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How can defence investment be a win-win for security and communities?

Labour Party Conference Fringe Event 2024

Progressive Activists



Civic Pragmatists



Disengaged Battlers



Established Liberals



Loyal Nationals



Disengaged Traditionalists



Backbone Conservatives



...a group for whom politics is an important part of their identity and who seek to correct long-standing injustices

...a group that cares about others, at home or abroad. They wish for less conflict and more compromise.

... a group that are just getting by. They blame the system for its unfairness, but not other people.

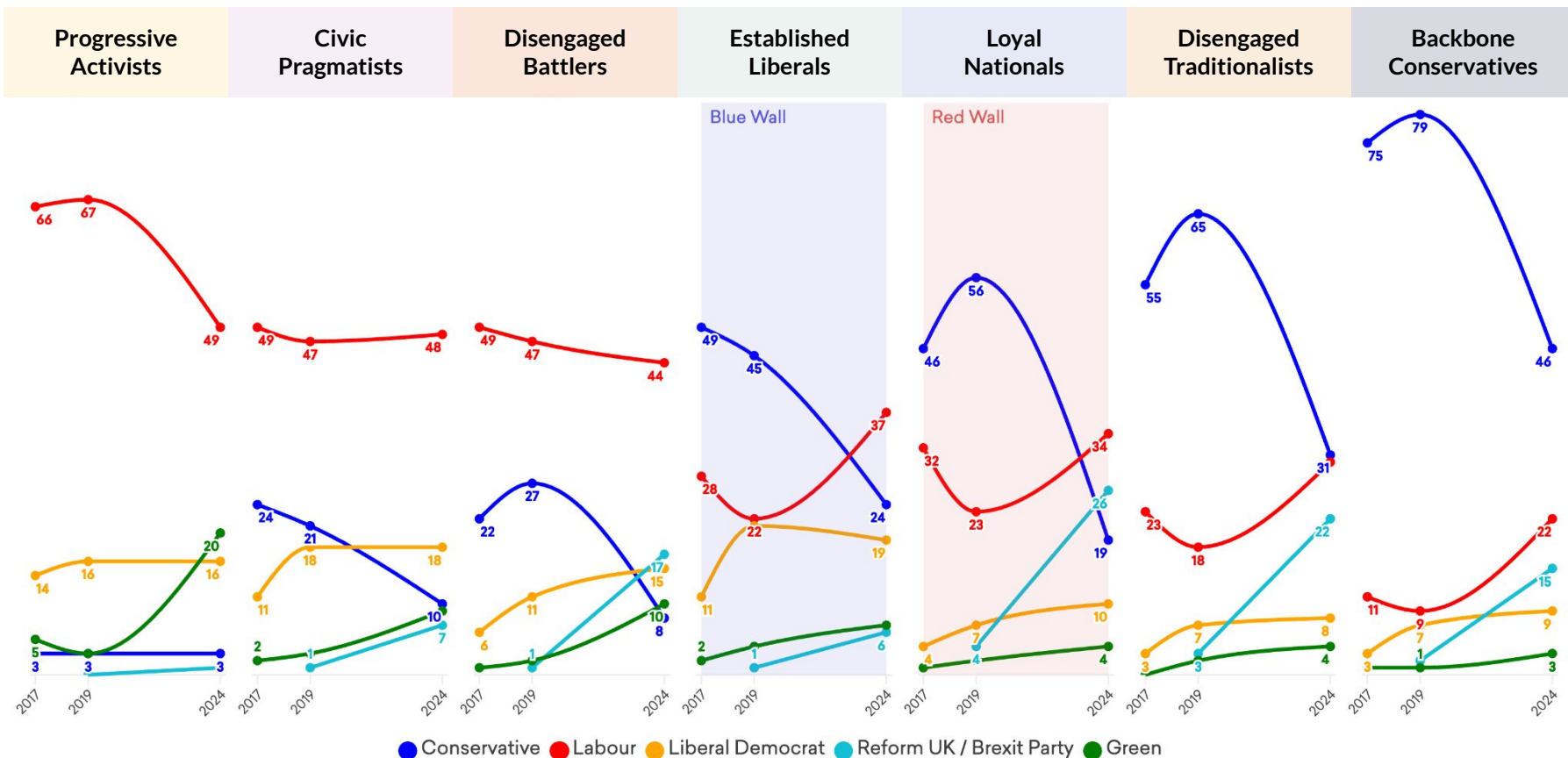
...a group that has done well towards others, but also sees a lot of good in the status quo.

