



More in
Common

Starting Points

Where are voters at as the election begins?

28th May 2024

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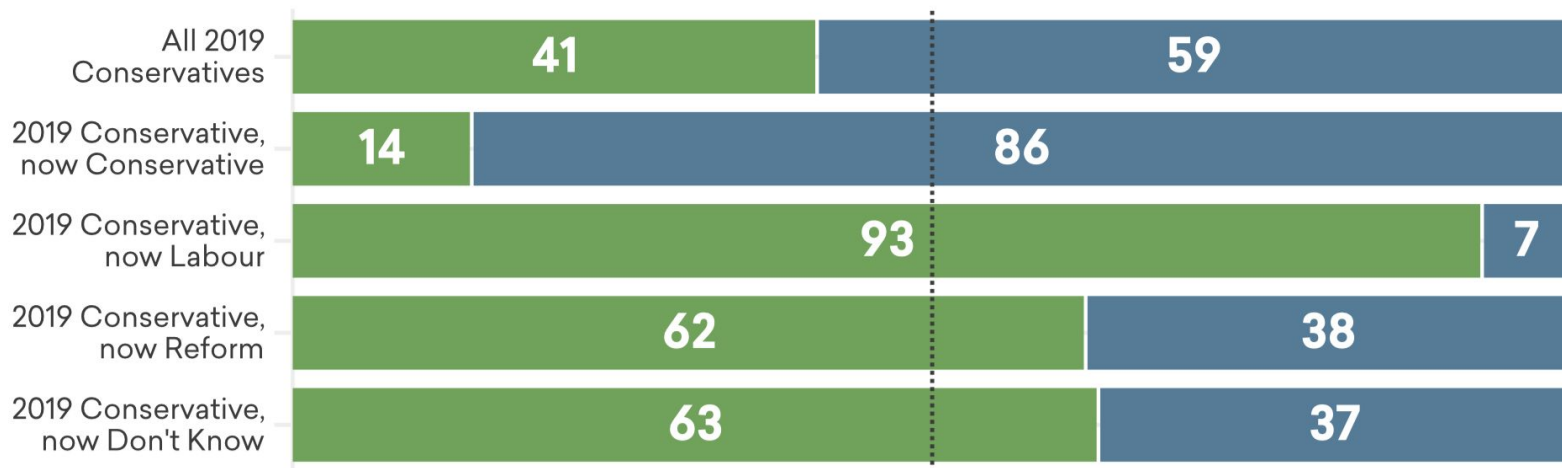
The public's starting points for the campaign

Many 2019 Conservatives think it's time for change

70% of the public favour Starmer's time for change message over Sunak's stick with the plan message. Sunak's message may land well with Conservative 2019 voters who intend to vote Conservative again, but other 2019 Conservatives are unconvinced.

Which comes closest to how you are feeling about the next general election?

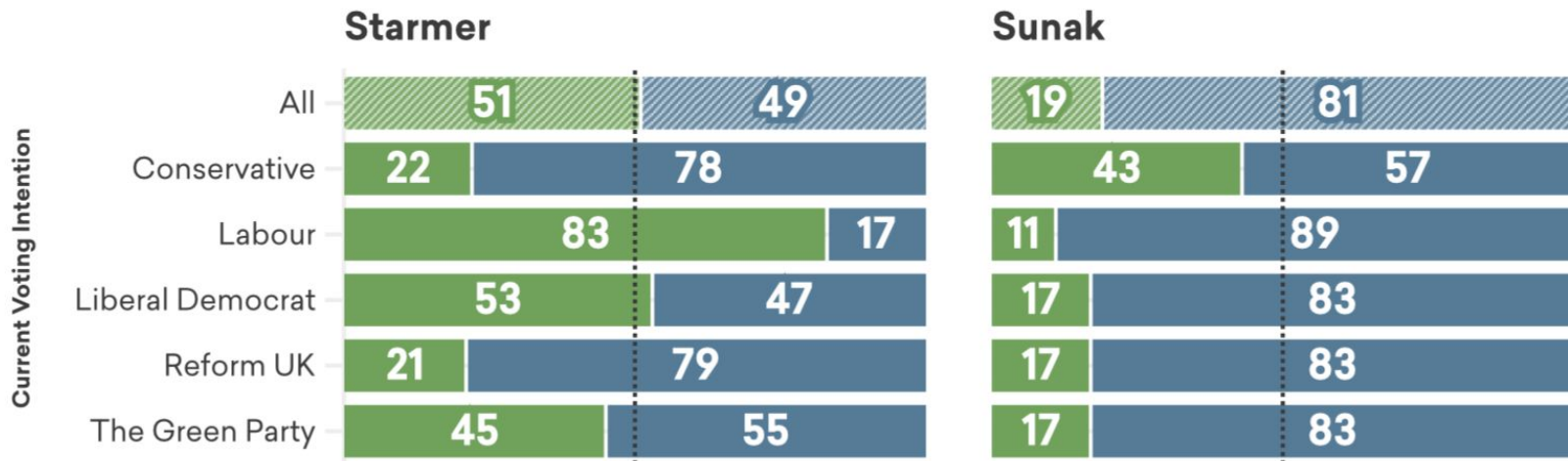
● It's time for change ● We need to stick with the plan



Starmer represents change to half the country, while Sunak is seen as more of the same

Thinking about [Keir Starmer/Rishi Sunak] which comes closest to how you think about him?

● He represents change ● He represents more of the same



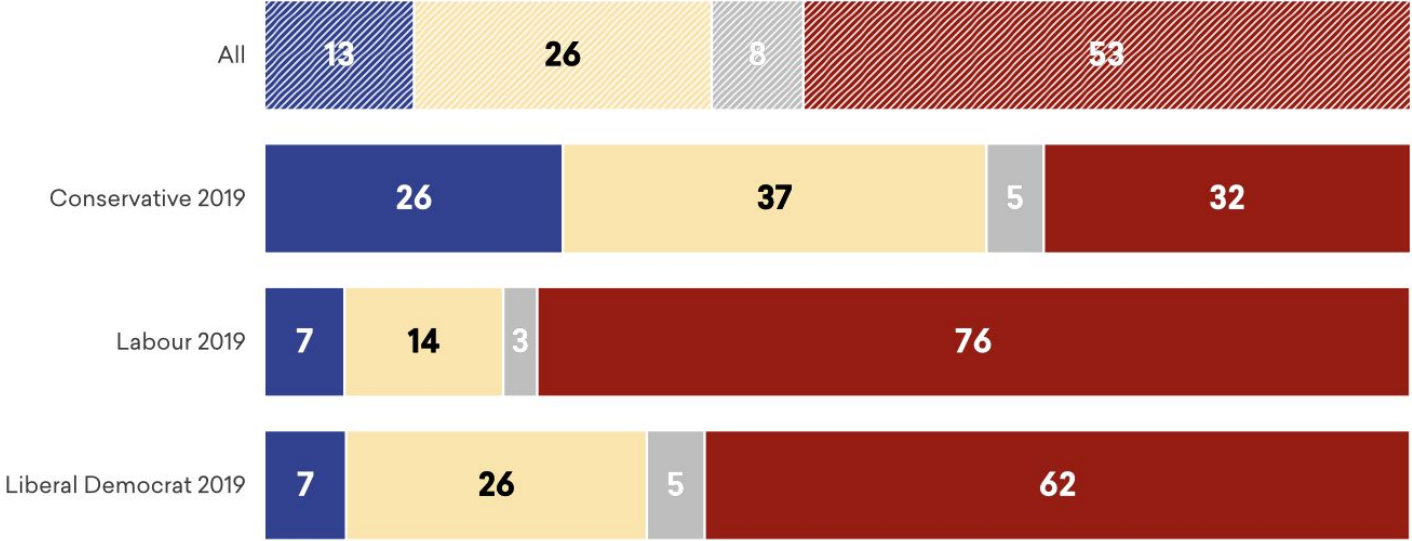
Source: More in Common, May 2024

Starmer's change message appears to be cutting through - half now say he represents change, up from 41% in January. Most people see Sunak as more of the same, including a majority of those who intend to vote Conservative.

The Conservatives are failing the Ronald Reagan test

The Conservative Party has now been in power for 14 years. In that time, do you think they have...

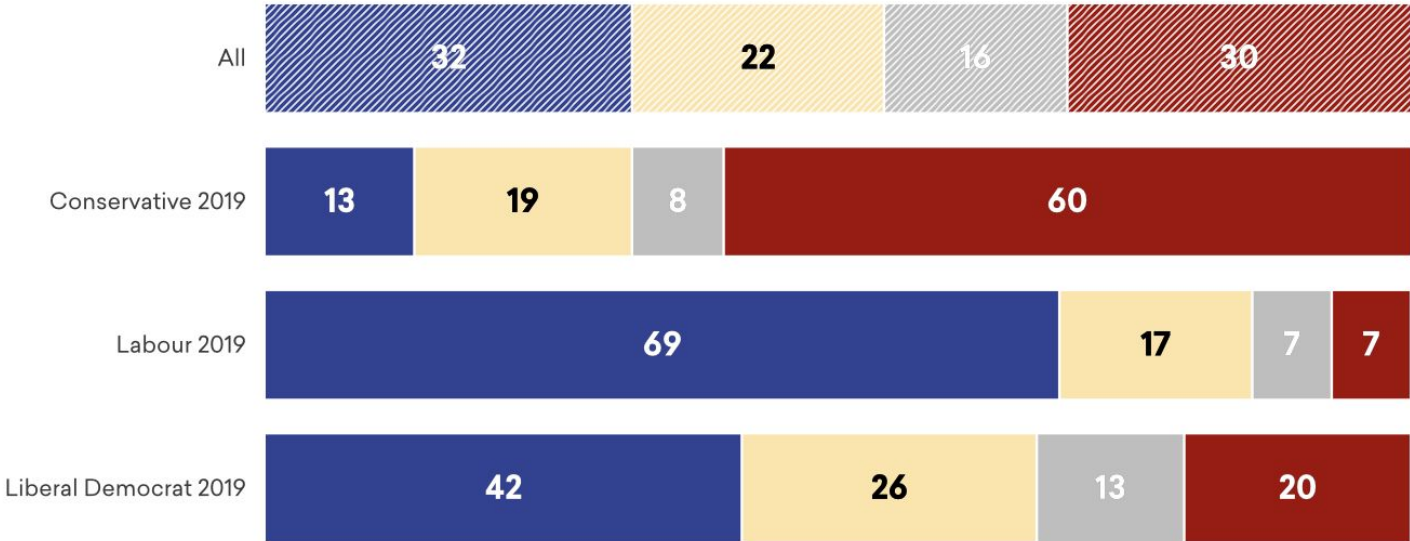
- Changed the country for the better
- Changed the country neither for the better or worse
- Don't know
- Changed the country for the worse



But people aren't convinced Labour can change the country for the better

And if Labour came into power, do you think they would...

- Change the country for the better
- Neither change the country for the better or for the worse
- Don't know
- Change the country for the worse





Voting intention - Past, present and future

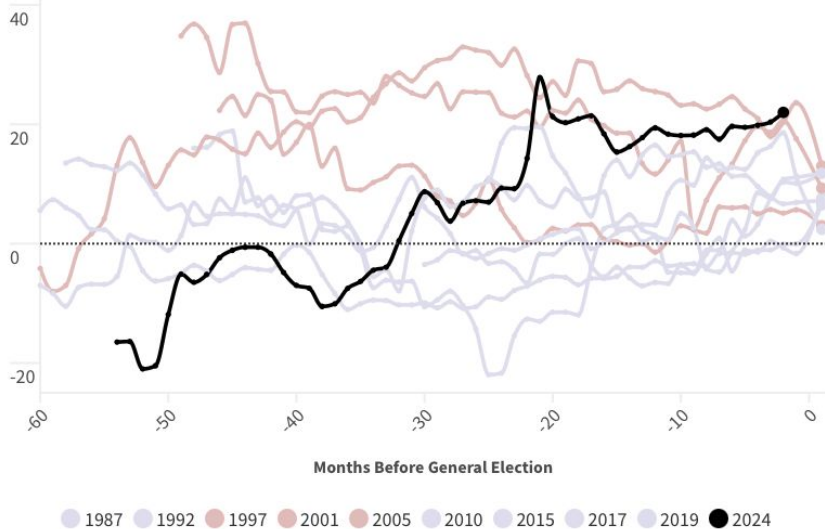
A historic election

To secure a majority, Labour will need to record the largest ever swing by a major party in a General Election (beating Blair's record). But if the Conservatives deny Labour a majority it will be the greatest comeback in any election campaign since records began.

