



What people think,
feel and do

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The Political Report

8th July 2021



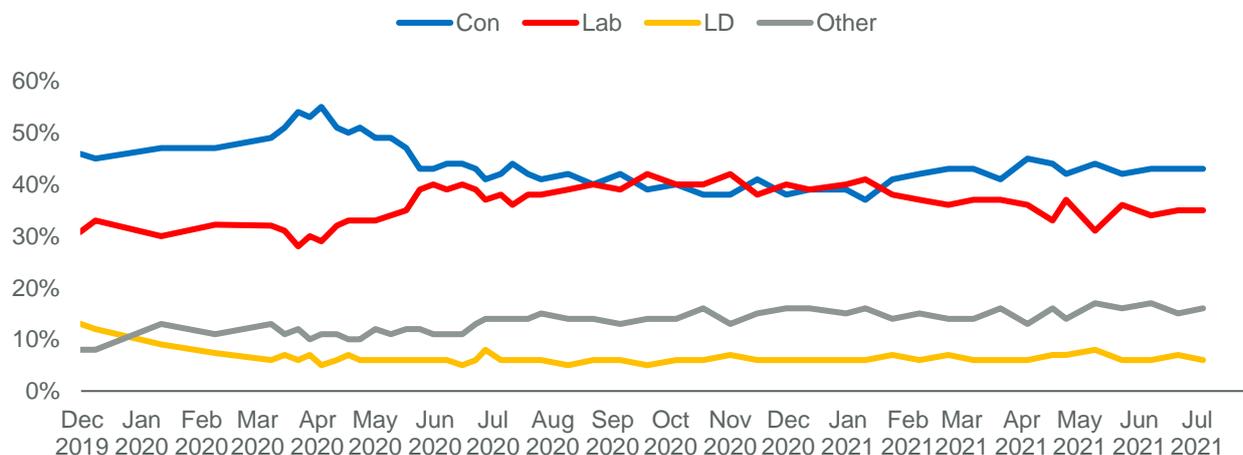
From the Opinium/Observer polling series

9th July 2021

One-minute takeaway

- Headline:** The Conservatives retain their eight-point lead, unchanged from two weeks ago. The Tories are on 43% (unchanged), with Labour on 35% (unchanged), the Lib Dems on 6% (-1), and the Greens on 6% (+1).
- Johnson's job approval is -8, with 37% approving (-3) and 45% disapproving (+1). Starmer's job approval is -7, with 29% approving (-2) and 36% disapproving (-3).
- Covid:** Net approval of government's Covid handling sits at -6%, the lowest approval level of the government's Covid handling since late February.
- Half of (50%) UK adults think the lifting of restrictions should be postponed beyond July 19th, while a third (31%) think it should go ahead as planned and only 10% think it should have happened earlier.
- The public generally think mask wearing should continue to be compulsory after July 19th. In particular 73% think it should continue to be mandatory on public transport.
- Three in ten (31%) with the NHS app will either delete or disable it after July 19th, while one in ten (11%) UK adults have already deleted it.
- Triple lock:** Overall, voters back the triple lock, with 48% saying they support it, compared to just 12% who oppose it.
- Voters are also more likely to say the triple lock is fair (47%) than unfair (12%), and a good use of money (47%), rather than that the money would be better spent elsewhere (17%).
- Football:** Nearly four in ten (38%) think England will win the game compared to 32% who think Italy will win. Younger voters are more optimistic about Labour's chances, with 43% of 18-34s thinking England will win, compared to 31% of those aged over 65.
- The latest poll shows that 56% of people support England taking the knee at the start of games, up from 50% a month ago. Meanwhile, just 32% now oppose this action, down from 37% a month ago.

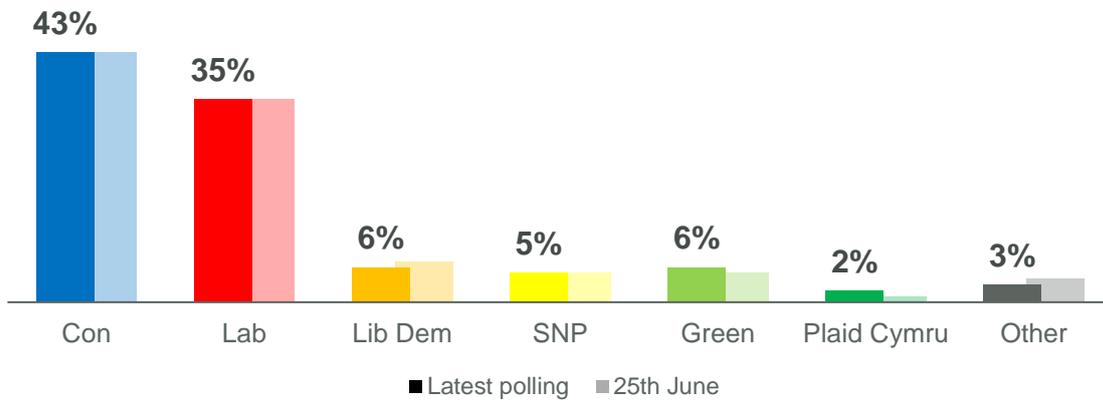
Voting intention since the 2019 general election



