

huggg

Local Welfare Deployment

Lessons from Huggg and Ipsos UK



huggg

Company

Founded in

2015

By

Paul Wickers



Customers

Huggg has facilitated the sending of

Every

3000+

organisations

£250M+

worth of gifts and vouchers since 2020

15 seconds

a gift or voucher is redeemed

Accreditations



ISO 27001 certified



Cyber Essentials Plus certified

Crown
Commercial
Service
Supplier

CCS Supplier for Payment Solutions 2 &
Funds Administration and Distribution Services



Agenda

- Local welfare background
- Target groups & assistance types
- Delivery models & impact
- Allocation, awareness, & future guidance

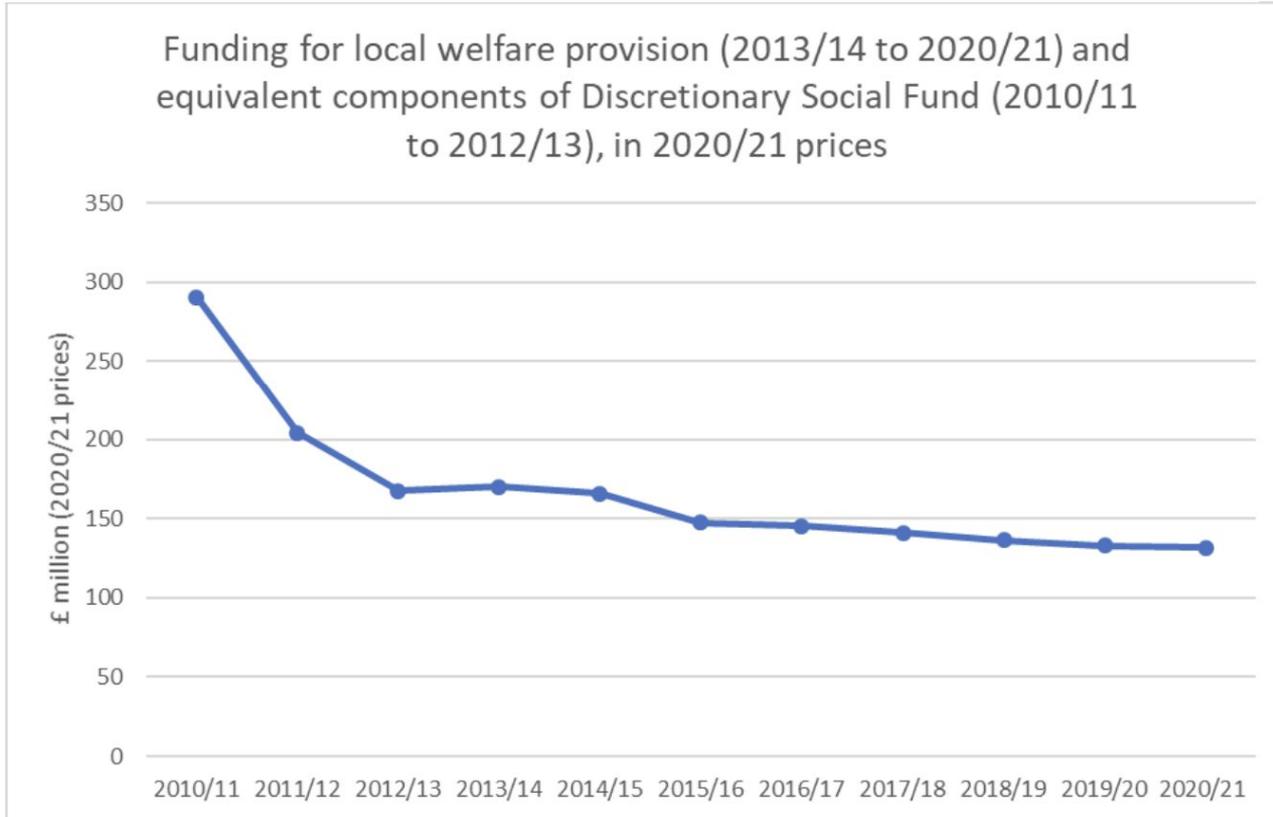
DWP spent ~£0.5m reporting on the effectiveness of HSF4

