



More in
Common

Britons and Refugees

The last six months

¹ July 2022

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Britons and Refugees: the last six months

Over the last 6 months, More in Common has held focus groups across the country and conducted several rounds of polling to better understand Britons' attitudes to refugees. The following briefing is intended to help take stock of how public attitudes have evolved over time in the context of a fast-moving news cycle and numerous international crises. We hope this briefing will provide useful insights to policy makers, the media and our partners in civil society about public opinion.

Our key findings are:

- Levels of concern about asylum seekers crossing the channel has remained high over the last six months
- That concern is not shared evenly across the population. Several segments rank this as one of the most important issues facing the country, others rank it the least – this helps to explain how the debate about refugees and asylum policy has unfolded.
- Although more support than oppose the Rwanda plan, this support is soft and subject to framing. Knowledge of the specifics of the policy is low. Most think the government must do something, but doubt that it will substantially reduce numbers.
- The effectiveness of the policy as a 'wedge' issue is unclear. While asylum seekers crossing the channel is a top priority for the Loyal Nationals (the key segment that swung from Labour to Conservative in 2019 and who best reflect the typical 'Red Wall' voter) who form one side of the Conservative Coalition, it is one of the lowest for Established Liberals (the group most likely to have swung away from the Conservatives to Labour and who best reflect a typical 'Blue Wall' voter), who form the other side of the Conservative coalition. Many in this latter group find the Rwanda scheme unpalatable.
- Headline support for taking refugees from areas of conflict is high (74 per cent). Asking about Ukrainian refugees specifically raises that support by just four points to 78 per cent. While the public do distinguish between Ukrainian refugees and those crossing the channel, this is driven by a sense that they are more likely to be women and children, more likely to return home and because the conflict is so close to the UK. For the vast majority of Britons support for Ukrainian refugees is not driven by race.
- Community sponsorship has the potential to radically shift the British public's attitudes to the UK taking in refugees, particularly reducing opposition to refugees among more socially conservative groups. The government should build upon the Homes for Ukraine scheme and use community sponsorship as the primary model for how the UK resettles refugees going forward.
- Cost of living is the top issue for all segments of the British public, and many worry whether Britain has the capacity to help refugees during this crisis and when services such as the NHS are already stretched.

Channel crossings

High levels of concern about asylum seekers crossing the channel have remained an enduring feature of public opinion over the last 6 months. Issue tracker polling in November 2021 found that channel crossings ranked fifth highest of sixteen with 28 per cent selecting it as one of the biggest issues facing the country. Six months later in May it had declined to eighth place on 17 per cent.

In part this decline appears to be because of the emergence of other, more pressing issues. At the start of the year Covid was the public's biggest concern, this then became the rising cost of living, with party gate and the war in Ukraine by April. However, despite a fall in relative levels of salience, focus group conversations indicate that channel crossings remain a real concern for many voters.

“Even when these immigration people are of coming over on the little boats and that, Great Britain is just allowing them straight in. They're not deploying them straight back, and they should go through the proper channels...you don't catch us just jumping on a little dinghy and trying to get into bloody France or America or Australia. You know?”

Sonia, Loyal National, Blyth (January)

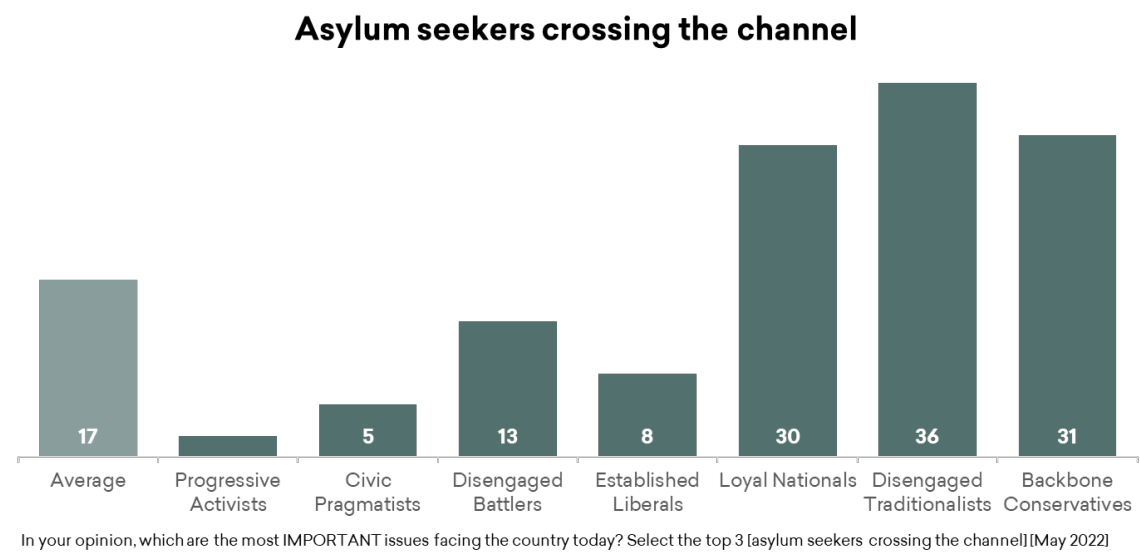
“When the refugees are coming from African countries, Middle Eastern countries, they've gone through tens and tens of countries before they got to us. And I think that raises a question about why they want to come here. And look, if I was in that situation, I'd probably want to get to the UK as well. I definitely would”

Terence, Disengaged Battler, Long Eaton (March)

“If they were that desperate to flee a fighting country, internal or civilian war or whatever it is, like Syria and Afghanistan, surely they've just crossed the border like the Ukrainians have into Poland. But now they've got to make their way to England, because we'll give you a house. We'll give you all the benefits. We'll leave our Army men on the street and we'll look after you. Don't worry”

Paul, Loyal National Dudley (May)

More pertinently, the ‘British Seven’ segments (see Appendix for more details) show that concern about channel crossings varies across diverse groups of the population. For more socially liberal groups, it is not an issue at all. Of 16 options, Progressive Activists ranked it last. Civic Pragmatists ranked it third to last, and Established Liberals second to last. In contrast, more socially conservative groups take the opposite view - it is the second top issue (after cost of living) for Loyal Nationals and Disengaged Traditionalists, and third (after cost of living and Ukraine) for Backbone Conservatives.