Labour's Lead in Historical Context

Winning party's lead over second party in GB voting intention polls

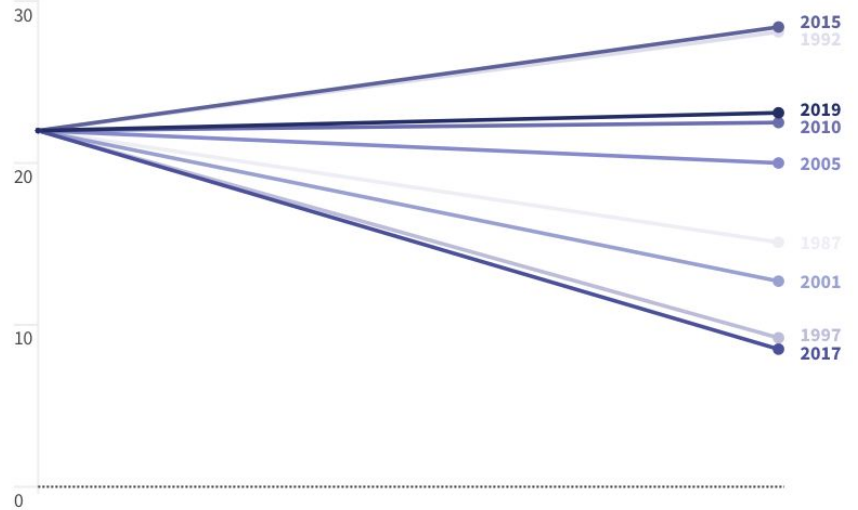
Lead (pts)



What happens now?

Trajectory of winning party's lead during GE campaign, applied to Labour's current lead.

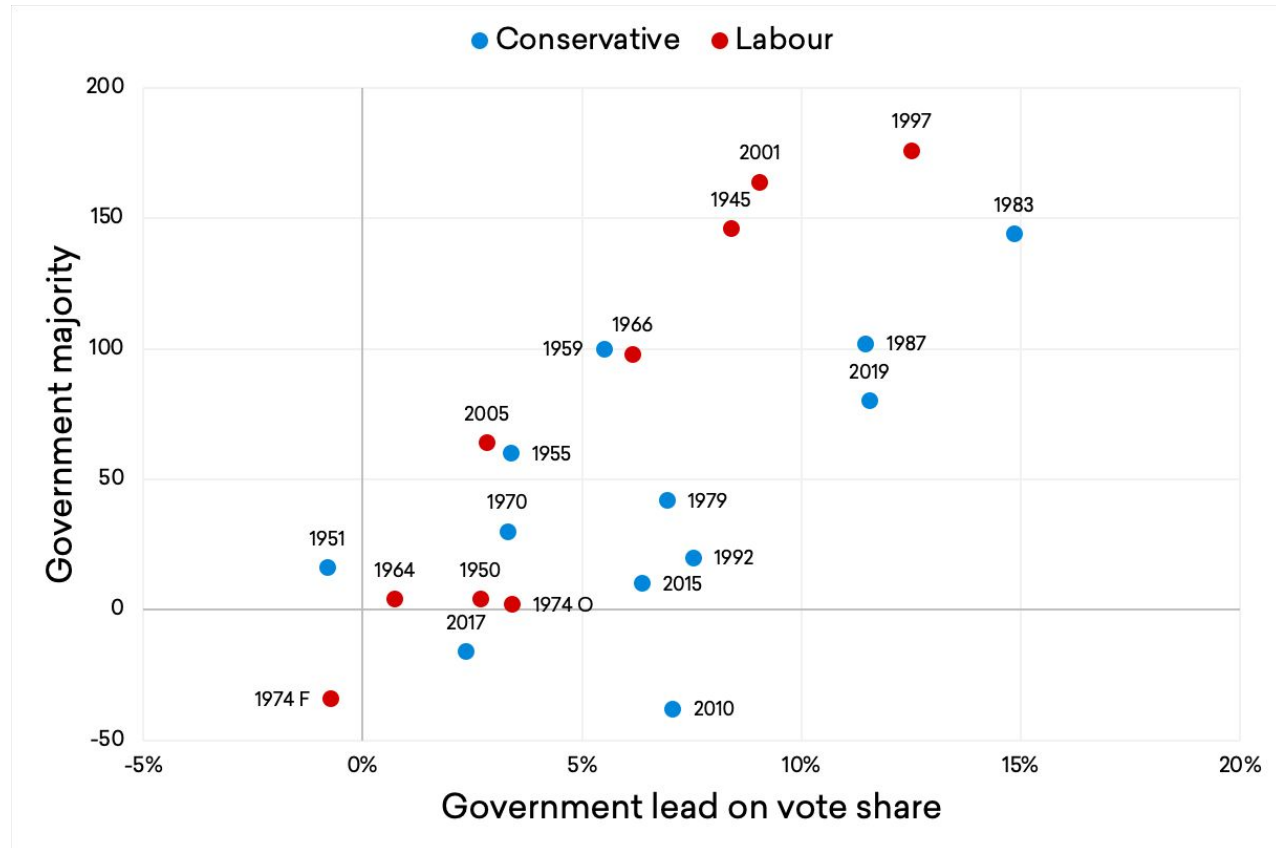
Projected lead (pts)



When Labour wins, they tend to win big

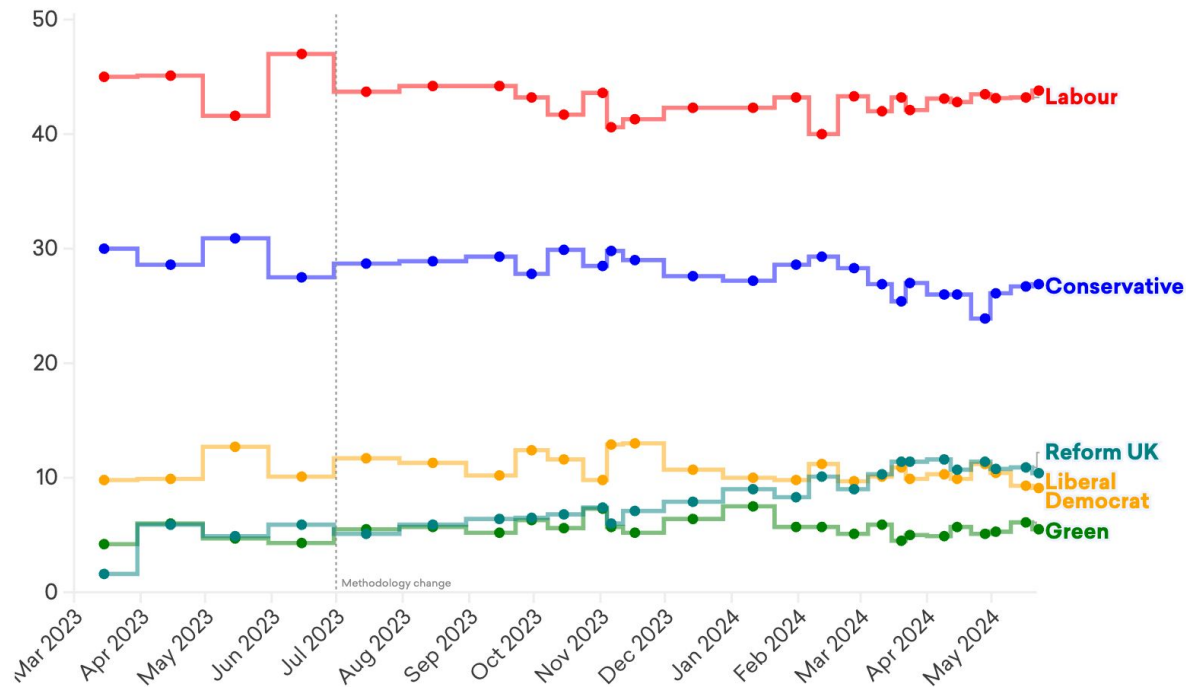
The three most efficient winning coalitions - turning votes into seats - were all Labour (2001, 1997, 1945).

2019 was not very efficient. With a larger lead than Blair had in 2001, Johnson won a majority half the size.



Latest voting intention

Westminster voting intention over time



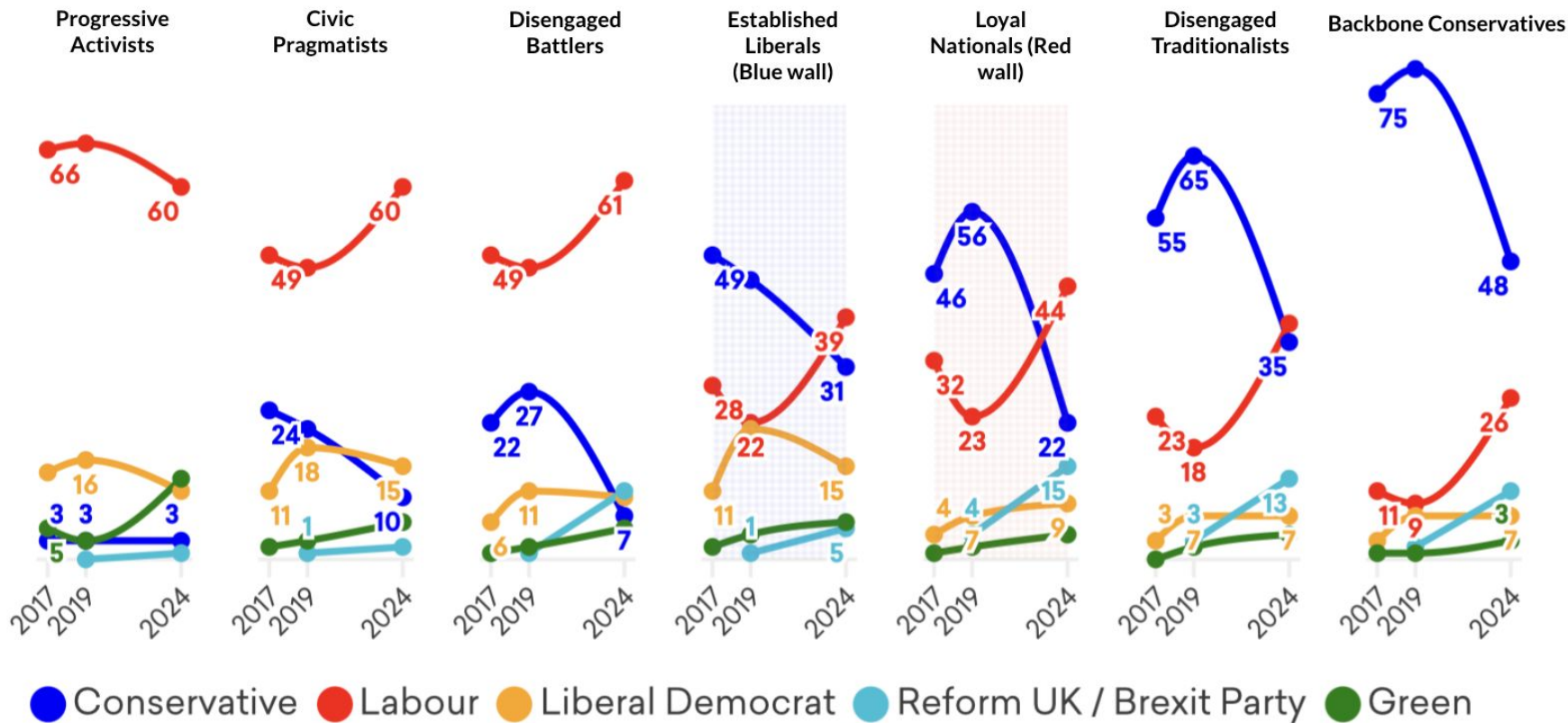
Latest fieldwork: 22nd-23rd May 2024

In the campaign's first week, the polls are yet to show any signs of a long-anticipated tightening.

