



More in  
Common

# After choosing sides

November 2025

# Top lines

Despite two years of fighting, the **majority of Britons still do not take a side in the conflict between Israel and Palestine**. 14% lean toward Israel and 26% toward Palestine - numbers that have changed little in recent years.

**People who do take sides are becoming more entrenched in their views**, and have become more negative about those with opposing views.

43 per cent of those who sympathise with Palestine would consider ending a friendship with someone who posted on social media in support of Israel, and 46 per cent of those who sympathise with Israel would consider doing the same over a pro-Palestine post.

Concerns about **the safety of British Muslims and Jews** have increased over the last two years. After the Heaton Park Synagogue attack, rising antisemitism has become Britons' top concern about the conflict. Concern about antisemitism and anti-Muslim hate has also become slightly polarised.

**Public patience for protest is wearing thin** - Two-thirds of Britons now believe some protests are too disruptive to be allowed, with sustained demonstrations over Gaza contributing to broader backlash against activist movements.

**Trust in mainstream media and politicians is under strain** among those with stronger views on the conflict. Those with strong views on the conflict are switching off from mainstream news and finding their own information online, making shared debate more difficult.

# Introducing the Seven Segments

The British Seven segments were developed to move beyond traditional left-right or party-based analysis by exploring the deeper psychological, cultural, and value-driven foundations that shape public opinion.

This approach helps explain why political loyalties have fractured and offers a more nuanced understanding of what drives attitudes on issues like immigration, climate, and the economy—enabling more effective engagement with the public across a fragmented political and social landscape.



## Progressive Activists



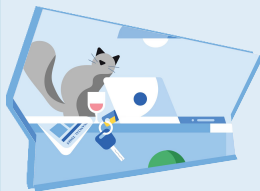
...an outspoken group that is politically engaged and globally minded, championing social justice but feeling alienated from mainstream politics

## Incrementalist Left



...a group that leans left and trusts institutions, often stepping back from the news and avoiding politically fraught debates

## Established Liberals



... a prosperous group that is confident in institutions, values expertise, and believes the system broadly works

## Sceptical Scrollers



...a disengaged group that has lost trust in mainstream institutions and increasingly looks online for sources of truth

## Rooted Patriots



...a patriotic group that feels overlooked by elites and wants leaders with common sense to protect local identity

## Traditional Conservatives



... a nostalgic group that respects tradition, authority and personal responsibility, while remaining sceptical of rapid change

## Dissenting Disruptors



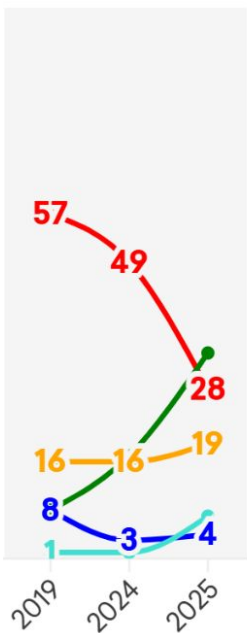
... a frustrated group that craves radical change and backs strong leaders who promise to shake up a broken system



# How would the seven segments vote?

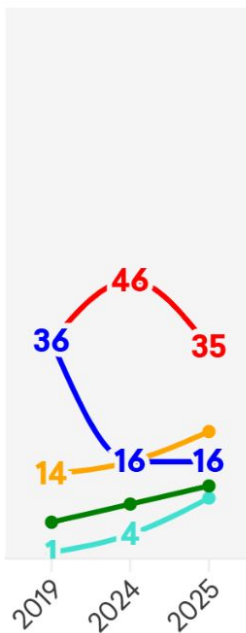
## Progressive Activists

"Corbynites"



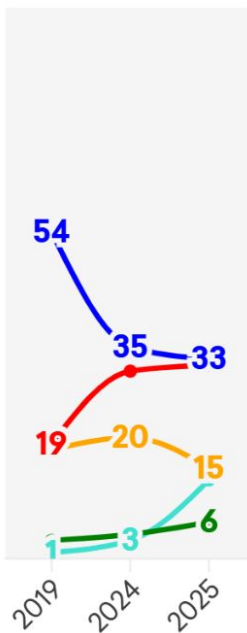
## Incrementalist Left

"Social democrats"



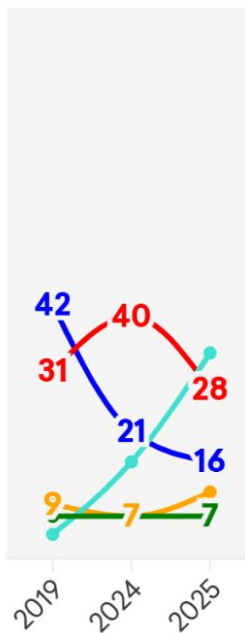
## Established Liberals

"Blue Wall"



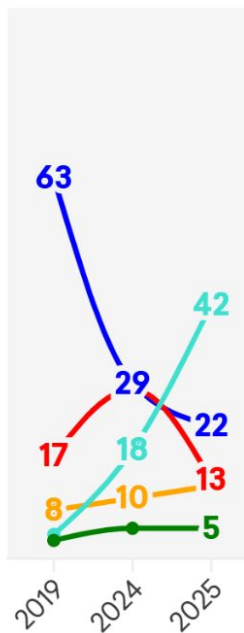
## Sceptical Scrollers

"Online Disengaged"



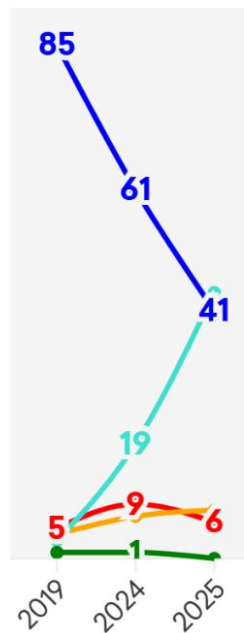
## Rooted Patriots

"Red Wall"



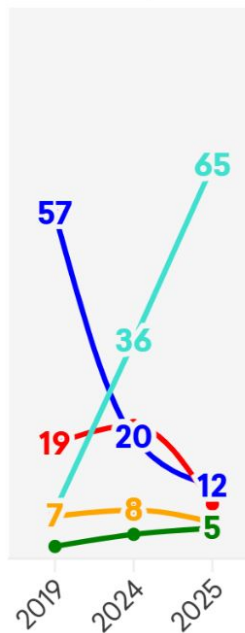
## Traditional Conservatives

"Shire Tory"



## Dissenting Disruptors

"Populist Right"



# The Seven segments' attitudes to the conflict



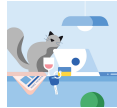
## Progressive Activists

The only segment where a majority support one side (Palestine), they are highly engaged, view the issue as central to their identity, and are most likely to use terms like "genocide" and have negative views of Israeli citizens.



## Incrementalist Left

Generally sympathetic to Palestine and concerned about both antisemitism and anti-Muslim hate, though less intensely engaged than Progressive Activists and less likely to support disruptive protest.



## Established Liberals

High-information although tend to view themselves as impartial on the conflict. They are most concerned about the increased temperature of debate about the conflict and how it is shaping discourse in the UK.



## Sceptical Scrollers

From spending a lot of time online, they have seen a lot of information about the conflict although struggle to know which information is true.



## Rooted Patriots

Attitudes shaped by high threat perception makes them very concerned about the impacts of the conflict on the UK, and shocked by the images they are seeing coming out of Gaza.



## Traditional Conservatives

The most likely to sympathise with Israel of any of the segments, and the most likely to hold strong negative views about pro-Palestine protestors.



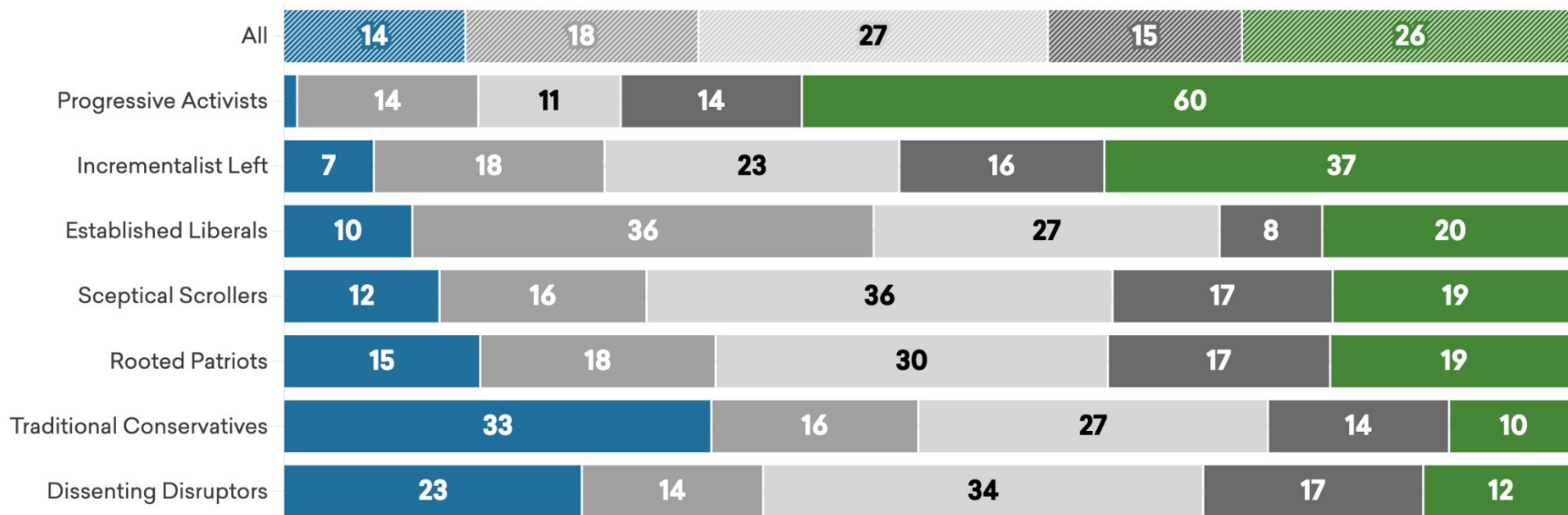
## Dissenting Disruptors

They tend to think Britain should not be involved in the conflict in Gaza at all, and think that pro-Palestine protests have been a distraction from bigger issues at home.

# The views of the Seven segments

Which side in the Israel-Palestine conflict do you sympathise with more?