...a patriotic group, who worry that our way of life is threatened and also feel our society has become more unfair.

... a group that values a well-ordered society and prides in hard work. They want strong leadership that keeps people in line.

... a group who are proud of their country, optimistic about Britain's future, and who keenly follow the news.

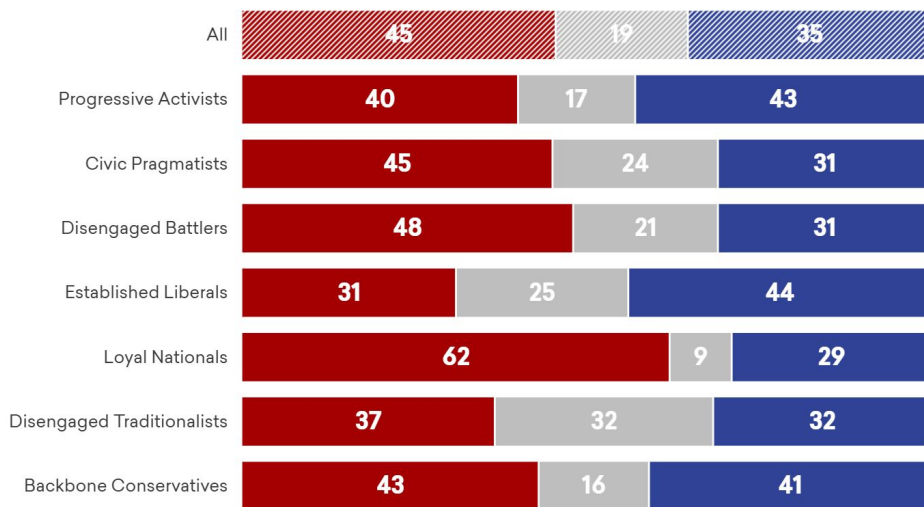
How did the Seven Segments vote?



Context to the defence investment debate

Which of the following comes closest to your view?

- The next few years will be some of the most dangerous our country has ever known
- Don't know
- The next few years will not be significantly more dangerous than what we have experienced in the past

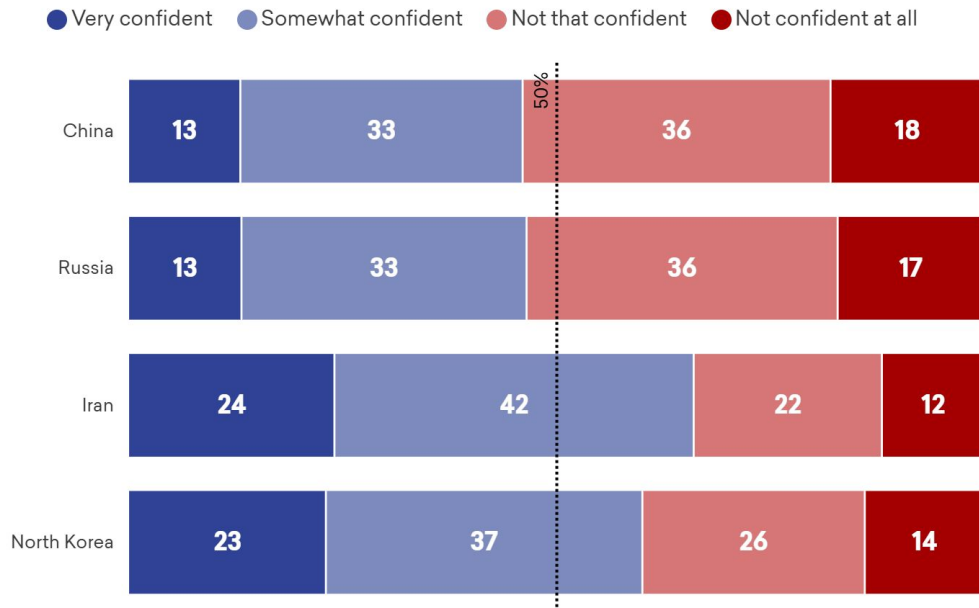


The public are more likely than not to expect the next few years to be among some of the most dangerous Britain has ever known

This is a view held much more strongly among Labour's electoral coalition (particularly in the Red Wall) and this will shape how the government handle the debate about defence investment whenever the public's threat perception is high

Confidence in Britain's ability to defend ourselves

How confident are you that the British military, with support from its allies, could defend the UK from military threats from...