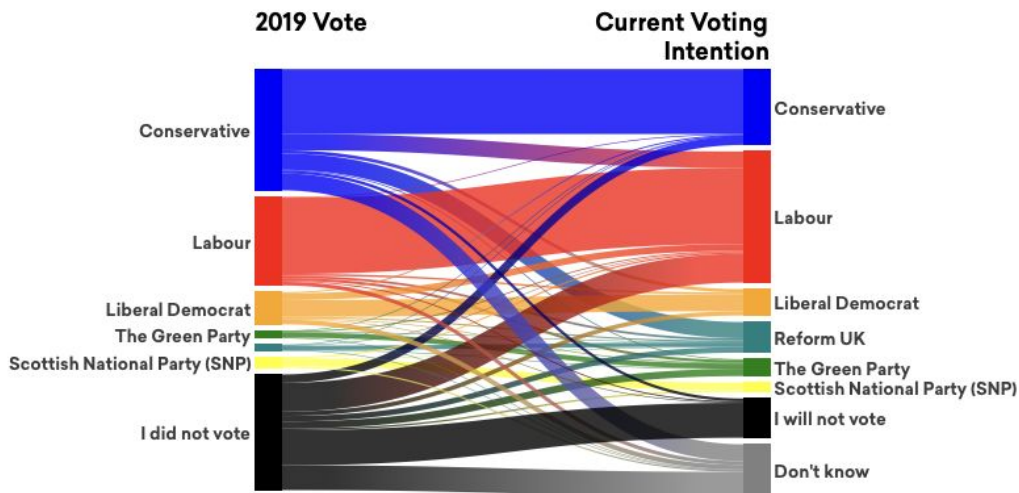
The Conservative Party are the lowest they have ever been in the polls when an election has been called.

Labour also holds the largest lead of any party at the time an election was called since polling began.

The changed shape of the Labour and Conservative voting coalitions



How does 2024 compare to 1997?

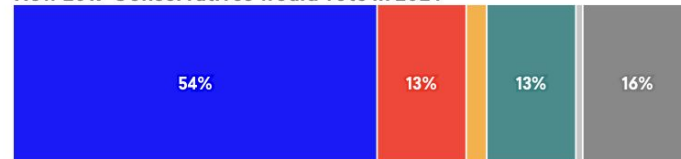


● Conservative ● Labour ● Liberal Democrats ● Reform ● Other
● Don't know / Would not vote

How 1992 Conservatives voted in 1997



How 2019 Conservatives would vote in 2024



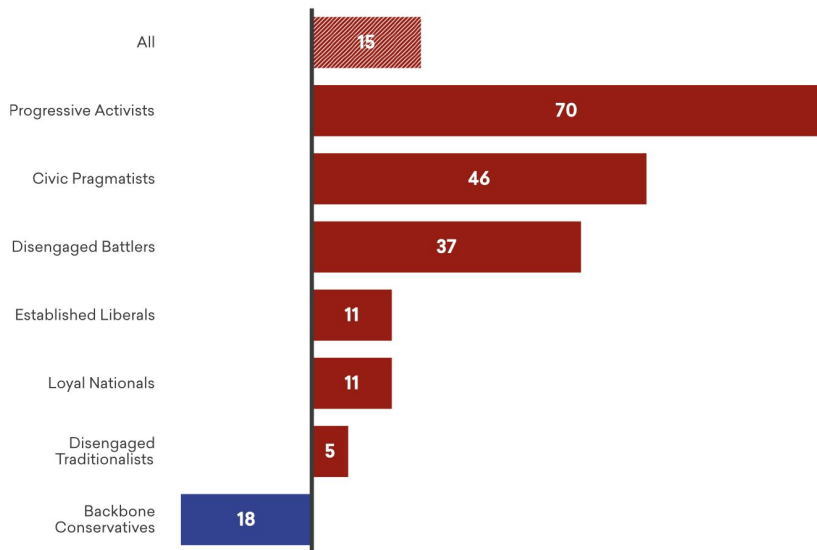
Just over half of 2019 Conservatives are sticking with the party, and Labour are winning 13% of 2019 Tories. Unlike in 1997, when 11% of Conservatives switched to the Lib Dems, only 3% of former Tories intend to back the Lib Dems at this year's election. Instead, 2019 Conservative voters are switching to Reform at about the same rate as they're defecting to Labour.

Conservative support is concentrated in their base

All segments bar one are more likely to say the Conservatives deserve to lose the election than win it, and to want Keir Starmer as PM rather than Rishi Sunak. Only within the Backbone Conservative segment (the loyal Conservative base) is there net support.

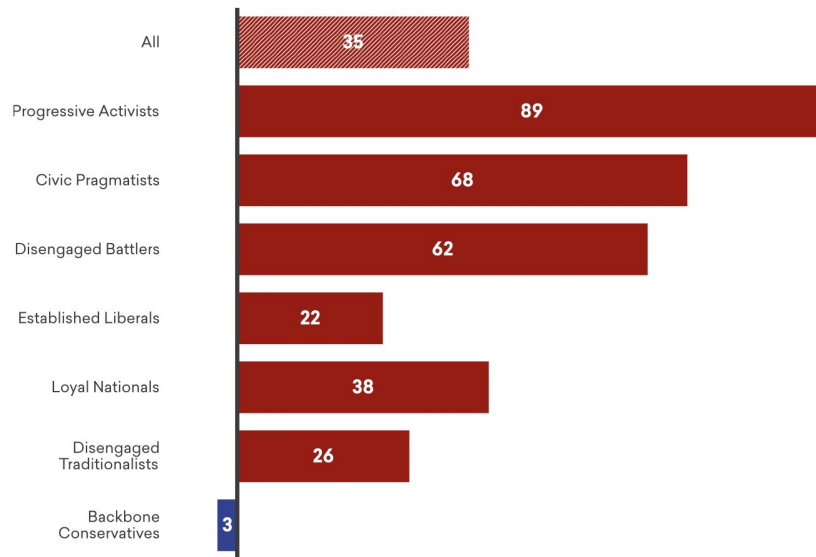
After this General Election, who do you most want to be Prime Minister?

● Rishi Sunak ● Keir Starmer



Which of the following comes closest to your view?

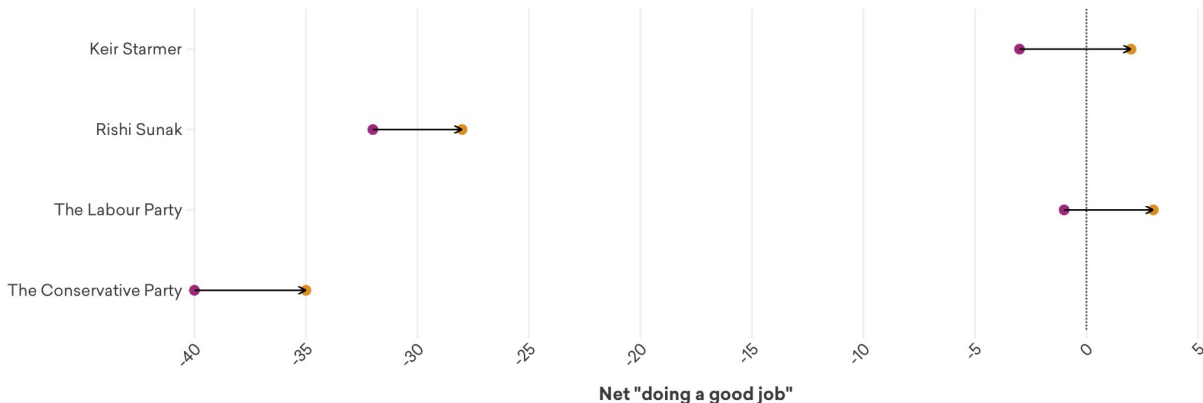
● The Conservative Party deserves to win the next election
● The Conservative Party deserves to lose the next election



Starmer and Labour move into positive approval

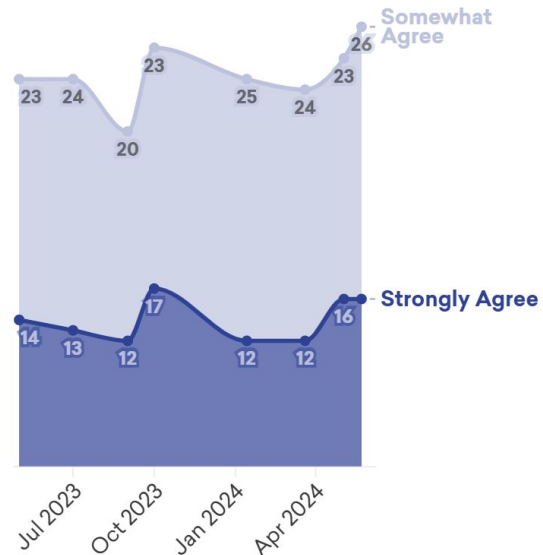
For each of the following please indicate whether you think they are doing a good job or a bad job.

● January 2024 ● May 2024



Source: More in Common, May 2024

"Keir Starmer is an asset to the Labour Party"

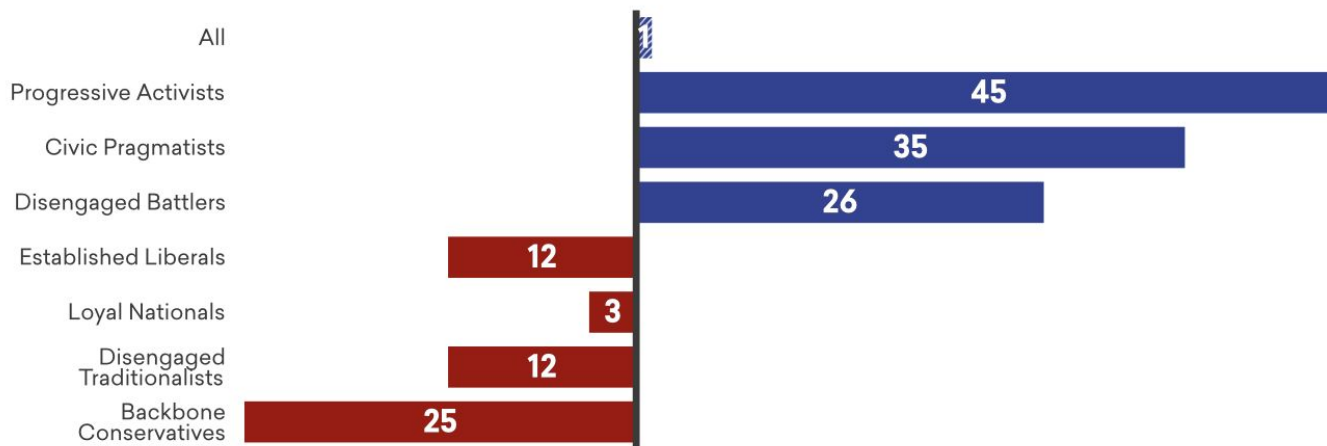


For the first time this year, people are more likely to say that Starmer is doing a good job than a bad job. And he is seen as an asset to Labour by more people now than ever. Sunak's approval has also increased, along with the Conservatives', but a majority still say he is doing a bad job.

Yet many are not convinced Labour is ready to govern

Which of the following comes closest to your view?

- The Labour party is ready to form a government
- The Labour party is not ready to form a government



More in
Common

Source: More in Common, May 2024
% 'The Labour Party is ready to form a government' minus % 'The Labour Party is not ready to form a government'

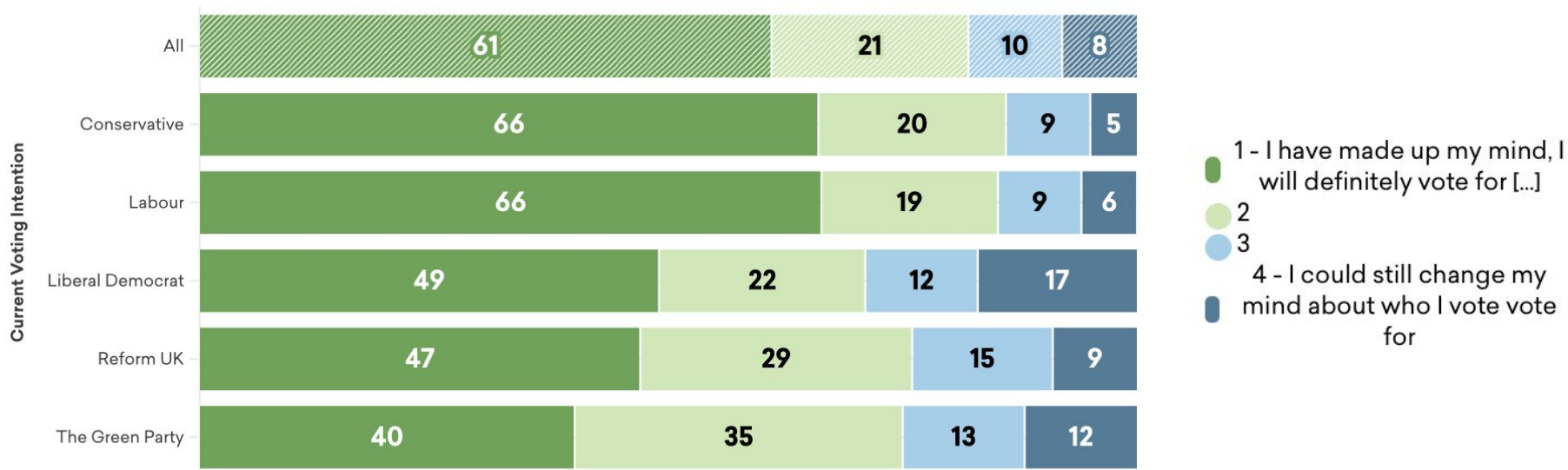
Most people outside of Labour's base do not think that the party is ready for government. But even among these segments more intend to vote Labour regardless.

