the UK.

### 1.5 The GEIUK: Three measures of gender equality

When measuring gender equality, conceptual clarity is needed as to whether the measure should exclusively capture gender gaps or also consider overall levels of achievement or development in an area.<sup>2</sup> If the aim is to improve outcomes and raise living standards for women and men, then exclusively focusing on gender differences can provide an incomplete picture, since a narrow gender gap can emerge where both women and men are falling behind – i.e., doing 'equally badly'. Instead, it is important to additionally consider women's and men's local outcomes in comparison to national averages.

For example, the gender pay gap in Greater Manchester (11.7%) is smaller than the national average (14.7%), yet this is mainly due to women and especially men in Greater Manchester earning below the national average; women earn three percent less than the British average compared to 7 percent less for men (Rubery and Schmid, 2023).

It is therefore important to measure both inequalities *between* as well as *among* women and men by comparing local performance to national outcomes – a need compounded by the high levels of regional inequalities in the UK. To address this, the GEIUK is composed of three measures, listed in Table 1, that use the same indicators but different calculations, as discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

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<sup>2</sup> This is a longstanding dilemma in the gender-related composite indicators literature, especially since the introduction of the UNDP's 1995 *Gender-related Development Index* (United Nations Development Programme, 1995) that led to the creation of 'direct' measures of gender equality (e.g., Dijkstra 2002; Dijkstra & Hanmer, 2000; Klasen & Schüller, 2011). Recent indices have offered a way out of this impasse by creating two indices to separately capture gender differences and women's achievement levels respectively, such as UN Women and UNDP's (2023) *Twin Indices on Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality* and the European Commission's Joint Research Centre's Regional Gender Equality Monitor (Norlén et al., 2019). The GEIUK is novel in that it introduces a third measure to additionally capture men's achievement levels.

Table 1. The three measures comprising the GEIUK.

GENDER EQUALITY MEASURE	WOMEN'S OUTCOMES MEASURE	MEN'S OUTCOMES MEASURE
Gaps between women and men in a local authority, irrespective of the direction of (dis)advantage.	Gaps between women locally and women nationally.	Gaps between men locally and men nationally.

## 1.6 The importance of intersectionality

A central challenge to the development of the GEIUK is to avoid obscuring other forms of inequalities such as racism, ableism or ageism that materially affect different gender groups. Throughout the GEIUK development, the possibilities for adopting an intersectional approach through the inclusion of multivariate (beyond sex-disaggregated) data have been assessed. The follow-through requires harmonised data disaggregated by protected characteristics under the *Equality Act 2010* (including sex, age, disability, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity) on a local area level for each nation. This is needed to measure and analyse subnational variations in gender equality for different groups of women and men.

Unfortunately, such data are still largely absent in the UK (and beyond), making this aim challenging to fulfil. The problems around the availability of disaggregated data are usually linked to small sample sizes, resulting in limited reliability of data, if collected at all. An exception is the 2021 UK censuses<sup>3</sup>, which due to exceptionally large samples allow much more detailed analyses of outcomes by multiple characteristics at the local area level. In some instances, these values are suppressed, however, following statistical disclosure controls<sup>4</sup> which are central to protecting the identities of individuals. Regrettably, the UK censuses do not contain all the indicators of gender equality we require for the GEIUK.

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<sup>3</sup> In the UK, it is more accurate to refer to 'censuses' in the plural since there are three separate censuses conducted for England and Wales, for Scotland, and for Northern Ireland.

<sup>4</sup> Statistical disclosure control (SDC) is a set of methods designed to protect the confidentiality of individuals and individual entities in data analysis. It ensures that sensitive information cannot be traced back to specific respondents. SDC is used in various ways, such as anonymising data before analysis, applying rules to prevent the identification of individuals in published results, and modifying data to reduce the risk of disclosure (Elliot and Domingo-Ferrer, 2018). SDC is highly relevant at the local authority level because it ensures that the data used for analysis and decision-making do not compromise the privacy of individuals within the community.

Instead, we rely on additional sources that do not disaggregate data across multiple characteristics.

For now, therefore, the GEIUK focuses on comparing women's and men's outcomes across a range of socioeconomic indicators. We present the results of a cluster analysis (see Section 5.5) conducted to describe the 'types of gender equality', which draw on additional socio-demographic data, including age, ethnicity, local productivity, deprivation and rural or urban profiles. While this approach still does not provide a sufficiently satisfying intersectional analysis of our data, it does allow us to build on the GEIUK findings and start moving beyond an exclusive focus on gender.

## 2 Conceptualising gender equality in the UK: selecting domains

In the following chapter, we present the stages in the conceptual development of the GEIUK. Further, we outline the theoretical and policy relevance of each of the six domains that constitute this composite measure: *Paid Work, Unpaid Work, Money, Education, Power & Participation* and *Health*.

### 2.1 Stages in the development of the conceptual framework

The domains making up the GEIUK were identified through multiple stages (Figure 1). First, we reviewed a selection of prominent literature relevant to understanding gender inequalities in the UK and beyond and which defines and systematises the diverse domains where gender inequalities manifest themselves (Azcona et al., 2025; Schmid et al., 2023). This literature review also involved an analysis of existing composite indicators of gender equality to summarise commonly included domains. Second, we mapped the identified domains to UK policy documents related to gender equality aims, as well as international treaties the UK is party to.<sup>5</sup> This provided an initial conceptual framework for measuring gender equality on the local area level in the UK.

Figure 1. Steps in the conceptual development of the GEIUK.



Third, we refined this framework through a stakeholder workshop where we consulted twenty-four academics, civil servants and women’s organisations from across England, Scotland and Wales in November 2020. Participants contributed their expertise in gender equality as well as their knowledge of regional differences and data in the United Kingdom to assess and improve the conceptual framework and identify the benefits of the GEIUK for a range of users. Our briefing (Schmid et al., 2021) and academic article (Schmid et al., 2023) summarise the results of the reviews and workshop in more detail.

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<sup>5</sup> These include the *Equality Act 2010*, the main legislative framework for gender equality in Great Britain (GB), as well as the *Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW), the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) and the *Beijing Platform for Action*. For more information on legislative frameworks for gender equality in the GB context and how the index relates to these, see Schmid et al. (2023).

As an outcome of this process, six domains were identified to capture gender equality in the United Kingdom: *Paid Work*, *Unpaid Work*, *Money*, *Education*, *Power & Participation* and *Health*. The GEIUK subdomains are shown in Table 2 along with the selected indicators, which are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

Table 2. Overview of proposed domains and subdomains for the GEIUK.

Domain	Subdomain	Indicator
PAID WORK	Employment	Employment rate
		Supervisors and professionals
	Quality of work	Progression opportunities
		Involvement in decision-making
UNPAID WORK	Care and domestic work	Daily childcare
		Weekly domestic work
MONEY	Pay	Weekly median pay
		Not in low pay
	Home equity	Homeowners with a mortgage
POWER & PARTICIPATION	Leadership	Company leadership
		Councillors
	Participation	Participation in civil society
		Voted in the general election
EDUCATION	Qualifications	Level 4 qualifications or above
	Skills	English GCSE
		Maths GCSE
HEALTH	Life expectancy and good health	Life expectancy
		Healthy life years
		Good health

## 2.2 Note on Violence against Women and Girls

Throughout the conceptual development, we noted the importance of including measures of violence against women and girls, given that it is both a cause and consequence of gender inequalities and arguably one of its most extreme manifestations (Strid et al., 2021). However, our review of the data landscape on violence (Schmid et al., 2024), highlighted significant gaps in data availability, comparability and quality that impede the inclusion of this domain in our index.

The most fundamental problem with the availability of data on crime – especially sexual violence – is the low reporting or disclosure rate of violence against women and girls (Brunton-Smith et al., 2020; House of Commons Public Administration Select Committee, 2014; Smith, 2006). Beyond that, we find that datasets covering all four UK nations are lacking, making it difficult to compare the prevalence of different forms of violence consistently between them. Further, data sources rarely go beyond the aggregate national level, giving us little understanding of how the prevalence varies regionally and locally. Finally, data are infrequently disaggregated by characteristics other than sex. Given the intersectional nature of violence against women and girls, there is great research and policy relevance in understanding the prevalence of gender-based violence for different groups of women.

As a result, the GEIUK is unable to include a domain of *Violence* until significant advances in data quality and availability are made. However, in our report (Schmid et al., 2024) we put forward recommendations to the government, public bodies and statistical agencies to contribute to improving data so that future iterations of the GEIUK can follow through.

### 2.3 Domain of *Paid Work*

In the UK and beyond, labour markets continue to be characterised by gender disparities, despite women's increased participation over the past decades. Differences make themselves apparent in the sectors women and men work in, their progression opportunities, as well as in the intensity, quality and conditions of employment. Gender inequalities in paid work simultaneously emerge from and reinforce gender inequalities in the division of unpaid care, with consequences for financial security, independence and agency.

The UK government and devolved nations have recognised the need to address gender inequalities in the labour market. Policies have aimed at increasing women's labour market participation by reducing the barriers women face in (re)entering employment (Scottish Government, 2017; Welsh Government, 2020; Government Equalities Office, 2019a). This includes addressing the over-representation of women in low-paid, precarious work and emphasising the links between gender equality and strategies focusing on improving the quality of work. The UK-wide *Taylor Review* (Taylor, 2017) and the *Fair Work Scotland* and the *Fair Work Wales* programmes all drew attention to this relationship. Moreover, the *Get Britain Working White Paper* (Department for Work and Pensions et al., 2024) emphasised the need to address the rates of women who are economically inactive due to caring responsibilities to grow the economy.

The UK is uniquely facing the challenge of being the only major economy where employment rates have declined over the past five years, with economic inactivity rates still higher than they were before the pandemic (Institute for Employment Studies, 2024).

Policies and industrial strategies, such as the government's *Invest 2035: The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy* (UK Government, 2024), aim to increase employment rates and stimulate growth. However, they fail to sufficiently account for gendered patterns and regional inequalities in employment and labour markets. This oversight could hinder efforts to drive growth and build a resilient, sustainable, and inclusive economy

In the last quarter of 2024, women's employment rates stood at 72 percent compared to 78 percent for men (Office for National Statistics, 2025a).<sup>6</sup> For women and men, employment rates are highest in Scotland (73.1% and 77.5%, respectively) and lowest in Northern Ireland (70.1% and 76.6%, respectively) (ONS 2024). Women's employment rates in England varied from 69 percent in the East Midlands to 76 percent in the South West between October and September 2023. For men, employment rates stood at 82 percent in the South West, South East and the East of England but were only 73 percent in the North East (Office for National Statistics, 2024a; Francis-Devine and Hutton, 2024). Geographical differences in employment rates across the UK's local authorities are also well documented, ranging from 66 percent in Skegness and Lough to 90 percent in Harrogate (Overman and Xu, 2022).

Overall, the difference in employment has reduced to six percentage points from 10 percentage points in the previous decade, although changes to women's state pension age in part explain the recent increase in women's employment rates (Francis-Devine and Hutton, 2024). Further, these headline employment rates mask significant gender differences in part-time employment, which continues to be more prevalent among women who represented 71 percent of the part-time labour force in the last quarter of 2024 (Office for National Statistics, 2025b). For women and men, part-time work is most widespread in the lowest-paying occupations (Francis-Devine and Hutton, 2024) with 22 percent of part-time workers earning less than two-thirds of the UK median hourly pay (Office for National Statistics, 2023c).

The persistent gendered division of unpaid care of children and adults (see Section 2.4) is a key factor in women working reduced hours. The transition to parenthood is associated with women working fewer hours and, as a result, earning less (Andrew et al., 2021). In addition, part-time work is shown to be a key factor in explaining poorer job quality (Jones

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<sup>6</sup> Since 2023, the ONS has encountered reliability issues due to sample size collapses, meaning that the Labour Force Survey (LFS) should be treated with caution. This is also affecting other datasets such as the Business Register and Employment Survey (Foster & Fleming, 2025). The ONS regularly publishes LFS performance and quality monitoring reports on their website. The House of Commons Library has published a briefing explaining these issues further, see Francis-Devine & Powell (2024). Instead of using the LFS, we draw on 2021/2022 census data for inclusion in the GEIUK's domain of *Paid Work*, although this comes with its own set of issues. While sample sizes are high, the England/Wales and Northern Ireland data were collected during the Covid-19 pandemic which may have impacted employment figures as furloughed respondents may not have been consistently classified as employed and economically active (for a discussion, see Office for National Statistics, 2022a, 2023b).

et al., 2023) and the gender pay gap (Andrew et al., 2021; Costa Dias et al., 2018). Further, reduced working hours are associated with lower employee participation in decision-making (Markey et al., 2002) and lower career progression (Costa Dias et al., 2018; Barnett and Hall, 2001; van Osch and Schaveling, 2020; Global Institute of Women's Leadership, 2022; Jones et al., 2023). Indeed, the UK labour market continues to be characterised by vertical segregation (Government Equalities Office, 2019b): women are less likely to work as managers, directors, or senior officials with only eight percent of women holding these higher-paying occupations compared to 13 percent of men (Francis-Devine and Hutton, 2024).

While women tend to feel positive about working part-time, this decision is influenced by multiple constraints (Global Institute for Women's Leadership, 2021; Murphy, 2022). A 2021 survey showed that across the UK, nearly half (46%) of mothers surveyed struggled with access to childcare. Of these women, nearly half (46%, equivalent to 1.7 million) were prevented from taking on more hours while a third (34%) were prevented from taking on a new potential job (Centre for Progressive Policy, 2021). A survey by the British Chamber of Commerce (2023) showed that two-thirds of women with childcare responsibilities in the past 10 years feel they have missed out on career progression and 90 percent believe additional support is needed. Besides resulting in significant earnings losses on an individual level, society pays a considerable long-term cost from underemployment and unrealised productivity gains (Millthorne et al., 2023).

#### 2.4 Domain of *Unpaid Work*

The gendered distribution of unpaid work is at the heart of gender inequalities. On average, women carry out 60 percent more unpaid work than men (Office for National Statistics, 2016). In the UK, this results in women's total working hours – unpaid and paid – being higher than men's by 16 minutes per day, leaving less time for non-work activities (Andrew et al., 2021). Per day, women on average provided around an hour more of unpaid care for children and adults and domestic work than men in 2023 (Office for National Statistics, 2023e).

Great societal and economic benefits can be gained from increasing men's involvement in unpaid care. Research shows that fathers' greater involvement in childcare during the first year of parenthood is critical to establishing a pattern of involvement as children get older (Fagan and Norman, 2016; Norman et al., 2023), which in turn benefits women's labour market participation (Norman, 2019) and children's cognitive behaviour and educational attainment at primary school (Norman and Davies, 2023). Further, longer periods of paid leave for fathers or partners are associated with better mental health outcomes for both parents (Feldman et al., 2004; Courtin et al., 2023; Heshmati et al., 2023).

With an ageing population and a compromised social care system, the provision of informal care for adults is gaining importance. Recent census data for England and Wales

shows that in 2021, among women, 10.4 percent were unpaid carers of adults compared to 7.6 percent among men. Further, the proportion providing 20 to 49 hours of unpaid care a week increased from 1.5 percent in 2011 to 1.9 percent in 2021. According to research by Carers UK and the Centre for Care (2022), two-thirds of adults in the UK will become unpaid carers for adults in their lifetimes. Women are likely to become carers earlier, with 50 percent of women becoming carers by the age of 46, while 50 percent of men become carers by 57 – a full decade later, likely further impacting gender differences in career development, earnings and pension wealth accumulation. The highest percentage of women who are unpaid carers are aged 55 to 59, whereas, for men, it is between the ages of 60 and 64 (Office for National Statistics, 2023g).

Providing higher-intensity unpaid care is associated with negative impacts on people's paid employment, mental health and well-being (Carers UK, 2021; Brimblecombe and Cartagena Farias, 2022). Negative impacts are especially pronounced for so-called 'sandwich carers' who provide unpaid care to both children and adults: more than one in four sandwich carers report symptoms of mental ill-health (Office for National Statistics, 2019). The prevalence of mental ill-health tends to rise with the amount of unpaid care performed: a third of sandwich carers providing at least 20 hours report suffering from mental ill-health compared to less than a quarter (23%) of those providing less than five hours each week (Office for National Statistics, 2024b).

## 2.5 Domain of Money

Gender inequalities in paid and unpaid work can result in sizeable inequalities in earnings and wealth between women and men. In 2024, the UK gender pay gap in median hourly earnings for all employees stood at 13 percent, dropping down to 7 percent for full-time employees (Office for National Statistics, 2024c).

Across the UK, the size of the gender pay gap varies significantly. For all employees, the gender gap in 2024 is lower in Northern Ireland (7.3%), Wales (8.9%) and Scotland (9.2%) compared to England (13.6%). Within England, the North East exhibits the smallest, though still substantial, gap of 11 percent, while the South East has the highest at 18 percent (Office for National Statistics, 2024c).

The full extent of differences in earnings between women and men is obscured in the common calculation of the gender pay gap, which is based on women's and men's median *hourly* earnings. This is because using *hourly* earnings disregards differences in working time, particularly that women are more likely to work on a part-time basis. Using *weekly* earnings helps better account for differences in hours worked, as on average, men are working more paid hours than women. Ultimately, someone's ability to meet their expenses (e.g. for housing or food) is more reliant on the total earnings they receive rather than on the actual hourly rate upon which this is based. In 2023, the median weekly gross earnings for women working full-time was £632 compared to £730 for men (Office for National

Statistics, 2023f). This means that for each pound men earn per week, women receive only 87 pence.

Overall, 2023 data show that women are still more likely to be in low-paying jobs (i.e. earning less than two-thirds of the UK median hourly pay) compared to men (10.5% versus 7.2%) (Office for National Statistics, 2023d). Further, women are also more likely than men to be 'stuck' in low-paid employment, unable to move into higher-paying work (Cominetti et al., 2021). Women in the UK thus remain overrepresented at the bottom of the earnings distribution and increasingly underrepresented the further up the earnings distribution (Joyce et al., 2019). Even women in the top 10 percent of earners receive, on average, two-thirds (67%) of what top-earning men take home (Andrew et al., 2021).

Parenthood and the gendered division of unpaid work impact the gender pay gap, resulting in a reduction of women's earnings – a phenomenon also known as the 'motherhood penalty' (Budig et al., 2012; Budig & England, 2001; Budig & Hodges, 2010). In contrast, researchers have found evidence of a 'fatherhood premium' to men's earnings (Lundberg and Rose, 2002; Glauber, 2008; Hodges and Budig, 2010). The Institute for Fiscal Studies shows that mothers' earnings in the UK are, on average, less than half of fathers' just seven years after the birth of a first child (Andrew et al., 2021).

Accumulated inequalities in earnings and income over the life course result in significant wealth differences between women and men. Research from the Women's Budget Group (2023) shows that the total gender wealth gap in the UK stood at 35 percent, with men on average having £92,762 more in wealth than women between April 2018 and March 2020. Although the average wealth gap is negligible between women and men aged 25 to 34, it rises to 42 percent by the age of 64, highlighting the growth of gender inequalities across the life course. Consequently, the gender gap in average private pension wealth in the UK stands at 90 percent, with men holding an average of £83,879 more in their pots than women. While men's main source of wealth are private pensions, which are owned by the individual alone, women more commonly rely on wealth which is shared with other household members, such as physical (i.e. household possessions and vehicles) and property wealth (Women's Budget Group, 2023).

Across Britain, wealth is unevenly distributed. Data from the ONS shows that the wealthiest 10 percent are estimated to hold around half of all wealth, mainly private pension and property wealth. Further, the UK is characterised by regional wealth inequalities, which are largely explained by differences in property ownership and value. Data from April 2018 to March 2020 show that individual median wealth is highest in the South East of England (£236,000) and lowest in the North East (£79,000), amounting to a difference of £157,000. Comprising a mixture of low- and high-wealth groups, London exhibits the highest individual wealth inequality in the country (Office for National Statistics, 2022b). Further research is needed to determine the level of wealth inequalities by both region and gender.

## 2.6 Domain of Power & Participation

Equal access to power and participation in politics, business, and public life is fundamental to achieving a gender-equal society. Promoting women's voices and ensuring their active involvement in decision-making necessitates not only increased representation in national and local politics but also in business and civic organisations. Institutions that achieve greater gender balance in representation are more likely to champion policies advancing gender equality and implement initiatives that directly benefit women (Pascall and Lewis, 2004; Cowper-Coles, 2020).

Key barriers to women's representation include entrenched gender norms around leadership and the disproportionate burden of care work, which limits women's time, financial resources and opportunities for public engagement. Frameworks such as the UN's Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UK's 2010 Equality Act emphasise the importance of increasing women's presence in conventional positions of power, aiming to dismantle these barriers and foster more inclusive institutions.

Women are underrepresented in business leadership in the UK, though progress is being made. Among the FTSE 350, gains were made in 2024 with women's representation on board increasing to 43 percent although women still only make up 16 percent of Executive Directors, according to FTSE Women Leaders Review (2025). Further, in 2023, only one in five (20%) active limited companies in the UK was led by women. England has the highest share of companies led by women (20%), followed by Scotland and Wales (19% and 18%, respectively) and 18 percent in Northern Ireland (Pay et al., 2024).

In the UK, gender parity in politics is yet to be achieved although the number of women elected as UK Members of Parliament and in devolved legislatures has been steadily increasing. The 2024 UK General Election resulted in the highest number of women being elected to the House of Commons, now making up 40 percent of Members of Parliament (Allen, 2024). In 2023, women's representation in devolved legislatures stood at 52 percent in the London Assembly, 42 percent in the Welsh Assembly (Senedd Cymru), 36 percent in the Northern Ireland Assembly and 35 percent in the Scottish Parliament (Cracknell et al., 2023). The council level of government exhibits greater levels of gender inequalities: 95 percent of local councils across the UK were dominated by men in 2022, with only 18 out of the 364 councils achieving at least gender parity (Fawcett Society, 2023). Regionally, London exhibited the highest number of women councillors (45%) while the lowest number was recorded in Northern Ireland (26%). In England, in 2024, there were 10 combined authority Metro Mayors of which three are women: Tracy Babin (West Yorkshire), Kim McGuinness (North East) and Claire Waard (East Midlands).

Voting in general elections is a common form of participating in public life and is key to a functioning democracy. In the 2024 general election, voter participation dropped to 60 percent, marking the lowest turnout rate since 2001. Turnout rates differed significantly across the UK: the lowest regional voter participation was recorded in Yorkshire and the

Humber (56%), while turnout was highest in the South West at 65 percent (Sturge, 2024). This is likely linked to growing income inequalities, as witnessed across the UK, being linked to greater mistrust in political institutions (Bienstman et al., 2024). Moreover, the UK is witnessing a deepening ‘turnout divide’ among the young, with socioeconomically disadvantaged demographics increasingly less likely to vote compared to their better-off peers (Aref-Adib and Hale, 2024; Ansell and Gingrich, 2024). Further, a recent study indicates a growing gender gap in political interest between the ages of 16 and 30, in part explained by lower political interest among women with lower-level and upper-secondary vocational qualifications (Janmaat et al., 2022). So far, this has not resulted in significant differences in voter turnout among women and men at the UK level, though deeper analysis of the gender gap at the local area level is needed.

## 2.7 Domain of Education

Over the past decades, significant advances have been made in women’s education, with women and girls in the UK outperforming men in many areas of educational attainment. The latest figures for 2022/23 in England show that girls outperform boys in all headline Department for Education measures. For example, at the end of reception year (ages between four and five), nearly two-thirds (61%) of boys achieved a ‘good level of development’ compared to three-quarters (74%) of girls (Department for Education, 2023). Further, at the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) level, 68 percent of girls and 63 percent of boys achieved a grade above 4<sup>7</sup> in English and Maths (Department for Education, 2024b). By the age of 19, men (40%) are less likely to be enrolled in Higher Education compared to women (54%), as data from 2021/22 in England shows (Department for Education, 2024a).

However, women continue to lag behind in key areas such as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) courses, where male students dominate enrolment figures, underscoring persistent gender imbalances in these fields (House of Commons Science and Technology and Committee, 2023). This disparity contributes to the broader issue of women’s educational advantage not translating into equivalent labour market gains (Farquharson et al., 2022). Among university graduates, men remain more likely to participate in further advanced studies, hold managerial or professional positions and progress at a higher rate than women. Furthermore, five years after graduating with an undergraduate degree, women earn 12 percent less than men (Roberts et al., 2024).

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<sup>7</sup> The General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) is a qualification typically taken by students in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland when they are around 16 years old. The grades for GCSEs range from 9 to 1, with 9 being the highest grade. The Scottish equivalent is National 5 (N5) qualifications with candidates awarded grades on a scale from A to D, with A being the highest grade.