Public confidence in Britain's ability to defence itself is relatively low

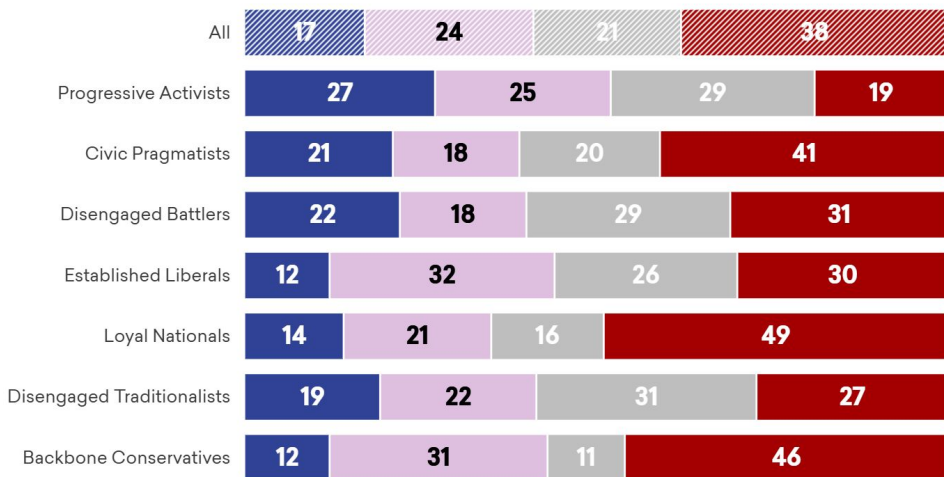
More than half the public say there are not confident that Britain could defend itself from military threats from China or Russia.

Although they are more confident about fending off threats from Iran or North Korea.

Public twice as likely to think we spend too little on defence

Do you think the amount the government spends on defence is...

- Too much
- About the right amount
- Don't know
- Not enough

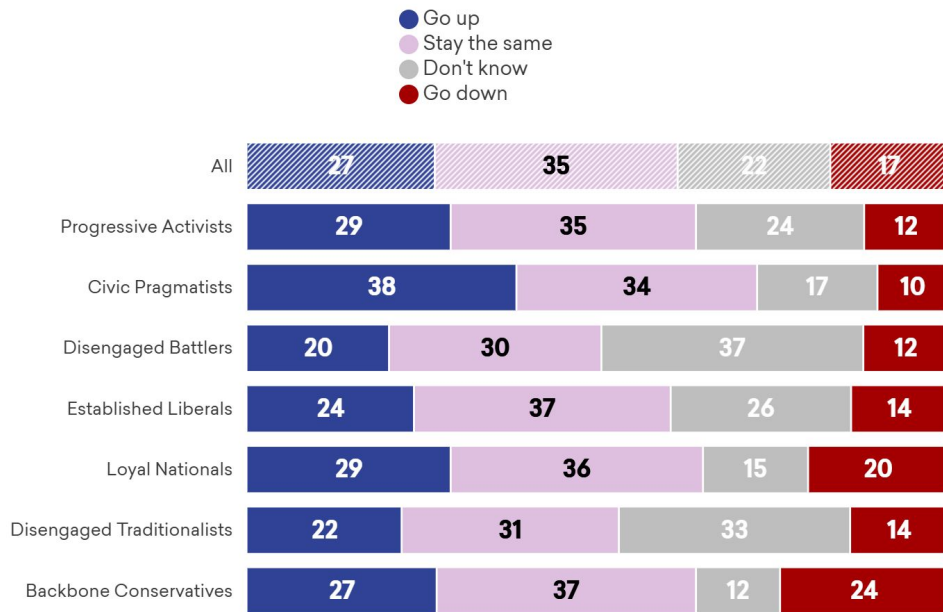


The public are more than twice as likely to think that the government doesn't spend enough on defence (38 per cent) than too much (17 per cent). Only among Progressive Activists do more think we spend too much and than too little.