Most voters don't see themselves changing their minds

61% of likely voters are sure about who they will vote for in July.

Smaller parties voters' are most open to changing their minds - with fewer than half currently certain of their choice.

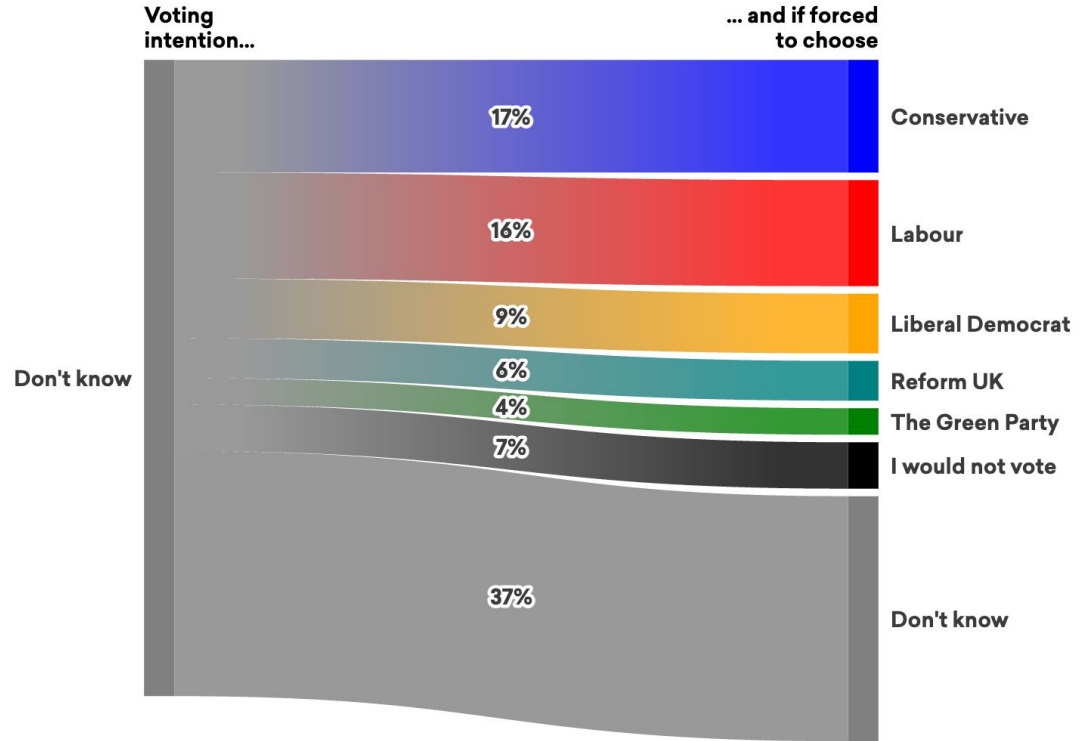
Thinking about the General Election in July, please use the scale below to indicate which comes closest to your view.



But those who are still undecided skew more Conservative than those who have decided

Undecided voters are the big known unknown at the moment.

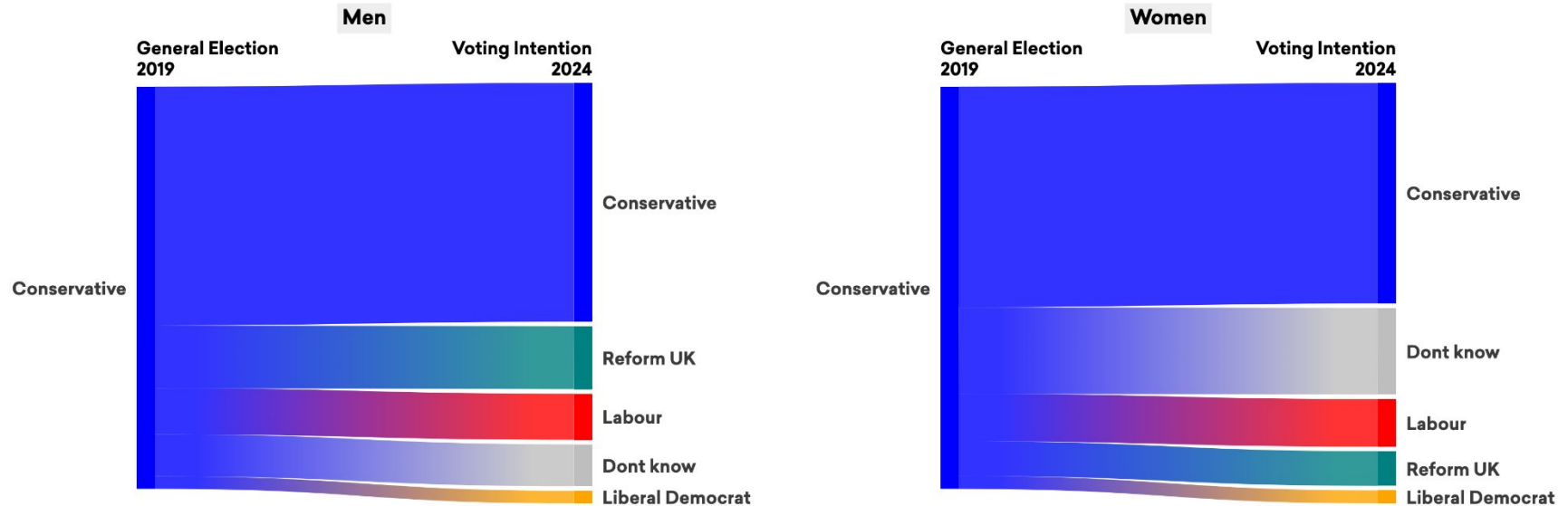
Where the general public are skewing towards Labour, undecided voters are evenly split.



Whitby Woman - the wavering Conservative voter

72 per cent of those who voted Conservative in 2019 and now don't know how they will vote are female. This group skews much older than the rest of the population and are likely to own their home. They are also much more small-c conservative than the rest of the country - coming largely from our Backbone Conservative and Loyal National segments - which supports the idea a large number are in fact disgruntled Conservatives.

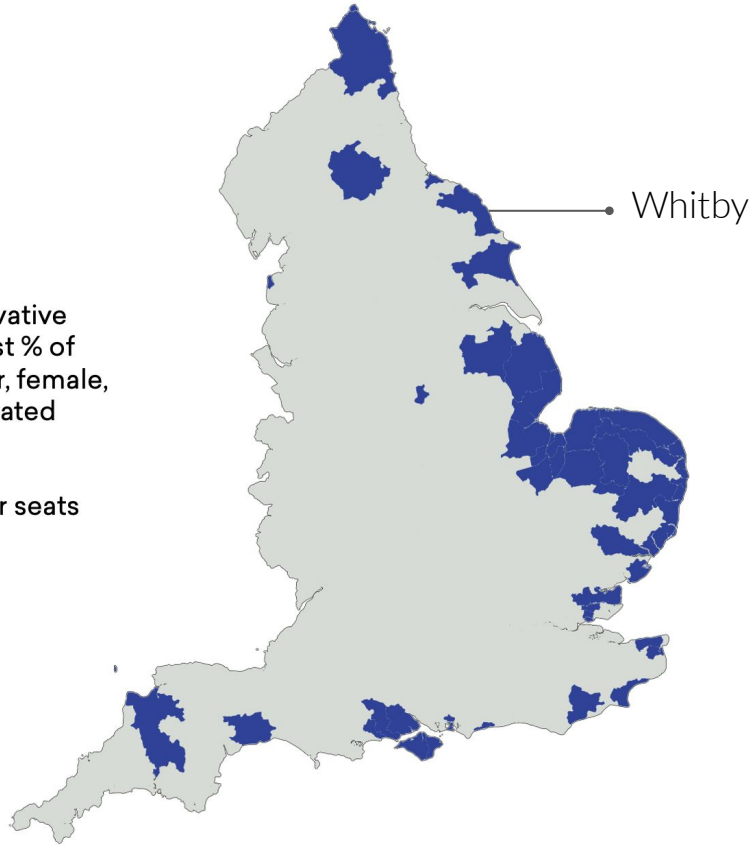
Where have 2019 Tory voters gone - by gender?



Whitby Woman - the wavering Conservative voter

In **BLUE** are Conservative seats with the largest % of voters who are older, female, non-university educated homeowners

In **GREY** are all other seats



A portrait of Whitby Woman:

- Female
- Mostly in their 60s
- Own their own homes
- Didn't go to university
- Voted to Leave in 2016
- Top concern is the NHS, more than cost of living

Particularly receptive to the “we’ve turned a corner message” and have no confidence in Starmer or Labour.



**The issues that will
decide the election**

Britons' big issues

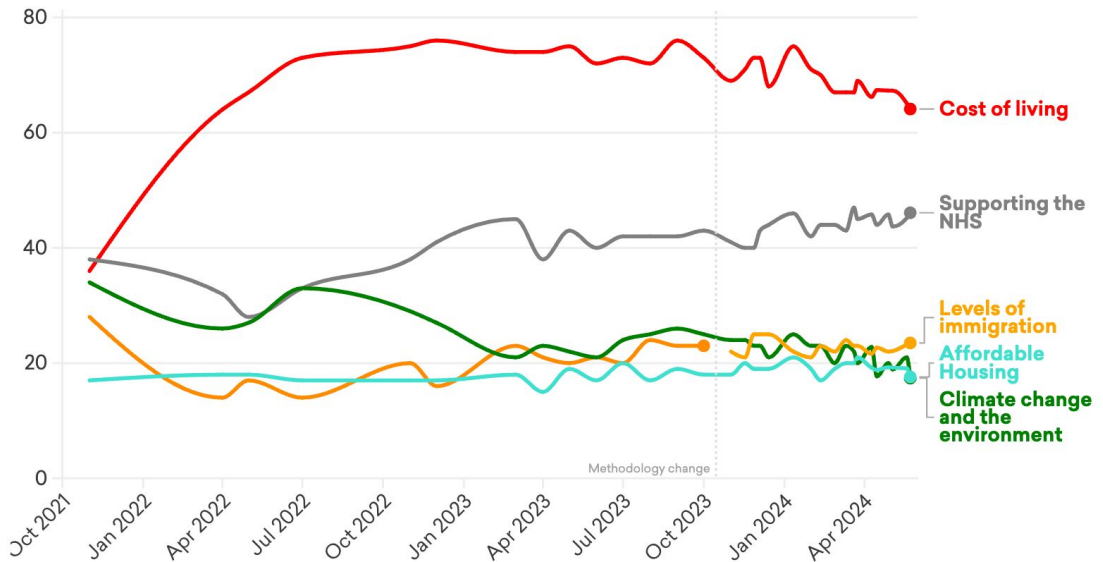
The public tend to agree that the main issue impacting their vote will be the cost of living - which has been the top concern for years.

For almost half, the NHS is another main factor.

Beyond this, issue salience varies by voter group. Immigration, housing and climate are the broadest concerns.