This divergence of views, with some groups ranking it as one of the biggest issues facing the country, and other groups ranking it as the least, is indicative of the potential for the policy responses to small boats to become polarised.

Rwanda plan

One of those policy responses is to send those who seek to claim asylum by crossing the channel to Rwanda, where they have the option to claim asylum there.

Polling suggests that public opinion is divided on the Rwanda scheme. YouGov polling from June 13th found that while 44 per cent of people supported the government's Rwanda plan, 40 per cent opposed it. Support and opposition was heavily demarcated along partisan lines, with 74 per cent of Conservatives supporting it, to 71 per cent of Labour supporters opposing it.¹ However, our focus group conversations find that support may be softer than these numbers suggest.

Firstly, there is a degree of confusion about what the scheme entails. Across several focus groups, of different segments, people assumed the Government is only sending failed asylum seekers to Rwanda, with the 'genuine refugees' being allowed to stay in the UK. Many couched their support for the policy in these terms – it is likely that there would be lower levels of support if it were clear that there was not a route back to the UK for successful claimants. Communicating this apparent unfairness towards genuine refugees could shift the dial on public opinion on the policy.

“If they're refugees fleeing from an awful situation, then it is bad to send them to a country like Rwanda. Sure. But as a deterrent for people who just want to come to Britain who are completely fine, who are coming over with their rich clothes and phones and everything, because there are people that are just coming to Britain, aren't there? Millions have just come, or thousands have come. So we don't know who these people are. So I agree with the issue that it's bad for them to go to Rwanda, with everything that Paul said about the lack of information we're going to get about their welfare. If they are refugees, I don't think that's right. But if it's a deterrent for people that just come to Britain, then that's a different thing, I guess”

Jonathan, Backbone Conservative, Hitchen

“And I don't really know much about the subject entirely, but I think obviously if they are deemed a legit refugee, then why are they being taken to Rwanda? It's not fair... I read about a lot of people coming across in dinghies, and actually a lot of them are because it's for money, to get a better life. They're promised a better life. Potentially people smuggling as well. So something does need to change. I think it is a very scary prospect that people are just going to be shipped out and then heard in Rwanda. I didn't realize that”

Charlotte, Civic Pragmatist, Hitchen

¹<https://yougov.co.uk/topics/politics/survey-results/daily/2022/06/13/c8bf1/1>

It is also clear, even for those who express support for the Rwanda plan, that their support is less for this specific policy, and more because they think that something needs to be done. For many this is the only solution that has been proposed. Most people in our focus groups (across segments) were confused why Rwanda was chosen, and some worried about the country's own human rights record. People understood that the government justified the policy as a deterrent, and almost everyone thought that people smugglers were the real villain in this story. In general people often think the policy is worth trying but have little hope that it would actually work in practice. Others are more readily willing to dismiss it as 'just a gimmick' which is a far more common response in opposition than outright moral outrage seen online.

"I don't know. I mean the idea is it's going to stop the people trafficking and save lives crossing the channel and everything, et cetera. That's the thinking behind it, I suppose. But I don't know if it will or not. I think they just come over illegally as they always have done. And they'll just work in Chinese chip shops and all these sweat shops as they do now. Because a lot of them here are illegal, they got no paperwork and that. So I don't think he's going to stop the dingys coming over"

Rich, Loyal National, South Swindon

"I don't know all the ins and outs of why Rwanda's been picked out of all the countries of the world. I don't know. I don't know why. Does anyone else know that? I don't know. No idea"

Jonathan, Backbone Conservative, Hitchin

"I think with Rwanda, I think the government are trying to change their perception. If somebody's seeking a better life, it wouldn't matter where in the world they end up. If they are that determined to come here, they would be happy to be sent to Rwanda. So, I think they've done with more of a deterrent to try and deter people who are trying to pull a fast one to think, "Well, if I do end on the shores of England, I'm actually going to end up in Rwanda." Will it give them a second thought worldwide? Possibly, and I that's a perception I think the government's trying to give"