This is a view held most strongly among Red wall (Loyal National) voters with the rest of the Labour base in agreement.

Mixed expectations on defence spending

Under the current government do you expect the amount the government spends on defence to...



The public are torn on their expectations of how the government's defence spending might change over the course of the parliament.

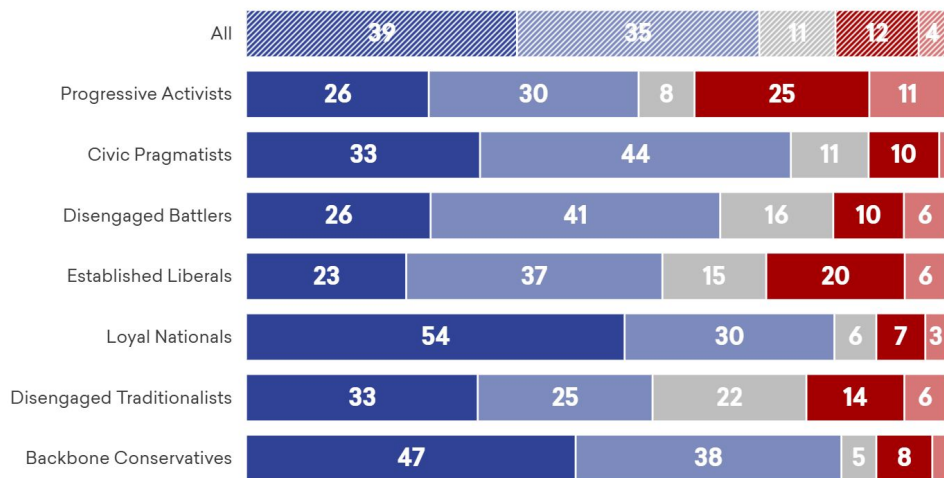
A plurality (35 per cent) expect it to stay the same, more than a quarter (27 per cent) think it will go up, and only less than a fifth (17 per cent) think it will go down

Strong public support for increase defence spending

How important would you say each of the following are to ensuring Britain's national security?

Increasing the amount we spend on defence

● Very important ● Somewhat important ● Don't know ● Not that important ● Not important at all



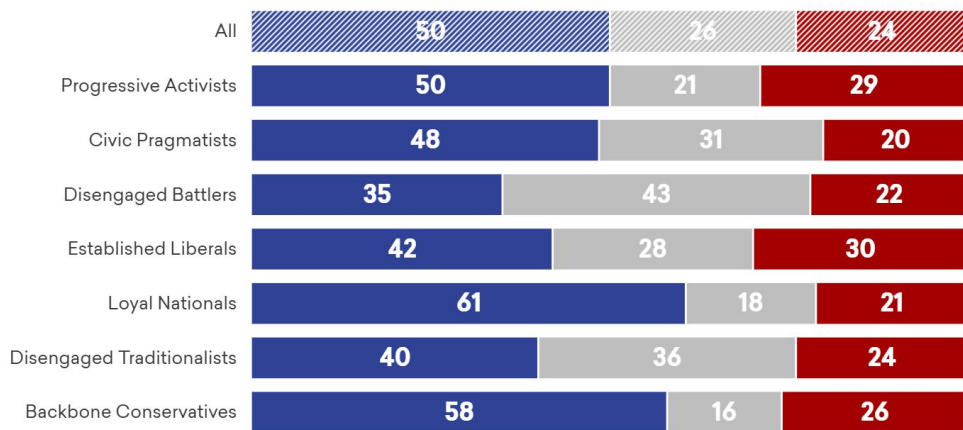
While the public are unsure whether defence spending will increase or not - they see such an increase as integral to Britain's national security.

This is a view that commands support across our seven segments - but most particularly among Red Wall-Loyal National voters

Backing British businesses in defence procurement

Thinking about the Ministry of Defence's spending on manufacturing, which of the following comes closest to your view?