Geographically, educational skills and attainment in the United Kingdom are unevenly distributed. The Learning and Work Institute (2023) documents significant gaps in numeracy and literacy rates within local areas across England. Simultaneously, educational attainment varies substantially across the UK: 30 percent of the 25–64 population in the West Midlands are qualified below GCSE or equivalent level, which is three times higher than in Inner West London at 9 percent (Evans et al., 2024). Further, two in three adults in London have a higher education qualification, compared to just one in three in Greater Lincolnshire. Qualifications across the UK are more unequally distributed than in most European countries and inequalities are estimated to worsen over the next decade: 71 percent of Londoners and 65 percent of adults in Scotland will have a degree by 2035, compared with only 29 percent in Hull and East Yorkshire (Evans et al., 2024).

Inequalities in essential skills and attainment rates by region and gender pose a significant challenge for the UK in that they inhibit productivity, growth and fairness, with parts of the country having world-leading skills bases while others are falling further behind in international skills rankings.

## 2.8 Domain of *Health*

Across G20 countries, the UK exhibits the largest differences in health outcomes, healthcare provision and prevalence of disease between women and men (Benenden Health, 2023). While in most countries men have poorer health outcomes than women, the opposite is true in the UK (Evans et al., 2024) despite women on average living longer (Office for National Statistics, 2024e).

Women, for example, represent two-thirds of all people with dementia (Prince et al., 2014), – the leading cause of death for women aged 80 and men 85 and over (Allen & Sesti, 2018). Women are also more likely to suffer from mental health problems in England, namely one in five women compared to one in eight men, with the rate steadily increasing for women between 2000 and 2014 (McManus et al., 2016). Still, data from the Fawcett Society (2024) indicates that nearly two-thirds of women feel their health issues are not taken seriously and over half report negative experiences with a healthcare professional. Men, however, continue to be more likely to die by suicide than women (Office for National Statistics, 2024f)

Factors such as socioeconomic background, ethnicity and geography are related to health outcomes, often compounding each other. For example, in terms of ethnicity, Black women in the UK are three times more likely to die during childbirth than White women, pointing to the importance of intersectional analyses in outcomes (MBRRACE-UK, 2024). There is also a geographical dimension to this, as women living in the most deprived areas in England are 2.5 times more likely to die during childbirth than women living in the least deprived areas of the UK (MBRRACE-UK, 2022).

Geographic inequalities also manifest themselves in life expectancy and healthy life years (Allen & Sesti, 2018), with a clear North–South divide that has further increased since the Covid-19 pandemic (Office for National Statistics, 2024d). Alongside income inequalities rising (Clegg and Corlett, 2023), so has the gap in life expectancy across the UK: on average, life expectancy is highest for women (83 years) and men (79 years) in England, especially the South of England and lowest in Scotland (81 years for women and 77 years for men). Across local areas, Blackpool overtook Glasgow City for the first time in 20 years to exhibit the lowest average male life expectancy of 73 years in 2023. For women, life expectancy remains lowest in Glasgow City at 78.3 years (Office for National Statistics, 2024d).

The patterns in life expectancy largely reflect those for healthy life years – the number of years a person is expected to continue to live in a healthy condition. Between 2018 to 2020, women in the UK were expected to live 63.6 healthy life years compared to 62.8 years for men. Figures are highest for women and men living in the South of England and lowest in Scotland, where a decrease was recorded for both women and men between 2015–2017 and 2018–2020 (Office for National Statistics, 2022c).

### 3 Measuring gender equality in the UK: selecting indicators

This chapter presents how the conceptual framework is translated into the GEIUK's measurement framework. It introduces the process for short-listing indicators and challenges encountered in geographical harmonisation across datasets and countries. Further, we introduce the final selection of indicators making up each of the six GEIUK domains and offer a descriptive account of women's and men's outcomes across the indicators making up each of the six GEIUK domains.

#### 3.1 Selecting indicators

The conceptual framework was used as a basis for sourcing and assessing the latest relevant and available indicators. To assess the suitability of indicators, we followed four principles:

1. The data must be sex-disaggregated;
2. The data are measured on the 'Local Authority District' (LAD) level;
3. The data cover all four UK nations;
4. The data are recent and published after 2020.

Our previous data scoping highlighted gaps in the availability of reliable sex-disaggregated data at the LAD level (Schmid et al., 2023). This is a commonly cited problem in the gender equality index literature that often constrains the conceptual scope of gender-related indices (e.g., Bozzano 2012; Di Bella et al. 2020; Di Noia 2002; Dunatchik et al. 2017; Gil-Lafuente et al. 2019; Harvey, Blakely and Tepperman 1990; Kjeldstad and Kristiansen 2001). A further challenge was that datasets covering all four nations did not exist for all indicators of interest. In some instances, data had to be combined from different sources to achieve UK coverage. Fortunately, conceptual and methodological comparability among these indicators is high for most indicators. Where deviations exist, these are noted in the tables describing the indicators below and in the Annex.

The recent releases of the UK censuses provide an invaluable resource in terms of UK coverage and robust sample sizes that permit local-level analyses. However, since census data are only collected once a decade, the opportunity for regular updates of the indicators is limited, posing challenges to future iterations of the GEIUK. Further, while providing a rich resource due to near-complete coverage of the UK population, census data only cover a handful of indicators that are of interest to our purposes. For example, it does not allow us to estimate time spent on childcare or domestic work, income, or participation in the community. Instead, we are required to draw on alternative sources.

While most of the shortlisted indicators are available at the LAD level, some are only available at the regional level<sup>8</sup> or Unitary Local Authority<sup>9</sup>, which are higher than the LAD level. For example, an indicator on time spent on childcare at the local level is unavailable, making it necessary to revert to regional-level data for the four nations. In some instances, values from the Unitary Authority level for England had to be used, of which there are only 63 for England as of 2023. In these instances, imputations to the LAD level have been undertaken and noted where applicable for data to be interpreted with caution. For data on the gender proportions of councillors, data from the council level was imputed to the LAD level.

For the development of the methodological framework, including indicator selection, we followed the guidelines set out by the 'Handbook on Constructing Composite Indicators' developed by the OECD and European Commission Joint Research Centre (2008). The short-listing of indicators was performed iteratively after extensive checks of conceptual fit, outliers, missing values, correlation structures and Principal Components Analysis (PCA)<sup>10</sup>. Histograms of each indicator showing their distribution as well as correlation matrices and results of the PCAs are presented in the Annex.

Using PCA, we tested the indicators for each domain to achieve symmetry in the latent structure across the three measures: the Women's Outcomes Measure, the Men's Outcomes Measure and the Gender Equality Measure. The Women's Outcomes Measure was used as our guiding measure when exploring the latent structure of the index. This is motivated by wanting to centre the GEIUK around women's experiences and the historical discrimination and inequalities women have faced. To achieve the same structure for each of our three measures, the structure was first tested on the Women's Outcomes Measure and subsequently checked against the other two measures.

In the remainder of this chapter, we present the shortlisted indicators for each domain, showing how the conceptual framework has been translated into a robust measurement framework.

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<sup>8</sup> Across the UK, there are twelve regions. England is made up of nine regions while regional data for Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland are equivalent to national-level data, as each country is treated as a region.

<sup>9</sup> Unitary Local Authorities (ULAs), also known as Upper-tier Local Authorities, handle all local government functions within a larger area, unlike Local Administrative Districts (LADs) where responsibilities are split between county and district councils (see Sanford, 2020).

<sup>10</sup> Principal Component Analysis (PCA) is an exploratory data analysis tool used to simplify complex data by identifying underlying factors or dimensions that capture the main patterns within a dataset (Jolliffe and Cadima, 2016; OECD and Joint Research Centre, 2008). In the context of measuring gender equality, PCA examines correlations among the indicators of interest to identify factors representing meaningful subdomains of gender equality.

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Table 3. Geographical scale of indicators covering the four nations. \* LAD stands for Local Authority District, ULA for Unitary Local Authority.

Domain	Indicator	Geography	Year	Source
PAID WORK	Employment rate	LAD*	2021 / 2022 Scotland	ONS (2022) England and Wales 2021 Census; NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland 2021 Census; NRS (2024) Scotland's Census 2022.
	Supervisors and professionals	LAD	2021 / 2022 Scotland	
	Progression opportunities	ULA*	2021 / 2023 NI	ONS (2021) Annual Population Survey; NISRA (2023) Annual Population Survey.
	Involvement in decision-making	ULA	2021 / 2023 NI	
UNPAID WORK	Daily childcare	Region	2023	ONS (2023) Time Use in the UK: Country and region, by sex.
	Weekly domestic work	LAD	2021	University of Essex, Institute for Social and Economic Research (2024). Understanding Society: Waves 1-14, 2009-2023.
MONEY	Weekly median pay	LAD	2023	ONS (2023) Annual Population Survey; NISRA (2023) Annual Population Survey.
	Not in low pay	ULA	2021 / 2023 NI	ONS (2021) Annual Population Survey; NISRA (2023) Annual Population Survey.
	Homeowners with a mortgage	LAD	2021 / 2022 Scotland	ONS (2022) England and Wales 2021 Census; NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland 2021 Census; NRS (2024) Scotland's Census 2022.
POWER & PARTICIPATION	Company leadership	LAD	2023	The Gender Index and MnAI (2023) UK female-led companies 2023.
	Councillors	Council	2023	Open Council Data (2023) UK councillors by year.
	Participation in civil society	LAD	2021	University of Essex, Institute for Social and Economic Research (2024). Understanding Society: Waves 1-14, 2009-2023.
	Voted in the general election	LAD	2021	
EDUCATION	Level 4 qualifications or above	LAD	2021 / 2022 Scotland	ONS (2022) England and Wales 2021 Census; NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland 2021 Census; NRS (2024) Scotland's Census 2022.
	English GCSE	ULA	2021 / 2023 Scotland	Department for Education England (2023) Key stage 4 performance; Scottish Qualifications Agency; Department for Education Examinations Database (2023), Requested data; Welsh Government School Statistics (2023) Key Stage 4 Interim Measures by LEA.
	Maths GCSE	ULA	2021 / 2023 Scotland	
HEALTH	Life expectancy	LAD	2018-2020	ONS (2022) England and Wales 2021 Census; NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland 2021 Census; NRS (2024) Scotland's Census 2022.
	Healthy life years	ULA	2018-2020	ONS (2022) Health state life expectancies, UK: 2018 to 2020.
	Good health	LAD	2021 / 2022 Scotland	ONS (2022) England and Wales 2021 Census; NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland 2021 Census; NRS (2024) Scotland's Census 2022.

### 3.2 Measuring Paid Work

In the domain of *Paid Work*, four indicators were selected that relate to participation in employment, representation in managerial, administrative and professional occupations, opportunities for progress and quality of work (Table 4). These indicators were selected because they reflect key dimensions of gender equality in employment, capturing whether women and men participate in paid work in addition to the quality of that participation. They provide insights into the broader barriers and opportunities individuals face, including access to career advancement and decision-making influence at work, both of which have profound implications for gender equality and socioeconomic well-being. Correlations between indicators and PCA results are provided in the Annex.

Table 4. Overview of indicators in the domain of Paid Work.

PAID WORK					
Subdomain	Variable	Reference population	Description	Year	Source
Employment	Employment rate	16–64	Percentage of people in employment (employee or self-employed; including full-time student).	2021 / 2022 Scotland	ONS (2022) England and Wales 2021 Census; NISRA (2022)
	Supervisors and professionals	16–64	Percentage of employees working in higher and lower managerial, administrative and professional occupations.	2021 / 2022 Scotland	Northern Ireland 2021 Census; NRS (2024) Scotland’s Census 2022.
Quality of work <sup>11</sup>	Progression opportunities	16+ / 18+NI	Percentage of employees with good or very good self-perceived career progression opportunities.	2021 / 2023 NI	ONS (2021) Annual Population Survey; NISRA (2023)
	Involvement in decision-making	16+ / 18+NI	Percentage of employees with self-perceived employee involvement in decision-making at work.	2021 / 2023 NI	Annual Population Survey.

<sup>11</sup> Regional averages were used due to missing data for six LADs: Bromsgrove, Malvern Hills, Redditch, Worcester, Wychavon, Wyre Forest.

In 2021 (2022 for Scotland), the UK average employment rate of women aged 16–64 was 69 percent (ranging from 53% in Nottingham to 82% in the Shetland Islands), compared with 76 percent for men (ranging from 58% in Nottingham to 85% in the Shetland Islands). In all LADs, women are less likely to be employed than men, with an average percentage point (pp) difference of 6.6 (Table 5).

Employment rates need to be considered in relation to equal access to more senior, higher-paying positions, as vertical segregation is still a pronounced feature of the UK labour market (Government Equalities Office, 2019a; Francis-Devine and Hutton, 2024). In 2021, 32 percent of employed women worked in higher or lower managerial, administrative or professional occupations<sup>12</sup> (ranging from 18% in Leicester to 51% in Wandsworth). This is slightly higher for men, where 35 percent are employed in such positions (ranging from 20% in Blaenau Gwent to 58% in Richmond upon Thames). While the average difference is small between women and men (–3pp), women’s disadvantage is not present in all LADs; at the maximum, there is a positive 6 percentage point difference in Fermanagh and Omagh, where more women than men work in higher or lower managerial, administrative or professional occupations.

We are also interested in examining aspects of the quality of work, although recognise that this is a much broader topic than what can be captured here (see for example Jones et al., 2023; ONS, 2022). We selected two indicators to measure this aspect. One indicator captures career progression opportunities and shows that women are slightly less likely to agree or strongly agree that they have good progression opportunities (53%) compared with men (56%). On average, the difference is small (–3 pp), but across LADs, there are much wider differences that range from women being –33 percentage points lower than men in Clackmannanshire to 19 percentage points above men in Knowsley.

Another indicator captures the proportion of employees with self-perceived employee involvement in decision-making in their workplace. A similar pattern emerges as women and men are, on average, about equally likely to feel involved (54% and 55%, respectively). However, this masks other strong differences. In some LADs, most men (up to 93% in Camden) feel involved while for women the maximum peaks at 69 percent in Dudley, though the minimum is lower for men (28% in Merthyr Tydfil) than women (37% in Kensington and Chelsea).

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<sup>12</sup> Categories are based on the Standard Occupational Classification 2020 (ONS 2023) and combine: L2 Higher managerial and administrative occupations; L3 Higher professional occupations; L4 Lower professional and higher technical occupations; L5 Lower managerial and administrative occupations; L6 Higher supervisory occupations; L10 Lower supervisory occupations. The Scottish data also includes L1 Employers in large establishments.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics for indicators in the domain of Paid Work.

Domain	Indicator	Mean	Std dv	Min	Max
PAID WORK	<b>Women</b>				
	Employment rate	69.2%	4.9	52.8%	82.1%
	Supervisors and professionals	32.0%	5.7	17.8%	51.2%
	Progression opportunities	52.6%	5.6	31.5%	73.6%
	Involvement in decisions	53.5%	5.3	36.7%	68.5%
	<b>Men</b>				
	Employment rate	75.8%	4.8	58.0%	85.1%
	Supervisors and professionals	34.7%	7.6	19.8%	57.7%
	Progression opportunities	55.8%	8.2	30.7%	82.7%
	Involvement in decisions	54.7%	7.1	27.7%	92.7%
	<b>Gender Gap (w-m)</b>				
	Employment rate	-6.6pp	2.1	-13.4pp	-0.5pp
	Supervisors and professionals	-2.7pp	2.9	-10.9pp	6.1pp
	Progression opportunities	-3.2pp	8.6	-32.8pp	18.8pp
	Involvement in decisions	-1.2pp	8.0	-29.9pp	32.4pp
	<b>Total (population-weighted average)</b>				
	Employment rate	72.5%	4.7	55.4%	83.6%
	Supervisors and professionals	33.3%	6.6	18.9%	54.1%
	Progression opportunities	54.3%	5.6	39.1%	72.0%
	Involvement in decisions	54.1%	4.8	39.8%	78.7%

### 3.3 Measuring Unpaid Work

Unpaid work is a root cause and the most obvious manifestation of gender inequalities. This domain measures women’s and men’s involvement in childcare and domestic tasks (Table 6). The division of activities into productive (paid work) and reproductive (unpaid care and domestic tasks) spheres, along with society’s historical undervaluation of the latter, remains central to the persistence of gender inequalities (Crompton, 2006; Walby, 1990).

Unpaid care and domestic responsibilities disproportionately fall on women, significantly constraining their opportunities to participate equally in the labour market and attain economic independence. However, addressing gender equality in this area is not solely about reducing and redistributing existing care tasks but also about recognising the inherent value of caregiving itself and ensuring that everyone, regardless of gender, has the opportunity and freedom to engage meaningfully in care activities (Elson, 2017). Measuring both care and domestic work is essential to highlight and redress existing inequalities while also emphasising the societal value of care, underpinning the development of capabilities and thus human development (UN Women, 2018b, 2018a).

For this domain, it was particularly difficult to obtain reliable sex-disaggregated data measured at the LAD level. For time spent on childcare, only regional averages are available, requiring us to impute values to the LAD level. As a result, much detail on the variation and gender division in unpaid childcare is lost, though this is still better than not including such an indicator at all. Correlations between indicators and PCA results are provided in the Annex.

Table 6. Overview of indicators in the domain of Unpaid Work.

UNPAID WORK					
Subdomain	Variable	Reference population	Description	Year	Source
Care and domestic work	Daily childcare	18+ years	Average daily time (minutes) spent doing childcare.	2023	ONS (2023) Time Use in the UK: Country and region, by sex.
	Weekly domestic work	16+ years	Average weekly time (hours) spent on housework, such as cooking, cleaning and laundry.	2023 <sup>13</sup>	University of Essex, Institute for Social and Economic Research (2024). Understanding Society: Waves 1-14, 2009-2023.

<sup>13</sup> Due to missing data, estimates from 2021 are used for: Allerdale, Barrow-in-Furness, Carlisle, Copeland, Craven, Eden, Hambleton, Harrogate, Mendip, Oxford (men only), Richmondshire, Ryedale Scarborough, Sedgemoor, Selby, Somerset West and Taunton, South Lakeland, and South Somerset.

The GEIUK compares time spent on unpaid childcare and domestic work, tracking both local gender gaps and showing where these outcomes are higher or lower than the national average for women and men. This does not imply that higher outcomes in *Unpaid Work* are necessarily better for women or men. Rather, we are monitoring where women or men are doing more of this work and how gendered its division is.

The first indicator captures the average daily time in minutes spent doing childcare. In 2023, women spent an average of 34 minutes daily on childcare (ranging from 20 minutes in Scotland to 49 minutes in the South West), compared to 19 minutes for men (ranging from 7 minutes in Northern Ireland to 25 minutes in the South West). Women are more likely to spend time doing childcare in all regions, with the difference between women and men ranging from 5 minutes in the North West to 27 minutes in Yorkshire and the Humber (Table 7).

Table 7. Descriptive statistics for indicators in Unpaid Work.

Domain	Indicator	Mean	Std dv	Min	Max
UNPAID WORK	<b>Women</b>				
	Daily childcare	34 mins	7.4 mins	20 mins	49 mins
	Weekly domestic work	12 hours	2.3 hours	5 hours	22 hours
	<b>Men</b>				
	Daily childcare	19 mins	7.4 mins	7 mins	25 mins
	Weekly domestic work	7 hours	1.8 hours	3 hours	16 hours
	<b>Gender Gap (w-m)</b>				
	Daily childcare	14.8 mins	6.0 mins	5.2 mins	27.1 mins
	Weekly domestic work	4.4 hours	3 hours	-6.4 hours	18.3 hours
	<b>Total (population-weighted average)</b>				
	Daily childcare	26.4 mins	5.4 mins	15.3 mins	36.6 mins
	Weekly domestic work	9.5 hours	1.5 hours	5 hours	17 hours

The second indicator measures the average weekly time in hours spent on domestic work, such as cooking, cleaning and doing laundry. In 2023, women spent an average of 12 hours weekly on domestic work (ranging from 5 hours in Rushmoor to 22 hours in Fermanagh and Omagh). Men provided an average of 7 hours per week (ranging from 3 hours in Middlesbrough to 16 hours in Selby). Gender gaps are largest in Fermanagh and Omagh, where women perform more than 18.3 hours of housework than men and narrowest in Copeland (though the small sample size makes this estimate less reliable), where men perform over 6 hours more than women.

Given that these data are based on self-reported time use, rather than diary-based time use which is considered the gold standard, these data should be interpreted with caution as both women and men tend to overestimate time spent on housework (Kan, 2006; Lee & Waite, 2005). Moreover, estimates of hours spent on domestic work are unreliable due to small sample sizes (less than 10) in several LADs.<sup>14</sup>

### 3.4 Measuring Money

Economic independence is a cornerstone of gender equality, as it provides individuals with autonomy, security and greater agency over their life choices. This domain thus focuses explicitly on pay and wealth (see Table 8) to capture not only immediate economic inequalities between women and men but also long-term inequalities in the accumulation of financial resources, which influence overall life outcomes and resilience to economic shocks. Correlations between indicators and PCA results are provided in the Annex.

In the *Pay* subdomain, the first indicator measures the median weekly pay (including overtime) for all employees, that is both full-time and part-time workers. The second indicator captures the extent to which women and men are not in low-pay employment; that is, they are earning at least two-thirds of the median pay in the UK, or in the case of Northern Ireland, earning above the real living wage of £9.90 in 2023.

For the subdomain of *Home equity*, the indicator measures the percentage of people living in owner-occupied accommodation with a mortgage or loan or part-owned on a shared ownership scheme. Serving as a proxy for wealth accumulation, it is inherently limited; it does not provide details such as whether the mortgage or loan is in the respondent's name or the size of the mortgage. Ideally, more precise measures of private wealth and assets would be included, but individual-level, sex-disaggregated data with sufficient sample sizes at the local authority level across all four nations are lacking. Despite these limitations, this indicator represents the best available option for capturing wealth-related disparities in this context, even if imperfectly.

On average, women in 2023 were paid £490 per week compared to men's weekly payment of £676, amounting to a difference of £186 per week or £744 per month (Table 9). Average weekly pay ranges substantially across local authorities, with men taking home a minimum

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<sup>14</sup> Average sample sizes in LADs are  $n = 50$  for women and  $n = 47$  for men, but small samples ( $<10$ ) are included, and estimates should, therefore, be interpreted with caution.

Women's estimates derived from small samples ( $<10$ ) are found in 10 LADs: Barrow-in-Furness, North Warwickshire, Oadby and Wigston, Orkney Islands, Richmondshire, Runnymede, Rushmoor, Shetland Islands, Torrington, and West Dunbartonshire.

For men's estimates, small sample sizes ( $<10$ ) apply to 13 LADs: Barrow-in-Furness, Blaenau Gwent, Ceredigion, Elmbridge, Inverclyde, Na h-Eileanan Siar, Oadby and Wigston, Orkney Islands, Runnymede, Rushmoor, Shetland Islands, Torrington, and West Dunbartonshire.

of £476 (in Causeway Coast and Glens) and a maximum weekly pay of £1,120 per week (in Kensington and Chelsea). The range is narrower for women but still substantial: the minimum women were paid weekly was £303 (in Melton), while this peaks at £771 (in Wandsworth). The greatest gender inequalities are found in Elmbridge (£454 per week) and the smallest in Tower Hamlets (£26 per week). There is no local authority where women’s average weekly pay is higher than men’s.

Table 8. Overview of indicators in the domain of Money.

MONEY					
Domain	Variable	Reference population	Description	Year	Source
Pay	Weekly median pay	16+ years	Full-time median weekly pay, including overtime in £ for all employees. <sup>15</sup>	2023	ONS (2023) Annual Population Survey; NISRA (2023) Annual Population Survey.
	Not in low pay	16+ years	Percentage of employees not in low-pay employment, i.e., earning at least two-thirds of the median pay of the UK. <sup>16</sup>	2021 / 2023 NI	ONS (2021) Annual Population Survey; NISRA (2023) Annual Population Survey.
Home equity	Home-owners with a mortgage	16+ years	Percentage of people in owner-occupied accommodation with a mortgage or loan or part-owned on a shared ownership scheme. <sup>17</sup>	2021 / 2022 Scotland	ONS (2022) England and Wales 2021 Census; NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland 2021 Census; NRS (2024) Scotland’s Census 2022.

In 2023, 61 percent of men did not work in low-pay employment (61%) compared to 57 percent of women, yet these shares vary strongly across localities. The lowest percentage of women not in low pay stands at 40 percent in Brent, with the highest percentage at 88 in Lisburn and Castlereagh. For men, the lowest share is 40 percent in Neath Port Talbot, rising to 93 percent for men Antrim and Newtownabbey. While the average difference between women and men is small (-4pp), there are significant gaps across LADs operating

<sup>15</sup> Regional averages were used due to missing data for the Orkney Islands and the Shetland Islands.

