



Global Britain?

Brexit's impact on the country's standing in the world and sense of identity



Ipsos MORI



The **UK** in a
Changing Europe

THE
POLICY
INSTITUTE

KING'S
College
LONDON

About this study

The Policy Institute at King's College London, Ipsos MORI and UK in a Changing Europe have run a survey of over 1,000 people in Great Britain to assess:
1) public perceptions of Britain's standing and influence in the world in light of Brexit, 2) people's views on the impact of Britain's relationship with other countries, and 3) their priorities for future relationships with other countries.

Technical details

All adults aged 16-75 in Great Britain (1,100), adults aged 18-75 who voted Remain in 2016 EU Referendum (465), voted Leave (432), Conservative supporters aged 18-75 (231), Labour supporters (290), 5-9 April 2019.

Where percentages do not sum to 100 this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of "don't know" categories, or multiple answers.

The Policy Institute

kcl.ac.uk/policy-institute

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UK in a Changing Europe

ukandeu.ac.uk

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Britain's standing and influence in the world

54% of the public think Brexit has harmed Britain's standing in the world.

Remain supporters **overwhelmingly** think it has caused harm, while Leave supporters are **more evenly divided** on the issue.

Seven in 10 Labour supporters think Brexit has harmed Britain's standing in the world. Almost half (44%) of Conservative supporters feel the same way, while three in 10 think Brexit has strengthened the country's standing

In your opinion, what effect, if any, has Britain's decision to leave the European Union, had on Britain's standing in the world? Has it...

