



A Reset on Immigration: Can Conservatives regain public trust?



Tuesday, 7 October



16:00 to 17:00



Chester Suite, Secure
Zone, The Midland



**Rachel
Sylvester (Chair)**

The
Observer



**Luke
Tryl**

More in
Common



**Chris
Philp MP**

Shadow Home
Secretary



**Gavin
Rice**

Onward



**Robbie
Moore MP**

Shadow Farming
Minister



**Salma
Shah**

Broadcaster &
former SpAd



**Lord
Davies**

Shadow Home
Office Minister

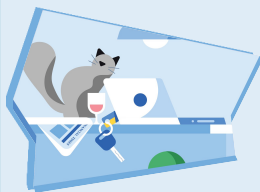
Progressive Activists



Incrementalist Left



Established Liberals



Sceptical Scrollers



Rooted Patriots



Traditional Conservatives



Dissenting Disruptors



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

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

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

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

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

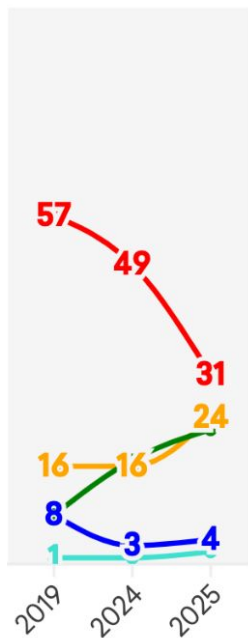
... a nostalgic group that respects tradition, authority and personal responsibility, while remaining sceptical of rapid change

... 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?

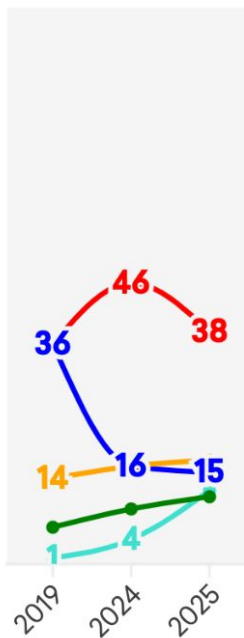
Progressive Activists

"Corbynites"



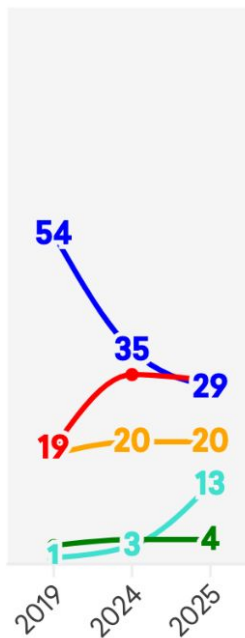
Incrementalist Left

"Social democrats"



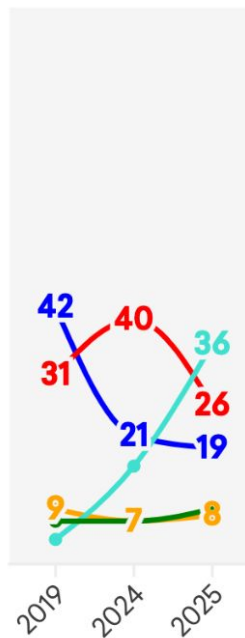
Established Liberals

"Blue Wall"



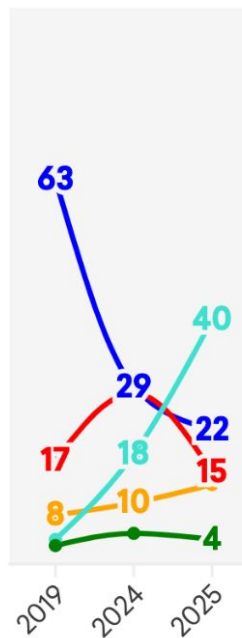
Sceptical Scrollers

"Online Disengaged"



