

STATE OF THE NORTH 2024



See our full *State of the North 2024* report for sources and methodology

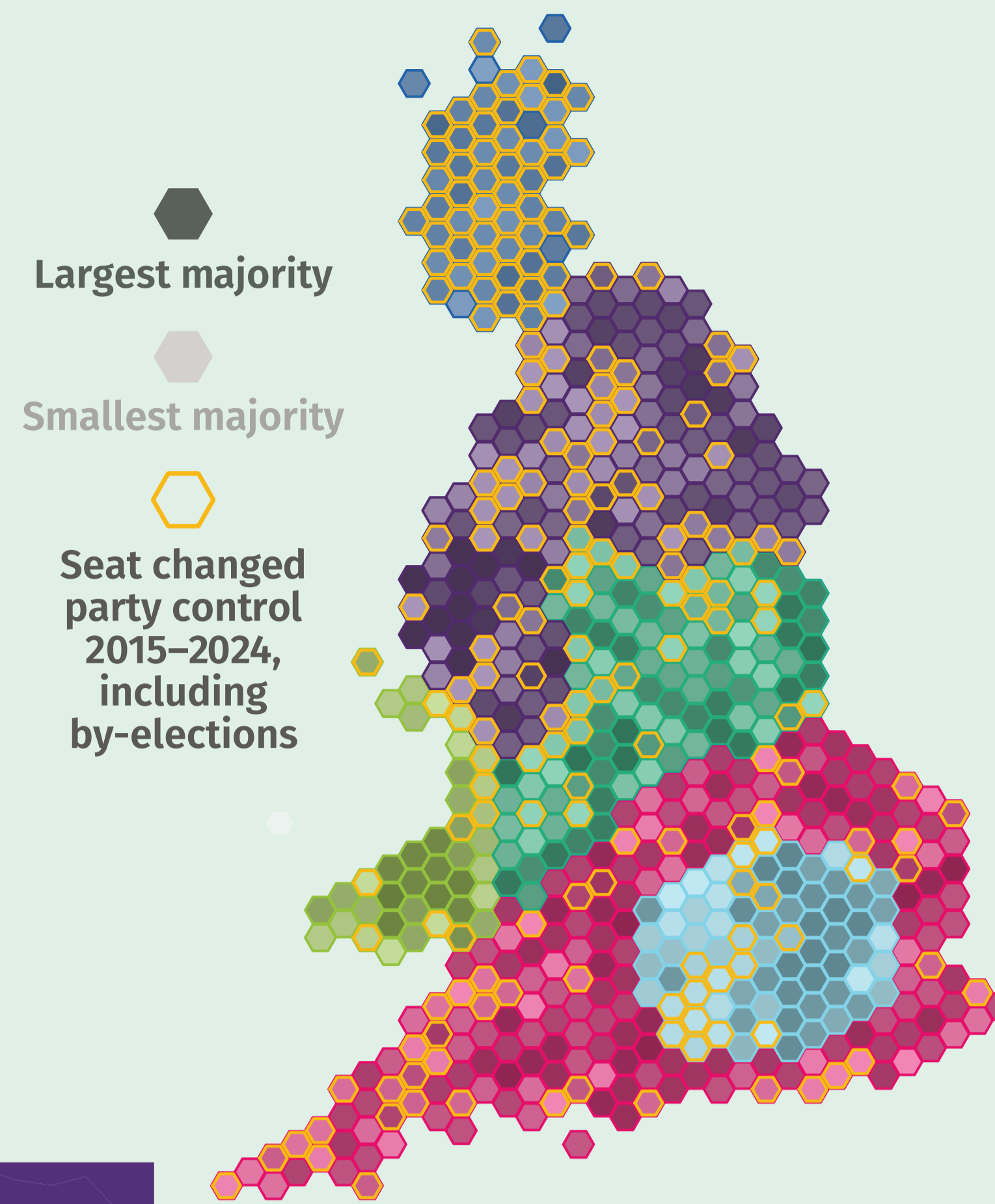
The North's communities are ambitious for a better future, but face systemic and pronounced inequalities. Gaps in power, wealth, opportunity, and health result in shorter, sicker, less fulfilling lives.