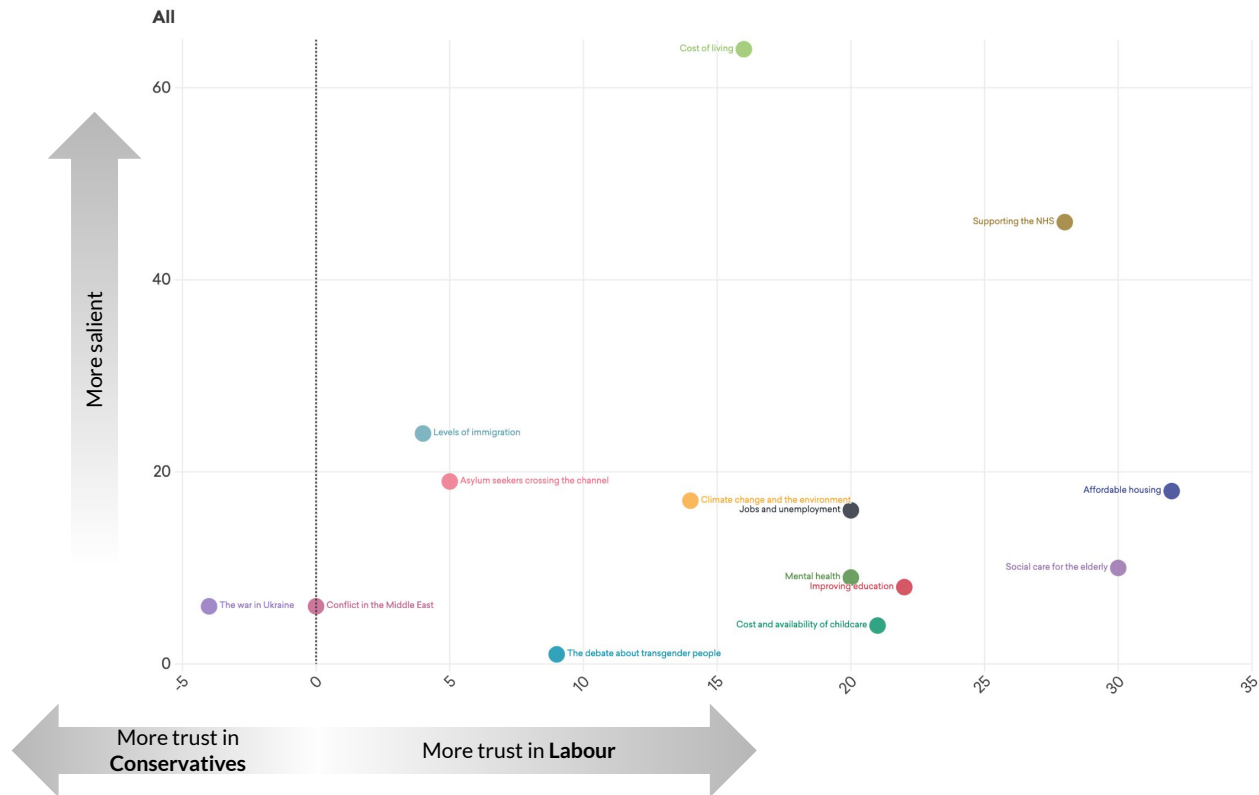
Britons' big issues over time

Thinking about the next General Election, which of the following issues are most likely to impact your vote? Please select up to three



Methodology change: rephrasing of migration answer options
Latest fieldwork: 22-23 May 2024

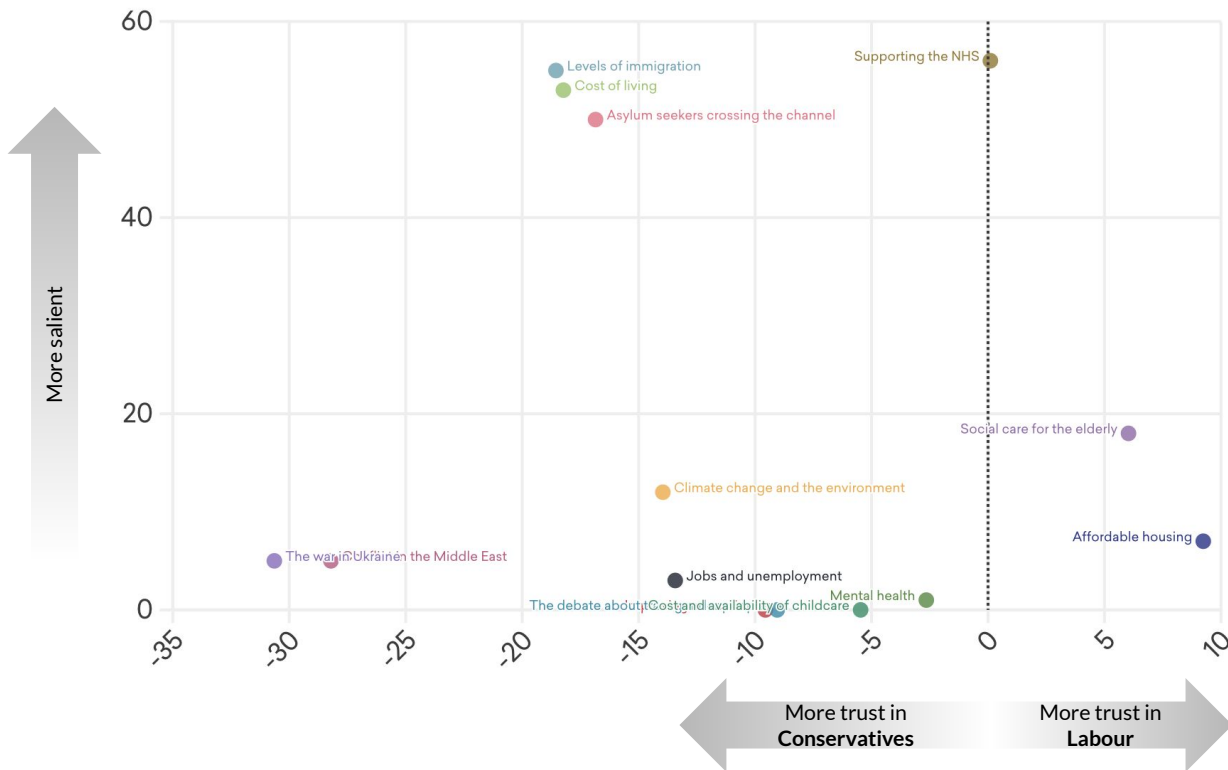
Labour is more trusted on all the most important issues



Labour is ahead of the Conservatives on every issue we have asked about, apart from the War in Ukraine.

Most importantly, they hold comfortable leads on the NHS and cost of living, which are easily the public's most important issues.

But for Whitby Woman it is a more mixed picture



The issues that matter to this group are the NHS, cost of living and immigration.

On immigration and the economy, Whitby Woman is more likely to say she trusts the Conservatives more than Labour.

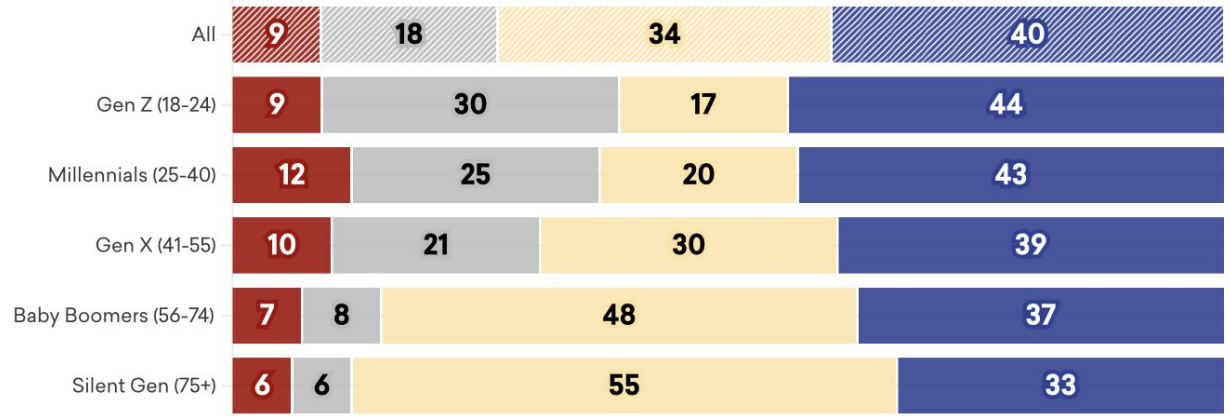
But the NHS matters more to Whitby Woman than to the country at large. And on this issue the group is split, with as many trusting Labour more as trusting the Conservatives more.

The 'quadruple lock' on pensions may appeal to older voters without putting off younger generations

Young people are more likely than others to say the triple lock is not generous enough to pensioners. Only 9% of the public think the policy is too generous. Whitby woman is more likely than the general public to say the triple lock is right or not generous enough (87% vs 74%).

Currently there is a 'triple lock' on pensions under which the state pension rises by the highest of either: the rate of inflation, the average increase in wages across the UK or 2.5%. Do you think that the triple lock is...

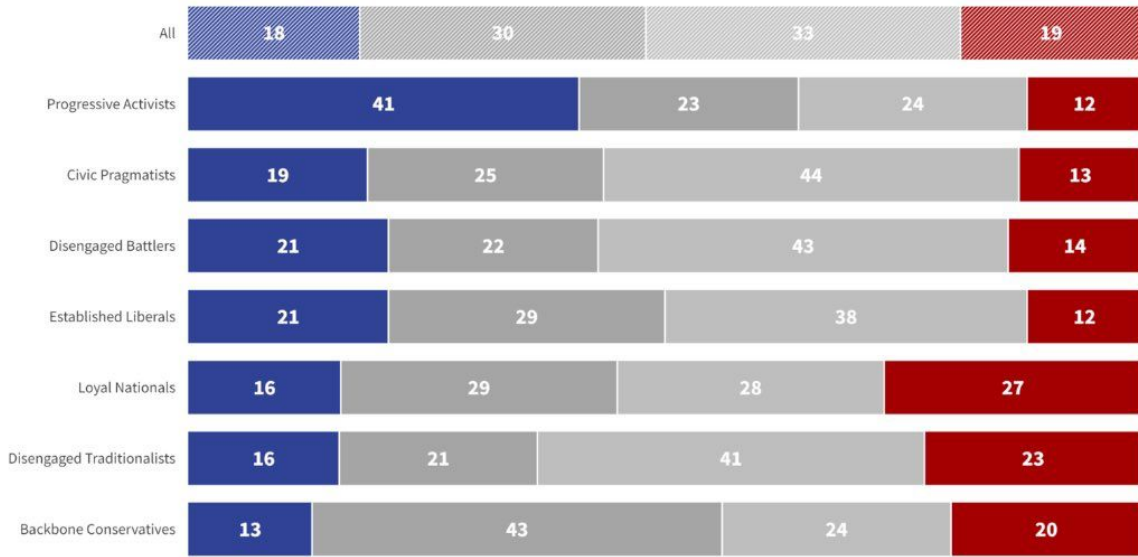
- Too generous to pensioners
- At the right level for pensioners
- Not generous enough to pensioners
- Don't know



