

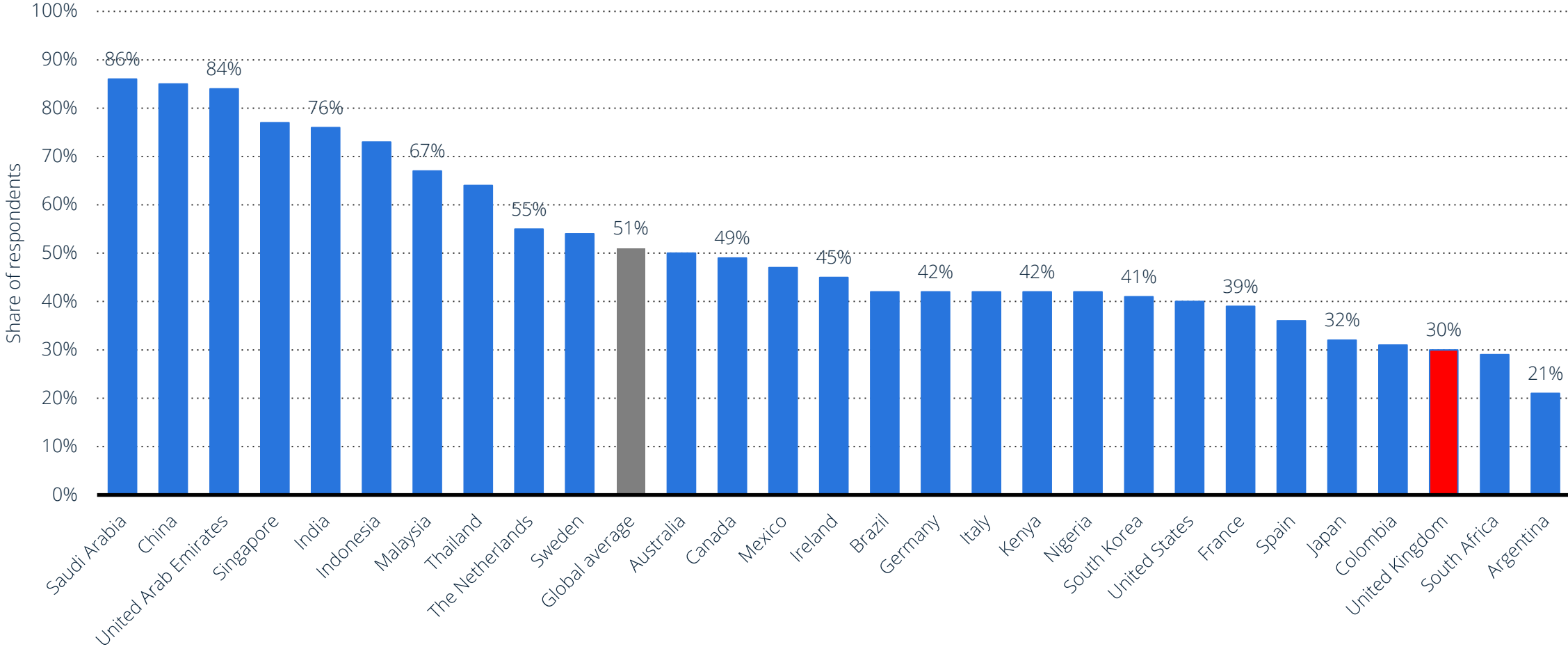
How Does a Functioning Justice System Underpin Trust in Government?