Regional inequality is a major concern for the public, and looming elections present an opportunity for course correction in the next parliament and the decade to come.

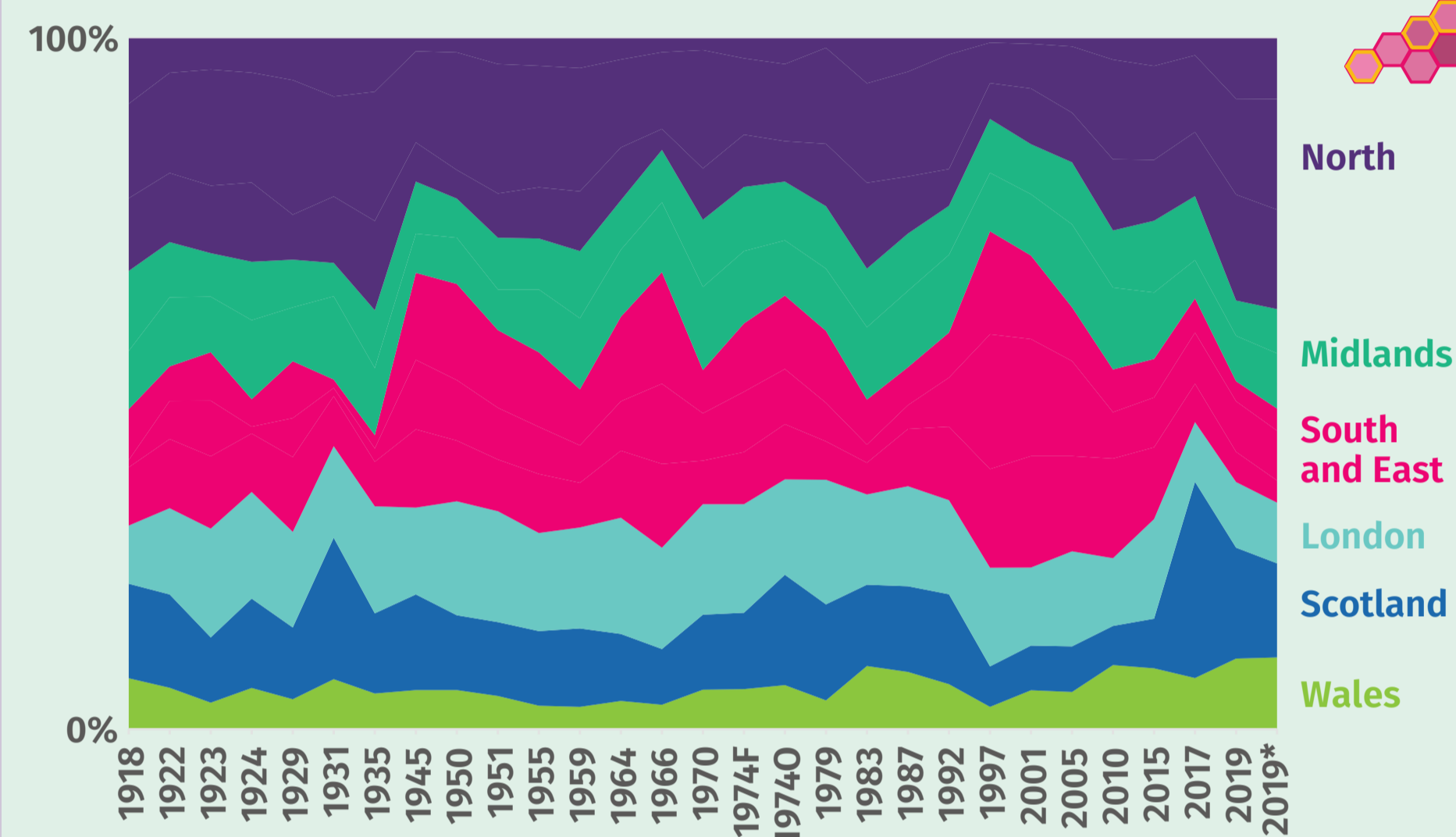
This *State of the North* report assesses our current course and proposes five priority areas for a decade of renewal. We envision a future where the North's regions stand equally among others offering opportunities for all to thrive within a healthy, prosperous, and equal country. We call for transformative action, to look forward, and realise the full potential of our regions.