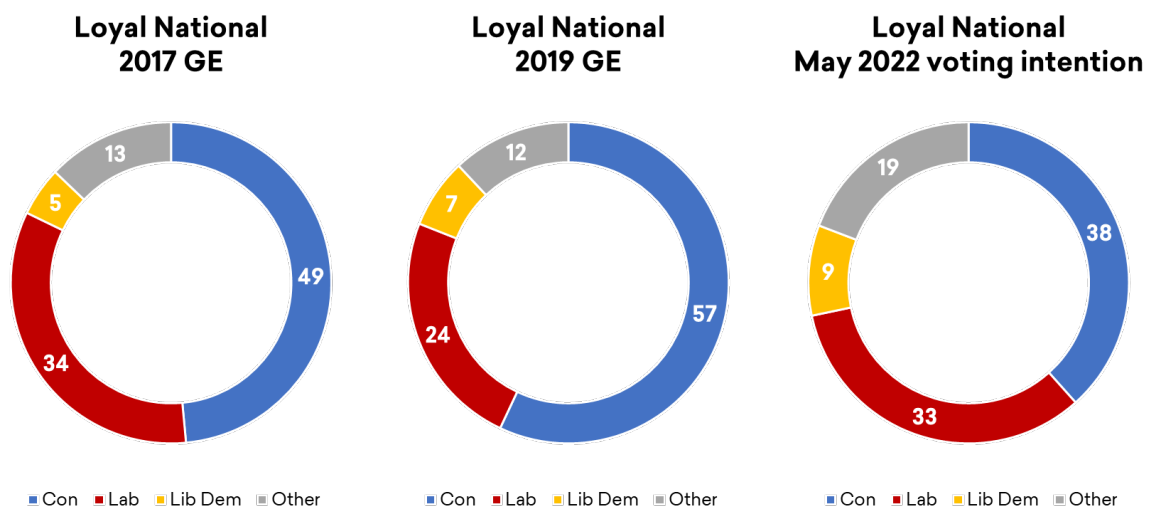
Paul, Loyal National, Dudley

Challenge for Conservatives

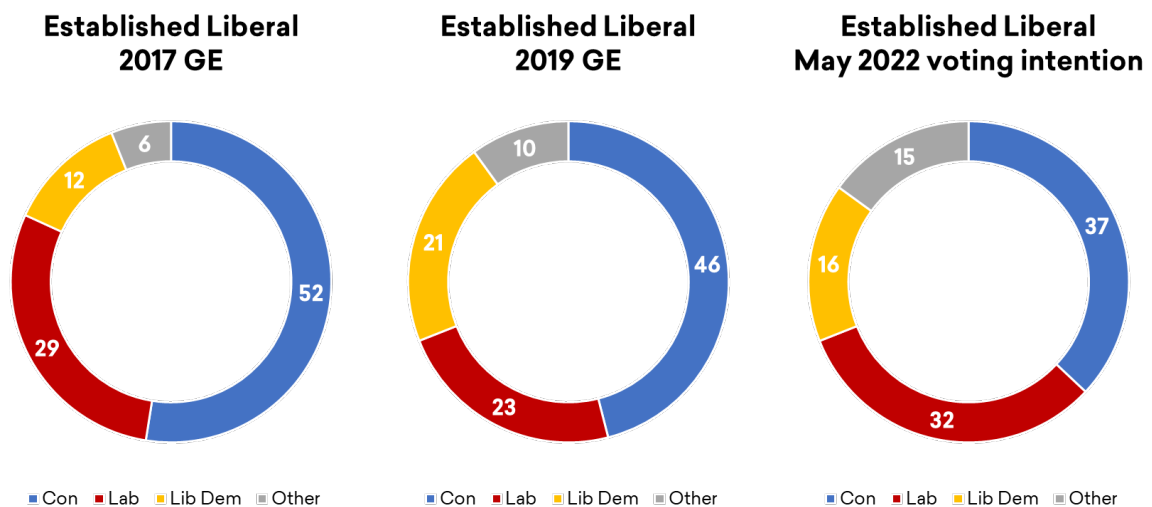
Some have suggested that the government is using channel crossings and the Rwanda policy as a 'wedge' issue. That is the Conservatives can present themselves as the only party willing to get tough on small boats and put an end to people smuggling, as a clear dividing line with other parties.

Our research suggests there is a constituency for such an approach. A key swing segment at the next General Election will be the Loyal Nationals. Economically left-wing but socially conservative, this group best proxy the average 'Red Wall' voter. At the 2019 General Election they had the largest swing (8 points) from Labour to the Conservatives, but have since swung back. As a result the very substantial lead the Conservatives enjoyed at the last election has now narrowed to just 5 percentage points. The electoral imperative for the Conservatives to regain lost ground among Loyal Nationals then is clear.

One way to do that is by demonstrating action on illegal immigration. Loyal Nationals rank 'asylum seekers crossing the channel' as the top issue facing the country after cost of living, meaning there is an opportunity here for the Conservatives to regain erstwhile supporters by being seen to be 'tough' on the issue.



However, this approach is not without risk. Another component part of the Conservative coalition is the 'Established Liberal' segment. A more economically right-wing but socially liberal group, they were largely remain voting in 2016 and serve as a good proxy for a 'Blue Wall' or 'Waitrose Woman' voter. Their support for the Conservatives has steadily dropped, falling by six points between the 2017 and 2019 elections (despite an overall swing of 4.5 points from Labour to Conservatives at that election), and it has fallen even further since.



Established Liberals are among the least likely to prioritise tackling small boats as an issue – out of 16 options, they ranked asylum seekers crossing the channel as only the fifteenth most important issue facing the country. What's more it is clear from focus group discussions that this segment is more likely than not to disapprove of the Rwanda policy and to find it unpalatable.

“Yeah. I think it's a vote catching scheme. That's all. Trying to stop people coming across the Channel by sending them to Rwanda is just a vote catching. It doesn't make any economic sense. It breaks international law. And I saw an article in the Guardian today, and one of the items which highlighted it from the government was resettlement. And that brought back some horrid memories of things I've read about in the '30s and the '40s about people being resettled and what that meant. And to go into a country like Rwanda, which not so long ago, there was a mass genocide, and there was no freedom of the press out there. So we will not know what happens to these people when they get there. All 10 of them”

Paul, Established Liberal, Hitchen

“My head says it's a good idea, because in theory it's a good idea. My heart says the poor people. Why would you do that to them?”

Justine, Established Liberal, Hitchen

The danger for the Conservatives is that while the Rwanda policy may be successful in regaining lost ground among Loyal Nationals, the other side of their voter base could end up on the wrong side of the wedge.

What is more, the policy may not even prove to be a slam dunk among more socially Conservative voters, if for instance the policy proves ineffective at deterring small boats –

or if it is seen as a distraction from tackling the cost-of-living crisis, which is by far the top issue for every segment of the population.

