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The four sides in the UK's “culture wars”

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Introduction

Different people hold different views on issues related to what is increasingly described as a UK “culture war”. There are patterns to these differences which can be used to identify distinct groups within the population and build a picture of the types of individuals engaged (or not) in the culture war debate.

The Policy Institute has used a technique called latent class analysis, drawing on a major survey of 2,834 people in the UK conducted by Ipsos MORI on their random probability “KnowledgePanel”.

The analysis reveals the UK is made up of four groups of people with distinct positions on issues that are often rolled into the country’s culture wars: Traditionalists, Moderates, the Disengaged and Progressives.

Traditionalists and Progressives inevitably have very divergent views on key issues, such as the British empire and the Black Lives Matter movement, and make very different value judgements about society and culture in the UK.

But they make up just one half of the population; the two groups that make up the other half have more variable or less strong views on relevant issues. Many in the Disengaged group often don’t take a position on them at all.

The remaining group – the Moderates – resemble Progressives on some issues, such as greater rights for historically marginalised groups, and Traditionalists on others, such as whether too many people in the UK run the country down.

Which way Moderates break on these kinds of issues has potentially significant implications for how political parties use culture war debates to consolidate or expand their supporter base. And despite being the largest group identified in this study, as well as having the most diverse views and political beliefs, the Moderate position tends to lose out to the Traditionalist and Progressive when it comes to media and political attention, reflecting how the debate in the UK is often focused at the more extreme ends of the spectrum.

This more variable and nuanced position may, however, be influenced by the nature of the national conversation on cultural change, which commentators and political leaders can clearly influence. More careful understanding of, and engagement with, this group should be a key focus.

1. The four sides in the UK's culture wars

A statistical technique called latent class analysis reveals that the country's culture war debate is made up of **Traditionalists** (26% of population), **Progressives** (23%), **Moderates** (32%) and the **Disengaged** (18%).

The four sides in the UK's culture wars

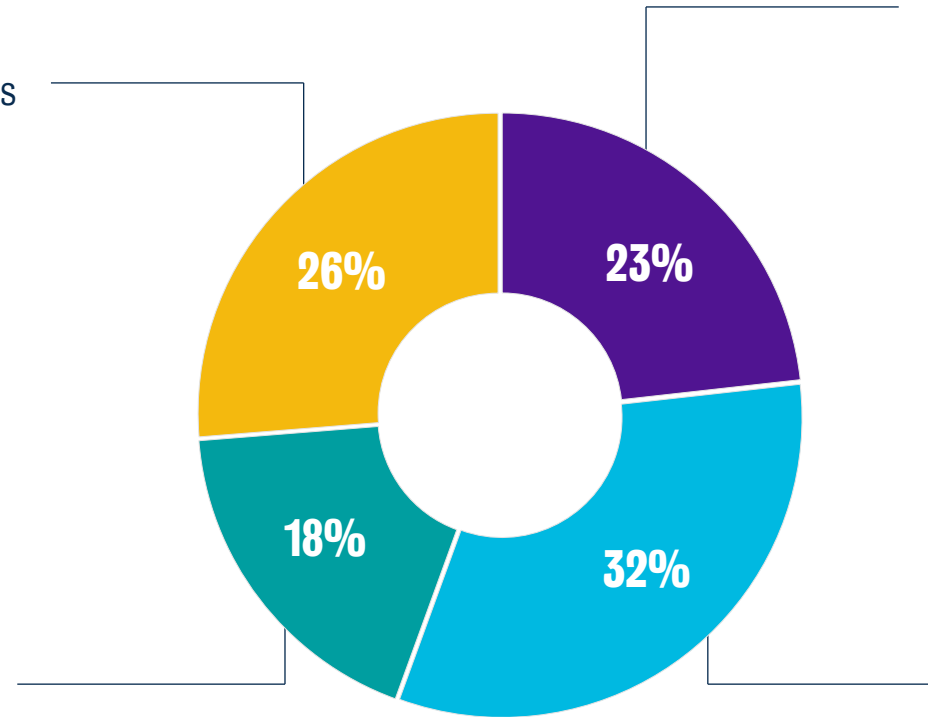
The key distinguishing features of the four groups are their attitudes towards expanding the rights of traditionally marginalised groups, and their pride in the UK and nostalgia for its history. Views on free speech and political correctness separate the most progressive group from the other three. Demographically, education and gender are important, with only one group majority-male.

Traditionalists

Oldest and most heavily male group. Most nostalgic for country's past and proud of British empire. 97% think political correctness gone too far, and most likely to feel UK has done enough on equal rights for historically marginalised groups.

The Disengaged

Stand out for neutrality on politics and Brexit. Least likely to take a position on equal rights for women and ethnic minorities, and least likely to take stance on culture war issues.



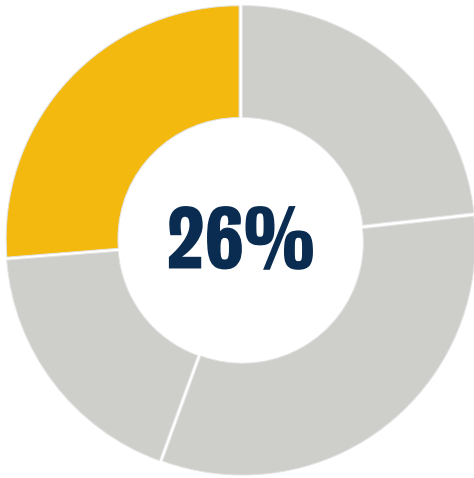
Progressives

Youngest group, with highest education level. Most likely to think women's rights, ethnic minority rights and trans rights not gone far enough. Most likely to be ashamed of British empire, and most in favour of political correctness.

Moderates

Support greater rights for women and ethnic minorities – but less strongly than Progressives. Agree political correctness gone too far, yet not nostalgic for past nor proud of empire.

Traditionalists



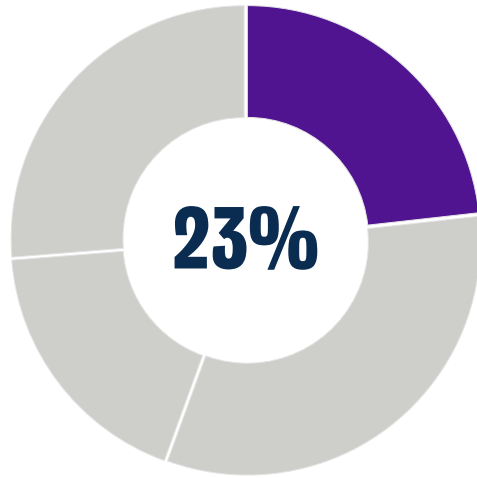
Key characteristics

- Only group with a male majority (61%).
- Oldest of the groups, with most aged 55 or above, and people from minority ethnic backgrounds are underrepresented.
- Highest share of members who are homeowners, and of those not in full-time work, reflecting the fact that they are the most likely of the groups to be retired.
- Of the four groups, by far the most patriotic and nostalgic for the country's past: 79% are proud of their country, 71% agree empire is something to be proud of, and 61% want their country to be the way it used to be.
- Much more likely than the other groups to believe rights for women and people from ethnic minorities have gone far enough. And 47% think trans rights have gone too far in the UK – around four times the proportion of the group next most likely to feel this way.
- Only group in which a majority are opposed to the Black Lives Matter movement.
- 97% agree political correctness has gone too far (including 76% who strongly agree), and a majority think people are too easily offended.

Key demographics

- 61% male
- 56% aged 55 or older
- 59% Conservative
- 78% Leavers
- 5% ethnic minorities (vs 11% in sample as a whole)

Progressives



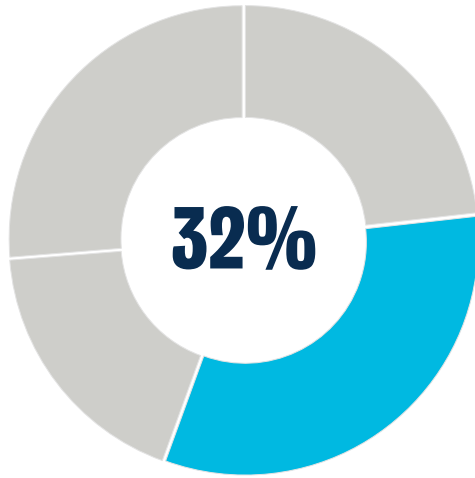
Key characteristics

- Youngest of the four groups, and slightly disproportionately female, with people from ethnic minority backgrounds overrepresented relative to the sample overall.
- Perhaps because of age, this group has the lowest proportion of members not in full-time work, and the highest renting from private landlords.
- Almost 50% have university degrees – the highest share of all the groups.
- Most likely of the groups to think the expansion of rights for historically less powerful groups – women, ethnic minorities, transgender people – has not gone far enough.
- 59% are ashamed of the British empire – three times the proportion of the next-most ashamed group – and they tend not to be nostalgic for the country's past nor strongly patriotic.
- By far the most likely of the groups to disagree that political correctness has gone too far (61%), as well as most likely to think the way people talk needs to be more sensitive to those from different backgrounds.

Key demographics

- 45% aged 34 or younger
- 55% female
- Labour (46%) and third party (41%) supporters
- 94% Remain
- 16% ethnic minorities (vs 11% in sample as a whole)

Moderates



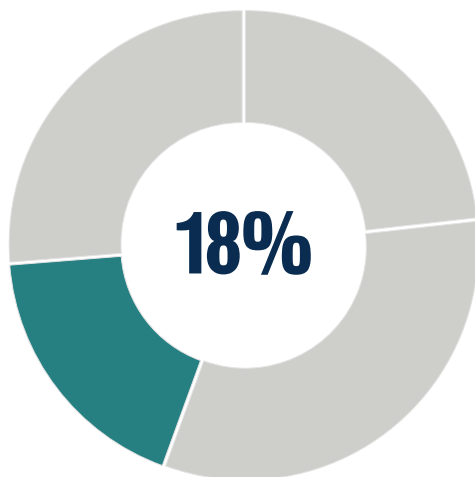
Key characteristics

- Older than Progressives, with the group including people from ethnic minority backgrounds at about the same rate as the sample overall.
- Most politically diverse group, with large shares of Conservative, Labour, and third-party supporters.
- This group is the second most highly educated, with 31% having a degree.
- On some issues, this group resembles the Progressives: they support the expansion of rights for women and ethnic minorities – albeit less strongly than do Progressives.
- On other issues their views are closer to those of Traditionalists. For example, they agree political correctness has gone too far.
- Most likely to think that trans rights have gone as far as they should go, with 40% holding this view.
- Majority are proud of the UK, but tend not to be nostalgic for the past nor proud of the British empire.
- Take a middle position between thinking there's a need to be sensitive and a perception that people are too easily offended.

Key demographics

- 33% aged 35-54 and 38% aged 55+
- 53% female
- Politically diverse: 28% Conservative, 33% Labour, 26% other party
- 63% Remain
- 12% ethnic minorities (vs 11% in sample as a whole)

The Disengaged



Key characteristics

- Highest proportion of women (58%) out of the four groups, and 35- to 54-year-olds make up the biggest share (40%). Joint-lowest share of degree holders (14%).
- Lowest rate of home ownership (63%), and highest rate of social housing (17%).
- Stand out for their neutrality on politics and Brexit: 44% don't support any party, and 37% don't think of themselves as Leavers or Remainers. Those who do support a party are more likely to support the Conservatives (28%) than Labour (16%).
- Distinguished from Moderates by views on the rights of various groups. A majority of Moderates disagree (although not strongly) that the rights of women and ethnic minorities have gone far enough, while the Disengaged neither agree nor disagree.
- Least inclined of the four groups to take a position on culture war issues, choosing "neither" or "don't know" at a higher rate. On issues where the largest share do express an opinion, it is rarely the most extreme position – for example, strongly agreeing or strongly disagreeing with a statement.

Key demographics

- 40% aged 35-54
- 58% female
- 44% don't support any political party
- Diverse Brexit identities: 29% Leave, 34% Remain, 37% neither
- 12% ethnic minorities (vs 11% in sample as a whole)

2. The groups' identifying characteristics in detail

Responses to questions about key culture war issues point to the existence of three groups: one with progressive views, one with traditional views, and a middle group.

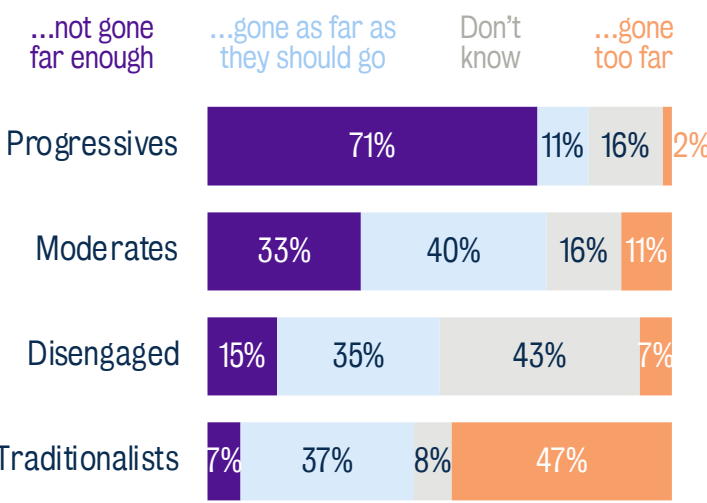
But questions about equality and rights for women, trans people, and people from ethnic minority backgrounds reveal that this middle group is actually two groups: one which is generally progressive but less so than the most progressive group, and one which generally doesn't come to a position on these (and other) issues.

