

**THE
POLICY
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The coronavirus crisis: who has been and who will be most affected?

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Introduction

This report includes findings from a survey of 2,237 UK residents aged 16-75 by [King's College London](#) in partnership with [Ipsos MORI](#), conducted on 17-20 July 2020.

It finds that:

- The public are relatively divided on how the coronavirus crisis will affect Britain: 46% say the country will be weaker because of it for years to come, compared with 39% who say the country will eventually emerge stronger.
- Despite women taking on a greater share of domestic, caring and home-schooling responsibilities during lockdown, the public are more than twice as likely to say the crisis has had a more negative impact on men (26%) than women (10%) so far – and both genders feel that men have been worse hit.
- 59% of white people say people from ethnic minorities have been worse affected by the crisis so far – significantly higher than the 41% of ethnic minorities themselves who say the same.
- 6 in 10 (63%) think the Covid-19 crisis has so far affected old people worse than young people, while just 1 in 10 (10%) think the reverse.
- Similar proportions think that the poor (59%) have been more negatively impacted than the rich (3%), that those from ethnic minorities (57%) have been more greatly affected than white people (7%), and that people in cities (55%) have been worse hit than those in other areas (7%).
- When asked about the longer-term impacts of the crisis over the next few years, there is no change in which groups the public think will be more negatively affected.
- There is also little indication that the Covid-19 crisis has affected the public's views on their own generation's prospects, or those of today's youth: 34% feel their generation will have had a better life than their parents – virtually the same as the 36% who felt this way in 2013, when the same question was last asked.
- Baby boomers are the only cohort with a majority (52%) who think their generation's lives will be better, and they are twice as likely as millennials (21%) and members of generation X (25%) to feel this way.
- People from ethnic minorities (37%) are more likely than white people (26%) to feel their generation's lives will be worse than their parents'.
- Despite the high likelihood of economic hardship for many young people due to disruption caused by Covid-19, the proportion who feel today's youth will have a worse life than their parents has actually declined since last year – from 47% to 38%.

Who has been most affected so far, and who will be most affected long-term?

The public is relatively divided on whether Britain will emerge stronger or weaker from the Covid-19 crisis, but much less divided on which sections of the population have been and will be more negatively impacted.

There is a clear view that so far the pandemic has been worse for old people than young people, and little change in opinion when the public are asked to consider the longer-term impacts – despite the impending economic hardship that has been predicted for many of the young.

People from ethnic minorities are also seen as having been worse hit to date, and likely to be worse hit in the future, than white people – but those from ethnic minorities themselves are significantly less likely than white people to think this.

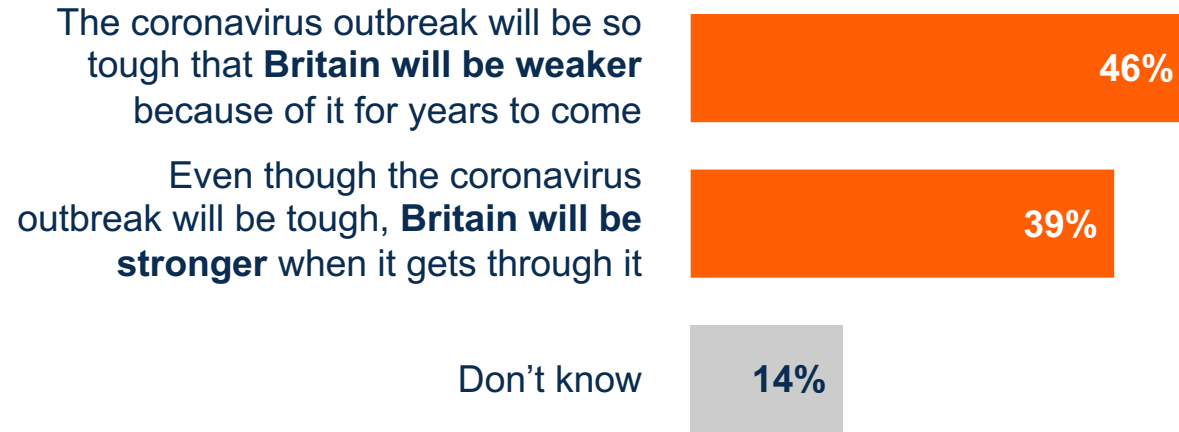
And women and men have almost identical views on which gender has been and will be more negatively impacted by the crisis, with both more likely to say it's men.

The public are relatively divided on how the coronavirus crisis will affect Britain: 46% say the country will be weaker because of it for years to come, compared with 39% who say the country will eventually emerge stronger.

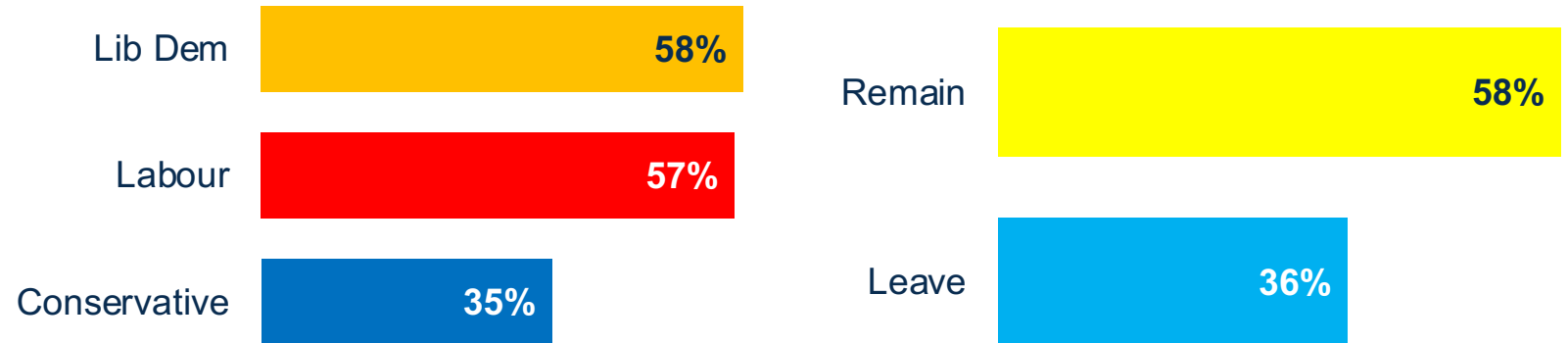
2019 Lib Dem and Labour voters are much more pessimistic than Conservative voters, while Remain voters are much more pessimistic than Leave voters.