STRENGTHENED IT A LOT/A LITTLE

HARMED IT A LITTLE/A LOT

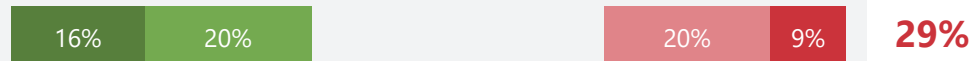
TOTAL
HARMED

2016 EU REFERENDUM VOTE

Remain



Leave



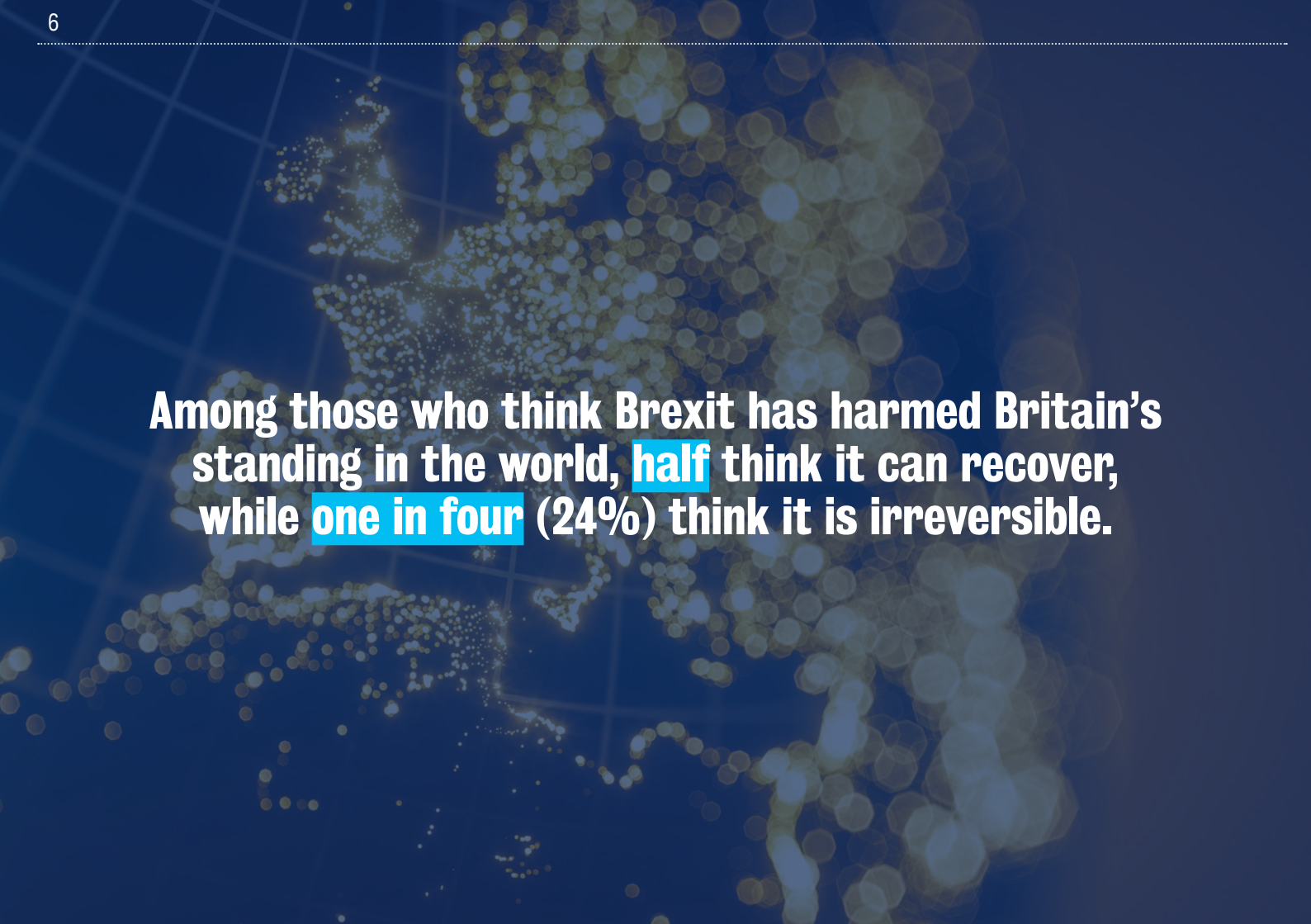
PARTY SUPPORT

Conservative



Labour





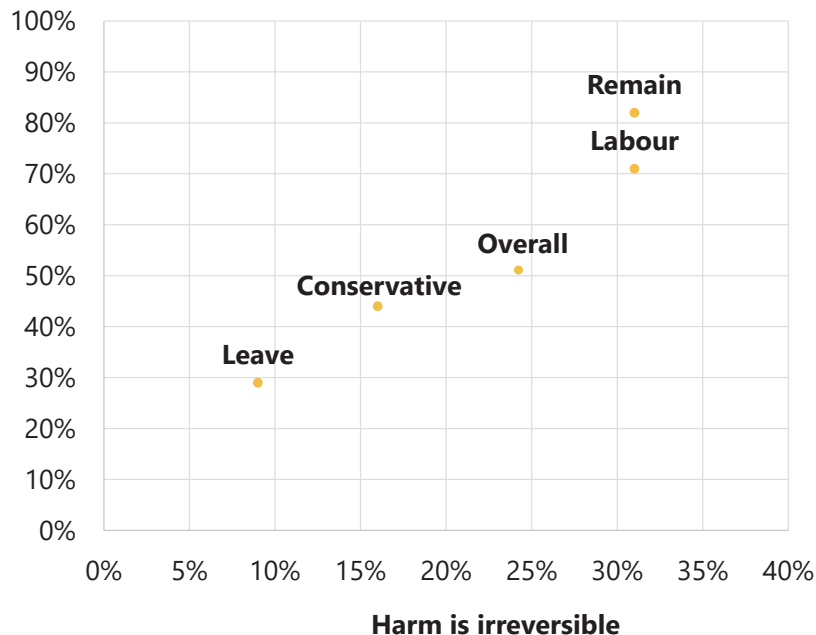
Among those who think Brexit has harmed Britain's standing in the world, half think it can recover, while one in four (24%) think it is irreversible.

Remain voters are **more than three times as likely** as Leave voters to say the harm caused to Britain's standing in the world by Brexit is irreversible

Labour supporters are **twice as likely** as Conservative supporters to say the harm is irreversible

And do you think Britain's standing in the world can recover from the harm caused by Britain's decision to leave the European Union, or is it irreversible?

Harmed Britain's standing in world

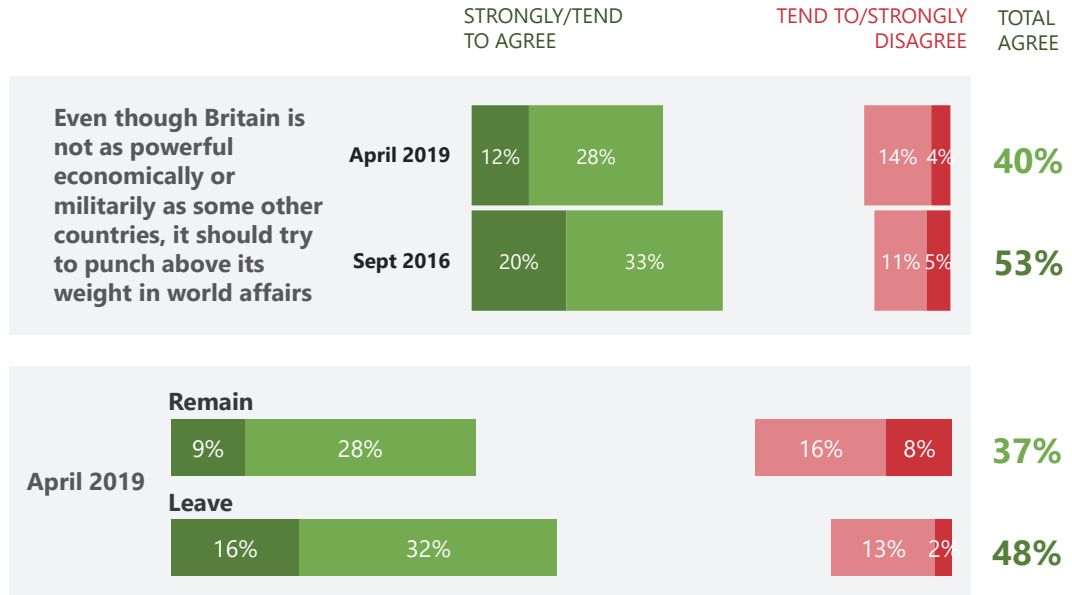




Compared to three years ago, fewer people now think Britain should attempt to “punch above its weight” in world affairs.

The number of people who say Britain should try to punch above its weight in world affairs has **declined, from 53% in 2016 to 40% in 2019**

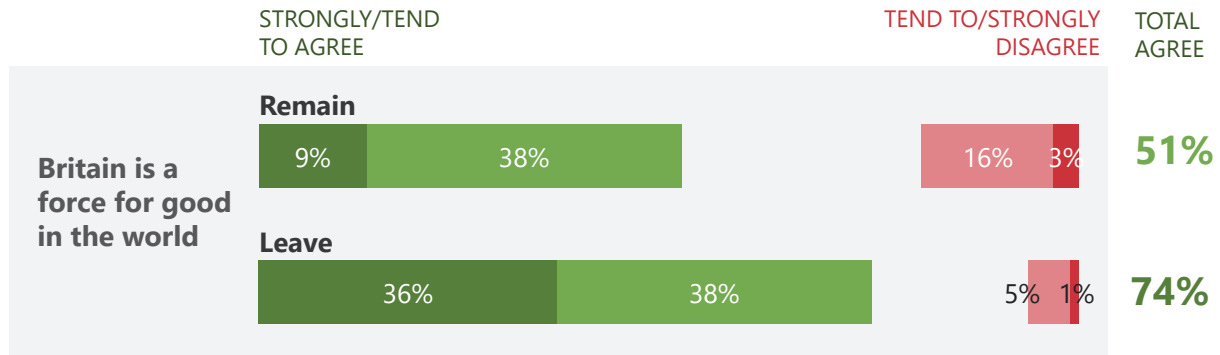
I am going to read out a number of statements about Britain's role in the world, and I would like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with each.