The four sides are distinguished by their attitudes towards rights for historically marginalised groups

There are big differences in how the groups see the issue of trans rights. 71% of Progressives think they haven't gone far enough in the UK – compared with just 7% of Traditionalists who feel the same. Nearly half (47%) of this latter group instead think that trans rights have already gone too far.

Moderates are most likely to say trans rights have gone as far as they should go (40%), while the Disengaged are most likely to say they don't know (43%).

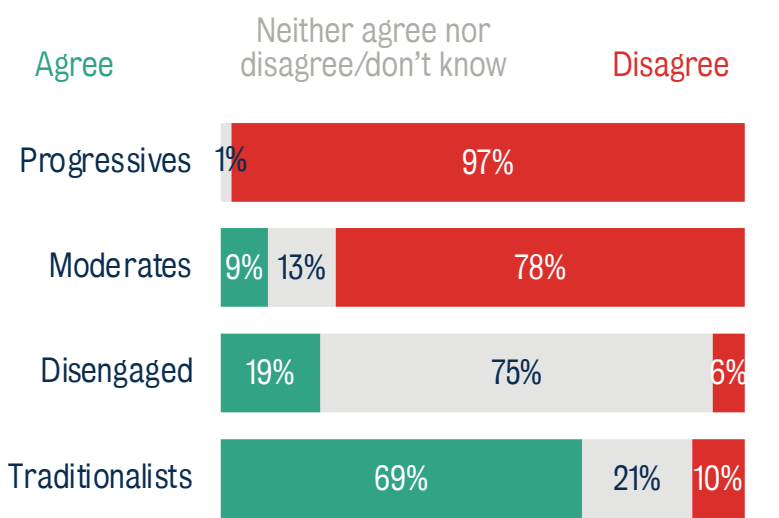
In the UK, transgender rights have...



There is near-universal disagreement among Progressives (97%) that equal rights for ethnic minority rights have gone far enough in the UK and a large majority of Moderates (78%) feel the same.

By contrast, most of the Disengaged (75%) neither agree nor disagree, while Traditionalists (69%) are by far most likely to say ethnic minority rights have gone as far as they should.

How much do you agree with this statement? When it comes to giving Black, Asian and minority ethnic people equal rights with white people, things have gone far enough in the UK

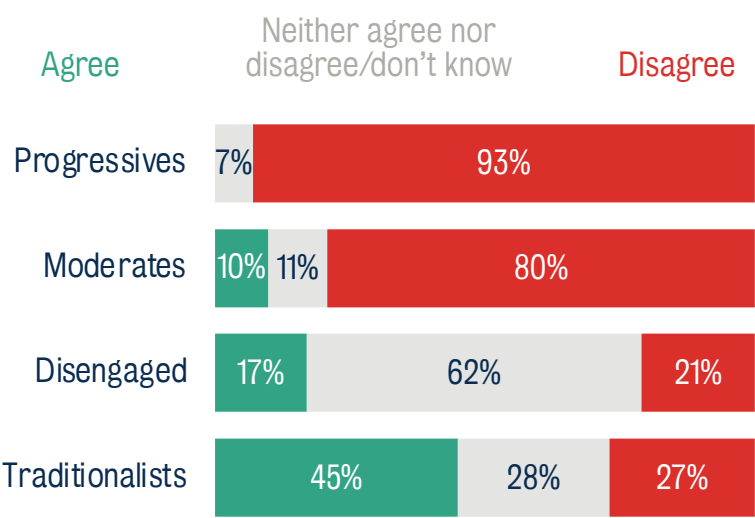


Strongly agree / tend to agree and strongly disagree / tend to disagree response options grouped

While Traditionalists are most inclined to be against greater rights for historically marginalised groups, they are more open to expanding rights for women, with 27% disagreeing that women's rights have gone too far.

Again, almost all Progressives (93%) disagree with this view, as do a high proportion of Moderates (80%), while most of the Disengaged (62%) don't take a position.

How much do you agree with this statement? When it comes to giving women equal rights with men, things have gone far enough in the UK



Strongly agree / tend to agree and strongly disagree / tend to disagree response options grouped

Most Traditionalists are proud of the British empire and would like their country to return to a past state – in stark contrast to Progressives

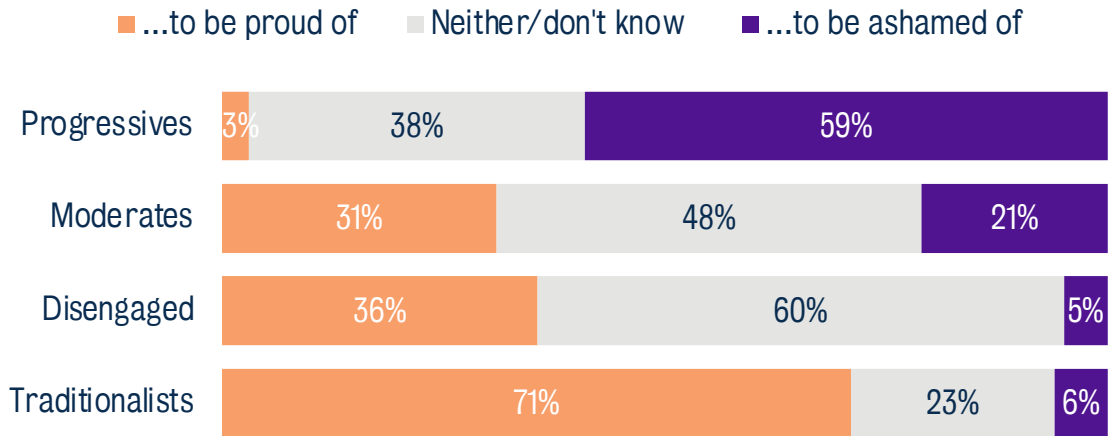
Nostalgia and views of UK history strongly divide Progressives and Traditionalists. A majority of Progressives, 59%, think empire is something to be ashamed of, while an even larger majority of Traditionalists, 71%, think empire is something to be proud of.

Similarly, 78% of Progressives say they would not like to return to the way the country used to be, while 61% of Traditionalists are in favour of such a return.

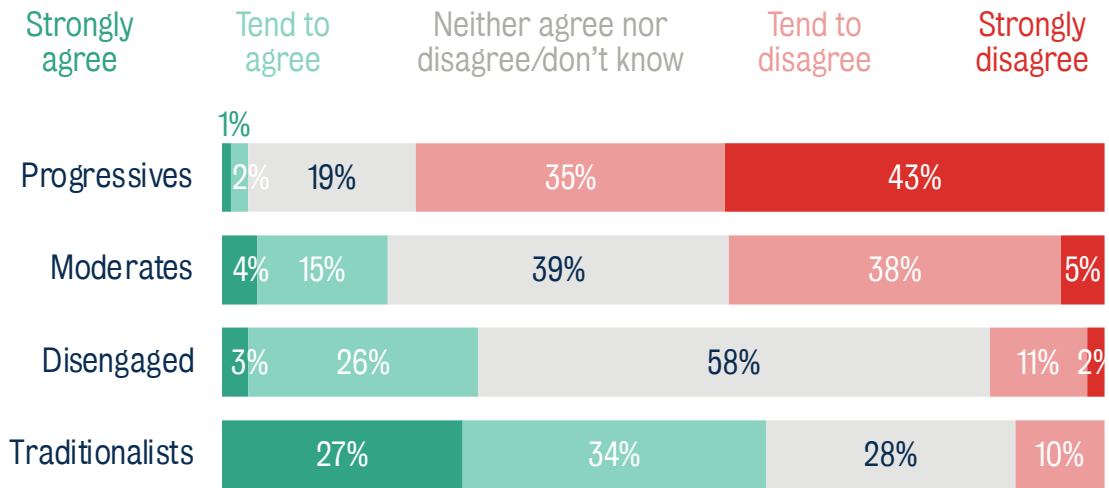
Unlike Progressives and Traditionalists, Moderates and the Disengaged are less well distinguished by their views on the UK’s history than their views on expanding rights, as shown on the previous page.

On empire and a return to the past, both groups give large numbers of neither/don’t know responses. More people in both groups thought empire was something to be proud of than something to be ashamed of, however, and a greater share of the Disengaged agree than disagree that they would like the country to be the way it used to be, while more Moderates disagreed than agreed.

The British empire is something...



To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? I would like my country to be the way it used to be



Traditionalists and Progressives' divergent views on the UK's history are reflected in their pride in the country

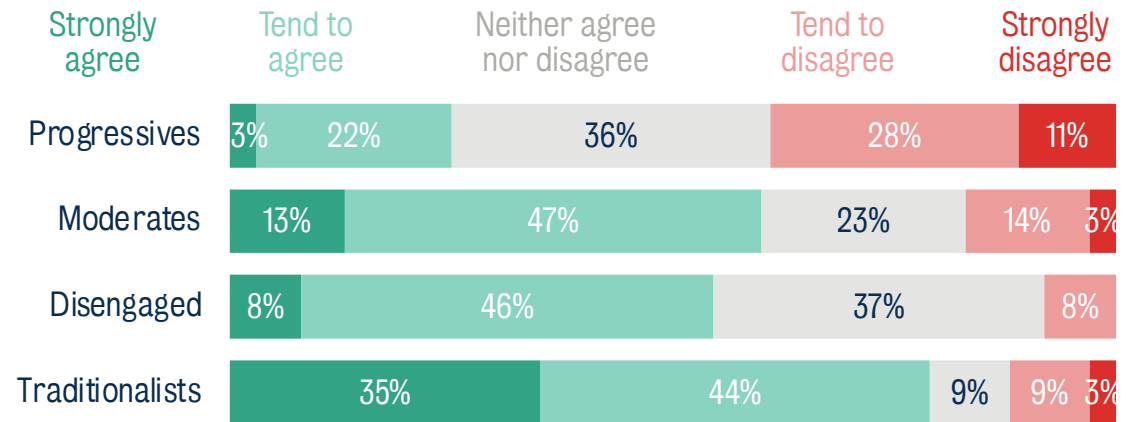
As with questions on the country's history, responses to questions about pride in the UK and people talking negatively about the country strongly distinguish Progressives and Traditionalists, with less obvious differences between Moderates and the Disengaged.

25% of Progressives say they are proud of their country, while 39% say they aren't, and 36% don't take a position or don't know. The Traditionalists, on the other hand, are much more of one mind, with a large majority of 79% saying they are proud of their country.

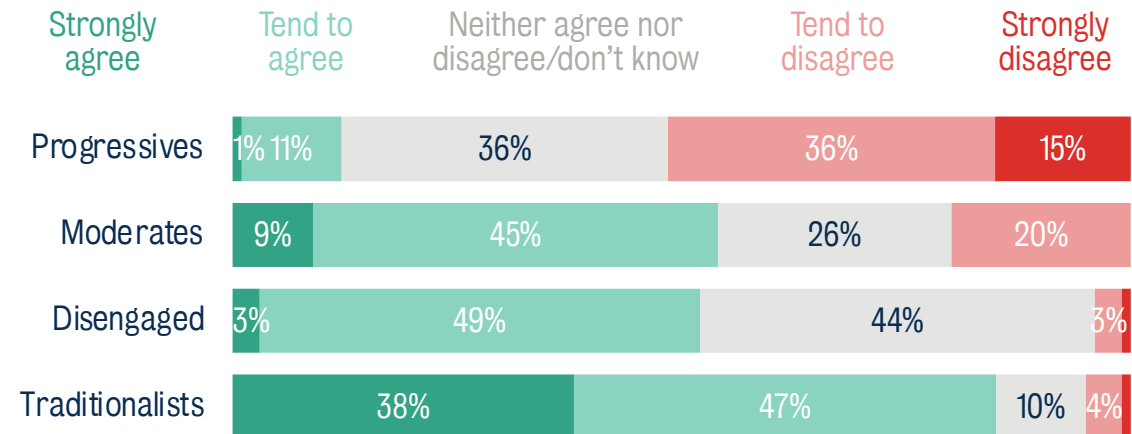
It is a similar pattern across the four groups for views on whether "too many people in the UK run our country down". However, Progressives are half as likely to agree with this statement (12%) as they are to be proud of their country (25%).