And people in Scotland are more pessimistic than the UK as a whole, with 58% saying they think Britain will be weaker.

Thinking about the coronavirus outbreak, which of these comes closest to your view?



% who say Britain will be weaker, by 2019 general election vote and 2016 EU referendum vote

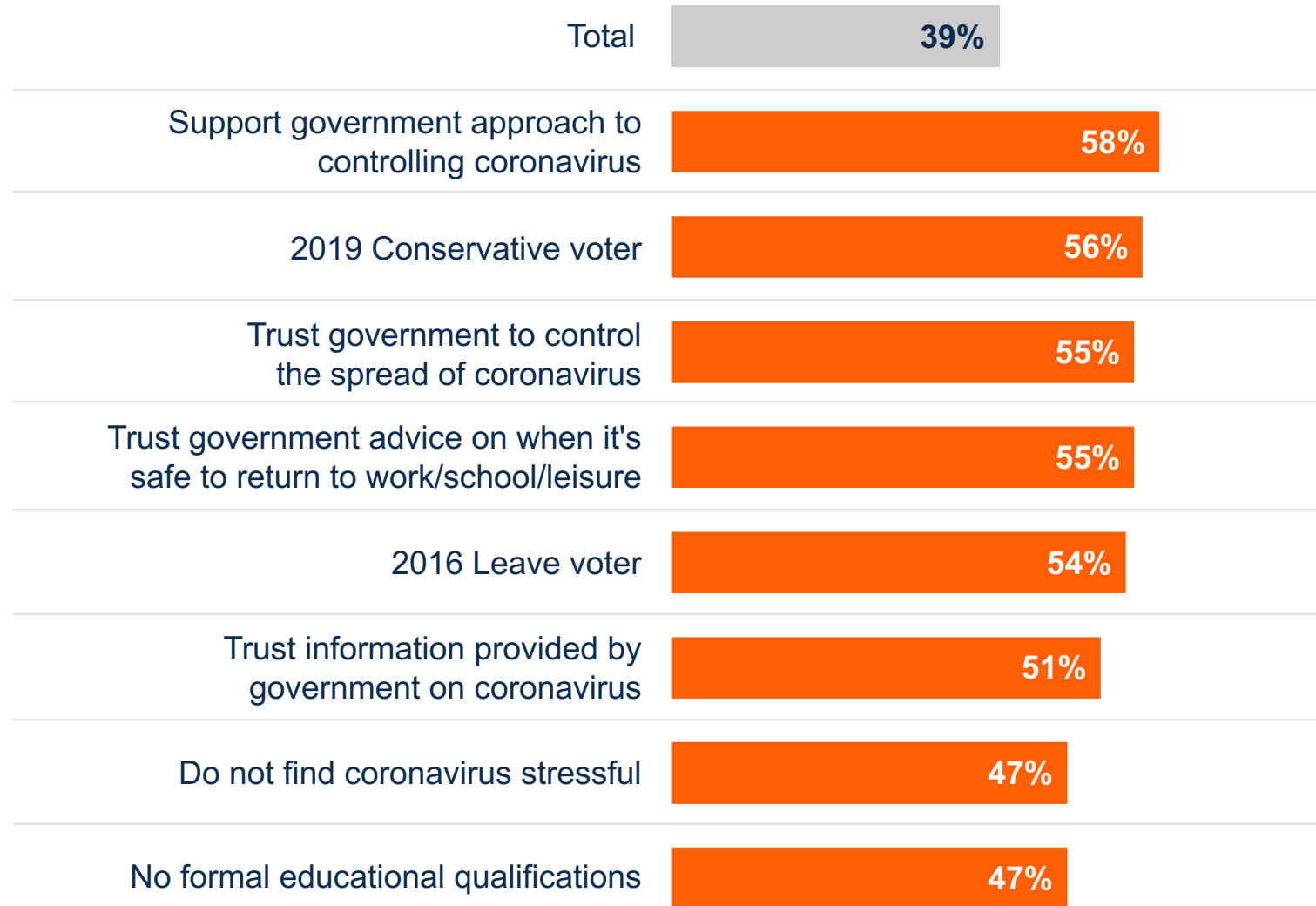


Base: 2,237 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 17-20 July

Greater optimism about Britain's post-Covid future is associated with greater trust in government – for example, higher proportions of the following groups all say the country will be stronger when it gets through the outbreak:

- Those who support the approach being taken on controlling coronavirus (58%).
- 2019 Conservative voters (56%).
- Those who trust the government to control the spread of coronavirus (55%).
- Those who trust government advice on when it's safe to resume aspects of normal life (55%).

% who say Britain will be **stronger** when it gets through the coronavirus outbreak