Headline Trackers

Conservatives retain their eight point lead

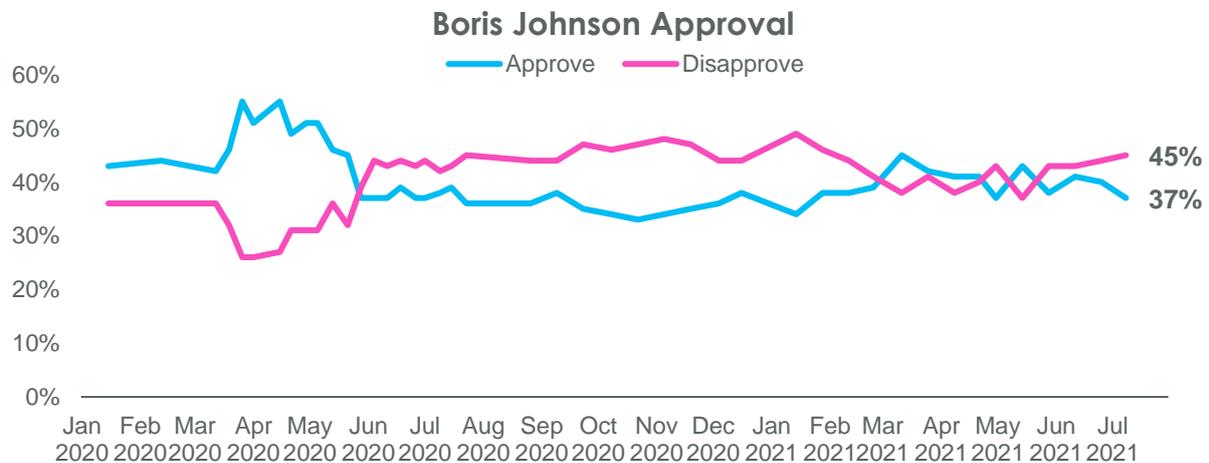
The Conservative have an eight point lead, the same as two weeks ago. The Conservatives are on 43%, unchanged from a fortnight ago, while Labour are on 35%.



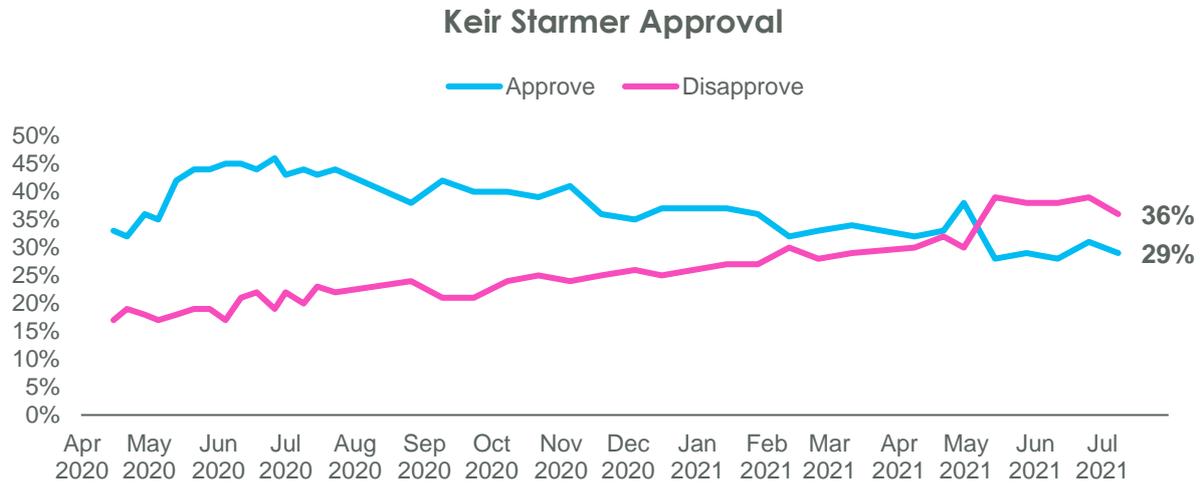
The Lib Dems are on 6% (-1) while the Greens are on 6% (+1).