It's important to note that, unlike the question about the British empire, which specifically asked whether people feel ashamed, these questions can only capture pride or its absence – those who aren't proud of their country are not necessarily ashamed of it.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
I am proud of my country



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Too many people in the UK run our country down

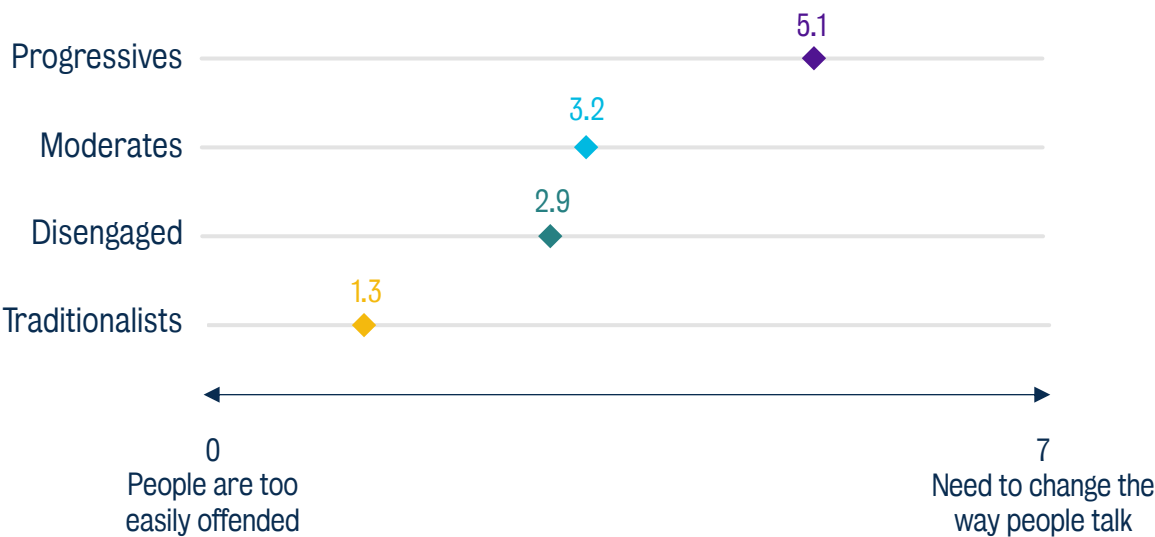


Progressives strongly favour being politically correct, while Traditionalists think all viewpoints should be aired, even if offensive

Asked to place themselves on a scale of political correctness, Progressives strongly lean towards preferring to be more sensitive to those from different backgrounds, while Traditionalists put themselves towards the other end of the spectrum, more in favour of the belief that people are too easily offended.

Moderates and the Disengaged were about halfway between Progressives and Traditionalists on the same scale.

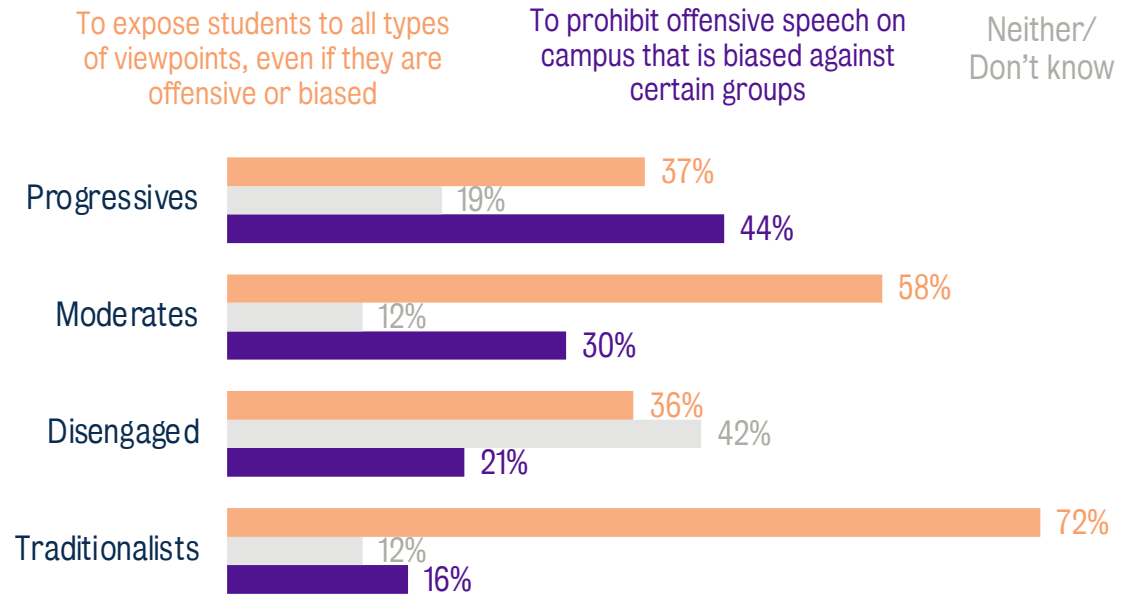
Some people think that the way people talk needs to be more sensitive to people from different backgrounds. Others think that many people are just too easily offended. Where would you place yourself on this scale?



Progressives are slightly more likely to say it is more important for universities to prohibit biased and offensive speech on campus (44%) than to expose students to all kinds of viewpoints (37%). They are the only group where a larger share support prohibiting offensive speech.

Majorities of both Traditionalists (72%) and Moderates (58%) favour exposing students to all viewpoints, while the Disengaged are the only group where the largest proportion takes neither view (42%). Among this group, exposing students to all viewpoints has more support than prohibiting offensive speech (36% vs 21%).

If you had to choose, is it more important for universities...



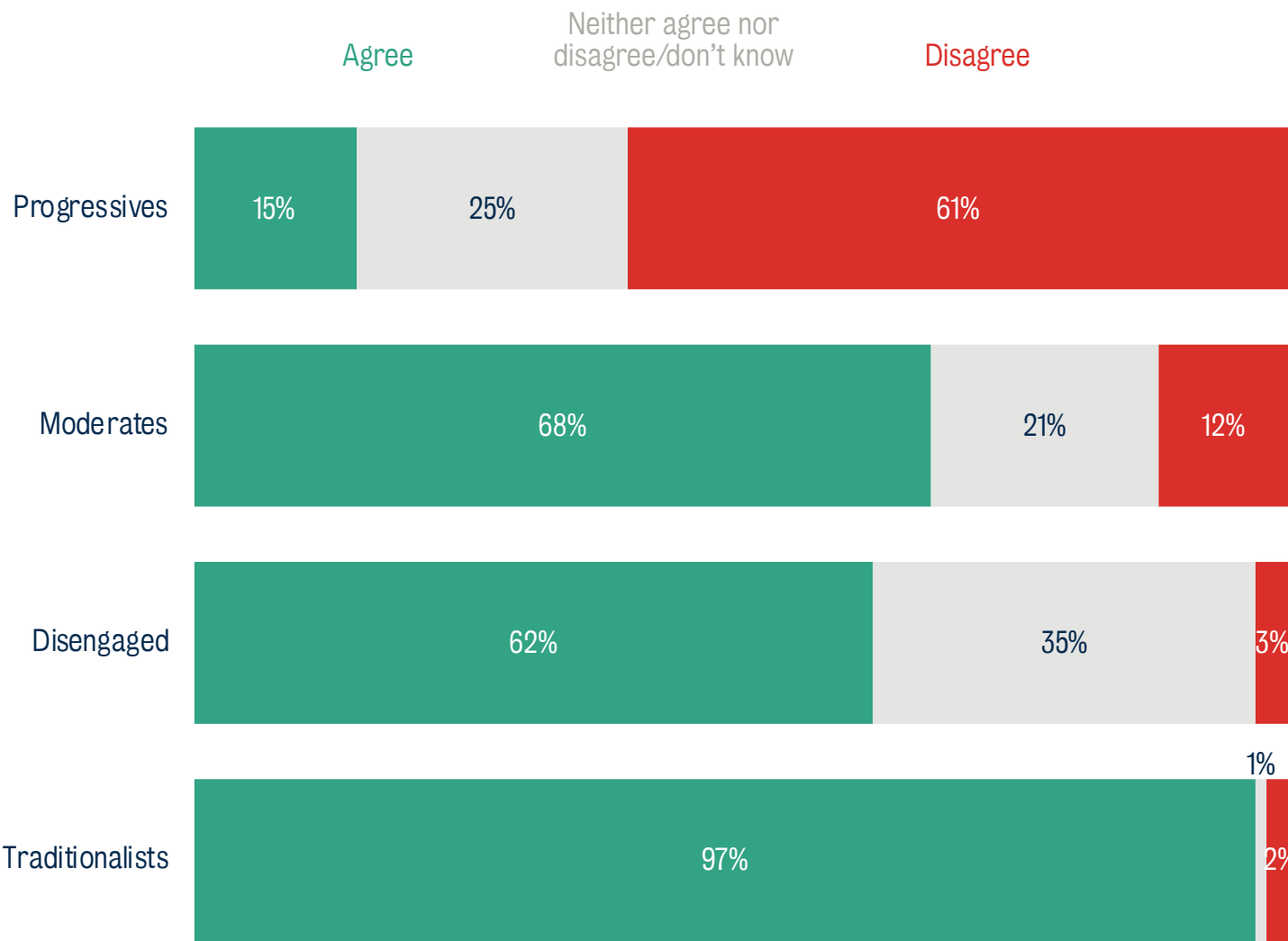
Nearly all Traditionalists think political correctness has gone too far – and majorities of the Moderates and the Disengaged feel the same

Traditionalists are near-unanimous that political correctness has gone too far, with 97% holding this view.

Progressives are the only group in which most members (61%) disagree that political correctness has gone too far.

Moderates and the Disengaged fall in the middle, although strong majorities of both nonetheless believe political correctness has gone too far, with 68% and 62% respectively taking this position.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Political correctness has gone too far



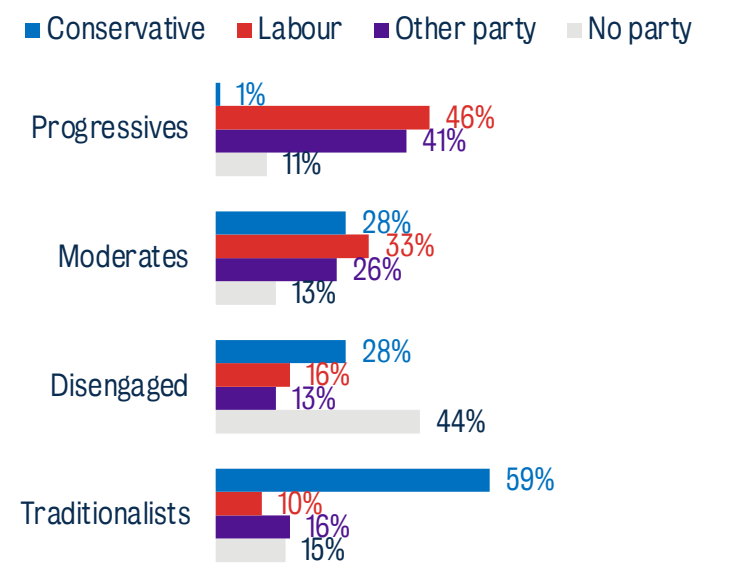
Strongly agree / tend to agree and strongly disagree / tend to disagree response options grouped

The four groups have distinct political allegiances

59% of Traditionalists support or feel closer to the Conservative party – the only group in which a single political party dominates. In all other groups, two or more political affiliations are well represented.

Progressives are split between Labour supporters (46%) and third-party supporters (41%), while the most diverse group is the Moderates, who are divided between Labour (33%), Conservative (28%) and third-party supporters (26%). Of all the groups, the Disengaged are most likely to identify with no party (44%).

Do you support/are you closer to any political party?

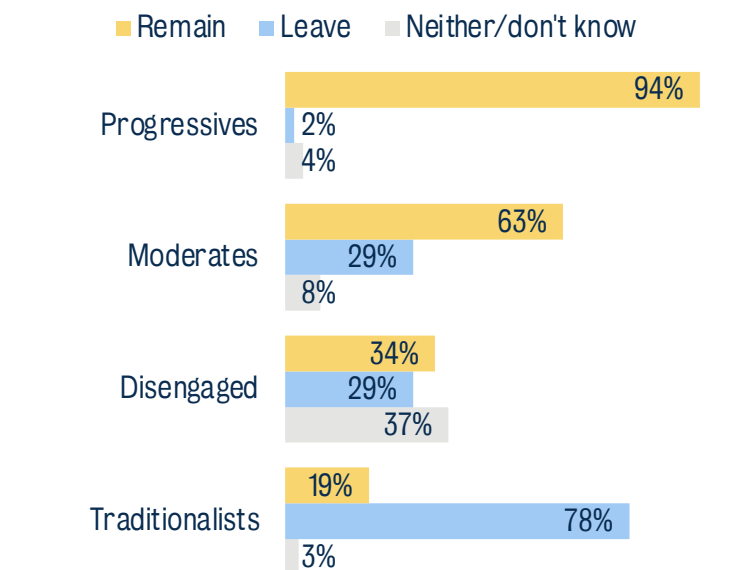


Progressives are overwhelmingly Remainers (94%), while Traditionalists have a large Leave majority (78%).

Moderates are similar to Progressives, in that the majority are Remainers (63%), although three in 10 of this group are Leavers.

The Disengaged are split relatively evenly between Remain (34%), Leave (29%) and neither side (37%).

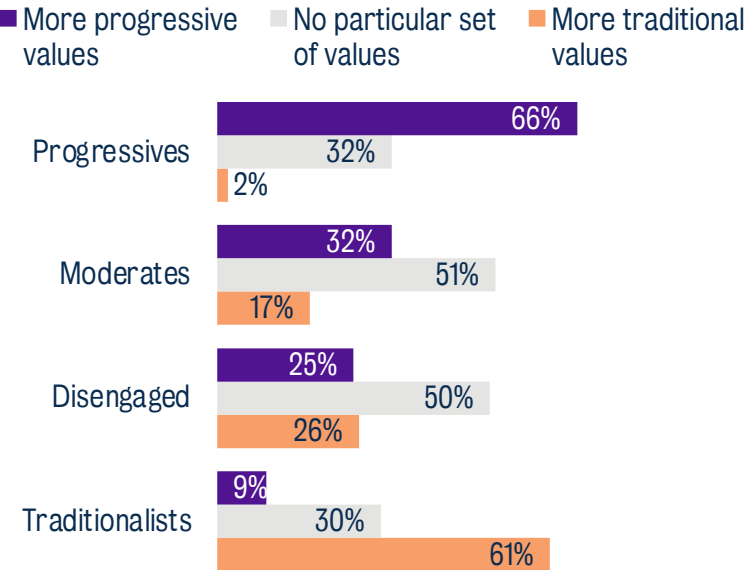
Thinking about the UK's relationship with the European Union, do you think of yourself as a "Remainer", a "Leaver", or do you not think of yourself in that way?