- Independent evaluation by Ipsos UK
- Focus: HSF implementation, Oct 2022 – Mar 2023
- Methodology: Surveys, interviews with LAs & stakeholders
- Report available [here](#)

Evaluation of the Household Support Fund 4

January 2025

Local welfare spending in the UK over time



"The HSF was introduced as a short term intervention in Autumn 2021"

Household Support Fund has become the cornerstone of local welfare assistance, which had been increasingly de-funded

Household Support Fund Iteration	Value (£)	Implementation period and duration	Household targeting criteria – ring-fencing for funding allocations
HSF1	£421 million	6 October 2021 to 31 March 2022 (6 months)	50% of funding to be allocated to households with children
HSF2	£421 million	1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022 (6 months)	33.3% of funding to be allocated to households with children 33.3% of funding to be allocated to households with pensioners
HSF3	£421 million	1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023 (6 months)	Ring-fencing of funding allocations removed
HSF4	£842 million	1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 (12 months)	Ring-fencing of funding allocations removed
HSF5	£421 million	1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024 (6 months)	Ring-fencing of funding allocations removed
HSF6	£421 million	1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025 (6 months)	Ring-fencing of funding allocations removed

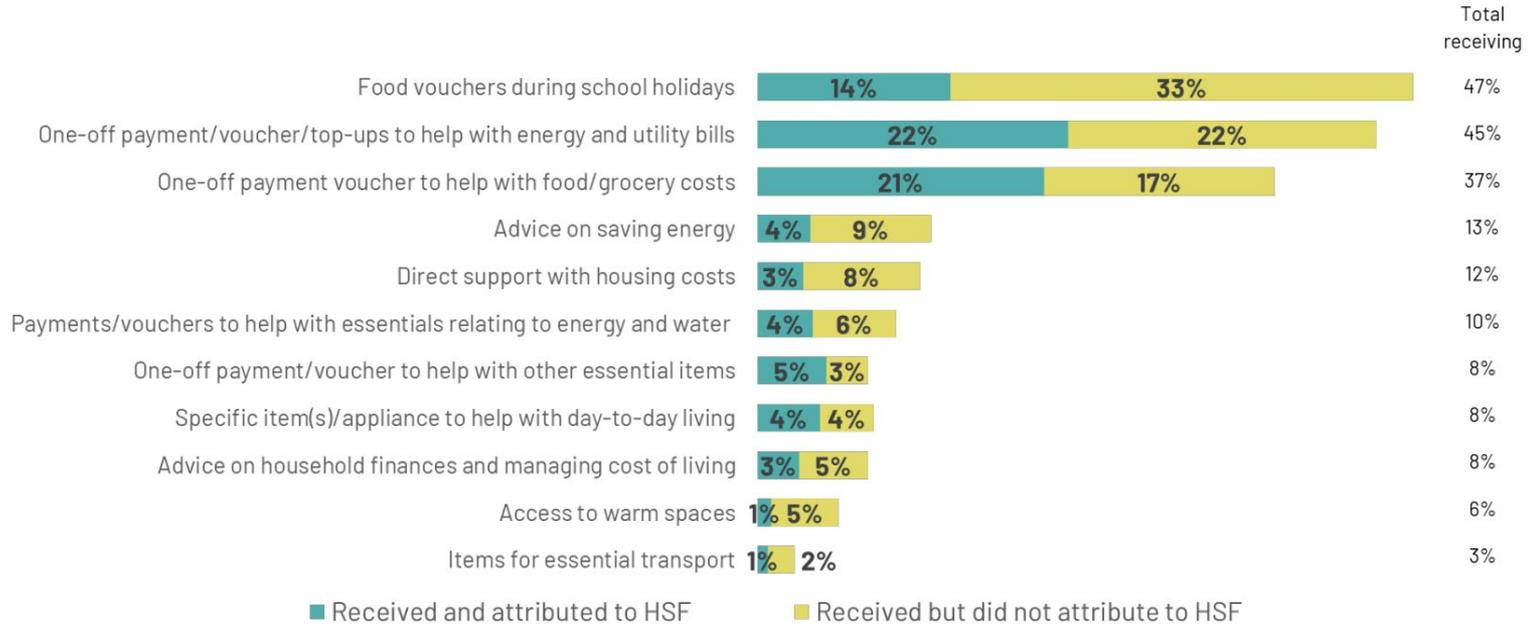
Who received support?

