

Focus on Ethnicity

Life in the UK





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Introduction

Life in the UK measures the collective wellbeing of people across the UK.

We started with a simple question: can we bring together data from different aspects of our lives to give a richer picture of how we are really doing? And if so, can we compare experiences of different groups to better understand the inequalities in society?

This insights paper presents further detail on the inequalities we identified in wellbeing according to ethnicity. In this research we have referenced a range of resources, including UK Government guidelines, to inform how we have written about ethnicity. We recognise that standard ethnicity categories are broad generalisations. The use of language to describe ethnicity is constantly evolving and improving, and we welcome thoughts on how to improve practice in this area.

About the index >

Life in the UK provides:

- > a single score for collective wellbeing that will show if we are living better or worse over time.
- > a score for each of the four domains of wellbeing: social, economic, environmental and democratic.
- > collective wellbeing and domain scores for each of the nations and regions of the UK.
- > collective wellbeing and domain scores for different demographics.

How to read the wellbeing scores

The Life in the UK index has been designed to provide an overall assessment of 'how life is'. The overall index score is an average of the scores for each of the four wellbeing domains: social, economic, environmental and democratic. Higher scores indicate a higher level of wellbeing.

- > The index is based upon a 26-question survey of more than 6,900 people across the UK. The questions relate to the different domains of wellbeing and were tested with focus groups and an Advisory Group. The survey was administered through the Ipsos Knowledge Panel, a random probability survey panel based on a random sample of UK households. The survey was administered through the Ipsos Knowledge Panel, a random probability survey panel based on a random sample of UK households.
- > The number of ethnic minority respondents was boosted to 966 in total. This included 473 people from an Asian background, 244 people from a Black background, 134 people from 'Mixed/Multiple' ethnic groups and 115 people from another ethnic minority background. A total of 5,913 White people were surveyed, including 5,618 from a White British background and 295 from another White background.
- > The overall collective wellbeing index score and the wellbeing domain scores have a value of between 0 and 100. Note that although the scores are on a scale of 0 to 100, they are not percentages.
- > The collective wellbeing scores, domain scores and individual questions were analysed to compare aspects of life for different types of people and different parts of the UK.
- > We have only commented on statistically significant relationships.
- > We used factor analysis to construct the index scores and regression analysis to help us understand which demographic characteristics (including gender, age, income, disability, area deprivation, tenure and ethnicity) are most associated both with collective wellbeing overall and with social, economic, environmental and democratic wellbeing specifically.

In taking this approach, the Life in the UK index is unique. In the coming years we will be able to use this measure to track whether lives are improving. This year, our focus is on what the data has revealed about the extent of inequality in the UK.

Carnegie UK and Ipsos designed, developed and analysed the index in partnership. The recommendations outlined in the full report are Carnegie UK's alone. More information on the methodology is available [here](#).

Collective wellbeing

Carnegie UK has been involved in understanding and measuring wellbeing for over a decade. We have supported governments to take a broader view of social progress, to consider social, economic, environmental and democratic (SEED) outcomes as equally important in decision making, allocating resources and tackling the challenges of our time. Taken in turn, these domain scores evidence whether:

- everyone has access to the services and support that they need (social wellbeing)
- we all have a decent minimum living standard (economic wellbeing)
- we are all able to access a quality local environment and collectively live within our planet's natural resources to secure the environment for future generations (environmental wellbeing)
- we all have a voice in the decisions that affect us (democratic wellbeing)

Our analysis found that people from Asian, Black and 'Other White' ethnic groups and people with 'Mixed/Multiple' ethnic backgrounds have lower collective wellbeing scores compared with people from a White British background (56 for the Black ethnic group, 57 for the Asian ethnic group and 59 for both 'Other White' and 'Mixed/Multiple' ethnic groups, compared to 63 for people from the White British ethnic group).