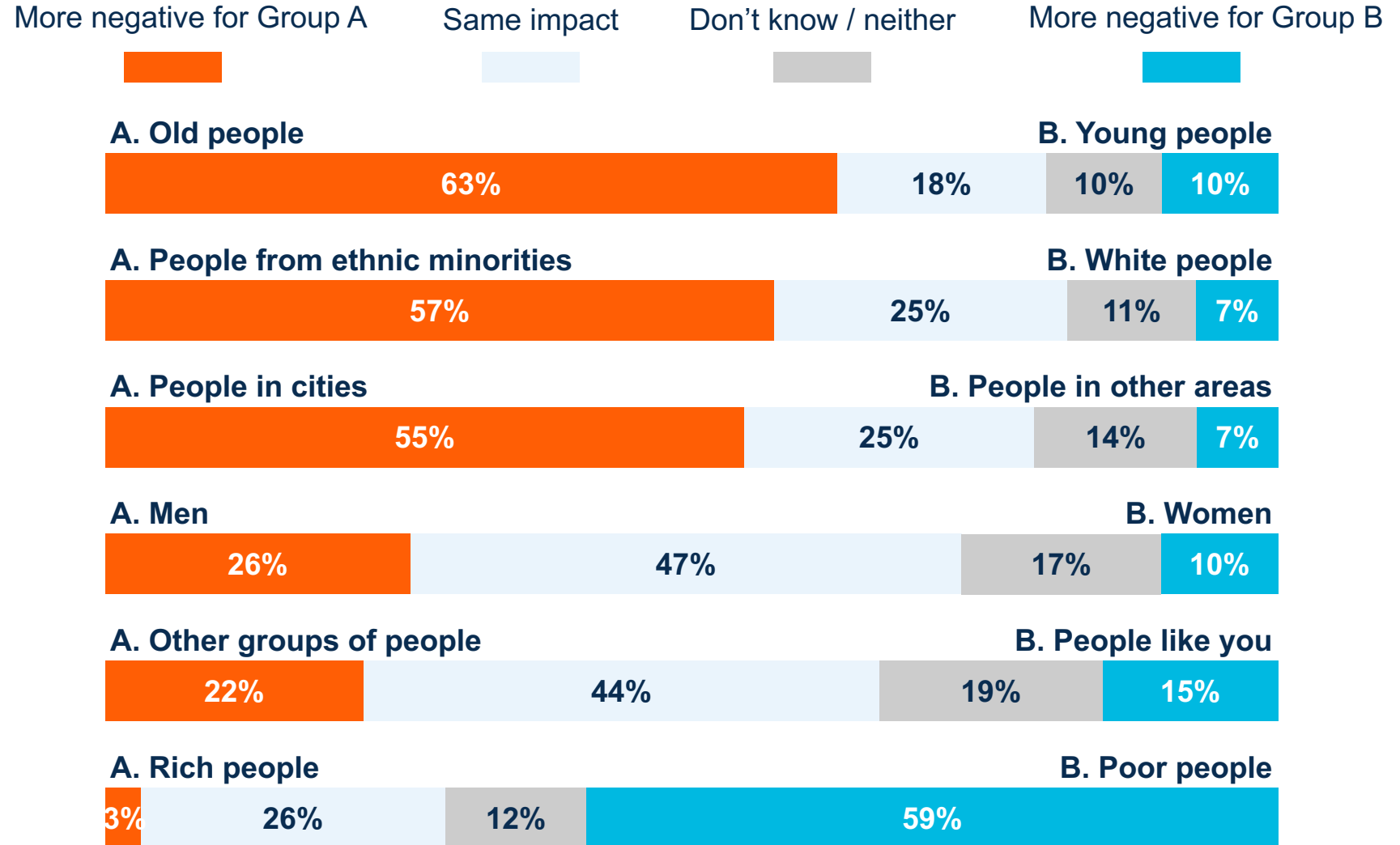
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6 in 10 (63%) think the Covid-19 crisis has so far affected old people worse than young people, while just 1 in 10 (10%) think the reverse.

Similar proportions think that the poor (59%) have been more negatively impacted than the rich (3%), that those from ethnic minorities (57%) have been more greatly affected than white people (7%), and that people in cities (55%) have been worse hit than those in other areas (7%).

And despite much research showing many women have been under significant strain throughout lockdown due to their taking on a greater share of domestic, caring and home-schooling responsibilities, the public are more than twice as likely to say the crisis has had a more negative impact on men (26%) than women (10%).

Taking all the potential effects into account (such as health, economic and social impacts), and thinking first about the effects of the coronavirus crisis *so far*, who do you think it has had a more negative impact on...?