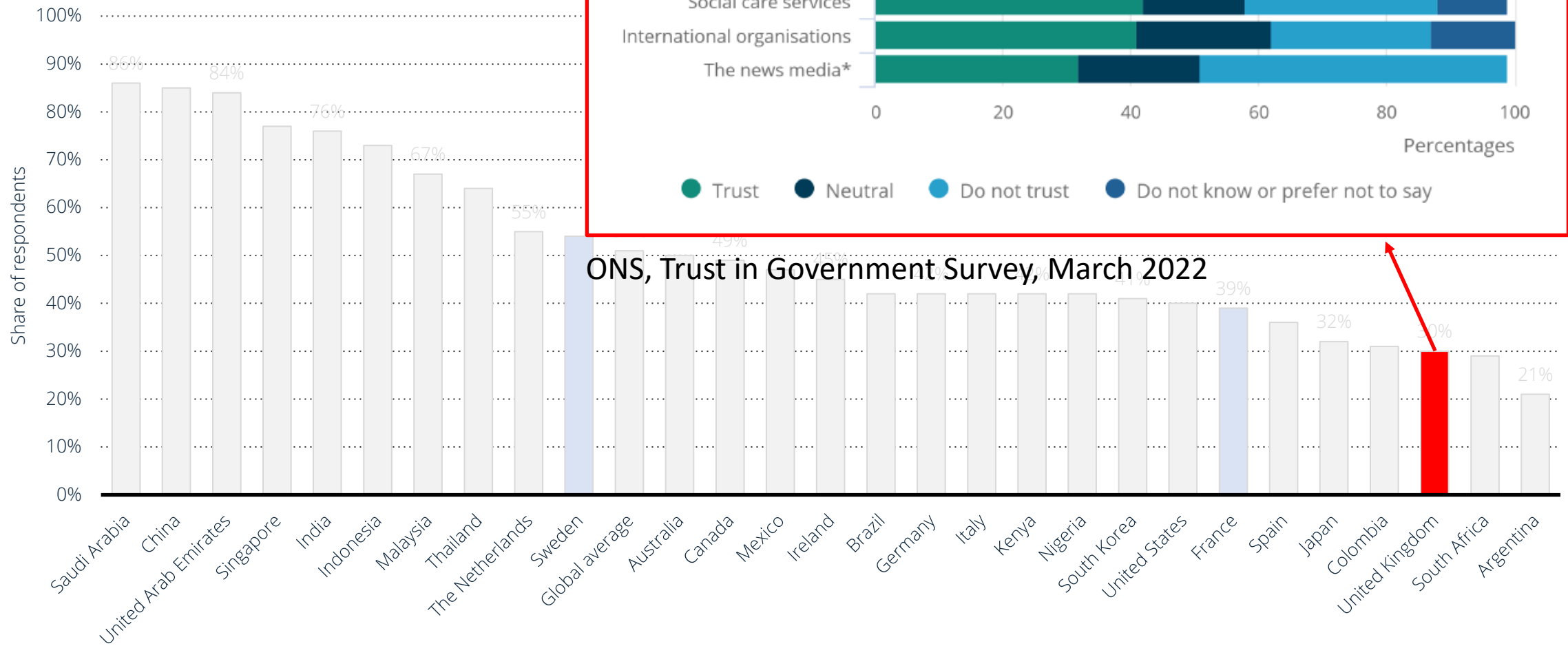
Imran Rasul
[UCL and IFS]