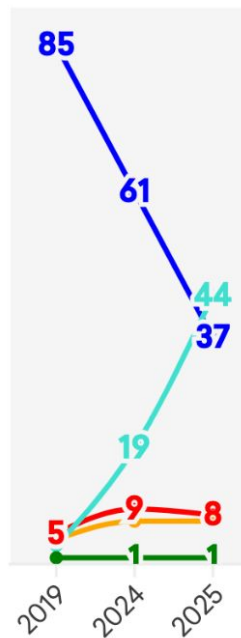
Rooted Patriots

"Red Wall"



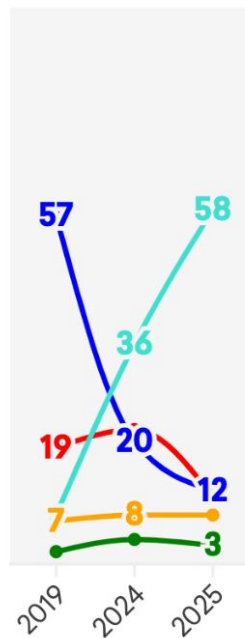
Traditional Conservatives

"Shire Tory"



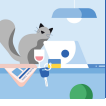






Dissenting Disruptors

"Populist Right"



How do the Seven Segments approach immigration?

	Progressive Activists	The most pro-immigration segment, proud of multiculturalism and critical of Britain's imperial past, prioritizing global justice over national issues. Only a small fraction see immigration as a top issue and many want more refugees.
	Incrementalist Left	Value multiculturalism and take pride in Britain's history of welcoming refugees, many are immigrants or second/third generation themselves. Split on whether immigration levels should fall or be maintained, but not a top concern.
	Established Liberals	Support a controlled, selective immigration system favouring skilled workers and those in genuine need, while welcoming refugees and multiculturalism. They back a points-based system to make sure we bring in the best.
	Sceptical Scrollers	Hold non-cohesive views on immigration and treat it as one problem among many, preferring to avoid discussing it. Despite this, they are the most likely to hold racist beliefs about the intelligence of different races.
	Rooted Patriots	Link immigration to overstretched public services and prioritize British citizens at a time of scarce resources. They are open to 'contributing' migrants (e.g. NHS workers) but oppose those who don't work, and worry about illegal immigration and its impact on safety and national identity.
	Traditional Conservatives	See immigration as the UK's most urgent issue, believing the system is out of control and favours rule-breakers. They want sharp cuts in immigration, especially illegal, and view multiculturalism as a threat to British identity.
	Dissenting Disruptors	See Britain as 'full' and seek major reductions in immigration. They feel silenced when discussing its negative impacts and believe growing diversity, especially Islam, has undermined British culture.