Leaders ratings almost unchanged

Boris Johnson's rating sits at -8, down from -4 a fortnight ago, with 37% approving (-3) and 45% disapproving (+1).



Meanwhile, Keir Starmer's approval rating sits at -7, still in negative territory as it has been since the May elections. In total, 29% approve of the job he is doing as opposition leader (-2) with 36% disapproving (-3).



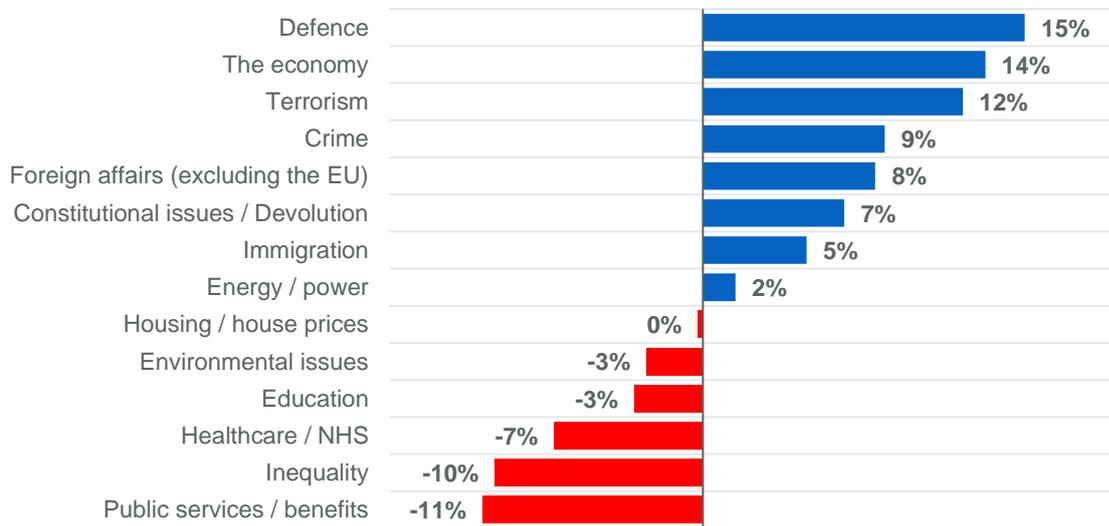
When it comes to who would make the best Prime Minister, 33% currently select Boris Johnson (-2) while 24% select Keir Starmer (-2). However, 30% chose neither (+2) and 12% said they don't know (+1).

Party preference

Conservatives retain large leads on many issues

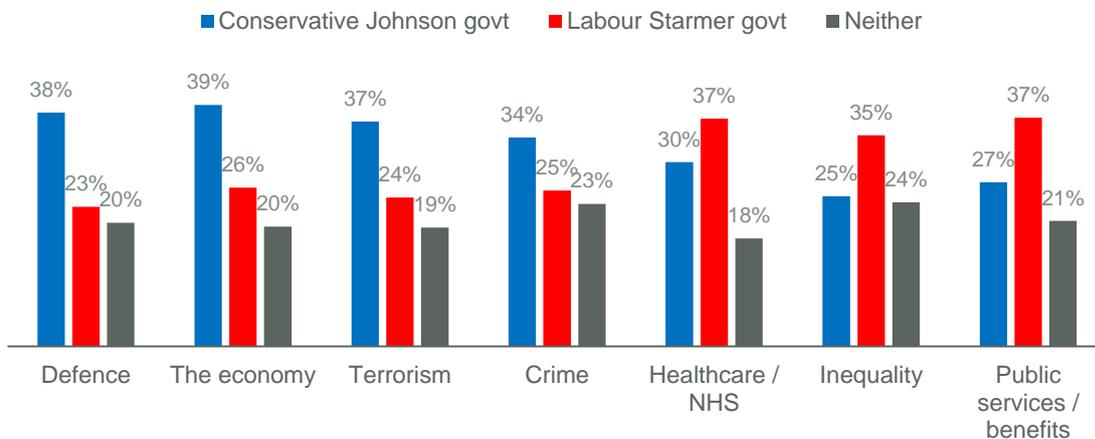
When asked which government they thought would be best, a Conservative government led by Boris Johnson retains striking leads over a Labour government led by Keir Starmer on a number of issues. The current government retains large leads on defence (15%), the economy (14%), terrorism (12%), and crime (9%). However, a Starmer Labour government retains leads on health (7%), inequality (10%) and public services / benefits (11%).