<sup>16</sup> Data for Northern Ireland refer to the percentage earning above the real living wage of £9.90 in 2023. Comparisons with England, Wales and Scotland should therefore be made with caution.

<sup>17</sup> In Scotland, this includes shared equity, e.g. LIFT or Help-to-Buy.

in both directions: the maximum gap in favour of women is found in the City of Bristol (15pp) and that in favour of men in Moray (20pp).

Table 9. Descriptive statistics for indicators in Money.

Domain	Indicator	Mean	Std dv	Min	Max
Money	<b>Women</b>				
	Weekly median pay	£490	£68.7	£303	£771
	Not in low pay	56.6%	7.4	39.6%	87.7%
	Homeowners with mortgage	35.0%	5.9	11.9%	48.1%
	<b>Men</b>				
	Weekly median pay	£676.4	£88.4	£477	£1120
	Not in low pay	60.7%	7.6	40.4%	93.7%
	Homeowners with mortgage	36.9%	6.2	12.7%	51.5%
	<b>Gap (w-m)</b>				
	Weekly median pay	-£186.5	£65	-£454	-£25.7
	Not in low pay	-4pp	5.1	-20.4pp	14.7pp
	Homeowners with mortgage	-1.8pp	0.7	-3.9pp	1.1pp
	<b>Totals (population-weighted average)</b>				
	Weekly median pay	£580	£70.7	436.6	£855.9
	Not in low pay	58.7%	7.1	43.5%	88.9%
Homeowners with mortgage	36%	6.1	12.3%	49.5%	

There is a slight difference in the share of women and men living in owner-occupied accommodation owned with a mortgage or loan, namely 36 percent of women compared with 38 percent of men. This indicator shows some significant differences between LADs, with a minimum found in Westminster of 12 percent of women and 13 percent of men living in an owner-occupied home with a mortgage. While at the maximum, nearly half have such assets: 49 percent of women in Wokingham and 51 percent of men in East Renfrewshire. This indicator is unlikely to reflect the full extent of gender differences in wealth because home ownership is often held jointly as part of a household. Differences between women and men across the majority of LADs are to the detriment of women, suggesting that women – particularly in single households – may be less likely to build up property assets.

### 3.5 Measuring Power & Participation

In this domain, the focus is on equal access to power, i.e. positions of leadership, as well as wider community participation (

Table 10). These indicators were chosen to reflect the multifaceted nature of *Power & Participation*, recognising that gender equality encompasses not only formal leadership roles but also broader civic engagement. Capturing women’s and men’s representation in leadership positions, as well as their involvement in community organisations and democratic processes, ensures a comprehensive assessment of how power is exercised both structurally and socially, through voice and collective action. Correlations between indicators and PCA results are provided in the Annex.

The first subdomain, *Power*, contains two indicators. The first captures the percentage of active limited companies that are majority-led by women or men.<sup>18</sup> The second indicator provides data on the share of women and men in political office as elected councillors measured at the council level and imputed to the respective LADs.<sup>19</sup>

The second subdomain, *Participation*, measures the percentage of people regularly participating in political, environmental, religious, or social organisations. The other indicator measures the percentage of eligible people who voted in the last general election and shows a similar pattern. For both indicators, we use data from Understanding Society, which contains small sample sizes for several LADs, meaning that estimates are unreliable in these cases and should be interpreted with caution.

Women are much less likely to lead an active limited company. On average in 2023 in the UK, only 21 percent of such companies are led by women, ranging from 16 percent in Merthyr Tydfil to 39 percent in Wyre Forest (Table 11). In comparison, 65 percent of registered companies are led by men, ranging from 52 percent in Hammersmith and Fulham to 84 percent in Norwich. Across all LADs, women are at a systematic disadvantage compared to men, with differences ranging between -60 percentage points in Norwich and -16 percentage points in Wyre Forest.

In 2023, 37 percent of councillors in the UK were women, ranging from 10 percent in Na h-Eileanan Siar (Outer Hebrides) to 68 percent in South Somerset. Examining differences between women and men across LADs shows a mixed picture, with women under-

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<sup>18</sup> Percentages between women and men do not add up to 100 percent as mixed-led companies exists. See the Gender Equality Index 2024 methodology for more information: <https://www.thegenderindex.co.uk/uploads/Reports/TGI-2024-Report.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> The NamSor algorithm, a gender inferencing tool containing 7.5 billion names from over 200 countries, was used to infer gender based on names. NamSor is considered one of the most accurate gender inferencing tools available with low misclassification rates (Sebo, 2023; Santamaría and Mihaljević, 2018). The probability of accuracy produced was 0.95 for inference from the 19,100+ councillor names contained in the Open Council Data. In approximately 50 cases, gender was not inferred, mainly due to the seats being empty or labelled as vacant/postponed.

represented in the majority of LADs, though exceptions exist. In seven LADs, we find an equal representation: Monmouthshire, Sevenoaks, East Cambridgeshire, Wyre, Chesterfield, South Tyneside and Manchester.

Table 10. Overview of indicators in the domain of Power & Participation.

POWER & PARTICIPATION					
Subdomain	Variable	Reference population	Description	Year	Source
Power	Company leadership	Number of Ltd companies	Percentage of active limited companies majority led by women or men.	2023	The Gender Index and MnAI (2023) UK female-led companies 2023.
	Councillors	Number of councillors	Percentage of councillors who are women and men.	2023	Open Council Data (2023) UK councillors by year.
Participation	Participation in civil society	16+ years	Percentage of people regularly participating in political, environmental, religious or social organisations. <sup>20</sup>	2021	University of Essex, Institute for Social and Economic Research (2024).
	Voted in general election	16+ years	Percentage of eligible voters who voted in the 2019 general election.	2021	Understanding Society: Waves 1-14, 2009-2023.

In 2021, women and men were about equally likely to participate in civil society organisations (32% for women and 33% for men). Although there are significant differences in participation across LADs, ranging for women from 0 percent in four LADs (Crawley, Rutland, Carlisle and North Warwickshire) to 67 percent in South Somerset and for men from 0 percent in the Orkney Islands to 62 percent in Rushcliffe. There are no systematic differences between women and men.

<sup>20</sup> Including political party, trade union, environmental group, parent's/school association, tenants/residents' group, religious/church organisations, voluntary services, pensioners group/organisation, scouts/guides, professional organisation, other community group, sports club, WI/Townswomen's guild, women's group/feminist organisation.

In 2021, 80 percent of both women and men had voted in the 2019 general election. Differences across LADs are significant; for women, values range from 47 percent in Copeland up to 100 percent in 10 LADs.<sup>21</sup> For men, the proportion ranges from 46 percent in Middlesbrough to 100 percent in 24 LADs. On average, there is no systematic gender difference, although this masks geographical variation: across LADs, the gender gaps vary between -38 percentage points (a lower percentage of women voting) and 34 percentage points (a higher percentage of women voting).

Table 11. Descriptive statistics for indicators in Power & Participation.

Domain	Indicator	Mean	Std dv	Min	Max
POWER & PARTICIPATION	<b>Women</b>				
	Company leadership	21.3%	2.3	16.2%	38.7%
	Councillors	36.8%	8.6	10.3%	68.2%
	Participation in civil society	28.0%	10.8	0.0%	66.7% <sup>(u)</sup>
	Voted in the last general election	81.8%	9.1	46.7%	100.0%
	<b>Men</b>				
	Company leadership	64.8%	5.0	52.7%	84.3%
	Councillors	63.3%	8.5	35.1%	89.7%
	Participation in civil society	29.7%	11.4	1.0%	62.0% <sup>(u)</sup>
	Voted in the last general election	81.8%	10.1	46.2%	100.0%
	<b>Gap (w-m)</b>				
	Company leadership	-43.4pp	6.2	-60.1pp	-15.8pp
	Councillors	-26.5pp	16.9	-79.3pp	29.8pp
	Participation in civil society	-1.7pp	12.1	-47.5pp	62.5pp
	Voted in general election	0.1pp	9.7	-37.5pp	33.5pp
	<b>Total (population-weighted average)</b>				
	Participation in civil society	28.7	9.3	3.9	53.5
	Voted in the last general election	81.7	8.2	50.0	100.0

Note: <sup>(u)</sup> Unreliable estimate due to small (<10) sample size.

<sup>21</sup> Barrow-in-Furness\*, East Cambridgeshire, Epping Forest, Harborough, Hammersmith and Fulham, Reigate and Banstead, Runnymede\*, Test Valley, and Wyre. (\* small sample sizes).

### 3.6 Measuring Education

Equal educational opportunities are a precondition for gender equality and a skilled economy. In this domain, we focus on indicators that measure qualifications, numeracy and literacy skills (

Table 12). These indicators were selected because education is foundational for accessing high-quality employment, achieving economic independence and fully participating in society. Specifically, focusing on numeracy and literacy skills, as measured by performance in Maths and English, is essential, as these subjects represent fundamental competencies that shape future career pathways. Importantly, persistent gender inequalities in these areas, particularly in numeracy and STEM subjects, have significant long-term implications for women's economic opportunities and career progression. Addressing these skill gaps is increasingly critical in our technology-driven society, highlighting the necessity of promoting equal educational outcomes. Correlations between indicators and PCA results are provided in the Annex.

For the subdomain *Qualifications*, we measure the percentage of people with Level 4 qualifications or above. The subdomain *Skills* includes one indicator measuring mathematical skills achievements as a proxy for numeracy to ensure that women and men are equally able to participate in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). It captures numeracy skills by measuring the percentage of pupils aged 15–16 that achieve above 50 percent in either the GCSEs or Scottish 5s in Mathematics. Another indicator represents literacy rates, measured as the percentage of pupils aged 15–16 that achieve above 50 percent in either the GCSEs or Scottish 5s in English.

On average, in the UK in 2021, there are few differences between women and men in terms of educational achievements; since we are examining the 16+ population, we are not capturing the more recent trend of women's overperformance in Higher Education enrolment and attainment (Table 13). Unfortunately, in the UK censuses, it was not possible to further differentiate this broad category that may have provided more nuance to gender differences in educational qualifications across the four nations.

Among women, 35 percent have at least a degree or equivalent, compared with 33 percent of men. However, across LADs, the range of differences between women and men is apparent. The highest values are found for both women and men in Wandsworth (63% and 62% respectively), while Great Yarmouth (19% and 18% respectively) shows the lowest share with a degree or equivalent. Gender differences range from -2.4 percentage points (to women's disadvantage) in Fareham, up to 12 percentage points (to men's disadvantage) in Na h-Eileanan Siar (Outer Hebrides). Across LADs, men tend to be less

likely than women to have a degree, meaning they are at a greater disadvantage in terms of qualifications in several LADs.

Table 12. Overview of indicators in the domain of Education.

EDUCATION					
Subdomain	Variable	Reference population	Description	Years	Source
Qualifications	Level 4 qualifications or above	16+ years	Percentage of people with Level 4 qualifications or above. <sup>22</sup>	2021 / 2022 Scotland	ONS (2022) England and Wales 2021 Census; NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland 2021 Census; NRS (2024) Scotland's Census 2022.
Skills	Maths GCSE	15/16 years (Year 11)	Percentage of pupils achieving above 50 percent (Grades 9–5 or A*–C) in GCSEs/Scottish 5s in Mathematics.	2021 / 2023 Scotland	Department for Education England (2023) Key stage 4 performance; Scottish Qualifications Agency; Department for Education Examinations Database (2023) Requested data; Welsh Government School Statistics (2023) Key Stage 4 Interim Measures by LEA.
	English GCSE	15/16 years (Year 11)	Percentage of pupils achieving above 50 percent (Grades 9–5 or A*–C) in GCSEs/Scottish 5s in English.	2021 / 2023 Scotland	

On average in the UK in 2021 (2023 for Scotland), the level of mathematical achievement was about the same for young women and young men (53% and 54%, respectively). The lowest percentage of girls and boys who scored above 50% in their GCSE/Scottish 5s Maths are found in Knowsley, with 25 and 24 percent respectively, while the highest for

<sup>22</sup> Degree (BA, BSc), higher degree (MA, PhD, PGCE), NVQ level 4 to 5, HNC, HND, RSA Higher Diploma, BTEC Higher level, professional qualifications, for example, teaching, nursing, accountancy.

both are in Lisburn and Castlereagh with 87 and 89 percent respectively. Gender differences are spread widely, with girls outperforming boys by 11 percentage points in the Isles of Anglesey. Conversely, boys outperform girls by 21 percentage points in the Shetland Islands.

When it comes to literacy, measured as the percentage of pupils that achieve above 50 percent in either the GCSEs or Scottish 5s in English, we find that girls (71%) substantially outperform boys (57%). Further, across LADs, we find a greater variation in achievement among young men (ranging from 31.3% to 93%) compared to young women (ranging from 45% to 96%). Again, women and men perform poorly in Knowsley, where only 45 percent of girls and 31 percent of men achieve over 50 percent in their English GCSEs. The top achievements for girls are in the Shetland Islands as well as East Renfrewshire (96% achieve over 50%) and for boys, it is also East Renfrewshire (with 93% achieving over 50%).

Table 13. Descriptive statistics for indicators in Education.

Domain	Indicator	Mean	Std dv	Min	Max
EDUCATION	<b>Women</b>				
	Level 4 qualifications or above	35.1%	8.5	18.6%	63.2%
	Maths GCSE	52.8%	8.4	25.0%	87.2%
	English GCSE	70.5%	9.0	45.2%	96.3%
	<b>Men</b>				
	Level 4 qualifications or above	32.9%	8.6	17.5%	61.9%
	Maths GCSE	53.7%	8.2	24.1%	89.4%
	English GCSE	57.2%	11.1	31.3%	92.9%
	<b>Gap (w-m)</b>				
	Level 4 qualifications or above	2.1pp	2.2	-2.4pp	11.5pp
	Maths GCSE	-0.9pp	2.4	-10.7pp	21.2pp
	English GCSE	13.3pp	3.0	2.4pp	24.5pp
	<b>Total (population-weighted average)</b>				
	Level 4 qualifications or above	34.0%	8.5	18.2%	62.6%
	Maths GCSE	53.2%	8.2	24.6%	88.4%
English GCSE	63.8%	10.0	37.9%	94.4%	

### 3.7 Measuring Health

The last domain of the GEIUK focuses on both objective and subjective measures of health (Table 14). The first indicator is life expectancy at birth, while the second indicator examines the number of years spent in good health. The third indicator focuses on the percentage of individuals with good or very good self-perceived health. These health indicators were selected since good health is fundamental for individuals to achieve well-

being, autonomy and meaningful participation in society. Combining objective measures, such as life expectancy, with subjective assessments of personal health status offers a more comprehensive picture of health inequalities experienced by women and men, reflecting both the quality and longevity of life across different communities. Correlations between indicators and PCA results are provided in the Annex.

Table 14. Overview of indicators in the domain of Health.

HEALTH					
Subdomain	Variable	Reference population	Description	Year	Source
Life expectancy and good health	Life expectancy	Age < 1	Life expectancy at birth, 3-year average.	2021–2023/ NI 2020–2022	ONS (2022) England and Wales 2021 Census; NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland 2021 Census; NRS (2024) Scotland’s Census 2022.
	Healthy life years	Age < 1	Healthy life years expectancy at birth, 3-year average.	2018–2020	ONS (2022) Health state life expectancies, UK: 2018 to 2020.
	Good health	5+ years	Percentage of individuals with good or very good self-perceived health.	2021 / 2022 Scotland	ONS (2022) England and Wales 2021 Census; NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland 2021 Census; NRS (2024) Scotland’s Census 2022.

On average, in 2023, women are expected to live 83 years compared with 79 years for men (Table 15). Across LADs, women’s life expectancy systematically exceeds that of men. On average, women live 3.9 years longer than men across the UK. This gap varies, however, from a minimum of 2 years in Richmondshire to a maximum of nearly 6 years in Blackpool. This is where, as of 2024, the lowest life expectancy is found for men (73.1 years). Women exhibit the lowest life expectancy in the City of Glasgow (78.3 years) and live longest in Kensington and Chelsea (86.5 years).

In the UK in 2020, the average number of healthy life years for women and men is estimated to be about the same (63.8 years and 63.2 years, respectively). While women outlive men across all LADs, there is a mixed gender effect when it comes to healthy life years. In Rutland, women have 7.8 fewer years of healthy life than men but have 7 years

more in Greenwich. Men have the shortest healthy life expectancy (53.5 years) in Blackpool and the longest in Rutland (74.7 years). Women’s health life expectancy is the longest in the Orkney Islands (77.5 years) and shortest in North Ayrshire (54.0 years) and Blackpool (54.3 years).

On average, in the UK in 2021, men were about as likely to feel good or very good (82%) as women (80%). The highest proportion of people reporting good or very good health is 88 percent in both Richmond upon Thames and Elmbridge for both women and men. The lowest for men at 73 percent are found in Blackpool and East Lindsay. The lowest proportion of women reporting good or very good health stands at 72 percent in the same areas together with Blaenau Gwent.

Table 15. Descriptive statistics for indicators in Health.

Domain	Indicator	Mean	Std dv	Min	Max
HEALTH	<b>Women</b>				
	Life expectancy	83.0 years	1.6	78.3 years	86.5 years
	Healthy life years	63.8 years	3.5	54.0 years	77.5 years
	Good health	79.8%	3.2	72.2%	87.5%
	<b>Men</b>				
	Life expectancy	79.1 years	1.9	73.1 years	83.4 years
	Healthy life years	63.2 years	3.3	53.5 years	74.7 years
	Good health	81.5%	3.2	73.1%	88.7%
	<b>Gap (w-m)</b>				
	Life expectancy	3.9 years	0.6	1.8 years	5.8 years
	Healthy life years	0.5 years	2.2	-7.8 years	7.1 years
	Good health	1.7pp	1.0	-3.4pp	7.0pp
	<b>Total (population-weighted average)</b>				
	Life expectancy	81.0 years	1.7	75.9 years	84.7 years
	Healthy life years	63.5 years	3.2	53.9 years	74.4 years
	Good health	80.6%	3.2	72.7%	88.0%

## 4 Calculating the GEIUK: methodological steps

In this chapter, we describe the methodological steps involved in calculating the GEIUK, including the choice of metric for the three measures, the aggregation and weighting method, the treatment of missing data and the outlier checks performed. We outline our quality assessment checks, including the assessment of the correlation structure and robustness analysis.

### 4.1 Choice of metrics

In this section, we outline the steps taken to calculate the scores of the three measures making up the GEIUK<sup>23</sup>.

The Gender Equality Measure compares outcomes *between* women and men. The metric is obtained by taking the ratio between the values for women and men, using whichever value is larger as the numerator. The interpretation of the values of the Gender Equality Measure differs from the other two metrics. Here, 1 indicates 'complete equality' between women and men and 0 indicates 'complete inequality'.

This gives us a relative measure of gender equality, irrespective of the direction, i.e. whether scores are to the advantage or disadvantage of women or men. It allows us to combine subdomains and domains that operate in opposing directions to avoid a cancelling-out effect. For example, women's greater engagement in *Unpaid Work* relative to men is not cancelled out by their relative disadvantage in *Paid Work*. The index, therefore, problematises the gender gap in women's and men's outcomes across the

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<sup>23</sup> Other alternatives considered were linear transformations using the Min-Max approach and standardising procedure using Z-scores. The Min-Max approach unifies the scale of measurement and normalises the range of scores to values between 0 and 1. It does so by subtracting the minimum value from the observation and dividing this difference by the range of indicator values of a given indicator. The approach can be distorted by outliers or extreme values and can widen the range of indicators lying within a small interval, in turn increasing the indicator's contribution to the overall index score (JRC 2008). It can therefore mask the scale of differences in dispersion that exist between indicators. For our case, this is not a desirable property since we observe substantial differences in dispersion among indicators. Further, several indicators exhibit narrow ranges, for example, Life Expectancy and Healthy Life Years.

The Z-score approach also unifies the scale of measurement and produces a standard normal distribution with a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1, giving a similar dispersion across local authorities. Again, this is not desirable for our index, as capturing the differences in dispersion is a desirable feature to capture in this index.

Moreover, we considered constructing measures that, instead of gender group averages, take the population-weighted averages (i.e. totals for both women and men) for each indicator. This would have made the two measures more comparable as women's and men's values, respectively, would employ the same benchmark. However, it produced poor model fits in the PCAs, while the correlation matrix for each measure indicated low contributions of indicators and domains.

domains, rather than offering a normative judgement of whose outcomes should be taken as the benchmark to aspire to.

The metric is calculated as follows:

$$\tilde{g}_i = \begin{cases} \frac{w_i}{m_i}, & \text{if } w_i \leq m_i \\ \frac{m_i}{w_i}, & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

where  $w_i$  and  $m_i$  are values for a given indicator for women ( $w$ ) or men ( $m$ ) in local authority  $i$ . This metric can be interpreted as the gap between women and men in a given local authority, irrespective of which group outperforms the other.

For the Women’s Outcomes Measure and the Men’s Outcomes Measure, we calculate differences *among* women and men, respectively, by comparing women’s and men’s local performance to their national average. A value of 1 indicates parity with the national average for that gender group, a value above one indicates a higher value relative to the UK average and conversely, a value below 1 indicates a lower relative value. This metric is calculated as:

$$\tilde{w}_i = \frac{w_i}{\bar{w}} \text{ and } \tilde{m}_i = \frac{m_i}{\bar{m}}$$

where  $w_i$  and  $m_i$  are values for a given indicator for women ( $w$ ) or men ( $m$ ) in local authority  $i$  and  $\bar{w}$  and  $\bar{m}$  are the national averages for women and men, respectively, in the UK.

Deciles are used to visualise local authority scores on the website maps ([genderequalityindex.uk](http://genderequalityindex.uk)). Local authorities are grouped into deciles according to their scores and ranked from lowest (1) to highest (10). The 1st decile represents the bottom 10% of local authorities, while the 5th decile includes those in the middle 10% range and the 10th decile contains the top 10% of local authorities

## 4.2 Aggregation and weighting

To obtain the overall index scores for each local authority, we apply the arithmetic mean – the average in the traditional sense of the term – at each stage of aggregation from the indicator, subdomain and domain level. The arithmetic mean allows for full compensation, while other methods, such as the geometric mean, penalise for inequalities between different domains.

Each of the indicators, subdomains and domains are assigned equal weights. It is important to note that using equal weights is not neutral but instead reflects a decision to stay close to the data itself and its correlation structure. Indicators with little variance will, therefore, have less influence on the overall scores. However, we argue that this is a desirable property of the GEIUK. Another alternative considered was to use ‘expert’ weights, that is, weights that are allocated by stakeholders to reflect, for example, different

policy priorities. To do so, we set a budget allocation exercise between the different domains of the GEIUK to the project's Advisory Board in 2024. However, the participants unanimously decided that all subdomains and domains were equally important and should be treated as such.

Additionally, we tested alternative aggregation approaches using the geometric mean to aggregate at the domain and/or index level, as well as applying adjusted weights by factoring in the number of indicators included in each domain. The results are presented in Annex and show little change in the overall index scores for each of the alternatives. Given that there are few differences between the approaches, we proceed with the arithmetic mean and equal weights as this allows for easier interpretation and communication of the scores of the GEIUK.

### 4.3 Imputation of missing data

Data quality checks were performed by testing for the percentage of missing data across LADs for each indicator (see Figure 2 and Figure 3). Overall, the volume of missing data across the 19 indicators is quite low at 0.59 percent, 13 indicators had missing data points across 11 LADs. The presence of missing data in these LADs is due to the statistical disclosure control arising from small sample sizes. Two approaches were adopted to deal with missing data.

Two LADs – the City of London and the Isles of Scilly – have a high percentage of missing data (68% and 55%, respectively), which is too substantial for reliable imputation. Further, both have atypical population structures. The City of London is primarily a commercial and financial district with a small residential population (8,600 in 2021), while the Isles of Scilly is a geographically isolated area with an even smaller population (2,100 in 2021). As a result, these two LADs are omitted from the calculation of the GEIUK.