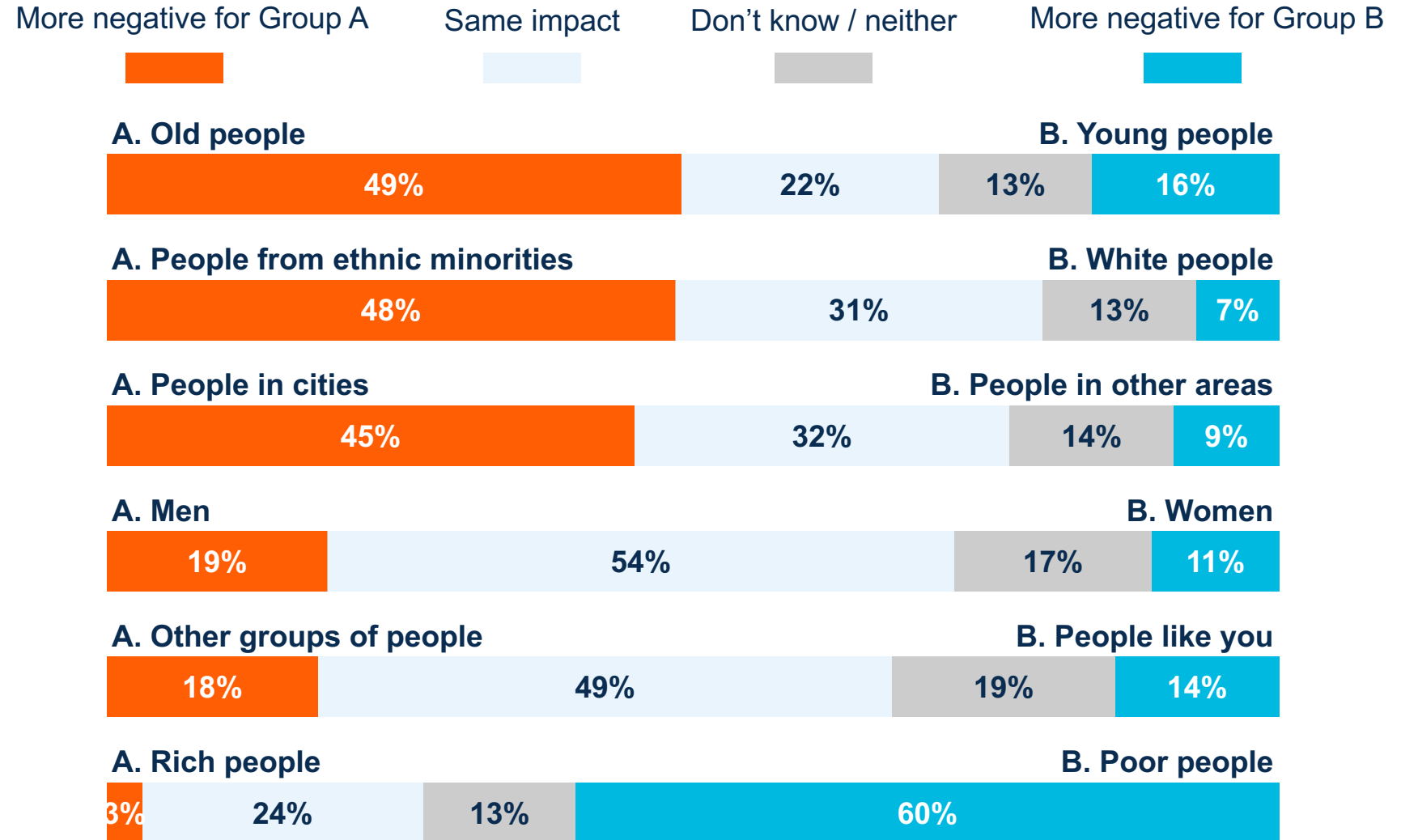


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When asked about the longer-term impacts of the crisis over the next few years, there is no change in which groups the public think will be more negatively affected, although for all but one set of groups (rich vs poor) the proportions who think the impact will be about the same increases.

The only slight change in perceptions of the impact on group B is for young people: 16% of the public say they'll be more negatively affected than old people over the longer-term, compared with 10% who think the young have been more negatively affected so far.

And now thinking about the longer-term effects, over the next few years, taking all the potential effects into account (such as health, economic and social impacts), do you think Covid-19 will have a more negative impact on... ?



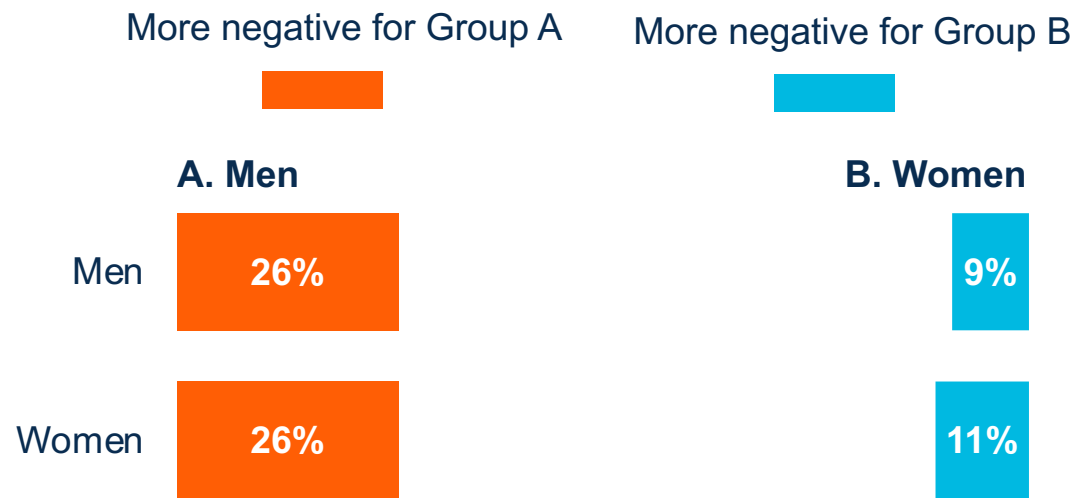
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Women and men have almost identical views on which gender has been and will be more negatively impacted by the crisis.

Both women and men are more likely to think the latter have already been worse hit and will be in the longer-term – although the proportions of both genders who think this declines slightly when considering how the next few years will play out.

Overall, however, women and men are most likely to think the impacts have been and will be about the same for each gender.

Impact of crisis so far:



Impact of crisis over the next few years:

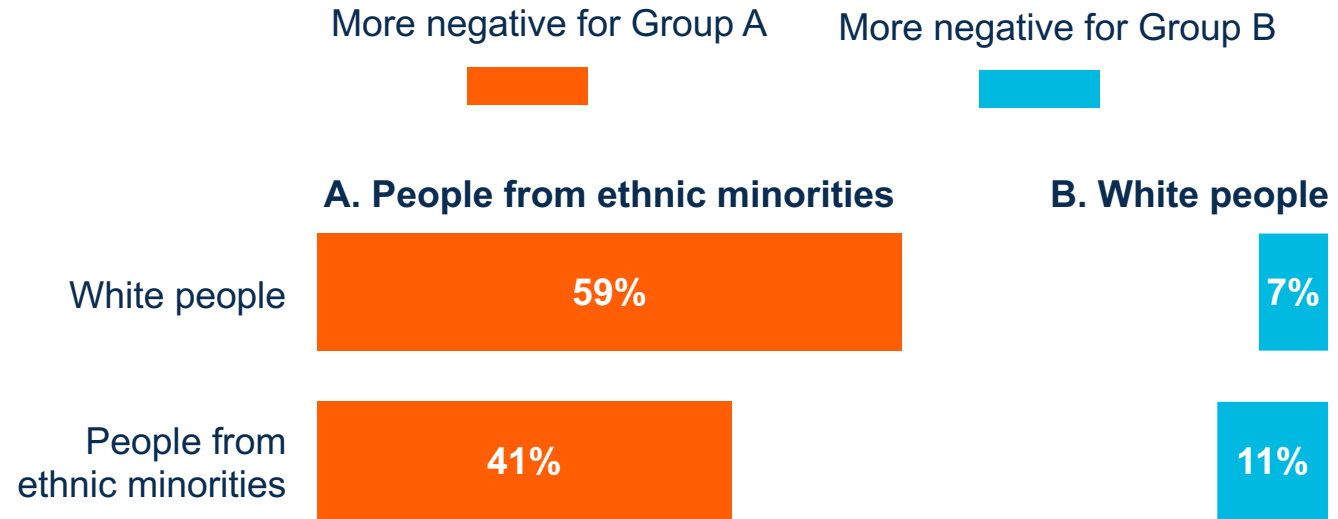


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59% of white people say people from ethnic minorities have been worse affected by the crisis so far – significantly higher than the 41% of ethnic minorities themselves who say the same.