Nuffield Foundation Conference

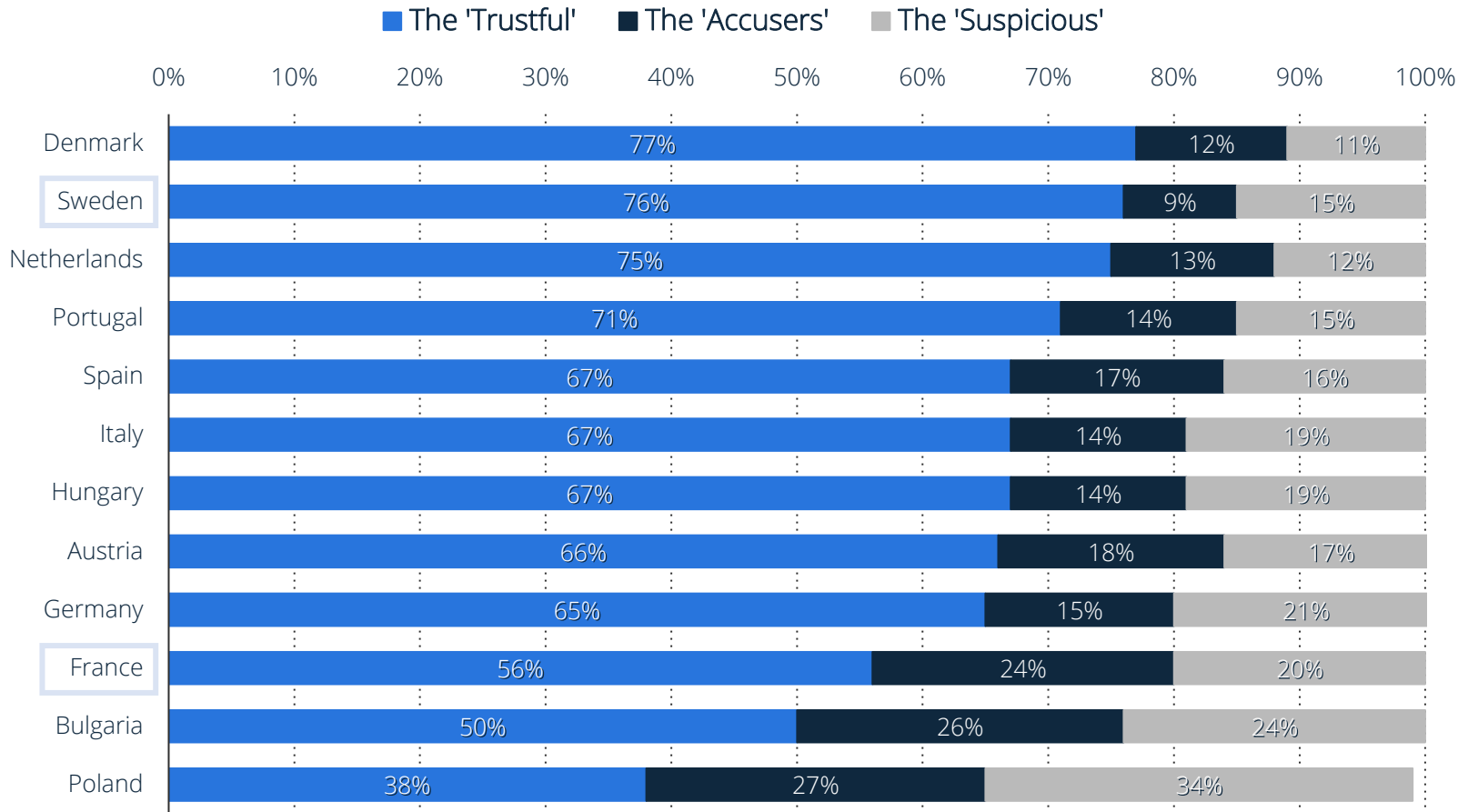


Share of population who trust their government, 2023





Trust and the motivation behind COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, 2021