- Households with vulnerable groups:
 - Children
 - Those with a disability, physical or mental health needs
 - Pension age individuals

Age	% of survey respondents ¹²
18-24	4%
25-34	15%
35-44	29%
45-54	24%
55-64	18%
65-74	7%
75+	3%
Gender	
Women	79%
Men	20%
Non-binary/ my gender is not listed	1%
Children in household	
Single adult, no children	22%
Two or more adults, no children	15%
Children in household	64%
Someone of state pension age in household?	
Yes	13%
No	87%
Someone with a disability or long-term physical or mental health condition in household?	
Yes	69%
No	31%
Ethnic group or background	
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	5%
Black, black British or black Welsh	6%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	3%
White	83%
Other ethnic group	3%

Support was primarily targeted around food and energy via voucher methods

Figure 4.4: Support received and attribution to the Household Support Fund



Q. Are you aware of receiving support in any of the following ways between April 2023 and March 2024?

Base: All respondents 1,806

Q. And was this support received from the Household Support Fund or through something else?

Awareness-raising is a challenge

- Multi-channel communication is crucial.
- Clear eligibility criteria are essential.
- Partnerships with community organizations expand reach.

"...clear communication about eligibility criteria and the application process was important in ensuring residents could access support."

Different models of deployment

Who

LA-Led

TPO-Led

Joint TPO and LA

Different models of deployment

Who	LA-Led	TPO-Led	Joint TPO and LA
How	Direct awards	Referrals	Applications

Different models of deployment

Who	LA-Led	TPO-Led	Joint TPO and LA
How	Direct awards	Referrals	Applications
Via	Cash	Vouchers	Physical goods

Delivery models – cash vs vouchers vs physical goods

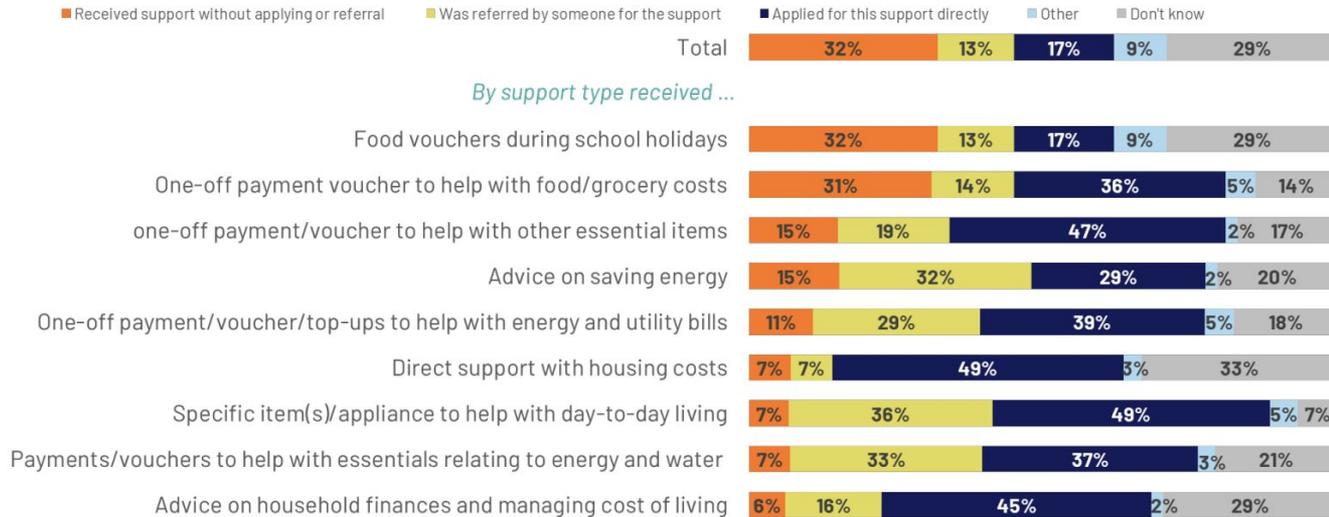
Delivery Model	Pros	Cons	Key Enablers	LA-Led vs. TPO
Cash Payments	Flexibility for recipients, immediate impact.	Potential for misuse, difficulty tracking spending.	Robust identification and verification systems.	Primarily LA-Led, but TPOs could assist with distribution.
Vouchers	Targeted spending, reduced risk of misuse, easier to track.	Less flexibility for recipients, potential for non-redemption.	Partnerships with retailers, efficient distribution systems.	Can be LA-Led or TPO-led
Physical Items	Ensures support reaches intended purpose, addresses specific needs.	Logistically complex, potentially less empowering for recipients.	Strong partnerships with local organisations, clear eligibility criteria.	Often relies heavily on TPOs (e.g., food banks, charities).