There is a similar divide in opinion when the public are asked to think about the impacts over the next few years, with 50% of white people saying those from ethnic minorities will be more negatively impacted, compared with 36% of people from ethnic minorities who say the same.

Impact of crisis so far:



Impact of crisis over the next few years:

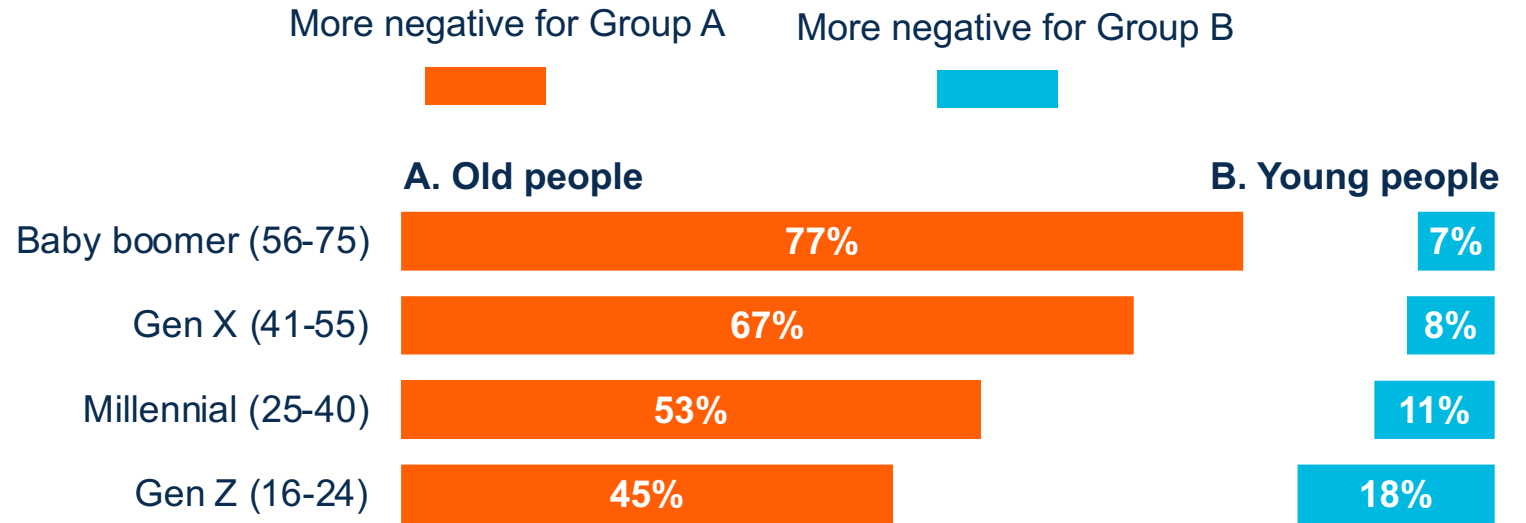


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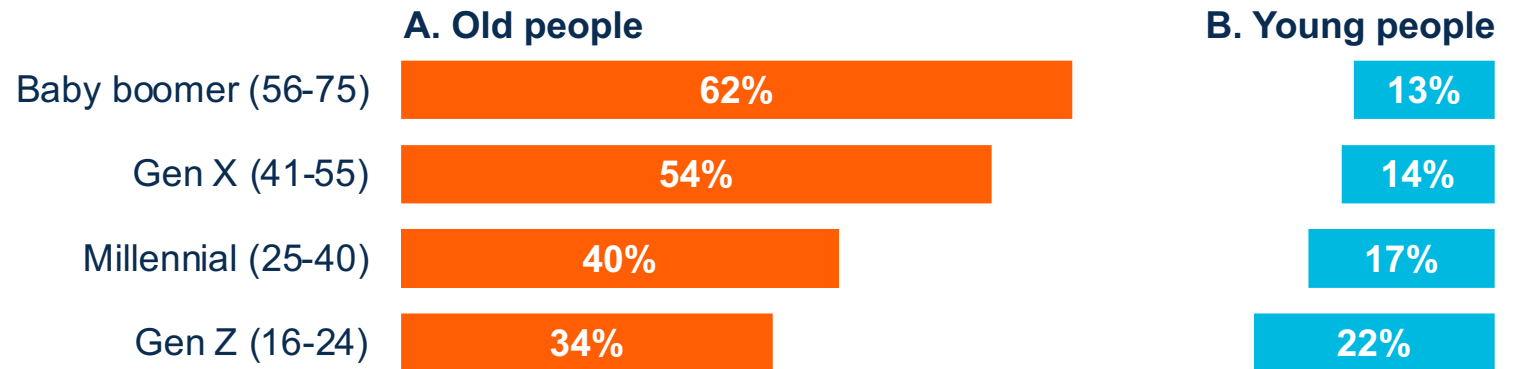
Members of gen Z are most likely to think that young people have been worse affected than old people by the crisis so far. They are also the only generation without a majority who feel that the impact has been more negative for old people – but overall both they and the other generations are far more likely to think the old have been hardest hit.

Looking to the longer term does little to make the different generations think the young will be more negatively impacted: even gen Z are still less likely to say young people will be more greatly affected over the next few years, with 22% thinking this will be the case, compared with 34% who think the impact will be worse for old people.

Impact of crisis so far:



Impact of crisis over the next few years:



Base: 2,237 UK residents aged 16-75, interviewed 17-20 July

What do people think of generational prospects in light of the crisis?

There is little indication that the Covid-19 crisis has affected the public's views on their own generation's prospects, or those of today's youth. Around a third feel their generation will have had a better life than their parents – virtually the same as in 2013, when the same question was last asked.