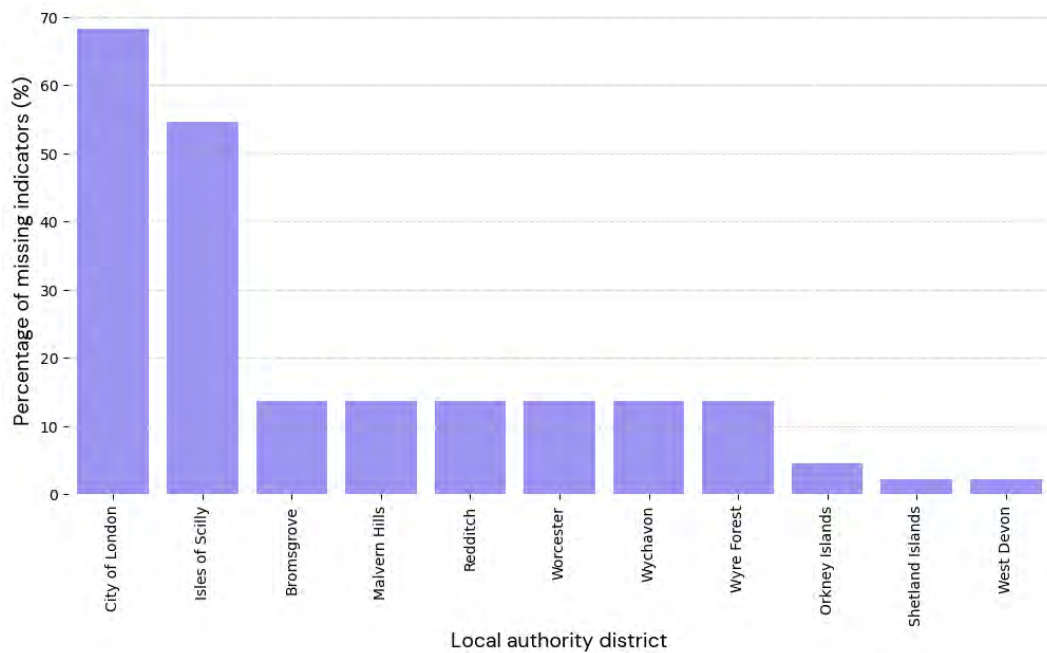
With the City of London and the Isles of Scilly removed the percentage of missingness reduces to 0.24 percent, with only four indicators containing cases with missing data (*Weekly domestic work*, *Weekly median pay*, *Progression opportunities*, *Not in low pay* and *Involvement in decisions*). For *Weekly domestic work*, estimates for women and men from 2021 are used instead for a number of LADs.<sup>24</sup> In the case of the other indicators, data for missing LADS was imputed by calculating the average values across LADs within the corresponding region.<sup>25</sup> These strategies helped us fill the data gaps while preserving uniformity within each larger regional context.

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<sup>24</sup> Allerdale, Barrow-in-Furness, Carlisle, Copeland, Craven, Eden, Hambleton, Harrogate, Mendip, Oxford (men only), Richmondshire, Ryedale Scarborough, Sedgemoor, Selby, Somerset West and Taunton, South Lakeland, and South Somerset.

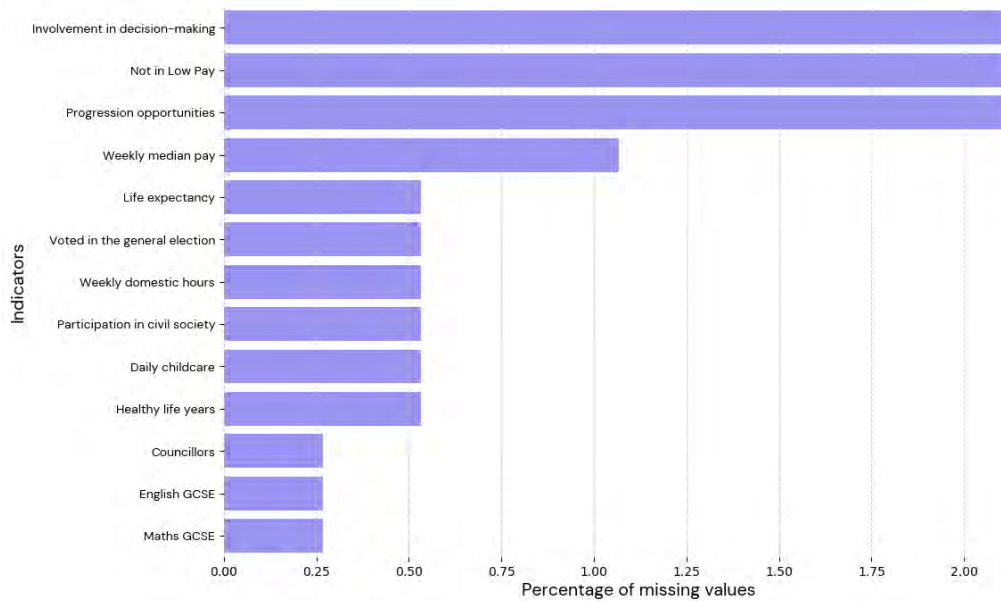
<sup>25</sup> Regional averages were used due to missing data for the following indicators and local authorities:

Figure 2. Percentage of missing indicators per local authority.



Note: Only LADs with missing data are shown

Figure 3. Percentage of missing values per indicator.



- *Progression opportunities*: Bromsgrove, Malvern Hills, Redditch, Worcester, Wychavon, Wyre Forest.
- *Involvement in decisions*: Bromsgrove, Malvern Hills, Redditch, Worcester, Wychavon, Wyre Forest.
- *Weekly median pay*: Orkney Islands, Shetland Islands.
- *Not in low pay*: Bromsgrove, Malvern Hills, Redditch, Worcester, Wychavon, Wyre Forest.

#### 4.4 Outlier checks

An outlier is an extreme value of an indicator that deviates markedly or stands apart from the rest. After imputing estimates for missing data, outlier checks on the indicators were performed by examining the skewness and kurtosis of each indicator.<sup>26</sup> Values for the skew and kurtosis that exceed these thresholds are potential outliers. It is also possible to identify outliers by making a visual inspection of the distribution plots of each indicator. Although the distributions of the five indicators<sup>27</sup> show one or two higher data points (see Annex), none of these are flagged as outliers as their skew and kurtosis do not exceed the specified threshold.

#### 4.5 Assessment of the correlation structures across the GEIUK

The correlation structure of all three measures was assessed following the methodological guidelines from the OECD and JRC (2008). The correlation matrices of the GEIUK measures are discussed below and included in the Annex along with additional robustness checks.

Assessing the correlation structure is a critical step in constructing composite indicators, ensuring that the aggregated measures accurately reflect the underlying phenomena. According to the OECD and JRC (2008) guidelines, this assessment involves several key steps:

1. Examining correlations between indicators within subdomains and domains: This step identifies how closely related the individual indicators are within their respective subdomains and domains. High correlations suggest that the indicators measure similar aspects, supporting their aggregation.
2. Assessing correlations between indicators and their respective subdomains and domains: Here, the focus is on how well each indicator aligns with the broader subdomain or domain it represents. Strong correlations indicate that the indicators are appropriate proxies for the larger constructs.
3. Evaluating correlations between subdomains and their respective domains: This step ensures that the subdomains collectively represent the overarching domain

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<sup>26</sup> Skewness measures how asymmetrical the distribution of data is. Values greater than 2 (or less than -2) typically indicate significant deviation from symmetry, warranting caution in certain analyses. Kurtosis measures how 'peaked' or flat a data distribution is. Values above 3.5 often indicate a substantial departure from normality and the presence of significant outliers.

<sup>27</sup> Variables include *Employee involvement* (men), *Domestic hours* (men and women), *Weekly median pay* (men), and *Company leadership* (women).

accurately. High correlations confirm that the subdomains are suitable components of the domain.

4. Analysing correlations between domains and the overall index: This final step checks how well each domain contributes to the composite index. Strong correlations between domains and the overall index demonstrate that each domain is integral to the composite measure.

These steps collectively provide evidence of convergent validity, confirming that components intended to measure the same construct are indeed related. Simultaneously, it is essential to assess divergent validity by ensuring that correlations are strong primarily among related components (indicators, subdomains, domains) and weaker among unrelated ones. Additionally, the correlation assessment should verify that there are few or no strong negative correlations, particularly within the structure, to ensure that all elements contribute positively and sufficiently to the composite index scores.

It is interesting to consider the three measures together. For both the Women's Outcomes Measure and Men's Outcomes Measure, we see that each of the domains contributes to the overall index score, apart from *Unpaid Work* in the case of the former. This could be interpreted as an indication of universality in the time spent on unpaid work among women and men respectively in the UK, although caution is needed when interpreting this, given that the indicator measuring domestic work contains small sample sizes for certain localities and that the childcare indicator is measured at the regional level. In contrast, the domain of *Unpaid Work* contributes to the Gender Equality Measure, which can be interpreted as a strong driver of inequalities between women and men.

The Gender Equality Measure shows no strong positive correlations nor negative correlations between indicators (measuring the gender gap in outcomes). Since other domains (e.g., *Health, Paid Work, Money, Education*) contribute less to the index, this indicates that they are small in magnitude. The domains of *Unpaid Work* and *Power & Participation* are the only domains to substantially contribute to the index score, suggesting that variation in gender gaps is driven predominantly by these two domains. This result reinforces the argument that achieving gender equality requires addressing persistent inequalities in care work and decision-making power. However, in this case, it is not only inequalities *between* women and men that appear to matter but also inequalities *among* women and men, as demonstrated by the strong contributions of this domain to both the Women's Outcomes Measures and the Men's Outcomes Measures.

The Women's Outcomes Measure, Men's Outcomes Measure and Gender Equality Measure were intentionally designed with the same structure to highlight how gender equality relates both to inequalities *between* women and men and to inequalities *among* them. This approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of how gender inequalities operate at different levels, capturing not just the gap between women and men, but also variations within each group across local areas. A key insight from the assessment is that not all domains contribute equally across the three measures and these variations are

telling in their own right, as they provide important substantive insights into how gender equality manifests differently. This methodological choice enhances the interpretability and policy relevance of the GEIUK, as it provides clearer guidance on where interventions are most needed to address gender inequalities.

## 5 Findings from the GEIUK

The following chapter presents the findings from the GEIUK. First, in section 5.1, we map the overall scores of each GEIUK measure to show where women and men differ from each other and where they are thriving or falling behind. As a reminder, the Women's Outcomes Measure measures the relative position of women in a local authority compared to the national average for women. The Men's Outcomes Measure provides the same comparison for men's outcomes. The Gender Equality Measure compares women's and men's local outcomes to capture any potential gender gaps in outcomes, irrespective of whether women or men are at a (dis)advantage.

To better understand the drivers of inequalities, section 5.2 offer an analysis of scores by domain for each GEIUK measure. In section 5.3, then plots the three measures against each other to investigate whether there is a relationship between gender equality levels and women's and men's socioeconomic outcomes across the UK. Next, section 5.4 investigates how the GEIUK scores map onto local authorities' demographic and wider socioeconomic profiles, including age and ethnic profiles, degrees of urbanity, local productivity levels and economic activity levels.

Finally, section 5.5 presents four 'types of gender equality' that local authorities can be classified into based on their combined scores across the GEIUK measures. The tables in the Annex list the local authority's index and domain scores across the three measures along with the corresponding type of gender equality.

### 5.1 Mapping the GEIUK scores across the UK

The results of the GEIUK are visualised below, taking each measure in turn. At the index level, we observe a North-South divide with women's and men's outcomes above average in the South of England while they tend to be falling behind in the North of England and Wales. Patterns in Northern Ireland and Scotland are more mixed though, for men, the gap between local and national outcomes is often larger than it is for women.

#### 5.1.1 The Gender Equality Measure

The Gender Equality Measure finds that no local authority has achieved gender equality. On average in the UK, women show higher outcomes in *Unpaid Work*, *Education* (apart from Maths GCSE) and *Health*, while men's outcomes are higher in *Paid Work*, *Money* and *Power & Participation*. Table 16 lists the top and bottom 10 local authorities on the Gender

Equality Measure by score<sup>28</sup> and decile<sup>29</sup>, while Figure 4 maps the deciles of all local authorities across the UK.

The results show that areas with the highest levels of gender equality are concentrated in London (e.g. Kingston upon Thames), the North West of England (e.g. Blackpool) and the South West (e.g. Worthing). However, as we explore in more detail below under section 5.5, the dynamics differ significantly between these localities, illustrating that a narrow gender gap *in and of itself* is not necessarily a good thing – it depends on the outcomes for both women and men. Pockets of greater gender equality are also found in Scotland (e.g. West Lothian), the North East (e.g. Gateshead) and the Midlands (e.g. Cannock Chase).

Table 16. Top and bottom 10 local authorities on the Gender Equality Measure.

Local authority	Region	Score <sup>31</sup>	Decile <sup>32</sup>
<b>Top 10</b>			
Wyre	North West	0.89	10
Kingston upon Thames	London	0.88	10
South Ribble	North West	0.88	10
Manchester	North West	0.88	10
Blackpool	North West	0.87	10
Hammersmith and Fulham	London	0.87	10
Waltham Forest	London	0.87	10
Wirral	North West	0.87	10
Worthing	South East	0.87	10
Lambeth	London	0.87	10
<b>Bottom 10</b>			
Fermanagh and Omagh	Northern Ireland	0.73	1
Na h-Eileanan Siar (Outer Hebrides)	Scotland	0.74	1
East Lindsey	East Midlands	0.74	1
Merthyr Tydfil	Wales	0.75	1
Mid Ulster	Northern Ireland	0.75	1
Orkney Islands	Scotland	0.75	1
Fenland	East of England	0.75	1
Clackmannanshire	Scotland	0.75	1
Richmondshire	Yorkshire and The Humber	0.76	1
Derry City and Strabane	Northern Ireland	0.73	1

Conversely, the local authorities with lowest levels of gender equality are spread across the four nations: Northern Ireland (e.g. Fermanagh and Omagh), Scotland (e.g., Na h-Eileanan Siar), Wales (e.g. Merthyr Tydfil) and multiple regions of England such as the East

<sup>28</sup> A score of 1 would indicate 'complete equality' between women and men. The Gender Equality Measure scores range from 0.73 and 0.89, as evident in Table 16.

<sup>29</sup> Local authorities are grouped into deciles according to their scores and ranked from lowest (1) to highest (10). The 1st decile represents the bottom 10% of local authorities, while the 5th decile includes those in the middle 10% range and the 10th decile contains the top 10% of local authorities.

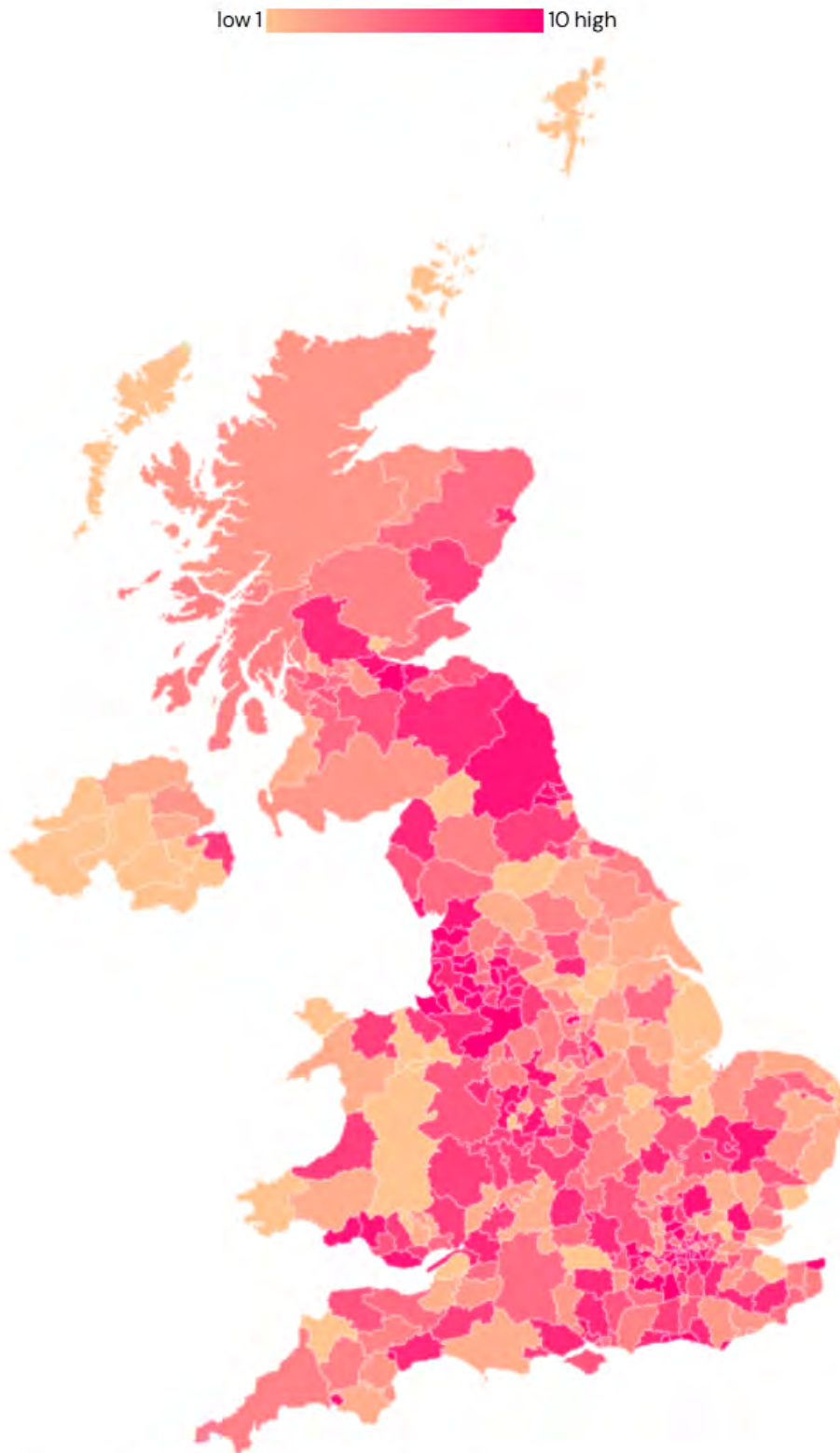
Midlands (e.g. East Lindsey), the East of England (e.g. Fenland) and Yorkshire and the Humber (e.g. Richmondshire).

Many of these bottom-ranking local authorities share economic challenges following the decline of their traditional industries, such as manufacturing, agriculture or fishing. The patterns exposed by the GEIUK highlight a pressing need for targeted, place-based interventions that simultaneously raise gender equality levels while improving the structural and economic conditions in an area.

Examining the different domains also shows great variation between local authorities (Figure 5):

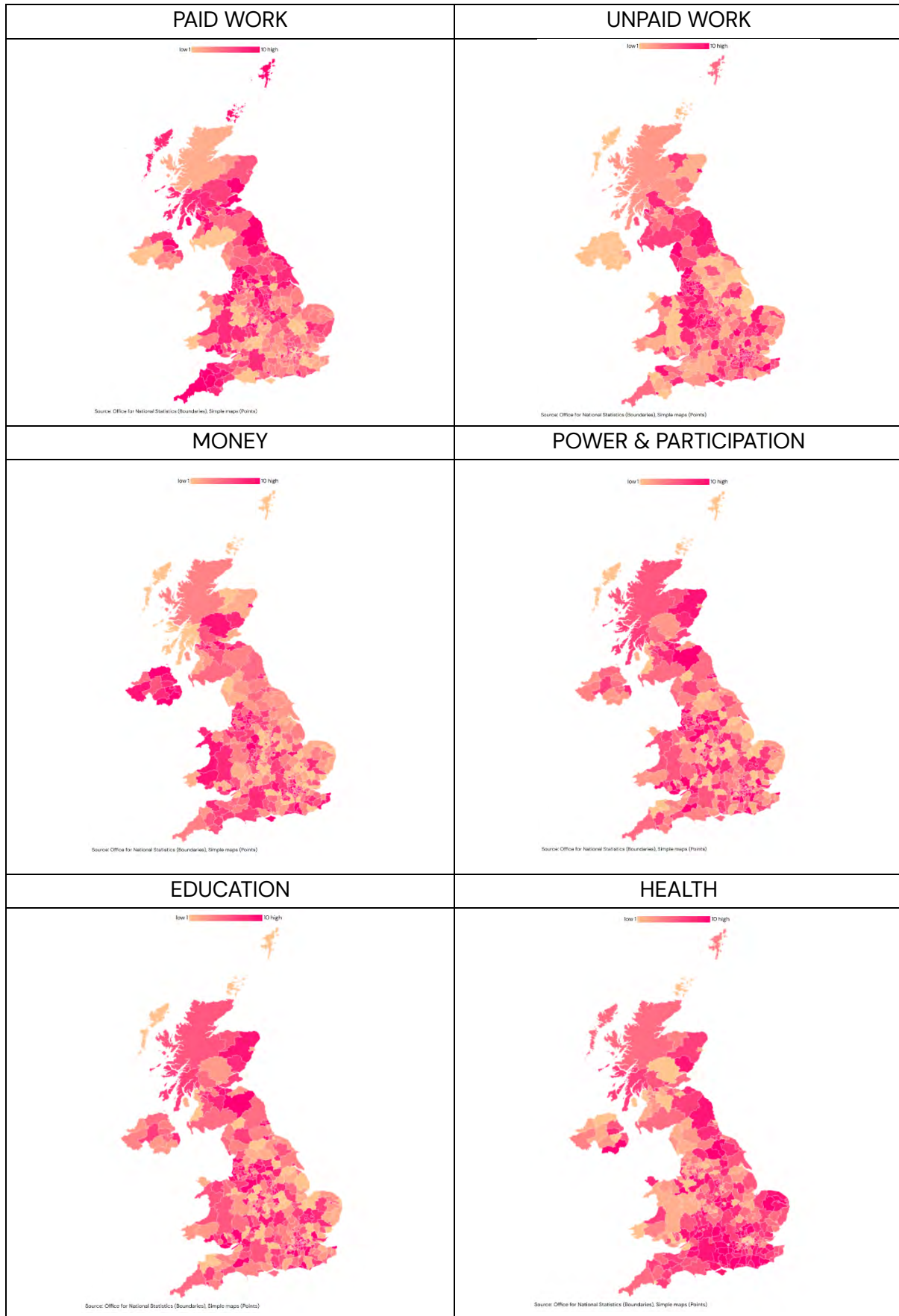
- In the domain of *Paid Work*, local authorities with small gender gaps are scattered across each of the four nations. In England, a greater concentration of local authorities with narrow gender gaps is found in the North West, Yorkshire and the Humber and South West Peninsula.
- Narrow gender gaps in *Unpaid Work* are found in the North West, West Midlands, South East of England and Aberdeen in Scotland. Conversely, these are largest in Northern Ireland, Wales, the East Midlands, the North East and Northern Scotland.
- The smallest gender gaps in *Money* are found in local authorities in Northern Ireland and Scotland (Dundee City, Falkirk and the City of Glasgow). While in the case of the former, these smaller gaps come in conjunction with relatively high outcomes for both women and men, the opposite is true for the Scottish local authorities mentioned. Larger gender gaps in *Money* exist across all regions of England, Scotland and Wales, with no clear concentration.
- Narrow gender gaps in *Power* are found mainly in the North West, South East and Southern Wales. Gaps between women and men are especially large in the Scottish Isles and across England, with Northern Ireland and Wales showing average outcomes.
- Gender gaps in outcomes related to *Education* are especially small in the South East and London but also in the North West, while substantial in Northern Ireland, Wales, the South West Peninsula and across Scotland.
- Lastly, in the domain of *Health*, gaps are smallest in the South East of England and parts of the East of England, the West Midlands and Yorkshire and the Humber. Outcomes diverge significantly between women and men in Wales and the North West, but also in parts of Northern Ireland and Scotland.

Figure 4. Mapping the Gender Equality Measure across the UK, with darker shades indicating higher gender equality.



Source: Office for National Statistics (Boundaries), Simple maps (Points)

Figure 5. Overview of domain scores of the Gender Equality Measure.



### 5.1.2 The Women's Outcomes Measure

The Women's Outcomes Measure compares women's local outcomes to women's national average, Wales and Yorkshire and the Humber.

Table 17 shows a great concentration of local authorities with above-average outcomes in the South of England, notably around London (e.g. Wandsworth), the South East (e.g. Epsom and Ewell) and East of England (e.g. St Albans). As shown in Figure 6, women's outcomes are also above average in local authorities in Scotland (e.g. East Renfrewshire) and Northern Ireland (e.g. Lisburn and Castlereagh).

Local authorities with the lowest outcomes for women are predominantly found in the North West (e.g. Blackpool) and North East (e.g. Hartlepool). Figure 6 further shows that women's outcomes are below-average in areas such as the East and West Midlands, the East of England, Wales and Yorkshire and the Humber.

Table 17. Top and bottom 10 local authorities on the Women's Outcomes Measure.