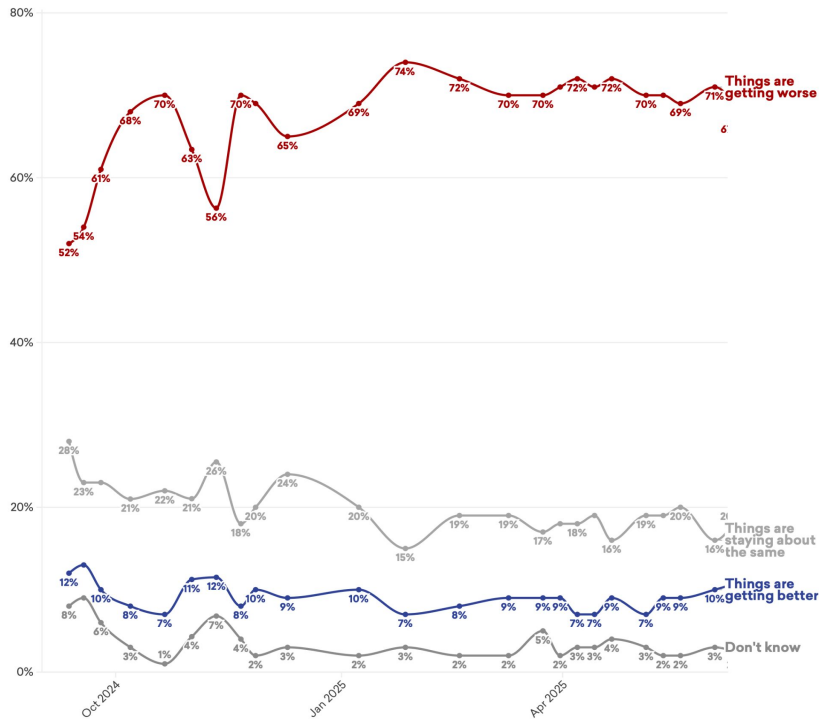


**What underpins people's
views on migration?**

Frustration with the status quo plays into frustrations around migration...

Most think things are getting worse

Thinking about the UK today, would you say...



Many Britons feel the government elected in July 2024 is so far failing to meet its promise of 'change'. There is a deep frustration with the status quo and inability of politicians to deliver on their promises.

This reflects a deep sense of disillusionment—not just with politicians, but with the political system as a whole – and a sense of 'lack of agency' or 'control'. **Failure to control borders plays into that sense of lack of agency.**

"I've actually given up on the system, if I'm being totally open and honest with you. Yeah, nothing really changes ever. You go from one bunch of lying so-and-so's to the next lot it, it would seem."

-Gary, Sales Manager, Bourne, Rooted Patriot

...As does a feeling of being 'ignored' by those in power

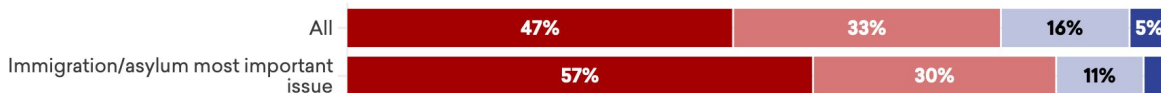
Many people feel they and their communities are ignored by those in power. **This sense of political disengagement and distrust in the system often coincides with strong concern about migration and asylum.**

Those who feel this sense of abandonment most strongly are much more likely to believe **politicians prioritise migrants over people like them.**

The people most concerned about migration often feel politically excluded and believe migrants' needs are prioritised over British citizens

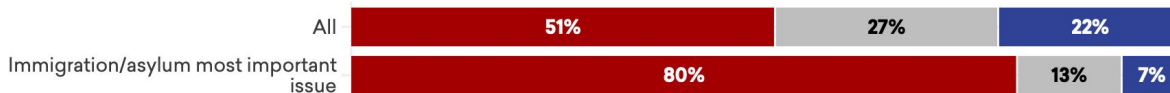
Which comes closer to your view?

● 1 - Politicians don't care about people like me ● 2 ● 3 ● 4 - People like me have a say in politics



Which comes closer to your view?

● These days, we seem to care more about immigrants than about British citizens
● I think we care equally about everyone, regardless of their immigration status
● These days we still care more about British citizens than about immigrants



Channel crossings and immigration are currently the second biggest issue for Britons behind cost of living

