

Opinium

Black History Month – Patriotism in the UK report



Key findings

16 December 2020

Project details

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| PROJECT NUMBER | OP15584 |
| PROJECT NAME | Black History Month – Patriotism in the UK report |
| CLIENT COMPANY NAME | Opinium |
| SAMPLE | <p>2,000 nationally representative UK adults (18+)</p> <p>750 nationally representative ethnic minorities (18+)</p> |
| FIELDWORK DATES | 16th - 21st of October 2020 |

Introduction

During Black History Month 2020, Opinium launched a study asking questions on the following four broad subject areas to the British public:

1. Attitudes towards Black History Month and teaching about Black History in schools.
2. Perceptions of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) UK movement.
3. **Understanding contemporary takes on patriotism, and what it means to be a patriot in 2020.**
4. Discussing the legacy of the slave trade in UK cities, with a particular focus on statues.

This report will speak about perceptions of patriotism in the UK.

The study was asked to a nationally representative audience of 2,000 UK adults, of which 1848 were British citizens.

The study was also asked to a nationally representative sample of 750 ethnic minorities (of which 665 were British citizens) to ensure we have robust numbers of responses from ethnic minority groups to compare and contrast with the national level data.

Both the nationally representative data and the specific ethnic minority data will be used in this report.

Summary of key findings

- **69%** of UK citizens describe themselves as 'patriotic'.
 - *This rises sharply to 89% among Conservative voters, and falls to 51% among Labour voters.*
 - *31% of ethnic minorities with no formal qualifications describe themselves as patriotic vs 79% of total UK citizens with no formal qualifications – this difference narrows as educational attainment increases.*
 - *70% of ethnic minorities born outside of the UK describe themselves as feeling patriotic about the UK, far above that of ethnic minorities and UK citizens on average that have settled within the last two generations.*
- **45%** of UK citizens believe patriotism is defined by a shared duty of citizenship and service towards others and the state.
 - *This rises to 60% among Conservative voters.*
 - *19% of Labour voters personally define patriotism as a method of socio-political control.*
- **58%** of UK citizens report the NHS as the key feature of British society that makes them patriotic.
 - *39% of ethnic minorities report British multiculturalism makes them feel patriotic, vs only 29% of UK Citizens on average.*
- **52%** of British citizens believe dissidence is compatible with patriotism.
 - *This falls slightly to 44% of ethnic minority citizens.*

Understanding patriotism

Seven in ten Citizens would define themselves as patriotic

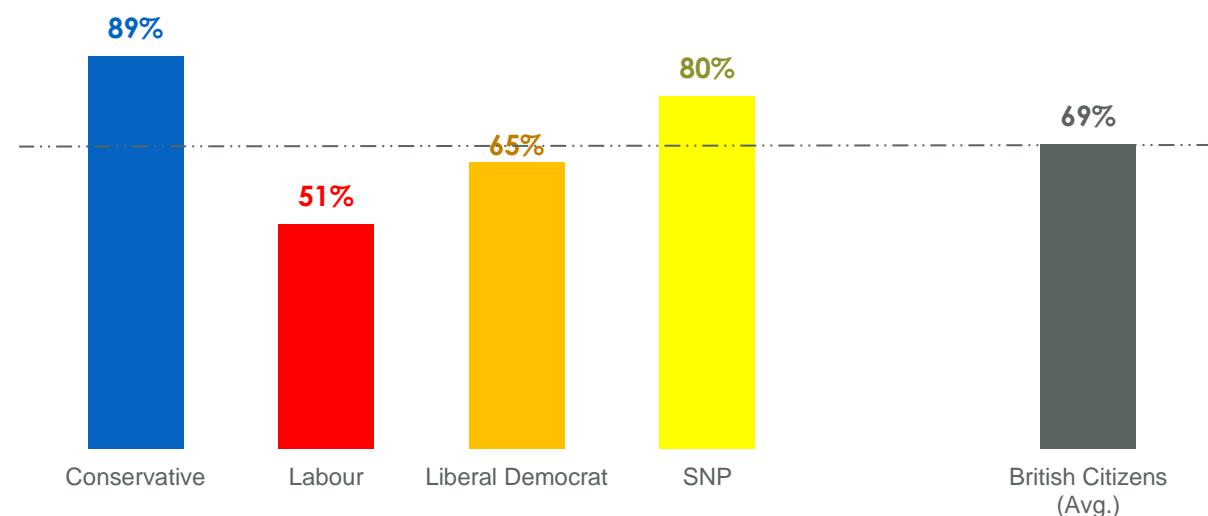
Given the definition of patriotism as:

"A feeling of love, devotion and sense of attachment to a homeland and alliance with other citizens"

On average, seven in ten British citizens would describe themselves as patriotic (69%), with 24% of those describing themselves as 'very' patriotic.