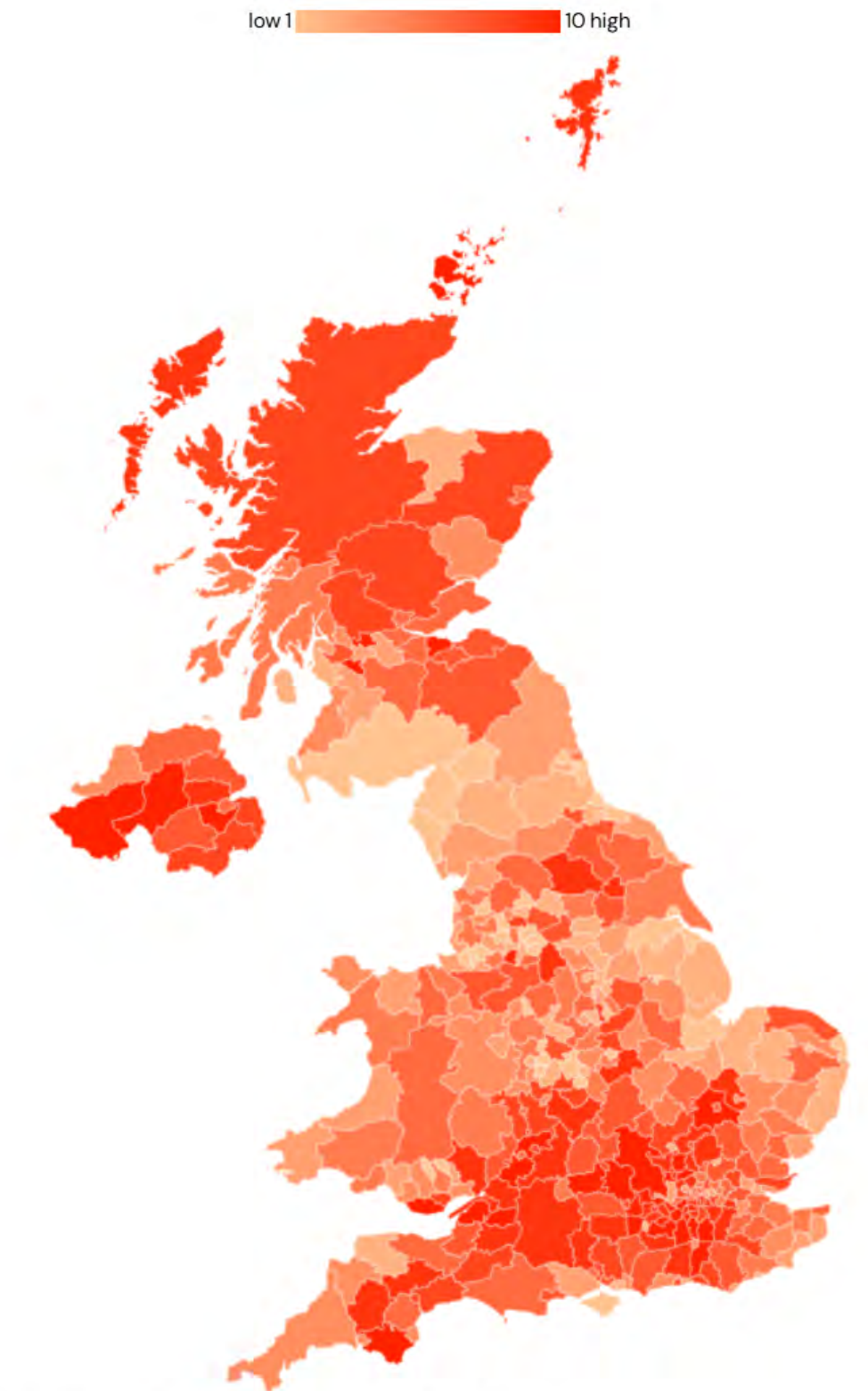
Local authority	Region	Score <sup>30</sup>	Decile
<b>Top 10</b>			
East Renfrewshire	Scotland	1.19	10
Wandsworth	London	1.16	10
East Dunbartonshire	Scotland	1.15	10
St Albans	East of England	1.15	10
Epsom and Ewell	South East	1.14	10
Richmond upon Thames	London	1.14	10
South Hams	South West	1.12	10
South Oxfordshire	South East	1.12	10
Wokingham	South East	1.12	10
Three Rivers	East of England	1.12	10
<b>Bottom 10</b>			
Blackpool	North West	0.86	1
Blackburn with Darwen	North West	0.86	1
Hartlepool	North East	0.86	1
Copeland	North West	0.87	1
Sunderland	North East	0.87	1
Oldham	North West	0.88	1
Rochdale	North West	0.89	1
Tamworth	West Midlands	0.89	1
Isle of Wight	South East	0.89	1
Blaenau Gwent	Wales	0.89	1

<sup>30</sup> A score of 1 reflects women's national average. Values higher or lower than 1 represent above-average or below-average scores, respectively. Scores on the Women's Outcomes Measure vary from 0.89 to 1.19, as shown in Table 17.

Figure 7 reveals great variation in local authority scores across the six domains:

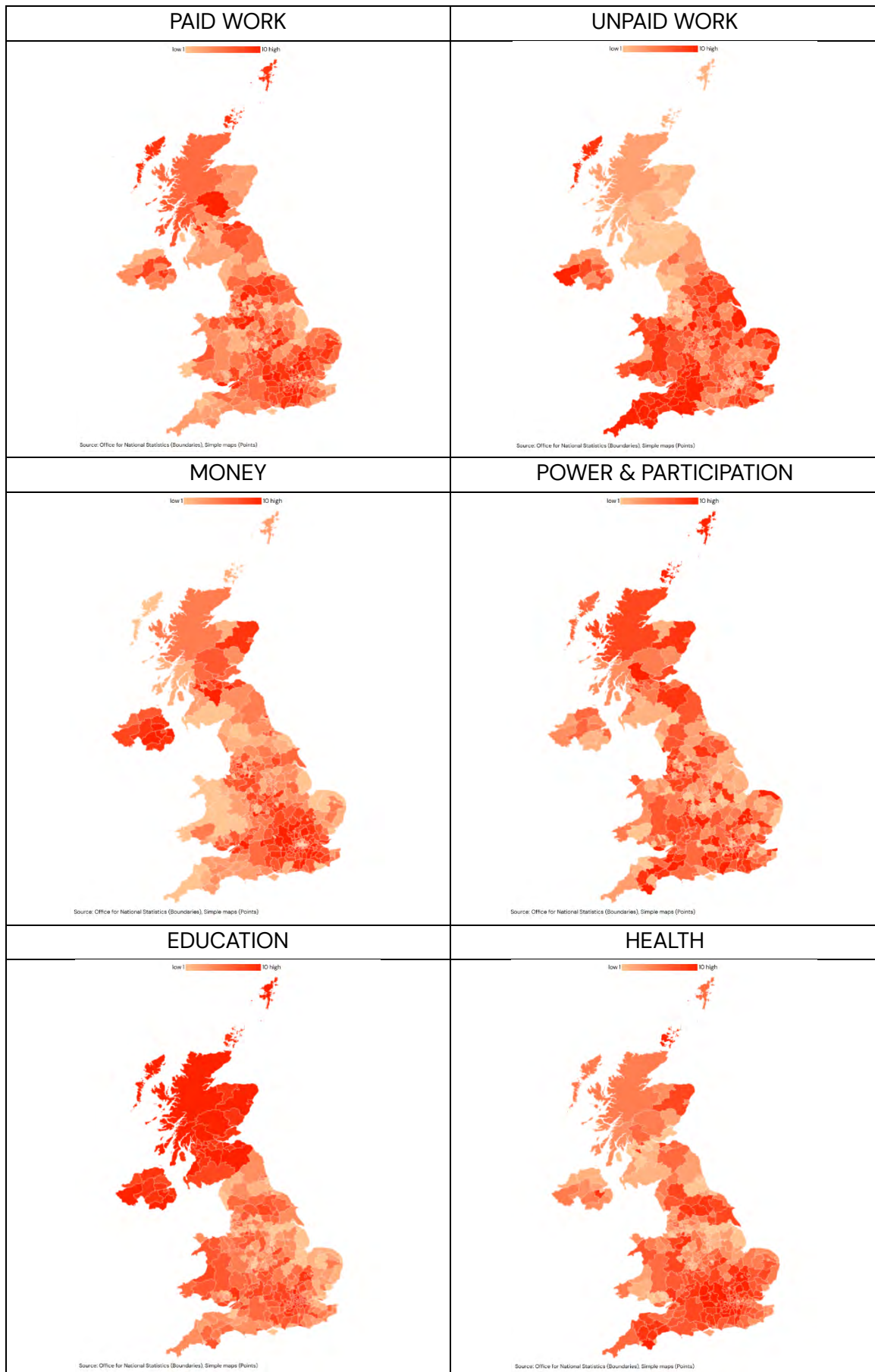
- In the domain of *Paid Work*, women are above the national average in the South of England, especially in London and the South West, but also in pockets in the Midlands, North West of England and in Scotland. Women's outcomes in *Paid Work* tend to be worse in certain coastal towns across all four nations.
- Examining *Unpaid Work*, we find less variation in scores across local authorities since one of our two indicators in this domain – time spent on childcare – is measured at the regional level. The maps show that women consistently spend more time on childcare and domestic work in the South West of England, though women tend to be over the national average across the East of England, East Midlands, Wales and Northern Ireland. Women in Scotland (apart from the Outer Hebrides) score below the national average on this measure, meaning that women on average spend less time on childcare and domestic work in these areas.
- The domain of *Money* shows a concentration of higher women's outcomes in the suburbs surrounding the capital cities in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The greatest concentration of local authorities in which women perform above average encircles but excludes London. Outcomes that are well below average are concentrated in coastal areas, especially Wales, the South West and East of England and parts of Northern England.
- In the domain of *Power & Participation*, women's outcomes vary considerably across the four nations with no consistent pattern.
- A clearer picture is apparent for *Education*, where outcomes are particularly high for women compared to the national women's average in Scotland and areas of Northern Ireland. Women's outcomes are particularly low in the East of England and East Midlands.
- Finally, in terms of *Health*, women's outcomes are above the women's national average in local authorities in the South East along with the Shetland Islands and South Hams. In the East Midlands, North East, southern Wales and mid-Scotland, they are among the lowest.

Figure 6. Mapping the Women's Outcomes Measure across the UK, with darker shades indicating higher outcomes.



Source: Office for National Statistics (Boundaries), Simple maps (Points)

Figure 7. Overview of domain scores of the Women's Outcomes Measure.



### 5.1.3 The Men's Outcomes Measure

The Men's Outcomes Measure compares men's outcomes locally to men's national average. Table 18 and Figure 8 shows that the geographic concentration of men's higher outcomes mirrors the pattern found for women, though men's outcomes are even more geographically polarised than for women.

Local authorities with the highest outcomes for men are concentrated in London (e.g. Richmond upon Thames), the South East (e.g. Wokingham) and the East of England (St Albans). While this generally confirms the existence of the North-South divide, Figure 8 shows that some areas in Scotland (e.g. East Dunbartonshire) and Northern Ireland (e.g. Lisburn and Castlereagh) also exhibit above-average outcomes for men.

In contrast, local authorities with the lowest scores for men are predominantly found in the East Midlands (e.g. East Lindsey), the North East (e.g. Middlesbrough), and Yorkshire (e.g. Kingston upon Hull). Below-average scores are also found amongst local authorities in the East of England (e.g. Great Yarmouth), the North West (e.g. Oldham) and Wales (e.g. Blaenau Gwent), as shown in Figure 8.

Table 18. Top and bottom 10 local authorities on the Men's Outcomes Measure.

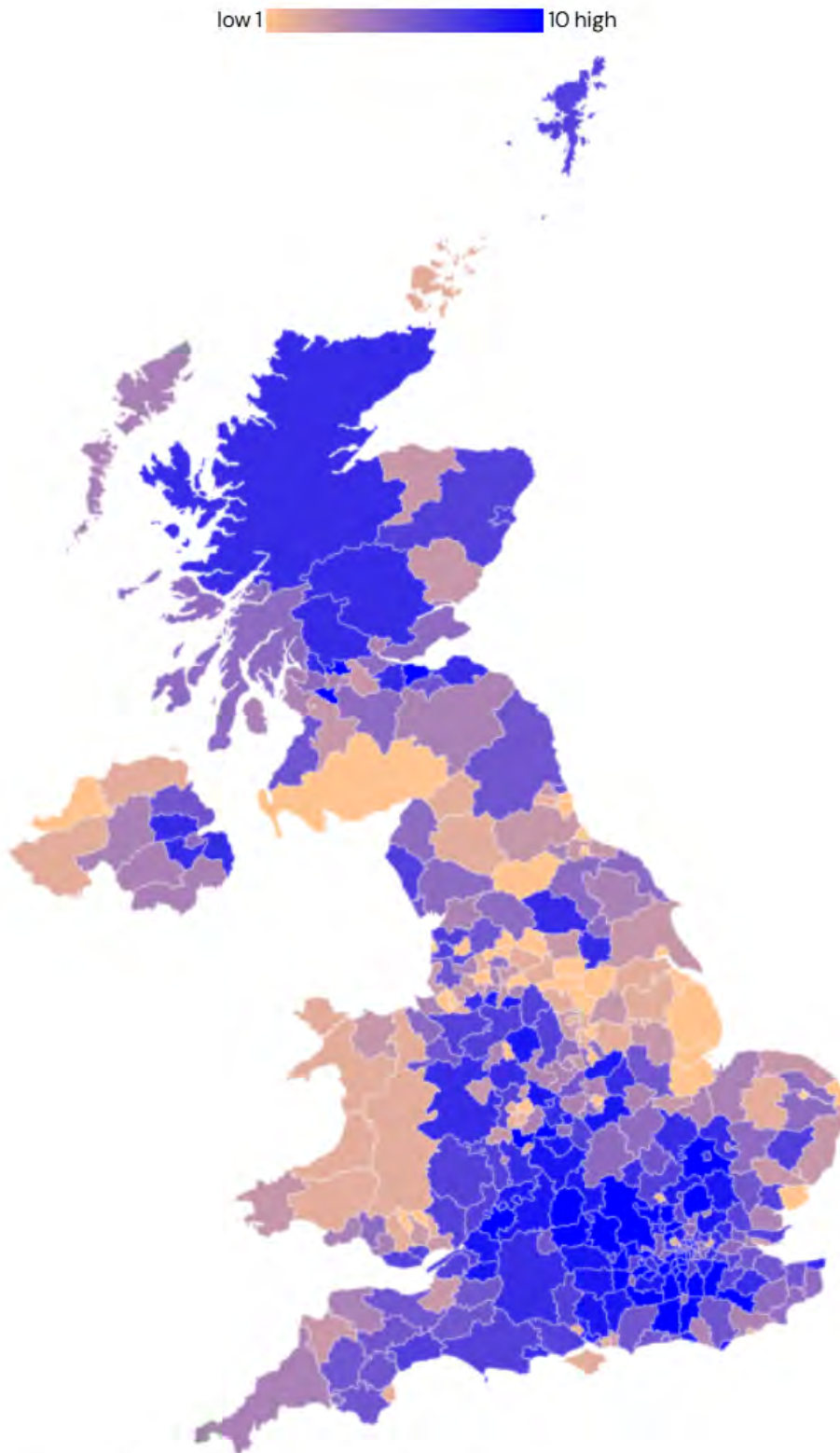
Local authority	Region	Score <sup>31</sup>	Decile
<b>Top 10</b>			
Richmond upon Thames	London	1.20	10
St Albans	East of England	1.19	10
Wokingham	South East	1.19	10
Elmbridge	South East	1.18	10
Waverley	South East	1.15	10
South Cambridgeshire	East of England	1.15	10
Stroud	South West	1.15	10
Woking	South East	1.15	10
Wandsworth	London	1.15	10
Tandridge	South East	1.15	10
<b>Bottom 10</b>			
Middlesbrough	North East	0.82	1
Kingston upon Hull	Yorkshire and The Humber	0.82	1
Doncaster	Yorkshire and The Humber	0.83	1
East Lindsey	East Midlands	0.84	1
Barnsley	Yorkshire and The Humber	0.85	1
Leicester	East Midlands	0.85	1
Sunderland	North East	0.86	1
Nottingham	East Midlands	0.86	1
South Holland	East Midlands	0.86	1
Great Yarmouth	East of England	0.86	1

<sup>31</sup> A score of 1 reflects men's national average. Values higher or lower than 1 represent above-average or below-average scores, respectively. Scores on the Men's Outcomes Measure vary from 0.82 to 1.20, as shown in Table 18.

As shown in Figure 9, great variation in local authority scores across the domains of the Men's Outcomes Measure:

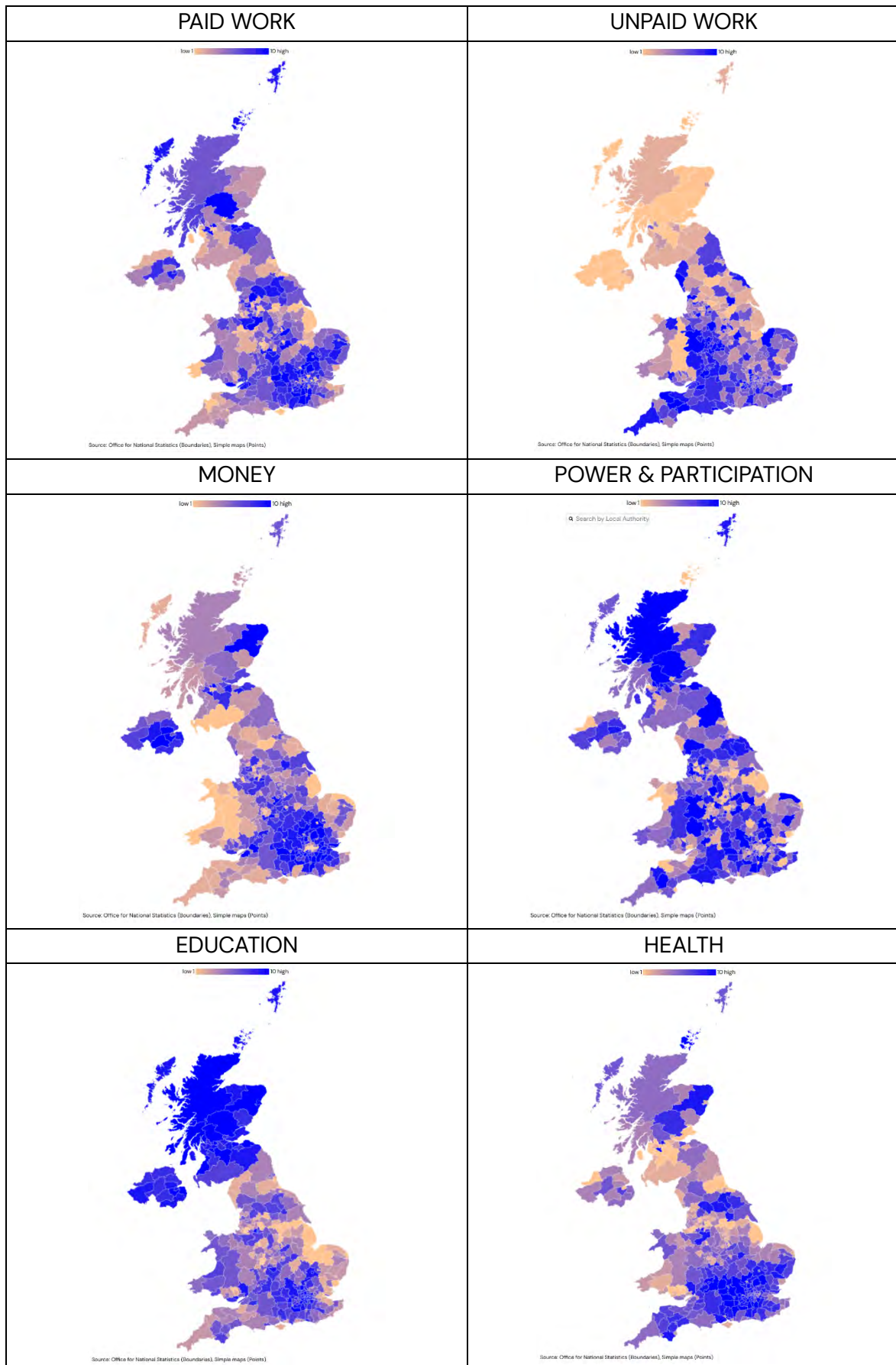
- Men's outcomes in *Paid Work* are higher in local authorities in the South East and West of England. Men's outcomes are below average in coastal regions across the four nations, with pockets in Northern Ireland, Wales, the North East and East Midlands.
- In terms of *Unpaid Work*, men do less than average in Northern Ireland and Scotland but also in Wales, Yorkshire and the Humber and the East Midlands. Men provide above-average care in the West Midlands and South West of England.
- In the domain of *Money*, the same pattern is found as was for women, with a great concentration of higher outcomes in the suburbs surrounding but excluding the big cities in England (e.g. London, Bristol, Birmingham), Scotland (e.g. Glasgow) and Northern Ireland (e.g. Belfast). Outcomes that are well below average are in coastal areas, especially Wales, the East of England and parts of Northern England and Scotland.
- The *Power & Participation* domain shows an uneven pattern across the UK, with both high- and low-outcome local authorities across all UK regions.
- In the domain of *Education*, outcomes are especially high for men in areas of Scotland and Northern Ireland but also in and around London. In contrast, men's educational outcomes are especially poor in the East of England, the West Midlands and parts of Northern England.
- Finally, above-average outcomes in *Health* are concentrated in the South East and South West, while poorer outcomes are found across Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the North of England.

Figure 8. Mapping the Men's Outcomes Measure across the UK, with darker shades indicating higher outcomes.



Source: Office for National Statistics (Boundaries), Simple maps (Points)

Figure 9. Overview of domain scores of the Men's Outcomes Measure.



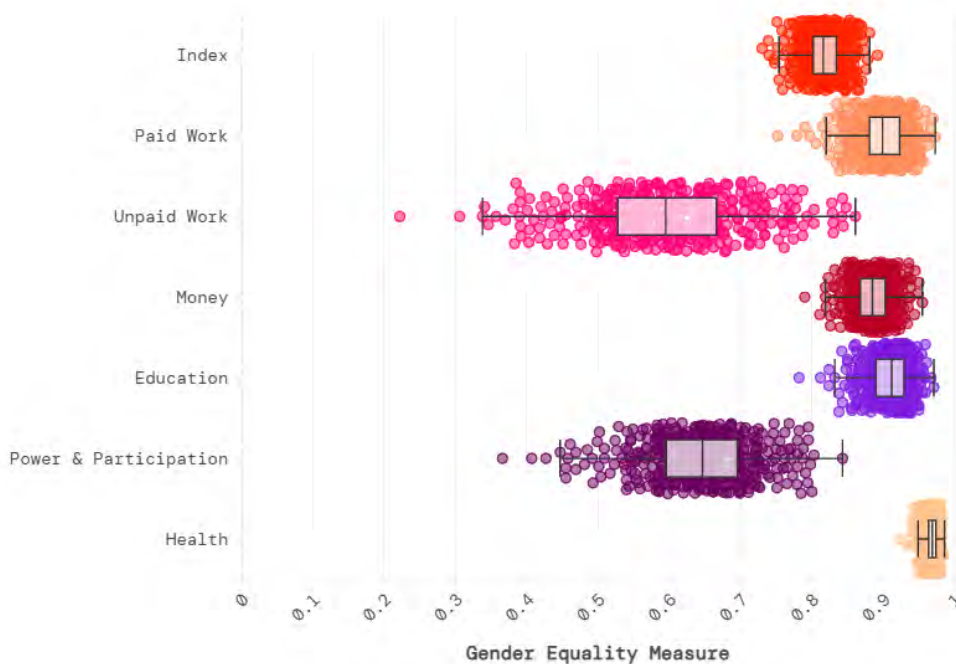
## 5.2 Below the headline: comparing domain scores across the GEIUK measures

In this section, we take a closer look at the domain scores for each GEIUK measure. Breaking down scores by domain shows much greater variation by gender and geography than captured by the aggregate index-level scores. More descriptive statistics for the domain and index scores for each GEIUK measure are provided in the Annex.

Figure 10 shows the Gender Equality Measure scores of local authorities across the six domains. A score closer to 1 suggests 'complete equality', while 0 indicates 'complete inequality'. The *Index* score ranges from 0.73 and 0.89, indicating that no local authority has achieved gender equality.

The domain of *Health* exhibits the least gender and geographic inequalities. Most local authorities score close to 1, meaning women and men's outcomes are more similar in health outcomes across local authorities. *Paid Work*, *Education* and *Money* display moderate inequalities with some variation between localities, but generally higher levels of equality compared to other domains.

Figure 10. Beeswarm plot of the domains and index scores on the Gender Equality Measure. Each dot represents a local authority.

