

Established Liberals

9 per cent of the population

A secure and internationally-minded group who trust expertise and institutions. They see Britain as part of a liberal global system and believe in reform through established democratic processes.



"All the politicians are short-term gain thinking about their votes, not about the future of the country...but in order to fix this country, I think it's got to be a long plan."

Jonathan, Chippenham

"Barack Obama, we all know he is the bee's knees." – Denise, Beaconsfield

Key words

Secure, internationally-minded, institutional, trusting, optimistic, liberal, compromising, meritocratic, comfortable.

What they worry about

Global instability and threats to liberal democracy, climate change, Brexit's long-term consequences, rise of populism and political extremism, economic inequality, the difficulty of doing business in the UK and Britain's global competitiveness.

Where you might find them

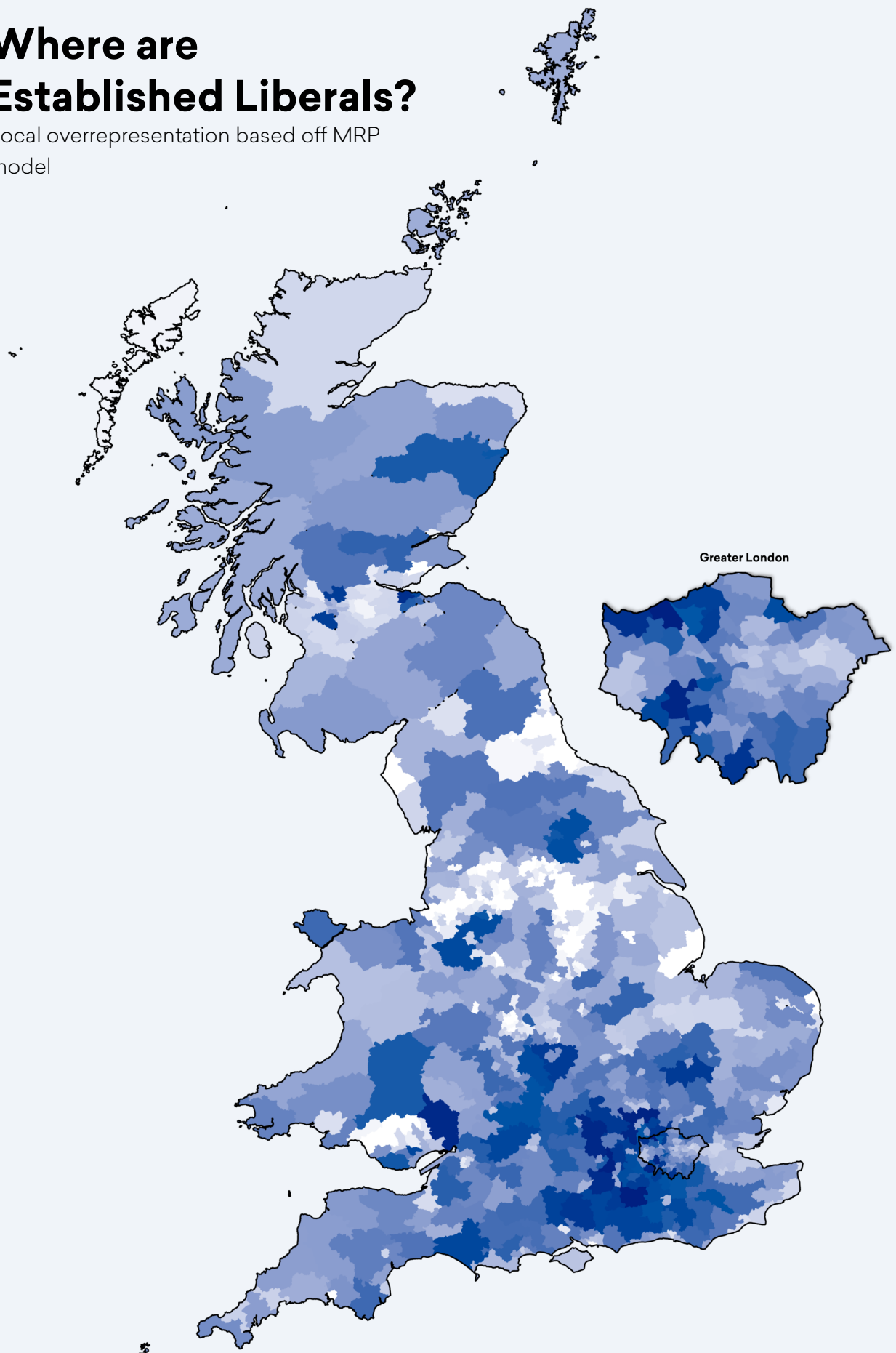
In affluent suburbs and commuter towns; working professional jobs with hybrid arrangements; attending cultural events such as literary festivals or the theatre; in constituencies such as Winchester, St Albans and Twickenham.