A Conservative Johnson government vs a Labour Starmer government



The detailed numbers for some of these issues are as follows:

Which would handle the following issues better?

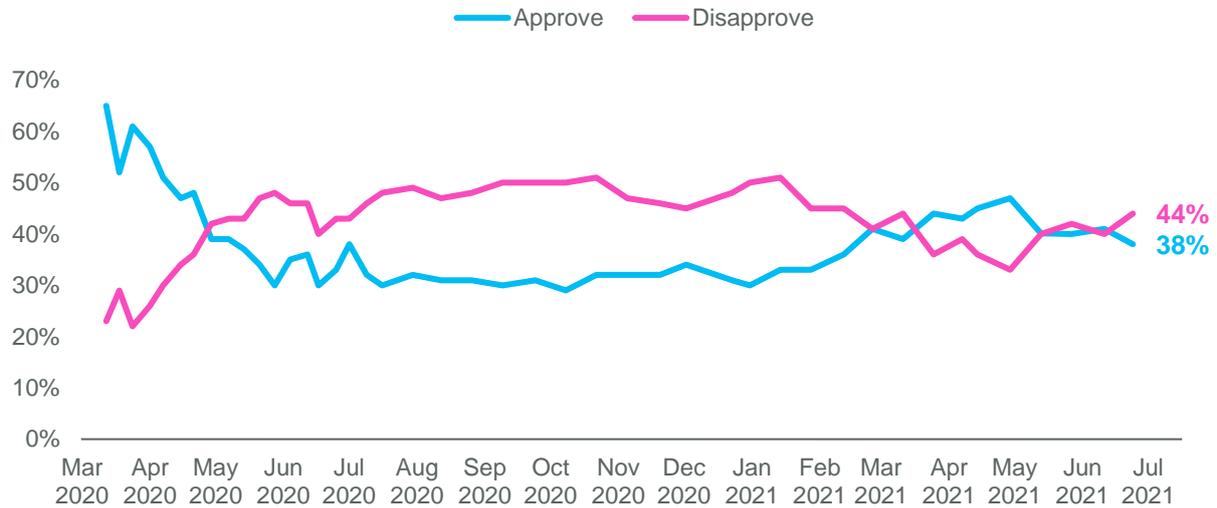


Covid

Lowest approval of government handling of Coronavirus since late February

This week, 38% approve of the government's handling of Coronavirus (-3 on a fortnight ago) while 44% disapprove (+4). At a net approval of -6% this is the lowest approval level of the government's Covid handling since late February.

Approval of the government's handling of Coronavirus

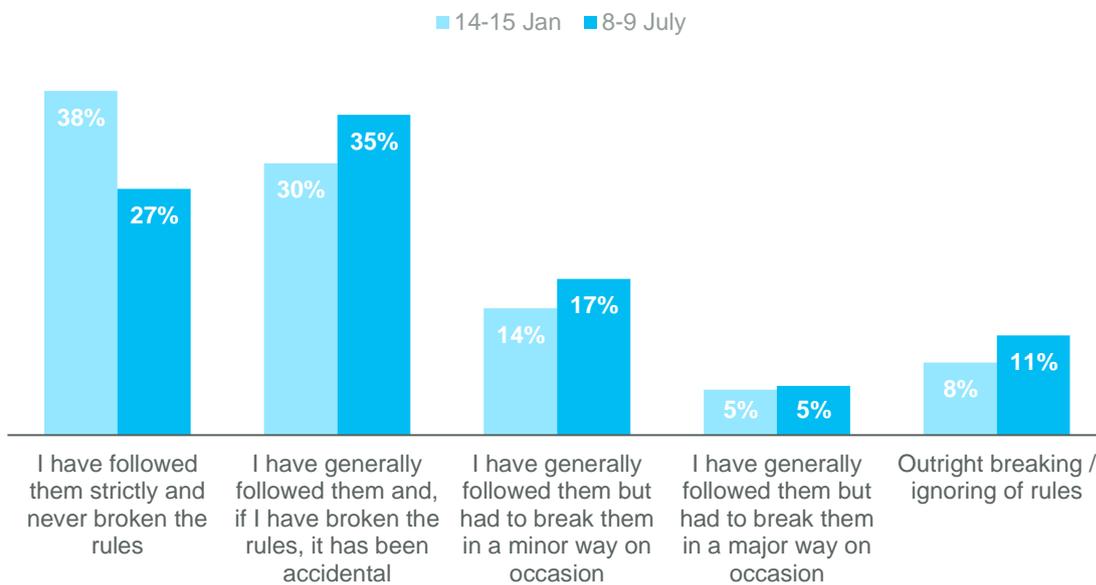


Currently 50% approve of the how the Government has handled the provision of financial support for workers and businesses during the Coronavirus crisis, while only 22% disapprove. Despite the winding down of furlough this is almost as high as the government's ratings in April.