Other statistically significant differences include:

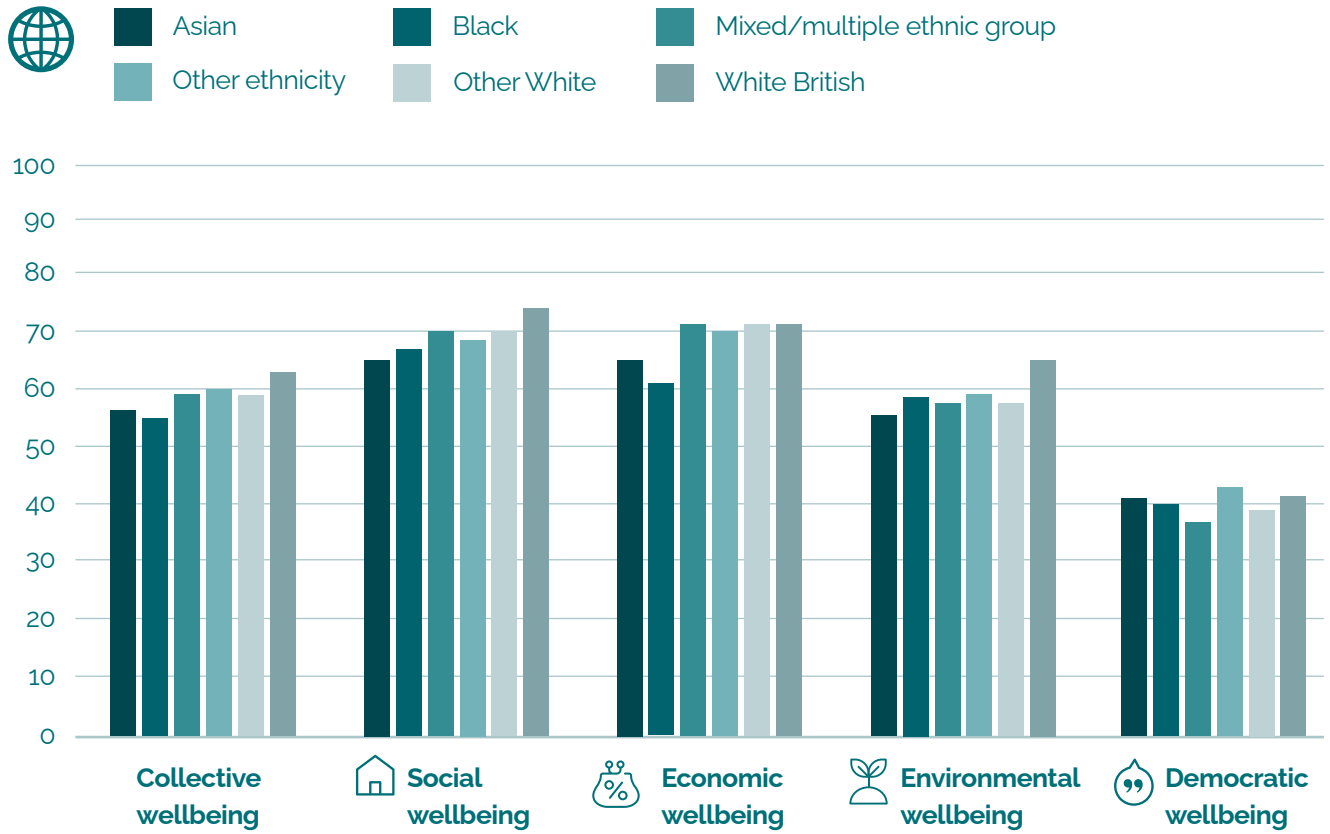
- People from the Black ethnic group have a lower collective wellbeing score than those from 'Other White' and 'Other Ethnicity' backgrounds (56 for the Black ethnic group compared with 59 and 60 for people from 'Other White' and 'Other Ethnicity' backgrounds).
- People from the Asian ethnic group have a lower collective wellbeing score than those from 'Other Ethnicity' backgrounds (57 compared with 60).

Table 1: Collective wellbeing and domain scores by disability

	Ethnic Group					
	Asian (473)	Black (244)	Mixed/ Multiple (134)	Other Ethnicity (115)	Other White (295)	White British (5618)
Collective wellbeing	57	56	59	60	59	63
Social wellbeing	65	67	70	68	70	74
Economic wellbeing	65	61	71	70	71	71
Environmental wellbeing	55	58	57	59	57	65
Democratic wellbeing	41	40	37	43	39	41



Chart 1: Collective wellbeing and domain scores by ethnicity



Social wellbeing

Social wellbeing includes aspects from health and mental health to neighbourhood safety and relying on each other. A higher score for a particular demographic or geographic area means that we found higher levels of social wellbeing for those people or places.

We found a statistically significant gap in the social wellbeing scores between people from Asian (65), Black (67), 'Other Ethnicity' (68) and 'Other White' (70) ethnic groups compared to those from the White British ethnic group (74).