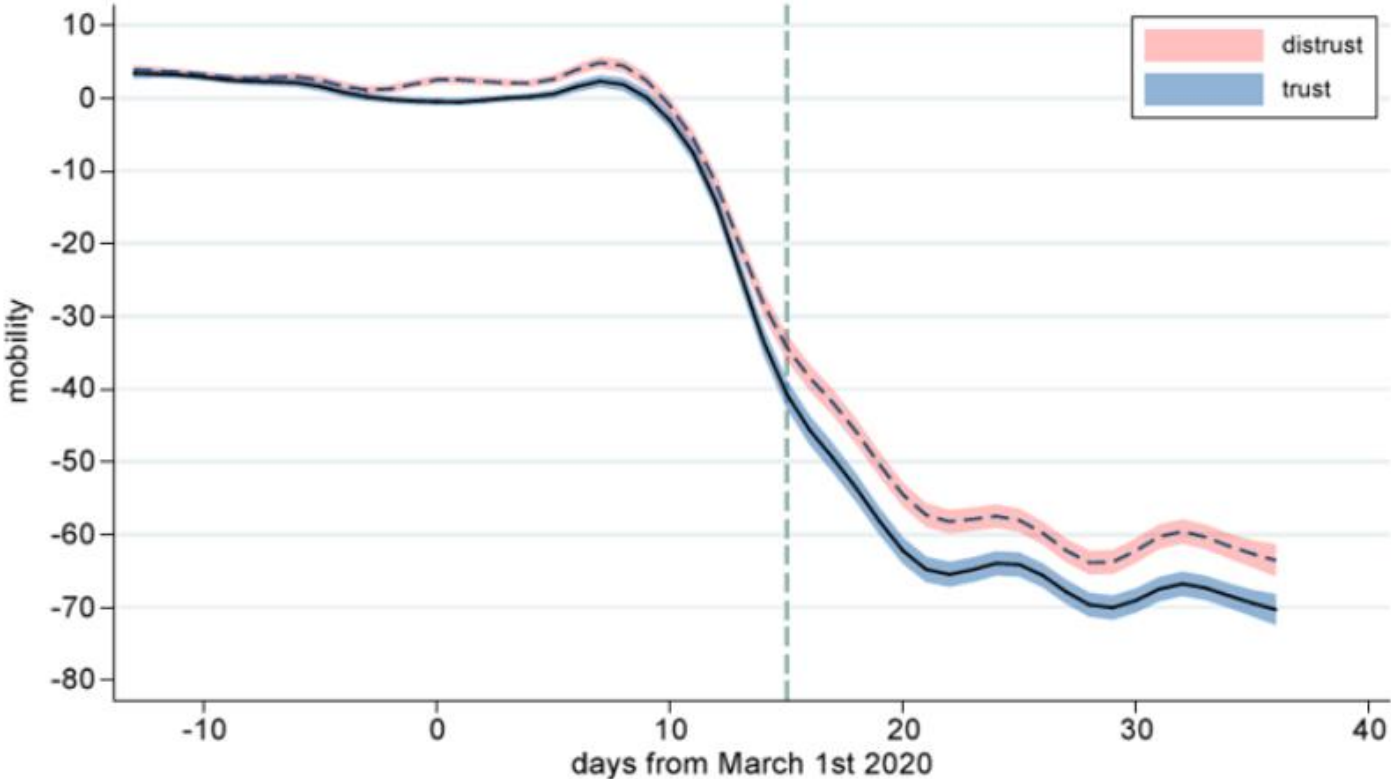
76% of Swedish respondents reported they trusted their government's motivations for lockdowns

At the other extreme, 20% of respondents in France said they were suspicious of the motivations behind lockdown restrictions; a further 24% percent thought lockdown restrictions were an excuse to control the public