58% now generally following the rules rather than strictly following them, but outright rule breaking still relatively low

Since the beginning of the year, those who say they were following the rules strictly and never broke them has dropped from 38% to 27%. This has seen the proportion who are 'generally following the rules' go up from 49% to 58%. There has been only a small increase in the proportion who are outright breaking or ignoring the rules (8% to 11%).

Following of the rules

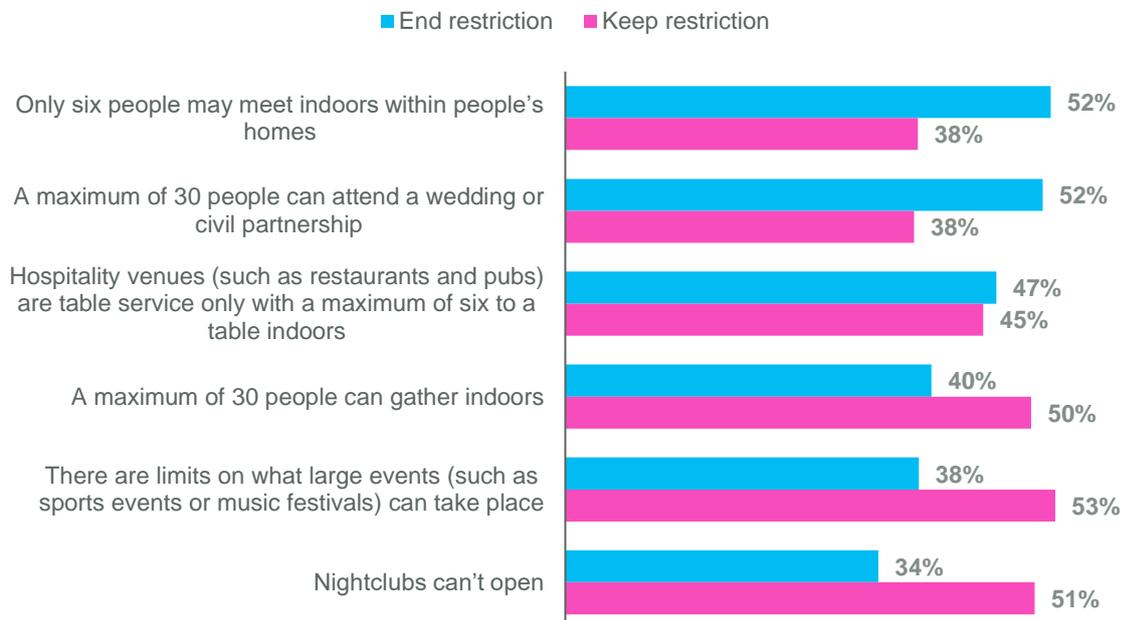


Half think the lifting of restrictions on July 19th should be postponed

Half of (50%) UK adults think the lifting of restrictions should be postponed beyond July 19th, while a third (31%) think it should go ahead as planned and only 10% think it should have happened earlier.

Just over half are happy to see the rule of six at home removed (52%) and end restrictions on weddings (52%) from July 19th. However, over half want to retain restrictions on large events (53%), night clubs (51%) and retain a maximum of 30 on anything indoors (50%).

Should the following restrictions be lifted on July 19th?



The public are divided on the rule of six and table service in hospitality venues (47% want to see these rules lifted vs. 45% want to see these rules retained).

Three quarters (73%) think that masks should be mandatory on public transport after July 19th

The public generally think mask wearing should continue to be compulsory after July 19th.

The public have a slightly more relaxed attitude to masks in the hospitality sector after July 19th. About three in ten think masks should no longer be mandatory after July 19th in restaurants (31%) and pubs (29%), although two thirds think they should continue to be (63% and 64% respectively).

Should face masks remain mandatory after July 19th?