Looking at some of what drives this disparity in scores, people from Asian and Black ethnic groups are more likely than those from the White British ethnic group to report that they feel unsafe walking alone in the local neighbourhood after dark; that they do not have someone to rely on in the neighbourhood if alone and needing help; and that they have experienced discrimination in the 12 months prior to being surveyed. There are no statistically significant differences in health or mental health by ethnicity.

Meanwhile, people belonging to the 'Other White' ethnic group are also more likely than those from the White British ethnic group to disagree that they have someone to rely on in the neighbourhood if alone and needing help, and to report having experienced discrimination in the 12 months prior to being surveyed.

Table 2: Positive and negative responses to individual questions on social wellbeing (%)

	Ethnic Group					
	Asian (473)	Black (244)	Mixed/ Multiple (134)	Other Ethnicity (115)	Other White (295)	White British (5618)
Feels safe/fairly safe walking alone in local neighbourhood after dark	64	64	69	69	67	72
Feels a bit unsafe/very unsafe walking alone in local neighbourhood after dark	36	34	31	30	32	27
Able to rely on someone if alone and needed help	50	52	61	48	58	69
Not able to rely on someone if alone and needed help	24	22	16	15	22	15
Experience of being unfairly treated or discriminated against in the last 12 months	67	68	60	64	55	36
Not unfairly treated or discriminated against in the last 12 months	27	27	37	29	43	63

Safety and community

- People from the Asian and Black ethnic groups are more likely than those from the White British ethnic group to report that they feel **unsafe walking alone** in the local neighbourhood after dark.
- People from the Asian, Black and 'Other White' ethnic groups are more likely than those from the White British ethnic group to disagree that they have **someone to rely on** in the neighbourhood if alone and needing help.

Discrimination

- People from Asian, Black, 'Other White' and 'Other Ethnicity' backgrounds and people with 'Mixed/Multiple' ethnic backgrounds are more likely than those from the White British ethnic group to report having experienced **discrimination** in the 12 months prior to being surveyed.
- People from the Asian, Black and 'Other Ethnicity' ethnic groups are more likely than those from the 'Other White' ethnic group to report having experienced **discrimination** in the 12 months prior to being surveyed.



Economic wellbeing >

Economic wellbeing includes access to a decent income, affordability, financial resilience, job opportunities and skills. A higher score for a particular demographic or geographic area means that we found higher levels of economic wellbeing for those people or places.

We found that people from the Black ethnic group had a lower economic wellbeing score than any other ethnic group (61 for people from the Black ethnic group compared with 65 for Asian, 70 for 'Other Ethnicity', and 71 for people with a 'Mixed/Multiple', 'Other White' or White British ethnic background.) People from the Asian ethnic group also had a lower economic wellbeing score than people from all ethnic groups, with the exception of people from the Black ethnic group.

Looking at what drives this disparity in scores, people from the Black ethnic group are at least twice as likely as all other ethnic groups¹ to disagree that they can afford enough food for everyone in their household, and more likely than all other ethnic groups to disagree that they can meet an unexpected but necessary expense of £850. They are also more likely to disagree that they can keep their homes adequately warm compared to those from 'Other Ethnicity' backgrounds.

People from the Black ethnic group are also more likely to say that they cannot afford a week's annual holiday away from home compared to most other ethnic groups, and around twice as likely as those from the White British or 'Other White' ethnic groups to disagree that they can afford to socialise outside of the home once a month if they chose to do so

Table 3: Positive and negative responses to individual questions on economic wellbeing (%)

	Ethnic Group					
	Asian (473)	Black (244)	Mixed/ Multiple (134)	Other Ethnicity (115)	Other White (295)	White British (5618)
Satisfied with education and skills	79	77	83	79	81	81
Not satisfied with education and skills	8	7	7	3	4	7
Satisfied with job opportunities in the local area	27	24	25	24	29	32
Not satisfied with job opportunities in the local area	32	27	30	27	26	22
Can afford to keep home adequately warm	66	60	66	77	72	74
Cannot afford to keep home adequately warm	21	20	17	7	15	17

¹ With the exception of the 'Mixed/Multiple' ethnic group due to sample size.