Opposition to the 'triple lock' is concentrated within a vocal minority

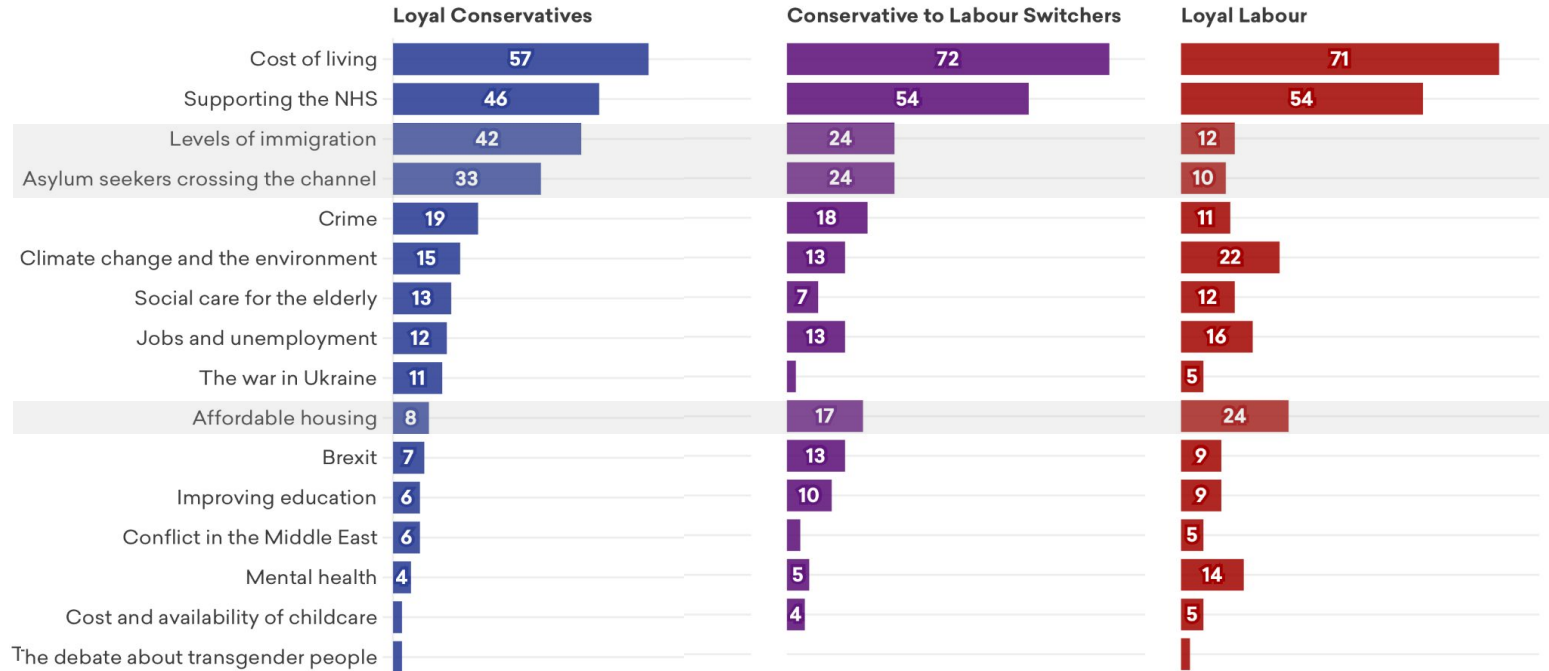
It is mainly the vocal Progressive Activist segment who think too much spending is directed at older generations - the general public are as likely to say too much is directed at younger generations.

Which of the following comes closest to your view? ● In the UK today too much government spending is directed at older generations
 ● Government spending is directed fairly between older and younger generations ● Don't know
 ● In the UK today too much government spending is directed at younger generations



Conservatives switching to Labour care more about housing, while immigration matters more to loyal Conservatives.

Thinking about the next General Election, which of the following issues are most likely to impact your vote? Please select up to three



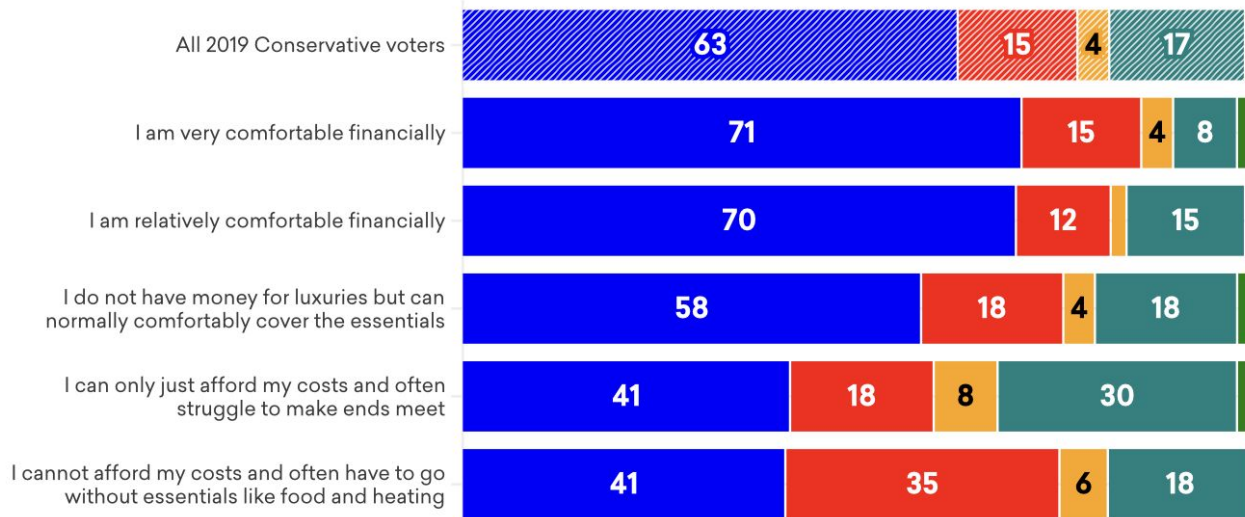
While cost of living is the top issue across all these groups, Conservative 2019 voters who are sticking with the party are more likely to say immigration will impact their vote (42%) than those who are switching to Labour (24%). Housing on the other hand is a key issue for more of those attracted to Labour (17%) than of those staying loyal to the Conservatives (8%).

The cost of living matters in more ways than one

2019 Conservative voter retention - by financial security

How are you intending to vote at the next General Election?

● Conservative ● Labour ● Liberal Democrat ● Reform UK ● The Green Party



Conservative losses since 2019 are overwhelmingly concentrated among more financially insecure voters.

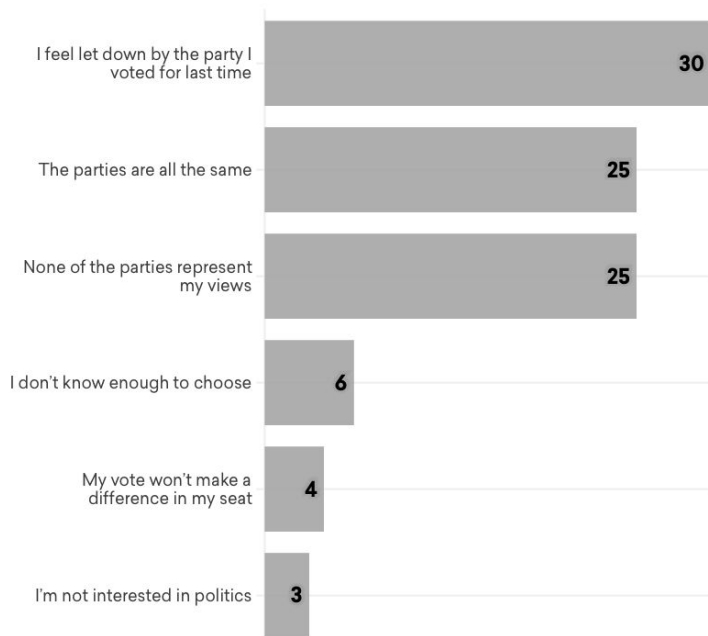
The Tories have held on to 70 per cent of their financially comfortable voters, but only 40 per cent of their poorer voters.

Uncommitted 2019 Conservatives feel let down by the party

The Conservatives are struggling to retain 2019 voters, even those unconvinced by other parties - 8% of 2019 Conservatives say they are unlikely to vote, and 13% of those who will vote haven't decided who for. This is most often put down to a feeling that they were let down last time.

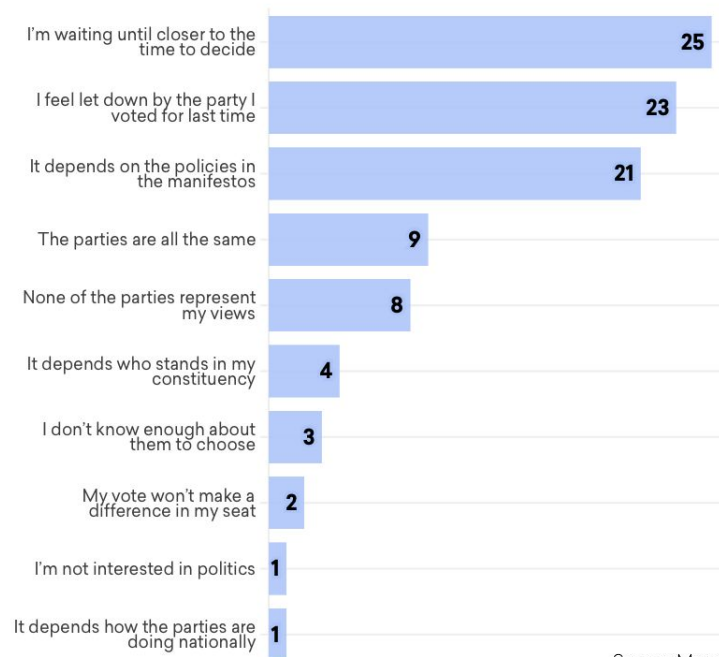
Conservative to 'I would not vote'

You said if a General Election was called tomorrow you wouldn't vote. Why is that?



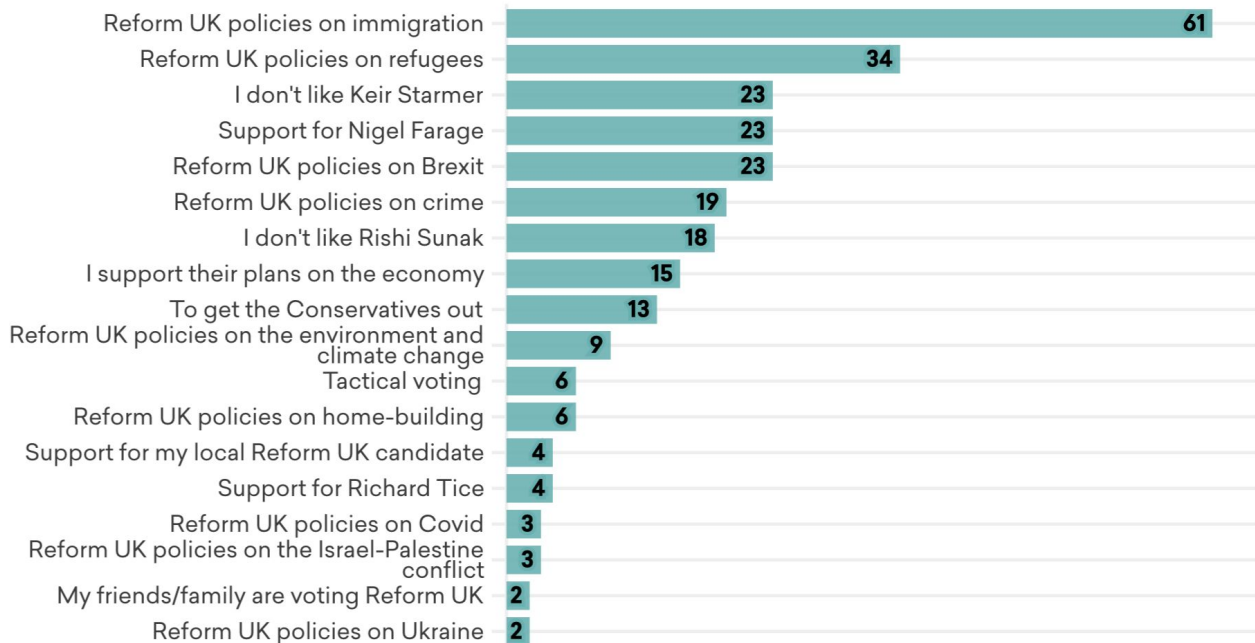
Conservative to 'Don't Know'

You said you're not currently sure how you would vote in a General Election. Why is that?



Migration policies and anti-Starmerism draw voters to Reform

You said you would vote for Reform UK. What are the most important factors in your decision to vote for the Reform UK? Select up to three



Source: Source: More in Common, April 2024

Immigration policy is the top reasons voters choose Reform.

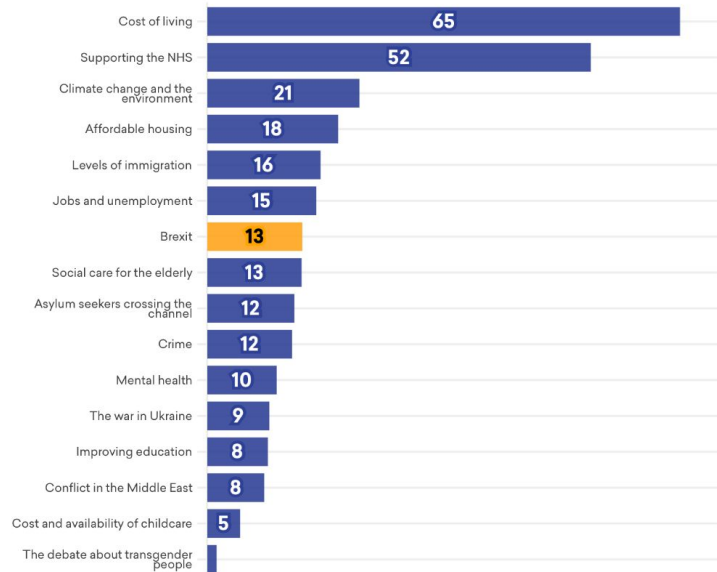
Farage's decision not to stand could affect the party's prospects as personal support for him is a main factor for many.