- Should not be mandatory after July 19th
- Should be mandatory after 19th July until more people are vaccinated than now
- Should be mandatory after 19th July until everyone is vaccinated

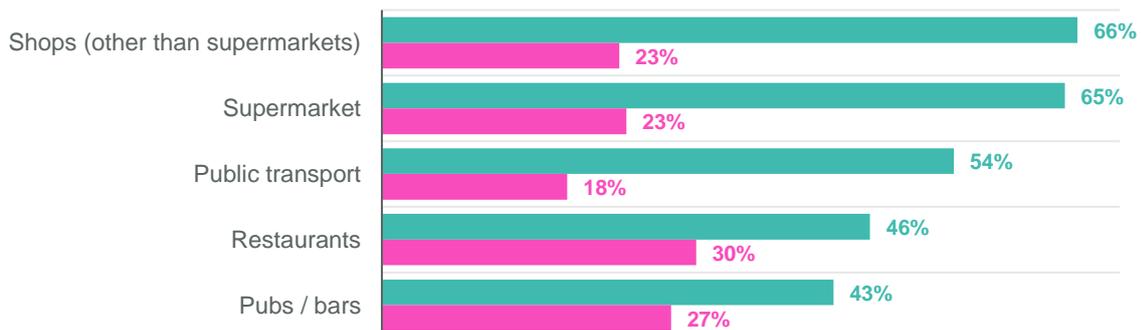


However, the public clearly back the continued use of face masks on public transport. Three quarters (73%) think that face masks should continue to be mandatory on public transport, including 40% who think it should continue to be so until everyone is vaccinated.

Two thirds will carry on wearing masks in shops (66%) and supermarkets (65%) after July 19th, while 54% will carry on doing so on public transport. However, this drops to 46% in restaurants and 43% in pubs and bars.

Will you wear face masks after July 19th?

- Will
- Wil not



Three in ten with the NHS app will either delete or disable it after July 19th

While two fifths (42%) of adults have the NHS Covid app, 58% do not. This includes one in ten (11%) who have downloaded it before but have since deleted it.

The most common reason for deletion is simply thinking it doesn't work well enough to be worth it (50%), although a quarter (25%) did so to avoid the risk of being told to self-isolate.

In total, quarter (24%) of people who have or have previously had the app have received an alert from it., including 12% who were told they have been in close contact with someone who tested positive for Covid-19 and have to self-isolate. Of those told to self-isolate, only half (48%) fully complied and totally self-isolated. A further 25% mostly self-isolated. But 25% mostly ignored it, with 11% doing so even without a negative test.

Of those who still have the app, half (50%) will keep it afterwards with the Bluetooth on after July 19th. However, three in ten (31%) will either delete (15%) or disable it (17%) by turning their Bluetooth off.

One in seven have booked a holiday abroad

Two in five (39%) have a holiday booked for 2021, including 14% who have one booked abroad and 27% who have one booked in the UK.

The most common types of holiday booked in the UK are as follows:

- A house/cottage/villa in the countryside / by the sea – 41%
- A hotel/B&B in the countryside / by the sea – 25%
- A camping holiday (in a tent / caravan / mobile home) – 22%
- A city break in hotel/B&B/Air B&B (e.g. a trip to Edinburgh or London) – 21%
- A package holiday (e.g. Butlins or Centre Parcs) – 11%

Just under half (46%) of those who have booked a holiday abroad think it is likely they will need to cancel it or rearrange it at some point, although an optimistic 41% think it is unlikely they will have to.

Triple lock

Voters opposed to changes to the triple lock

This week Rishi Sunak hinted that he might change the pension triple lock this year. Overall, voters back the lock, with 48% saying they support it, compared to just 12% who oppose it. The remainder say they either don't support or oppose it (19%) or are not sure (21%).