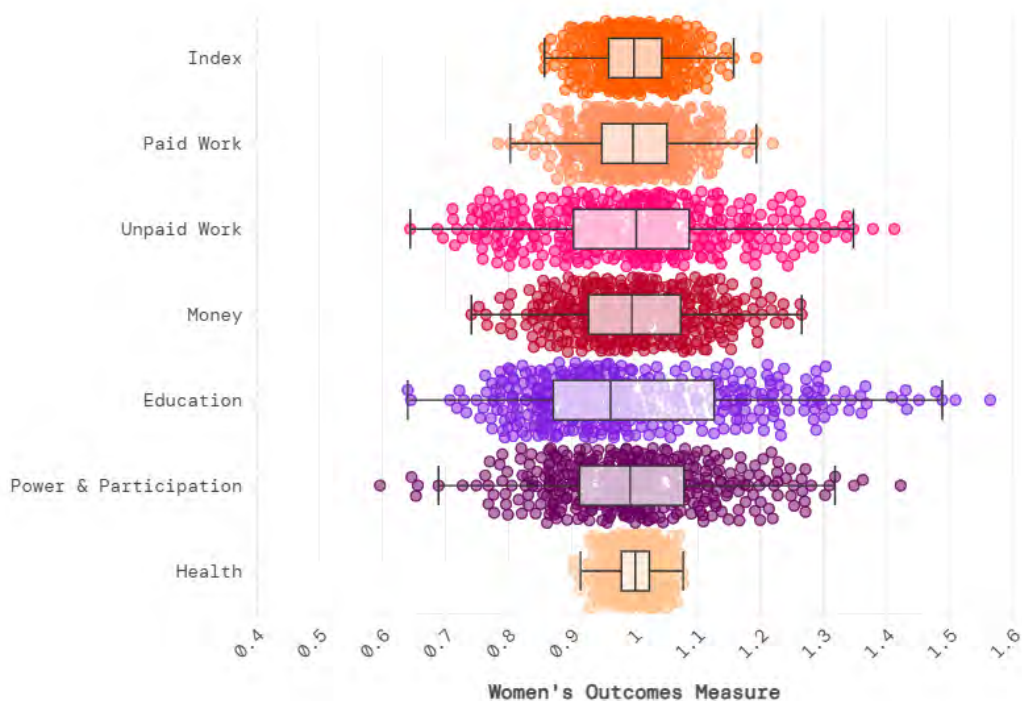


In contrast, *Unpaid Work* exhibits the widest spread of scores between local authorities and the lowest average score out of all domains. This reflects great gender gaps in the division of domestic and caregiving responsibilities. Further, it shows considerable variation in the size of the gap between local authorities. The most pronounced gender gaps in *Unpaid Work* are found in Fermanagh and Omagh, Mid Ulster and Doncaster, whereas Barrow-in-Furness shows the least difference between women and men.

Similarly, *Power & Participation* shows great variation and a low average score across local authorities, suggesting persistent gender imbalances in leadership and participation. Looking at the extreme values shows the largest gender gaps are found in Tamworth, Carlisle and East Lindsay, while the smallest gaps appear in Greenwich.

Figure 11 shows a comparison of local authority scores for the Women’s Outcomes Measure and each of its domains. A score of 1 represents the average outcomes of women across the UK. Values below 1 indicate that women’s outcomes in a local authority fall below the UK average for women, while values above 1 indicate women’s outcomes in a local authority are above average.

Figure 11. Beeswarm plot of the domains and index scores for local authorities for the Women’s Outcomes Measure.

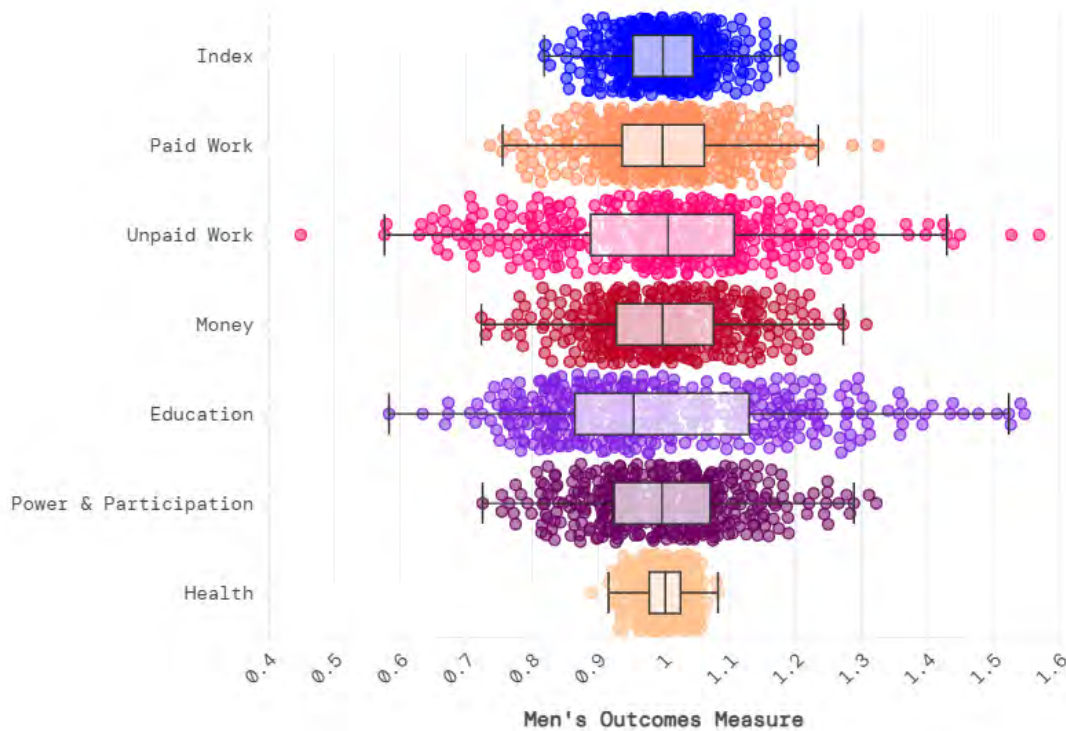


At the index level, the range of scores for the Women’s Outcomes Measure across the local authority index sits between 0.86 and 1.19. Figure 11 shows great variation in women’s relative outcomes across local authorities at the domain level. While women’s outcomes in *Health* are similar across local authorities, inequalities between women exist in the domains of *Education*, *Unpaid Work* and *Power & Participation*, where we find the greatest dispersion of local authority scores.

These domains also show the presence of extreme values, with certain local authorities with exceptionally high or low outcomes compared to women nationally. For example, in the domain of *Education*, we see women in East Renfrewshire showing the highest outcomes, followed by East Dunbartonshire, while women in Knowsley and Blackpool are falling behind significantly. In *Unpaid Work*, women’s outcomes are far above average in North Norfolk and South Hams, while women in Aberdeen City and Stirling are at the

opposite end. Finally, in *Power & Participation*, women are pulling ahead in Rossendale and Wandsworth, while they lag behind in Tamworth, Carlisle, Hartlepool and Preston.

Figure 12. Beeswarm plot of the domains and index scores on the Men's Outcomes Measure.



For the Men's Outcomes Measure (Figure 12), index scores range from 0.82 to 1.20. For men, the patterns across domains largely reflect those found for women, with great variation in inequalities between men in *Education* and *Unpaid Work*.

For men, as with women, *Health* outcomes show the least dispersion across local authorities. However, men's outcomes vary significantly in *Education*, *Money* and *Unpaid Work*, which display the widest inequalities. In contrast to women, *Power & Participation* scores are more centralised, suggesting men's access to leadership and decision-making roles remains more consistent nationally. That said, the presence of extreme values in *Education* and *Unpaid Work* highlights greater inequalities among men across the UK.

Specifically, men's *Education* scores are highest in the City of Edinburgh, Richmond upon Thames and Kensington and Chelsea, while they are lowest in Knowsley and Blackpool for men, too. Regarding *Unpaid Work*, men in Fermanagh and Omagh, Mid Ulster and Derry City and Strabane spend the least time on childcare and domestic responsibilities, whereas those in Eastbourne, Copeland and Harrow spend the most.

### 5.3 Relationship between the three GEIUK measures

The three measures comprising the GEIUK go beyond simply measuring gender gaps. They also assess whether and to what extent women and men in local areas are advancing or falling behind relative to the national average for women and men, respectively. For instance, gender employment gaps in some areas may be small because employment opportunities are equally limited for women and men. Such instances of ‘gender equality through deprivation’ should be avoided, as economic and social development should aim to raise outcomes and living standards while placing citizens on a gender-equal footing. This follows the UN principle of ‘leaving no one behind’: eradicating poverty while simultaneously ending discrimination and exclusion and reducing inequalities and vulnerabilities (UN Sustainable Development Group, 2022).

To better understand the dynamics driving the GEIUK scores, we plot the three measures against one another. Figure 13 shows a positive correlation between the scores of the Women’s Outcomes Measure and the Men’s Outcomes Measure ( $r = 0.78$ ). This means that there is a close relationship between women’s and men’s relative positions across the UK: in local authorities where women exhibit higher outcomes relative to their gender group, men do too.

Figure 13. Scatterplot comparing the Women’s Outcomes Measure to the Men’s Outcomes Measure.

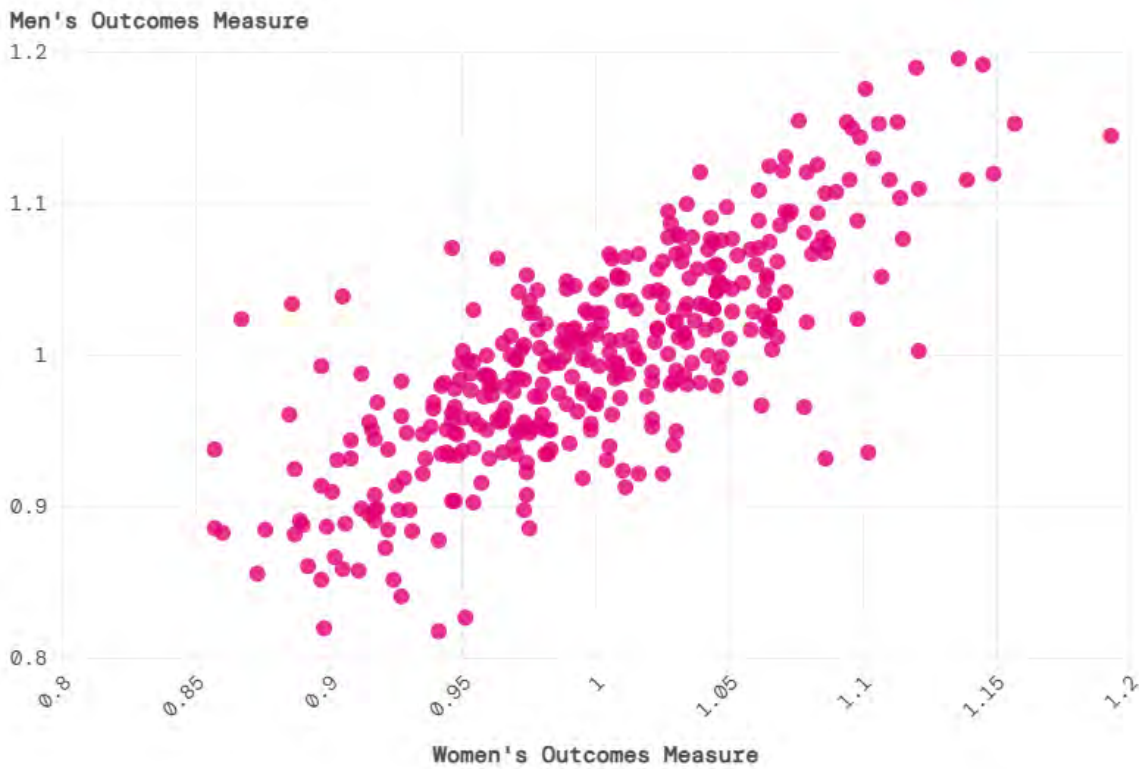


Table 19 reveals that the observed pattern holds at the domain level for *Education*, *Health* and *Money* and *Paid Work*, where the correlations between women’s and men’s outcomes are strong, indicating that higher outcomes for women in these domains tend to coincide with higher outcomes for men.

However, this pattern does not extend to the domains of *Unpaid Work* and *Power & Participation*, where there is little to no relationship between women’s and men’s outcomes. This means that women performing more childcare or domestic work does not result in men performing more or less unpaid work.

*Table 19. Correlations between domains of the Women's Outcomes Measure and the Men's Outcomes Measure.*

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Correlation</b>
PAID WORK	0.70
UNPAID WORK	0.21
MONEY	0.93
POWER & PARTICIPATION	0.25
EDUCATION	0.98
HEALTH	0.94

Moreover, Figure 14 and Figure 15 show no association between the Gender Equality Measure and the Women’s Outcomes Measure ( $r = 0.10$ ) and a weak association between the Gender Equality Measure and the Men’s Outcomes Measure ( $r = 0.35$ ). The same applies at the domain level, where none of the correlations exceed 0.20. This means that the gap between women and men can exist across all the relative positions of women and men across the UK. We return to this relationship in section 5.5 to reveal a more complex, non-linear pattern between the three GEIUK measures.

Figure 14. Scatterplot comparing the Women's Outcomes Measure to the Gender Equality Measure.

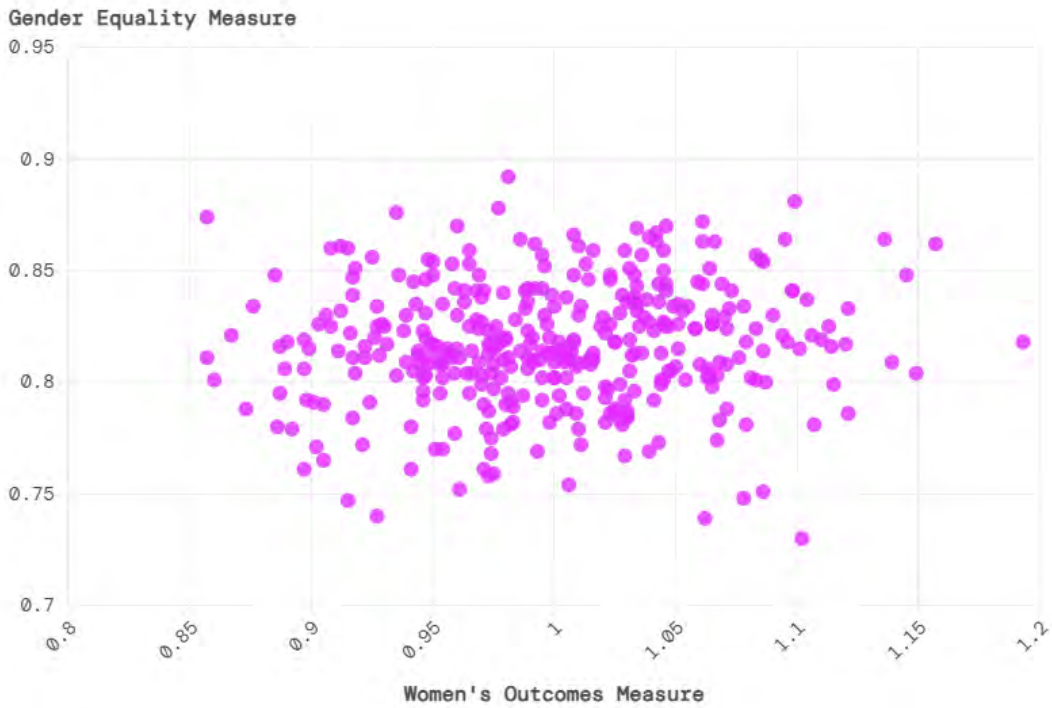
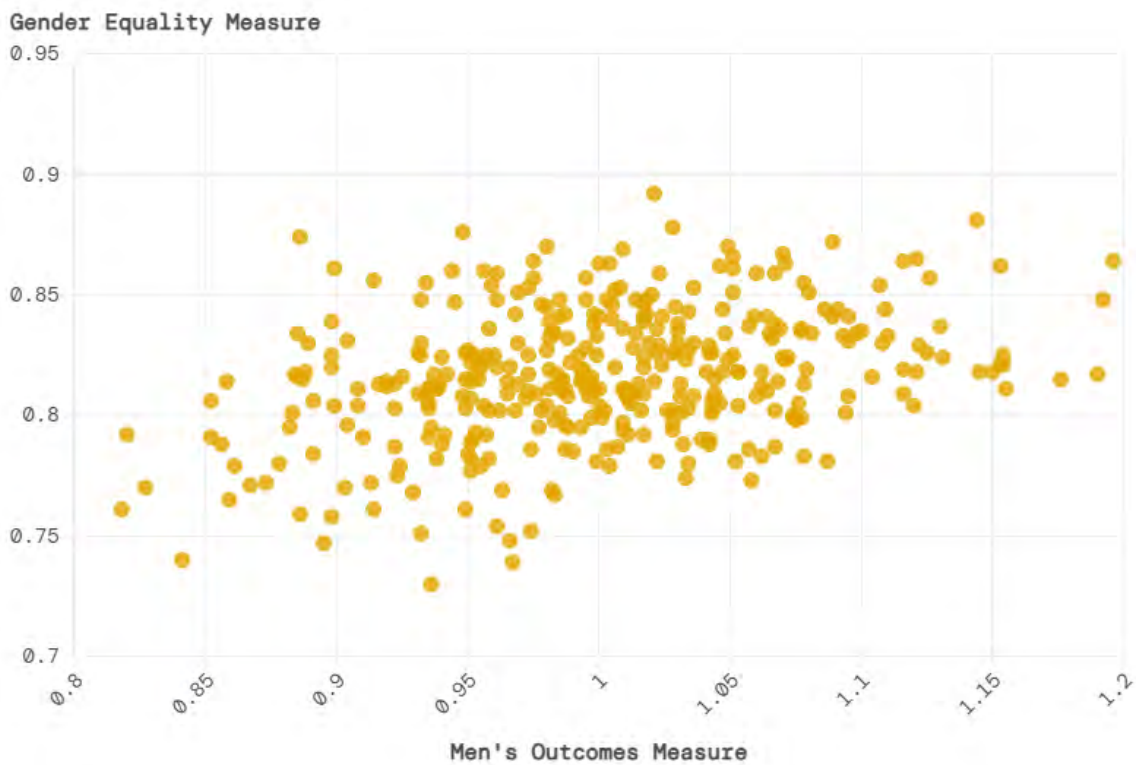


Figure 15. Scatterplot comparing the Men's Outcomes Measure to the Gender Equality Measure.



#### 5.4 GEIUK and demography, productivity and deprivation

In this section, we investigate how GEIUK scores map onto local authorities' demographic and wider socioeconomic characteristics, summarised in Table 20. We selected variables that help us better understand what factors may affect differing types of gender equality. Further, these variables are relevant to informing tailored policy interventions at the local level aimed at increasing economic productivity.

The share of the population across age groups and ethnic profiles directly aligns with the Equality Act 2010, addressing inequalities rooted in age and ethnicity that influence labour force participation, income inequality and access to opportunities. These factors are critical for fostering an inclusive and equitable economy.

Further, variables such as rural versus urban profiles, economic activity rates and local productivity rates are vital for indicating how geographic contexts shape economic outcomes, supporting the government's *Devolution* agenda and *Invest 2035: Industrial Strategy* to boost productivity and reduce regional economic inequalities.

Additionally, indicators such as deprivation levels, median weekly pay and time spent on unpaid work provide essential insights into socioeconomic inequalities that hinder the full use of human capabilities. For instance, the gendered division of unpaid childcare and domestic work curtails women's ability to participate fully in the workforce, with knock-on effects for their income and financial independence.

By integrating these variables into our analysis, we can better analyse how multiple factors intersect to shape outcomes and opportunities. Such an approach is necessary for the development of more equitable and context-sensitive policy interventions to foster economic inclusion, reduce inequalities and promote sustainable growth across the UK.

Table 20. Overview of socioeconomic variables used to profile local authority clusters.

Indicator	Description	Source
Deprivation – IMD score	Percentile of deprivation of a LAD, measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019. <sup>32</sup>	DLUHC, OCSI, NISRA, Scottish Government (2023) CDRC Harmonised IMD 2019.
Local productivity	Annual labour productivity indices by local authority districts, measured as Current Price Index Gross Value Added per hour worked. <sup>33</sup>	ONS (2024) Subregional productivity: labour productivity indices by local authority district.
Economic activity	Proportion of economically active women and men	ONS (2022) England and Wales 2021 Census; NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland 2021 Census; NRS (2024) Scotland’s Census 2022.
Part-time employment	Proportion of women and men working part-time	ONS (2022) England and Wales 2021 Census; NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland 2021 Census; NRS (2024) Scotland’s Census 2022.
Weekly pay	Average weekly pay for women and men	ONS (2023) Annual Population Survey; NISRA (2023) Annual Population Survey.
Unpaid work domain	<i>Unpaid Work</i> domain score for women and men	Based on GEIUK calculations.
Age	Proportion of residents aged 16–64 and 64+	ONS (2022) England and Wales 2021 Census; NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland 2021 Census; NRS (2024) Scotland’s Census 2022.
Ethnicity	Proportion of Asian, Black, Mixed, Other ethnicity and White population	ONS (2022) England and Wales 2021 Census; NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland 2021 Census; NRS (2024) Scotland’s Census 2022.
Rural versus urban classification	Proportion of the population that resides in rural or urban areas (England only)	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (2023) Rural Urban Classification 2011 lookup tables for local authority areas 2023.

<sup>32</sup> The Indices of Multiple Deprivation measures: Income; Employment; Education, Skills and Training; Health and Disability; Crime; Barriers to Housing and Services; and Living Environment. Local authorities are grouped into percentiles where 1 represents the most deprived local authorities and 100 the least deprived.

<sup>33</sup> Where the UK average is 100 and values above or below indicate that an area’s labour productivity is higher or lower, respectively.

Table 21 summarises the correlations between the three GEIUK measures and these additional demographic and socioeconomic variables. While we find significant associations, these relationships should not be interpreted as causal.

Higher scores on the Women's Outcomes Measure and Men's Outcomes Measures are associated with greater local productivity, economic activity, employment rates, weekly pay and reduced deprivation levels. While women's higher part-time employment rate is negatively correlated with all three GEIUK measures, for men it is positively associated with gender equality scores, suggesting differing gender effects of part-time work.

In addition to its links with gender equality, we find that men's greater involvement in *Unpaid Work* is positively associated with higher socioeconomic outcomes for men. Within the framework of the GEIUK, this indicates that childcare and domestic work contribute to men's overall socioeconomic outcomes. In contrast, the association is negligible for women, suggesting that childcare and domestic work have little impact on women's socioeconomic status, though it does negatively affect gender equality. While these findings reveal meaningful patterns, they do not establish causality and should be understood as significant relationships that merit further investigation into the dynamics at play.

Although the Gender Equality Measure is positively correlated with economic activity and local productivity, there is no significant relationship with levels of deprivation. This suggests that gender inequalities persist regardless of socioeconomic context, reinforcing the need for both place-based policies to uplift deprived areas and gender-focused strategies to close structural gender gaps. Demographic variables show that local authorities with higher scores on the Gender Equality Measure tend to have greater proportions of urban residents, mixed ethnic groups and younger, economically active populations (ages 16–64).

Table 21. Correlations between the three GEIUK measures and economic and demographic variables.

	Women's Outcomes Measure	Men's Outcomes Measure	Gender Equality Measure
Deprivation – IMD percentile	0.680**	0.671**	-0.004
Local productivity – CPI GVA per hour	0.324**	0.430**	0.162**
Economic activity rates – women	0.481**	0.543**	0.279**
Economic activity rates – men	0.451**	0.530**	0.204**
Part-time employment rates – women	-0.198**	-0.298**	-0.355**
Part-time employment rates – men	-0.091	-0.124**	0.161**
Weekly pay – women	0.492**	0.575**	0.373**
Weekly pay – men	0.522**	0.666**	0.130*
Unpaid work domain – women	0.164**	-0.050	-0.483**
Unpaid work domain – men	0.016	0.403**	0.467**
Proportion 16–64 years old	0.046	0.105	0.355**
Proportion over-64 years old	-0.045	-0.099	-0.295**
Proportion of Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh population	-0.042	0.033	0.181**
Proportion of Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African population	0.070	0.098	0.285**
Proportion of Mixed or Multiple ethnic population	0.252**	0.336**	0.417**
Proportion of Other ethnic group population	0.093	0.155**	0.300**
Proportion of White population	-0.037	-0.107	-0.280**
Rural vs Urban <sup>a</sup>	-0.090	-0.079	0.356**

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). \* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

<sup>a</sup> Predominantly Rural = -1, Predominantly Urban = 1, Urban with significant Rural = 0

## 5.5 Four types of gender equality

To interpret the combination of scores across the three measures of the GEIUK and identify patterns across local authorities, we use a clustering methodology<sup>34</sup> together with expert analysis of cluster means.