“They reckon the plane that didn't take them cost the taxpayer half a million quid”

Daniel, Backbone Conservative, Guildford

“It's an expensive gimmick. The Rwandan government were paid more than £250 million of taxpayer's money to accept these people. On Sky News this morning, they were saying there was more than 600 people that came across the Channel. The week before, more than 800. And there's seven people on this plane tonight, if it goes. It's just an expensive gimmick PR exercise”

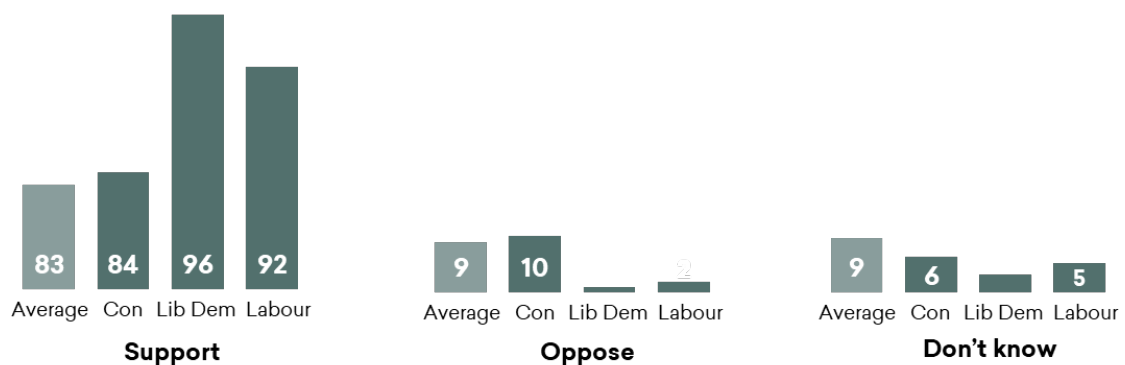
Colm, Disengaged Traditionalist, Hitchen

Ukrainian refugees

In contrast to the public's concern about small boats, there is overwhelming support across the public for taking in Ukrainian refugees

In April, when the Homes for Ukraine scheme was in its infancy, 83 per cent agreed the UK should take in Ukrainian refugees – with opposition limited to a small minority (and only one in ten 2019 Conservative voters).

Support for taking in Ukrainian refugees



Do you support or oppose the UK taking in Ukrainian refugees? [April 2022]

“They're people just like us, young children have been persecuted, forced from their homes, no fault of their own. I know we in England, in Britain, we take a lot on, I know we do. This is why we're in the mess we're in, Brexit. Yeah. We left the European Union because we didn't want too many immigrants and people coming into the country. But yeah, it's a tough one. It's a tough one. We've got to be helping them, surely. You can't just turn your back on people like that. Yeah”

Raj, Loyal National, West Brom

“I do think we should have done more for the civilians, getting the civilians out, getting them... Sod the red tape and all of that. Let's get them safe. Let's get the elderly, the women, the children, the people that are vulnerable... Let's get them out of there”

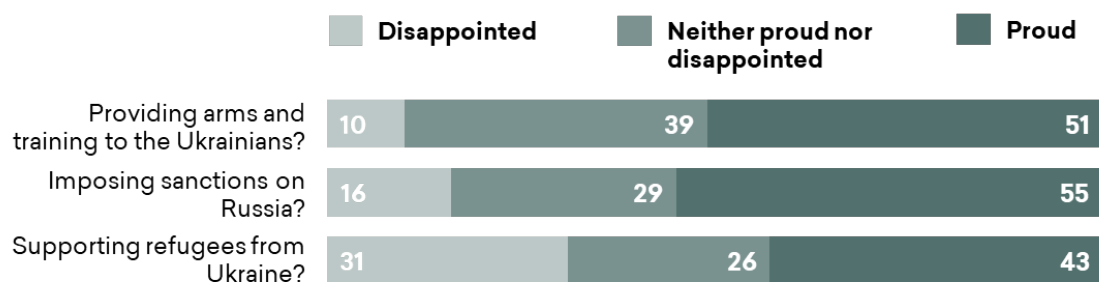
Lara, Disengaged Traditionalist, Dudley

“I think the refugee situation's been totally... It's been awful. I know a couple that live in Devon and they've got a flat they've offered to some refugees and they've done it all up and it's all ready, and the amount of hoops they've had to jump through to get these people here. They've been to their local MP and back again and back again and chasing visas and chasing this document and this document, and it shouldn't have to be that difficult, when other countries are just doing it and making it look so much easier and so much better. We're a laughing stock. We're an embarrassment, to be honest”

Natasha, Civic Pragmatist, South Swindon

Much of the UK's approach to the war in Ukraine is considered a source of pride by the public – Zelensky's personal praise for Britain in particular. But the approach to taking in refugees was the area Britons were most likely to express disappointment rather than pride, reflecting very real frustrations at the Home Office's slow pace of visa processing, and a feeling that the Homes for Ukraine scheme was being hampered by excessive red tape.