1 Restore voters' trust

To restore voters' trust, we recommend further regional empowerment and prioritising regional rebalancing in all national policy. Clear promises and tangible change for people's communities would reap political reward. Those seeking to form the next government should note increasing political volatility and discontent with regional inequality, especially in the North. Responding to this, local and regional leadership should be strengthened through broader and deeper devolution, improving outcomes and trust.

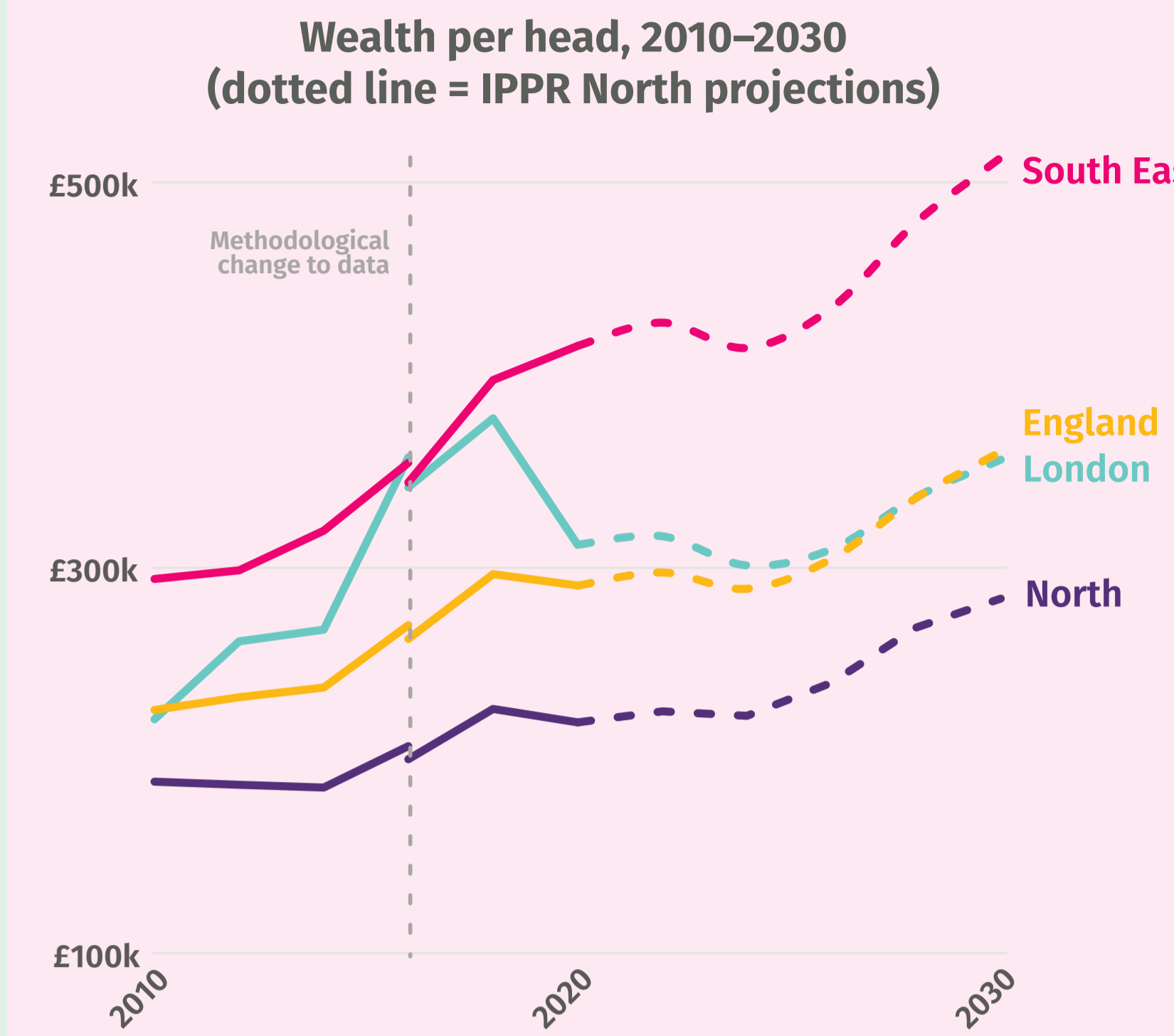


Each region's share of the total number of marginal seats, 1918-2019



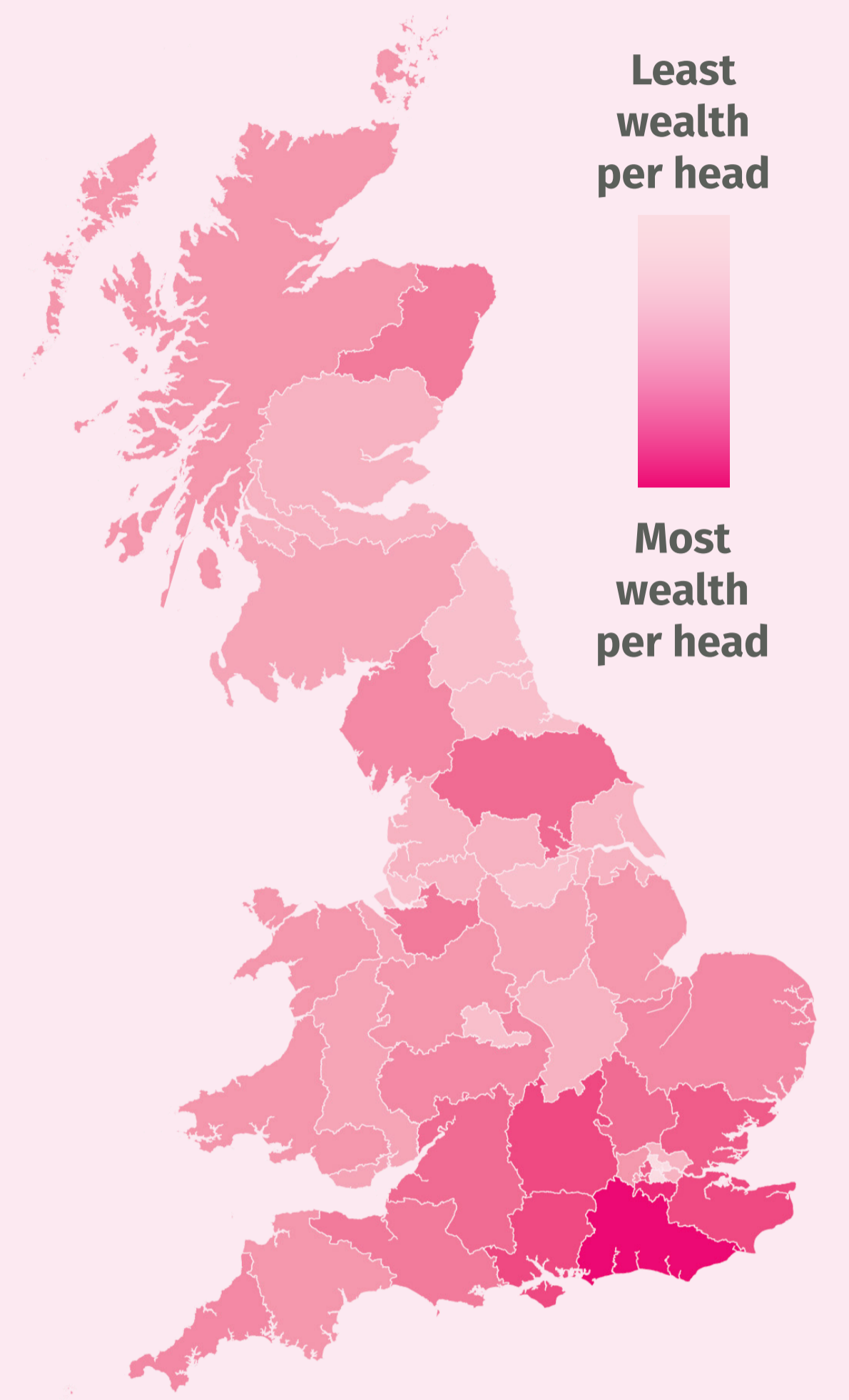
Almost two in five of all marginal constituencies in Great Britain are in the North