● The Israeli side ● Both sides equally ● Neither side ● Not sure ● The Palestinian side





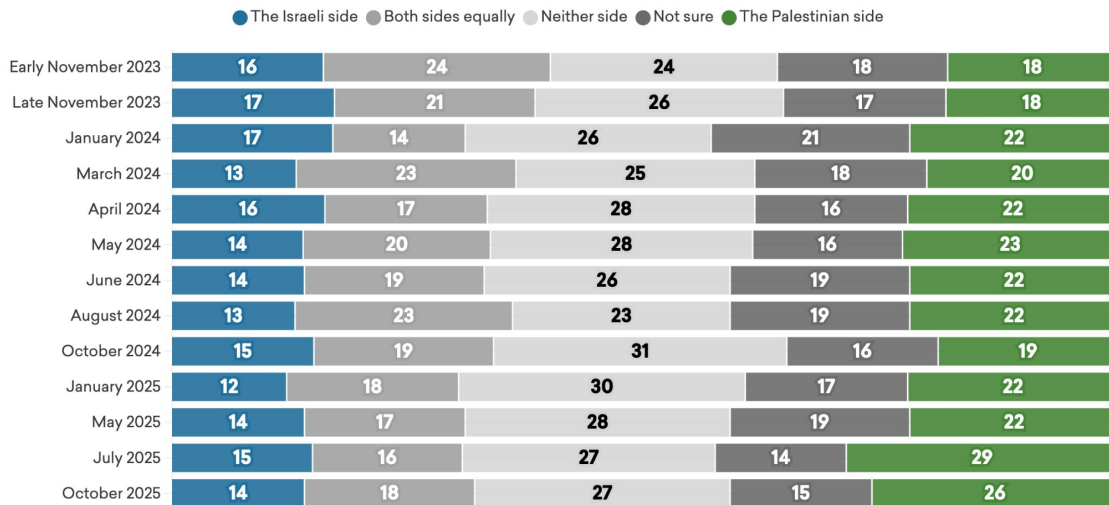
# **Public attitudes to the conflict in Israel and Palestine**

# Top lines attitudes to the conflict have not changed much

Over the course of the last two years, the proportion of people taking a side in the Israel-Palestine conflict has remained relatively unchanged. The number saying they sympathise more with Israel has fallen slightly from 16 to 14 per cent, and the proportion saying they sympathise more with Palestine has risen slightly from 18 to 24 per cent.

Many Britons, particularly those who do not take a side in the conflict, say they have switched off from the news about the war, because they find it too depressing or they do not see a way out of it.

Which side in the Israel-Palestine conflict do you sympathise with more?



“Sometimes you must turn off the news because it's so harrowing and that's not the best thing to do, I guess, because then you can never really form an opinion of your own.” James, Established Liberal, St Albans

“I tend to avoid watching it purposely because I just think I'm scared about about my kids growing up in this world. So I try to avoid it .... I'd never leave the house if I watched the news and kept up to date of everything.” Abby, Rooted Patriot, Stockport

# Shared starting points

**Regardless of people's views on the conflict, most Britons share a number of starting points that are held across divides:**

**Extreme sympathy for citizens of Gaza:** both for the severe suffering they have endured during this war as a result of Israel's military activity, and for the fact that they have to be governed by Hamas. Few Britons have positive views of Hamas, and there is widespread recognition that Palestinian civilians are trapped under the rule of a group that does not represent their interests and has actively harmed prospects for peace.

**Horror at the impact of the conflict on civilians on both sides and a desire for the war to end.**

**Support for the return of Israeli hostages, coupled with a belief that Israel has gone too far in their military activity in Gaza.** Britons across the spectrum wanted to see hostages released and returned safely to their families, but tend to think Israel's military response in Gaza has been disproportionate.

**Concern about the targeting of Jews in Britain,** particularly following the terror attack on Heaton Park synagogue in Manchester.

**Worry about integration, extremism and rising tensions between different religious communities in Britain.** Regardless of their views on the conflict itself, most Britons are concerned that events in the Middle East are creating divisions at home and making it harder for people of different faiths to live together peacefully.

# Most Britons do not take a side

**Most Britons do not approach the conflict through the lens of “sides” at all.**

For the average Briton, who will have seen horrific images of suffering both in Israel on October 7th, the plight of hostages and their families, and the extreme misery and suffering Gaza over the past two years, the immediate concern is that they want the war to stop, and for civilians who have been caught up in the war to be protected. For most Britons, holding these views does not require them to align with one view or another.

You said that you [sympathise with both sides equally / neither side / don't know which side you sympathise with more]. Why is that?

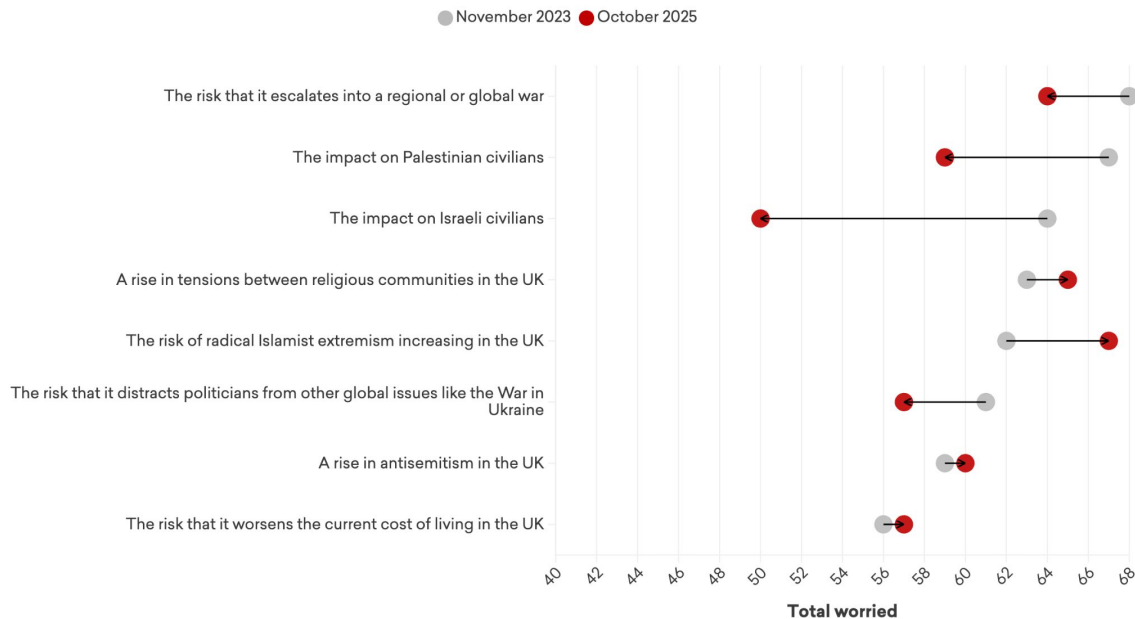


**“I just feel really sad. They're civilians that are just getting hurt on both sides for no reason. They don't need to be fighting. I just find it, it's just really sad. It doesn't make sense to me why people that have nothing to do with the politics are getting hurt and there's children getting hurt and they're all starving. It's not their fault. I don't understand why that's affected them. It's nothing to do with them. It just makes me really sad.”** Zoe, Hastings, Dissenting Disruptor

# Changing concerns

Even as Britons have speak about exhaustion with the conflict and a sense it is too depressing to watch, their concern remains high, with an **increasing worry about what the conflict means for communities here in the UK.**

For example, Britons are now much more worried about the rise in Islamist extremism and religious division - particularly after the fatal terror attack on a Manchester synagogue. At the same time, since the ceasefire has been implemented, concern about the impact on Israeli and Palestinian civilians has dropped down people's list of concerns.



*“It’s sort of spilling over from what’s happening in Gaza and all. It’s sad. It’s really, really sad. The Jews in living in Manchester, the Jewish community living in Manchester, they’ve been there for years and years and years and they’re all good people .... They’re peaceful people.” Marcus, Rooted Patriot, Stockport*



# Switching off from the news

In two years of intense fighting in Gaza, Britons have not stopped caring, but many explain how news from the conflict is taking an increased emotional toll on them or people they know. Many say they have actively tried to cut down on their consumption of news about the conflict because they find it too depressing.

Other forms of engagement have also fallen in the last few years - with fewer people saying they have posted about the conflict on social media, signed petitions about the conflict, or attended protests about the conflict.

"You get up in the morning and you look at your phone and you look at the news and it's just the same thing over and over again and you get tired of it, it just depresses you. To be honest, I've often thought to myself, I'm just going to stop looking at it." Walter, Rooted Patriot, Stockport

"And this sounds really probably a bit selfish to be fair. When obviously it all started happening, it was really bad. It was on the news and it was like every day, but I've become a little bit immune to it, to the point of where it is just everyday life now. doesn't affect me anymore. I'm just a bit probably just in my own little bubble with my own little family, but unless it hits close to home, I don't know. I've kind of stopped listening to it."  
Rachel,. Rooted Patriot, Stockport

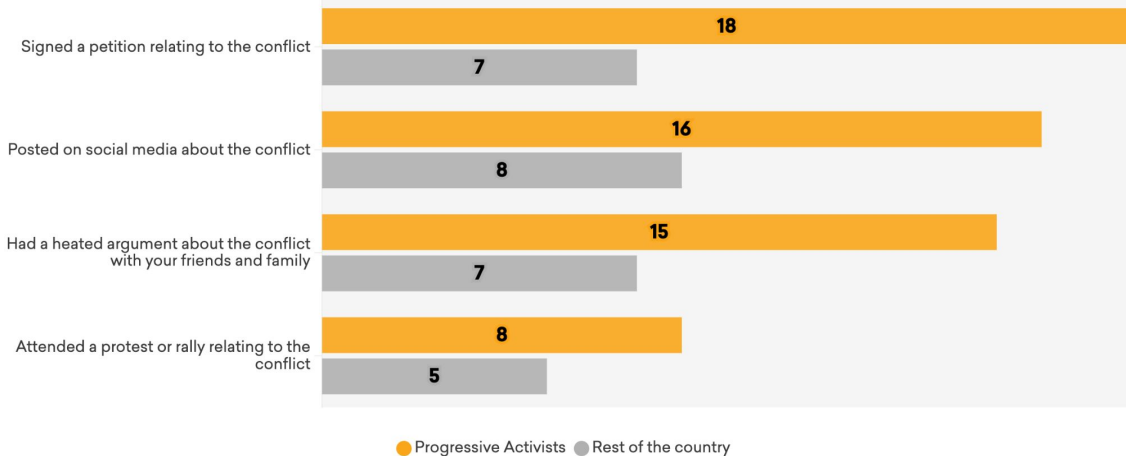
"Sometimes you must turn off the news because it's so harrowing and that's not the best thing to do, I guess, because then you can never really form an opinion of your own."  
James, Established Liberal, St Albans

"I've got to be honest, I've stopped watching the news for the last six months. I don't watch it. I don't do social media as well because it's just too much enough going on that I don't need that impact in my life as well. Sorry."  
Michelle, Traditional Conservative, Crawley

# Progressive Activists are the most engaged

Of all the segments, Progressive Activists (12% of the country) are by the most likely by far to say they sympathise more with the Palestinian side of the conflict, and the only segment where a majority of people take a side. Because they are outliers on some issues relating to the conflict and because they are much more vocal about the conflict than any other segment (for example, **they make up just a tenth of the country but a quarter of the people who have posted on social media about the conflict**), they have played an outsized role in the debate in recent years.