Can afford to buy enough food for everyone in the household	81	72	85	86	90	89
Cannot afford to buy enough food for everyone in the household	7	15	7	3	2	6
Can afford to pay for a week's annual holiday away from home (not staying with relatives)	55	45	66	67	67	69
Cannot afford to pay for a week's annual holiday away from home (not staying with relatives)	26	36	27	17	20	22
Can afford to socialise with friends or family outside of the home once a month if desired	71	65	81	66	77	81
Cannot afford to socialise with friends or family outside of the home once a month if desired	16	20	11	13	11	11
Can afford to pay an unexpected, but necessary, expense of £850	55	39	59	68	55	62
Cannot afford to pay an unexpected, but necessary, expense of £850	29	49	33	22	31	29



Education, skills and job opportunities

- People from an Asian background are:
 - twice as likely as people belonging to the 'Other White' ethnic group to express dissatisfaction with their **education and skills**.
 - more likely than people belonging to the White British ethnic group to express dissatisfaction with **job opportunities** in their local area.

Affordability: absolute poverty

We included two measures that relate to absolute poverty – the ability to keep one's home adequately warm and the ability to buy enough food for everyone in the household. We found that:

- People from the Asian, Black and White British ethnic groups are more likely to disagree that they can keep their **homes adequately warm** compared to those from 'Other Ethnicity' backgrounds.
- People from the Black ethnic group are at least twice as likely as all other ethnic groups to disagree that they can afford enough **food for everyone in their household**.

Affordability: relative poverty

The focus groups that informed survey design were clear that when it comes to money, it is also important to be able to afford to 'make memories' and enjoy life. Following from this, we included two measures that relate to relative poverty – the ability to afford a week's annual holiday away from home (not staying with relatives) and to socialise with friends or family outside of the home once a month if desired. We found that:

- People from an Black ethnic group are:
 - at least nine percentage points more likely to disagree with the statement that they can afford a **week's annual holiday** away from home compared to people from Asian, White British, 'Other White' or 'Other Ethnicity' backgrounds.
 - around twice as likely as those from the White British or 'Other White' ethnic groups to disagree that they can afford to **socialise outside of the home** once a month if they chose to do so.

Affordability: an emergency expense

We asked whether people could afford an unexpected but necessary expense of £850 as a loose estimate of whether people had financial security or a degree of wealth. We found that:

- People belonging to the Black ethnic group are more likely than all other ethnic groups to disagree that they can meet an **unexpected but necessary expense of £850**.



Environmental wellbeing >

Environmental wellbeing includes access to green and blue spaces, the quality of the local environment and collectively living within the planet's natural resources. A higher score for a particular demographic or geographical area means that we found higher levels of wellbeing for those people or places.

We found that people from Asian, Black, 'Mixed/Multiple', 'Other Ethnicity' and 'Other White' ethnic backgrounds have a lower environmental wellbeing score than those from a White British background (55 for people from the Asian ethnic group, 57 for those from the 'Mixed/Multiple' and 'Other White' ethnic groups, 58 for people from the Black ethnic group and 59 for people from the 'Other Ethnicity' ethnic group compared with 65 for people from the White British ethnic group).

Looking at what drives the disparity in these scores, people from Asian, Black, 'Mixed/Multiple', 'Other Ethnicity' and 'Other White' ethnic groups are more likely than those belonging to the White British ethnic group to report major or moderate problems with noise, air quality and litter.

Table 4: Positive and negative responses to individual questions on environmental wellbeing (%)

	Ethnic Group					
	Asian (473)	Black (244)	Mixed/ Multiple (134)	Other Ethnicity (115)	Other White (295)	White British (5618)
Satisfied with the quality of the public, green or open space in local area	50	54	64	58	66	73
Dissatisfied with the quality of the public, green or open space in local area	21	19	11	8	17	11
Satisfied with efforts to preserve the environment in the UK	29	33	13	47	28	24
Not satisfied with efforts to preserve the environment in the UK	34	26	53	28	37	46
Major/moderate problems with noise	40	29	32	33	30	18
Minor/no problems with noise	59	70	66	65	69	81
Major/moderate problems with air quality	37	35	30	35	39	17
Minor/no problems with air quality	61	58	60	62	59	79
Major/moderate problems with litter or rubbish on the street	47	39	45	49	50	31
Minor/no problems with litter or rubbish on the street	52	58	54	49	50	69

Local green space

- People from the Asian ethnic group are more likely than people in the 'Other White', White British or 'Other Ethnicity' ethnic groups or those from 'Mixed/Multiple' ethnic backgrounds to express dissatisfaction with the **public, green or open space in their local area** nearest to their home.