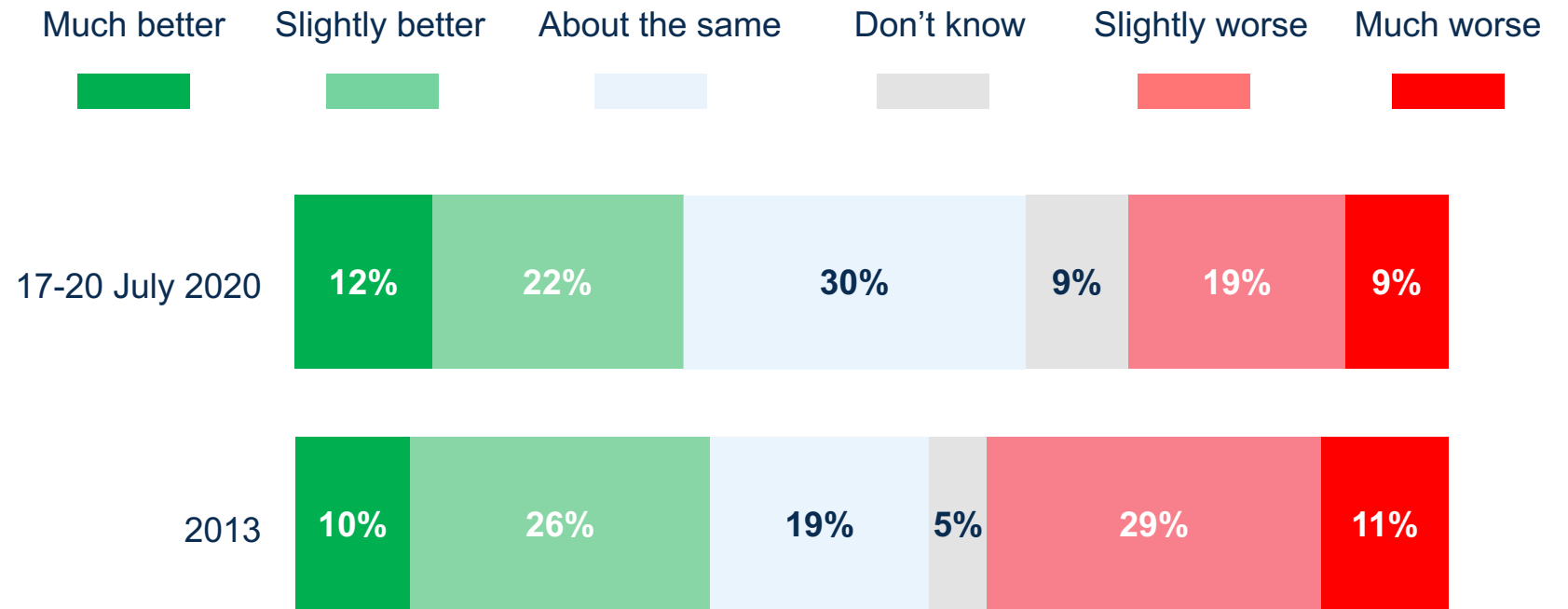
Baby boomers are the only cohort with a majority who think their generation's lives will be better, and they are twice as likely as millennials and members of generation Z to feel this way. There is also a divide in opinion along ethnic lines, with people from ethnic minorities more likely than white people to feel their generation's lives will be worse than their parents'.

Finally, just under a quarter think young people today will have a better life than their parents, similar to levels of optimism over the past seven years. And despite the high likelihood of economic hardship for many young people due to disruption caused by Covid-19, the proportion who feel today's youth will have a worse life than their parents has actually declined since last year.

34% feel their generation will have had a better life than their parents, almost unchanged from the 36% who said the same the last time this question was asked, in 2013.

But 28% now think their generation's lives will have been worse, down from 40%. The proportion who think they will be about the same has risen in line with this, increasing from 19% to 30%.

To what extent, if at all, do you feel that your generation will have had a better or worse life than their parents, or will it have been about the same?