2 Rebalance wealth



Wealth inequalities grow in England as wealth becomes more concentrated in London and the South

To regionally rebalance wealth, we recommend equalising tax on incomes from wealth with tax on incomes from work. Unequal wealth holds back social mobility and better living standards across England. Fairer tax would be redistributive and should be used to fund regional economic development and stabilise local government finances. Rebalancing and rebuilding wealth like this would rebalance regions, supporting widespread power, wealth, opportunity, and health.

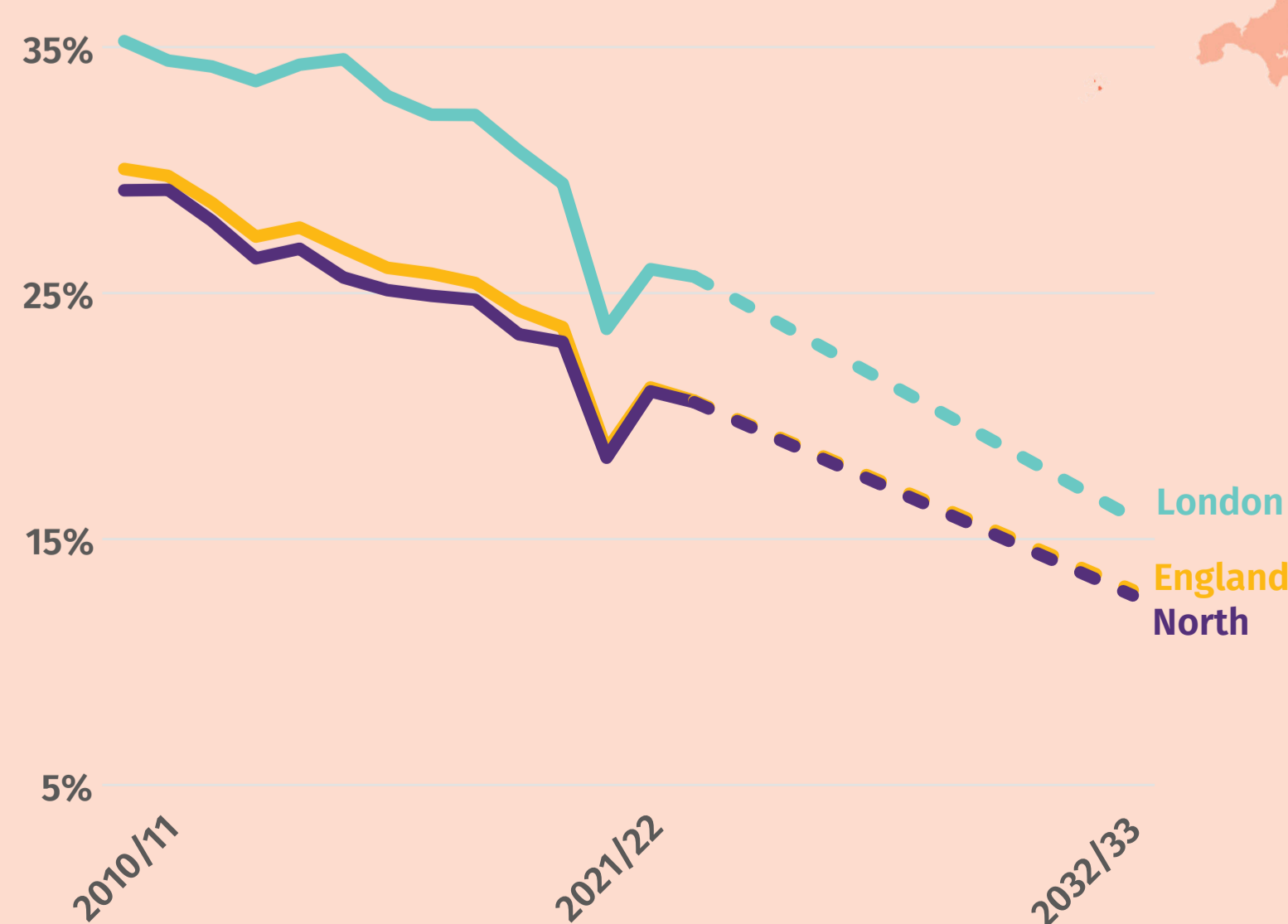