Strong majorities of Progressives (66%) and Traditionalists (61%) think the government should promote their respective values.

In contrast, the majority view of Moderates (51%) and the Disengaged (50%) is that the government should not be promoting any particular set of values. In both of these groups, though, there are non-trivial numbers favouring the promotion of both progressive and traditional values.

The government should promote ____ in our society*



* "Don't know" responses were not used in identifying groups and were therefore excluded in calculation of percentages

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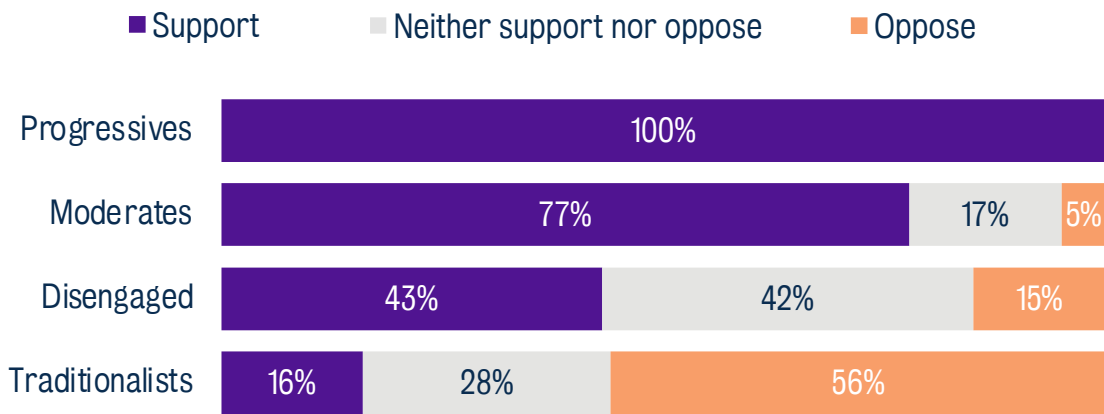
Black Lives Matter divides the four groups, but there is more unanimity over lockdown restrictions

Progressives unanimously support the Black Lives Matter movement, with 100% in favour of it, including 86% strongly. A majority of Moderates also support the movement (77%), although fewer strongly support it (35%).

Members of the Disengaged are virtually equally likely to support BLM (43%) as they are to say they don't take a position on the issue (42%).

56% of Traditionalists oppose BLM – the only group where a majority do so.

From what you've read and heard, how do you feel about the Black Lives Matter movement?*



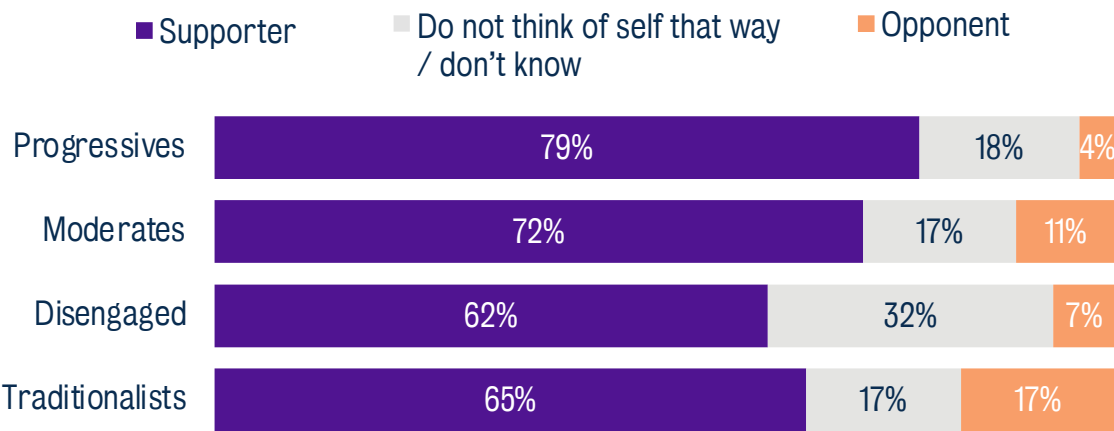
Strongly support/ somewhat support and strongly oppose / tend to oppose response options grouped

* "Don't know" responses were not used in identifying groups and were therefore excluded in calculation of percentages

By comparison, there is much less of a distinction between the groups' views on another culture war issue – Covid-19 lockdown restrictions.

Majorities of all four groups see themselves as lockdown supporters, although there is still a spread between them – going from 62% of the Disengaged, to 79% of Progressives.

The UK government has imposed a series of restrictions on how we live, including "lockdowns" and wearing of masks in response to the coronavirus outbreak. Do you think of yourself as a supporter or an opponent of these restrictions, or do you not think of yourself in that way?



3. Different views on culture war issues reflect different underlying values

The four groups' different perspectives on culture war flashpoints aren't unique to these issues. Instead, they seem to reflect fundamentally different worldviews.

These differences in worldviews are apparent in responses to questions about a range of values, with Traditionalists tending to take conservative and authoritarian positions, and Progressives being more open to change and liberal in their outlook. Moderates and the Disengaged, on the other hand, take a range of views depending on the question.

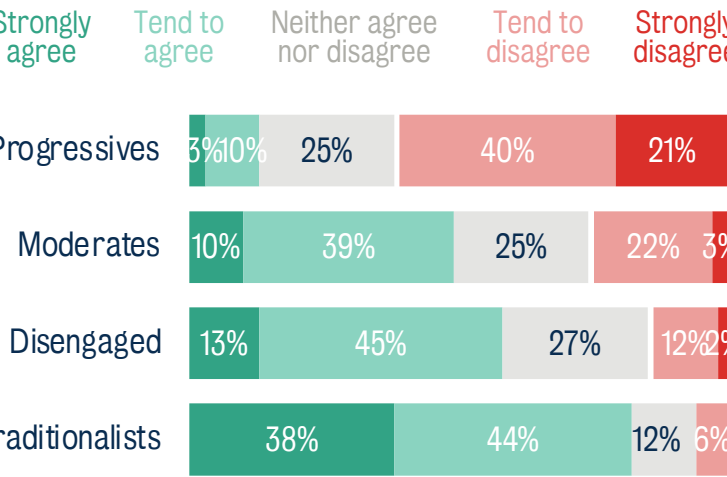
One area in which there is agreement across the groups is in recognising economic inequalities in wealth and power.

Progressives and Traditionalists make fundamentally different value judgements about society and culture in the UK

82% of Traditionalists agree that young people do not have enough respect for traditional values, compared with 13% of Progressives. And although there is a gradient in opinion across the groups on this question, it is only Progressives who have majority disagreement (61%).

Among the Disengaged, there is 59% agreement, while even among Moderates close to a majority (49%) agree young people don't respect traditional values enough.

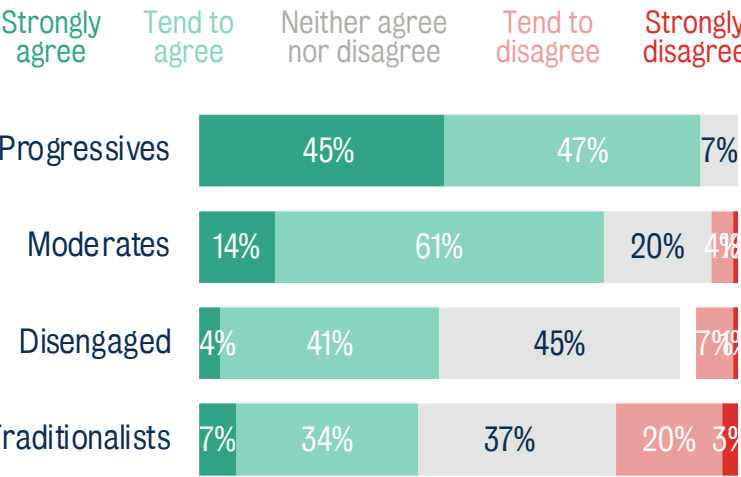
How much do you agree or disagree? Young people today don't have enough respect for traditional values



92% of Progressives agree people should be more tolerant of those who lead unconventional lives – more than double the 41% of Traditionalists who feel the same. But despite this, Traditionalists are still most likely to agree with this view.

Moderates' views on this question come closer to Progressives' while the Disengaged take a similar position to Traditionalists.

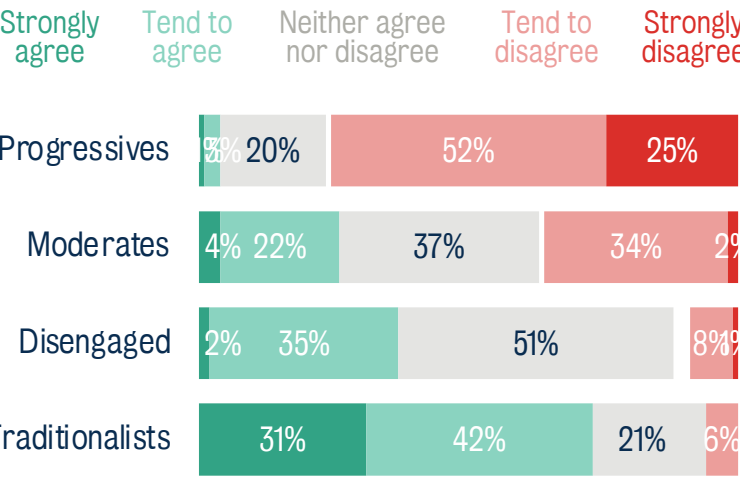
How much do you agree or disagree? People in the UK should be more tolerant of those who lead unconventional lives



In line with their view that young people do not sufficiently respect traditional values, a majority of Traditionalists (73%) agree that the culture in the UK is changing too fast. Following the same pattern as other questions, majority agreement from Traditionalists here is matched by majority disagreement from Progressives (78%).

A majority (51%) of the Disengaged don't take a position on whether the UK's culture is changing too fast, and more than a third of Moderates (37%) do the same.

To what extent do you agree or disagree? The culture in the UK is changing too fast

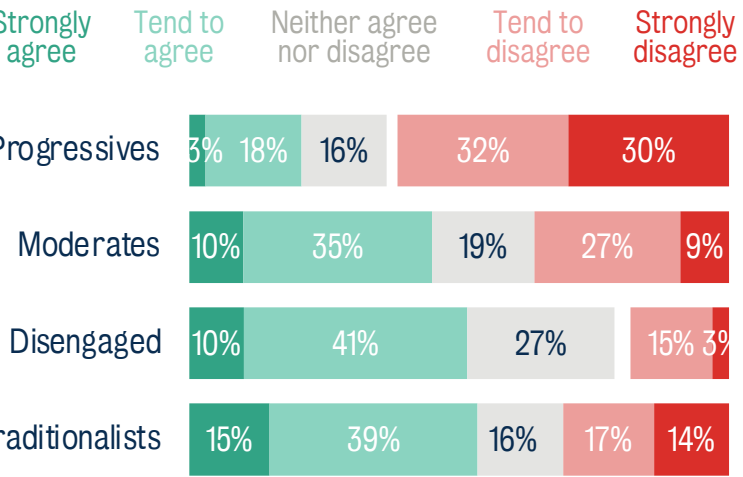


The groups think in different and sometimes contradictory ways about various aspects of free speech and the right to offend

Slight majorities of Traditionalists (53%) and the Disengaged (52%) agree that censorship is needed to uphold moral standards, while more Moderates agree than disagree with this view (45% vs 36%).

One in five (21%) Progressives think censorship is necessary for this reason, with three in five (62%) disagreeing with this perspective.

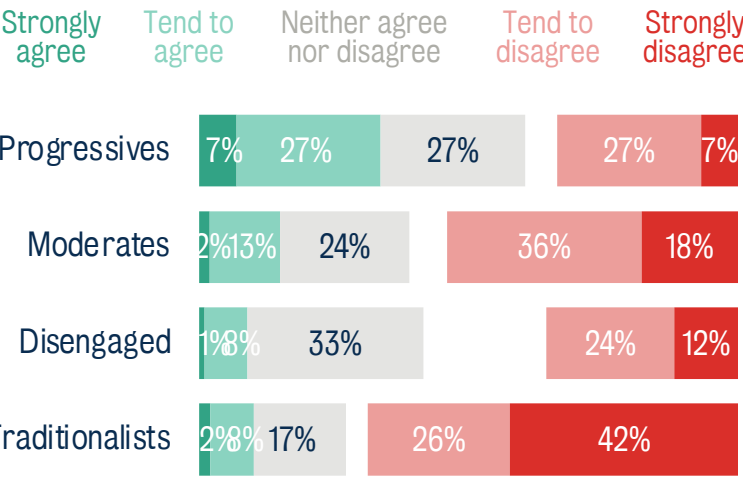
How much do you agree or disagree? Censorship of films and magazines is necessary to uphold moral standards



In no group does “no-platforming” controversial speakers attract majority support. Around a third of Progressives (33%) are in favour of it – the highest of any group – although this is matched by the same proportion who are against it.