And thinking about the Israel-Palestine conflict, in the last few weeks have you...



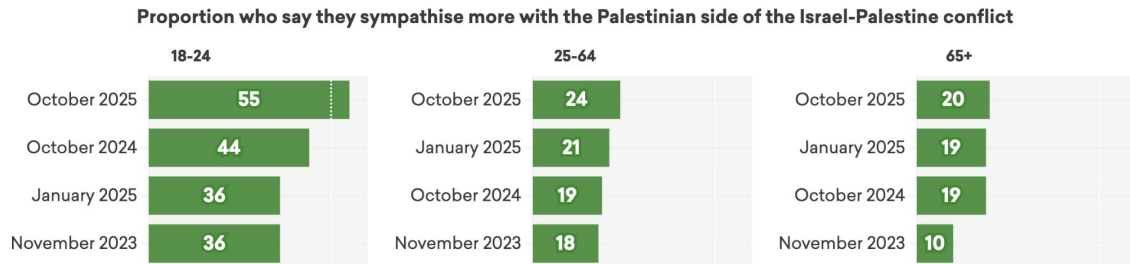
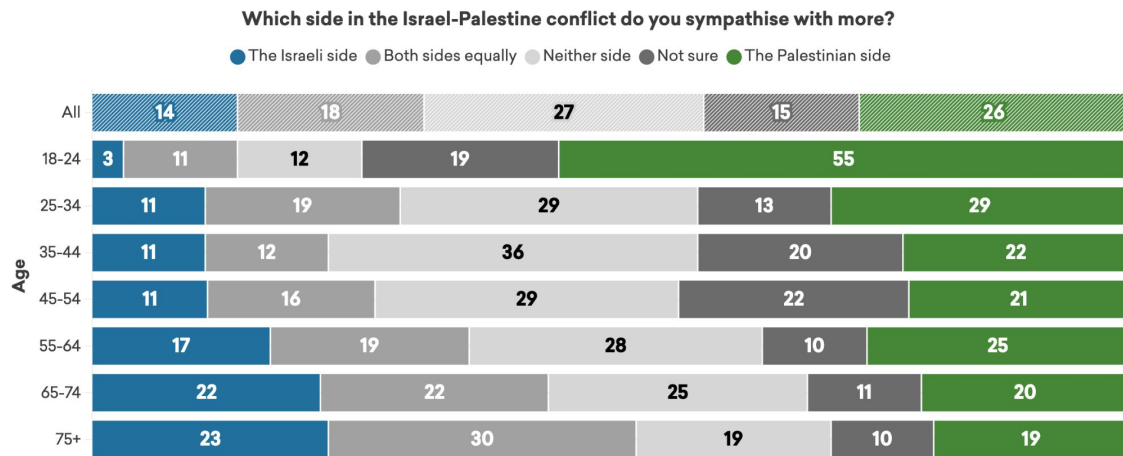
**"I think the Israeli state has gone off the reservation. I think it's basically engaged in a genocidal end game... Gaza has been used as a weapons laboratory for testing of essentially American weapons in urban settings."** Dave, Progressive Activist

**"It's good to talk about it. It's very good to talk about it. If you don't talk about it, it doesn't get talked about... keep talking about it otherwise it will go on, not talk about thousands of people being killed."** John, Progressive Activist

# Young people

**Younger Britons - particularly 18-24 year olds - have become considerably more likely to say they sympathise with the Palestinian side of the conflict.** In November 2023 the majority in every age group did not take a side in the conflict, since then, the growth in the number of 18-24 year olds sympathising more with Palestine means this is no longer the case.

The oldest Britons have also become more likely to say they sympathise with Palestine, albeit from a lower base. Since 2023, the proportion of 65+ year olds who say they sympathise more with the Palestinian side of the conflict has doubled from ten to 20 per cent.



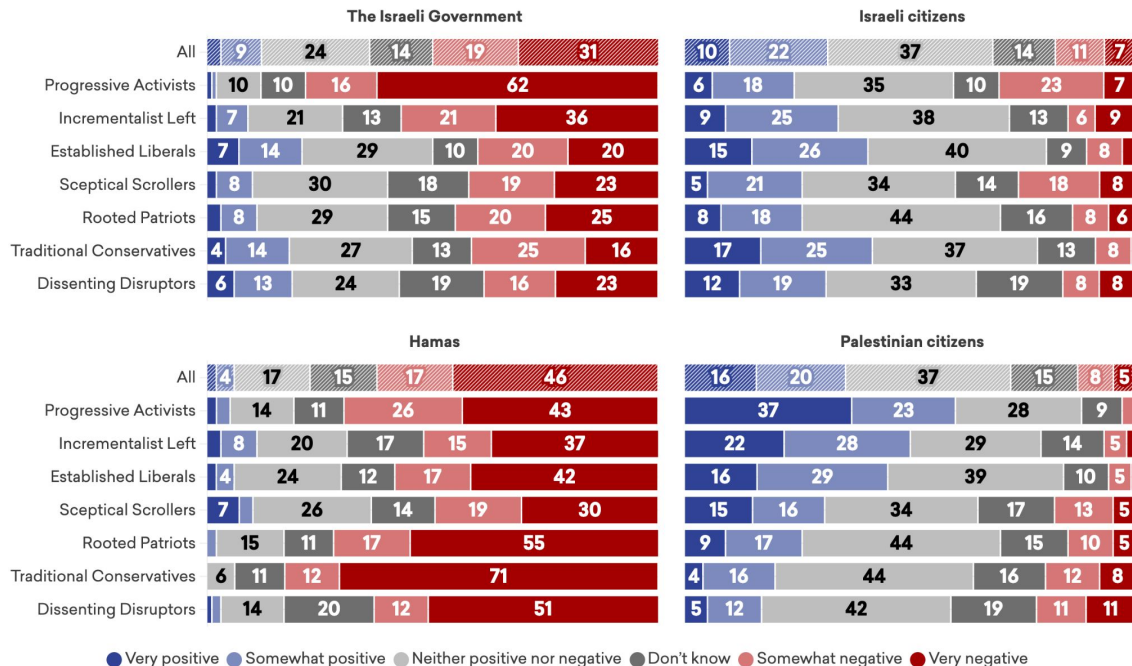
# Attitudes to different actors in the conflict

Overall, just 12 per cent of Britons have a positive view of the Israeli Government and half have a negative view. Progressive Activists are far more negative in their view of the Israeli Government than any other segment, with 78 per cent saying they have a negative view.

For most Britons, disapproval of the Israeli Government does not extend to negativity about Israelis themselves - only 18 per cent of Britons have a negative view of Israeli citizens - although this is higher among Progressive Activists, of whom three in ten (30 per cent) say they have a negative view and Sceptical Scrollers (26 per cent).

Britons are even more critical of Hamas. 63 per cent have a negative view of the group and a virtually negligible proportion have a positive view of them.

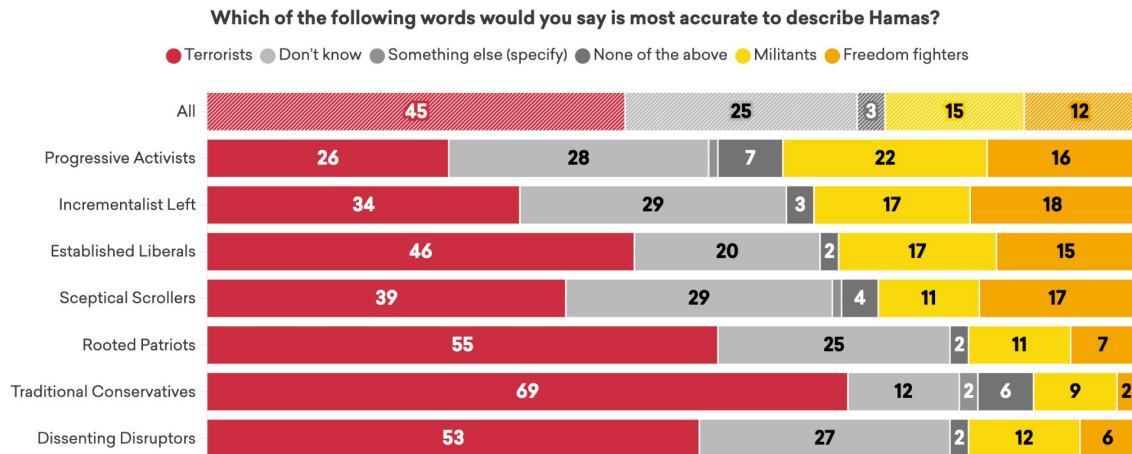
Generally speaking, do you have a positive or negative view of each of the following?



# Attitudes to Hamas

Britons are extremely negative about Hamas, and in focus groups the British public often speak with horror and despair when talking about the actions they have seen from Hamas on the news, with people particularly saddened by the fact that civilians in Gaza don't have fair and proper representation.

While Britons tend to use 'terrorists' to describe Hamas rather than any other word - this distinction is less clear for Progressive Activists, of whom only 26 per cent think that terrorists is the most appropriate word.



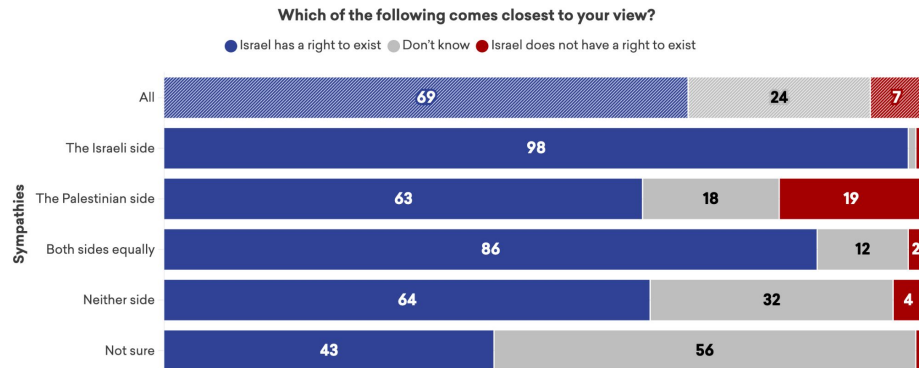
I think they're terrorists and I think people keep saying free Palestine and I think it's the Palestinian people that need freeing from to live a life of freedom and these guys, they've got, they're worth billions, absolute billions and the people in garden living in poverty. - Katie, Rooted Patriot, Stockport

I just don't know how you would've gone and carried out October the seventh without realising the retaliation you would get on your fellow country, men and women and just in any sane brain cannot understand why you would go and do that, because they must have known the retaliation, what the retaliation must have been. So it is just evil that it's worst, isn't it - Kirsty, Established Liberal, St Albans

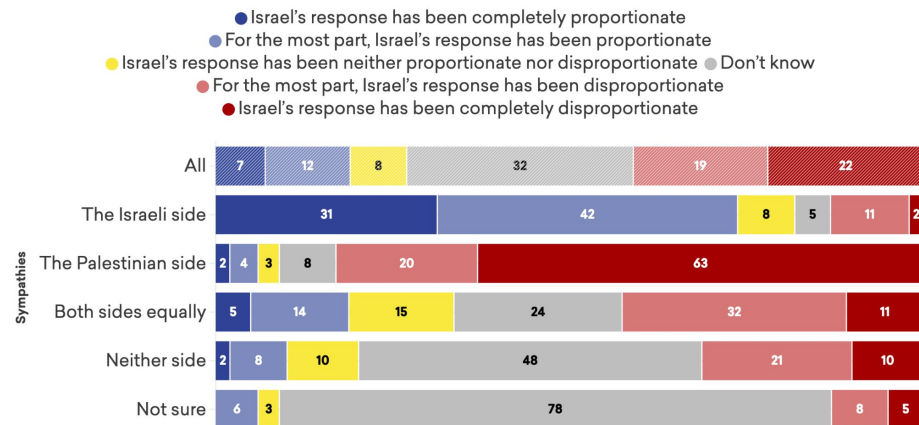
# Attitudes to Israel

While most Britons sympathise with the need for Israel to defend themselves, take on Hamas, free Israeli hostages, Britons are often highly critical with how the Israeli Government has behaved in this conflict. Just 12 per cent of Britons say they have a positive view of the Israeli Government and only 7 per cent say Israel's military activity in Gaza has been completely proportionate.