How they get their news

Conventional broadsheets and magazines, BBC, the Financial Times, and other mainstream outlets, political podcasts such as *Political Currency*, longer-form analysis from trusted journalists and commentators such as Nick Robinson. They dislike news information that comes across as too partisan or too tabloid-y.

Where are Established Liberals?

Local overrepresentation based off MRP model



Source: More in Common, June 2025

The worldview of Established Liberals is shaped primarily by their sense of security and optimism. This group went to university, have done well for themselves since and live comfortably. They work hybrid between the office and the home that they tend to own outright. They drive a car, work out at the gym and go to the theatre. They donate to charities and their place of worship and volunteer in their community. More so than any other segment, they feel happy and respected.

All this contributes to Established Liberals' satisfaction with their lives - from work to their family and social life. As such, they may look at the country's problems through rose tinted glasses compared to other groups. Unlike the majority of the country, who express anxiety about the country's direction, Established Liberals tend to maintain a more positive outlook, displaying the lowest levels of perceived threat and greatest optimism. They see their generation slotting into place within an ongoing history of society improving - expecting their children to have a better life than their parents and their grandchildren after them.

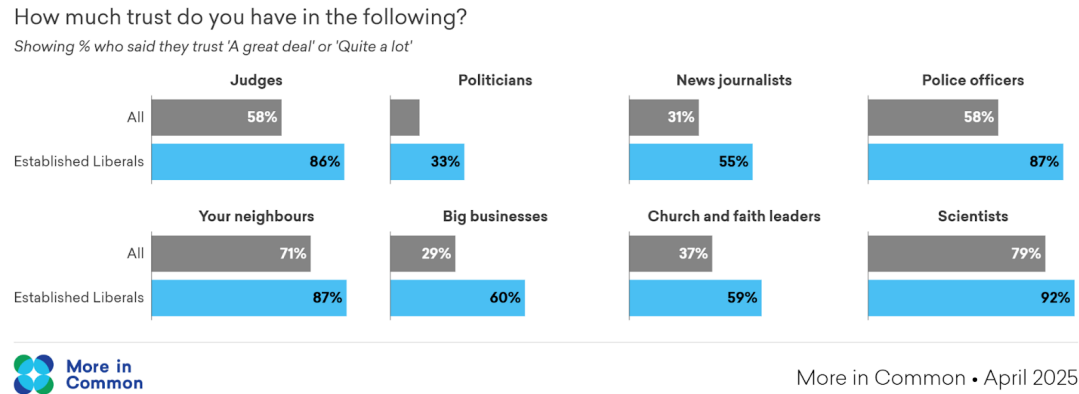
Demographically, Established Liberals are one of the more diverse segments, with 19 per cent identifying as non-white. This group has the highest proportion of Hindu respondents of any segment, and is the second-least secular segment overall.

Established Liberals are firmly rooted in the status quo. They perceive the system as working fairly - driven by a strong belief in personal agency and the importance of hard work. Established Liberals tend to believe their own work ethic, rather than luck or circumstance, has handed them the success they enjoy today. Because of that strong belief in individual agency, combined with their own relative sense of security, some in other segments may accuse the Established Liberals of lacking empathy with those who are struggling or who are less fortunate than themselves.

Established Liberals are generally not zero sum in their thinking about the economy. They hold a strong belief that economic growth will improve most people's quality of life and that people can attain wealth without making someone else worse off. As such this group is optimistic about new technologies - seeing innovation as a key driver of progress.

Established Liberals trust specialists and expert knowledge. They view the country's challenges as complex and requiring informed, rather than simple common-sense, solutions. This deference to experts leads them to value institutions that have stood the test of time and to be sceptical of calls to overhaul them. As such, they place high trust in our institutions and want to see them optimised rather than overhauled.

Figure 66 | Established Liberals' trust in our institutions



Established Liberals believe politicians should work within existing democratic structures and favour cross-party collaboration. They see compromise as important for progress. Established Liberals believe politics should be cordial and that healthy debate needs to have some limits to protect people from harmful speech.

Established Liberals are among those most likely to vote for the established main parties. This group might be thought to resemble the voters who identified most strongly with David Cameron as he sought to modernise the Conservative Party's image.