The correlation analysis in section 5.3 suggested that there is no relationship between the Gender Equality Measure and either of the two other measures. However, correlations are based on a pairwise analysis that assumes a linear relationship. Consequently, it can miss the more complex dynamics that we are interested in. In contrast, the clustering methodology allows us to investigate non-linear relationships and how the three GEIUK measures interact with each other simultaneously. This way, we can examine whether a small gender gap, as measured by the Gender Equality Measure, can occur where both women and men fare equally well or equally badly, as measured by the Women's Outcomes Measure and the Men's Outcomes Measure.

The cluster analysis identifies four 'types of gender equality' across local authorities that reveal just this: higher levels of gender equality can exist alongside both high and low socioeconomic outcomes for both women and men. Nonetheless, the results show that where gender equality levels are low, both women's and men's outcomes tend to be worse. Importantly, we find no type of gender equality that combines large gender gaps with high outcomes for women and men.

Taken together, this points to the fact that gender equality is not a zero-sum game, and both women and men stand to benefit from a more gender-equal society. Below, each type is described and summarised in Figure 16 and Table 22.

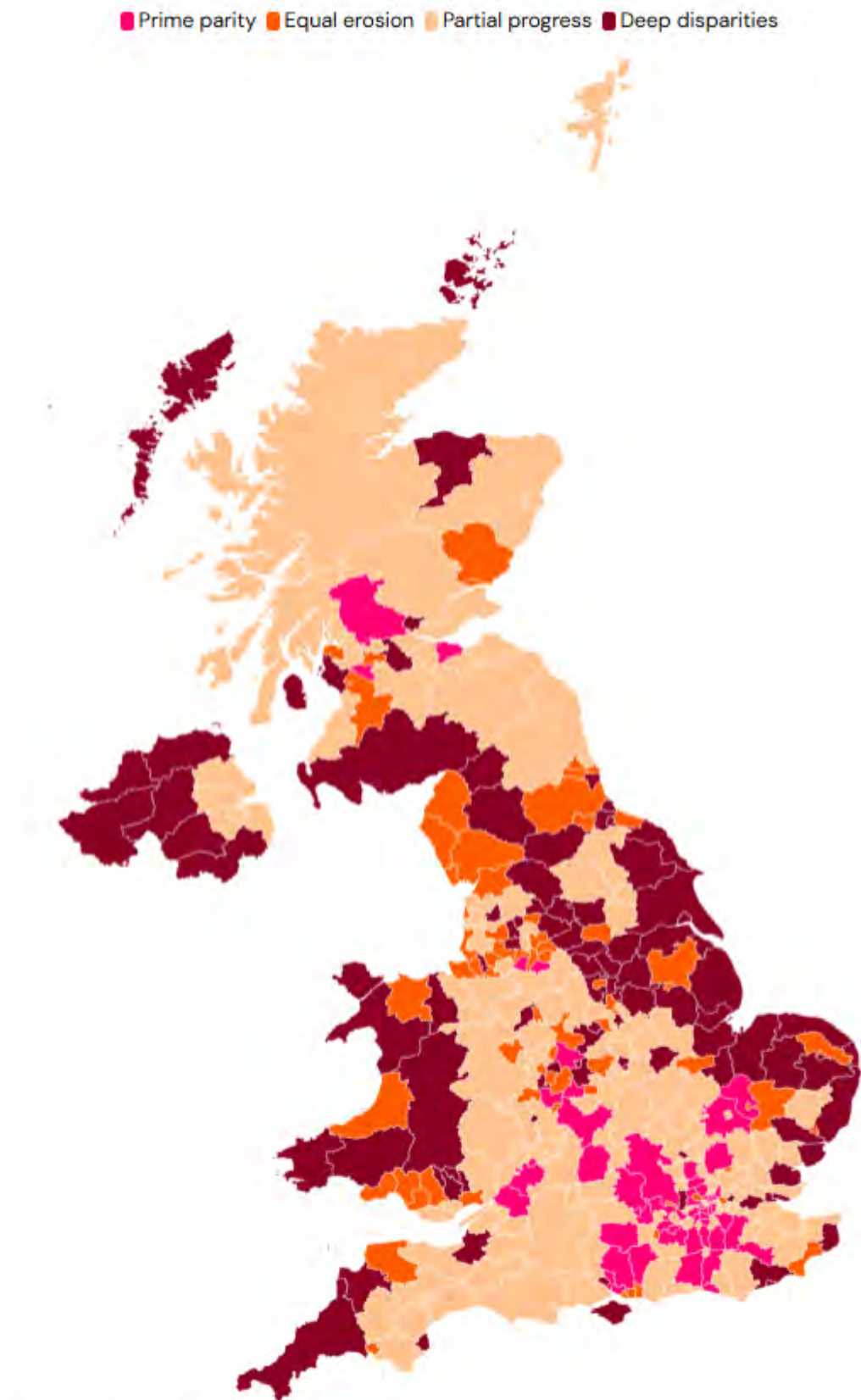
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<sup>34</sup> Cluster analysis is a widely used machine learning approach across disciplines, including geographical analysis, to discover sets of categories (Rokach and Maimon, 2005). Among the many clustering methods available (see Gao et al., 2023), we employ the k-means clustering approach using Python.

The k-means algorithm partitions data into  $k$  clusters, each represented by a central point, or centroid. Data points are assigned to clusters based on their proximity to these centroids. For our analysis, this involved grouping 372 LADs into initial clusters. After this, the algorithm recalculates the centroids of each cluster, reassigning LADs and repeating this process until no further reassignments occur. Since the outcome depends on the initial cluster assignment, we have performed 50 iterations of the k-means algorithm, selecting the model with the highest silhouette score (Rousseeuw, 1987). The silhouette score evaluates the quality of clustering by measuring how well data points fit within their assigned clusters compared to others.

To determine the optimal number of clusters, we combined the silhouette score analysis with visual inspection of cluster profiles using relevant control indicators. This approach revealed that the 372 LADs group into seven distinct clusters sitting within four supergroups: our types of gender equality, explained below. This classification is based on expert analysis of GEIUK cluster means plus analysis of supporting data (see Table 20) which led to a small number of local authorities being reclassified based on the following rules: on the Gender Equality Measure, Prime Parity reassigns LADs with deciles 5 or below to Partial progress; Equal Erosion reassigns LADs with deciles 4 or below to Deep disparities; Deep disparities reassign LADs with deciles 7 or above to Equal erosion.

Figure 16. Geography of the four types of gender equality.



Source: [Office for National Statistics \(Boundaries\)](#), [Simple maps \(Points\)](#)

Table 22. Description of the seven types of gender equality based on average demographic and socioeconomic variables.

Type of gender equality	Prime parity	Equal erosion	Partial progress	Deep disparities
Description	Highest gender equality and outcomes	High gender equality but poor outcomes	Moderate gender equality and outcomes	Low gender equality and poor outcomes
Example local authority	Guildford, St Albans, Wandsworth	Blackpool, Neath Port Talbot, Stoke-on-Trent	Canterbury, Midlothian, South Somerset	Bradford, Merthyr Tydfil, Derry City and Strabane
Top regional concentration	South East, East of England, London	North West, Wales, West Midlands	South East, Scotland, South West	Yorkshire and the Humber, Wales, Northern Ireland
Gender Equality Measure	High	High	Medium	Low
Women's Outcomes Measure	High	Low	Medium	Low
Men's Outcomes Measure	High	Low	Medium	Low
Productivity	High	Low	Medium	Low
Economic activity	High	Low	Medium	Low
Weekly pay	High	Low	Medium	Low
Deprivation	Low	High	Medium	High

Table 23. Average demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of each type of gender equality.

	UK Average	Prime parity	Equal erosion	Partial progress	Deep disparities
Percentage of local authorities	-	15%	19%	40%	26%
Gender Equality Measure (deciles <sup>35</sup> )	5	8.2	7.4	5.5	2.6
Women's Outcomes Measure (deciles)	5	8.9	2.6	6.8	3.7
Men's Outcomes Measure (deciles)	5	9.4	3.3	7.0	2.6
Productivity	100	107.4	89.4	97.7	85.5
Deprivation – IMD score	50	71.3	27.9	61.9	33.6
Economic activity	56.1% women 65.0% men	60.1% women 69.3% men	54.7% women 63.2% men	57.0% women 65.3% men	53.5% women 62.6% men
Full-time employment	56.2% women 82.0% men	59.6% women 82.1% men	56.3% women 81.7% men	56.2% women 82.2% men	54.2% women 81.8% men
Part-time employment	43.1% women 17.4% men	40.0% women 17.5% men	42.9% women 17.5% men	43.0% women 17.1% men	45.3% women 17.7% men
Weekly pay	£490 women £676 men	£568 women £769 men	£468 women £628 men	£499 women £696 men	£447 women £626 men
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean, or African population	2.5%	4.5%	2.5%	2.5%	1.6%
Asian, Asian British, or Asian Welsh population	6.4%	9.2%	7.4%	5.3%	5.6%
White population	87.2%	79.9%	86.6%	88.5%	89.9%
16–64 population	61.9%	64.0%	62.5%	61.7%	60.7%
64+ population	20.0%	17.5%	19.21%	20.4%	21.3%

<sup>35</sup> Based on their respective GEIUK score, local authorities are ranked and grouped into deciles where 1 indicates local authorities in the bottom 10% and 10 those in the top 10%.

### 5.5.1 *Prime parity: highest gender equality and outcomes*

The first type of gender equality comprises local authorities where both women and men achieve the highest socio-economic outcomes and gender equality levels. On average, these areas perform strongly on the Women's Outcomes Measure and the Men's Outcomes Measure, while also exhibiting the highest levels of gender equality according to the Gender Equality Measure. Of the 372 local authorities, 15 percent (56) fall into this type. Figure 17 shows that the majority are located in the East of England, London and South East.

Notably, men in these areas engage in more *Unpaid Work* than men in other parts of the country, particularly in childcare and domestic responsibilities, while women's engagement in *Unpaid Work* aligns with national averages.

Beyond the GEIUK indicators, these local authorities demonstrate robust economic performance. They report the highest average local productivity alongside the lowest deprivation levels compared to the other types of gender equality. Further, economic activity rates are high for both women (60.1%) and men (69.3%) as are full-time employment levels (59.6% and 82.1%, respectively). Wage levels are above the national level, with average weekly earnings reaching £769 for men and £568 for women.

Demographically, this type is characterised by the greatest ethnic diversity. On average, these local authorities have the lowest share of the White population (79.9%), while the representation of all other ethnic groups is higher: Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh populations account for 9.2%; Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African populations make up 4.5%. Furthermore, these local authorities tend to have younger populations, with a higher-than-average share of working-age (16–64) population (64.0%) and children aged 16 and under (17.5%).

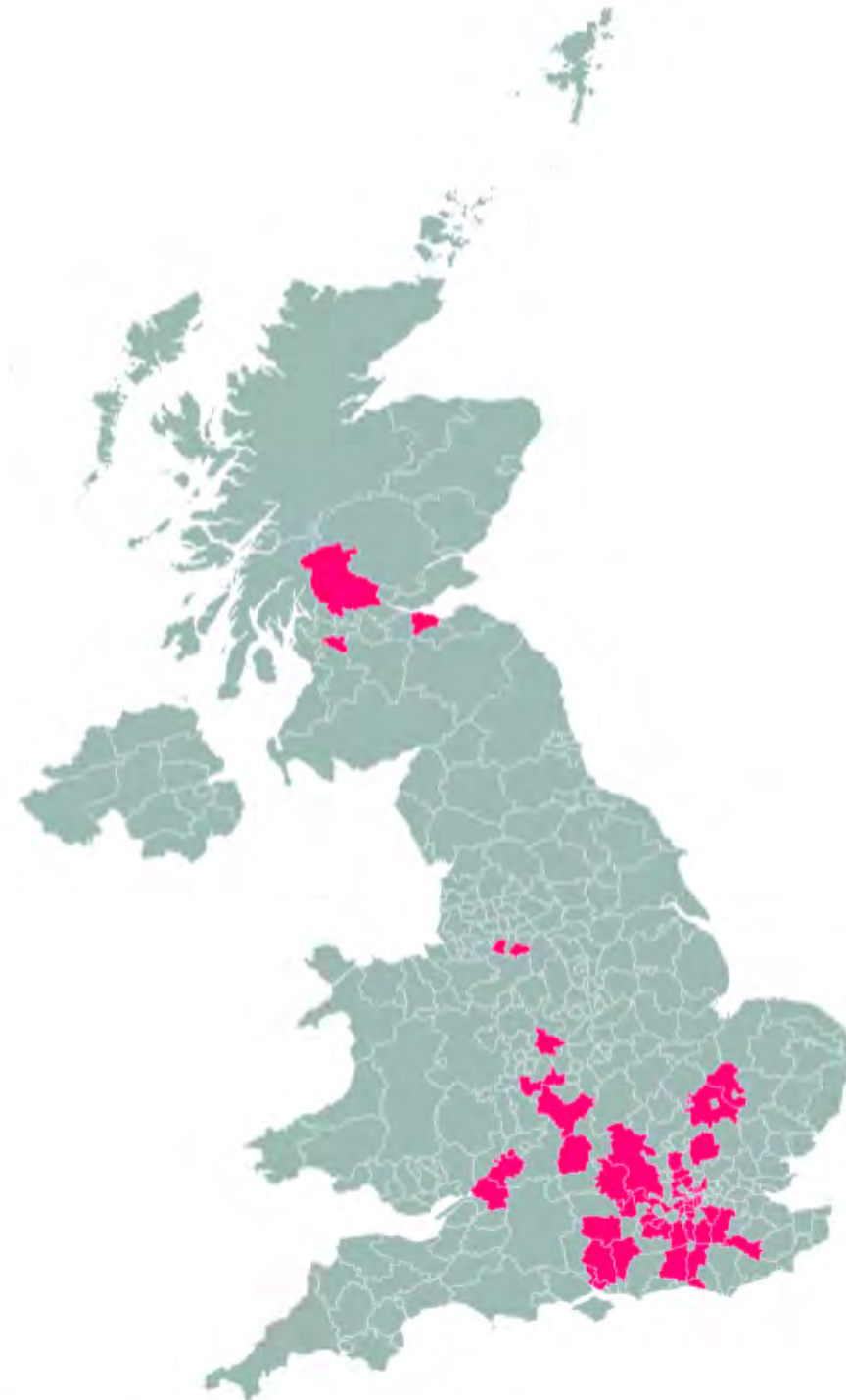
### 5.5.2 *Equal erosion: high gender equality but poor outcomes*

The second type also exhibits higher levels of gender equality, yet this is explained by relatively poor socioeconomic outcomes for everyone. In these areas, lower scores on the Women's Outcomes Measure and the Men's Outcomes Measure indicate that while gaps between women and men are less pronounced, overall conditions remain challenging. In total, 19 percent (69) of local authorities fall into this type, with most concentrated across the North West, Wales and the West Midlands, as shown in Figure 18.

Women in this cluster, on average, spend less time on unpaid labour compared to women nationally, while men take on more unpaid work than their counterparts in other areas. Economically, these local authorities face higher levels of deprivation and lower local productivity. For both women and men, local authorities exhibit below-average economic activity rates (54.7% and 63.2%, respectively), full-time employment rates (56.3% for women and 81.7% for men) and weekly median pay (£468 for women and £628 for men).

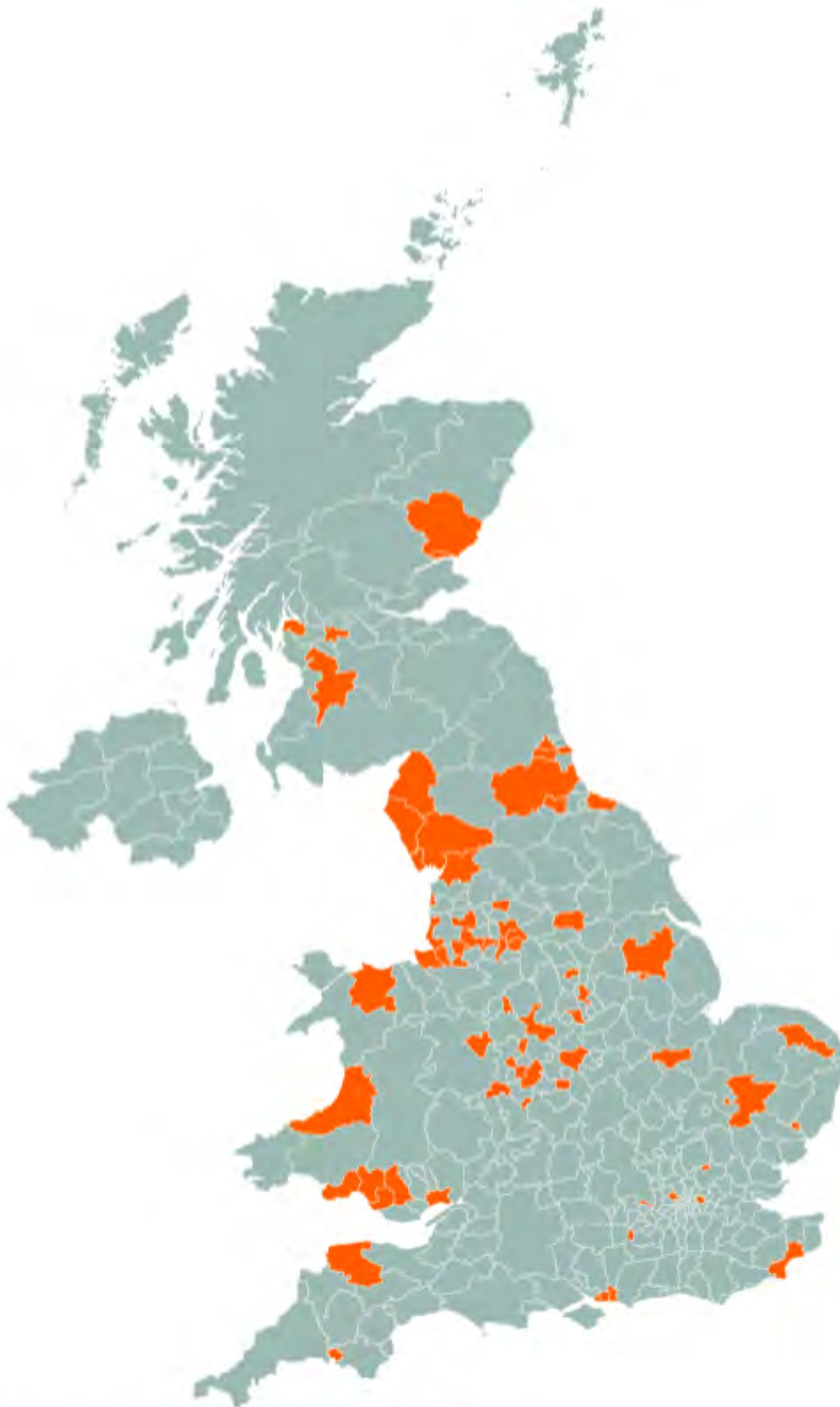
In terms of their ethnic composition, these local authorities on average show below-average share of the White ethnic population (86.5%) and a higher proportion of the Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh population (7.4%). These areas also tend to have an above-average working-age population (62.5%), the second highest amongst the types.

*Figure 17. Local authorities of the type 'Prime parity'.*



Source: [Office for National Statistics \(Boundaries\)](#), [Simple maps \(Points\)](#)

Figure 18. Local authorities of the type: 'Equal erosion'.



Source: [Office for National Statistics \(Boundaries\)](#), [Simple maps \(Points\)](#)

### 5.5.3 *Partial progress: moderate gender equality and outcomes*

The third type of gender equality comprises local authorities with moderate levels of gender equality combined with above-average outcomes for both women and men. Figure 19 shows that this is the largest of the gender equality clusters, encompassing 40 percent (149) of local authorities. While these areas are more evenly distributed across the four nations compared to the other types, higher concentrations are found in the Scotland, the South East and the South West.

Local authorities in this group report the second-highest average local productivity rate and the second-lowest levels of deprivation compared to the other three types. Economic activity rates closely align with national averages for women (56.6%) and men (65.3%), as do full-time employment rates (55.9% for women and 81.9% for men). Median weekly earnings are just above the national average at £493 for women and £681 for men.

Demographically, these local authorities have a higher-than-average share of the White ethnic population (88.5%) and a marginally larger proportion of the Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African population (2.5%). In contrast, the representation of the Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh population is lower than the national average, at 5.3 percent. These areas also tend to have older populations, with an above-average share (20.4%) of residents aged 64 and above.

### 5.5.4 *Deep disparities: low gender equality and poor outcomes*

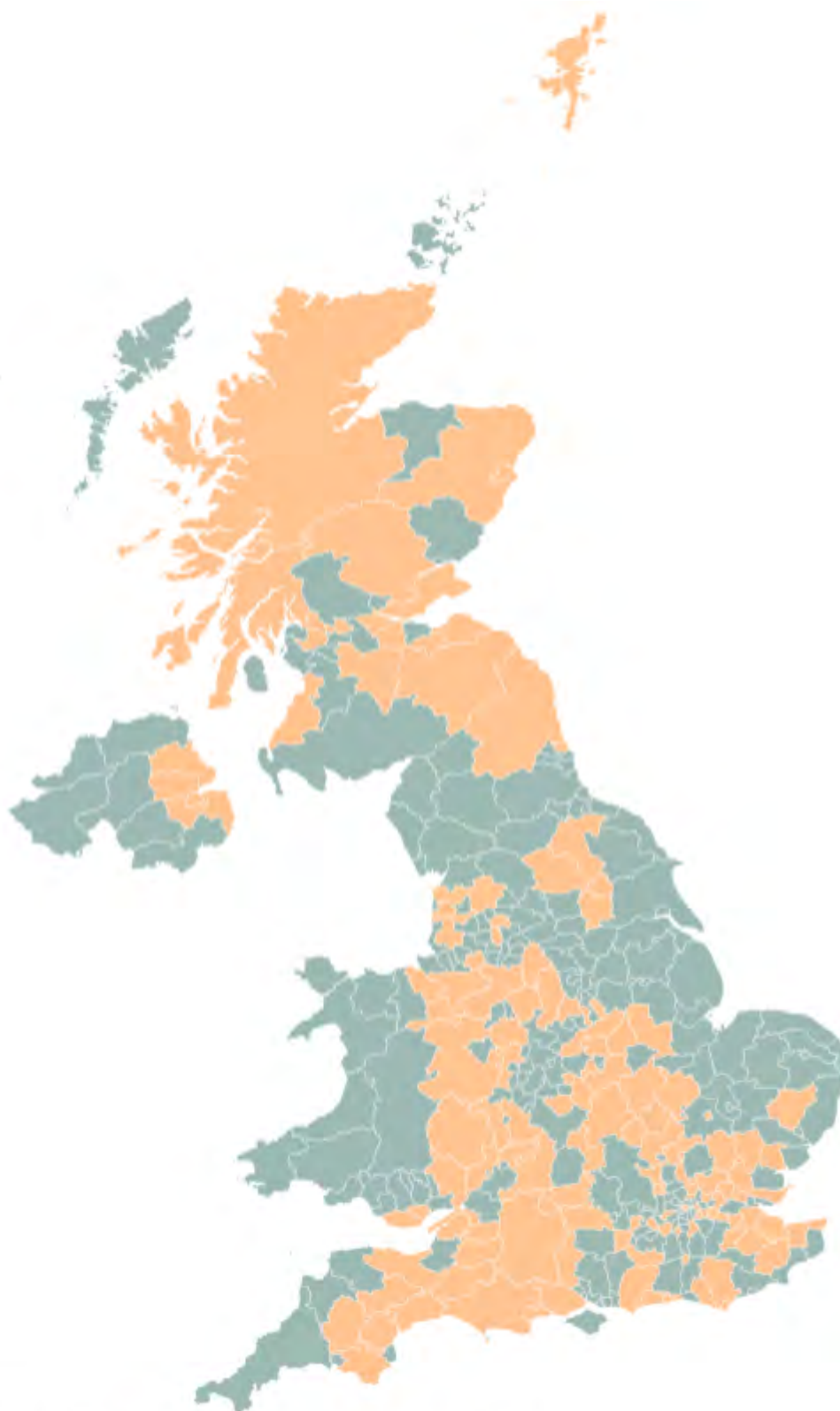
The final type contains local authorities where gender equality is least pronounced and socioeconomic outcomes for both women and men are the lowest. While both women and men fall behind in these areas, men's outcomes are especially low. In total, 26 percent (98) of local authorities fall into this category. As shown in Figure 20, the majority are concentrated in Yorkshire and the Humber, Wales and Northern Ireland.

A key feature of this cluster is the stark gender divide in *Unpaid Work*: men in these local authorities spend the least time on childcare and domestic work, whereas women's unpaid work levels are the highest among all clusters.