As seen earlier in this report, Traditionalists take a more absolutist stance on free speech issues, while Progressives seek to limit the harm caused by speech. In line with this, 68% of Traditionalists oppose no-platforming, including 42% who strongly oppose it.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that “no-platforming” is the right response to speakers with controversial views?



From these questions it is possible to see some level of contradiction between some of the groups’ positions on censorship.

For example, Progressives, who in other areas are the most willing to limit freedom of speech to protect audiences from offensive messaging, are the least supportive of censorship to protect moral standards.

Similarly, Traditionalists, who are otherwise absolutist about free speech regardless of the potential for offense, have a majority agreeing that censorship is necessary to uphold moral standards.

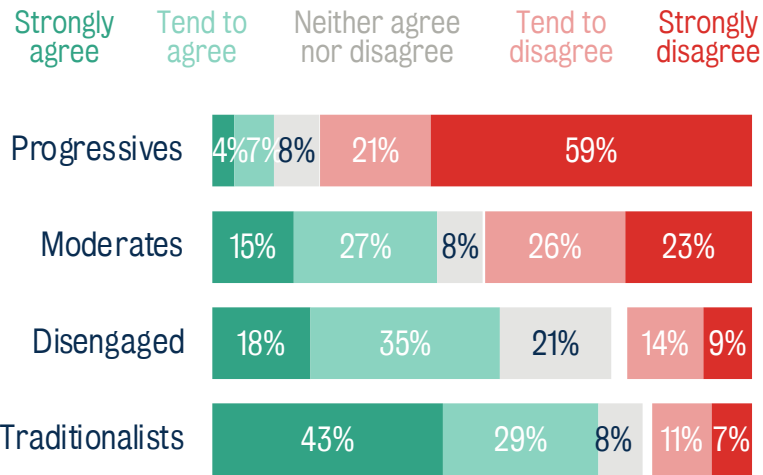
Question on no-platforming included this preamble: “There have been well-publicised instances of “no-platforming” at UK universities in recent years. This involves students trying to prevent invited speakers, whose views the students believe to be unacceptable, from speaking, or disrupting the events they are speaking at.

Progressives tend towards more liberal perspectives on law and order, while Traditionalists have more authoritarian views

80% of Progressives disagree that for some crimes the death penalty is the most appropriate sentence, including a majority of 59% who strongly feel this way. In contrast, 72% of Traditionalists agree that the death penalty can be appropriate in certain circumstances.

Moderates and the Disengaged take distinct positions between these two extremes: the former are relatively split on whether the death penalty can sometimes be the right option, while the latter have a slight majority in favour of it.

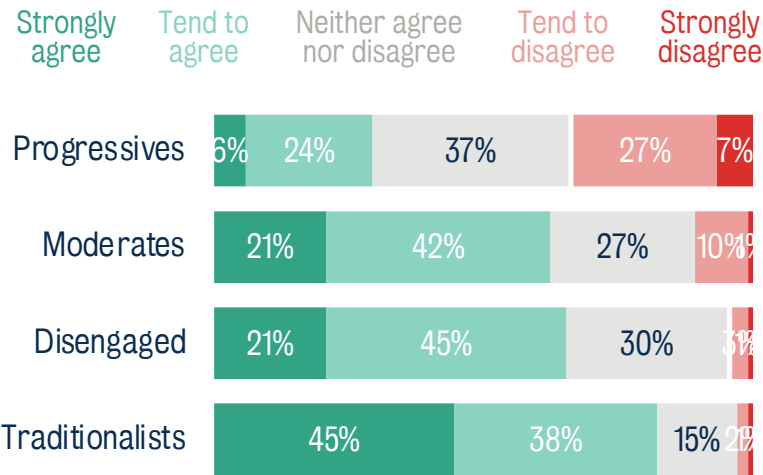
How much do you agree or disagree? For some crimes the death penalty is the most appropriate sentence



More generally, there is majority support across all groups except Progressives for stiffer sentences to be given to those who break the law. However, among Progressives, there is greater support for stiffer sentences than there is for the death penalty (30% vs 11%), and considerably less opposition (34% vs 80%).

Traditionalists are much more likely to be in favour of tougher sentences, with 83% favouring them. Moderates and the Disengaged have very similar views.

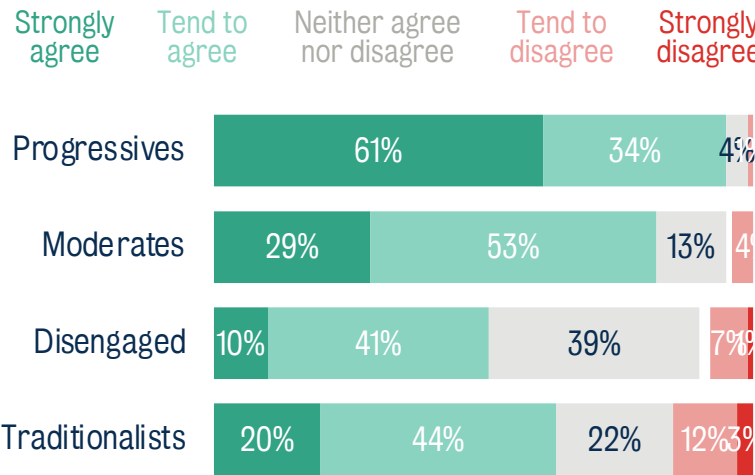
How much do you agree or disagree? People who break the law should be given stiffer sentences



With the exception of the Disengaged, there is majority support across all groups for the right to protest against the government.

Progressives come out as most supportive, with 95% agreeing people should be allowed to organise public meetings to protest (including 61% who strongly agree). Traditionalists show considerably less support – 63% feel this way.

How much do you agree or disagree? People should be allowed to organise public meetings to protest against the government?

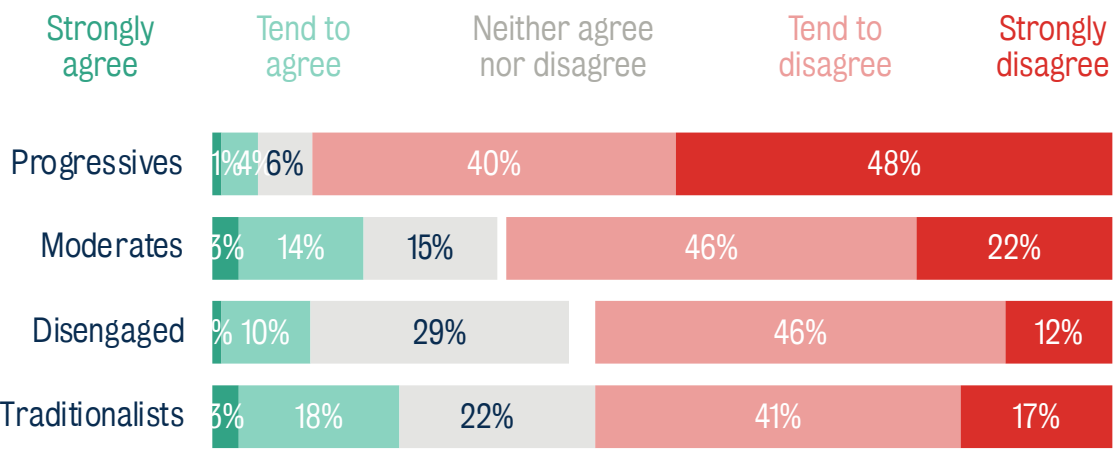


All groups believe there are inequalities in wealth and that there is unfairness between rich and poor

When it comes to questions of wealth inequality and fairness, majorities in all groups take the position that the status quo is unjust or unequal.

For example, 88% of Progressives disagree that ordinary working people get their fair share of the nation’s wealth, while 58% of Traditionalists say the same.

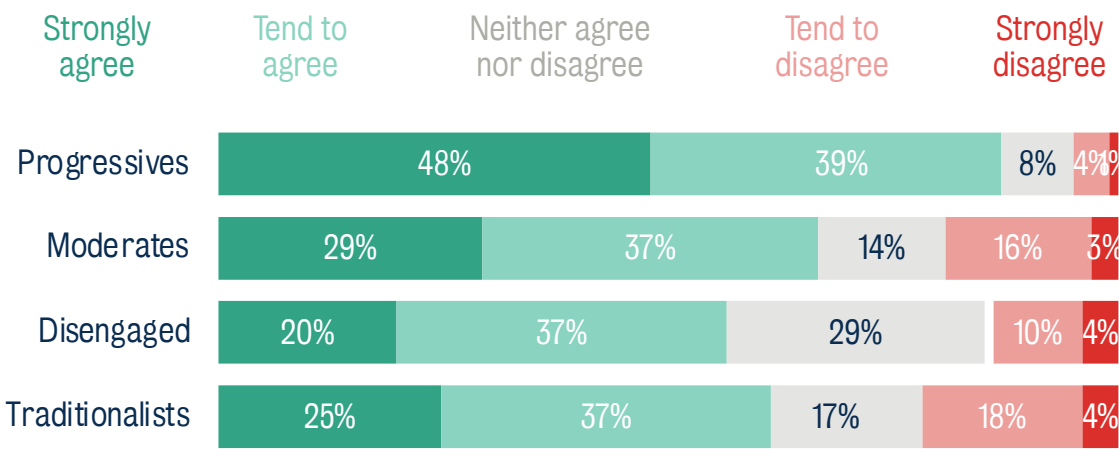
How much do you agree or disagree? Ordinary working people get their fair share of the nation’s wealth



It not surprising that Progressives are the most sensitive to inequality across these issues: a defining feature of the group is that they do not believe equal rights for women, ethnic minorities, or trans people have gone far enough (although this may reflect other factors as well as economic inequalities).

Traditionalists’ views on these issues indicate they may be more sensitive to particular types of economic inequalities than inequalities in rights between different groups, which, as shown earlier, are seen to have gone far enough.

How much do you agree or disagree? There is one law for the rich and one for the poor



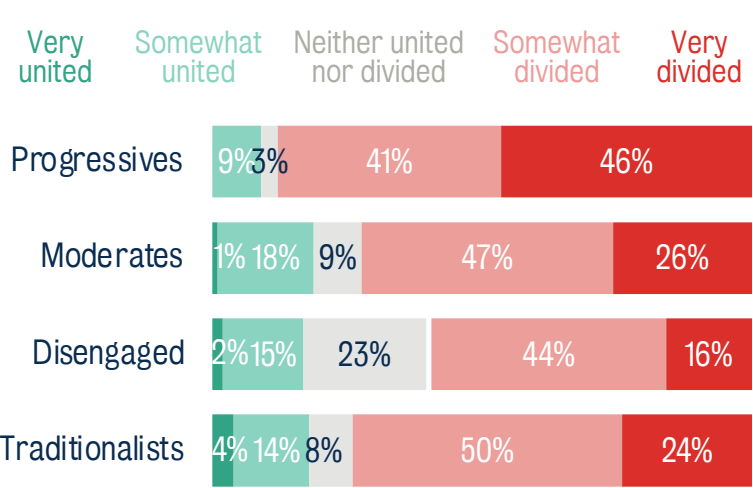
4. Unity and division

While disagreeing on key culture war issues, the four groups have similar perceptions of the country as being divided. This is despite majorities in all groups believing the media exaggerates the country's divisions.

Majorities of all groups see the UK as divided, while also believing the media exaggerates the country's divisions

A majority of all four groups think the country is divided – although Progressives are much more likely to see the UK as being *very* divided: 46% say this, compared with around a quarter of Traditionalists and Moderates who say the same.

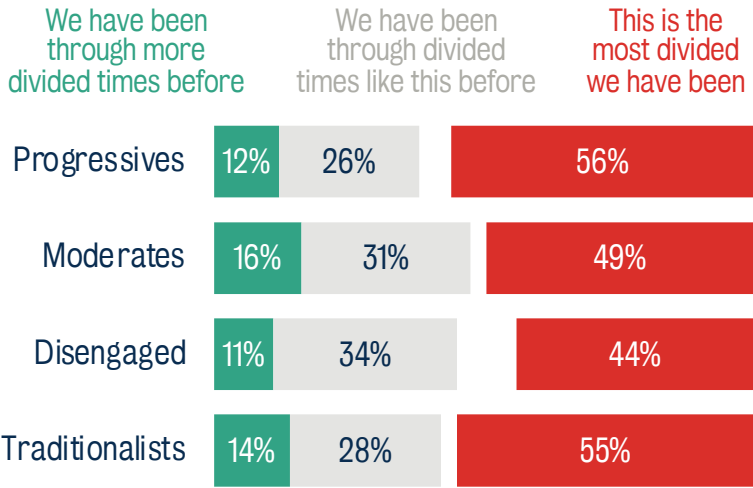
How united or divided does the UK feel to you these days?



Most members of the Progressive (56%) and the Traditionalist (55%) groups think this is the most divided the country has been in their lifetime. This is despite the different age profiles of the groups and therefore potentially different frames of reference for historical levels of division.

Between a third and a half of all groups think the country has been as or more divided in the past.