Beyond elections, Established Liberals remain highly engaged in politics. Four in five follow government and current affairs, though you would be unlikely to see them post about it on social media. Their institutional trust and faith in expertise extends to the media. They are far more likely to trust mainstream established outlets over independent sources, and have high levels of trust in the BBC. This group also seeks out longer-form analysis in broadsheets like the Times and Financial Times. This tendency toward information seeking can moderate their political opinions - they like to consider the evidence and hear a range of thoughtful perspectives before coming in strongly behind one side of a debate.

Established Liberals have an internationally oriented mindset and view the United Kingdom as part of a liberal global order. They are proud to be British - more so than any other segment - but this does not lend itself to nativism or isolationism. Instead, they see Britain's multiculturalism as an asset and do not believe the British born should get special treatment over those who immigrate to the UK. This is perhaps most true when it comes to their attitudes towards Europe. Among economically liberal segments, they are the group most likely to have voted to remain in the European Union, and along with the Incrementalist Left and Progressive Activists, they are the most likely group to say they would vote again to join the EU. Similarly, among traditionally Conservative voting segments, it is the Established Liberals who are most likely to consider it important that Britain remains in the European Court of Human Rights.

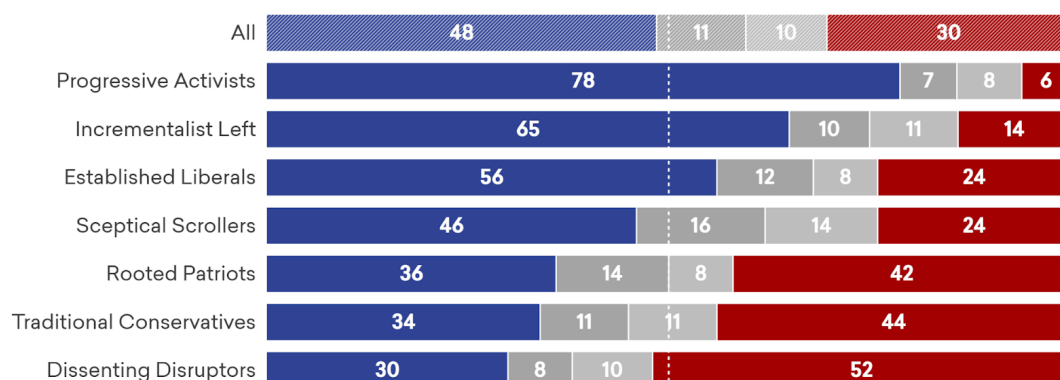
We're probably an island fighting a lone battle in a world market. Personally I voted Remain, I don't mind saying, but what I'm trying to say is it changed the direction and pulled the country apart and I don't think really that we've recovered from that.

Andrew, Established Liberal, Chippenham

Figure 67 | EU Referendum vote by segment

If the 2016 Brexit referendum was held today, how would you vote?

- Remain
- Would not vote
- Don't know
- Leave



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Established Liberals' internationalism extends elsewhere. Most notably, they are among the strongest supporters of Ukraine. While support for Ukraine does not significantly divide the British Seven segments, this group is much more likely to spontaneously raise the issue as a matter of national pride.

[It makes me proud of Britain that] people opened their homes to Ukrainian families. People were giving spare rooms out doing sponsored things, weren't they? It was communities coming together with other communities for Ukraine. So that was a big thing.

Leanne, Established Liberal, Beaconsfield

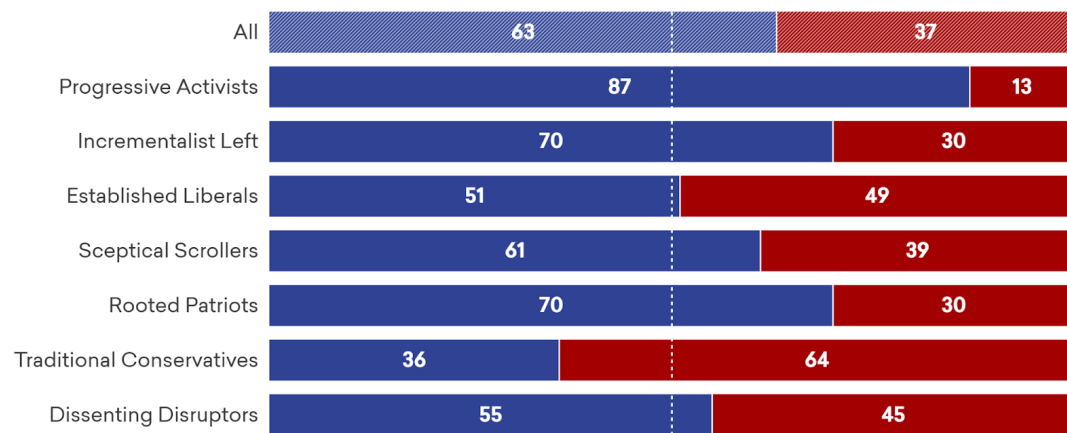
On many social and cultural issues, Established Liberals take a similar approach to the Incrementalist Left: one that is tolerant of change and broadly permissive of people who want to live their lives as they desire. Where they differ from this group, however, is on economic issues. Established Liberals are the most likely to say that the ultra-wealthy are