**Remain and Leave supporters agree that Britain
is a **force for good** in the world.**

However, Leave supporters are **much more likely** to feel this way

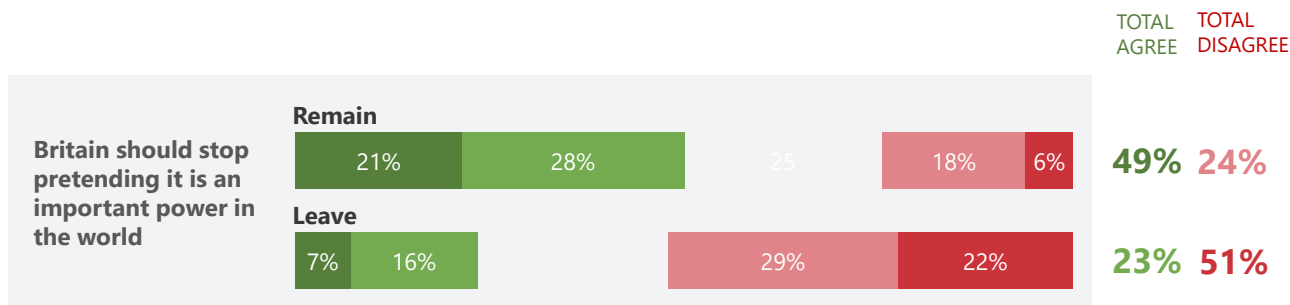


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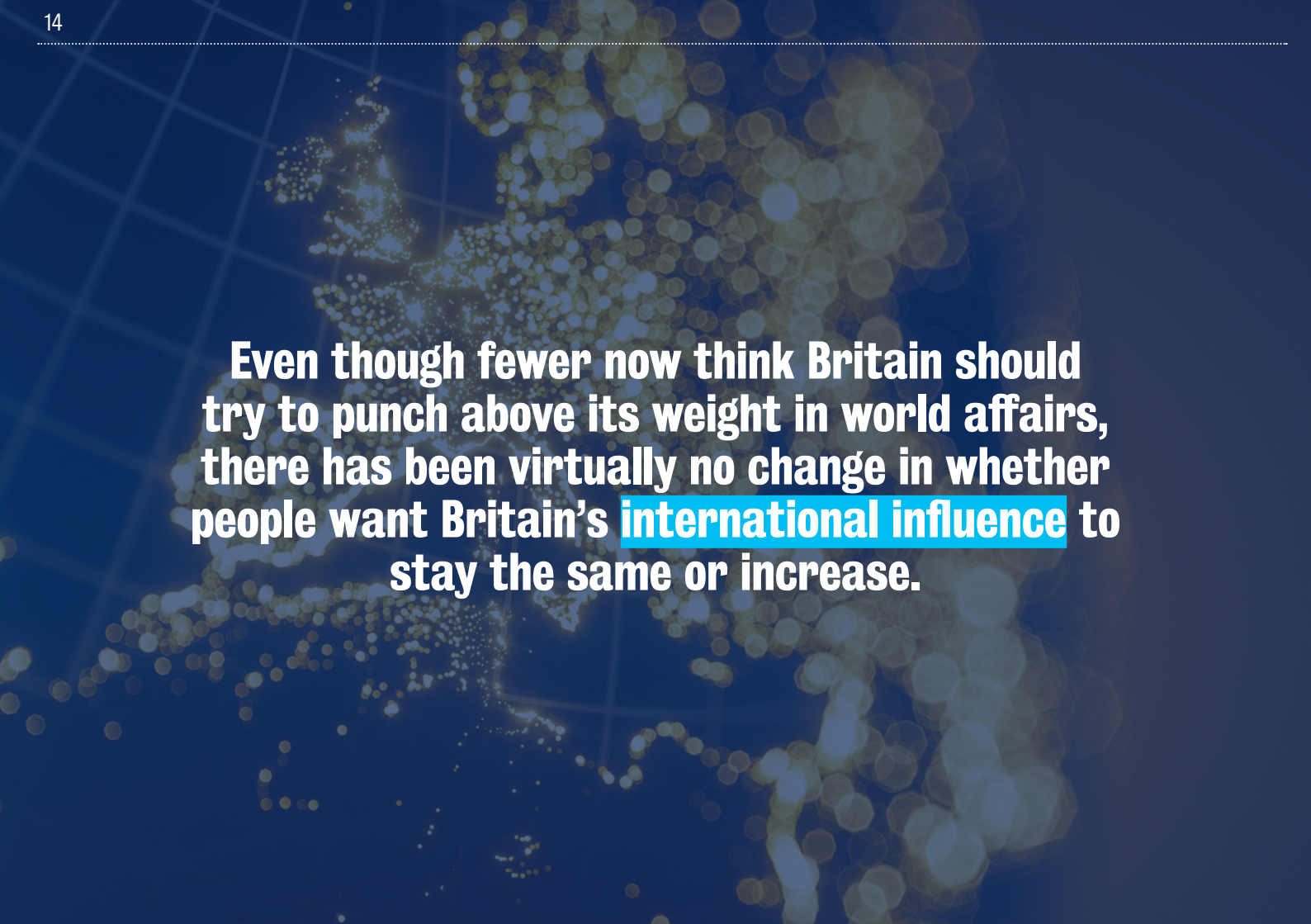


Remain and Leave supporters also differ strongly on whether Britain should **stop pretending to be an important power in the world.**

49% of Remain supporters agree Britain should stop pretending to be an important power in the world, whereas 51% of Leave supporters disagree



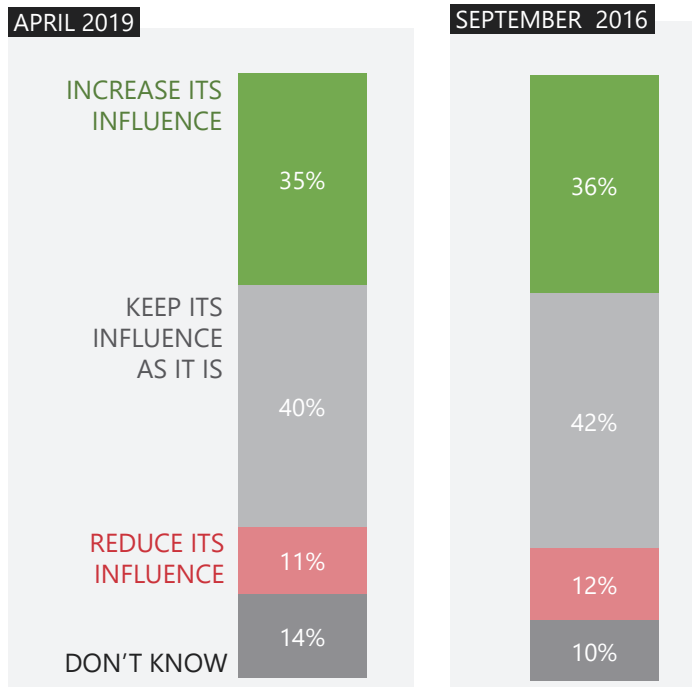
I am going to read out a number of statements about Britain's role in the world, and I would like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with each.



Even though fewer now think Britain should try to punch above its weight in world affairs, there has been virtually no change in whether people want Britain's international influence to stay the same or increase.

Most want **Britain's influence** in the world to stay the same or increase – this has not changed since 2016

Do you think Britain should try to increase its influence around the world, reduce it, or keep it as it is?



Four in 10 Leave supporters want Britain to **increase** its influence around the world, compared with **three in 10** Remain supporters

Do you think Britain should try to increase its influence around the world, reduce it, or keep it as it is?

