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PRESS RELEASE

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NORTHERN IRELAND IS THE MOST PROSPEROUS NATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

LONDON—Northern Ireland is the most prosperous of the four nations of the United Kingdom, more prosperous than England, Scotland and Wales, according to a new Index published today.

The Legatum Institute, an international think tank based in London, published its first ever 'Geography of Prosperity' Index today, comparing the prosperity of 170 areas across Britain. The findings are based on measuring the average income per person along with how happy they feel.

- Northern Ireland is far from the wealthiest part of the UK, but conversely is the happiest, propelling much of the region to the top of the index. All five Northern Irish areas in the Index are in the top 25% most prosperous areas in the UK.
- Northern Ireland contains some of the happiest parts of the UK. Of the five Northern Irish areas in the index, four; West & South of Northern Ireland, Outer Belfast, East of Northern Ireland and North of Northern Ireland, are in the top 20 happiest areas in the UK.
- With an average ranking of 25th Belfast is the most prosperous capital in the UK, Edinburgh ranks 38th, London's average prosperity rank is 83rd and Cardiff ranks 115th. Belfast (containing Outer Belfast and Belfast) marries wealth and wellbeing. Outer Belfast is happy, ranking joint 4th on this measure across the whole of the United Kingdom. Belfast is relatively wealthy, with the average person having an income of £34,100 it is the 14th richest area of the UK.

The Index reveals a number of other interesting findings:

- London contains 4 out of the 5 most prosperous areas in the country but also 3 out of the 10 least prosperous areas including Croydon, Brent and Bexley & Greenwich. Inner London contains 9 out of the top 10 wealthiest areas. People in Hammersmith & Fulham and Kensington & Chelsea have an average income of £133,000 a year. However, 4 of the 10 most miserable areas in the country are in London: Haringey and Islington, Croydon, Camden and City of London and Brent.
- A further 4 of the most prosperous areas can be found in Scotland. People living in the Outer Hebrides are the happiest in the UK, followed by residents of the Orkney Islands. However, Scotland also contains people with some of the lowest incomes in the country—in East Lothian/Midlothian (£13,200) and North and West Ayrshire (£12,400).
- Wales contains 3 out of 10 of the least wealthy parts of the UK. People living in Anglesey have the lowest incomes in the country—£11,200 a year—below the annual national minimum wage, while the Gwent Valleys (£12,300) and South West Wales (£13,300) are also near the bottom when it comes to income. Wales is also the most miserable of the four nations of the United Kingdom.

The most prosperous places in the UK are:

1. Hammersmith & Fulham and Kensington & Chelsea
2. Westminster
3. Wandsworth
4. Camden and the City of London
5. Outer Hebrides (Eilean Sar)

The least prosperous places in the UK are:

1. Wolverhampton
2. Sandwell (West Midlands)
3. Blackpool
4. Liverpool
5. East Derbyshire

The findings come a week before the Legatum Institute unveils its 2015 global Prosperity Index.

Sian Hansen, Executive Director of the Legatum Institute, said:

“The “Geography of Prosperity” index reveals that prosperity is about more than just wealth—it is about feeling that one’s life is worthwhile. The data shows that Northern Ireland is the happiest place in the UK and all areas of the country rank in the top quarter of the index.

“Northern Ireland has consistently been the happiest place in the UK. Belfast is also economically one of the best performing regions in the UK with below average unemployment and a growing economy. Nevertheless, Northern Ireland remains the second poorest nation in the UK. Going forward the region must narrow the gap between how happy and how wealthy its citizens are because in the long-run only high levels of both wealth and wellbeing will ensure prosperity.”

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Notes to Editors

1. The Geography of Prosperity Index ranks 170 places in the UK based on combining the results of two different data sets. Firstly, Eurostat’s data on gross domestic product for UK local areas and secondly, the ONS’ wellbeing statistics. Both datasets are aggregated at the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS) 3 level. A full methodology document is available at www.uk.prosperity.com (also embargoed until 00:01, Tuesday, 27 October 2015).

2. A digital map of each of the 170 areas covered in the Index is available on the website.

3. See below for a full rankings table of the Northern Irish areas in the index:

Area	Rank (out of 170)
West & South of Northern Ireland	7
Outer Belfast	19
Belfast	30
East of Northern Ireland	31
North of Northern Ireland	36

Media Enquiries

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About the Legatum Institute

The Legatum Institute seeks to identify the drivers of prosperity, which we define as both wealth and wellbeing. Our signature product is the *Legatum Prosperity Index™*, a unique global assessment of national prosperity that assesses 142 countries and is an essential tool for governments across the globe. For more information please go to www.li.com and www.prosperity.com.