"I think they've come to a stage now where after the October [attack] they've come to a stage thinking, well this can happen again next week. So this is the time to sort it out, sort it out now, otherwise it's going to go over and over and over again." Jason, Rooted Patriot, Stockport



To what extent do you believe Israel's military response in Gaza has been proportionate?





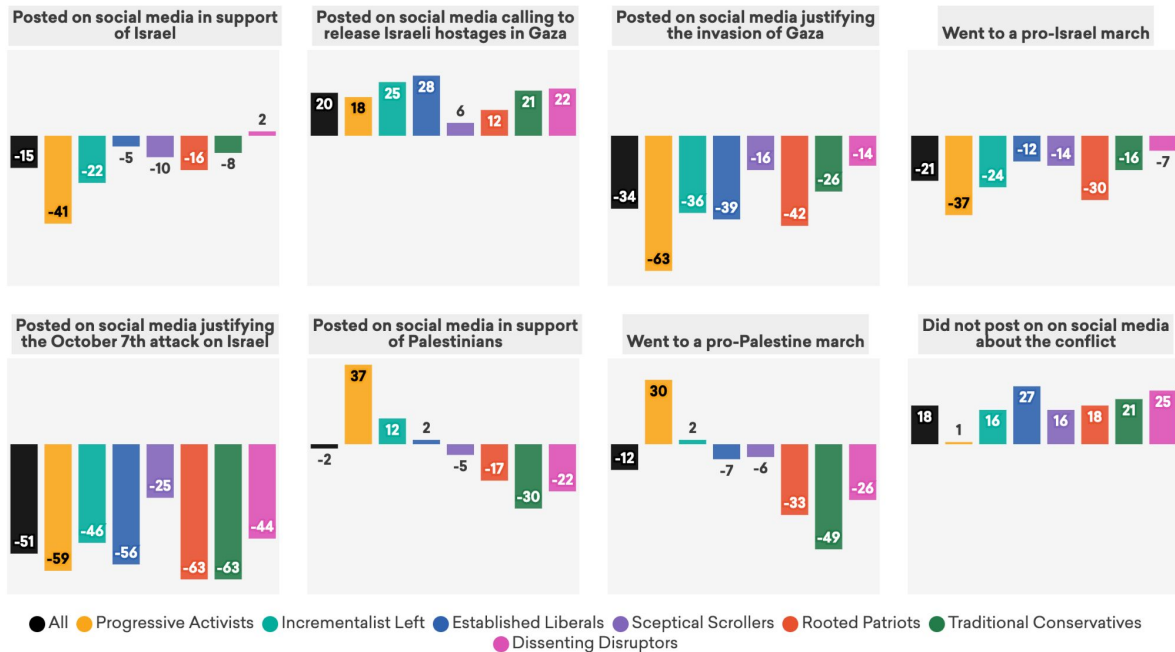
**How the conflict has  
changed Britons' attitudes  
towards each other**

# The conflict is changing perceptions of each other

There are some issues where taking a public stance on the conflict shifts how more engaged Britons think about each other. For example, **61 per cent of Britons say they would think no differently about someone who posted on social media in support of Israel.** However, this number falls to 50 per cent among Progressive Activists, 45 per cent of whom say they would think less of someone who posted on social media in support of Israel.

At the same time, **18 per cent of Britons would think better of someone who posted on social media in support of Palestine, but this rises to 41 per cent among Progressive Activists.**

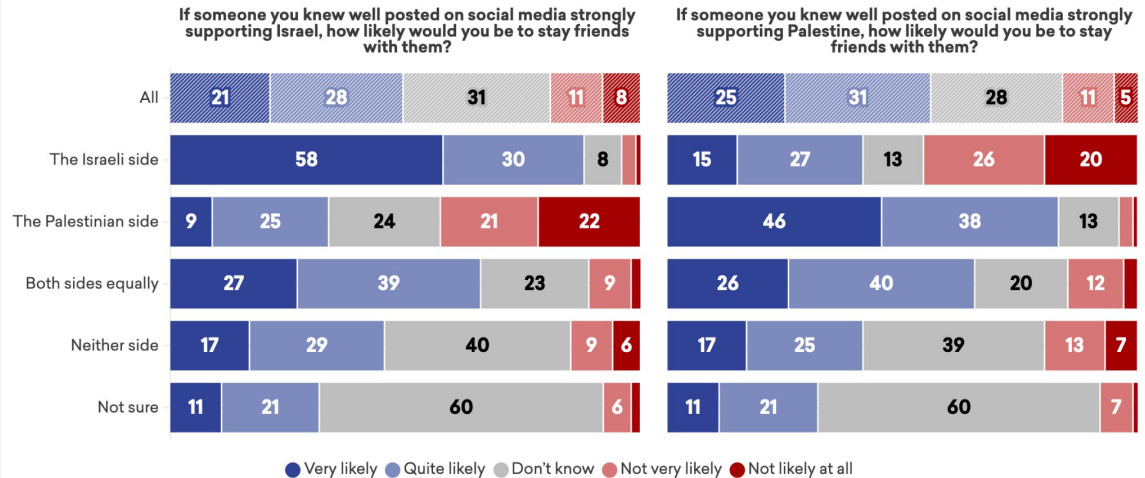
In general, would you think better or worse of someone if they...  
Net change in opinion (proportion who would think more positively about someone minus the proportion who would think more negatively about someone)





# The conflict is changing perceptions of each other

19 per cent of Britons say they might consider stopping being friends with someone if they saw them posting on social media strongly supporting Israel - a number that rises to 38 per cent among Progressive Activists, who are more likely than not to say they would stop being friends with someone who posted on social media in support of Israel. In total, 43 per cent of those who sympathise more with Palestine say they would consider ending a friendship with someone who posted on social media in support of Israel, and 46 per cent of those who sympathise more with Israel would consider ending a friendship with someone who posted on social media in support of Palestine.



Source: More in Common • Fieldwork: 10-13 October

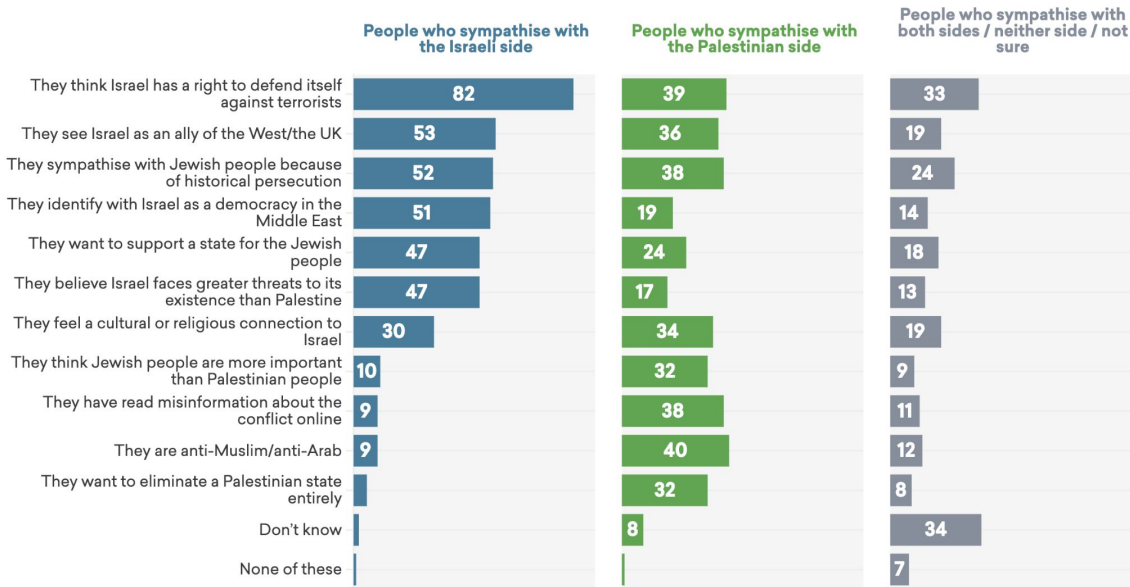
"I've got my birthday coming up. My best friend's Jewish, we've been friends for 30 odd years. I have a friend who's said she's very pro Palestine. I said, can we just all go out for dinner and my Jewish friend doesn't want to be with my Palestine friend. You not just come out and not talk about it and just come out and be people. I have to disinvite both of them and they're both really close friends. It's just crazy that it's becoming like that".

Katie, Rooted Patriot, Stockport

# Understanding the other side - Israel supporters

Those who explicitly identify with a particular side of the conflict often misunderstand the motives of those who take the opposing point of view. For example, those who sympathise more with Israel are most likely to do so because they think Israel has a right to defend itself against terrorism, they see Israel as an ally of the West, and because they sympathise with the historic persecution of Jewish people. In contrast, those on the pro-Palestine side are much more likely to believe that people support Israel because they are anti-Muslim or anti-Arab, or because they have read misinformation about the conflict online.