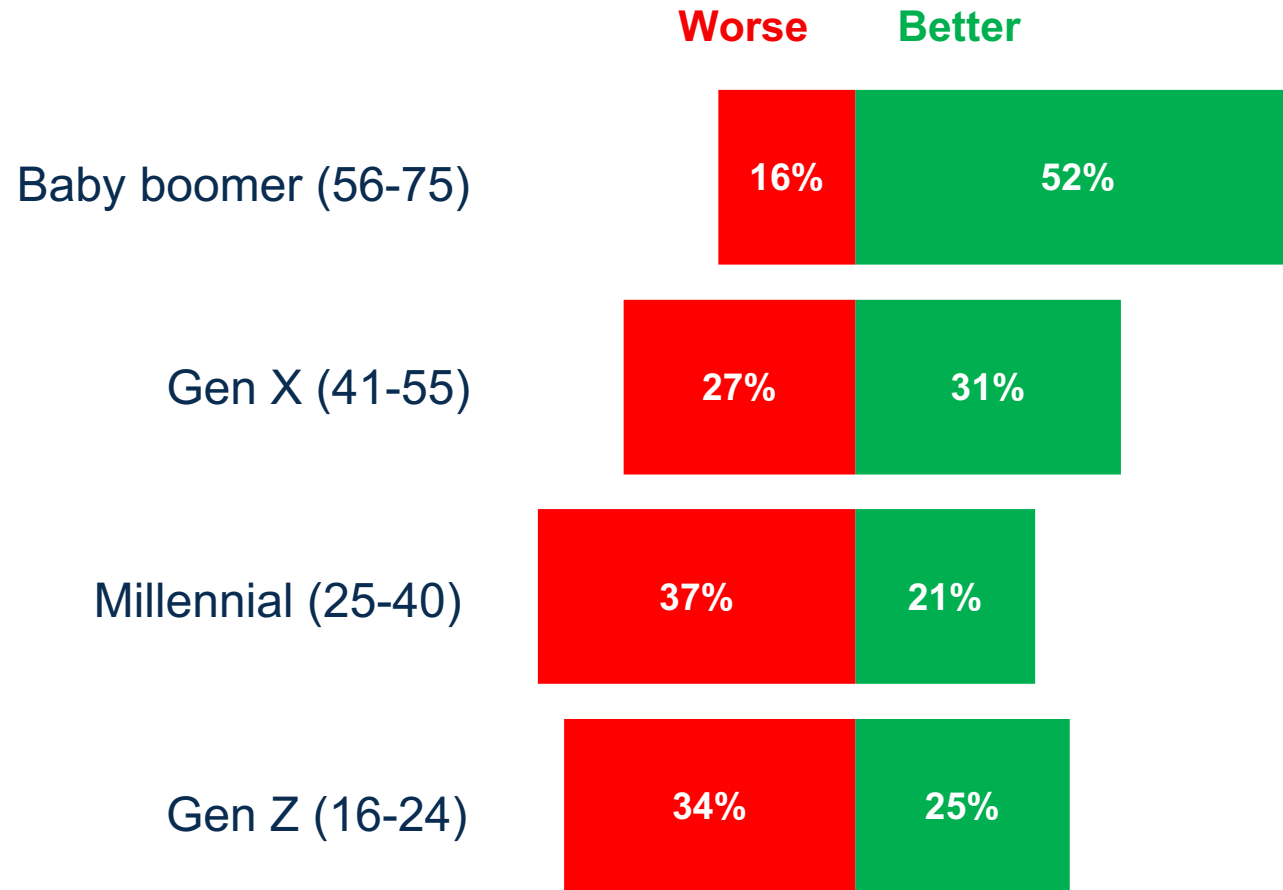


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52% of baby boomers feel their cohort will have had a better life than their parents – the only generation with a majority who think this, and more than twice as many as the proportions of gen Z (25%) and millennials (21%) who say the same.

The situation is reversed when it comes to those who think their generation will have been worse off, with millennials (37%) and members of gen Z (34%) twice as likely as baby boomers (16%) to feel this way.

To what extent, if at all, do you feel that your generation will have had a better or worse life than their parents, or will it have been about the same?

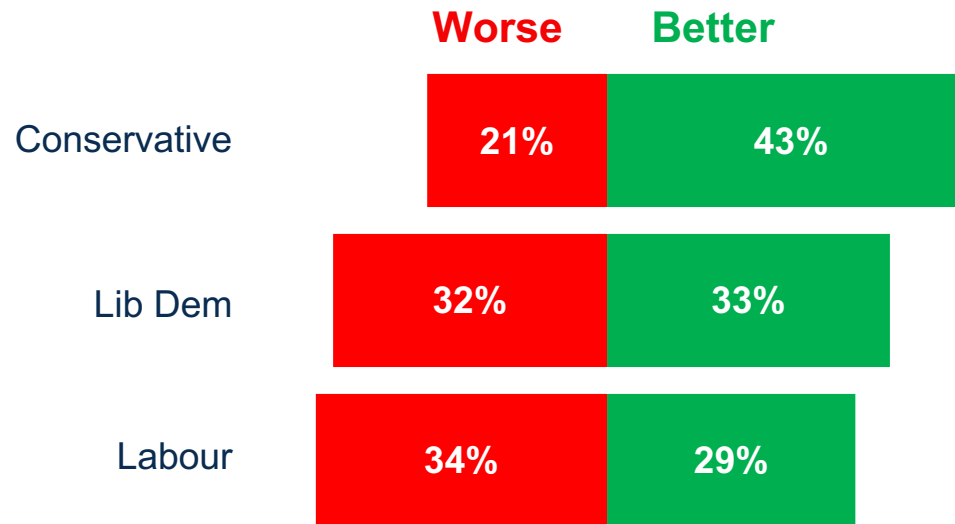
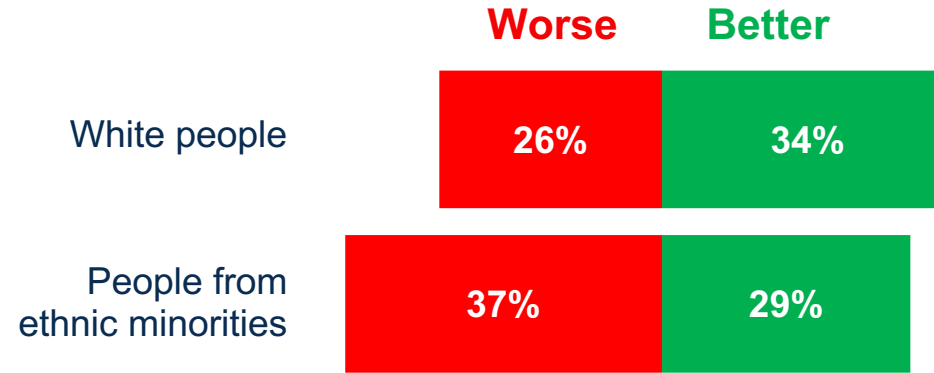


By 37% to 26%, people from ethnic minorities are more likely than white people to think their generation will have had a worse life than their parents.

2019 Conservative voters (43%) are more likely than Lib Dem (33%) and Labour voters (29%) to be positive about their generation's future.

By contrast, 34% of Labour voters and 32% of Lib Dem voters feel negative about it, compared with 21% of Conservative voters who feel the same.