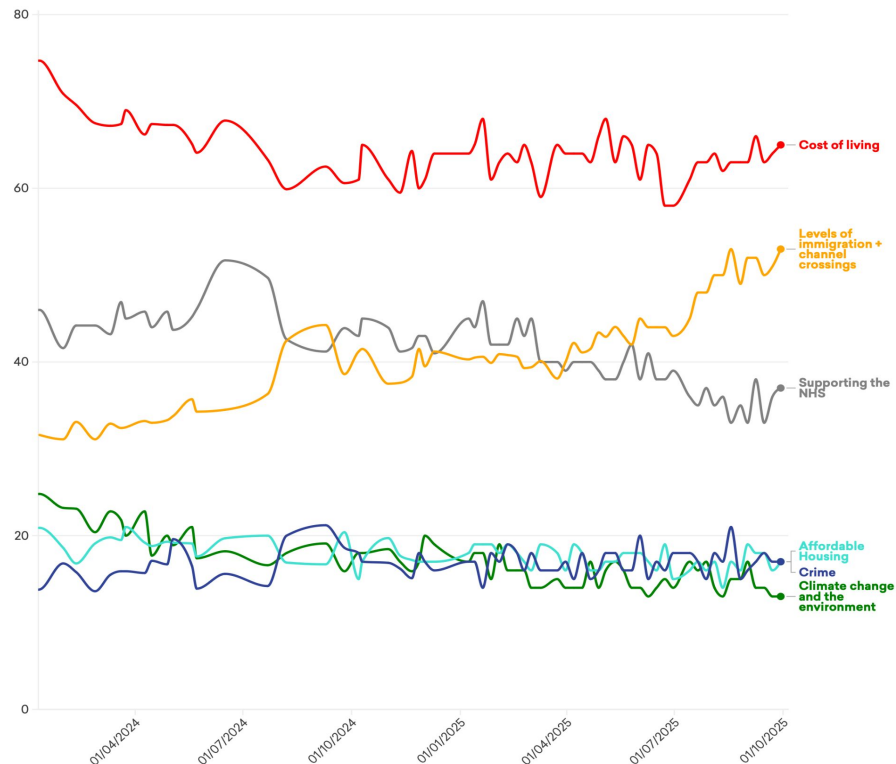
Levels of immigration and channel crossings are currently the second biggest issue for Britons - only beaten by the cost of living crisis.

This issue has risen in importance since the election of the Labour Government in July 2024 by 9 points, **overtaking the NHS for the first time in More in Common's issues tracker in August.**

Immigration is now a top five key issue for **almost every group of party supporters**- the only exception are those currently intending to vote Green. Channel crossings is also particularly important to those who currently plan to vote Conservative and for Reform.

Britons' big issues over time

In your opinion, which are the most IMPORTANT issues facing the country today? Please select up to three



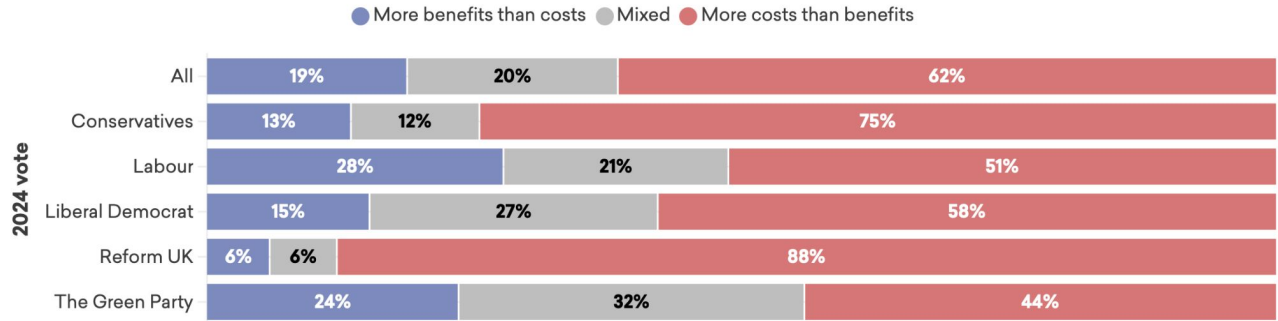
A majority of voters believe the UK's migration system has more costs than benefits

A majority of voters now believe that the **UK's current approach to migration has more costs than benefits.**

Even those groups which tend to be more liberal on migration and positive about its social and cultural impact - such as Labour, Liberal Democrat and Green voters - think the current system does not work for the UK and is stretching already scarce public resources.

Voters of all parties are more likely to believe that the UK's current approach to migration brings more costs than benefits.

On the whole, do you think our current immigration policies bring more costs or benefits to the UK?