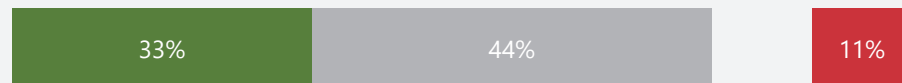
INCREASE ITS INFLUENCE

KEEP ITS INFLUENCE AS IT IS

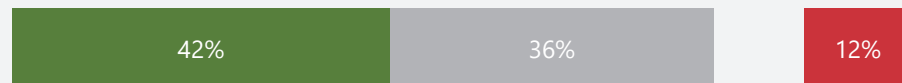
REDUCE ITS INFLUENCE

2016 EU REFERENDUM VOTE

Remain



Leave

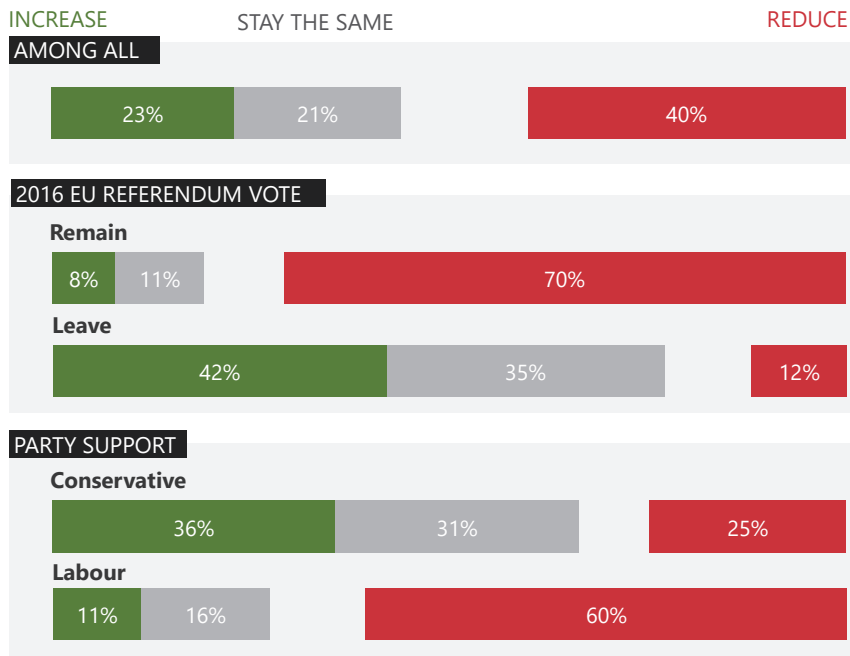





44% think Britain's international influence will either increase or stay the same after Brexit, while a **similar proportion** (40%) think it will reduce.

Opinions differ sharply between supporters of the two main parties and between Leave and Remain supporters

If Britain leaves the EU, do you think its influence around the world will increase, will reduce, or will it stay the same?

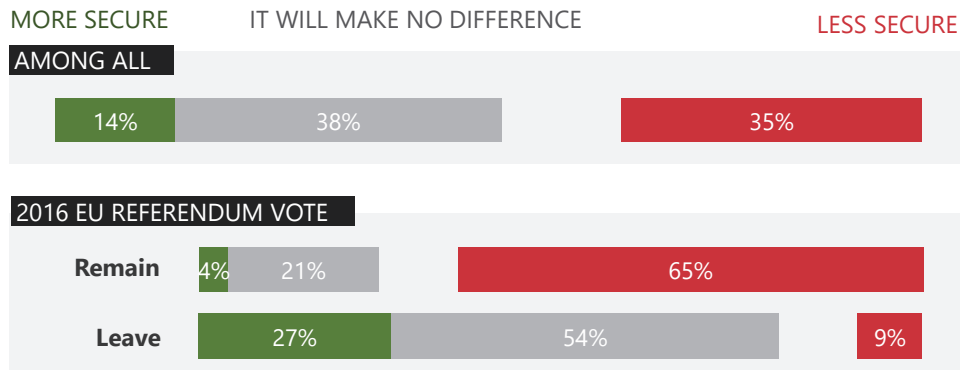




A third of the population think Brexit will make no difference to national security. A similar proportion think it will make Britain less secure, while 14% think it will enhance security.

Remain supporters are **seven times more likely** than Leave supporters to say that Brexit will make Britain less secure

Do you think Britain leaving the European Union will make Britain more secure against its enemies in the future or less secure, or will it make no difference?



Overall, more people would prefer Britain to be open to the rest of the world than protect itself from it.

Remain supporters are twice as likely as Leave supporters to say Britain should be open to other countries.

More think Britain needs to be open to the rest of the world than protect itself from it

Which of these statements below is closest to your view?

STATEMENT A: In the future, Britain needs to protect itself from the rest of the world.

STATEMENT B: In the future, Britain needs to be open to the rest of the world.

AGREE MORE WITH STATEMENT A

AMONG ALL

23%

AGREE MORE WITH STATEMENT B

42%

2016 EU REFERENDUM VOTE

Remain

16%

57%

Leave

32%

29%

PARTY SUPPORT

Conservative

26%

38%

Labour

17%

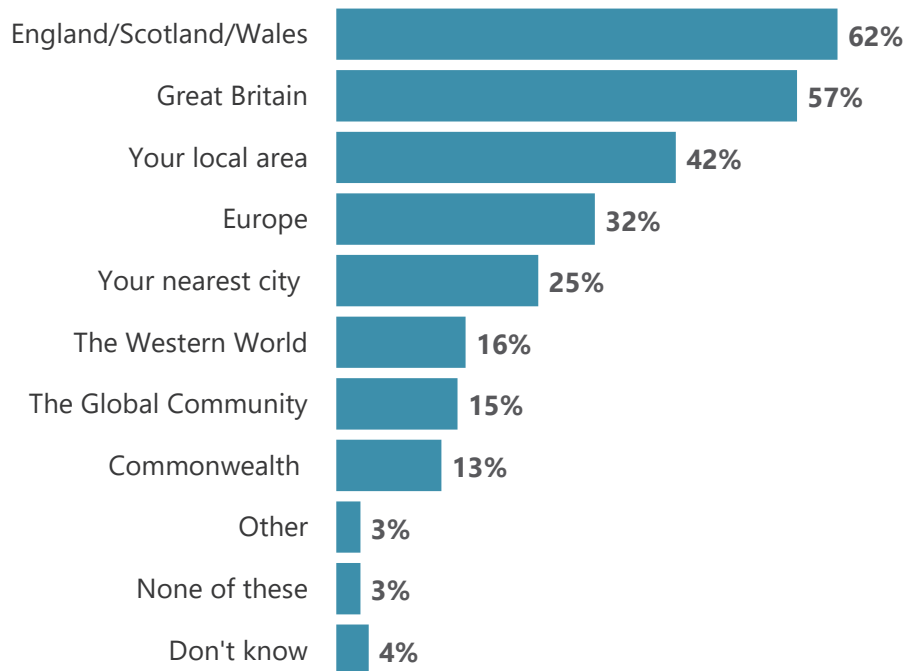
54%



National still trumps international when it comes to people's sense of identity.