- The government should prioritise supporting British manufacturers even if they are not the most cost-effective option
- Don't know
- The government should prioritise using the most cost-effective manufacturers if they are not based in Britain

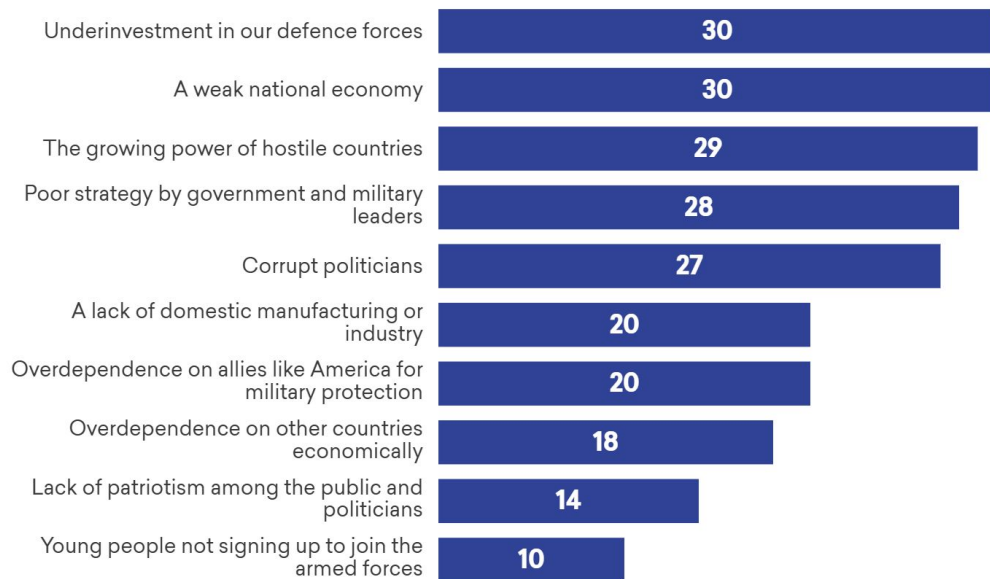


The public are twice as likely to think the government should be prioritise investing in British manufacturers rather than non-British manufacturers - even if that is not the most cost effective option. That is informed by both the view we should have control over production and that defence investment should put back into communities.

Again, this is a view held most strongly among Loyal Nationals and Backbone Conservatives

Underinvestment seen as threat to national security

And from the following list, what do you think weakens Britain's ability to protect its national security? Select up to three.



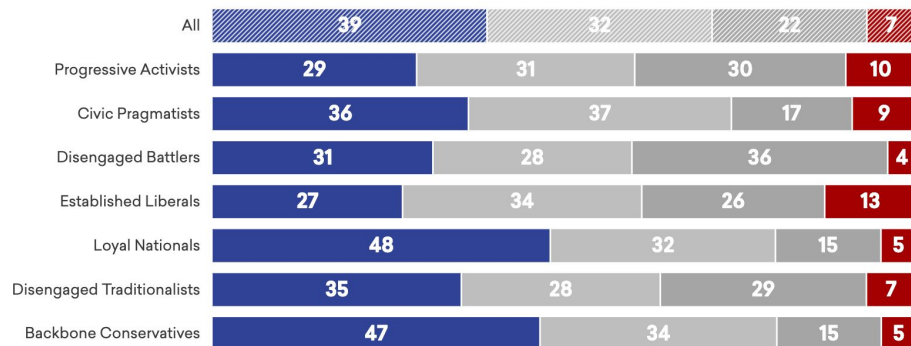
The public see underinvestment in the defence forces as the key risks to Britain's national security, alongside a weak national economy - even more so than the growing power of hostile states.

Lack of patriotism or generational divides are seen as less important reasons.

Investment - a win-win for regeneration and security

If the government increased defence spending in your local area, do you think that would be...

- Good for the local area
- Not make much difference to the local area
- Don't know
- Bad for the local area



The public are more than five times as likely to say that increased defence spending would be good than bad for their local area

Loyal Nationals - Red Wall voters are more likely to say that defence investment would be good for their area, reflecting the opportunity they see in defence spending being a vehicle for regeneration.



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