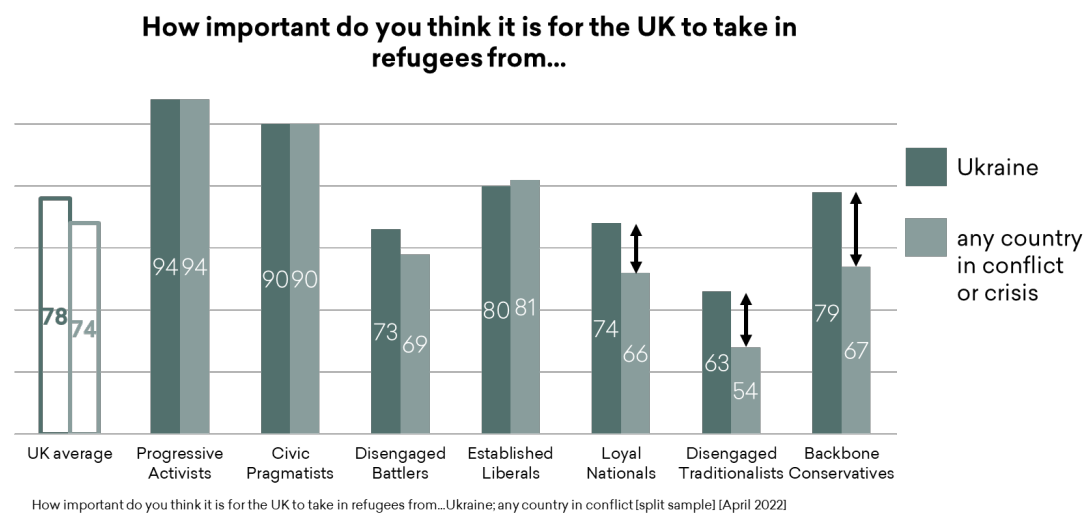
Pride and disappointment in the UK response



Thinking about the UK's response to the invasion of Ukraine, how proud or disappointed do you feel about our response to...
[April 2022]

Are Ukrainians different to other refugees?

Some have made a comparison between Britain's welcome to Ukrainian refugees, and those from other countries, and suggested that this is due to racism. James O'Brien of LBC, for instance said in a recent radio show² that "What's the difference between a Ukrainian refugee and a Syrian refugee? Skin colour". Our research suggests a different conclusion.

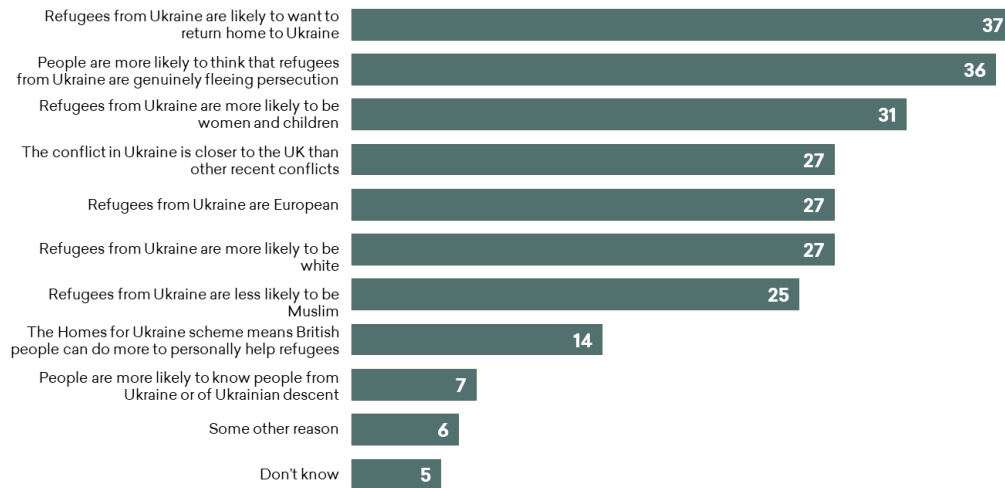


A/B testing – where each sample in an opinion poll is shown a different question wording – of taking in refugees from Ukraine and taking in refugees from any country in the conflict, finds that reference to Ukraine leads to an only four per cent increase in support for taking in refugees.

Among some of the more socially Conservative segments, who tend to be most migration sceptic – the difference in support is marginally wider, around 10 per centage points. However even among these groups a majority believe the UK should take in refugees from any country in conflict. And even then, there is no evidence that it is race driving differences in support for welcoming refugees.

² <https://twitter.com/LBC/status/1536671382188216321>

Why is Britain more welcoming?



You said that Britain has been more welcoming to Ukrainian refugees than those fleeing other conflicts. Why do you think this is? Please tick up to three [Asked to 57 per cent who said that Britain has been more welcoming to Ukrainian refugees than those fleeing other conflicts] [April 2022]

Instead in focus groups most people focused on the fact that, because of Zelensky's conscription order, most refugees from Ukraine, were likely to be women and children, that the invasion of Ukraine was a war, with a clear 'aggressor' and persecuted groups, that Ukrainian refugees were more likely to return home and that Ukraine was closer than many other conflicts.

This was confirmed in our polling, where although 57 per cent said they felt that the UK had been more welcoming to refugees from Ukraine than other conflicts, only a quarter of that group believed that it was due to race. Breaking down those who say it is due to race reveals that Labour Party voters are much more likely to select it than Conservatives. Given that Labour voters tend to be more socially liberal it seems unlikely that they are admitting to having a racial bias for Ukrainian refugees and are instead projecting their views about racism in society and dislike of the current Government onto the motives of others.

"I think we can relate to them more, even me being of a brown background. I think we can relate to the Ukrainians a bit more because it's kind of society we live in. We don't see kind of... The clothes they're wearing, what they look like. I think we're relating them a bit more than we would to other countries"

Nanveet, Loyal National, West Brom

"Once this is all done and dusted, 99% of them will go back home. They love their country, they want rebuild their country, they want get it back to the way it was. So we should be doing everything we can to give some of these, and the big difference is, 99% are women and children, let them over here, wherever, we have to put them up and just look after them until it's sorted"

Ian, Loyal National, Govan

“Yeah. I just thought, well, Ukraine's more on our doorstep, isn't it? It's almost part of Europe. So I think because of its close proximity to our countries, I think that's why we are more inclined to do it. Whereas I don't know, Syria, Afghanistan, they're all in different continents. And I think that maybe we haven't been as obliging in those situations”