Britons are most likely to identify with their home nation, Great Britain or local area

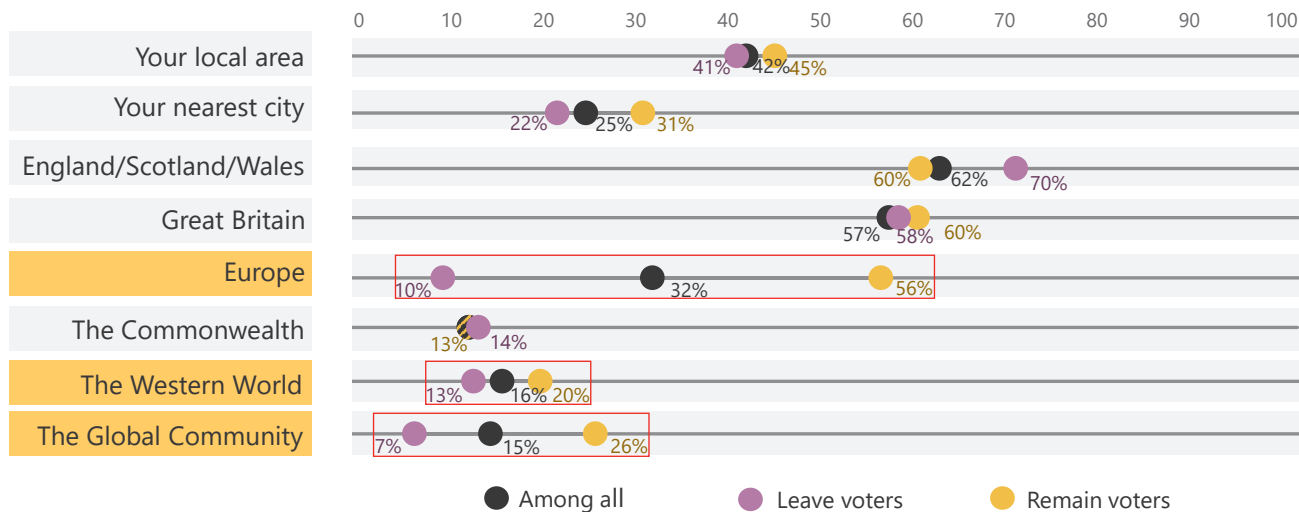
Which of the following, if any, do you identify with?
Please select as many as relevant.



There is very little difference in the extent to which national and local identities are important for both Leave and Remain supporters.

The main difference is that Remain supporters have additional supranational identities – they are more than five times as likely as Leave supporters to identify with Europe, and are more likely to identify with the Western world and the “global community”.


Remain voters are more likely to identify with Europe, the western world and global community



Which of the following, if any, do you identify with? Please select as many as relevant.



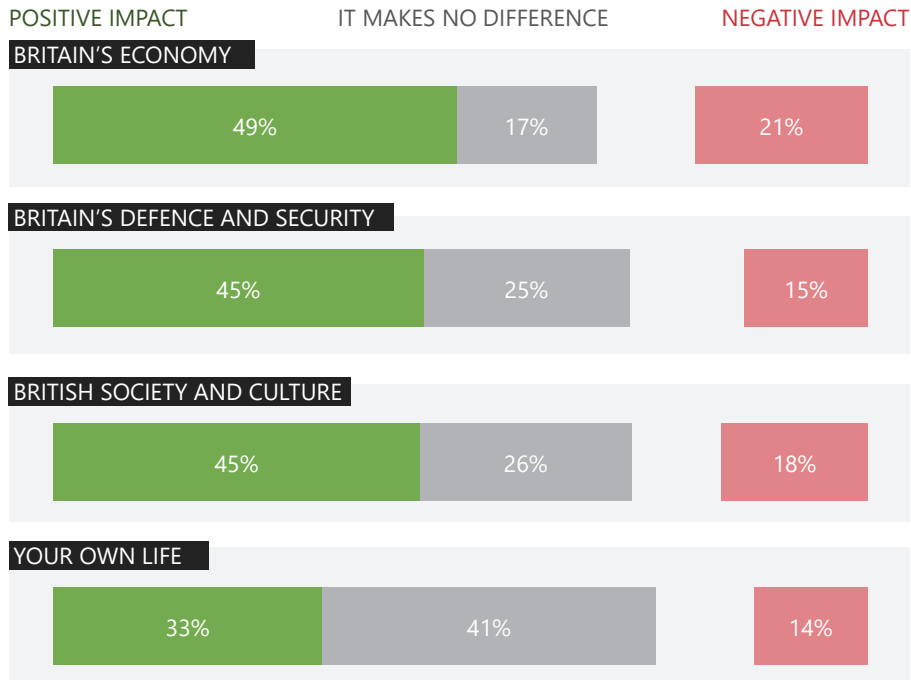
Britain's relationship with other countries



**For the most part, the public have a broadly
positive view of the impact of Britain's
relationship with other countries**

Around **half** think Britain's relationship with other countries has a **positive impact** on the country's economy, security and culture

What impact, if any, do you think Britain's relationship with other countries around the world currently has on...

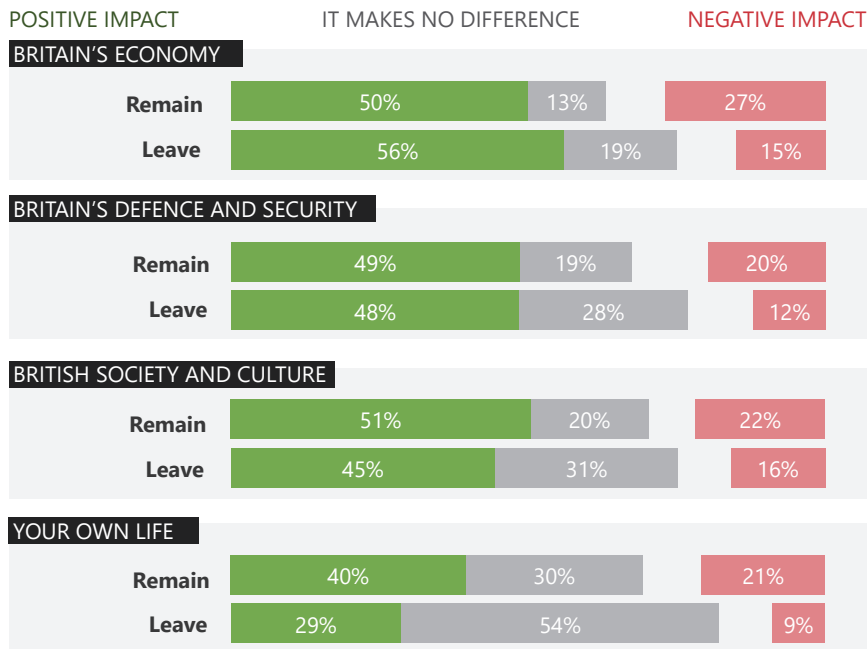


And a **plurality** (and often a majority) of Leave and Remain voters agree that Britain's international relationships have a **positive impact**.