Economically, these areas experience the highest levels of deprivation and the lowest local productivity. Economic activity rates are below average for both women (53.5%) and men (62.6%), while part-time employment is notably high at 45.3 percent for women and 17.7 percent for men. Weekly median pay is significantly lower than the national average at £447 for women and £626 for men.

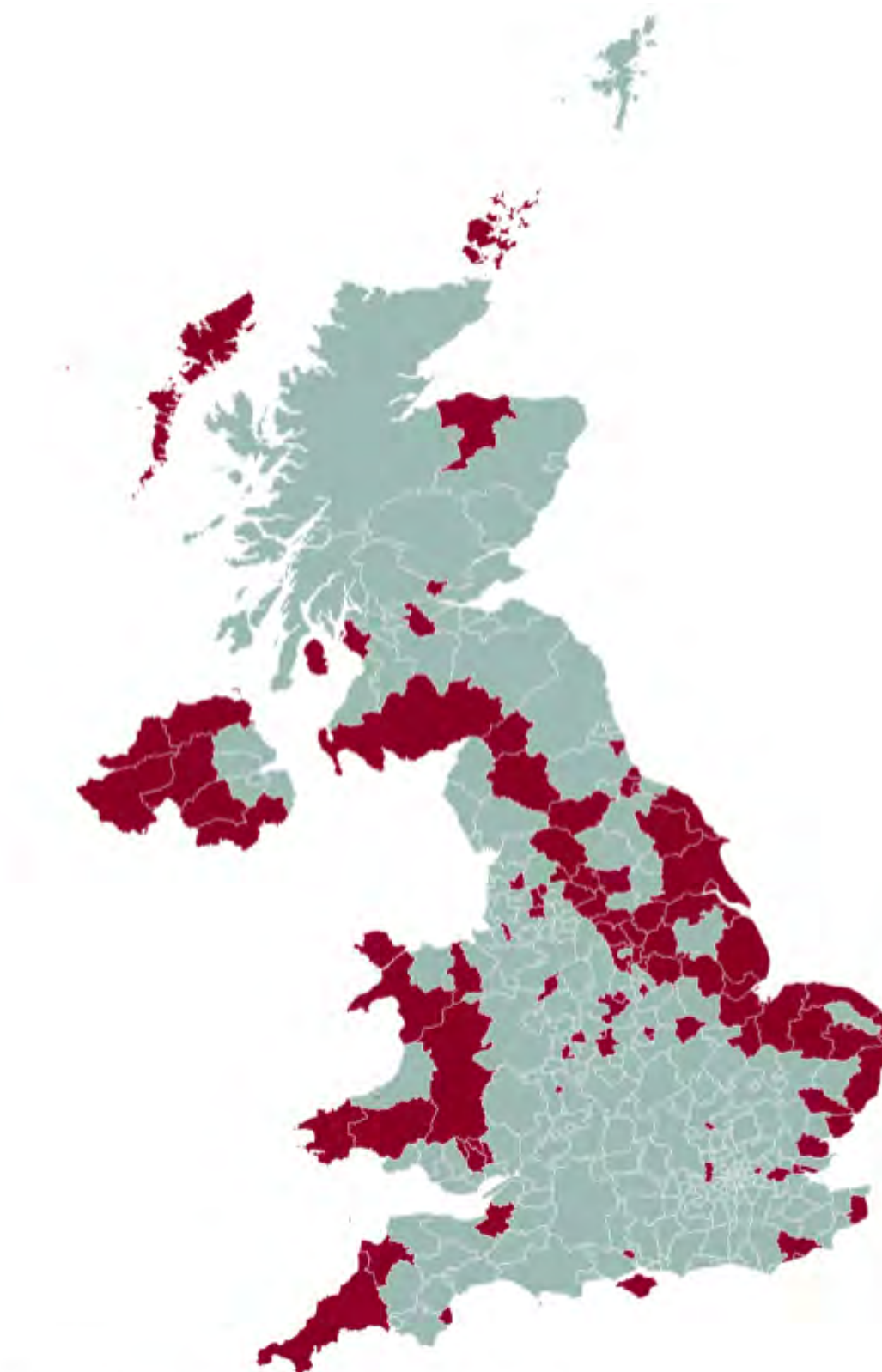
Demographically, this cluster has the highest share of the White population (89.9%) and a slightly above-average representation of the Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh population (5.6%). These local authorities also tend to have an older population, with the largest average share of individuals aged 64 and over (21.3%) and the smallest working-age population (60.7%).

Figure 19. Local authorities of the type 'Partial progress'.



Source: [Office for National Statistics \(Boundaries\)](#), [Simple maps \(Points\)](#)

Figure 20. Local authorities of the type 'Deep disparities'.



Source: [Office for National Statistics \(Boundaries\)](#), [Simple maps \(Points\)](#)

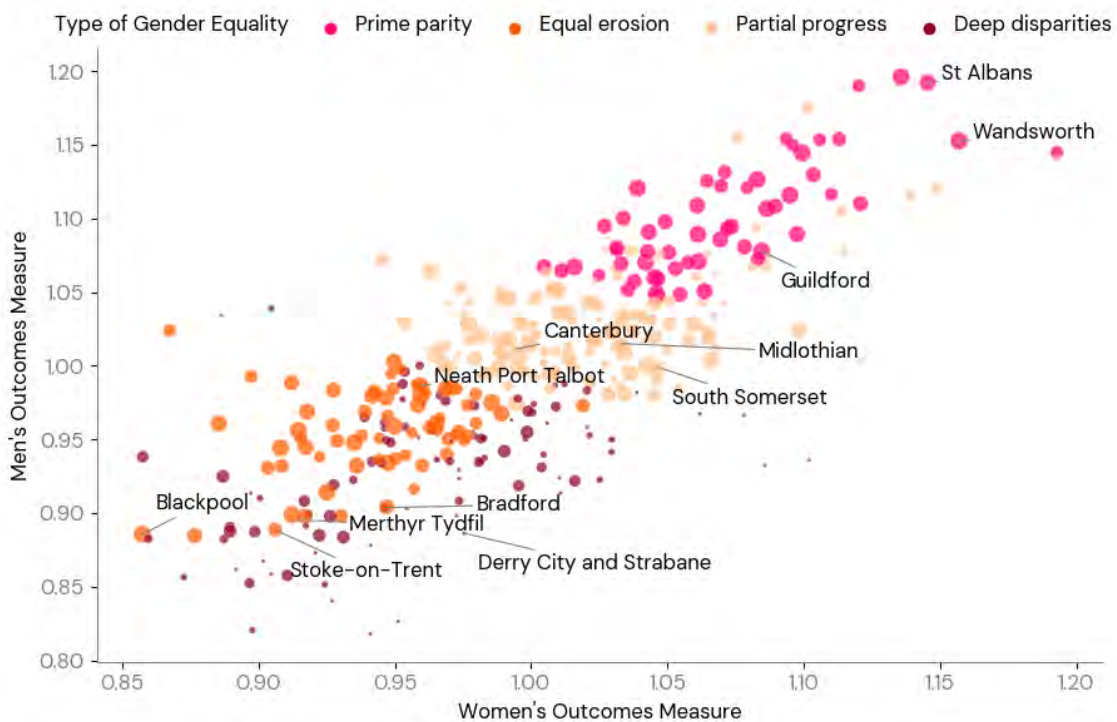
### 5.5.5 Plotting the types to the GEIUK measures

The four types of gender equality can be used to revisit the relationship between the Gender Equality Measure and the Women’s Outcomes Measure, and the Men’s Outcomes Measure.

Figure 21 plots the Women’s Outcomes Measure against the Men’s Outcomes Measure to visualise this relationship. Each dot represents a local authority with larger-sized dots indicating higher scores on the Gender Equality Measure.

The relationship shows that gender equality is not a zero-sum game: gender equality flourishes where women and men do well. Conversely, lower outcomes for women and men generally coincide with lower gender equality. Importantly, no type of gender equality is found that combines high outcomes for both women and men with large gender gaps.

Figure 21. Local authorities plotted according to their GEIUK scores and type of gender equality. Larger dots indicate higher scores on the Gender Equality Measure.



## 6 Implications for policy, data collection and future research

The GEIUK advances our understanding of gender equality in the UK by providing a measure of inequalities in socioeconomic outcomes *between* women and men as well as *among* women and men across local authorities.

Below, we discuss the key takeaways for policy and highlight how future iterations of the GEIUK will benefit from improvements to the gender data landscape, as outlined below. Before concluding, we outline avenues for future research based on the GEIUK.

### 6.1 Insights for policy and advocacy

Based on the GEIUK findings, the following lessons can be drawn for policy and advocacy.

#### 1. Gender equality is not a zero-sum game – both women and men can benefit:

The GEIUK shows that higher levels of gender equality often exist alongside high socioeconomic outcomes for women and men. Further, local authorities with high equality and high outcomes for both women and men show greater economic activity, local productivity, higher pay and lower deprivation. The GEIUK underlines the benefits of pursuing gender equality for both women and men as well as the economy.

#### 2. Accelerate progress by reducing gender inequalities in the domains of *Unpaid Work* and *Power & Participation*:

The Gender Equality Measure again shows that gender inequality is largest in the domains of *Unpaid Work* and *Power & Participation*, reflecting ongoing gender imbalances in the division of unpaid labour, leadership and participation. In contrast, gaps in the domains of *Health, Money, Education* and *Paid Work* tend to be narrower. This pattern reflects a 'stalled revolution' (Hochschild and Machung, 2012): although women have made significant strides in education and the labour market, deeply rooted inequities persist in care responsibilities and leadership roles.

Greater efforts are needed to reduce gender inequalities in time spent on unpaid care and domestic work and in leadership, engagement and voice. A more equal gender division of unpaid work can be supported by greater access to flexible working arrangements, better-paid shared parental and paternity leave and greater access to affordable childcare.

A more gender equal division of unpaid work can also positively impact women's ability to engage in political and community activities, although additional support structures must be put in place. For example, national and local government and political parties can support women's political representation at different levels by committing to a balanced selection of candidates for councillors, ensured by the collection and publication of data on the diversity of candidates, as called for by the Fawcett Society and the Electoral Reform Society. Once in post, women councillors can be better supported by the

introduction of parental leave and the provision of support for childcare and adult care costs.

Women also require better support to start and scale up businesses, which can stimulate employment growth, innovation and productivity. As identified by the Rose Review (2019), improved access to capital and professional networks as well as greater care support remain required. Additionally, there is much scope to strengthen self-employment rights, for example, by bringing maternity pay, parental leave allowance, sick pay and pension contributions closer into line with those enjoyed by employees.

By explicitly measuring *Unpaid Work*, the GEIUK highlights the need to recognise and value care as an essential social resource and enabler for everyone. Embracing a more equal distribution of care not only advances gender equality but also expands opportunities to support a cultural shift toward men's greater engagement in caregiving. In turn, both women and men benefit from better work-life balance, enhanced health and well-being and the chance to participate fully in all facets of society.

### **3. Greater involvement in childcare and domestic work benefits men, so we must encourage it:**

Increasing men's involvement in childcare and domestic work requires extending the right to request and access flexible working arrangements but also the introduction of non-transferrable parental leave and extensions to paid paternity leave – to a minimum of six weeks in the UK as currently being advocated by organisations including the Fatherhood Institute, The Dad Shift and Pregnant Then Screwed.

Further, campaigns to challenge traditional gender norms and stereotypes and family-friendly workplace policies can encourage men's greater involvement in caregiving responsibilities. By removing logistical and cultural barriers, policymakers at both the national and local levels can encourage more egalitarian norms in unpaid work, ultimately benefiting individuals, families and communities alike.

### **4. Regional development strategies will benefit from a gender perspective:**

It is well established that gender and income inequalities hamper economic growth, as shown by the OECD (Soldani et al., 2024; André, 2023) and the IMF (Ostry et al., 2014; Berg and Ostry, 2017; Dabla-Norris and Kochhar, 2015; Elborgh-Woytek et al., 2013; Dollar and Gatti, 1999). International comparisons suggest that the lack of economic growth in the UK is in part explained by its high level of regional inequalities (Carrascal-Incera et al., 2020).

Reducing gender and regional inequalities can therefore help stimulate much-needed economic development. The GEIUK shows that local authorities with greater gender equality tend to exhibit higher economic activity, increased full-time employment and greater local productivity. Embedding gender-focused strategies into regional policies can foster more equitable and sustainable economic growth.

Labour markets are inherently gendered. A comprehensive gender analysis of both supply-side factors (such as health, education and caregiving responsibilities) and demand-side factors (including prevalent local sectors and workplace flexibility) can help identify untapped economic potential and areas for reform. This approach enables targeted investments in gender-inclusive initiatives and ensures that regional development strategies address contextual barriers.

The GEIUK provides a powerful framework for advancing these goals, offering a nuanced understanding of gender dynamics by examining differences both *between* and *among* women and men. These insights should guide the integration of gender equality objectives into national policies, including the government's mission to *Kick-start the economy* and the delivery of the *Invest 2035* industrial strategy. The GEIUK can inform the design of evidence-based, context-specific interventions to unlock significant economic and social benefits while addressing persistent inequalities across the UK.

#### **5. Address structural barriers associated with part-time work for women:**

The GEIUK shows that working part-time is negatively associated with women's outcomes and gender equality, while the opposite is true for men. Cultural changes are needed to counter stigmas around part-time work that result in negative outcomes for workers' well-being and productivity (Chung & Seo, 2024). Better access to flexible working arrangements – flexitime and remote working – can help women out of part-time employment (Chung and Van der Horst, 2018; Chung, 2019). Similarly, increasing access to affordable and high-quality childcare and expanding the availability of free breakfast and after-school clubs can support parents, especially mothers, in maintaining greater labour market participation.

## 6.2 Addressing gender data gaps in the UK

As the first iteration, the GEIUK sets a foundation for measuring gender inequalities across local authorities in the four nations of the UK. It includes 19 recent indicators, disaggregated by sex, capturing differences both *between* and *among* women and men. While the selection of indicators was guided by conceptual and methodological considerations, it was ultimately shaped by the availability of existing data.

The development of the GEIUK offered insights into the quality of the UK gender data landscape, uncovering key gaps, outlined below, that require addressing to further strengthen the GEIUK and advance our understanding of gender and geographical inequalities in the UK. Adequately funding statistical agencies across the four nations is imperative and a prerequisite to each of the suggestions for improvement.

### **1. Harmonised data at the Local Authority Districts (LAD) level need to cover all four UK nations**

Although the GEIUK has made significant progress in improving the availability and accessibility of gender-related data in the UK, several areas remain where further development would strengthen its analytical and policy value. One priority is the harmonisation of data across local authority districts, using standard definitions and methodologies. This would support a more consistent and comparable analysis of gender equality across the UK.

### **2. Granular geographic data are required for local-level analysis**

A second area concerns the need for more granular geographic data. Local authority-level coverage should be considered a minimum standard, at least for key indicators of gender and social equality, as this level of detail is essential for tailoring policies to specific contexts and communities. In addition, there is an urgent need to improve time-use data on unpaid care and domestic work. Reliable, representative data on time spent on childcare and housework, especially at the local level, would enhance understanding of gendered divisions of labour and support further methodological development of the GEIUK.

### **3. Time-use data on unpaid care and domestic work need to go below the regional level**

Collecting comprehensive time-use data on unpaid care for children, grandchildren and adults is essential to understanding its impact on gender equality. Reliable data on time spent on care, with sufficient sample sizes to enable meaningful analysis at the LAD level, would support methodological innovations to the GEIUK. Improved data could advance measurements of gender differences in work-life balance, leisure time and unpaid work dynamics, providing a more nuanced understanding of gender roles across the UK.

**4. Better individual-level, private wealth indicators to estimate gender wealth gaps are required**

Individual-level data on private wealth also remains limited. Household-level measures can obscure significant gender differences in financial security across the life course, particularly in later life. Expanding the coverage and sample sizes of surveys such as the Wealth and Assets Survey and including Northern Ireland would help to capture gendered patterns of wealth more accurately at the local level across the UK.

**5. Improved data on Violence against Women and Girls for UK comparisons should be prioritised**

Another gap lies in data on violence against women and girls. Improved data collection and analysis in this area would provide a clearer picture of the prevalence across UK local authorities. Implementing the recommendations from our recent report (Schmid et al., 2024) could pave the way for the inclusion of a dedicated domain on violence in future iterations of the GEIUK, enabling a granular analysis of the links between gender equality, socioeconomic status and the prevalence of gender-based violence.

**6. Disaggregated data for intersectional analysis need to be systematised**

Finally, the ability to conduct intersectional analysis remains limited by the lack of multivariate disaggregation. While indicators used in the GEIUK are disaggregated by sex, further breakdowns by additional protected characteristics, such as age, ethnicity and disability, would provide a deeper understanding of how gender equality is experienced across life stages and among different groups of women and men. Census data already offers a rich source of such multivariate information at the local level and future data linkage efforts could enable other GEIUK indicators to be similarly disaggregated.

Addressing these gaps would strengthen the analytical potential of the GEIUK to inform tailored initiatives aimed at advancing gender and social equality across the UK.

### 6.3 Using the GEIUK for future research

The GEIUK's detailed and geographically granular approach makes it particularly useful for future research, offering opportunities for better understanding the relationship between the GEIUK and other social, economic and structural factors that shape the lives of women and men across the UK. Future research building on the GEIUK may include the following points, though the applicability reaches beyond these areas.

#### **1. Building on the GEIUK: further analysis and future updates**

As the inaugural iteration, the GEIUK provides a strong foundation for understanding gender and geographic inequalities. Future versions would benefit from recent, granular UK-wide data and improvements to the gender data landscape to enhance its validity, application and potential for impact.

By backdating the GEIUK using historical data where available and integrating future datasets as they emerge, the GEIUK could evolve into a powerful longitudinal tool to evaluate and monitor changes over time. This could provide a framework for assessing the impact of policy interventions, economic shifts and societal changes on women's and men's outcomes across the UK.

A deeper exploration of the GEIUK is necessary to further unpack the key drivers of gender inequalities. In particular, understanding the interplay between gender equality, deprivation and income inequalities is critical, as initial findings suggest that these relationships are not linear. Longitudinal data would allow researchers to track how inequalities evolve in response to interventions or external factors, highlighting the most effective pathways for reducing disparities.

#### **2. Improvements to the measurement of *Unpaid Work***

A critical area for improvement lies in the measurement of *Unpaid Work*. The current GEIUK approach tracks time spent on unpaid childcare and domestic work, identifying gender gaps and where these outcomes deviate from national averages for women and men. This exposes disparities, while not implying that higher levels of unpaid work are inherently better.

Time-use surveys with larger sample sizes covering all four nations at the local level would enable more granular monitoring of changes in time allocated to childcare and other forms, such as adult care and grandchild care. Additionally, incorporating leisure time as an indicator in future iterations could shed light on gender differences in work-life balance in the UK. This enhanced data would significantly advance the GEIUK's capacity to reflect variations in *Unpaid Work* across genders and geographies.

#### **3. Introducing an intersectional approach to the GEIUK**

The GEIUK's framework invites future intersectional research using methodologies such as Intersectional Multilevel Modelling (Humbert, 2024; Evans et al., 2024). This

approach allows for the simultaneous modelling of between-group inequalities and within-group heterogeneity across multiple geographic contexts.

Linking GEIUK data with individual-level microdata, such as census data, could uncover how local gender equality intersects with other protected characteristics such as ethnicity, age and disability. This would enable researchers to understand compounded inequalities and inform targeted, evidence-based interventions aimed at tackling complex, overlapping forms of inequalities.

#### **4. Analysis of local economies and productivity**

The GEIUK can facilitate further research on regional development and economic productivity through a gender lens. Initial findings suggest that localities with higher gender equality tend to exhibit greater economic productivity, higher full-time employment rates and lower deprivation levels.

Building on these insights, future research could use the GEIUK to examine the interplay between supply-side factors, such as health outcomes, educational levels and caregiving responsibilities, and demand-side factors, such as local sectoral composition and workplace flexibility. This comprehensive approach could help pinpoint untapped economic potential and design targeted, gender-sensitive interventions to address contextual barriers, enhance productivity and foster equitable economic opportunities.

Demand-side challenges, such as automation, technological advancements, and the green transition, are poised to reshape labour markets and local economies in profound ways. The GEIUK offers a unique framework for analysing how these transformations may interact with gendered employment patterns and socioeconomic outcomes. By linking GEIUK data with sectoral and occupational trends, researchers could investigate the potential gendered impacts of automation and green transitions on job displacement and creation.

#### **5. Investigating the impact of local service provision on gender equality**

The GEIUK findings can be used to understand the interplay between local infrastructure provision, socioeconomic outcomes and gender equality level. Comparing GEIUK findings to local government wealth and spending – on education, transport, affordable housing, for example – may help explain differences in women’s and men’s socioeconomic outcomes across the UK.

Understanding variations in childcare accessibility would be particularly revealing to understand the impact on employment patterns. Further, analysing varying levels of childcare accessibility could also offer insight into reliance on care provision by grandparents. Research could leverage the GEIUK to assess how these factors differ across local contexts, providing insights into policy interventions to improve family outcomes and reduce gendered socioeconomic disparities.

## 6. Exploring gender norms and political attitudes

The GEIUK results can be mapped onto gendered norms and political attitudes, offering critical insights into the cultural dimensions of gender equality. By linking GEIUK scores to attitudinal datasets, researchers could examine whether areas with higher GEIUK scores correspond to more egalitarian views on equality in work and family life, and shared responsibility for care, for example.

Such analyses could also explore variations in attitudes across generations, shedding light on whether narrow gender gaps align with broader social liberalisation. Evidence of gender polarisation in egalitarian attitudes among Gen Z women and men (IPSOS UK and Global Institute of Women's Leadership, 2025) underscores the importance of such an analysis to understand shifting perspectives and the implications for gender equality.

Additionally, future studies could compare GEIUK scores to men's attitudes and norms, examining how these may contribute to men's involvement in *Unpaid Work*. Such research could inform initiatives aimed at fostering new forms of masculinity, such as 'caring masculinities' (Scambor et al., 2014; Elliott, 2016), that recognise the benefits of care work and gender equality for men and society at large.

Finally, the GEIUK framework presents a unique opportunity to explore how gender equality levels in local areas relate to views on democracy, social cohesion, the welfare state and immigration, offering valuable insights into the interplay between gender norms and political attitudes.

This research could help identify areas where cultural norms and structural changes are misaligned, requiring tailored strategies – such as education campaigns, targeted communication, and gender mainstreaming initiatives – to advance gender equality and rebuild trust in democracy.

## 7. International comparison and methodological adoption

Finally, the GEIUK three measures, capturing outcomes for women, men and gender equality, provide a replicable model for adaptation in other national and regional contexts. Its innovative use of three complementary measures extends and refines the methodology established by the UN Women's *Twin Indices on Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality* (UN Women and UNDP, 2023). Data permitting, the potential to apply the GEIUK framework to existing indices – for example, the UN Women's *Twin Indices* or the European Institute for Gender Equality's *Gender Equality Index* – would enable researchers to benchmark gender equality internationally, facilitate cross-country comparisons and foster collaborations to identify best practices. As such, the GEIUK framework would contribute to a richer global dialogue on gender justice and geographical inequalities, offering policy insights into the conditions under which gender equality promotes wider societal well-being and economic development.

## 7 Conclusion

This report outlined the conceptual and methodological development and findings from the Gender Equality Index UK (GEIUK). The first of its kind, the GEIUK offers an innovative tool for measuring, mapping and analysing women's and men's outcomes across the 372 local authorities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The GEIUK combines existing sex-disaggregated data measured to capture socioeconomic outcomes related to six domains of women's and men's lives: *Paid Work, Unpaid Work, Money, Education, Power & Participation and Health*.

What sets the GEIUK apart is its three-pronged measurement framework: the Women's Outcomes Measure, the Men's Outcomes Measure and the Gender Equality Measure. Together, these measures offer a more complete picture of gender inequalities – *between* and *among* women and men – and demonstrate why gender equality must be at the heart of efforts to raise living standards and promote more inclusive regional development.

While no local authority has yet achieved full gender equality, the GEIUK shows that those making the greatest strides also demonstrate higher socioeconomic outcomes for all. These insights highlight a crucial opportunity to reduce gender disparities and advance inclusive regional development and raise living standards in line with the UK government's *Devolution Revolution*, the *Invest 2035* agenda and its mission to *kick-start the economy*.

More than a measurement tool, the GEIUK serves as a roadmap to policymakers, researchers and advocates. It pinpoints where inequalities are most pronounced, identifies pathways for progress and demonstrates how targeted interventions can lead to a more equitable distribution of social and economic benefits. By placing gender equality in the context of women's and men's overall outcomes, the GEIUK serves as a guide for building more resilient, inclusive and thriving local economies across the UK.

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