Source: More in Common, July 2024 • N=2035

"I'm a massive fan of immigration. I've got no problem with people coming to this country. I think we've got an issue at the moment with balancing resources versus the amount of people that's coming in. I feel the effects of lack of housing, NHS issues. Every resource seems to be stretched and so I questions how many people we can actually bring in."

-Dom, Established Liberal, Manchester



Voters' evaluations of the Conservatives' record on migration

The Conservatives lost trust at the last election because of their handling of migration

While there is widespread disapproval of Labour's handling of immigration so far, this dissatisfaction is not limited to one party. Britons see the problem of small boats and net migration as the fault of consecutive governments, including the last Conservative Government.

Asking 2019 Conservative voters why they would not vote for the party now, **34% cite the party's record on immigration**. This rises to **43%** among those who would now vote for Reform UK.

37% of Traditional Conservatives - the segment which is the backbone of the Tory party - say the party's migration record was why they went elsewhere in 2024.

Key Conservative segments who backed Boris Johnson in 2019 cite the party's migration policy as a main reason for switching their support

You said you voted Conservative under Boris Johnson in 2019, but would not vote for them if there was an election today, why is that? Choose up to three reasons from the list below.



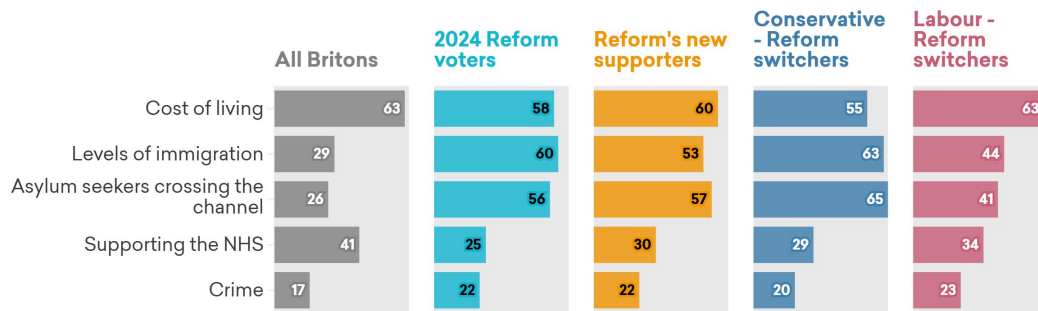
Immigration continues to drive the Reform vote

Concern about immigration's negative economic impact - driving up rent and house prices, increasing strain on public services and undercutting wages - **has fuelled Reform's rise since the 2024 election.**

It has been a particular driver of those who have moved from voting Conservative to Reform since the general election; **these voters are ten points more likely to say small boats is one of the biggest issues facing the country than to cite the cost of living.**

The biggest issues across Reform's voter coalition

In your opinion, which are the most IMPORTANT issues facing the country today? Please select up to three



"I do kind of like him as a person, and obviously illegal immigration is a massive problem. But that's the main thing that you think of when you think of Nigel Farage, but it's like there's a lot more to running the country than just sorting that out. But is it the shock that everybody would need if a different party got into power to shake things up and make real changes for decent hard-working people."