Trust in the State and Behaviour

Figure 2 Daily mobility and political trust, variation across European regions

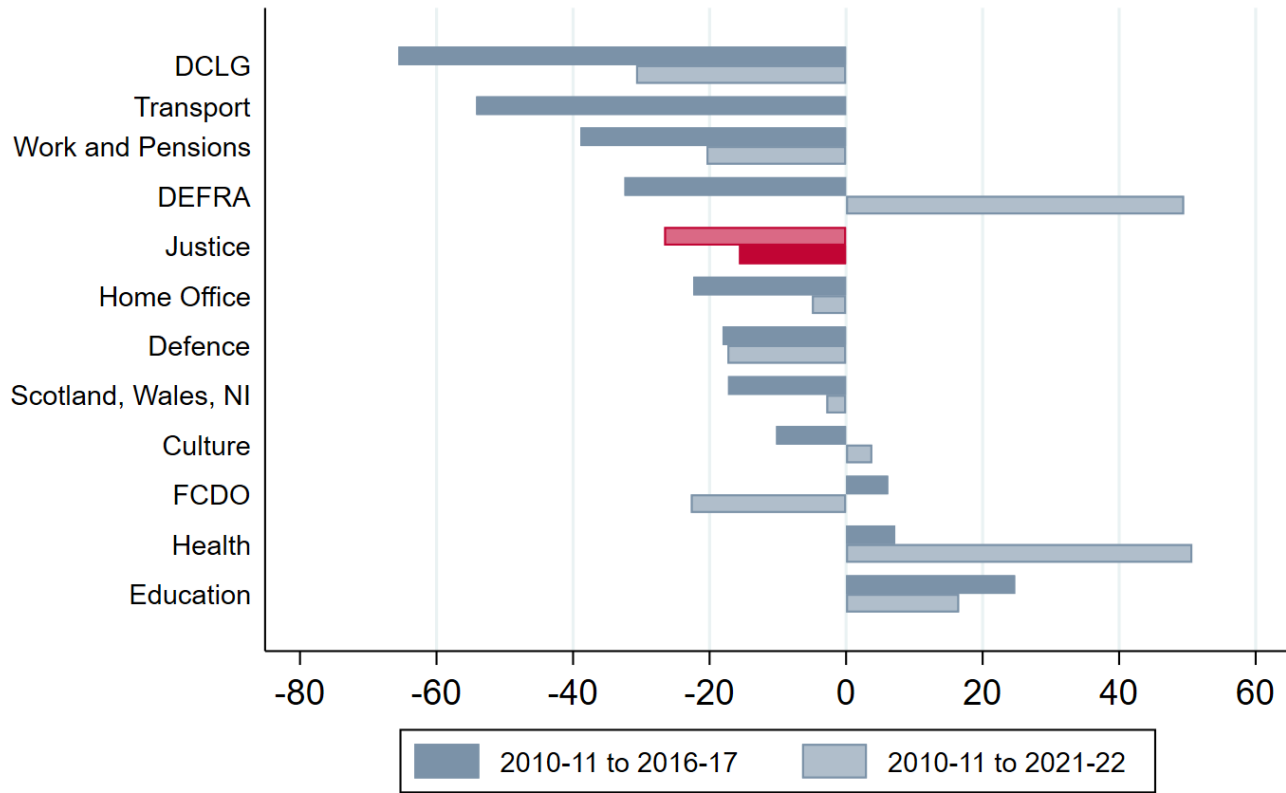
a) Retail and recreation



The Justice System as a Cornerstone of Society

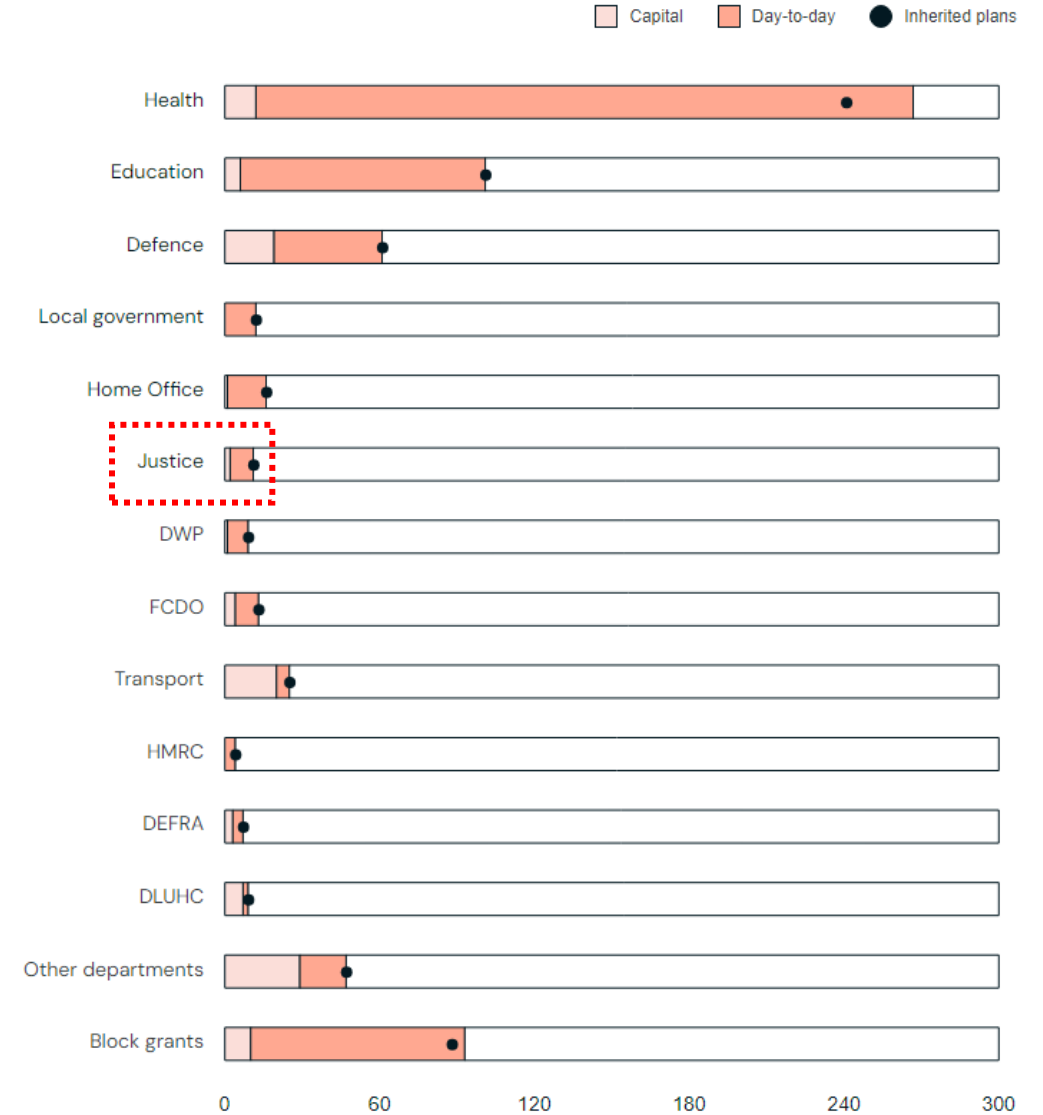
- sets rules for interpersonal, economic interactions:
 - individual behaviour towards other individuals
 - individual relations with the state
 - what individuals can expect of the state
 - what the state can expect of individuals