As might be expected, voting intent appears to be one of the strongest drivers behind patriotism. For those citizens that are likely to vote Conservative, patriotism rises to 89%, whereas for those who vote Labour, self-declared patriotism drops significantly to 51%. The full extent of patriotic sentiment is displayed below across the main political party votership:

How patriotic do you consider yourself to be? % Very/fairly patriotic

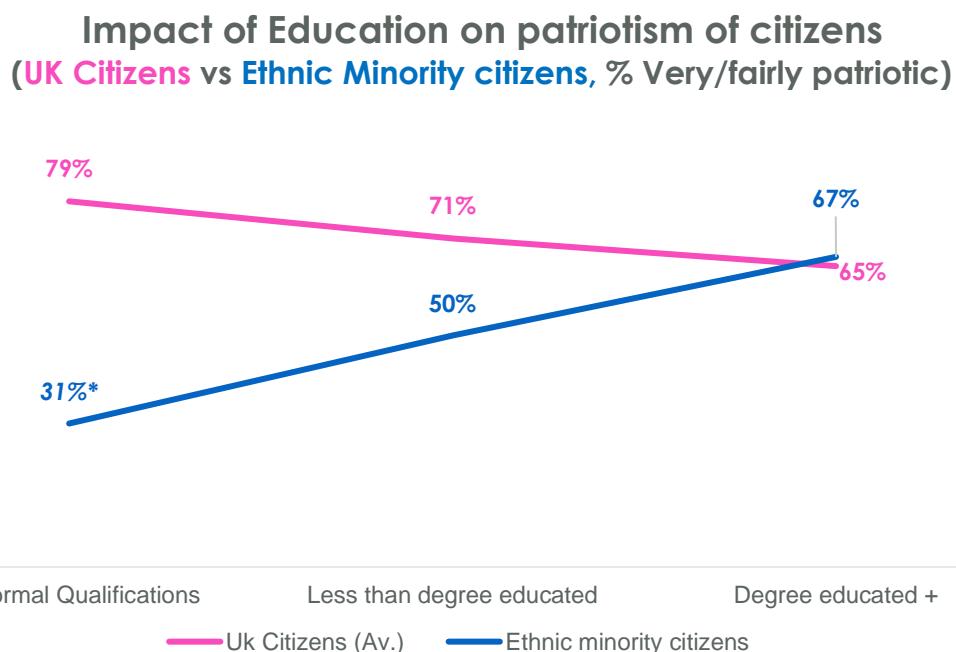


(N = 1848 UK citizens Avg., N= 483 Conservative, N = 493 Labour, N= 120 Lib Dem, N = 69 SNP)

Similarly, over eight in ten people who voted 'leave' in the 2016 Brexit referendum declared themselves patriotic (84%), whereas only six in ten 'remain' voters identified themselves as being patriotic (59%).

Education attainment increases patriotism in ethnic minorities, but decreases patriotism amongst UK citizens on the whole

White British citizens report higher levels of patriotism (71%) than their ethnic minority counterparts (59%). Among ethnic minorities, South Asian Brits report the highest level of patriotism, with up to 6 in 10 expressing patriotic sentiment (61%). Crucially, the data reveals that increasing educational attainment has inverse impacts on ethnic minorities as compared to British citizens on the whole. Generally, higher levels of education increases patriotic sentiment among ethnic minorities, whereas it decreases patriotic sentiment among UK citizens on average. This relationship is illustrated in the graph below:

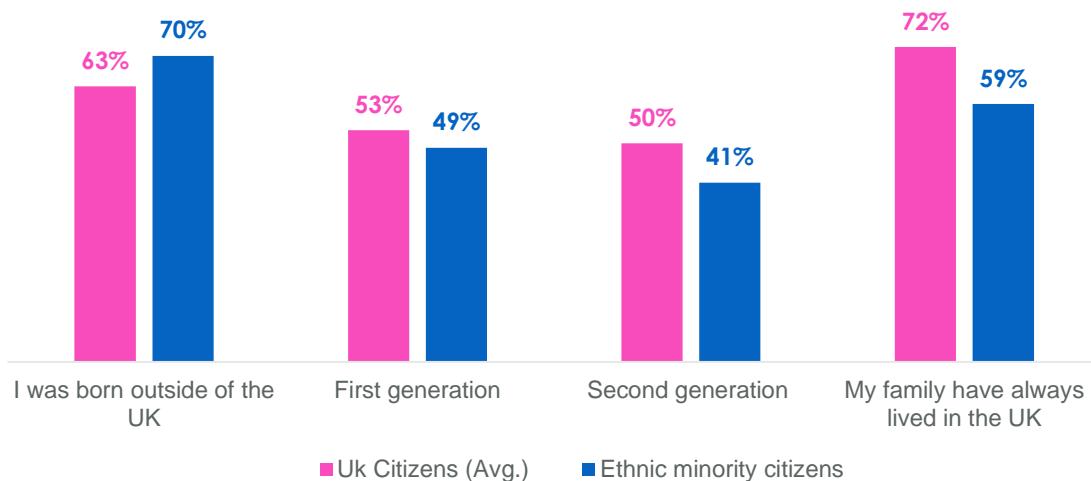


(N = 1848 UK citizens, N= 665 Ethnic Minority citizens * N.B. Base size for 31% is too low to be nationally representative)

Classically, one might expect that those with a more secure immigration status (first and second-generation immigrants) would express similar levels of patriotism to those who have been settled for many generations. Yet, when examining generation of citizenry among ethnic minorities, some more counterintuitive trends become apparent. Six in ten ethnic minorities who have always lived in the UK report they are patriotic (59%) – only half of first generation immigrants report feeling patriotic (49%), dropping further to 41% among second generation immigrants, whilst up to seven in ten of those born outside of the UK express patriotic sentiment (70%). These results are compared to the national average in the chart below:

Impact of generation of immigration on patriotism

(**UK Citizens vs Ethnic Minority citizens, % Very/fairly patriotic**)



(N = 1848 UK citizens Avg., N= 665 Ethnic Minority citizens)

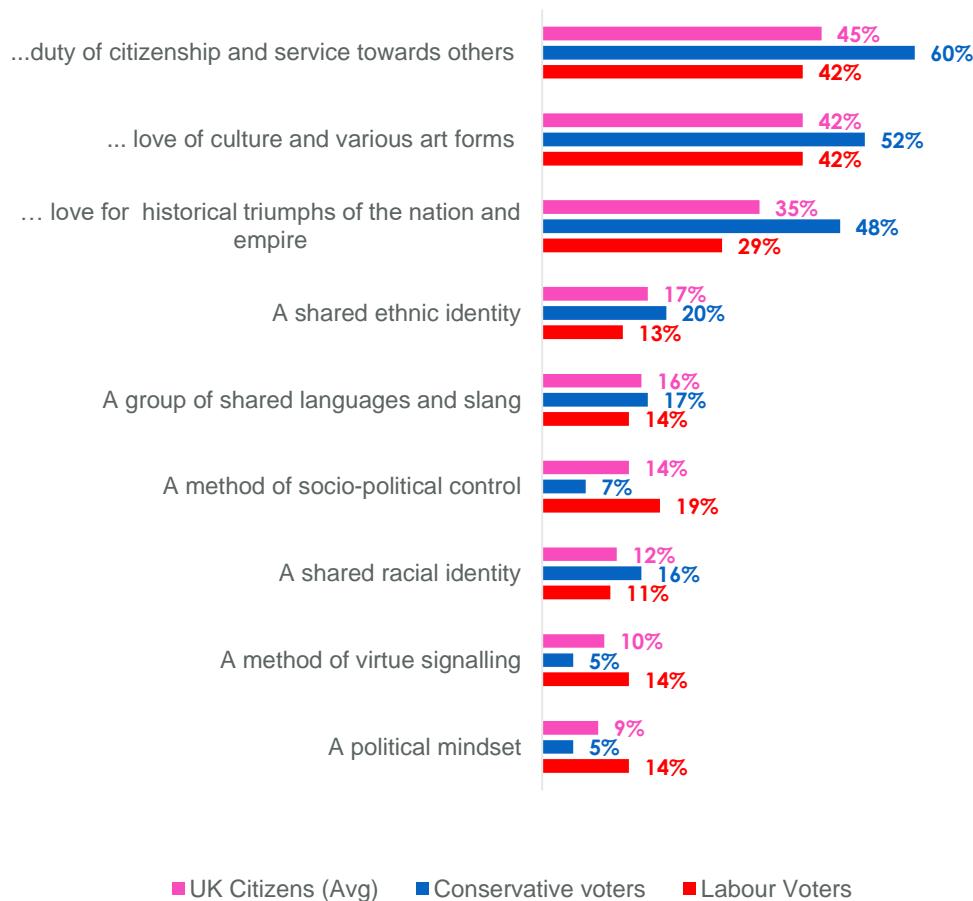
However, when considering political discourse around freedom of movement in relation to the EU referendum and the recent Windrush scandal, these findings begin to make more sense – these recent immigrants have seen their security questioned over many years, possibly adversely affecting their faith in the nation.