3 Empower places

To spread power and prosperity, we recommend fixing local funding with a fair, needs-based, whole-place model to enhance broader, deeper devolution. Empowering communities means providing both the power and the means. Cuts to local budgets deeply undermine advancements in devolution. Fairer, multi-year settlements would begin to reverse austerity's damage and be the first step on the road to stronger local financial powers.

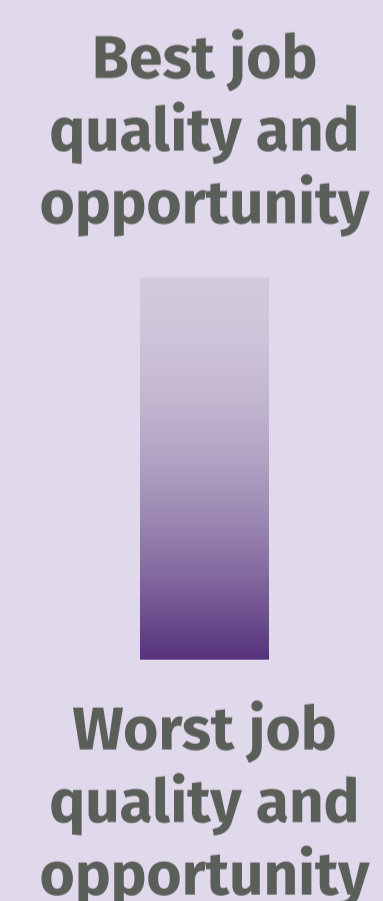


Share of total public spending accruals spent by local government 2009/10-2032/33 (dotted line = IPPR North projections)