Neal, Disengaged Traditionalist, Dudley

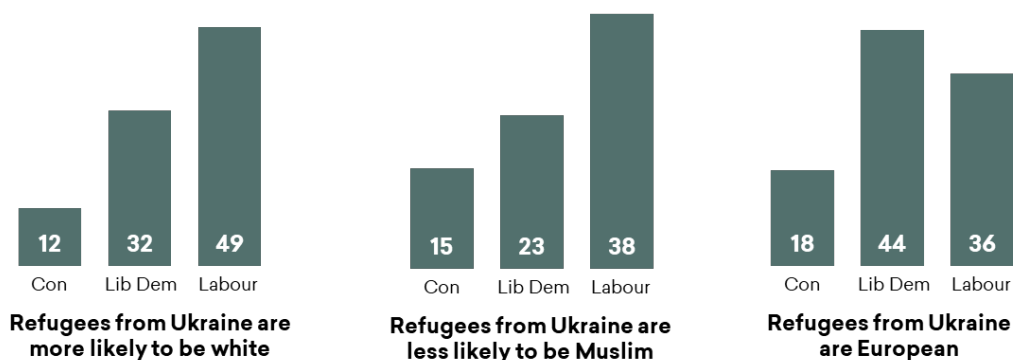
“I think, maybe because there's a more coverage of the Ukraine war. It's more the media seems to be do more to report of how they suffer every day, what is happening in there really. That's maybe why people have a different view about the Ukrainians because the other one's, they are covered by the media, but not as much”

Maria, Established Liberal, Guildford

“The people that are arriving on these little boats at Dover and wherever else...they're on the want, they're after something. They're all up to something. There's an ulterior motive for them to come here. They're after benefits and houses. Ukraine, they're actually suffering in silence, basically, because they're living in squalid conditions because of a war where they haven't asked for it. People arriving on a boat don't want to go back. Do they? People from Ukraine have all spoke out quite widely in the news, in the press, to say that they actually do want to go back. They don't even want to leave the country when they're crying, holding their little loved ones, leaving their home. They're crying to go back, not crying to leave”

Paul, Loyal National, Dudley

Why is Britain more welcoming? Party breakdown



You said that Britain has been more welcoming to Ukrainian refugees than those fleeing other conflicts. Why do you think this is? Please tick up to three [Asked to 57 per cent who said that Britain has been more welcoming to Ukrainian refugees than those fleeing other conflicts – breakdown by 2019 GE vote shown] [April 2022]

We would caution those working in this sector to not fall into that trap. Britons' widespread welcoming of Ukrainian refugees is an opportunity to be built upon and extended to other causes, giving the chance for the plight of refugees to be heard outside of its usual audiences. If instead these people are attacked for helping now but not helping before, there is a danger that this opportunity will be lost.

Community sponsorship

Community sponsorship programmes are more popular than traditional, Government led, routes for resettling refugees.

Pioneered in Canada, the scheme involves groups of citizens 'sponsoring' refugees to come and live in their communities. Sponsors play a leading role in helping refugees get set up with housing, education and language support and helping them to integrate into a new country. The scheme, which is uncapped in the UK, was first introduced in the UK in 2016 in response to the Syrian refugee crisis, with approximately 700 refugees accepted³. Community sponsorship provided the model for the Homes for Ukraine scheme, but with the goal of taking in far greater numbers at a far greater pace. The result has been 58,800 Ukrainians coming to the UK through the scheme as of 27th June (in addition to the 27,800 arriving through the family scheme)⁴.

One of the key appeals of community sponsorship is that it empowers individuals and communities to say that they want refugees to come to their community, rather than them being imposed by the Government.

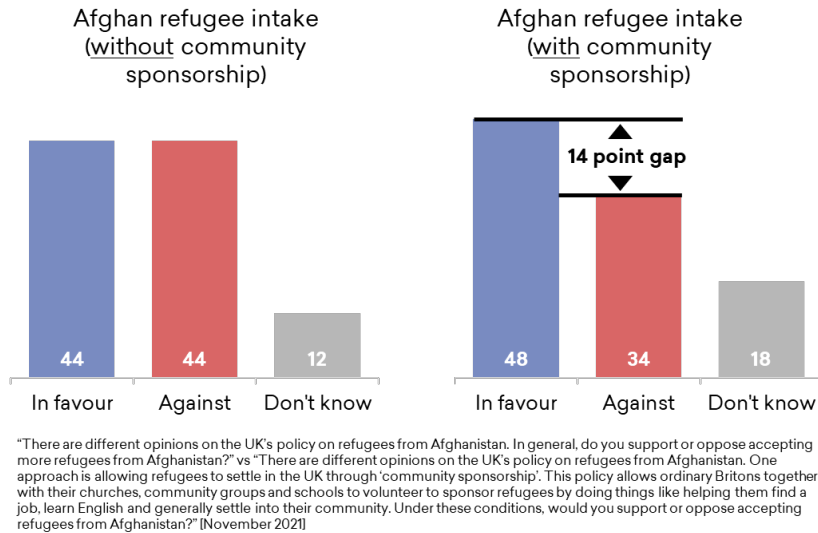
Furthermore, the programme, unlocks community activism, in a way which is not possible for regular refugee resettlement - demonstrated by the 150,000+ people who expressed interest in being a host under the Homes for Ukraine scheme within days of its announcement - and allows as many refugees to be accepted as there are hosts willing to sponsor them. It leads to better integration outcomes for refugees, providing a ready-made support network in the communities in which they live.

This controlled, people led approach to resettlement significantly reduces opposition to taking in refugees. Using A/B testing, polling in November found net support for taking in refugees increased by 14 points when framed in the context of community sponsorship.