 - interactions between firms and their employees, customers, other firms
 - interactions on other economic relationships: landlord-tenant etc.
- exposure to the justice system occurs in times dispute or vulnerability
- a well-functioning justice system supports an inclusive and secure society, underpinning trust in the state

Real-terms departmental budget changes (%), 2010–11 to 2019–20



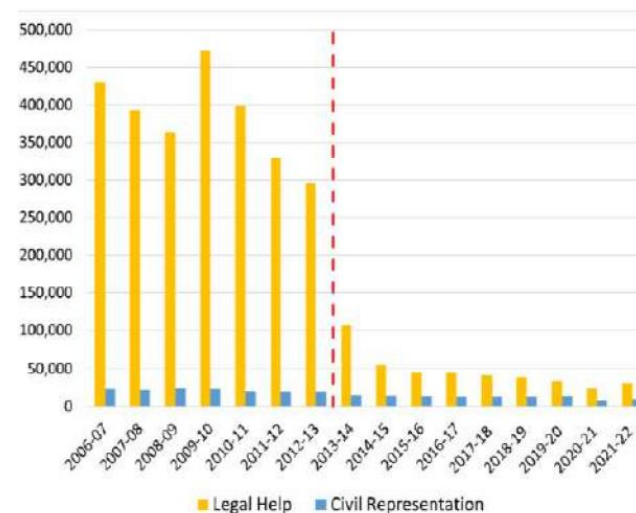
Source: Authors's calculations from HM Treasury, Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses, 2015, 2017, 2022.