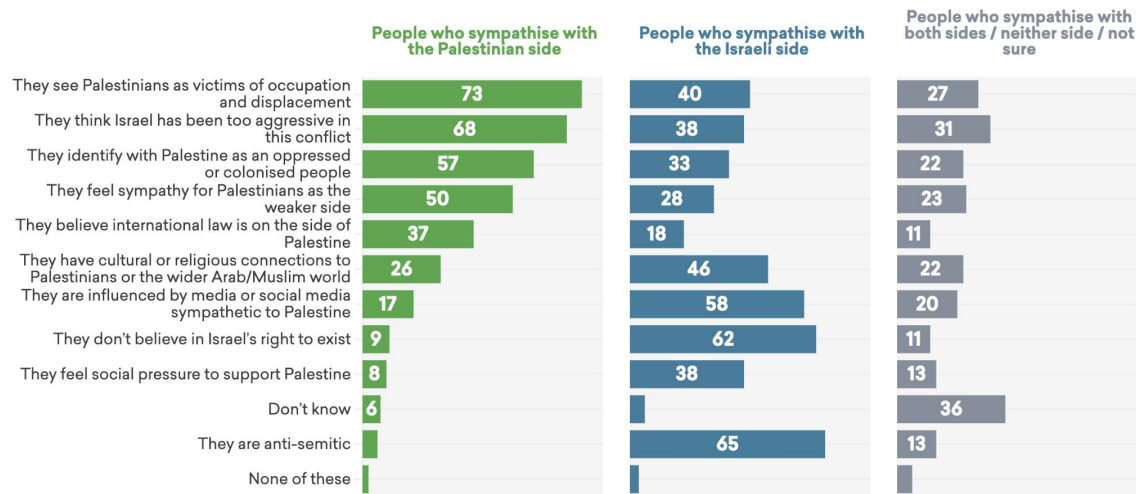
Thinking about people who say they support ISRAEL in the Israel-Palestine conflict, why do you think that is? Select all that apply.



# Understanding the other side - Palestine supporters

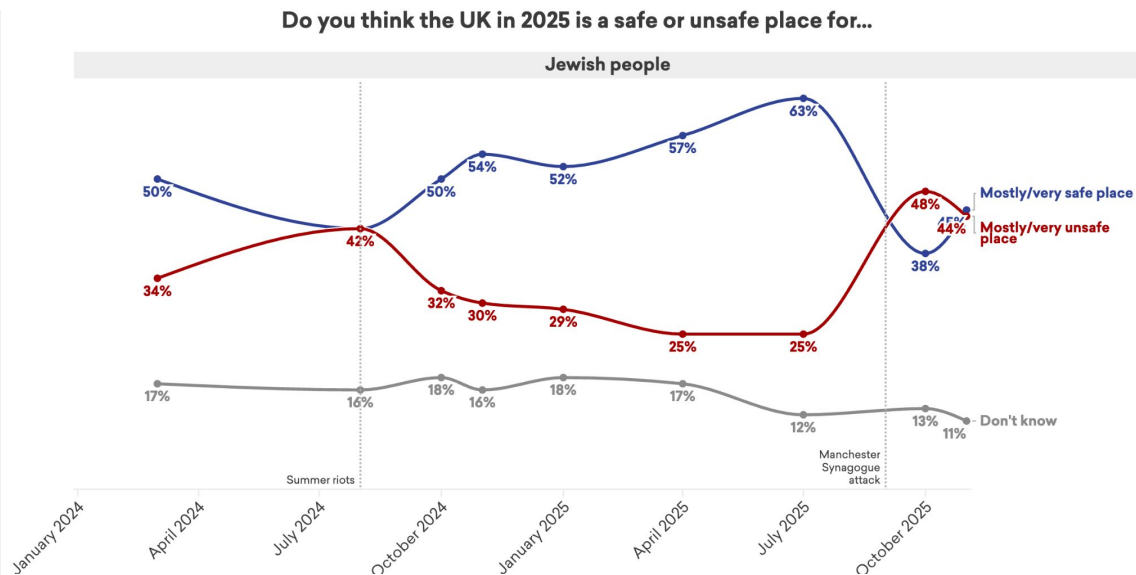
In contrast, those who support Palestine are most likely to do so because they see Palestinians as victims of occupation and displacement. Israel supporters are much more likely to say that people support Palestine because they are antisemitic or don't believe in Israel's right to exist.

Thinking about people who say they support PALESTINE in the Israel-Palestine conflict, why do you think that is? Select all that apply.



# Antisemitism

Concern about antisemitism has risen significantly during the conflict, with six in ten Britons now worried about rising antisemitism as a result of the war in Gaza. Following the Heaton Park synagogue attack in Manchester, more Britons said Britain is an unsafe place for Jews than a safe place for the first time. Many British Jews report changing their behavior out of fear, with young Jews in particular feeling unable to wear religious symbols in public or tell friends about their identity.



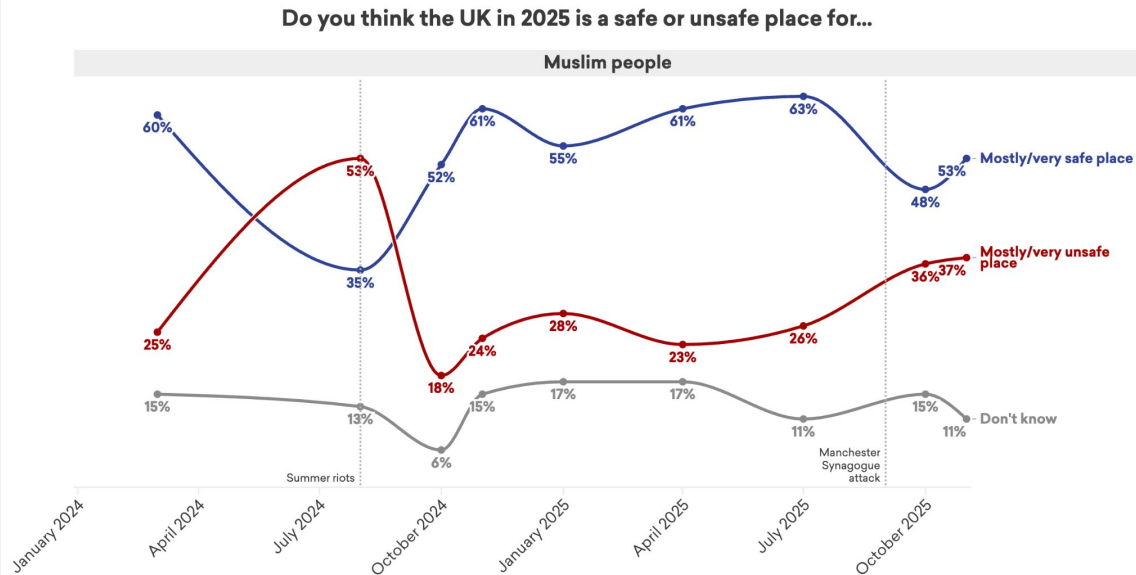
"I feel like I kind of get sort of a backlash for being Jewish, even though I'm not religious or anything. People, if I tell them now, people just automatically start saying like, oh, well you've done this and you've done that, and I'm just like, no. They just kind of blame me for it, but I've not done anything." Talya, London

"There was this terror attack in my city a few weeks ago ... Especially when I go to town, I can't wear my kippah, I just won't do it because it's just, there's so many antisemitic people in town...It does feel unsafe still." Zac, Manchester

# Anti-Muslim hate

Anti-Muslim hate has also spiked during the conflict, with **37% of Britons saying the UK is unsafe for Muslims by Autumn 2025.**

Increases in anti-Muslim hate are closely related to other divisive issues such as immigration and multiculturalism. Given this, efforts to address anti-Muslim prejudice face political obstacles, with opposition to a formal definition of Islamophobia driven by fears it would restrict free speech and legitimate criticism of Islam or immigration.



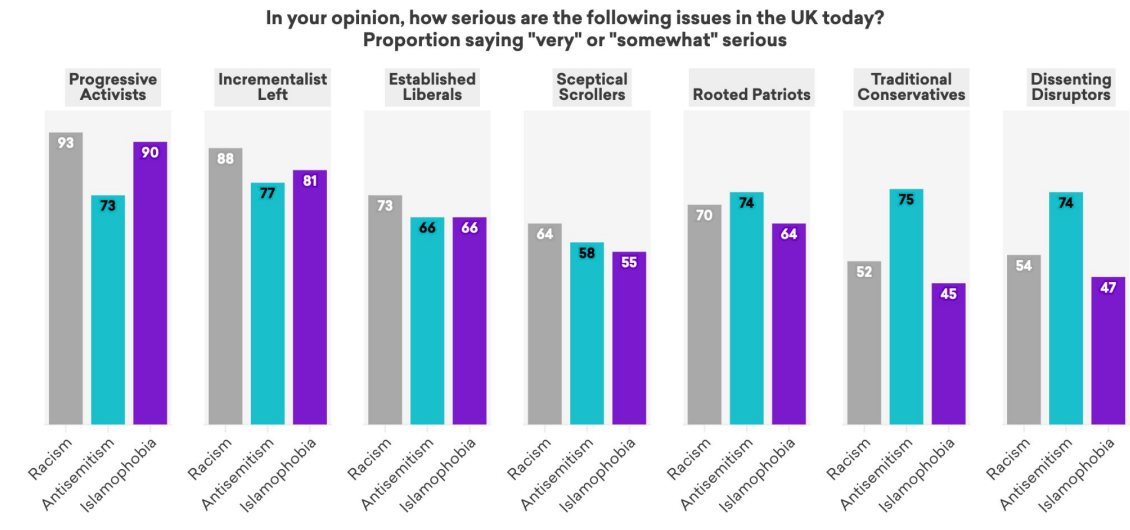
I feel that Muslims, wherever we are in the world, anything happens, we get blamed for everything. It's like that teenager who killed those children in [Southport]. I think last year or the year before because he had appeared or whatever, he was considered a Muslim and there were riots and everything. It turned out that he wasn't a Muslim"

Talya, Birmingham

# Polarisation in concern about prejudices

**Concern about antisemitism and anti-Muslim hate has become politically polarised.** Right-leaning segments are much more worried about antisemitism than anti-Muslim hate, while left-leaning segments show the reverse pattern - even as they are more concerned about discrimination overall.