-Catherine, purchase ledger clerk, Scunthorpe, Reform supporter

Attacking the 'Boriswave' struggles to gain traction

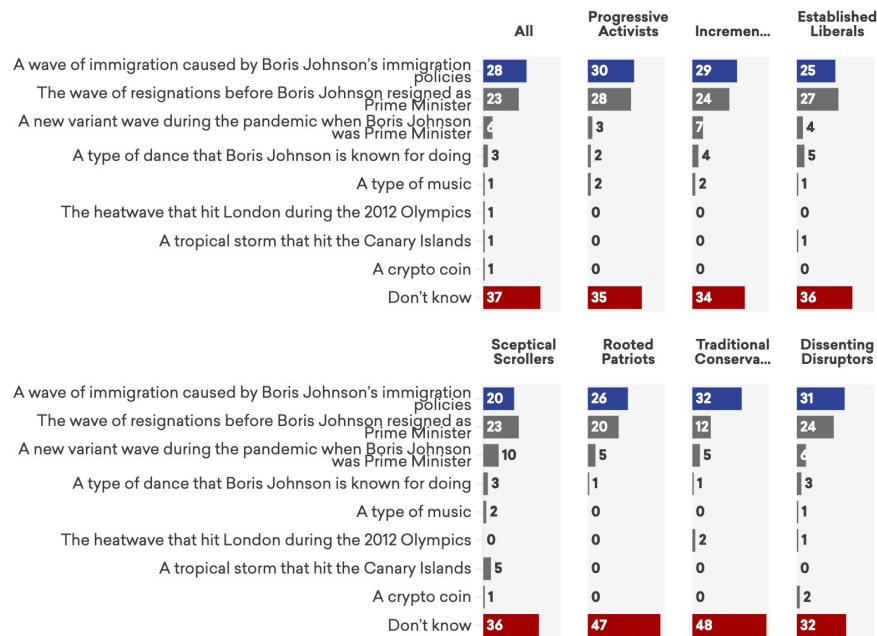
Most voters are unfamiliar with the phrase 'Boriswave' (just 23%) - though this rises to 30% among Conservative-Reform switchers.

A similar number of voters are aware of the reference, though this is only marginally higher among the most migration-sceptic segments (Traditional Conservatives and Rooted Patriots) than the rest of the population.

This suggests that this specific frame of attack from Labour and Reform has not yet cut through to a majority voters, despite many being unhappy with the Conservatives' record on migration and asylum.

Three in ten Britons know what the 'Boriswave' is

What do you think the word "Boriswave" refers to?





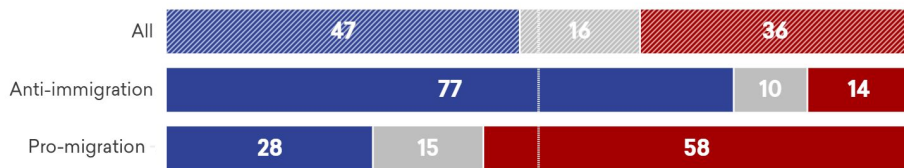
The public's priorities on migration

Many Britons are willing to lower economic growth if it means reducing net migration

Those who want to reduce immigration think lower growth is a price worth paying

Which of the following comes closest to your view?

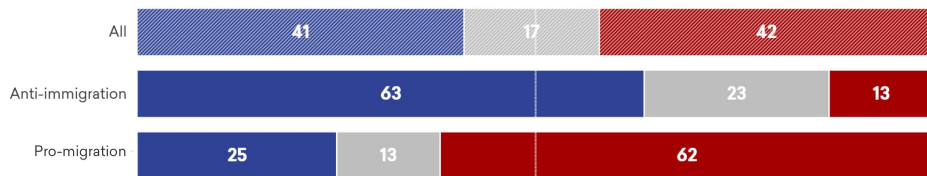
- Reducing overall levels of immigration will be worth it even if it lowers the UK's economic growth
- Don't Know
- Reducing overall levels of immigration will not be worth it if it lowers the UK's economic growth



And are willing to see shortages of essential workers

Which of the following comes closest to your view?

- Reducing overall levels of immigration will be worth it even if it leads to shortage of workers in areas like the care sector
- Don't know
- Reducing overall levels of immigration will not be worth it if it leads to shortage of workers in areas like the care sector



60% of people want net migration to the UK to be either significantly or slightly reduced.

This desire is so strong that many are willing to accept real trade offs as long as immigration numbers decrease, either with reduced economic growth or a shortage of essential workers.

For those who are the most migration-sceptic, reducing economic growth and a shortage of essential workers are worthwhile trade-offs to see numbers decrease.