2029-30 Departmental Budgets, £billion

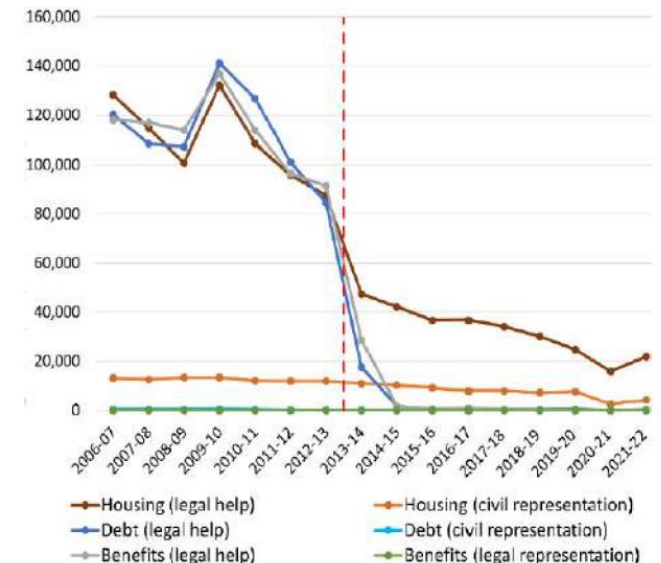


Changing Access to Justice?

- Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act [LASPO 2012] brought significant changes to legal aid provision
 - changed financial eligibility criteria
 - took areas of civil/family law out of scope
 - reduced the fees solicitors can charge to eligible individuals
 - funding for criminal legal aid fallen by 50%
 - funding for civil legal advice and representation fallen by 30%



(a) By type of legal aid work



(b) By areas of law

FIGURE 1: Evolution of the number of legal aid cases completed

Infrastructure of Justice

- real terms spending on courts fallen by 25% between 2010-18
- court closures: between 2010-19, 295 out of 923 court facilities closed across England and Wales
 - raised £224mn
 - median distance of households to a court facility increased from 4.2 to 6.7 km
- police station closures:
 - in England, since 2010, 600 out of 900 police stations have closed
 - in Greater London, average distance to a police station doubled from 1.4km to 3.1km
 - average response time to attend incidents increased by 40%

Police Infrastructure, Police Performance, and Crime: Evidence from Austerity Cuts*

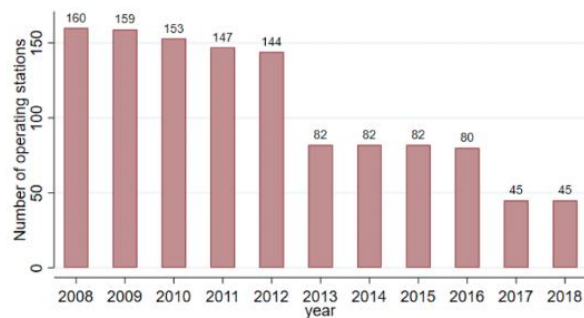
Elisa Facchetti[†]

April 2024

Abstract

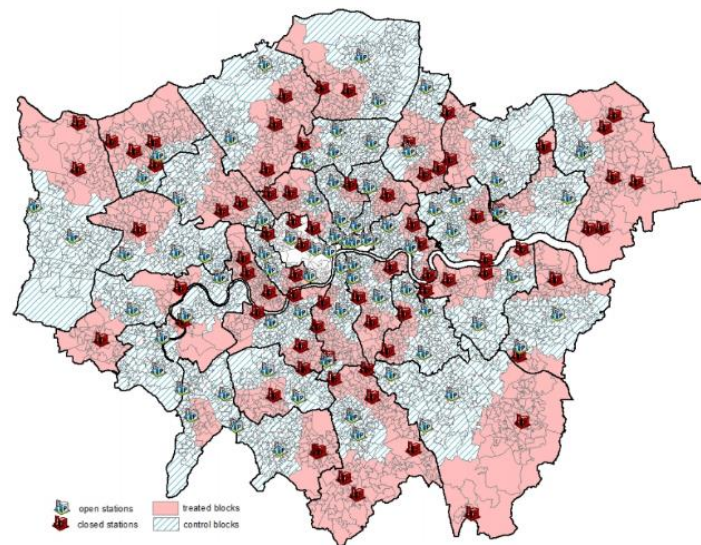
Utilizing newly compiled granular data on 7 million criminal incidents within a large police force, I examine the impact of police deployment on crime occurrence, reporting, police investigations, and overall citizens' welfare. Focusing on a wave of austerity cuts which resulted in the closure of 70% of the police stations (while preserving total police strength), I show that the closures persistently increased violent crimes in census blocks near the defunct stations. Consistent with lower deterrence and police effectiveness, I document reduced clearance rates, reduced reporting of non-violent offences, and lower local house prices in the most deprived areas. The policy appears not to be cost-effective.