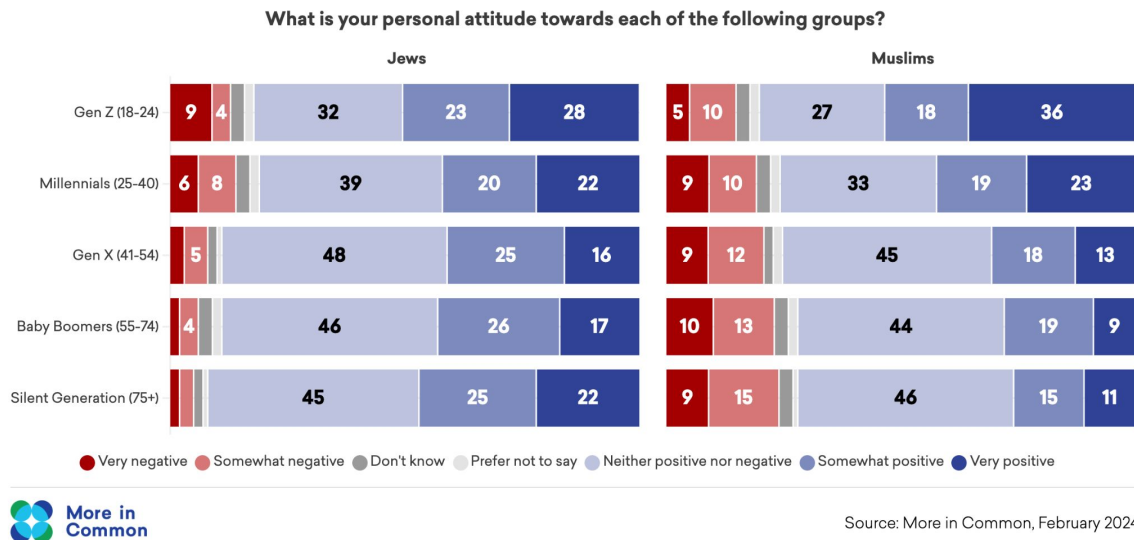
For example, **90% of Progressive Activists view Islamophobia as serious compared to 73% for antisemitism**, while Traditional Conservatives are significantly more concerned about antisemitism. Similarly, Traditional Conservatives are 30 points more likely to say that antisemitism is a serious issue than Islamophobia.



# Age profiles

The age profiles of antisemitism and anti-Muslim prejudice in Britain are the inverse of each other.

Younger Britons are much more likely to hold negative views of Jews compared to older Britons. Asked about Muslims, it is older Britons who are more likely to hold negative views.





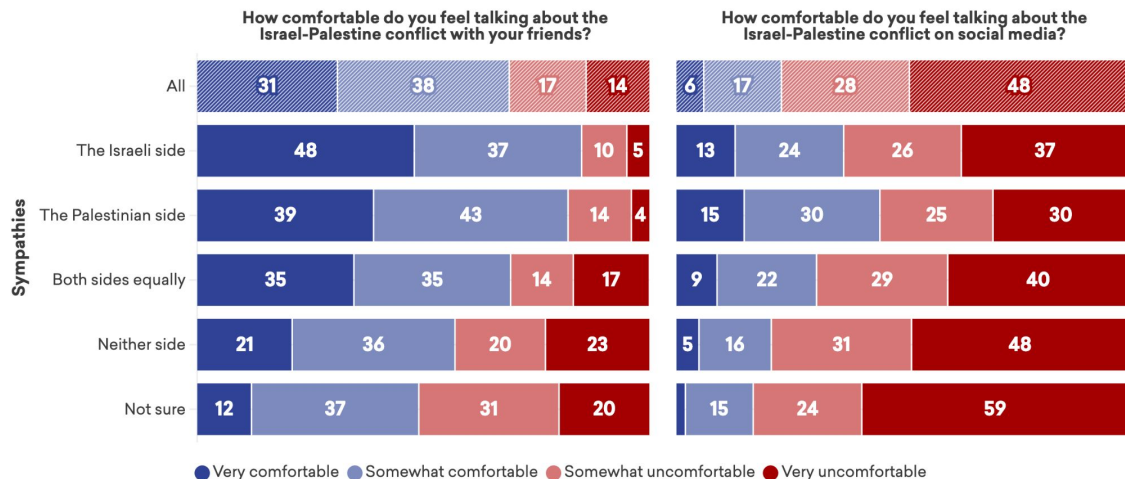
**Talking (and shouting)  
about the conflict**



# Most people don't feel comfortable talking about the conflict on social media

Most people feel uncomfortable talking about the conflict on social media - 42 per cent of those who take a side on the conflict feel comfortable talking about it, compared to just 23 per cent of those who do not take a side.

The result of this is that people who do not hold strong views on the conflict often hold back, and are disproportionately not heard in discussions about the conflict. For example, **despite only making up 40 per cent of the country, people who take a side in the conflict account for 71 per cent of people who have posted about the conflict on social media.**



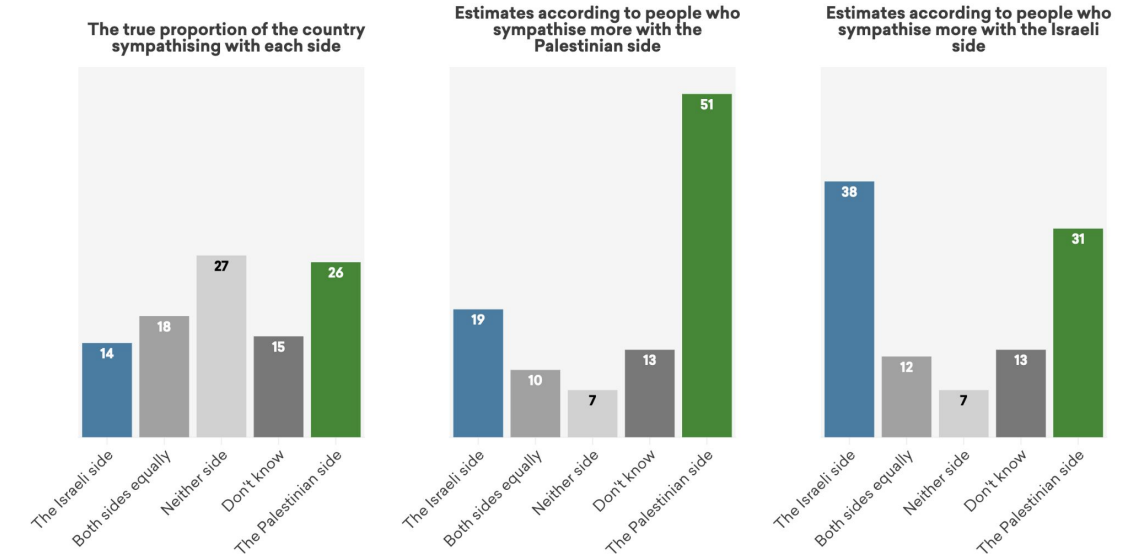
*"I think it's a very difficult subject to raise actually because people have such polarised views and we've lost the art of debate, haven't we? So it's really difficult to talk about something in a intelligent moderated having all sides of the argument given way. I think we've lost that as a nation." Kirsty, Incrementalist Left, St Albans*

*"I think it's quite dangerous actually, social media for things like this. People, they have an opinion on everything and if you don't conform with what they believe in, they become a hater and it's just really frightening" Tina, Traditional Conservative, Braintree*

# Perception gaps

## Loud discourse means people overestimate how engaged the public are in the conflict.

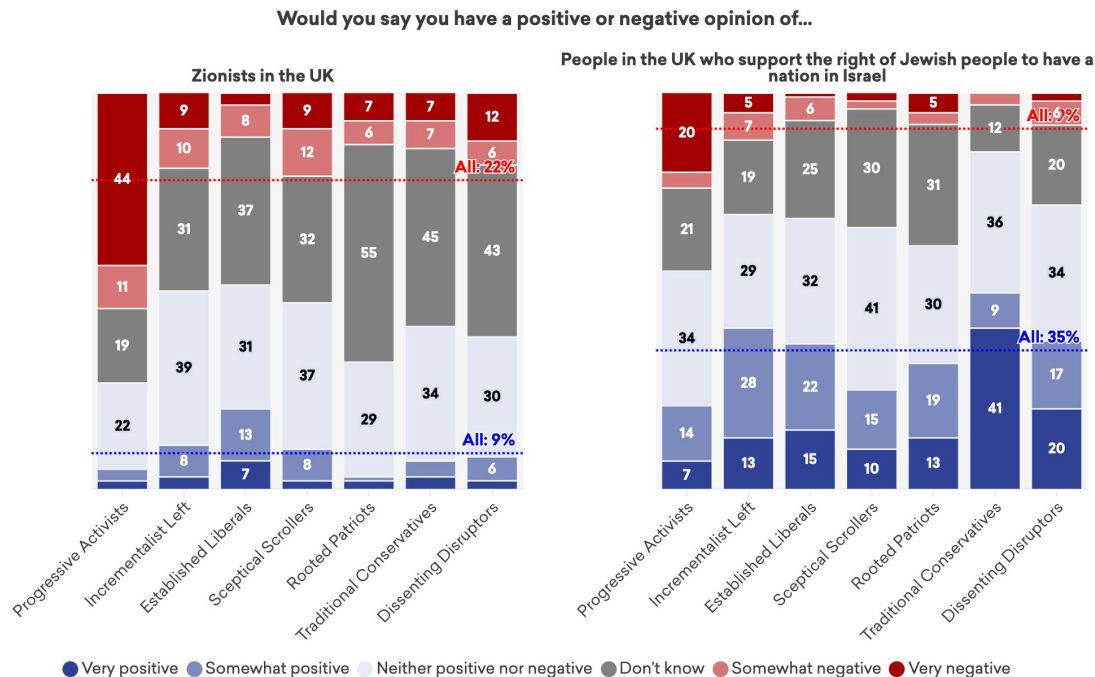
While the majority do not sympathise with either side, on average Britons think that 29 per cent of the country puts themselves on the pro-Palestine side, and 18 per cent put themselves on the pro-Israel side. Among those who do take a view on the conflict, these numbers are even more pronounced: among those who sympathise with Palestine more, they think 51 per cent of the country do the same as them; among those who sympathise with Israel more, they think that 38 per cent of the country do the same, and think that there are more pro-Israel than pro-Palestine people in the country. That people overestimate how common their own viewpoints are is evidence that perhaps people are filtering into their own echo chambers on social media.



# Language - Attitudes towards zionism

Our research shows that understanding of the word zionism is weak, and that people attribute more negative meanings to the word 'zionist' than they do when explaining what one is in simple language.

In total, 22 per cent of Britons have a negative view of zionists, however this falls to 9 per cent when asked about 'people who support the right of Jewish people to have a nation in Israel'.



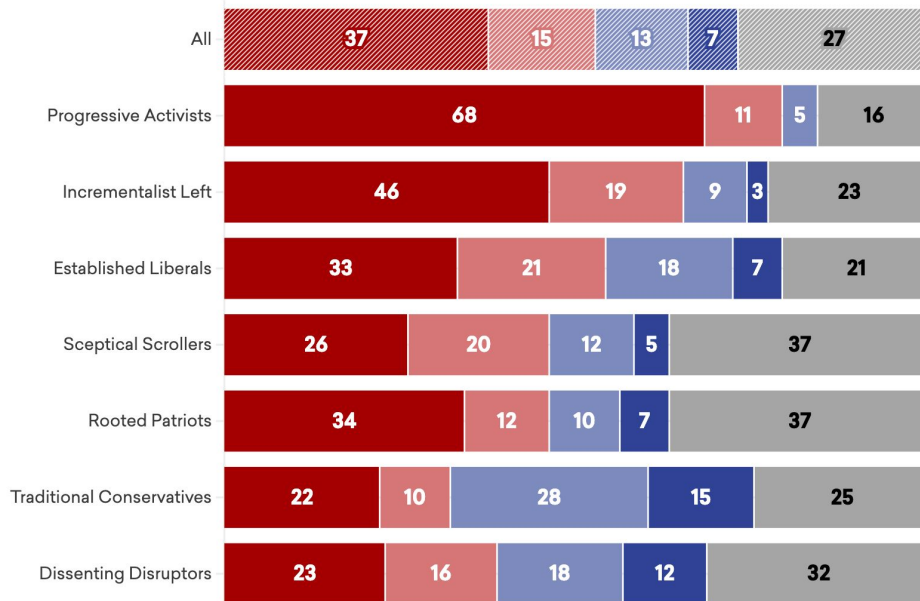
# Language - Genocide

37 per cent of Britons think that Israel's actions in Gaza amount to a genocide, but most do not.