And while people overall still think **Europe** is Britain's most important international relationship, the proportion who agree with this **declined**, from **47%** in 2017 to **39%** in 2019.

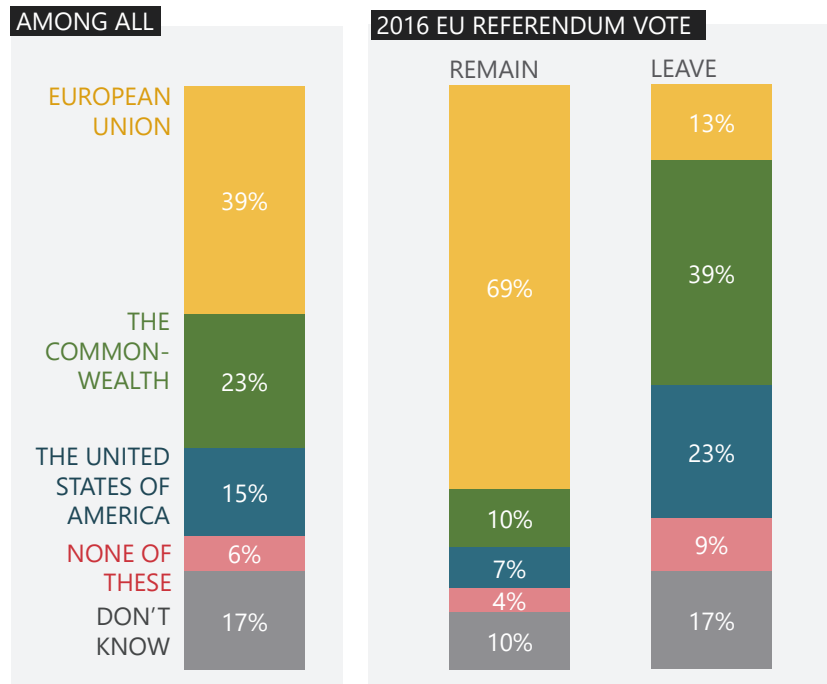
Similar proportions of Remain and Leave voters say Britain's relationship with other countries has a **positive impact** in different areas – but they disagree most on the impact on their **own life**

What impact, if any, do you think Britain's relationship with other countries around the world currently has on...



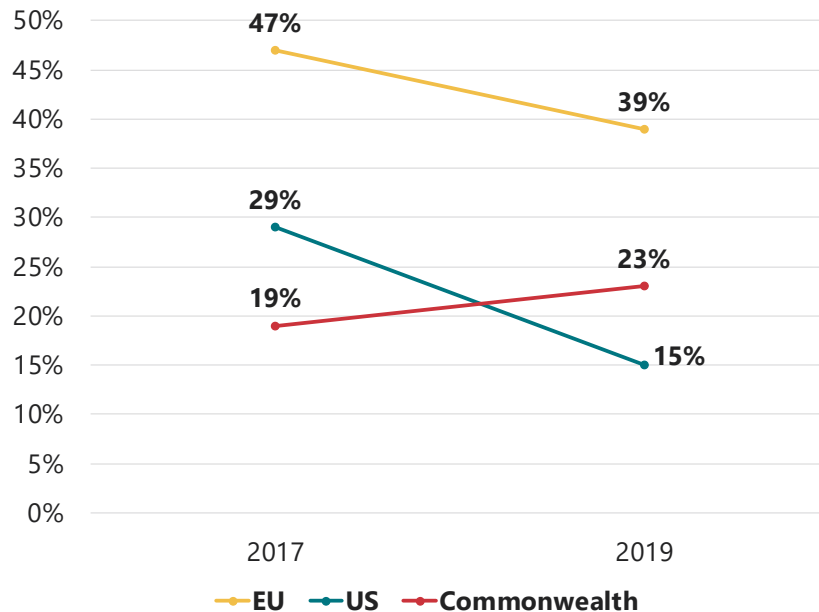
Britons think Europe is their most important relationship, with two in five holding this view. By contrast, Leave voters are more likely to choose the Commonwealth

Which of these, if any – Europe, the Commonwealth or the United States of America – is the most important to Britain?



Overall, the proportion who say Europe is Britain's most important relationship has **declined over the past two years, from **47%** in 2017 to **39%** in 2019. The proportion choosing the US has **halved** in that time**

Which of these, if any – Europe, the Commonwealth or the United States of America – is the most important to Britain?



* 2017 data did not include a 'None of these' category

2017 and 2019 polls used different survey modes

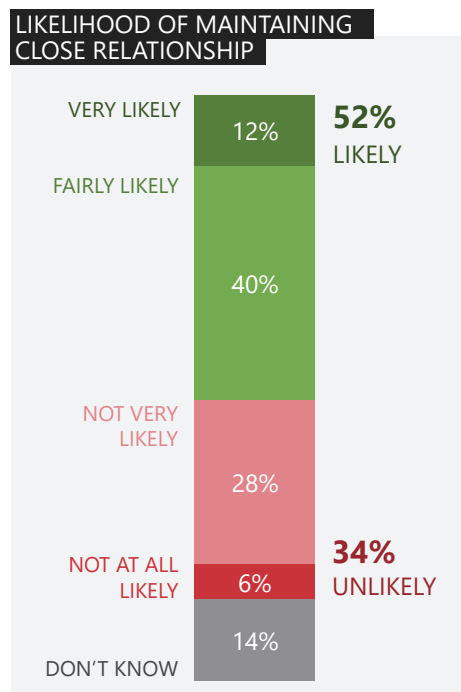
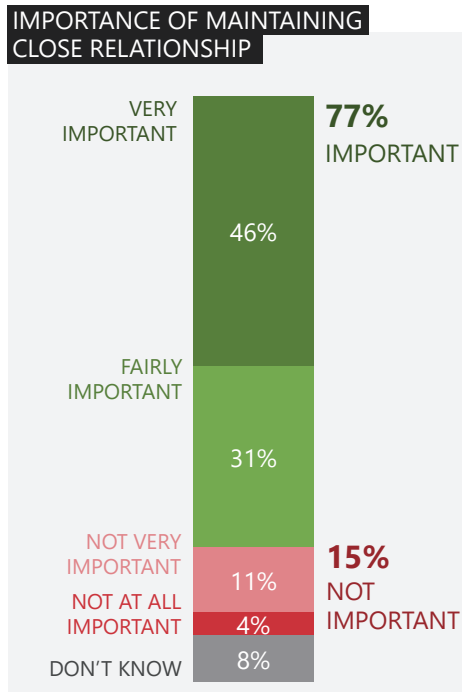