The public prioritise stopping small boats over reducing net migration

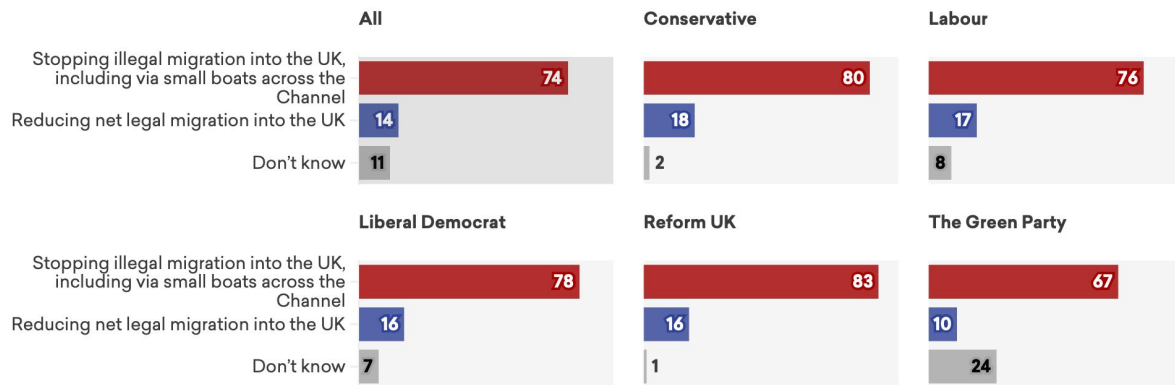
The public want the **stopping of small boats from crossing the Channel** much more than reducing net legal migration.

Despite less than 10% of migrant arrivals to the UK being illegal Channel crossings, **the public think that 35% of immigration is illegal.**

For many, repeated images of people arriving on UK shores **reinforce the perception that Britain lacks control over its borders.** Concerns about **security and fairness** lie at the heart of these views.

Across politics, Britons think that stopping the boats is more important than reducing net migration

Which do you think should be the higher priority for the UK government?



Source: More in Common • May 2025

"I think legal immigration is good for the country because the people who legally come into the country, they contribute in taxes and then they become part of society. So they come through the proper point system and that sort of thing. But illegal immigration, that is a bit costly for the country and economy because the country has to spare lots of resource for them and then they don't contribute like in taxes and that sort of thing." - Abrar, Manchester

'Compassion' is playing a diminishing role in public attitudes toward migration policy.

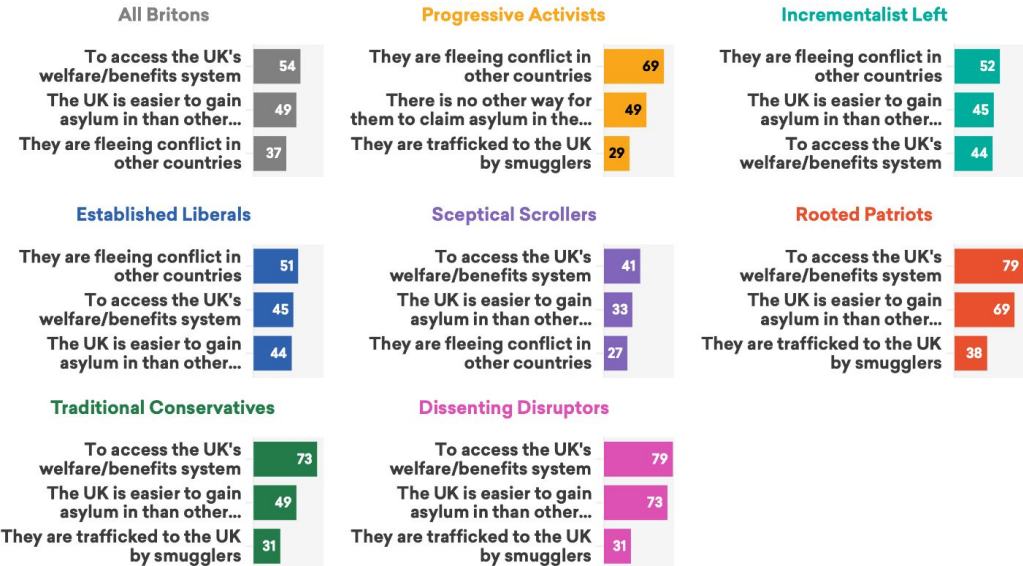
Britons remain sympathetic to genuine refugees, but economic pressures have sharpened concerns that the asylum system is being exploited.