Progressive Activists are by far the most likely to say that Israel has committed a genocide, and are the only segment where more than half think a genocide has occurred.

Based on what you know, would you say that Israel's actions in Gaza...

- Amount to a genocide
- Are war crimes, but not a genocide
- Are disproportionate, but not war crimes
- Are not disproportionate or illegal
- Don't know



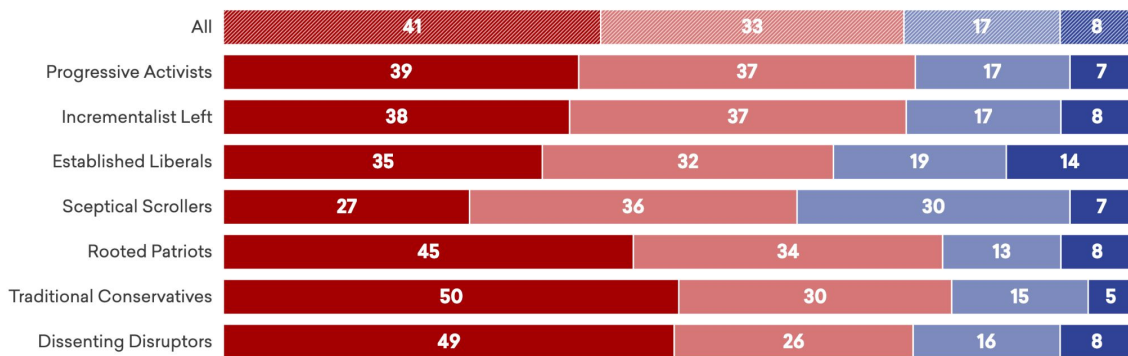
# Social media seen as unhelpful in the conflict

Across focus groups, people frequently raised that social media had made it harder to know what was going on in the conflict.

In part this is because people with the most extreme views are seen to be crowding out everyone else. For example, despite only making up 40 per cent of the country, people who take a side in the conflict account for 71 per cent of people who have posted about the conflict on social media.

## Which of the following comes closest to your view?

- 1 - People with the most extreme views on Israel-Palestine tend to crowd out the voices of people with more moderate views
- 2
- 3
- 4 - People with more balanced voices are heard the same as people with more extreme views



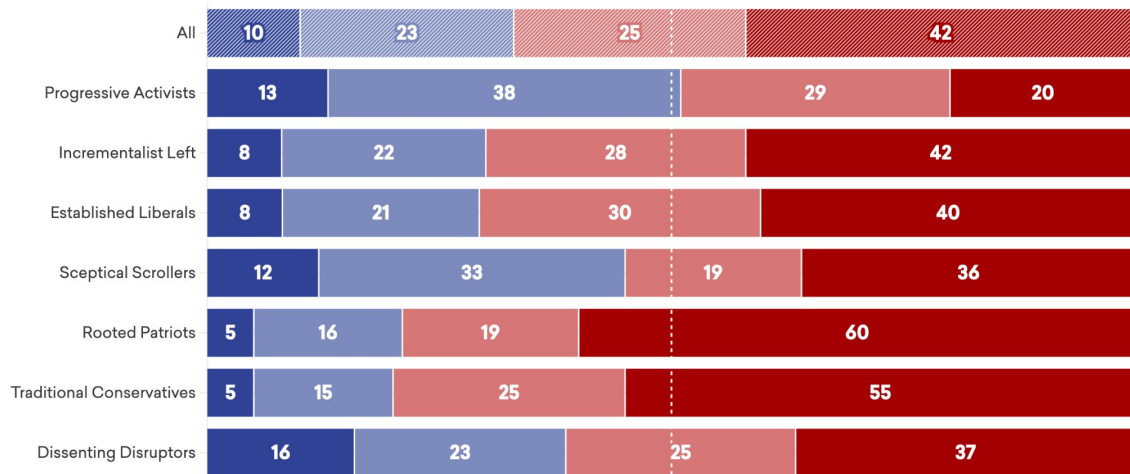
**"I think it's really worrying. I think social media is also worrying because you've got a lot of people that are giving their opinions without any facts on it. I've recently come off social media because it scared the life out of me. People that I thought were really close friends and they've got such very different views compared to me, so I try to avoid looking altogether, so I do just stay off social media and news wherever possible."** Abby, Rooted Patriot. Stockport

# Concerns about disruptive protest

**The public's patience for disruptive protest is wearing thin.** People support the principle of the right to free speech, but draw a line at offensive language and particularly disruptive protest. 27 per cent of Britons would think worse of someone for going to a pro-Palestine march, and 30 per cent would think worse of someone for going to a pro-Israel march. The majority of the public think that some protests are so disruptive they should not be allowed.

Please use the following scale to indicate which of the following comes closest to your view, where 1 means you fully agree with the first statement and 4 means you fully agree with the second statement.

- 1- Protestors should have a right to protest about Palestine and Israel, no matter how disruptive those protests are
- 2 -
- 3 -
- 4 - Some protests are so disruptive that they should not be allowed

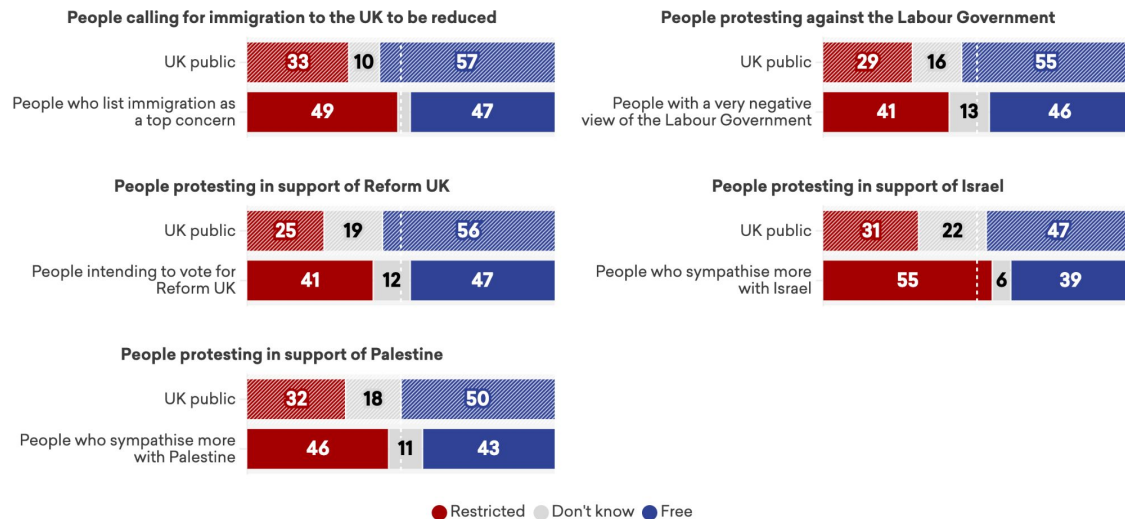


# People feel their free speech isn't protected

People feel that Britons are largely free to protest a range of issues in Britain today, even if the numbers saying that these forms of protest are 'very free' are quite low.

However, a potentially larger challenge is that people are much more likely to think that protests on their own views are restricted. **31 per cent of the public think that pro-Israel protests are restricted in Britain, but this rises to 55 per cent among people who sympathise more with Israel.** Similarly, **32 per cent of the public think pro-Palestine protests are restricted, but 46 per cent of people who support Palestine feel this.**

## In Britain today, how free do you think people are to protest about each of the following?



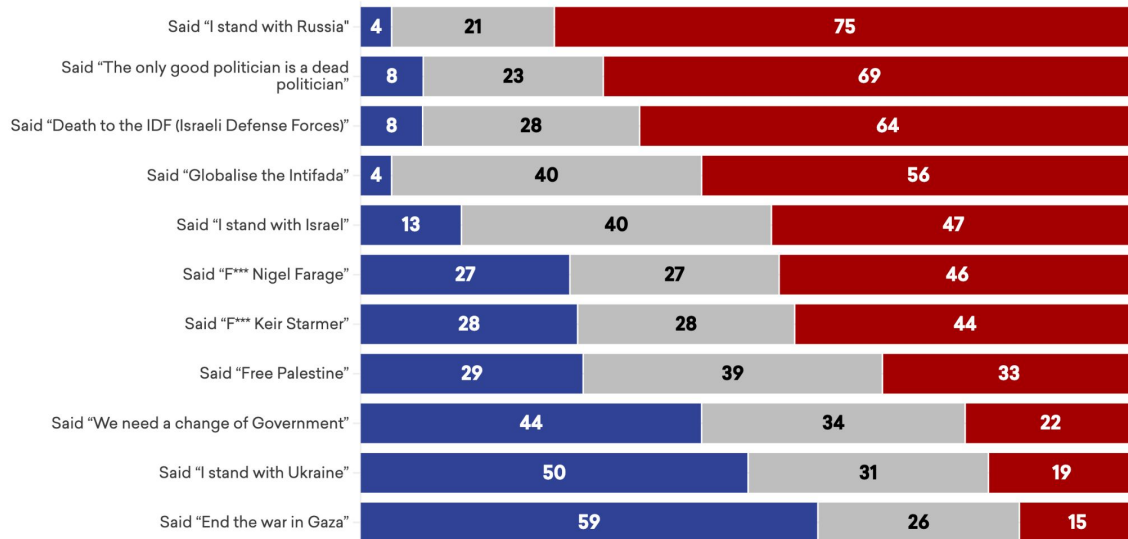
# Cultural figures

**Most Britons are uncomfortable with musical artists inciting political violence at concerts or festivals.** Just eight per cent say they would like it if a musical artist said "death to the IDF" at a concert, with similarly low levels of support for phrases like "the only good politician is a dead politician" or "globalise the intifada". The opposition to these statements crosses party lines and segments, suggesting a broad consensus that calls for violence have no place in entertainment venues, or indeed British society more widely.

This goes beyond Gaza - people tend to want musicians staying out of international conflicts in general, including other conflicts such as Ukraine.

If you went to a concert or gig and the musician did each of the following, would you like that, or would you not like it, or would you like this or not like this, or not mind either way?