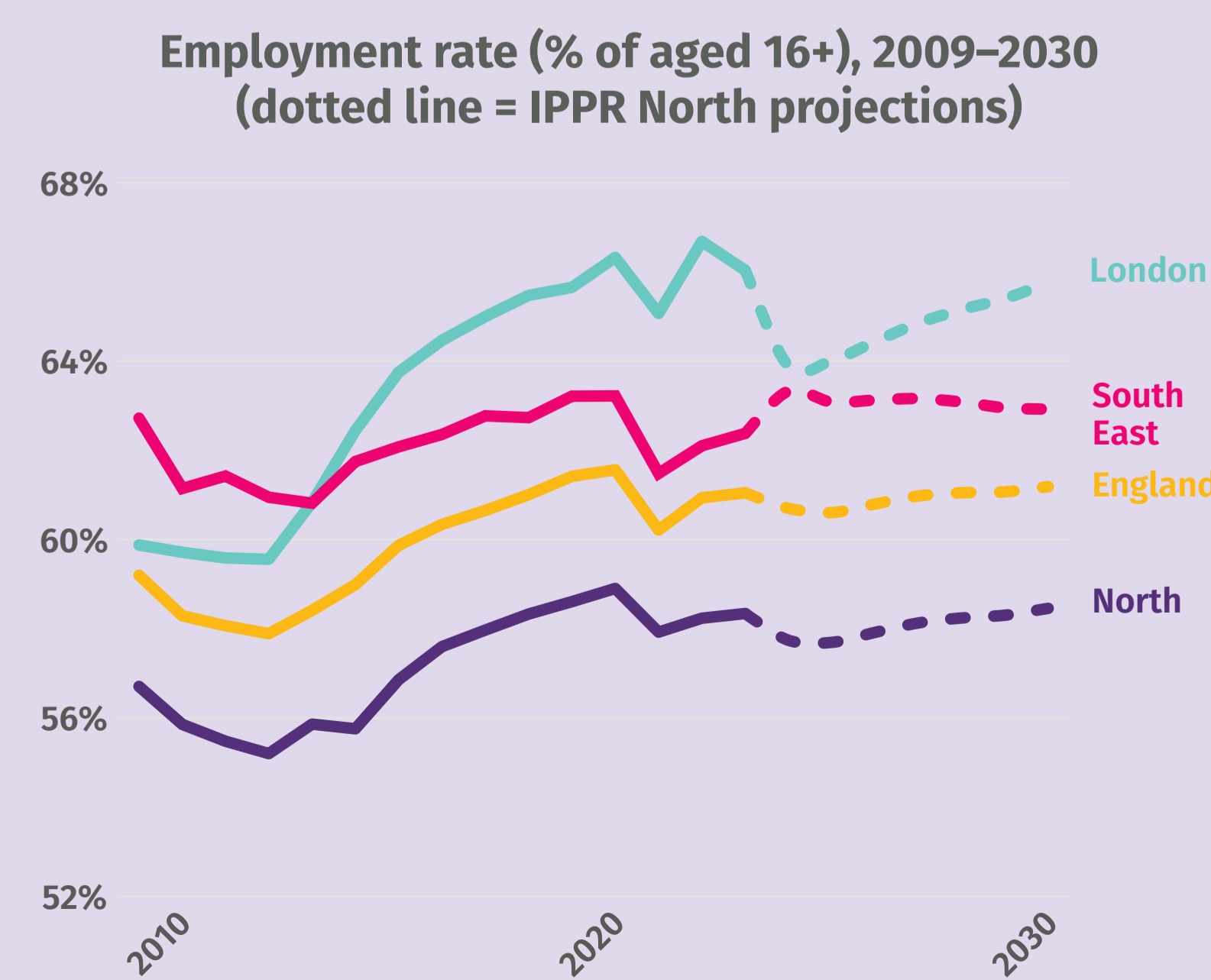
State financial power is being centralised, undermining efforts to devolve power and decentralise England