Three-quarters of the public think maintaining a close relationship between Britain and the EU will be key after Brexit, while **half** think such a relationship is likely.

Three in four think maintaining a close relationship with the EU is important, while half think it's likely

Thinking about if Britain leaves the European Union, how important, if at all, do you think it will be for Britain to maintain a close relationship with the EU?

And how likely, if at all, do you think it would be for Britain and the EU to have a close relationship after Britain has left?

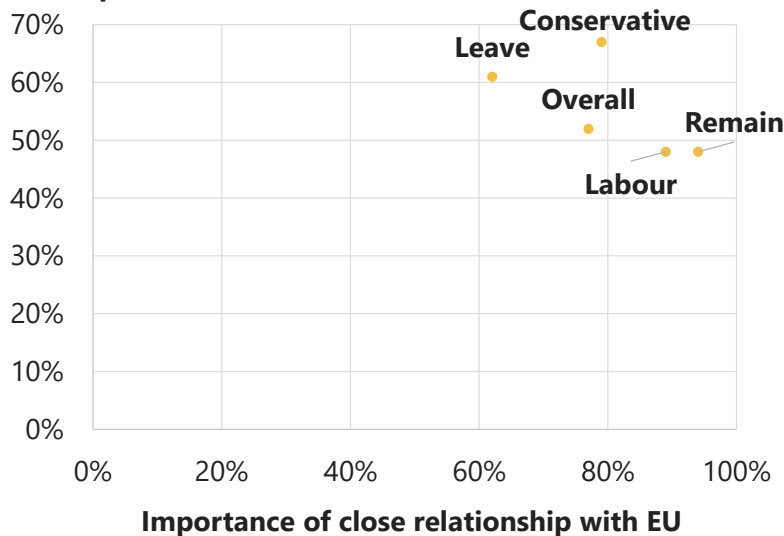


Leave supporters have **more confidence** than Remain supporters that Britain will have a close relationship with the EU post-Brexit – but Leave supporters think that relationship is **less important**

Thinking about if Britain leaves the European Union, how important, if at all, do you think it will be for Britain to maintain a close relationship with the EU?

And how likely, if at all, do you think it would be for Britain and the EU to have a close relationship after Britain has left?

Likelihood of close relationship with EU

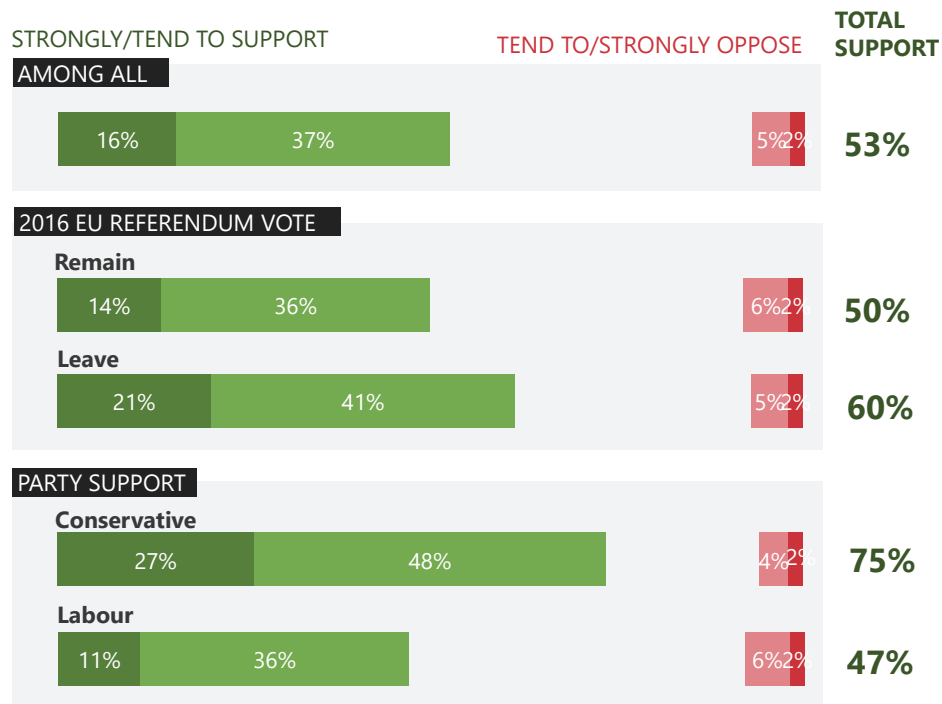


Reflecting the importance that people place on Britain's relationships with the EU and other countries, the public are **supportive of the government's "Global Britain" agenda, with Conservative party supporters and Leave voters **more likely** to favour it.**

However, while people share the ambitions outlined as part of this agenda, they **differ in their expectations for it...**

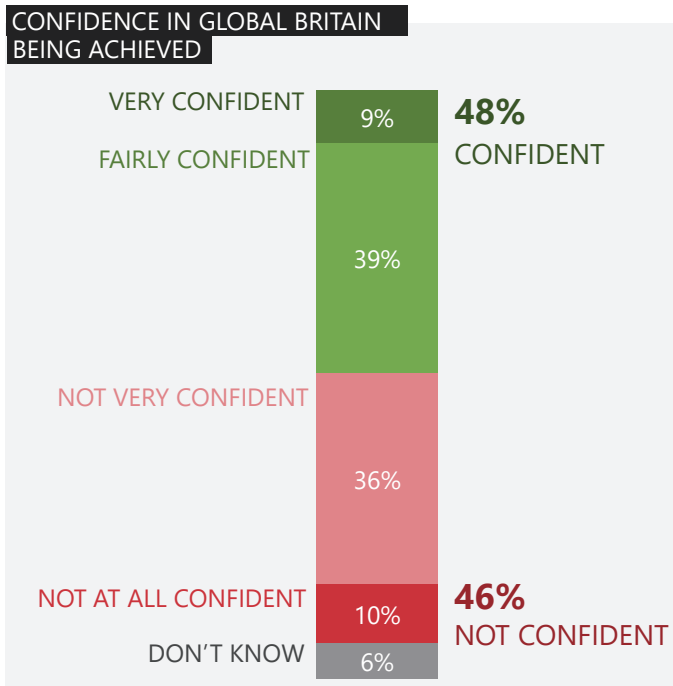
Around **half** support Theresa May's vision for Global Britain – very few oppose it