paying their fair share in taxes and are more sceptical than the Incrementalist Left on government regulation of business.

Figure 68 | The segments' economic starting points

In general, which economic system do you prefer?

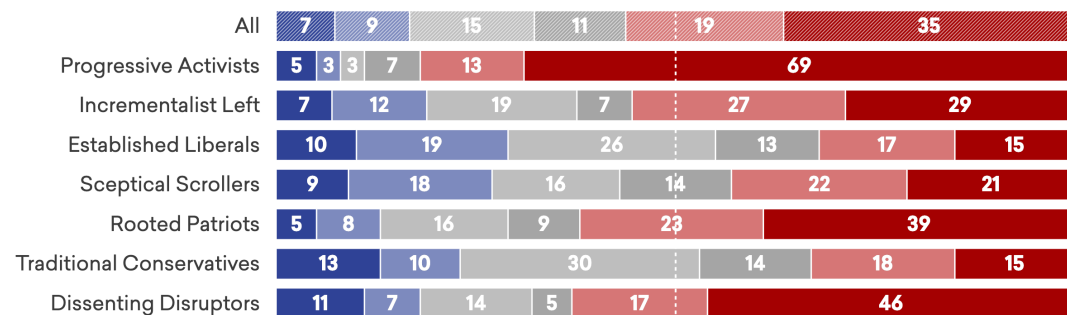
- Where regulations are put on businesses to prohibit them from harming consumers
- Where the government minimises regulations on businesses to make it easier to do business



For each of the following groups, please indicate whether or not they pay their fair share in taxes?

The ultra-wealthy

- Much more than their fair share
- A bit more than their fair share
- Pay their fair share
- Don't know
- A bit less than their fair share
- Much less than their fair share



Simon

Simon lives in Godalming in a house he and his wife bought ten years ago and works as an actuary for a firm in the City. While he could work from home most days, he enjoys the rhythm of commuting into London - listening to the *Political Currency* podcast or catching up on The Times app during his train journey. When he does work from home, he has developed a ritual of pouring a glass of wine as he wraps up emails in the evening, a small pleasure that marks the transition from professional to personal time.

Simon feels genuinely fortunate about how his life has turned out - the security of homeownership, interesting work that pays well. His success feels both earned and slightly precarious to him—he knows he has worked hard, but he is also aware that timing and circumstance played their part. This awareness makes him sympathetic to calls for public spending on education and healthcare, though he is sceptical of proposals that seem to punish success or dismantle systems that have served him well.

Simon is confident that Britain, despite its current challenges, remains a fundamentally decent place where hard work and good judgment are rewarded. Still, he is increasingly troubled by signs that the social fabric might be fraying. The rise of Reform UK baffles him and he is worried that none of the parties he has voted for before seem to know how to stop that. He also notices more graffiti on his tube carriage these days and people brazenly jumping barriers without paying fares. He sees himself as open-minded on social issues, but when his children come back from university it sometimes feels like they are talking a different language, and he struggles to keep up with all the new terminology they are using to describe prejudices in society.

Simon subscribes to both The Times and Financial Times, often reading the paper over his Saturday morning flat white. Simon deliberately avoids getting drawn into social media debates, viewing Twitter arguments as the opposite of the good debate. When colleagues forward him articles from less established outlets, he finds himself automatically checking whether the same story appears in mainstream sources before taking it seriously.

Simon's pride in Britain is tied to his sense of the country as a stabilising force in an increasingly chaotic world - he was genuinely moved when neighbours offered spare rooms to Ukrainian refugees, seeing it as evidence of British decency in action. Yet he's troubled by the polarisation he sees creeping into public discourse, feeling that both the far-left and far-right threaten the moderate consensus that has underpinned his comfortable life. He believes most problems can be solved through careful policy-making and goodwill, though he's beginning to wonder whether that optimism might be naive in an age of social media and populist politics.