Personal reflections on patriotism

Half of those surveyed believe that 'patriotism' is defined by a shared duty of citizenship

Reflecting on what patriotism personally means to people, just under half of British citizens express patriotism is chiefly defined by a shared duty of citizenship (45%). 42% report patriotism means sharing a love of national culture and art forms, whilst around a third express it is defined by a shared love of historical triumphs of nation and empire (35%). This shared love of empire rises to half of Conservative voters (48%) and falls to only 3 in 10 among Labour voters (29%). In fact, political allegiance seems to be the strongest determinant of variation in one's personal understanding of patriotism, as illustrated in the chart below:

What does patriotism mean to you? (Conservative voters vs Labour Voters)



(N = 1848 British citizens, N= 469 Conservative, N = 444 Labour)

The National health service is the principal feature of British society that makes citizens patriotic

Three in five citizens cite the NHS as the principal feature of society that makes them proud to be British (58%). Half cite natural beauty features of the country (49%), whilst four in ten cite the monarchy (38%), constituting three key drivers behind patriotism.

For ethnic minorities, The NHS still ranks highest (59%), but multiculturalism claims the second spot, with four in ten reporting their pride in this feature of British society (39%), followed closely by natural beauty (37%). For UK citizens on average, only one in five report multiculturalism as a key driving force behind their national pride (19%), illustrating a significant difference in perception. Moreover, ethnic minorities are twice as likely to place pride in the government (12% vs 6%) and the economy (15% vs

7%). Only 6% of ethnic minorities report they are not proud to be British, whilst one in ten British citizens express this sentiment (9%). The extended features that inspire patriotism are displayed below:

Features of British society that inspire patriotism (UK citizens vs Ethnic Minority citizens)



(N = 1848 UK citizens avg., , N= 665 Ethnic Minority citizens)

Half of UK citizens believe dissidence is compatible with patriotism

Given the following statement as a stimulus:

"To be patriotic, you must support the actions and policies of the government, even if you disagree with them"

Half of British citizens polled expressed they disagree with this notion (52%), driven by a majority who *strongly* opposed this statement (34%). Interestingly, this viewpoint is shared more widely across the population with increasing age; only 43% of those aged 18-34 express this sentiment, rising to over half among those aged 55+ (56%).

Similarly, ethnic minorities are less likely to believe dissidence is compatible with patriotism – 44% of ethnic minorities polled disagreed with stimulus statement above vs half of UK citizens on average (52%).

About Opinium

OPINIUM is an award winning strategic insight agency built on the belief that in a world of uncertainty and complexity, success depends on the ability to stay on pulse of what people **think, feel and do**. Creative and inquisitive, we are passionate about empowering our clients to make the decisions that matter. We work with organisations to define and overcome strategic challenges – helping them to get to grips with the world in which their brands operate. We use the right approach and methodology to deliver robust insights, strategic counsel and targeted recommendations that generate change and positive outcomes.

www.opinium.com | research@opinium.com | 0207 566 3190