Theresa May has talked about the importance of supporting 'Global Britain', which means the UK being 'the best friend and neighbour to our European partners, but a country which reaches beyond the borders of Europe too. A country that goes out into the world to build relationships with old friends and new allies alike'. To what extent, if at all, do you support or oppose these aims for Britain's role in the world?



But supporters of Global Britain are **split** as to whether it will actually be achieved

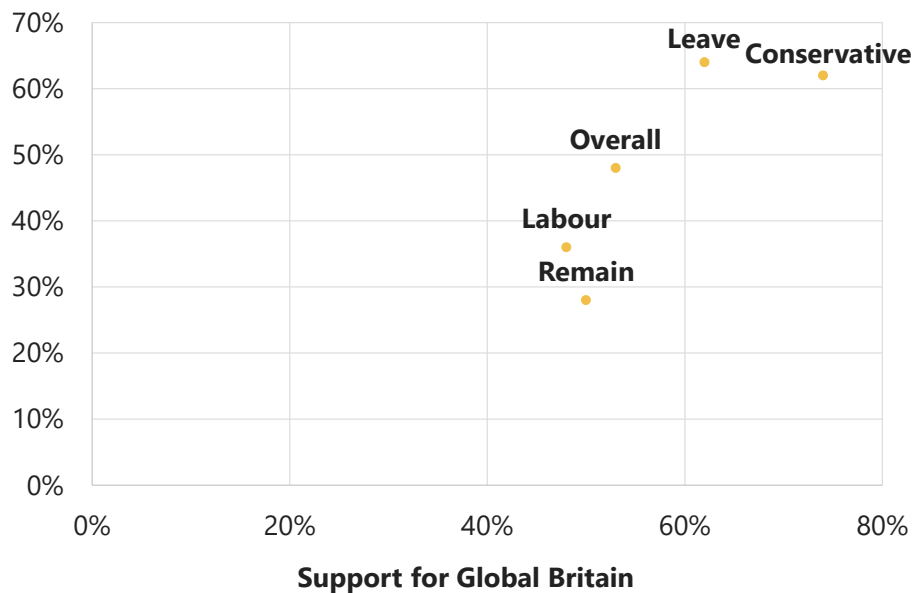
And how confident, if at all, are you that these aims will be achieved for Britain's role in the world in the future?



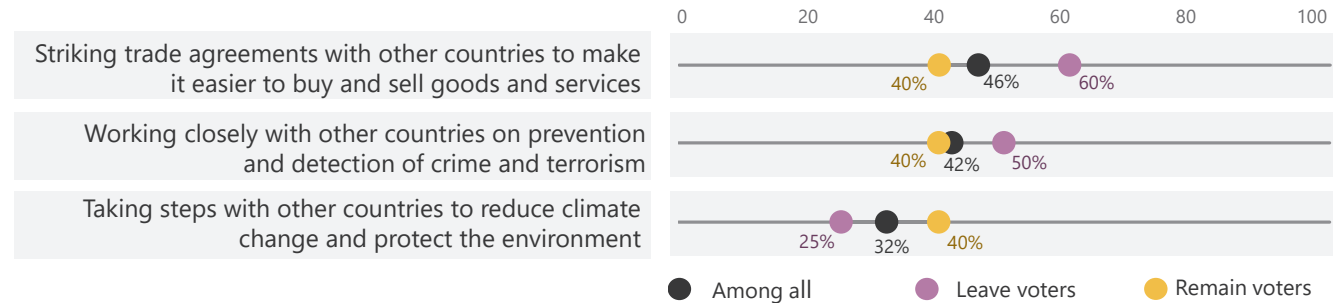
Leave voters are **more supportive** of Global Britain than Remain voters, and **more than twice** as confident that it will be achieved

And how confident, if at all, are you that these aims will be achieved for Britain's role in the world in the future?

**Confidence
Global Britain
will be achieved**

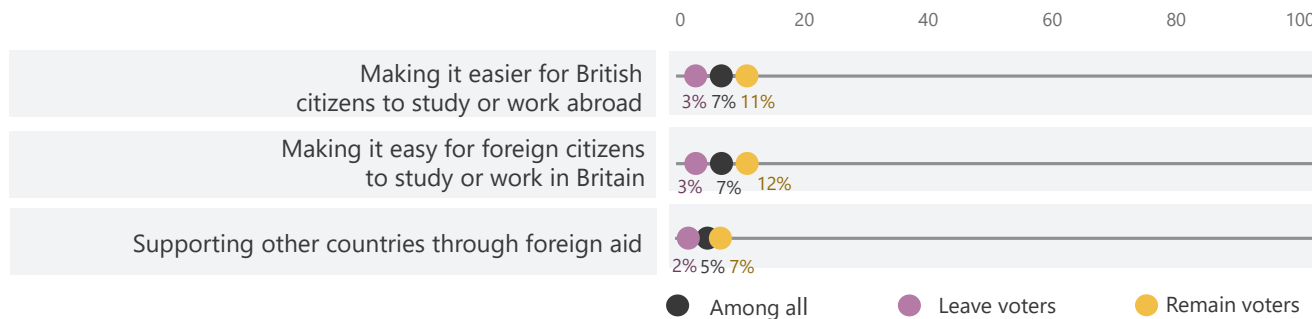


The public's **top three priorities** for Global Britain are trade, security and protecting the environment



And which two or three of these, if any, do you think should be the top priorities for Britain's relationships with other countries?

Britons are **less concerned** about foreign aid and freedom of movement



And which two or three of these, if any, do you think should be the top priorities for Britain's relationships with other countries?

For more information, please contact:

Bobby Duffy

bobby.duffy@kcl.ac.uk
@BobbyDuffyKings

Anand Menon

anand.menon@kcl.ac.uk
@anandmenon1

Ben Page

ben.page@ipsos.com
@benatipsosmori



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