Figure 1: Number of police stations in Greater London



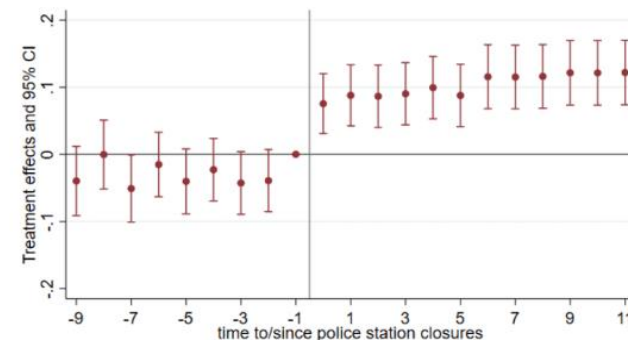
Note: The figure displays the total number of police stations operating in Greater London between 2008 and 2018. The sample period of the empirical analysis stops at the end of 2016 because of subsequent changes in the local policing structure.

Figure 2: Map of police station closures and treated blocks



Notes: The map plots the locations of police stations, including both open and closed stations, as of the end of 2016 (end of the sample period). In addition, the map codes treated and control census blocks: blocks where the nearest station was closed (in red) and blocks whose nearest station remained open (in blue and white). Black thick borders correspond to boundaries to the 31 boroughs of London, which overlap with the borders of the police divisions. The map excludes City of London and Westminster.

Figure 6: Event study for violent crimes



Note: The graph reports coefficients and 95% confidence intervals estimated according to Equation 2 and is produced using the stacked-by-event dataset at the quarterly frequency. Time on the horizontal axis is computed by subtracting the date when a block's nearest police station closes from the quarterly date of the observation. The dependent variable is the total number of violent crimes, defined as assaults and murders, recorded in a census block and transformed using the hyperbolic sine transformation. I omit the dummy for the period before the closures and, as suggested in Sun and Abraham (2021), I exclude the distant relative periods, keeping areas with 9 leads and 11 lags. All regressions include census block, calendar time (quarterly date), and relative time fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the census block level.

Transforming justice: the interplay of social change and policy reforms

A well-functioning justice system is fundamental to social wellbeing

A well-functioning justice system is fundamental to social well-being, supporting an inclusive and secure society and underpinning wider trust in the state. The justice system in England and Wales has been changed dramatically over the last decade through large-scale reductions in funding and a sequence of major procedural reforms intended to modernise the system. Despite the scale of change, and the central importance of justice to everyday social and economic life, to date there has been limited systematic economic and quantitative analyses of the impacts of these changes on access to justice, people's pathways through the justice system, and wider effects on well-being for those experiencing the justice system. This project will address these knowledge gaps using research drawn primarily from the administrative datasets curated through the Ministry of Justice's 'Data First' programme, funded by ADR-UK. The project will range across many of the system's jurisdictions including administrative, civil, family, and criminal.



As part of this four-year work programme we plan to examine how changes in the justice system have impacted perceptions of the justice system and trust in the state

As well as how reforms **within the justice system** and in **other areas of policy** have impacted:

- (i) access to justice
- (ii) pathways through the system
- (iii) demands on the justice system

<https://ifs.org.uk/transforming-justice-interplay-social-change-and-policy-reforms>

How Does a Functioning Justice System Underpin Trust in Social Justice?

Imran Rasul
[UCL and IFS]

Nuffield Foundation Conference