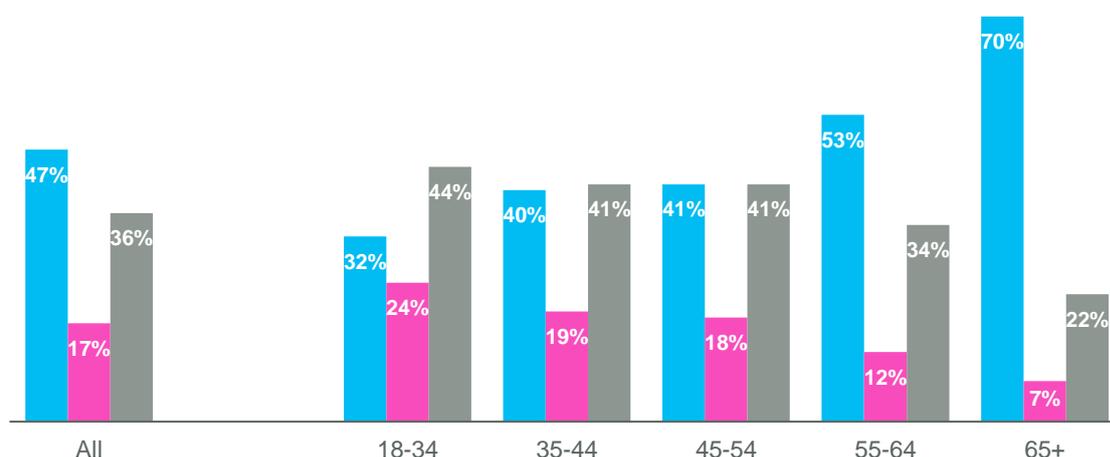
Voters are also more likely to say the lock is fair (47%) than unfair (12%), and a good use of money (47%), rather than that the money would be better spent elsewhere (17%).

Predictably, there is a big age divide on views. Younger voters are more likely to say the money could be better spent elsewhere or to not have an opinion on the policy at all, whereas older voters overwhelmingly think it is a good use of money.

Because support for the party comes disproportionately from older voters, Conservative voters are more likely to say it is a good use of money than Labour voters.

Views on the triple lock...

■ Good use of money ■ The money would be better spent elsewhere ■ Don't know

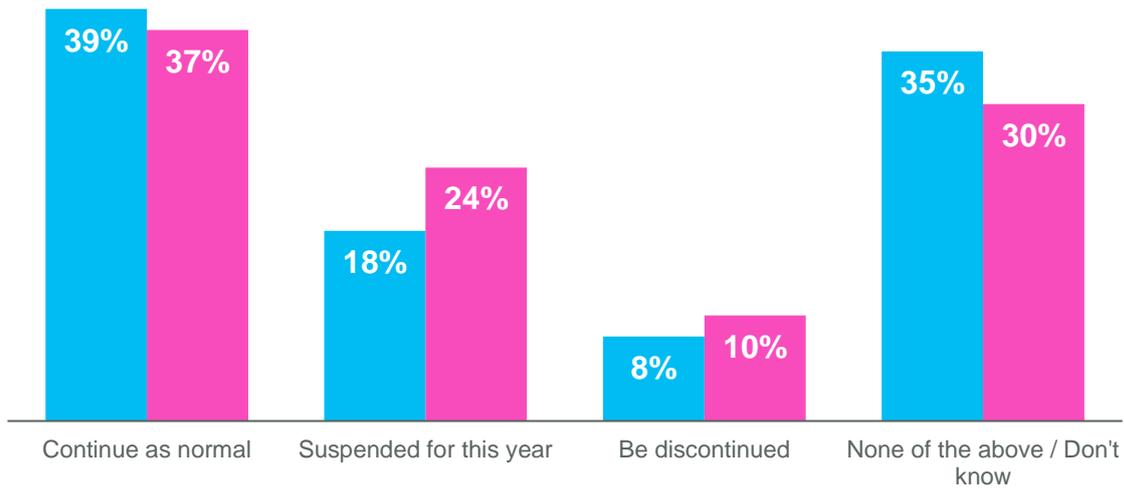


One of the reasons why the Chancellor is considering changing the policy for this year is because the rise will be disproportionately large this year, as wages are rebounding as the country comes out of the pandemic. When we asked unprompted, just 26% thought the lock should be suspended for this year or discontinued entirely, compared to 39% who thought it should continue as normal.

When the details about the rise were explained, and the reasons for it, support for a suspension or discontinuation rose to 34%, although this was still lower than the 37% who thought it should continue as normal.

What should happen to the triple lock

■ Without explanation ■ With explanation



The exact text of the explanation was “*In 2020, because of the pandemic, average earnings dropped substantially, but in 2021 they returned to normal levels. This means that official statistics record an annual rise in earnings of 8%. According to the triple lock, pensions are now guaranteed to rise 8% year-on-year despite average earnings over the long term not actually having risen.*”