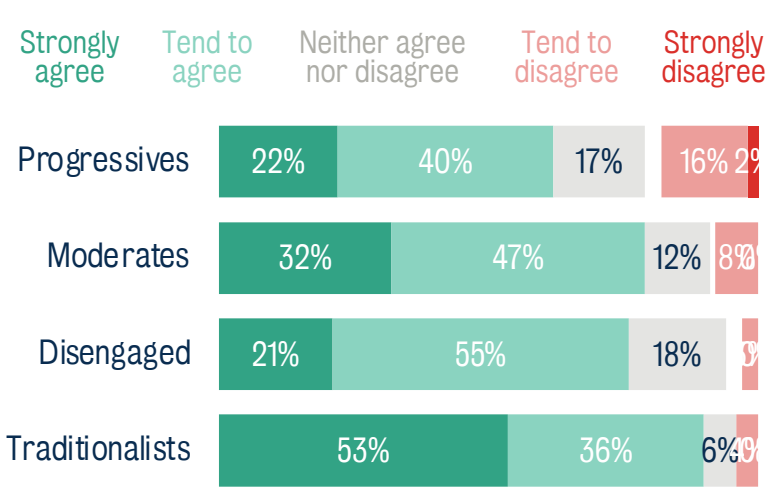
Which statement do you agree with more? In my lifetime...



Despite perceiving high levels of division in the UK, majorities of all four groups believe such division is exaggerated by the media.

Traditionalists are particularly likely to feel this way, with 89% agreeing the media often makes the country feel more divided than it really is, including 53% who strongly agree. Progressives have the lowest share of overall agreement, with 62% believing the media exaggerates divisions.

To what extent to you agree or disagree? The media often makes our country feel more divided than it really is



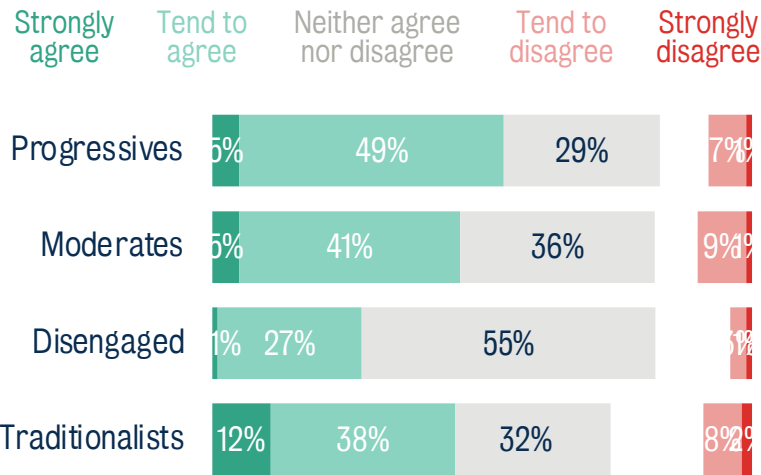
The groups all mostly think culture wars are real and a serious problem – but also that they’re stoked by politicians

Around half of three of the groups think culture wars are a serious problem – although very few strongly feel this way. The exception is the Disengaged, where around a quarter (28%) feel such conflicts are a serious problem.

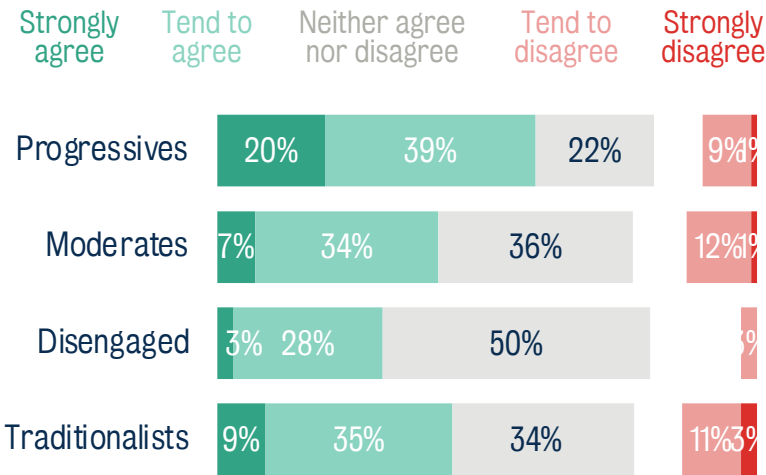
Progressives are most likely to think that politicians invent or exaggerate culture wars as a political tactic, with this group being the only one where a majority (59%) hold this view. But among the other groups, more people agree than disagree that politicians stoke culture wars in this way.

And all four groups are more likely to disagree than agree that culture wars only exist in the media and social media, rather than in real life. Only Progressives (62%) and Moderates (58%) have majority disagreement.

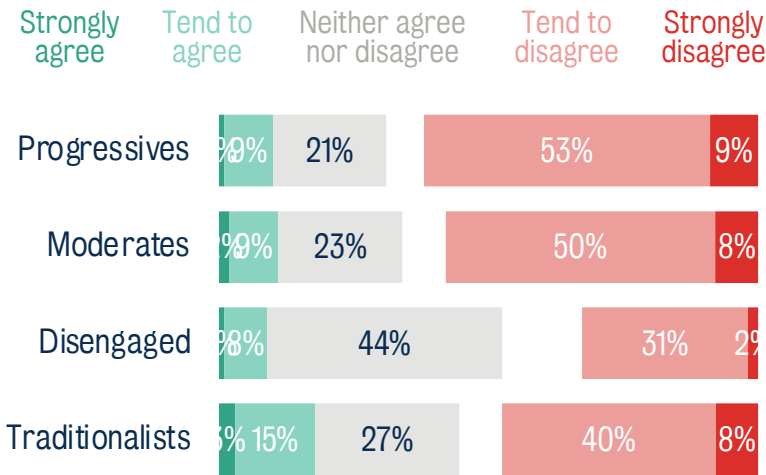
To what extent do you agree or disagree? Culture wars are a serious problem for UK society and politics



To what extent do you agree or disagree? Politicians invent or exaggerate culture wars as a political tactic



To what extent do you agree or disagree? Culture wars only exist in the media and on social media, not in real life



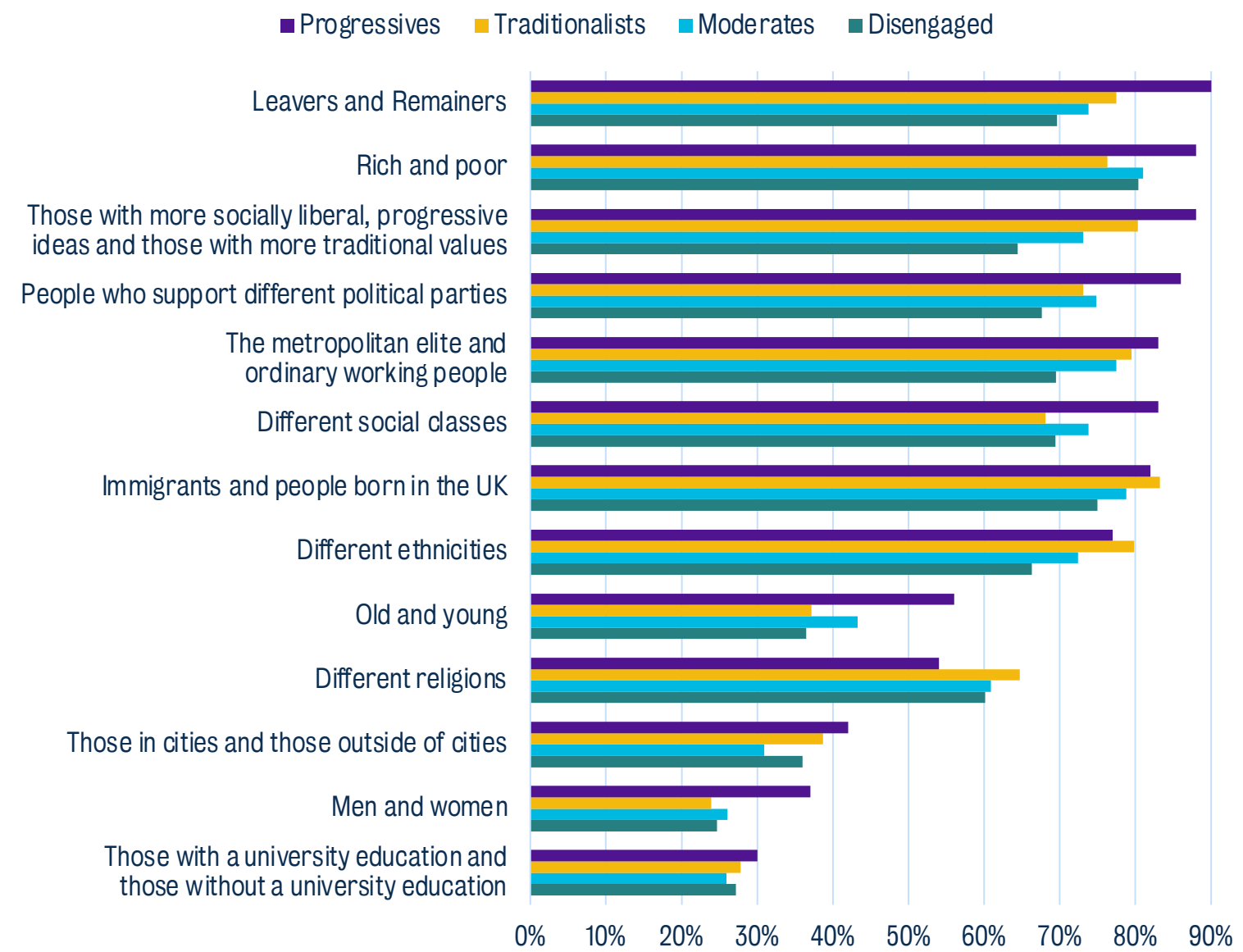
Progressives are most likely to feel there is tension between various groups in society

Around 90% of Progressives think relations are strained between Leavers and Remainers, rich and poor, the socially liberal and those with more traditional values, and people who support different political parties – higher than the proportions of the other groups who say the same.

Progressives are also the only group where a majority (56%) believe there is tension between old and young people in the UK, and 37% think there is tension between men and women – considerably higher than the other groups.

By contrast, Traditionalists are most likely to think there is tension between different religions (65%), different ethnicities (77%), and between immigrants and people born in the UK (83%) – although they are more closely followed by other groups in each category.

% who say there is a great deal or fair amount of tension between the following groups in the UK



5. Information bubbles

Progressives are the most likely of the groups to say that people they come into contact with share their political views.

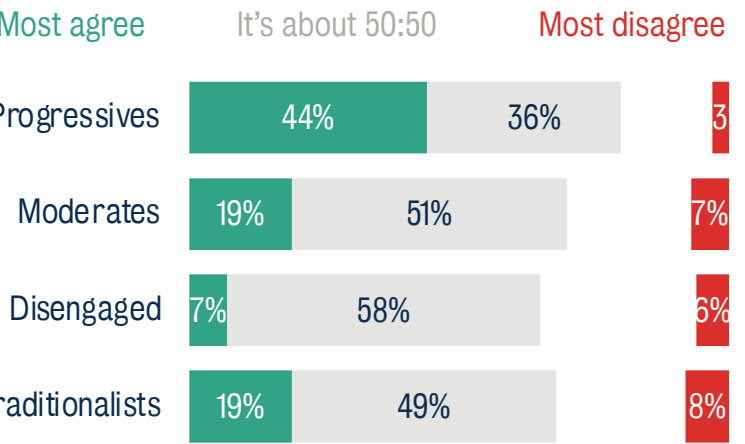
And all groups perceive greater agreement with close friends and family than with people they interact with online or their neighbours.

Progressives are much more likely than the other groups to say that those they interact with online share their politics

44% of Progressives say the people they interact with online mostly share their political views. This compares with 19% of Traditionalists and Moderates and 7% of the Disengaged who say the same.

Among all groups aside from Progressives, people are most likely to say it's about 50:50 – that half of the people they engage with online share their politics and the other half don't.

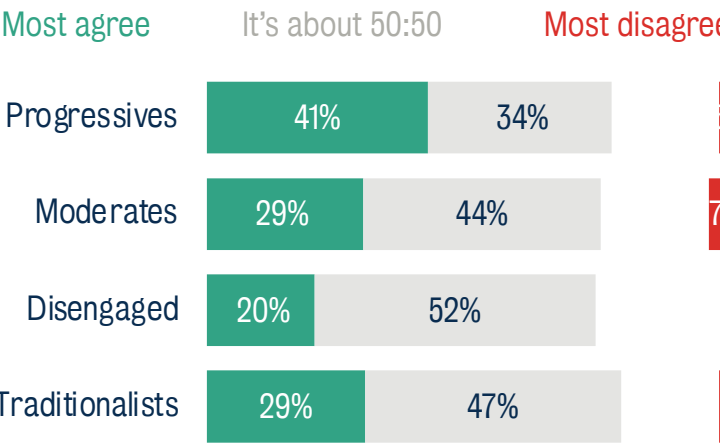
When it comes to political issues, do most of the following groups agree with you, is it about 50:50, or do most disagree with you? People you interact with online



Progressives (41%) are also most likely to say that their colleagues largely agree with them on politics.

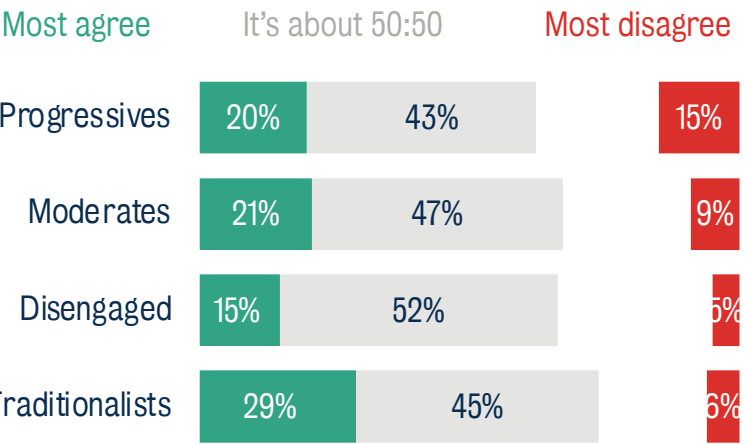
Among the other three groups, the most common response is that it's about 50:50 in terms of the extent to which colleagues agree with them.