This matters most for the Conservatives - previous More in Common analysis found Reform winning 14% of national vote share vs 9% could make thirty seats' difference to Conservative performance.

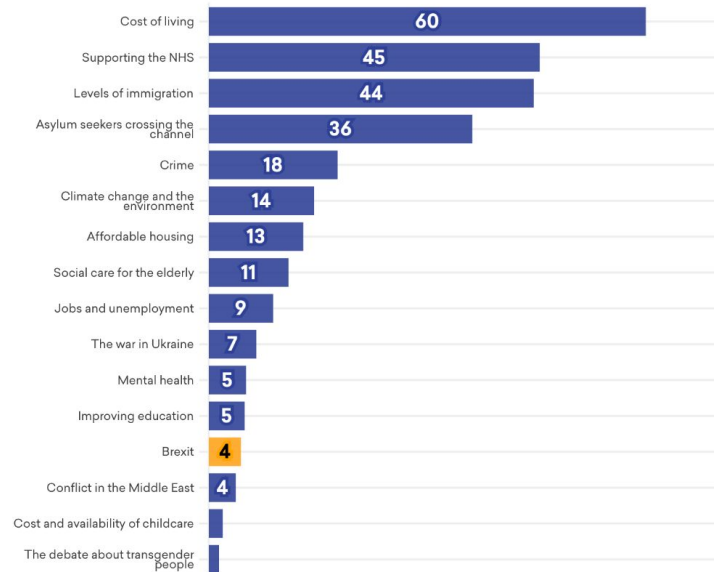
Brexit is a more salient issue for Remainders than Leavers

Thinking about the next General Election, which of the following issues are most likely to impact your vote? Please select up to three

Voted Remain in 2016



Voted Leave in 2016

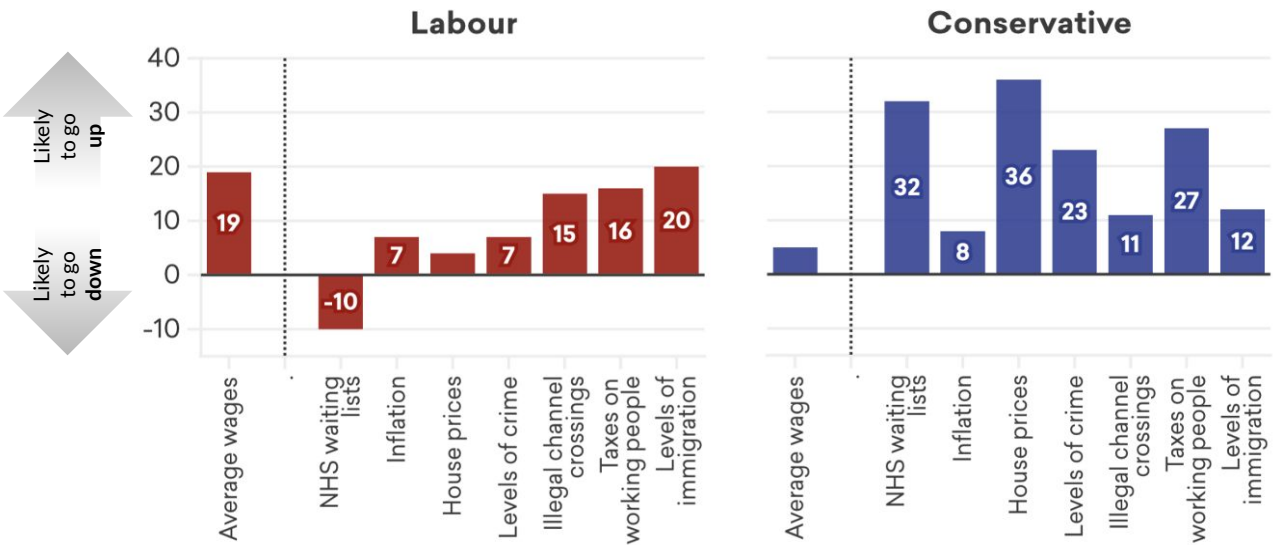


Source: More in Common, May 2024

In this election Brexit will not be one of the top issues impacting how most people vote. Those who say Brexit will be one of the main factors are more likely to have voted Remain in 2016 and to vote Labour or Liberal Democrat this time around.

Britons expect things to get worse - more so under a Conservative government than a Labour one

If the [...] Party forms the next government, do you expect each of the following to go up, go down, or stay roughly the same?



The public aren't convinced things will get better whoever wins the next election.

The NHS is an area where the public think Labour will do a much better job. Crime levels and house prices are also more broadly expected to go up under the Conservatives.

And more of the public think that taxes on working people are likely to rise under the Conservatives than Labour.

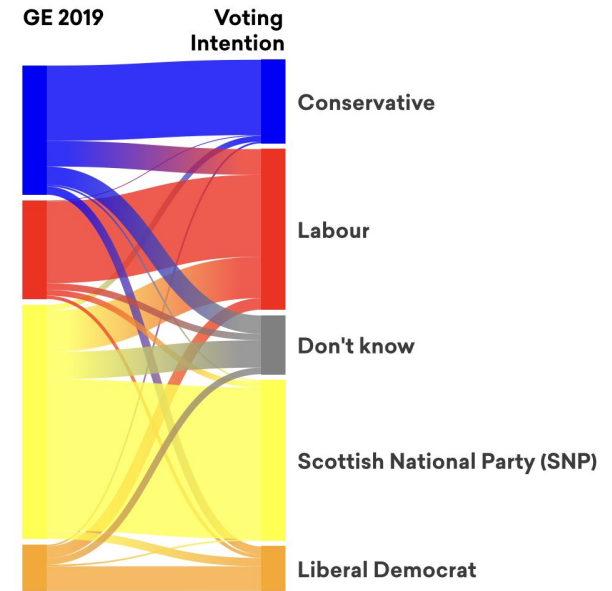
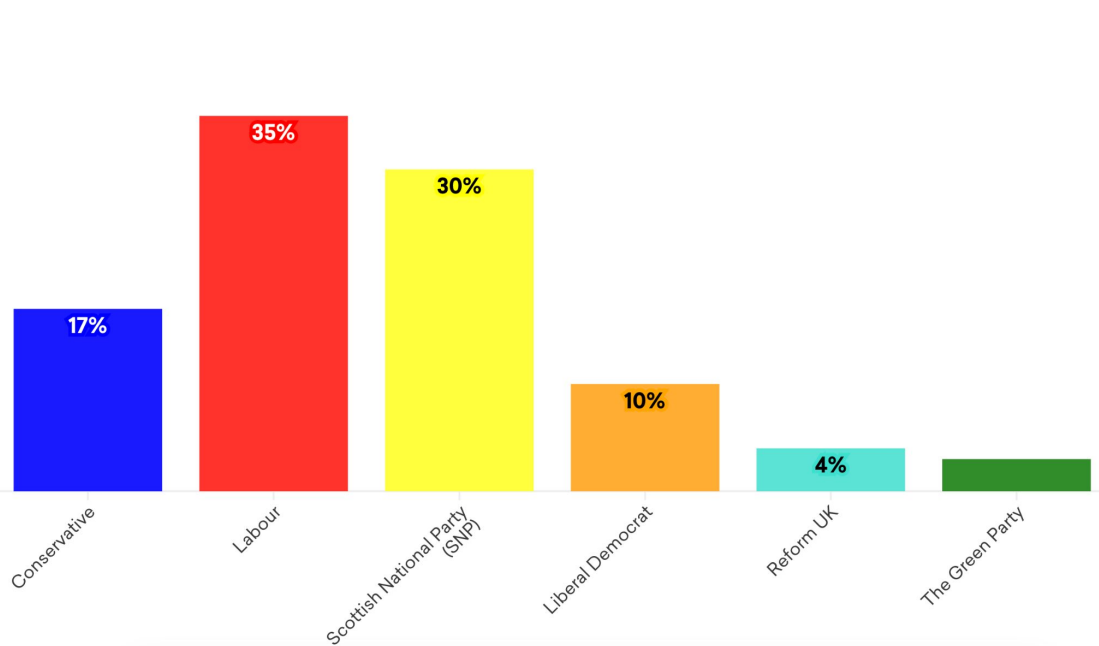
But levels of immigration and channel crossings are expected to go up more if Labour form the next government than if the Conservatives do.



Scotland

How will Scotland vote?

Our latest Scotland poll finds Labour's vote share 16 points higher than the 2019 General Election result, with the Conservatives' vote share down 7 points and the SNP down 15 points. Interestingly in Scotland 63% of voters say they've definitely made up their mind - 5 points higher than the UK as a whole.

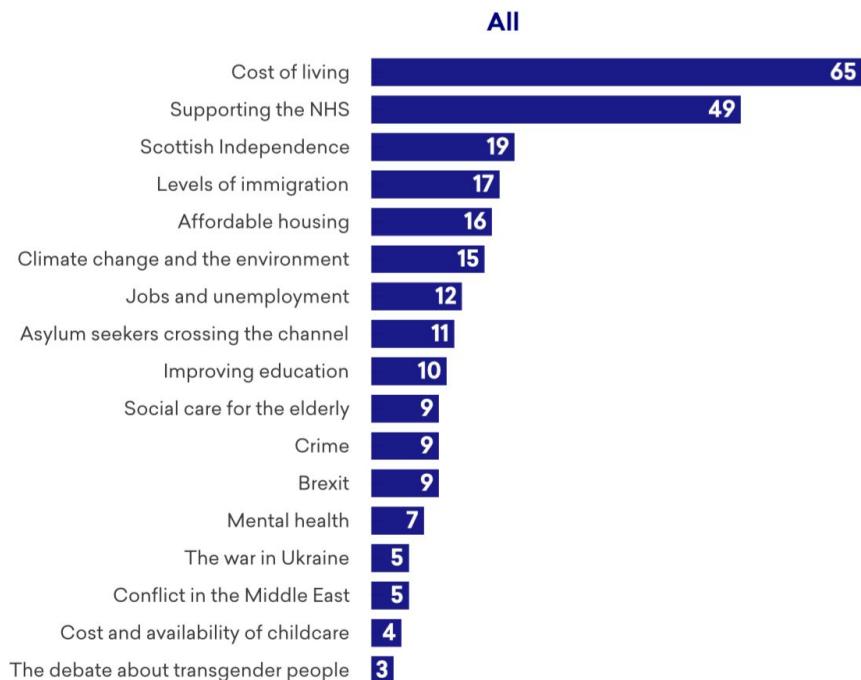


Source: More in Common, May 2024 • Fieldwork: 22-25 May
N = 1,106 Scottish adults

A minority say independence will decide their vote

Scotland's top issues this month

Thinking about the next General Election, which of the following issues are most likely to impact your vote? Please select up to three.



Independence is only selected as a top issue for the General Election by 19% of Scottish voters.

That's despite the pro/anti independence split in the poll being 40% for 44% against - even among pro-independence voters only 34% selected independence as a top issue impacting on their vote.