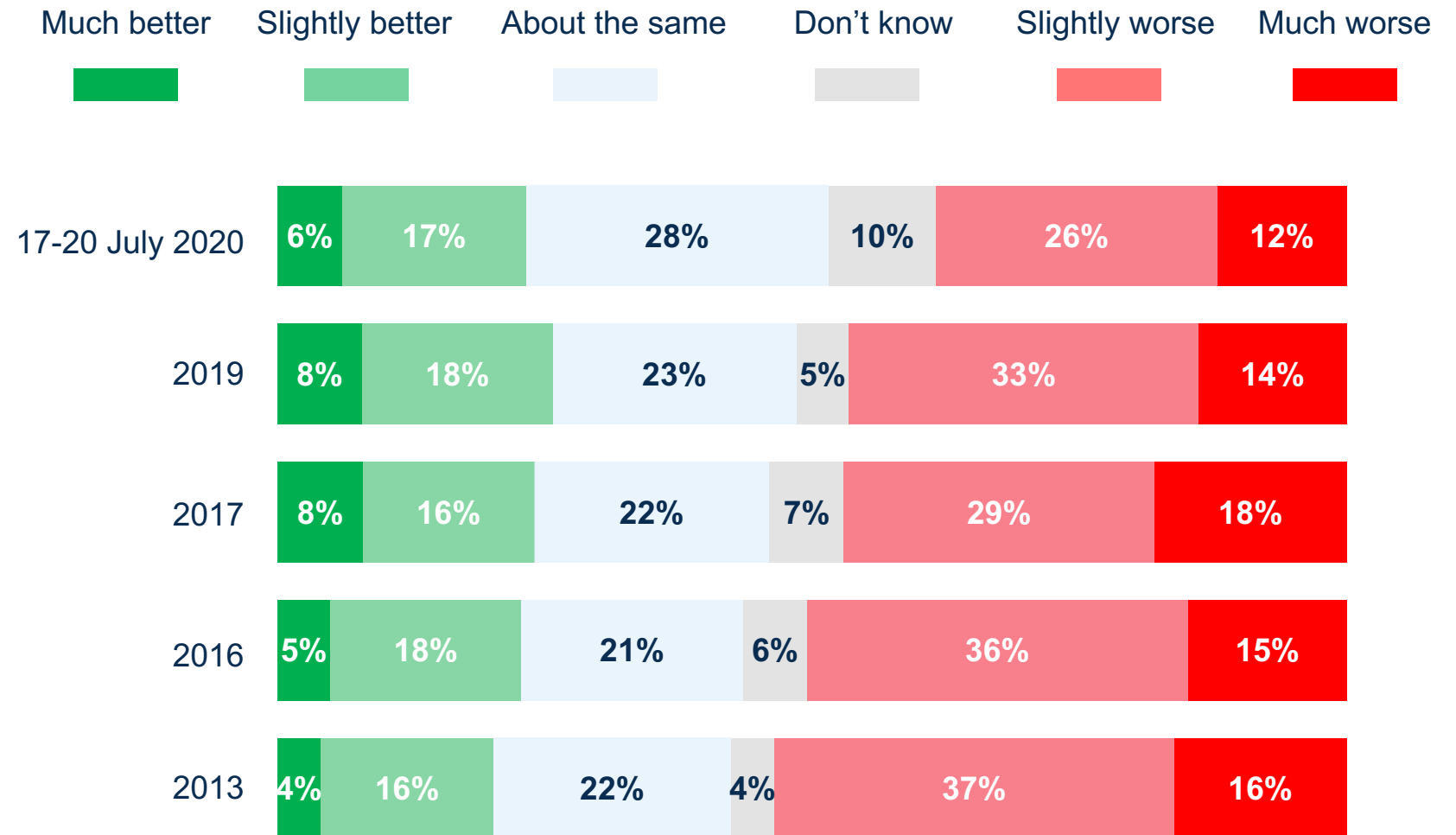
To what extent, if at all, do you feel that your generation will have had a better or worse life than their parents, or will it have been about the same?



Belief that today's youth will have a better or worse life than their parents has been relatively stable over the past seven years, and there is little indication that the Covid-19 crisis has affected the public's views.

The proportion who say young people's lives will be worse has actually declined, from 47% in 2019, to 38% today. In line with this, slightly more now think young people's and their parents' lives will be about the same or say they don't know.

To what extent, if at all, do you feel that today's youth will have a better or worse life than their parents, or will it be about the same?

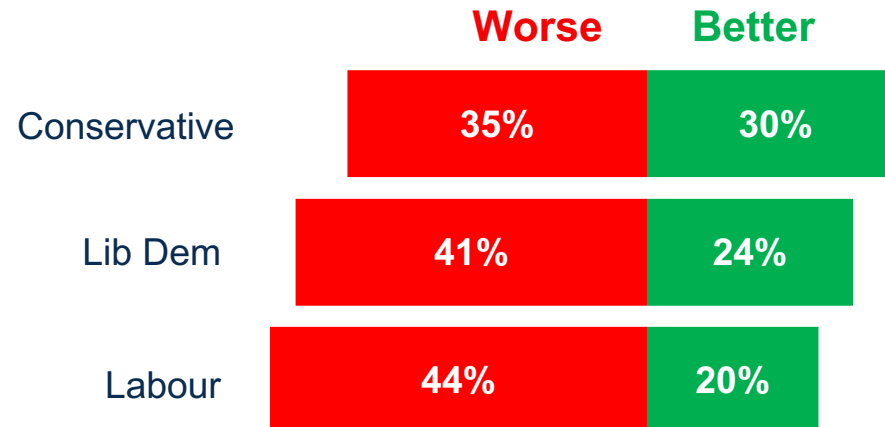
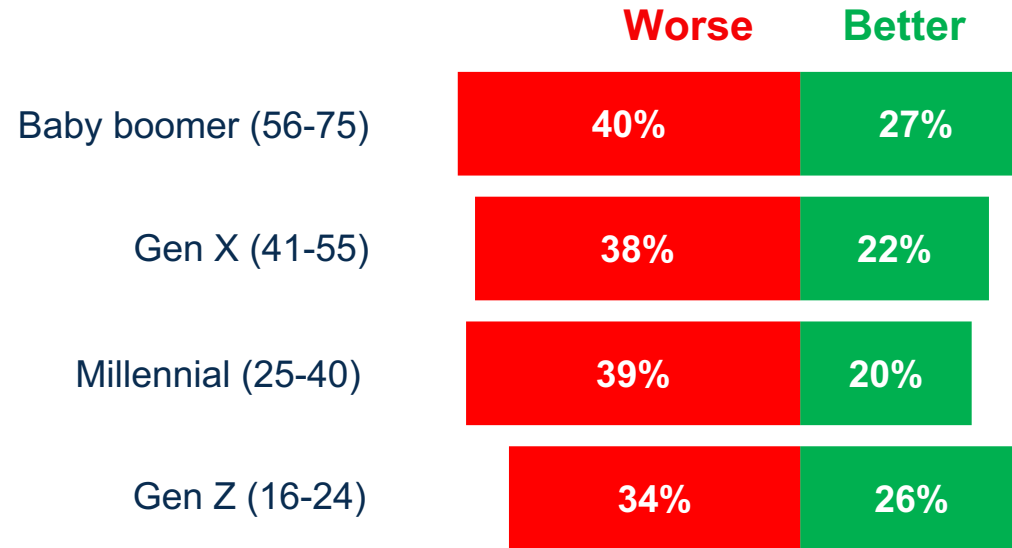


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There is little difference in the various generations' views on the prospects for today's youth.

Meanwhile, 2019 Labour voters (44%) are most likely to say young people will have a worse life than their parents, while Conservative voters (35%) are least likely to.

To what extent, if at all, do you feel that today's youth will have a better or worse life than their parents, or will it be about the same?



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