4 Create opportunity



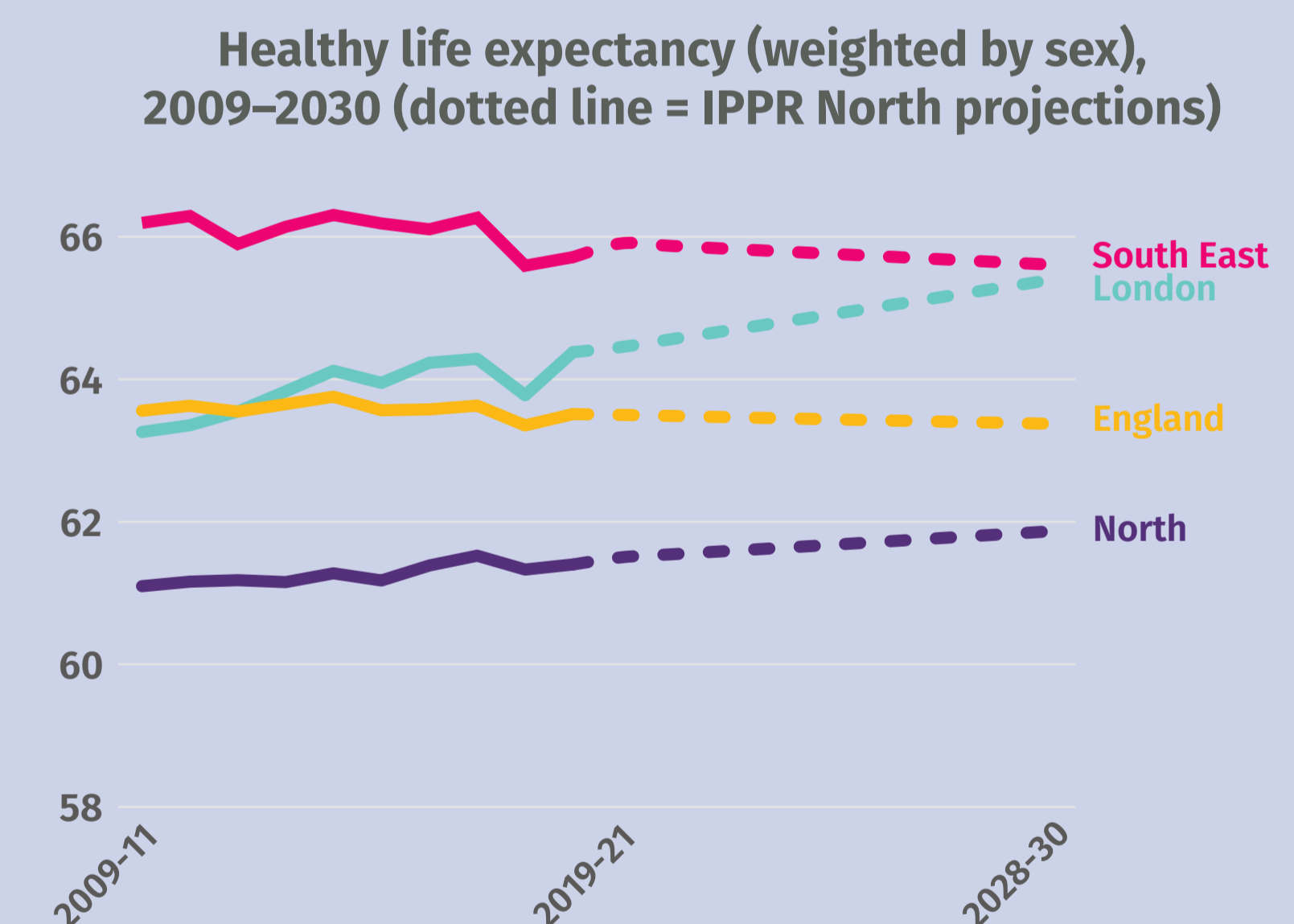
To create opportunity across England, we recommend a long-term green industrial strategy, emphasising the importance of places and rooted in local delivery. Rebalancing opportunity means creating not only jobs, but good quality, fulfilling jobs across the country. Action at all levels, learning from best practice at home and abroad, would unlock places' potential. Investment would be funded by joining up climate and economic development funding within this green growth strategy, alongside crowding-in private investment.

Opportunity for good jobs across England is uneven, with regional gaps in employment set to widen



5 Rebuild healthy places

Health disparities persist, with the North and Midlands on course to continue to lag behind by 2030



To rebuild healthy places, we recommend Health and Prosperity Improvement (HAPI) zones. Closing regional divides means improving outcomes in the places where healthy life expectancy is lowest. Responding to the double injustice of poor health and poor economic outcomes clustering together requires action across the foundations of good health. Local levers and new investment behind local plans, within a national health mission, would target: safer homes, healthier minds and bodies, cleaner air, better jobs, stronger community relationships, reduced addiction, and better starts to life. These would be paid for with national and optional local levies on health-harming activity.