Delivery models – direct awards vs applications vs referrals

Delivery Model	Pros	Cons	Key Enablers	LA-Led vs. TPO
Direct Awards	Speed.	Potential for lower take up amongst those that need it most.	Clear Comms strategy	Primarily LA-Led
Applications	Allows for verification of circumstances.	Potentially slower and more burdensome for citizen.	Simple and clear application route	Primarily LA-Led, though could be outsourced
Referrals	Allows professionals to put forward those that they know are in need.	Risk of leaving some people out	Strong links with community professionals	Relies heavily on TPO's

Food tends to be more prevalent in direct awards, whereas other categories are more weighted towards applications and referrals

Figure 4.5: Distribution method by support type received



Q. Did you apply to the council/other organisation directly for this support, were you referred by someone else for the support or did you receive it without the need for applying or referral?

Base: All who received some form of support (1,545)

Satisfaction is highest when the support is initiated not by the person in need

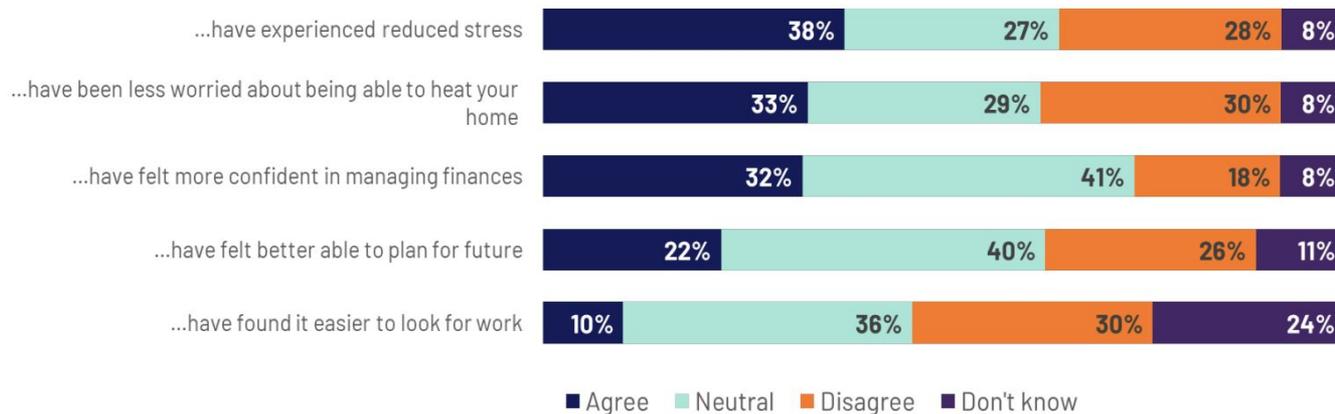
Table 4.3 Satisfaction with the way in which support was provided – by distribution method

	Applied for support directly	Referred by someone	Received support without applying/referral
Very satisfied	55%	72%	68%
Fairly satisfied	26%	18%	22%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	10%	7%	7%
Fairly dissatisfied	5%	1%	2%
Very dissatisfied	3%	1%	1%
Don't know/can't remember	2%	1%	1%
Net: Satisfied	81%	90%	90%
Net: Dissatisfied	8%	2%	3%

"The most commonly reported benefits included helping afford food and groceries (78%), energy and utility bills (60%), keeping homes warm in cold weather (58%), and helping avoid having to borrow money (61%)"

The vast majority of HSF4 recipients (98%) reported at least one positive benefit from their award

Figure 6.2: Broader benefits of support on personal wellbeing and confidence



E7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that, as a result of the payment or support you...