Efforts to preserve the environment

- People from 'Mixed/Multiple' ethnic backgrounds and the White British ethnic group are more likely than any other ethnic group to report dissatisfaction with **efforts to preserve the environment in the UK**.
- People from the 'Other White' ethnic group are also more likely than those from the Black ethnic group to report dissatisfaction with **efforts to preserve the environment in the UK**.

Problems with noise, air pollution and litter

- People belonging to Asian, Black, 'Mixed/Multiple', 'Other Ethnicity' and 'Other White' ethnic groups are:
 - more likely than those from a White British background to report major or moderate problems with **noise**.
 - more likely than those from a White British background to report major or moderate problems with **air quality**.
 - more likely than those from a White British background to report major or moderate problems with **litter**.



Democratic wellbeing

Democratic wellbeing includes participation, trust in key institutions and ability to influence decisions at a national and local level. A higher score for a particular demographic or geographical area means that we found higher levels of wellbeing for those people or places.

Low scores for democratic wellbeing are common across the population. Analysis shows that demographic variables explain less of the variation between people's democratic wellbeing score compared with other wellbeing domains. This reflects that there are wider issues influencing respondents' democratic wellbeing (for example, trust and influence) that go beyond core demographic characteristics.

There is a six-point gap between the lowest and highest scores for democratic wellbeing (37 for people from 'Mixed/Multiple' ethnic backgrounds compared to 43 for people from the category 'Other Ethnicity').

People from 'Mixed/Multiple' ethnic backgrounds have a lower score than those from Asian, 'Other Ethnicity' or White British ethnic groups (37 for people from 'Mixed/Multiple' ethnic backgrounds compared with 41 for people from Asian and White British backgrounds, and 43 for people from the 'Other Ethnicity' ethnic group).

Looking at what lies behind these scores, people with 'Mixed/Multiple' ethnic backgrounds are more likely than those in the Asian, Black or 'Other Ethnicity' ethnic groups to report low levels of trust in the UK Government and to report that they cannot influence decisions affecting the UK.

It is also worth noting that people from the Black ethnic group are more likely than those from the White British ethnic group (among others) to report low levels of trust in the legal system and courts as well as low levels of trust in the police. Meanwhile, people from the 'Other White' ethnic group are more likely than those in the Black and White British ethnic groups to report low levels of trust in the news media and banks.

Table 5: Responses to individual questions on democratic wellbeing (%)

	Ethnic Group					
	Asian (473)	Black (244)	Mixed/ Multiple (134)	Other Ethnicity (115)	Other White (295)	White British (5618)
Low trust in the UK Government	39	43	62	43	52	53
Low trust in the legal system and courts	17	23	14	9	18	16
Low trust in the police	21	36	31	25	23	18
Low trust in news media	34	35	39	38	46	38
Low trust in banks	18	16	20	15	25	16
I can influence decisions affecting the UK	9	7	4	10	4	5
I cannot influence decisions affecting the UK	62	64	81	59	73	75

UK Government: trust and ability to influence

- People from the White British ethnic group are more likely than those from the Asian and Black ethnic groups to report low levels of **trust in the UK Government**.
- People from 'Mixed/Multiple' ethnic backgrounds are more likely than those in the Asian, Black and 'Other Ethnicity' ethnic groups to report low levels of **trust in the UK Government**.
- People from the White British ethnic group are more likely than those in the Asian, Black and 'Other Ethnicity' ethnic groups to disagree that they can **influence decisions affecting the UK**.

Local councils: trust and ability to influence

- People from the White British ethnic group are more likely than those from the Black ethnic group to disagree that they can **influence decisions affecting their local area**.

Law and order: legal system, courts and the police

- People from the Black ethnic group are:
 - more likely than those in the 'Other Ethnicity' and White British ethnic groups to report low levels of **trust in the legal system and courts**.
 - more likely than those in the White British, Asian and 'Other White' ethnic groups to report low levels of **trust in the police**.

Other institutions: news media and banks

- People from the 'Other White' ethnic group are:
 - more likely than those in the Asian, Black and White British ethnic groups to report low levels of **trust in the news media**.
 - more likely than those from Black and White British ethnic groups to report low levels of **trust in banks**.



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