³ <https://resetuk.org/about/what-is-community-sponsorship>

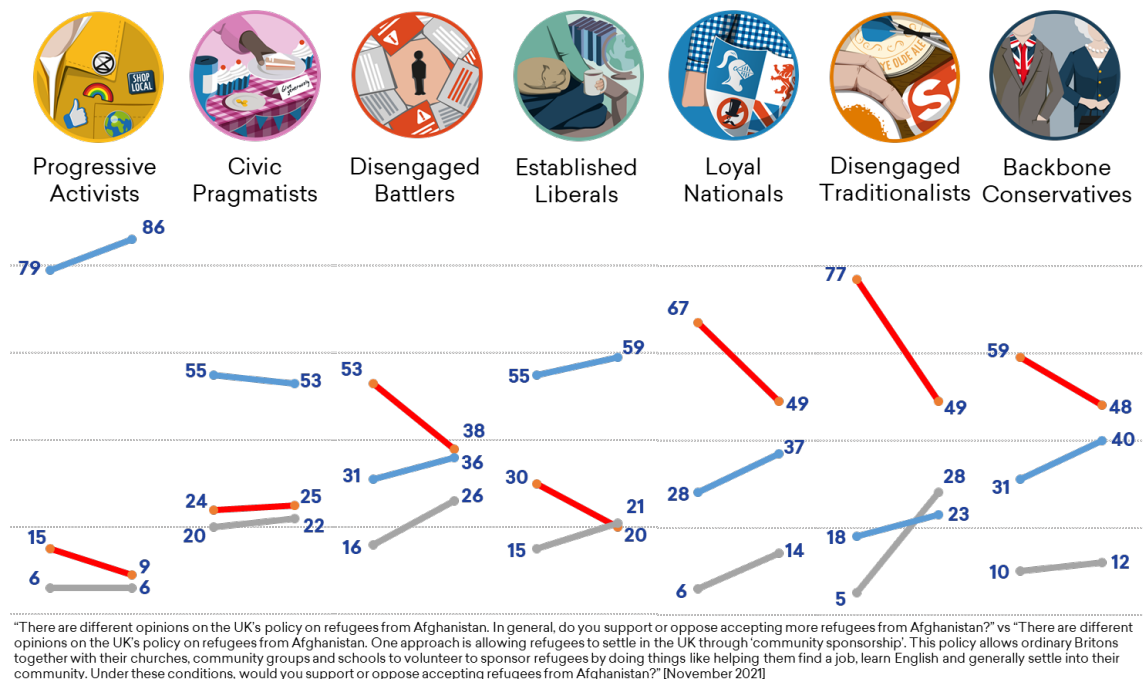
⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ukraine-family-scheme-application-data/ukraine-family-scheme-and-ukraine-sponsorship-scheme-homes-for-ukraine-visa-data--2>

Community refugee sponsorship



In fact, community sponsorship leads to the largest drop in opposition to taking in refugees from the most socially conservative and migrant sceptic segments of the population. Again this is driven because community sponsorship neutralises the sense that refugees are being imposed in a certain area.

Segments and community refugee sponsorship



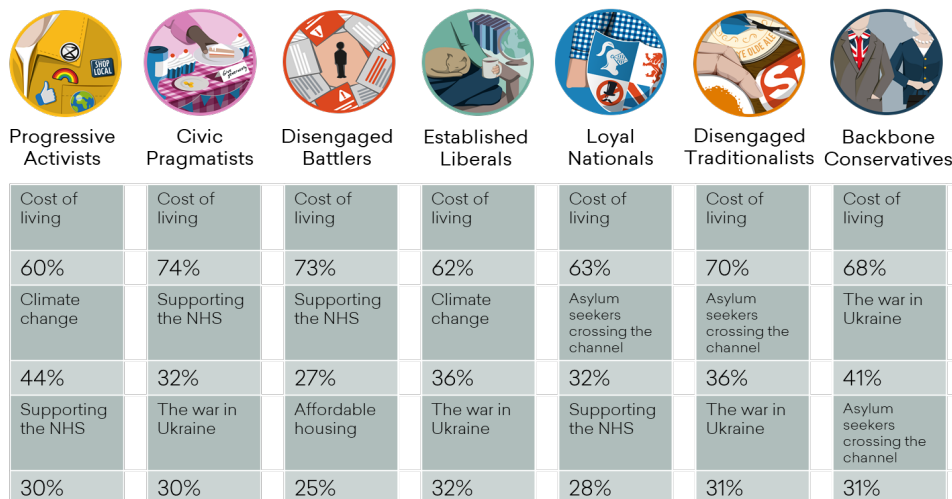
Clearly community sponsorship must be part of the answer for the future of the UK's refugee policy, with the potential, over time, to become the primary route for resettlement in the UK.

The current scheme could be improved – with bureaucratic hurdles at the local authority level, an absence (until Homes for Ukraine) of a naming policy, and a tendency to make unsuitable matches in terms of the level of support refugees require – which has hampered the programme's growth. As a next step, British Future and More in Common have proposed creating a 'Homes for Afghans' scheme⁵, which should build on the Homes for Ukraine to build a proper sponsorship model that gets the 12,000 Afghans still living in temporary hotel accommodation, proper support in local communities.

Accepting refugees in a cost-of-living crisis

Cost of living is overwhelmingly the biggest issue that people say is facing the country today, according to our polling. In November cost of living was ranked as the third biggest issue facing the country, with 36 per cent selecting it, and the top issue for just two of our seven segments – Disengaged Battlers and Disengaged Traditionalists. However, it is now by far the single biggest issue, with 67 per cent selecting it, and being top in every single segment of the population.