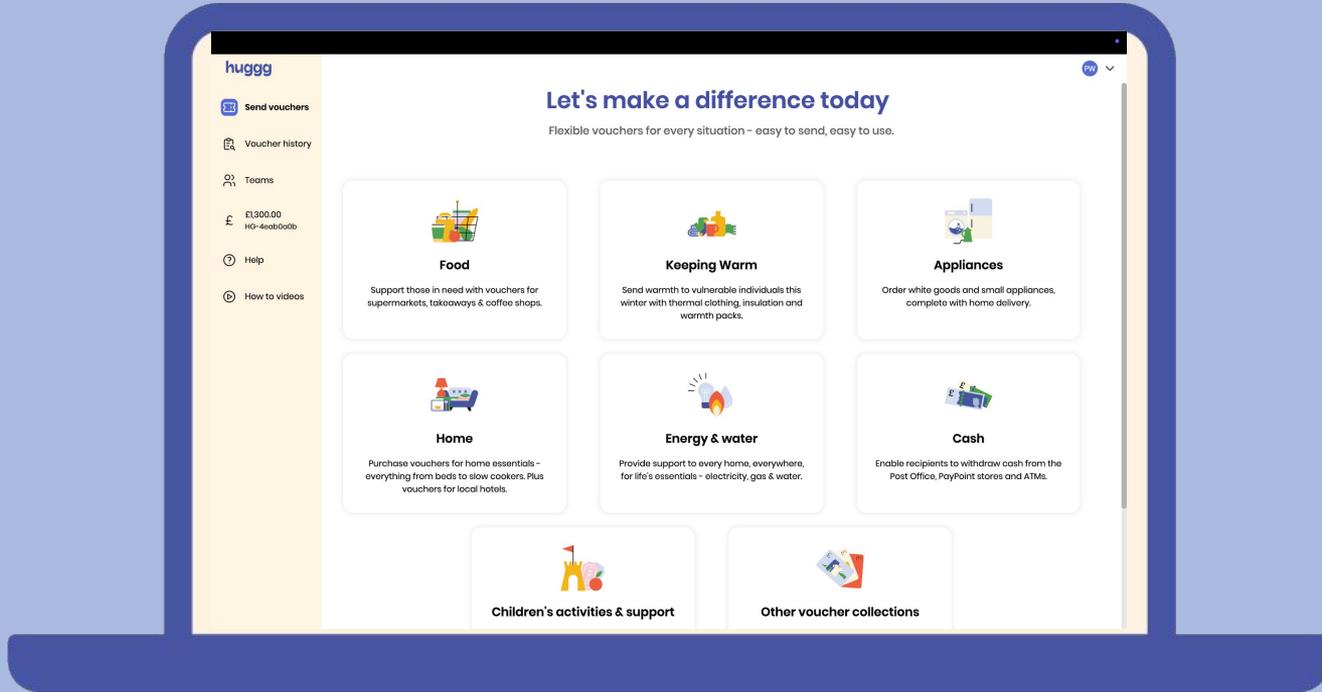
Base: All who recall receiving some form of support (1,545); except 'have found it easier to look for work' (all unemployed when received support, 364); 'have been less worried about being able to heat your home' (all owning or renting who received some type of support, 1,424)