When it comes to political issues, do most of the following groups agree with you, is it about 50:50, or do most disagree with you? Colleagues



Traditionalists (29%) are most likely to say their neighbours largely share their opinions on political issues – although among this group, as among the others, the most common response is that it's about 50:50 in terms of how much their neighbours agree with them.

When it comes to political issues, do most of the following groups agree with you, is it about 50:50, or do most disagree with you? Neighbours



Large proportions of all groups say that those closest to them agree with them on political issues

All four groups have large numbers reporting that their close friends mostly share their political views, and among Progressives (72%) and Traditionalists (51%) this perception is held by a majority.

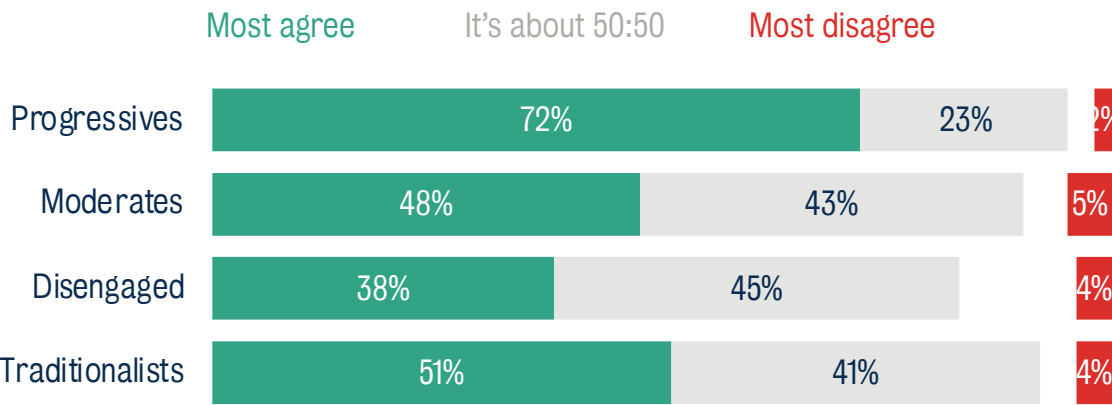
A majority of these two groups, as well as Moderates, also say that most of their family agree with them on political issues.

Across all five types of people asked about, Progressives and Traditionalists are most likely to perceive agreement, while Moderates

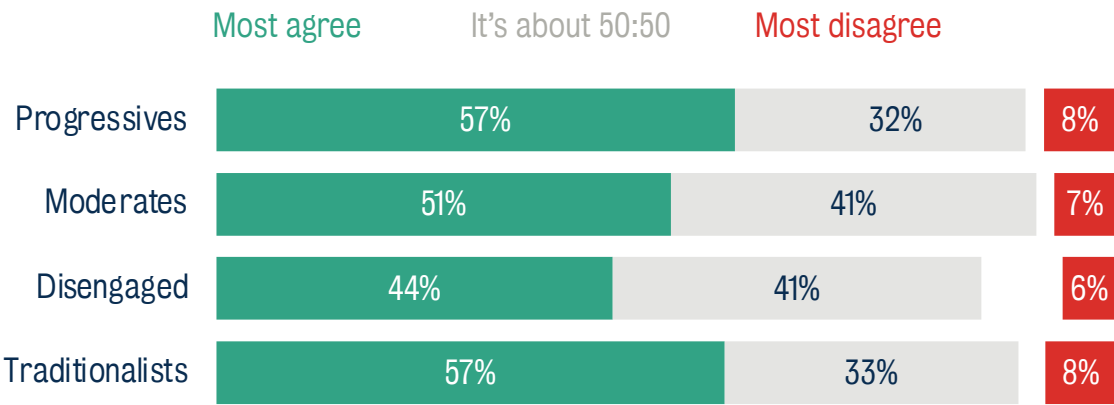
and the Disengaged are less likely. There are several potential explanations for this:

- Strong views may be more alienating, resulting in people with different views feeling reluctant to make them known.
- People with strong views may be more likely to assume agreement when other people’s views are unknown.
- People holding strong views may be more likely to have political conversations and therefore be more aware of others’ political views.
- People with strong views that are important to them may go to greater lengths to seek out others with similar views.

When it comes to political issues, do most of the following groups agree with you, is it about 50:50, or do most disagree with you? Close friends



When it comes to political issues, do most of the following groups agree with you, is it about 50:50, or do most disagree with you? Family



6. Views of the “other side” in culture war debates

All groups tend to have negative views of the other side in culture war debates – although Progressives have particularly cold feelings towards their “opponents” on the issues of Black Lives Matter, trans rights and Brexit.

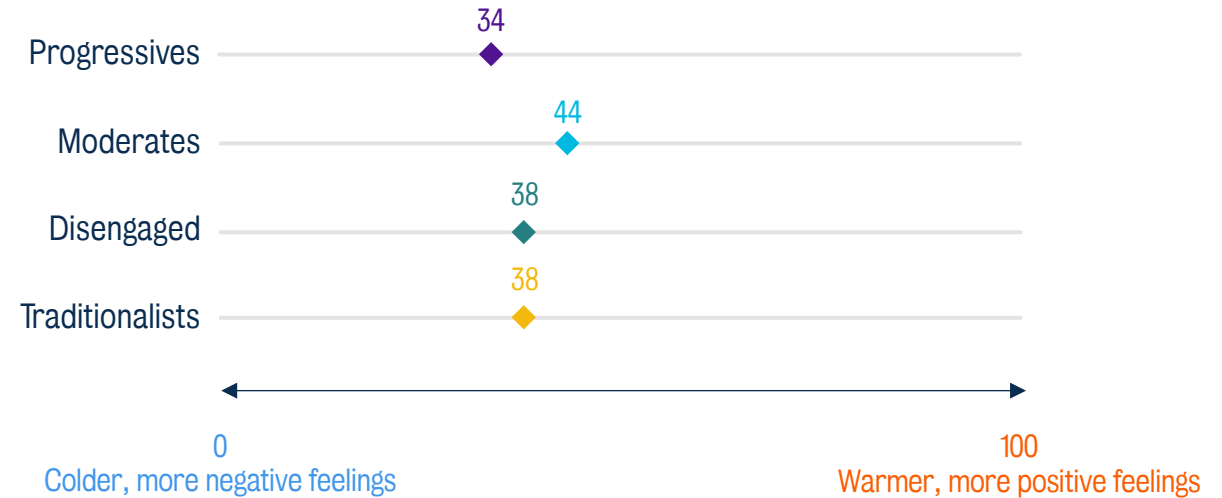
Compared with the other groups, Traditionalists are not particularly negative about the other side on most issues. While they do have the worst opinion of people who are ashamed of the British empire, their feelings are not particularly extreme.

Moderates are most positive about their political opponents, while Progressives are most negative about those on the other side of the Brexit debate

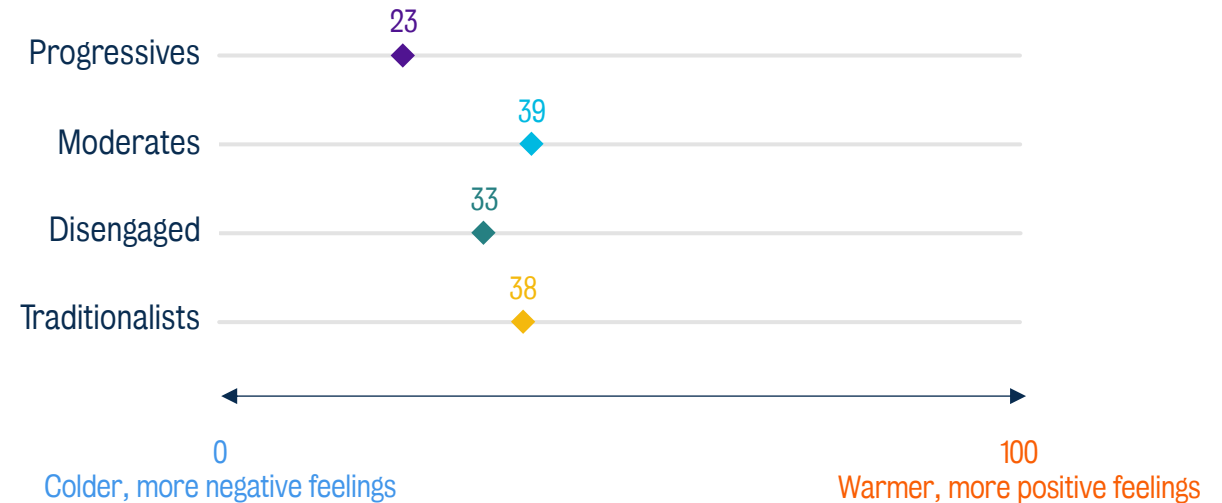
When asked to score their feelings towards people with different political opinions out of 100, all groups have a similarly negative view of the other side – except for Moderates, who are the most positive of the groups, rating their political opponents at 44 out of 100, close to a neutral rating.

There is greater variation on the issue of Brexit. Progressives rate their feelings towards those on the opposing side of the EU referendum debate at 23 out of 100 – the lowest rating given by any of the groups – while Moderates are again most positive, rating their feelings at 39, closely followed by Traditionalists, who give a score of 38.

Feelings towards people on the other side politically



Feelings towards people on the other side of Brexit

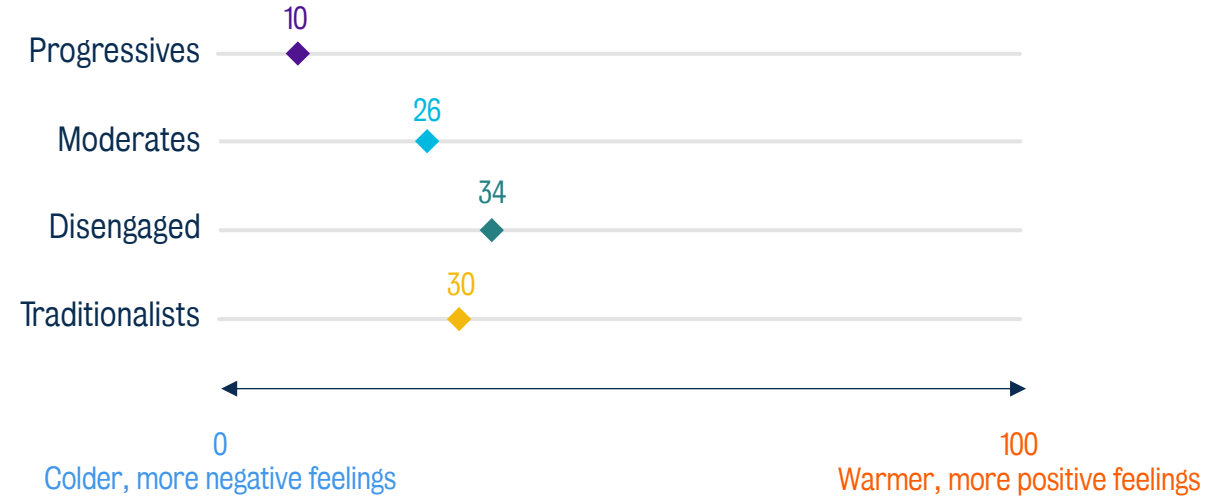


Of all the groups, progressives have the coldest feelings towards people who disagree with them on Black Lives Matter and trans rights

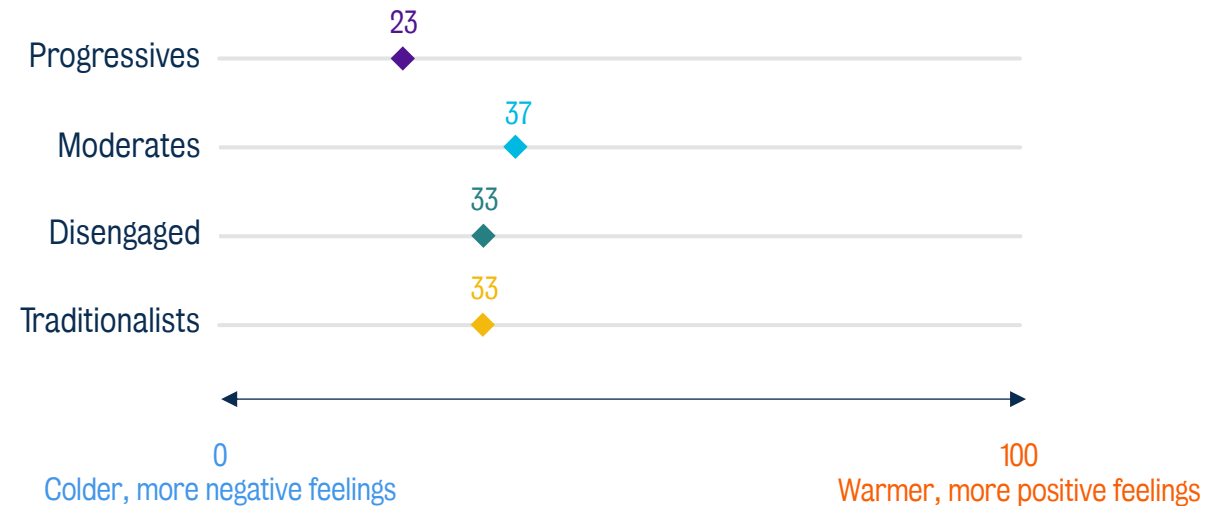
On Black Lives Matter and trans rights, Progressives stand out for holding particularly negative views of the other side – on the former issue, they rate their feelings towards their opponents at a particularly cold 10 out of 100, and on the latter, at 23 out of 100.