● I would like this ● I would not mind either way ● I would not like like this







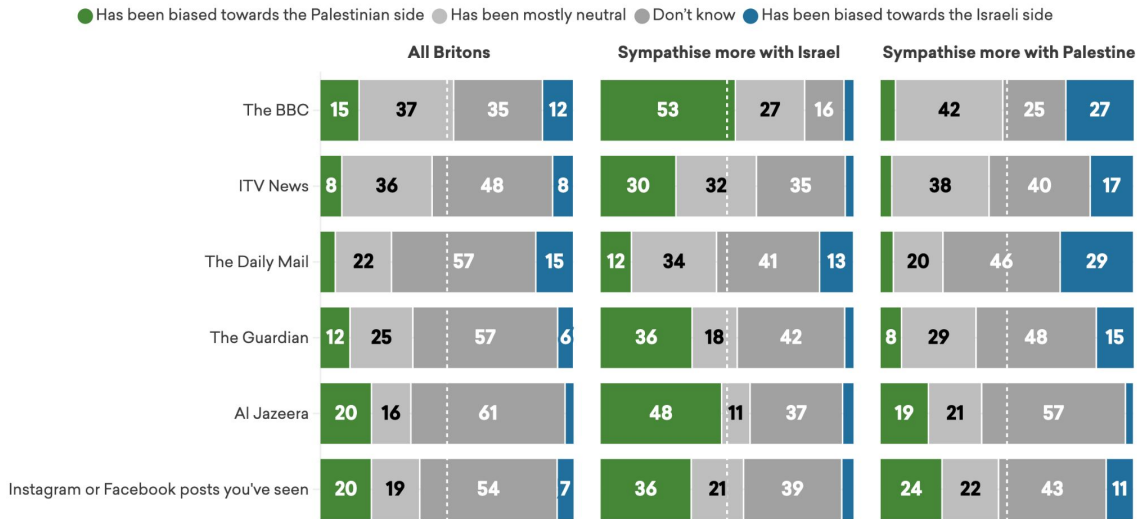
# Trust and truth

# Trust in the media

Those with strong views on the conflict are more likely to distrust mainstream media to cover the conflict fairly and are more likely to turn to alternative sources, in particular social media.

This fragmentation means opposing sides no longer share a common understanding of events in Gaza, making good-faith dialogue nearly impossible.

In their coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict, do you think...



I don't really trust the news or the newspapers because like Lewis said, they've got their own agendas. They're pushing a certain narrative, so I just kind of do my own research by going on all different social medias and getting bits of the real information. There are some people on TikTok that are in Gaza and things like that, and so I'm sort of viewing what they're saying. I'm just trying to make my own views from other people's views, not the news and not the newspapers, if that makes sense -

Zoe, Dissenting Disruptor, Hastings

# Trust in the BBC

While most Britons don't see the BBC as biased on the conflict, those sympathising with Israel increasingly view it as pro-Palestine (particularly following controversies like the Gaza documentary narrated by a Hamas official's son), while Palestine supporters have become slightly less critical.

In their coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict, do you think the BBC...

● Has been biased towards the Palestinian side ● Has been mostly neutral ● Don't know ● Has been biased towards the Israeli side

## All Britons



## Sympathise more with Israel



## Sympathise more with Palestine



Source: More in Common • Fieldwork: 10-13 October

"Wasn't it a few days ago the BBC was criticised because they made a documentary about Gaza and the narrator was the son of Hamas official and they didn't disclose this information so it's obviously going to be biased. They got major criticism for that, which again shows how they twist things. They don't add information that needs to be said." Zac

# Trust in politicians

On both sides of the conflict, people feel that politicians have not listened to their concerns.

Many British Muslims feel that the Labour party takes their votes for granted, and after years of perceived failure to tackle issues such as crime, the cost of living, or public services in areas they live, the conflict of Gaza acted as a spark that exposed wider discontent.

For Jews, there is a sense that British politicians aren't standing up for them or protecting them against rising antisemitism.

"You can sense he [Keir Starmer] has no passion really for the Palestinian cause. I don't even think he cares. Cares about it. It's not really a grey issue. It's very black and white, like people getting killed. Yes, people were killed on 7th of October, but people are getting killed on a daily basis for absolutely nothing. For him to not have anything to say for other party leaders, to have nothing to say on it, it says everything really."

Sophie (Muslim)

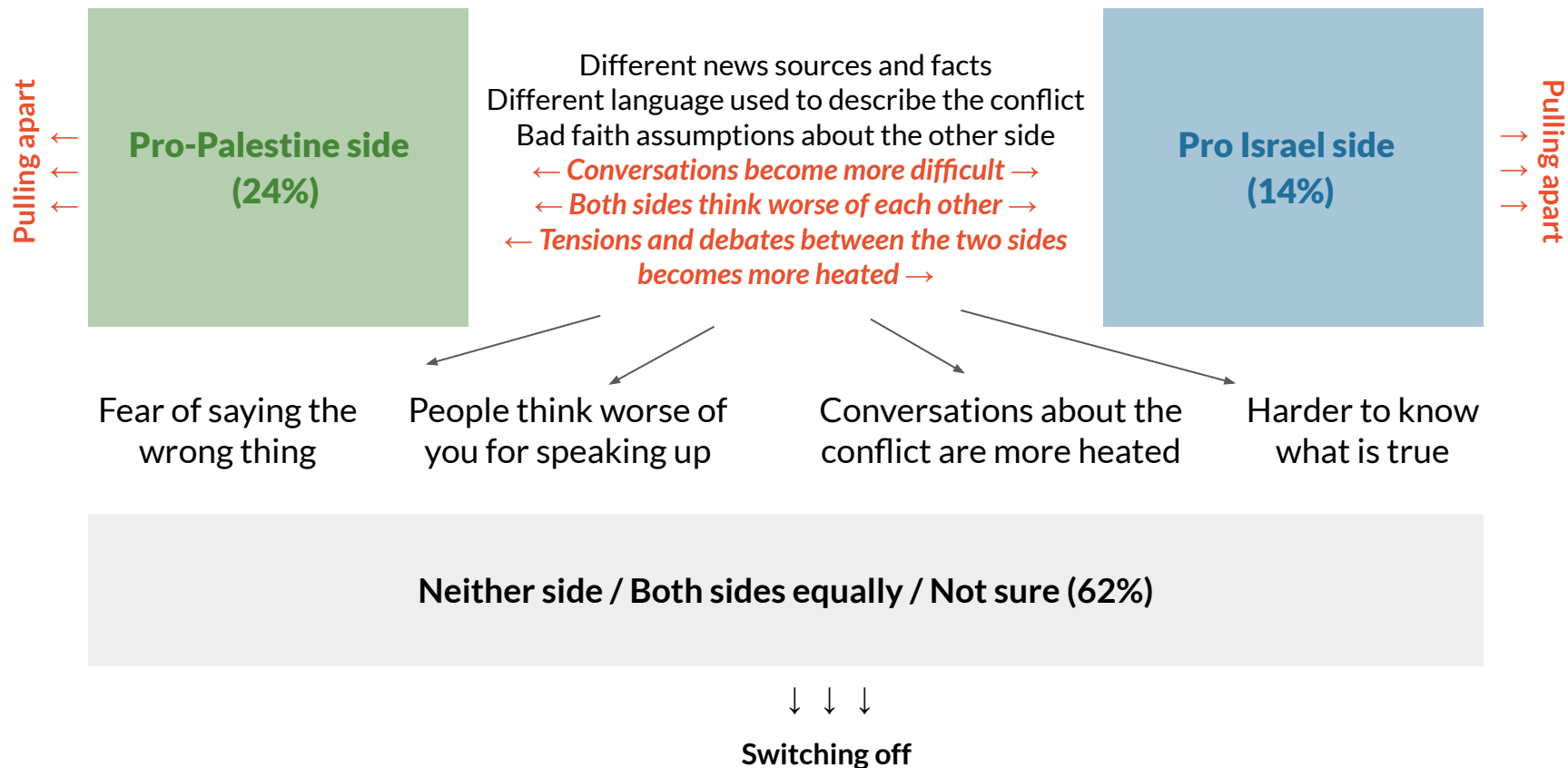
"I don't have trust in any politician in the UK right now. I think if anyone does have a stance on Israel, it's for their own political gain, especially that between labour and reform at the moment. Just trying to appeal to different voters. I just think it's deep down they both, they want to retain the next election and they want to get in power. I don't think they care about Israel that much. I don't really think they care about Jews that much. I don't have much trust in any of them, to be honest at the moment."

Chris (Jewish)



# **Conclusion and recommendations**

# Dynamics of polarisation in Britain today



# Recommendations

## **Make space for people to have a conversation.**

Many Britons hold back from discussing the conflict because they worry about saying the wrong thing or causing offense. If the conversation is to be open to more people, it is necessary to create environments where people can explore their views without fear of immediate condemnation. Additionally, it is important to remember that if people do not speak up, that is not out of lack of care, it is often because they care deeply but feel unsure how to contribute constructively.

## **Remember how protests are perceived by a weary public.**

Activists may feel passionately about their cause, but sustained disruption risks alienating the people they hope to persuade. Two-thirds of Britons now believe some protests are so disruptive they shouldn't be allowed to go ahead, and this backlash extends beyond Gaza to affect how the public views activism more broadly. Protesters should consider whether the frequency, timing or tactics of marches are building support or simply entrenching opposition - and how to call out the minority who use those marches to spread hatred.

**Do not assume people with opposing views hold them in bad faith.** When people believe the other side is motivated by racism, ignorance, or malice rather than genuine moral conviction, productive conversation becomes impossible. This assumption makes it hard to win over even people who are open to finding common ground and actively entrenches opposing camps.

## **Take antisemitism and anti-Muslim hate seriously, and don't let them become politically polarised issues.**

Progressive movements must show that antisemitism is treated with the same urgency as other forms of discrimination, while those concerned about antisemitism should not dismiss the rise of anti-Muslim hatred. When these issues become weapons in a culture war, the communities experiencing hatred are left less protected and it becomes harder to implement basic protections.

**Schools should be places where debate can be facilitated and set an example for young people throughout their lives.** Rather than avoiding difficult conversations about the conflict, schools should equip students with the skills to engage respectfully across lines of disagreement. This means exposing young people to a wide range of balanced perspectives rather than allowing echo chambers to form, and teaching them that it is possible to hold strong views while still listening to and learning from others. Schools with intakes largely of one faith or another, should make a particular effort to engage in inter-faith activity and ensure opportunities for engagement between Muslim and Jewish pupils in major cities such as London and Manchester.

**Social media platforms have a responsibility to ensure people aren't pulled further into echo chambers.** When algorithms consistently show users content that reinforces their existing views, it becomes harder for people to understand why others might see the conflict differently. Platforms should do more to expose users to a broader range of perspectives rather than narrowing their feed based on engagement. When people with different views on the conflict inhabit entirely separate information environments, they lose any shared basis for conversation



**More in  
Common**