Top 5 findings

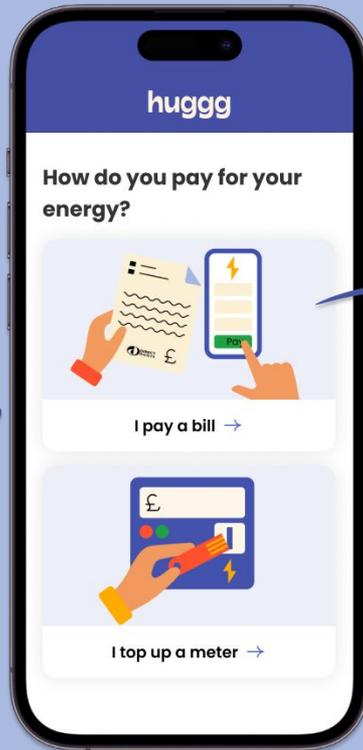
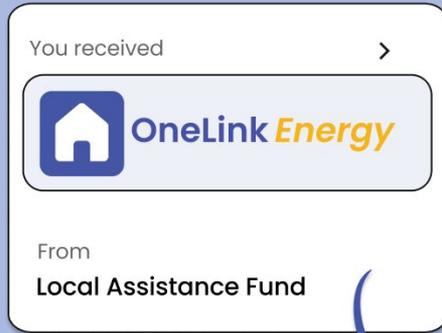
- **Targeted Support:** Prioritise the most vulnerable groups (families with children, pensioners, people with disabilities).
- **Flexible Delivery:** Offer a mix of delivery models to meet diverse needs.
- **Streamlined Administration:** Reducing the administrative burden on councils and recipients drives satisfaction.
- **Proactive Communication:** Ensure clear, accessible information reaches all eligible residents.
- **Data-Driven Decisions:** Continuously monitor and evaluate the impact to adapt strategies.

"...clear communication about eligibility criteria and the application process was important in ensuring residents could access support."

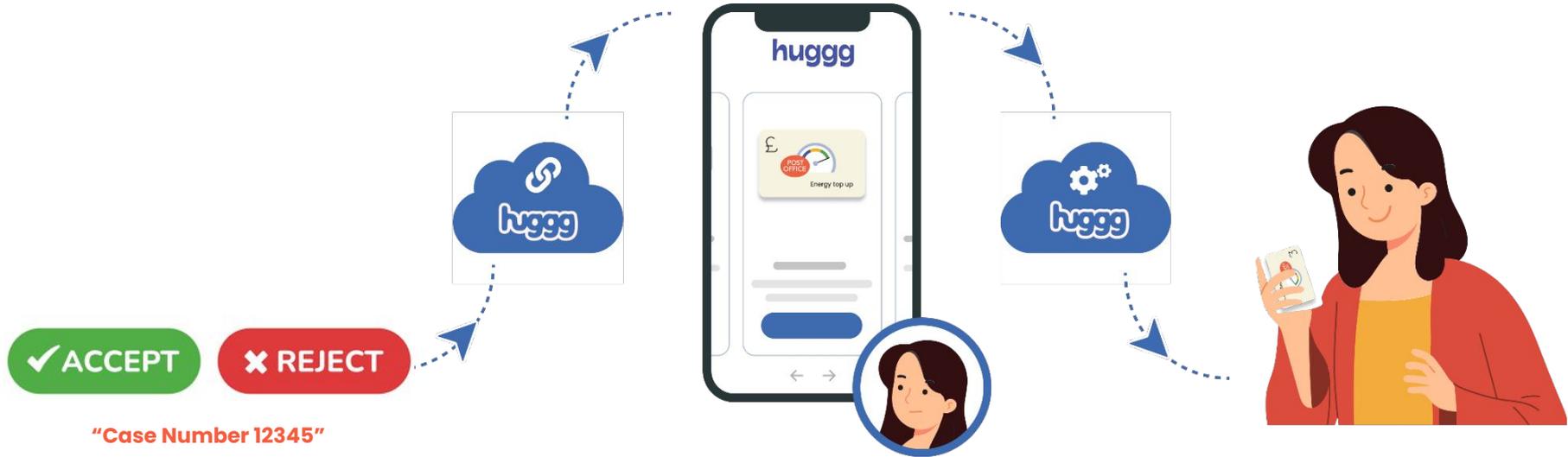
We provide a wide range of payout types in one self-serve platform



We brought to market the only energy voucher that can pay bills and make topups



And we invested in connectivity with common CRM systems, to save LAs time in serving their citizens



Trusted by hundreds of payouts clients, predominantly in the public and third sectors





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