The other three groups have much more similar – albeit still negative – views of their opponents in these culture war debates. For example, both Traditionalists and the Disengaged score their feelings towards people with the opposite position on trans rights at 33 out of 100.

Feelings towards people with the opposite view of Black Lives Matter



Feelings towards people who have the opposite view of trans rights

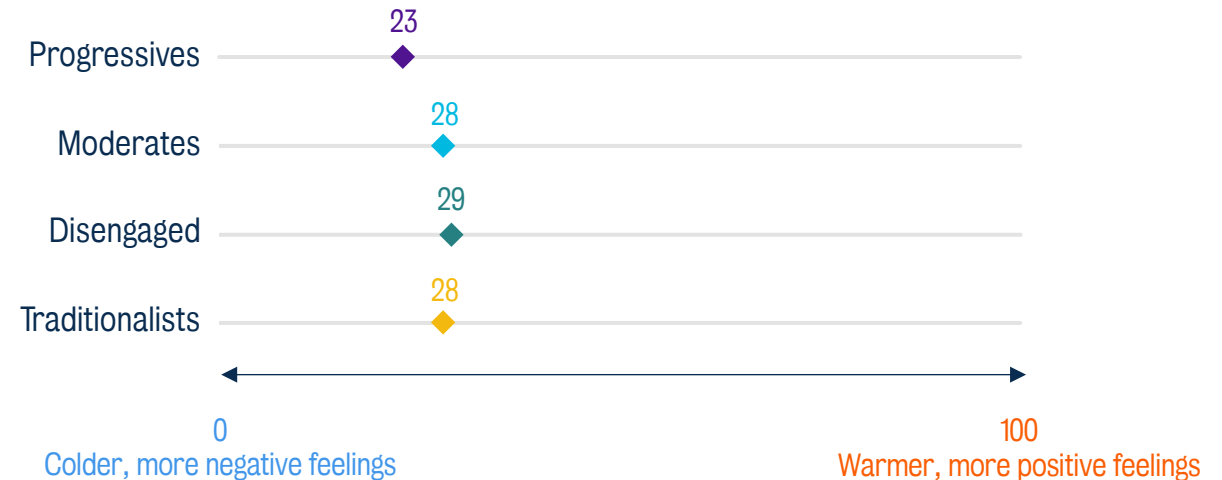


All groups have similarly negative views of people who take the opposing position on Covid restrictions, while Traditionalists have the worst view of those who disagree with them on the British empire

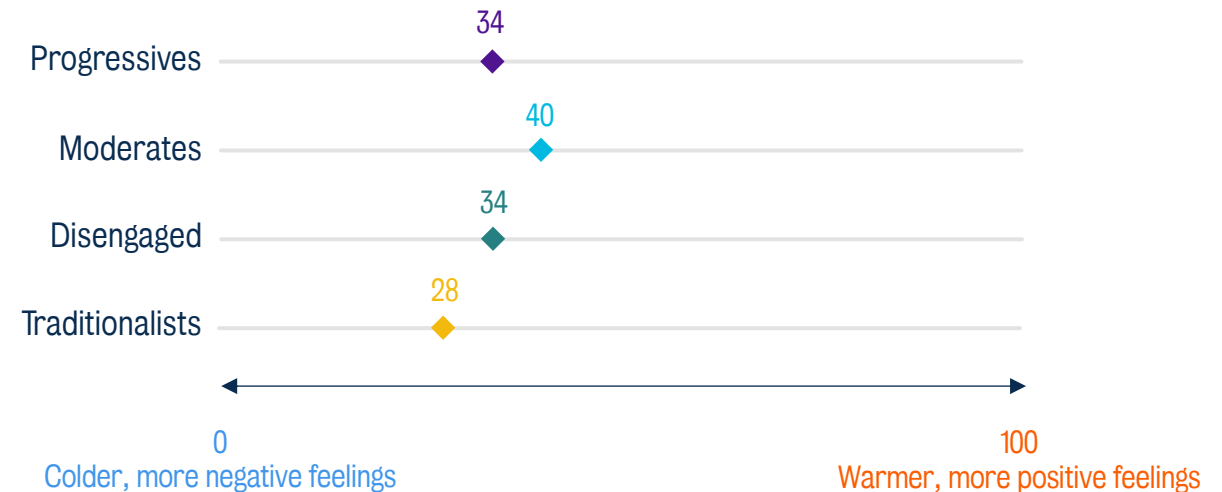
The issue of Covid-19 restrictions elicits some of the most consistently negative feelings towards the other side across the groups, with all four rating their feelings towards those who take the opposing view at under 30 out of 100. This may be because underlying support for Covid restrictions is very strong across all groups.

Meanwhile, the British empire is the only issue asked about where Traditionalists hold the most negative view of the other side. They rate their feelings towards those who take the opposite view in that debate at 28 out of 100. The Disengaged and Progressives, who are second-most negative about their opponents, give ratings of 34 out of 100.

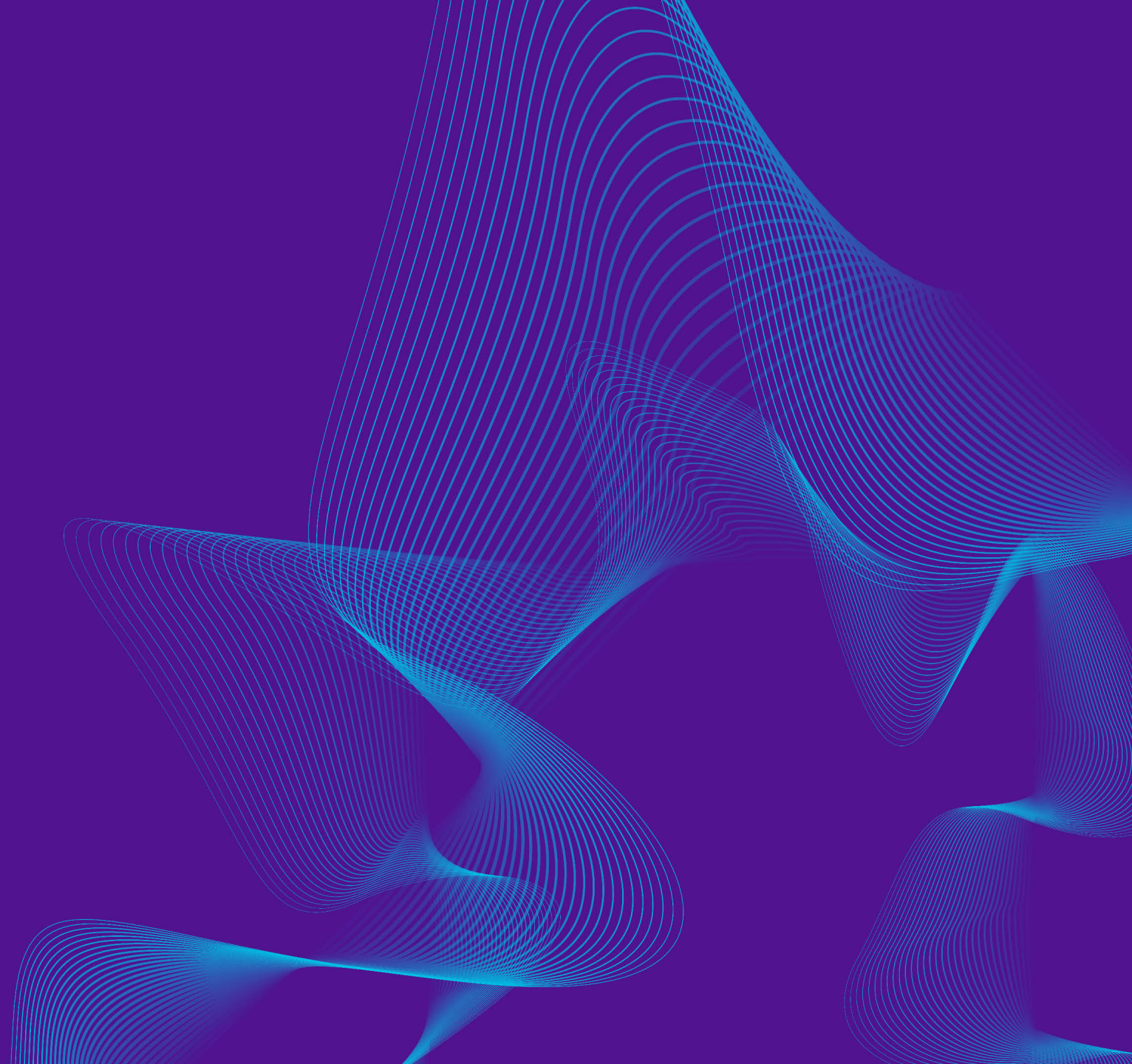
Feelings towards people with the opposite view of Covid restrictions



Feelings towards people who take the opposite view of the British empire



7. Technical note



Technical note

1. Latent class analysis

Respondents were grouped through latent class analysis using the GSEM suite of commands in Stata v. 16.1. Manifest variables used to identify groups were answers to questions about the rights of different groups of people, the UK and its history, the role of government in promoting values, free speech and political correctness, views on the Black Lives Matter movement and restrictions related to the coronavirus, support for political parties, and Brexit identity. For some variables, in one or more groups there were no respondents in the most extreme categories of agree/disagree style questions. When this was a problem, we collapsed categories, for example, “strongly agree” and “agree” became a single response.

Summary statistics for other variables by group were produced by calculating summary statistics for the whole sample using each observation’s probabilities of group membership as weights.

2. Defining the other side and measuring feelings

Every respondent was asked to rate their feelings towards people on each side of politics, Brexit, Covid restrictions, the expansion of trans rights, Black Lives Matter, and the British Empire, on a scale of 0 to 100

Within each group we needed the average for how each group felt about the other side. For people who self-identified as being on one side (for example, a Labour supporter) their views of the other side (in this example, Conservative voters) went into calculating the group average. For people who weren’t on one side (for example, third-party supporters) the average of their views of both sides (in this example, Labour voters and Conservative voters) went into calculating the group average.

Technical note: survey

Ipsos MORI interviewed online a representative sample of 2,834 adults aged 16+ across the United Kingdom between 26th November and 2nd December 2020. This data has been collected by Ipsos MORI's UK KnowledgePanel, an online random probability panel which provides gold standard insights into the UK population, by providing bigger sample sizes via the most rigorous research methods. Data are weighted by age, gender, region, Index of Multiple Deprivation quintile, education, ethnicity and number of adults in the household in order to reflect the profile of the UK population. All polls are subject to a wide range of potential sources of error.

Ipsos MORI's UK KnowledgePanel is the UK's largest online random probability panel, providing total understanding of the UK public for businesses and organisations looking for cutting edge insight at the gold standard of online research methods. It is important because it includes both online and offline participants selected at random from every address in the UK, the first of its kind, with a single interface to eliminate modal effects and produce accurate data rapidly.

UK KnowledgePanel utilises a panel of 15,000+ participants to provide a new innovative tool for all those organisations who wish to garner greater insights into the behaviours, beliefs and attitudes of not just the UK population as a whole, but also into the specific communities which make up the UK's diverse population.

Studies completed on UK KnowledgePanel will be fully representative of the UK population including the 4% of households who are considered 'offline'. This is made possible by recruiting offline and supplying participants with a tablet, internet access and the tech support needed to get online. As a result of this approach the panel utilises a single online data collection method, with no differential mode effects – a pioneering advancement which enhances the ability to understand our society.

The UK KnowledgePanel builds on work done by Ipsos in the US on their own, which has been operating since 1999, utilising that experience and blending it with Ipsos MORI's own research and methodological expertise to produce a tool which delivers robust nationally representative data at speed. [Find out more.](#)

This study was supported by Unbound Philanthropy

Subgroups

Variable	Survey (Nov-Dec 20)	Variable	Survey (Nov-Dec 20)
Gender		Party support	
Male	1,386	Conservative	806
Female	1,439	Labour	669
Age		Brexit support	
16-24	145	Leave	860
25-34	322	Remain	1750
35-54	973	Income level	
55+	1,394	Up to £25,999	612
Ethnicity		£26,000 to £51,999	934
White	2,644	£52,000 to £99,999	616
Ethnic minority	164	£100,000 and above	212
Country		Occupation type	
England	2,124	Modern professional	924
Scotland	443	Clerical and intermediate	397
Wales	109	Senior manager/admin.	415
Northern Ireland	158	Technical and craft	158
Region		Semiroutine manual/serv.	189
North East	107	Routine manual/service	103
North West	275	Middle/junior managers	223
Yorkshire & Humber	163	Traditional professional	343
East Midlands	205	Education level	
West Midlands	209	Degree level or above	1371
East of England	256	Below degree level	1199
South East	387		
South West	282		
London	240		



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