Top issues by segment



In your opinion, which are the most IMPORTANT issues facing the country today? Select the top 3 [May 2022]

⁵ <https://www.moreincommon.org.uk/our-work/initiatives-and-partnerships/homes-for-afghans-the-start-of-a-new-era-of-welcoming-in-britain/>

“I think, nationally, though, with the refugees, I would welcome everyone. We'd take the lot. But the logistics are not physically there for medical treatment, for hospitals, for doctors, for housing. Where would we physically put all these people?”

Paul, Loyal National, Dudley

“I mean, we can't barely get enough of our folk getting a hospital appointment, doctor's appointment, dentist's appointment. And suddenly we've got masses of refugees coming in who are entitled to one of our national services. Sounds great, but we can't get appointments now. So they'll have a long wait, they'll be back home in Ukraine by the time they get an appointment”

Ian, Backbone Conservative, Cardiff

“We are offering all this help and taking people in, and giving these payments. And I'm just wondering where it's all going to come from. The funding of it all. It's just like, we just always seem to be dishing out money to other places and not looking after our own. And I know it sounds really self-centred. And I do feel for them, but we've got to look after our people first”

Linzi, Loyal National, Dudley

“They've raised all this money, which is fantastic and great for Ukraine. But there's people on our streets that are ex-soldiers that have nowhere warm. They have no food...I think that they need to put the money back into our country a little bit. The inflation, just to know, in April, it's killing us at the minute. We have a mortgage. We have cars. We have a lot of things and it's really, really expensive. And the payroll isn't compared to what the inflation's gone. So I do think that we are helping, but the UK is such a small country. And I think we need to rely on the bigger countries to help out more. I mean, America's God knows how big compared to us. So- ”

Emily, Loyal National, Dudley

The difficult economic circumstances that people are experiencing, inevitably drives attitudes towards the UK accepting refugees – Ukrainian or otherwise. While most people in focus groups recognised that the UK needed to make sacrifices to help Ukraine – including taking in refugees and accepting rises to already high bills as a result of sanctions – they also regularly ask whether we can help refugees “when we can't even help people here”.

This aligns with More in Common polling from May, where 71 per cent said they agree with the statement 'Charity begins at home'. Agreement with the statement spanned every segment – including, by a narrow margin the most socially liberal segment, Progressive Activists of whom 53 per cent agreed. When asked what they meant by 'charity begins at home' most selected 'We should help people in Britain first before we help people from other countries'.

As such, it is important to recognise that opposition to the UK taking in refugees is not driven purely, or even primarily, through general anti-refugee attitudes. Much of people's concern links directly to the overwhelming biggest issue facing the country today - the rising cost of living and the need to clear NHS waiting lists. Those advocating for a more generous policy towards refugees need to be cognisant of these attitudes and avoid framings or messaging that exacerbates these concerns

Conclusion

As this briefing highlights, the public do not have one 'fixed' view when it comes to refugees and the UK's refugee policy. Clearly the public think that we have a responsibility to help 'genuine' refugees - something refugees fleeing the conflict in Ukraine are seen to exemplify. But there is also real concern - concentrated in particular segments of the population - about those who would abuse the UK's generosity, or who seek to come to the UK through illegal and uncontrolled routes, such as small boats over the channel. As a policy response to this concern, views of the Rwanda scheme are mixed, and much will depend on its eventual implementation. While the cost-of-living crisis has the potential to turn public opinion further inward, especially if there is a sense not enough help is being given to the UK citizens who are struggling the most.

Communications and policy to support refugees needs to recognise those nuances and meet the public where they are. An approach which attributes public concern to bigotry, or one which fails to recognise the need to come up with very real solutions to issues like people smugglers and channel crossings, will be unlikely to create a culture of welcome, and could instead harden attitudes against refugees.

Instead, policy solutions, such as community sponsorship, which empower local communities to take in refugees, and which provides not just immediate needs of accommodation, but also support with education, employment and integration, will meet with much greater public support and shift attitudes for the long term.

Annex 1: The British Seven Segments

More in Common has worked with data scientists and social psychology researchers to build a model that maps the British population not according to their party, age, income or other demographic factor, but according to their values and core beliefs. Analysing a representative sample of more than 10,000 people in partnership with YouGov and conducting focus group conversations and one-on-one interviews with hundreds of Britons, we have identified seven distinct population groups – the ‘British Seven’.⁶



Progressive Activists

A passionate and vocal group for whom politics is at the core of their identity, and who seek to correct the historic marginalisation of groups based on their race, gender, sexuality, wealth, and other forms of privilege. They are politically engaged, critical, opinionated, frustrated, cosmopolitan, and environmentally conscious.



Civic Pragmatists

A group that cares about others, at home or abroad, and who are turned off by the divisiveness of politics. They are charitable, concerned, exhausted, communityminded, open to compromise, and socially liberal.



Disengaged Battlers

A group that feels that they are just keeping their heads above water, and who blame the system for its unfairness. They are tolerant, insecure, disillusioned, disconnected, overlooked, and socially liberal.



Established Liberals

A group that has done well and means well towards others, but also sees a lot of good in the status quo. They are comfortable, privileged, cosmopolitan, trusting, confident, and pro-market.



Loyal Nationals

A group that is anxious about the threats facing Britain and facing themselves. They are proud, patriotic, tribal, protective, threatened, aggrieved, and frustrated about the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

⁶ For more information, visit <https://www.britainschoice.uk/>



Disengaged Traditionalists

A group that values a well-ordered society, takes pride in hard work, and wants strong leadership that keeps people in line. They are self-reliant, ordered, patriotic, tough-minded, suspicious, and disconnected



Backbone Conservatives

A group who are proud of their country, optimistic about Britain's future outside of Europe, and who keenly follow the news, mostly via traditional media sources. They are nostalgic, patriotic, stalwart, proud, secure, confident, and relatively engaged with politics.



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