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## The Social Cohesion Investment Supplementary technical document

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This document complements the Social Cohesion Investment report and reports additional technical details on methods and statistics used to produce the findings of the report.

### Data collection

The data presented in The Social Cohesion Investment report are part of the Beyond Us and Them June monthly survey. Data collection spanned 10<sup>th</sup> June to 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020. All data were collected online through an online questionnaire hosted on the Qualtrics survey platform.

### Sampling procedure

For the regions of Scotland and Wales and the county of Kent, which serve as the baseline reference samples in the report (i.e., designated as “other places”), respondents were recruited through an external partner, Qualtrics Panels. They were drawn from pools of available respondents willing to complete surveys in exchange for remuneration. Qualtrics Panels assigned quotas to ensure the basic representativeness of each sample in terms of gender ratio and age distribution.

Qualtrics Panels also recruited respondents for two of the six local authority areas, one entirely and the second one only partially (also ensuring basic representativeness of each sample). For the other five local authority areas, respondents were recruited through partnership with the local councils. Councils distributed the survey through their mailing list and advertised it on social media, using these two methods to distribute the survey as efficiently as possible. All respondents recruited through these means were offered a £5 voucher from the research project (not their council) as a thank-you upon completion of the survey.

### Checks for possible confound effects of different sampling procedures

We conducted analyses to check whether the way respondents were recruited may have introduced a confound that would complicate the direct comparison of responses between places. These are described below and do not suggest that the methods of recruitment have a substantive effect on the findings.

**First**, it should be noted that, regardless of recruitment method and of whether they were part of a region sample or a local authority sample, all participants were compensated for participation, to a similar extent.

**Second**, in one local authority area we divided recruitment to be partly via Qualtrics Panels and partly via the council, enabling us to test for differences in response between these two methods of recruitment. Statistical comparison of the mean scores on different dependent variables used in the report mostly reveal no evidence of any difference between the two subsamples. Because of the quite high statistical power, as well as for conducting multiple tests

given the sample size we adopted a moderately conservative criterion for detecting a difference ( $p < .01$ ). Accordingly, there were notably no significant differences regarding:

- Political trust,  $F(1, 210) = 0.02, p = .97$
- Perceived appropriateness of the restrictions,  $F(1, 210) = 0.86, p = .36$
- Trust in other people to respect the restrictions,  $F(1, 210) = 0.16, p = .69$
- Subjective wellbeing,  $F(1, 210) = 0.10, p = .75$
- Optimism for the future,  $F(1, 210) = 0.19, p = .66$
- Relationships with others during lockdown,  $F(1, 210) = 4.49, p = .035$

Only one difference was found, and this was for a composite measure of feelings towards immigrants. Here, respondents from the Council sample were more positive than those from the Qualtrics Panel sample,  $F(1, 210) = 10.9, p = .001$ . As this difference does not pervade other measures, we conclude that overall there is not a meaningful difference associated with the two methods of recruitment.

**Third**, despite the different unique characteristics of each local authority area, they show a common pattern of responses with the Other Areas on relevant measures. Importantly, the areas of congruence across all samples are those that are about general or national features. For example, there were *no* differences between local authority areas and Other Places in terms of:

- Importance of respecting restrictions,  $F(1, 2337) = 0.01, p = .92$
- General level of trust in people,  $F(1, 2337) = 0.80, p = .37$
- Perception of the UK as a whole as united/divided,  $F(1, 2337) = 0.58, p = .45$
- Attitudes towards White British people (feeling thermometer),  $F(1, 2337) = 0.18, p = .68$

**Finally**, the relationship between the demographic variables and social cohesion measures is the same within the local authority samples as it is within the other samples. This means that differences in demography are not having a different effect in different samples. Although some areas may have larger proportions of people with particular characteristics, the differences we find between the local authorities and other areas are not attributable to those characteristics (e.g., age) playing a larger role in some places than others. We tested this by examining the significance of interaction effects between the Area and each demographic on the set of relevant dependent variables using multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA). The interactions were systematically non-significant, indicating that the demographics were not having a different effect on the dependent variables in the different places.

- Place  $\times$  gender,  $F(8, 2403) = 1.69, p = .095$
- Place  $\times$  age,  $F(8, 2403) = 1.03, p = .41$
- Place  $\times$  ethnicity,  $F(8, 2403) = 1.57, p = .13$
- Place  $\times$  income,  $F(8, 2403) = 1.36, p = .21$
- Place  $\times$  socioeconomic status,  $F(8, 2403) = 1.87, p = .061$

By contrast, the attitudinal variable, political orientation, did show a differential impact,  $F(8, 2403) = 4.76, p < .001$ , indicating that differences of political orientation have a larger effect in some samples than others (this is linked to the role of SNP support in Scotland).

In fact, as shown in the Tables below, both the other areas and the local authorities are quite diverse politically. Scotland in 2016 and 2019 was predominantly Remain supporting and SNP voting. Wales was slightly Leave supporting and Labour voting, Kent was predominantly Leave supporting and Conservative voting. Among the local authorities, all but one were Leave supporting to varying degrees but three were Labour voting, two were Conservative voting and one was split. Therefore, there is neither a party political or a Remain/Leave distinction that makes the local authorities different, as a set, from the other places. It is important that the differences that we discovered between the local authorities and other places remain statistically significant even after accounting for respondents' standing on five demographic variables and their left-right political orientation

**Table 1. Results of the Europe Referendum (Brexit) vote in 2016, by place.**

Percentage of votes	Remain (%)	Leave (%)
<b>Local authority areas</b>		
Blackburn with Darwen	43.7	56.3
Bradford	45.8	54.2
Calderdale	44.3	55.7
Peterborough	39.1	60.9
Walsall	32.1	67.9
Waltham Forest	59.1	40.9
<b>Other areas</b>		
Kent	41.0	59.0
Scotland	62.0	38.0
Wales	47.5	52.5

**Table 2. Results of the 2019 General Election, by place.**

Party winning most seats in each place	Party	%
<b>Local authority areas</b>		
Blackburn with Darwen	Labour	64.9
Bradford	Labour	61.8
Calderdale	Conservative	51.9
Peterborough	Conservative	46.7
Walsall (North/South)	Conservative/Labour	52.4/40.1
Waltham Forest	Labour	76.1
<b>Other areas</b>		
Kent	Conservative	60.1
Scotland	Scottish National Party	45.0
Wales	Labour	40.9

**In conclusion**, although we cannot confirm causality we can comment on its plausibility. Taken together, these analyses support the conclusion that the mean differences that emerge between local authority areas and other places are likely to be attributable to the presence of cohesion strategies in the local authorities as they do not seem attributable to other factors.