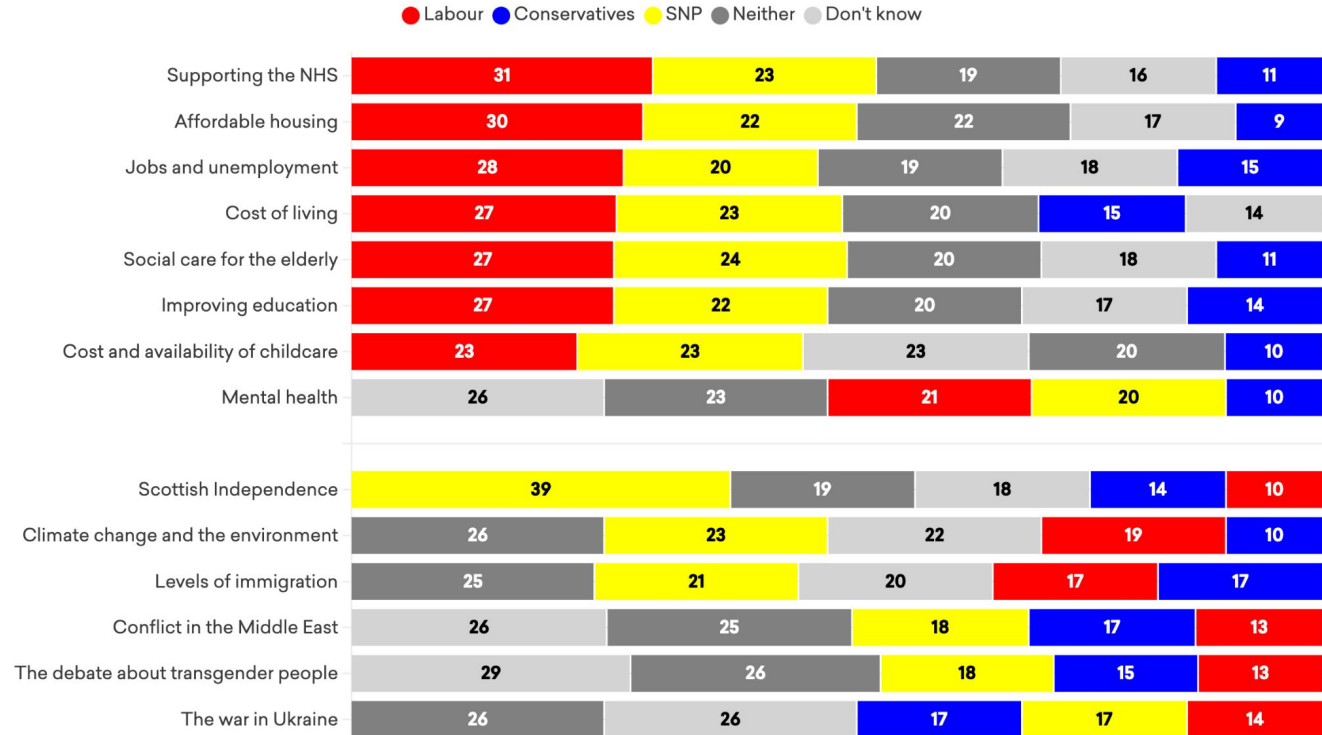
As with the rest of the UK, cost of living and the NHS are way out ahead.

Labour is more trusted than the SNP on top issues

Labour outperforms the SNP on many of the most salient issues, spanning the economy and public services.

But the SNP are more trusted than Labour on independence, climate change and immigration.

Thinking about the three main parties in Scotland, which do you trust most on each of the following issues?

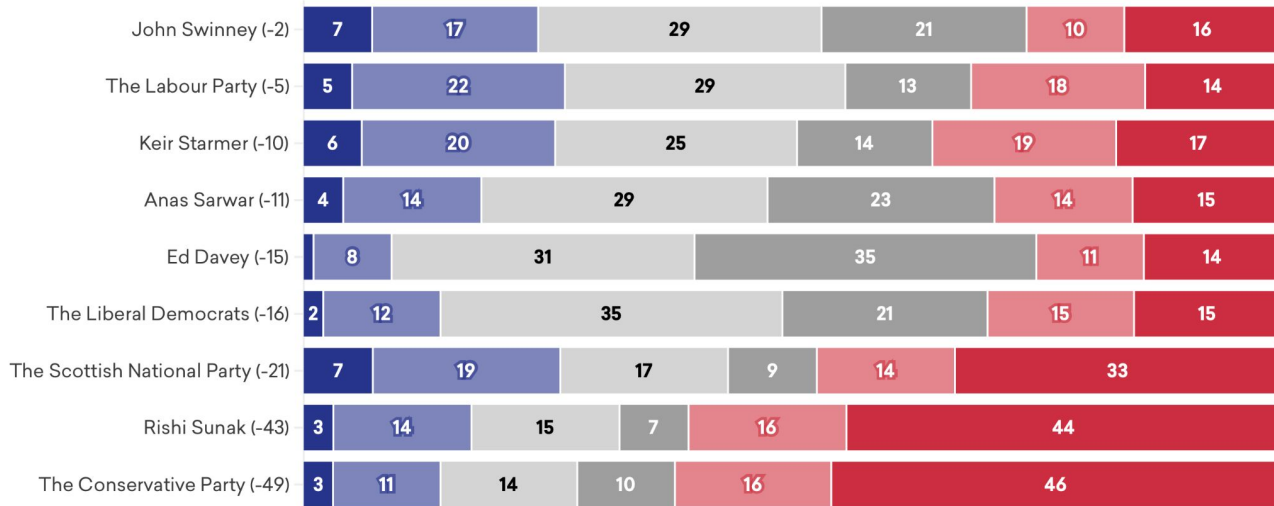


But Swinney has higher approval than Starmer, Sarwar or Sunak

John Swinney has the highest approval ratings of any of the parties or leaders that we tested and voters are significantly more likely to think he is an improvement (34%) rather than a downgrade (5%) on Humza Yousaf.

For each of the following, please indicate whether you think they are doing a good job or a bad job.

● Very good job ● Somewhat good job ● Neither a good job nor a bad job ● Don't know ● Somewhat bad job ● Very bad job





Focus Group Weekly Wash-Up

Conservative 2019 voters - Current voting intention Labour - C2DE socio-economic grade

In response to Sunak's announcement Damien said "I think they've caused the problems that he's trying to fix - that's the way I see it, so I don't believe a word he's saying to be honest"

Adam explained
"When you get rid of one [football] manager you just hope the next one's better. It's probably more a sense of apathy than thinking Labour will do better, but at least Starmer is making things clearer in terms of what he's gonna do."

Tas was unimpressed by Sunak's record:
"He's saying that right now inflation is back at its normal rate. To be honest is that it?... How many Prime Ministers have we been through to achieve just that?"

Faz was optimistic about Starmer's speech:
"I think the right words were used (by Starmer) It's now just like actually seeing if he does become Prime Minister, just making sure the money is coming into the people's pockets"

But Rikk was less convinced "I don't think you know he represents a lot of people in the country. I think, I just think that he just wants to get in power, basically for his own"

One thing the group were pleased about as Tas summed up: "the past couple of prime ministers we've had we've had no choice in the matter, and now it's like our time, our choice like to choose"

Aldershot

Conservative 2019 voters - Mix of current voting intention - Some participants who served in the UK armed forces

On Sunak's economic framing, most were sceptical: pensioner Lisa said
"Everything has just become so expensive. It might be okay for him, but it certainly isn't alright for most of us"

Linda agreed: **"It's a quick get out. If he thinks he's doing a good job, why he's throwing the towel in?"**

These voters thought the government had been dealt a difficult hand in recent years. Alison sympathised: **"it's not just Britain that's having a hard time at the minute"**

Some worried about Labour's economic record and felt they were rehashing Tory promises. Others wanted to see a plan from Labour before judging.

But some warmed to Starmer. Salesperson Joanne said **"I've got more faith in Starmer than I have in Sunak...I felt a bit more from Starmer"**

Across the group, there was broad cynicism about politicians and promises ahead of the election. Retiree Linda said **"I ain't got much faith in any of them"**

Aldershot - clip



Portsmouth / Aldershot

Conservative 2019 voters

All participants sensed that this is likely to be a change election. They knew little about Labour but expected to hear more about what they have to offer in the coming weeks.

Even if they don't know much about the opposition, they think that Rishi Sunak hasn't delivered, and think he doesn't deserve to win again.

Most participants knew very little about Starmer, but those who were clear that they want a change saw him as the default candidate they will vote for.

Some thought Starmer doesn't seem ready for government. Others said he is overly negative and doesn't have any ideas of his own, or questioned how he was going to pay for them.

On Sunak's security framing - all agreed that we are living in dangerous times, and thought he was right to draw attention to it.

A minority in the group thought that this was a distraction from more important issues at home, while others were more convinced this should be a security election.

Bristol Central

2019 Labour voters - Voted Green at the 2024 local elections

These voters were glad the election had been called. Carer Angela said **“it was a bit overdue, he's got there in the end and I guess it now gives the country a chance to put their votes in and I hope we get a decent outcome”**

That scepticism about what change the might bring ran through this group. Retired lorry driver Mike: **“we hear the same thing every time when an election comes on, they're going to do this, going to do that, it never happens.”**

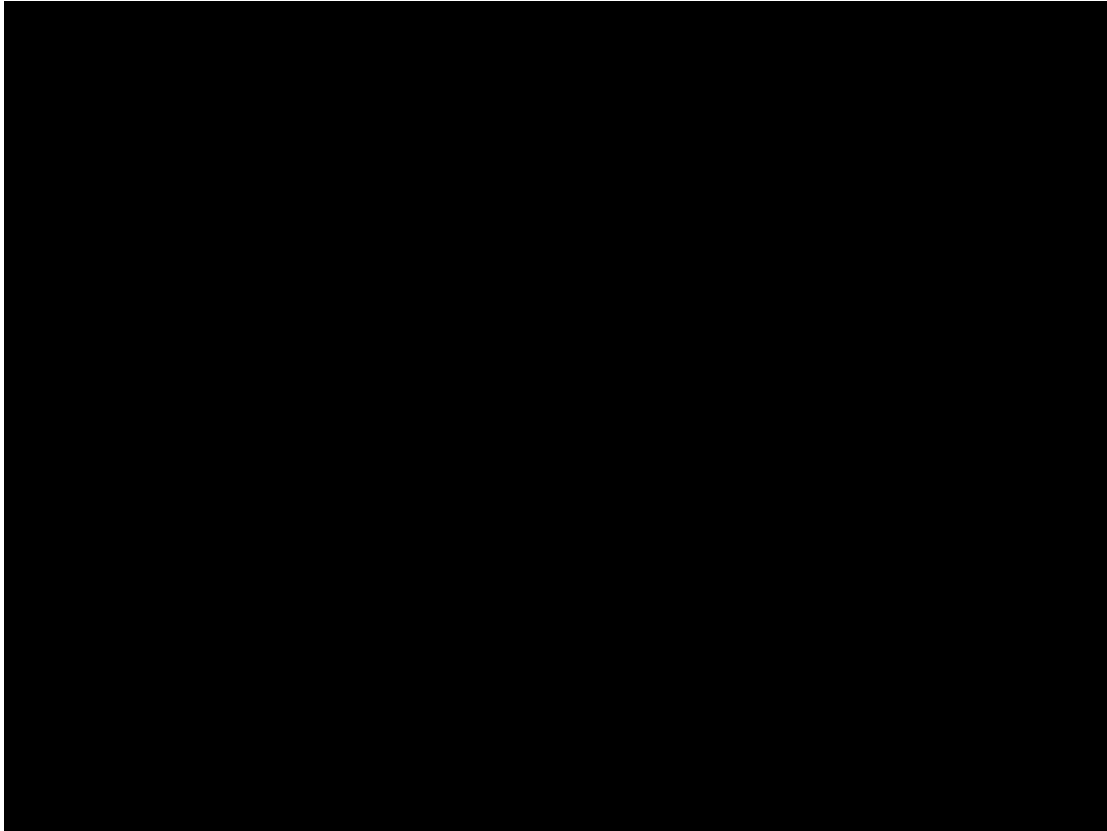
None of these Green-leaning voters knew of Labour or Green Party's position on Gaza. They mentioned concerns about the conflict but it wasn't what they were voting for.

So why are they voting Green? Mainly it was a good local reputation, as well as some local bandwagoning - a few remarked **“there are lots of vote green signs everywhere”**

While many had questions about what difference one Green MP for Bristol would make at Westminster, some were attracted to throwing a **‘spanner in the works’** for Labour.

Social worker Jade said: **“Everybody's kind of mentioned in some way or another today that they feel things are getting worse. So I just feel like try something new.”**

Bristol Central - clip



Tomorrow:

The image shows a YouTube video player interface. At the top left is the YouTube logo with 'GB' next to it. To the right is a search bar. The main video area has a dark blue background with white text. Below the video area is a black box with a live stream icon and text. Underneath is the channel name 'MIC Focus Group Live - Bury North' and a 'Subscribe' button. To the right of the button are icons for likes (0), comments, share, and a menu. At the bottom, there is a status bar showing '1 waiting Scheduled for 29 May 2024'.

YouTube^{GB} Search

The First Brick in the Wall

More in Common Focus Group **Live** from Bury North
Wednesday 29 May – 6:10pm
YouTube

Live in 3 days
29 May at 18:10

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UK Director
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