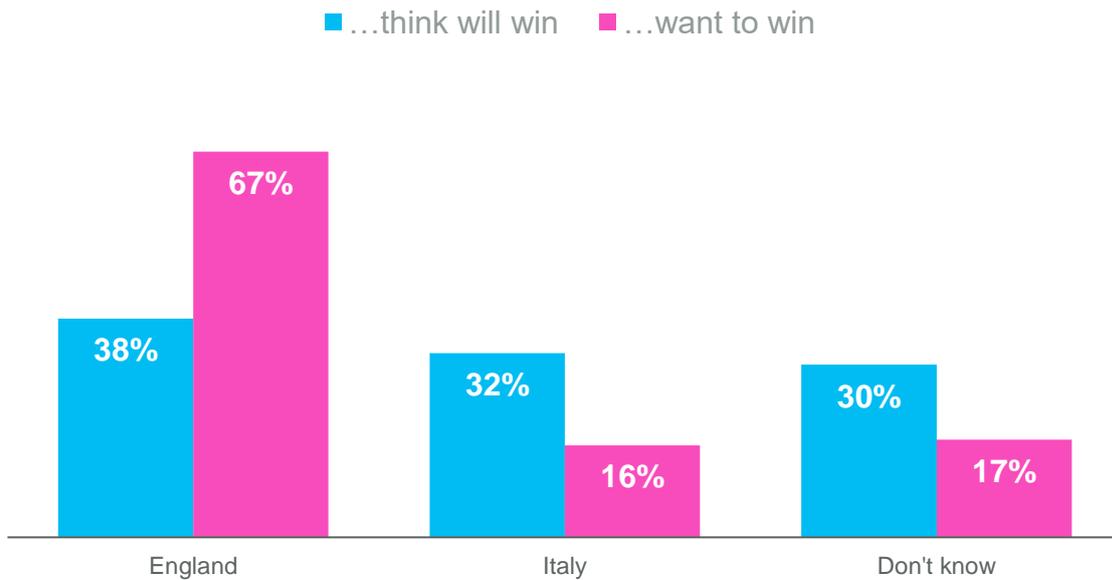
Even after this explanation, Conservative voters were more likely to support the policy continuing as normal (45%) than Labour voters.

Euros final

More think England will win than lose on Sunday night

Nearly four in ten (38%) think England will win the game compared to 32% who think Italy will win. Younger voters are more optimistic about England’s chances, with 42% of 18-34s thinking England will win, compared to 31% of those aged over 65. While some might say that younger voters are less likely to have experienced the crushing disappointment of England’s previous ignominious tournament defeats, it is worth remembering that England 1 – Iceland 2 was only five years ago.

Thinking about the Euros Final, who do you...



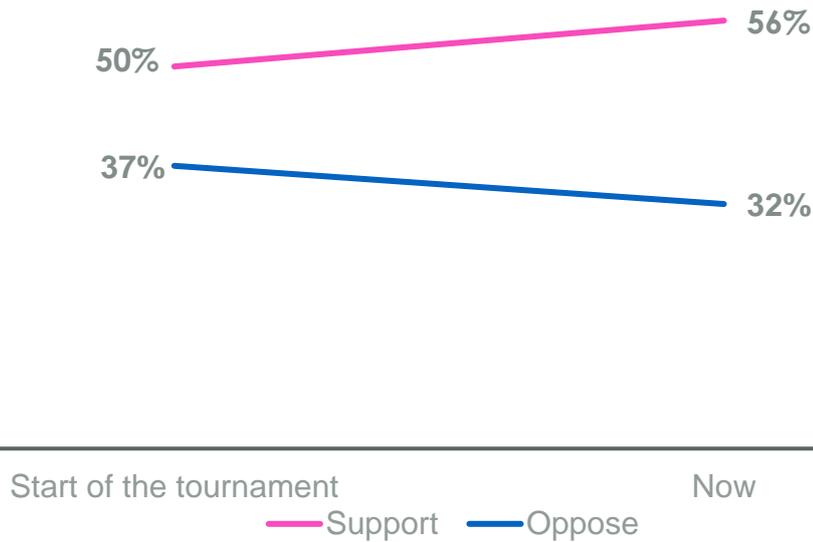
But regardless of what they expect to happen, two thirds of Brits (67%) want England to win on Sunday night, compared to just 16% who want Italy to win. In keeping with tradition, twice as many Scots (50%) want Italy to win than want England (26%) to win.

Support for “taking the knee” has increased as England have progressed through the tournament.

The latest poll shows that 56% of people support England taking the knee at the start of games, up from 50% a month ago. Meanwhile, just 32% now oppose this action, down from 37% a month ago.

However, there is a political divide, with Conservative voters more likely to oppose taking the knee (55% to 38%) and Labour voters more likely to support it (77% to 14%). The remaining 30% said they don't know.

View on England players "taking the knee"



Meanwhile, just 33% support the people who have booed the England players for taking the knee, compared to 48% who oppose this action.

About Opinium

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