Over 4 in 10 believe few or no asylum claims are legitimate. Voters are more likely to say people are crossing the Channel to seek benefits than to escape conflict. This view is strongest among Rooted Patriots (79%) and Dissenting Disruptors (78%), though even more than 4 in 10 members of Established Liberals and the Incrementalist Left agree.

Support for tighter controls is widespread: **78%** back an annual cap on asylum applications and **70%** say the UK should not take in more refugees. Views on 'safe routes' are also split - **35%** say more legal pathways would signal weakness on migration,

People are more inclined to think migrants cross the Channel to claim benefits than to seek refuge from danger

What do you think are the main reasons why people cross the Channel in small boats to get to the UK?
Please select up to three.



Views on asylum hotels highlight how public sentiment has hardened

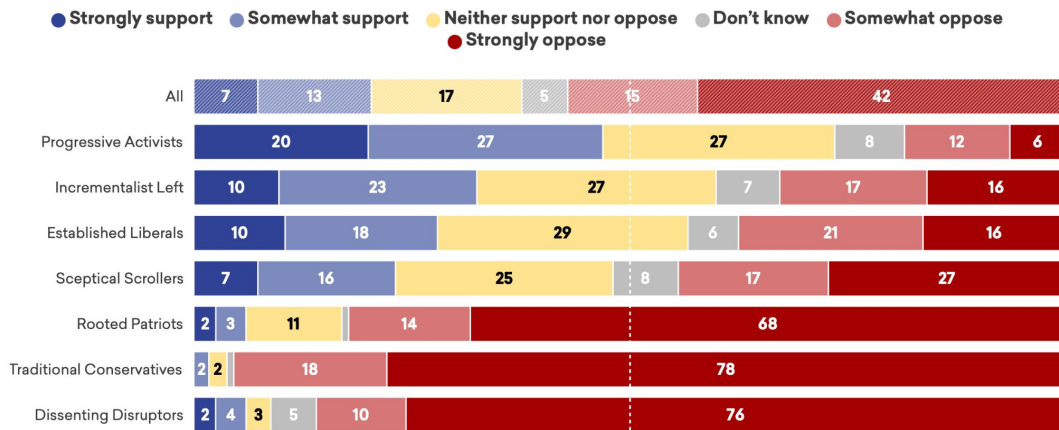
Just 16% support the policy of housing asylum seekers in hotels while their applications are processed- people are more likely to oppose than support this policy regardless of who they voted for in 2024.

44% say the government should not be spending any money on accommodation for asylum seekers at all.

57% say they would oppose asylum seekers being placed in a hotel in their local area, up 25 points since 2023. When asked why, even the most liberal segments cite concerns **over cost and pressure on public services**, while those who tend to be more conservative on migration overall also cite public safety concerns.

A majority of voters would oppose asylum seekers being placed in their local community

To what extent would you support or oppose asylum seekers being placed in temporary accommodation (such as hotels) in your local community?



More in Common • August 2025

"The Royal Station Hotel, part of our Heritage in Hull. And they've got immigrants staying in there who absolutely wreck the place. I've seen videos on social media. It's an absolute disgrace what they've done. It's a lovely vintage hotel. It used to be the main hotel. The Queen Mother stayed there years ago. It wouldn't be fit to stay in anymore after they've been in."

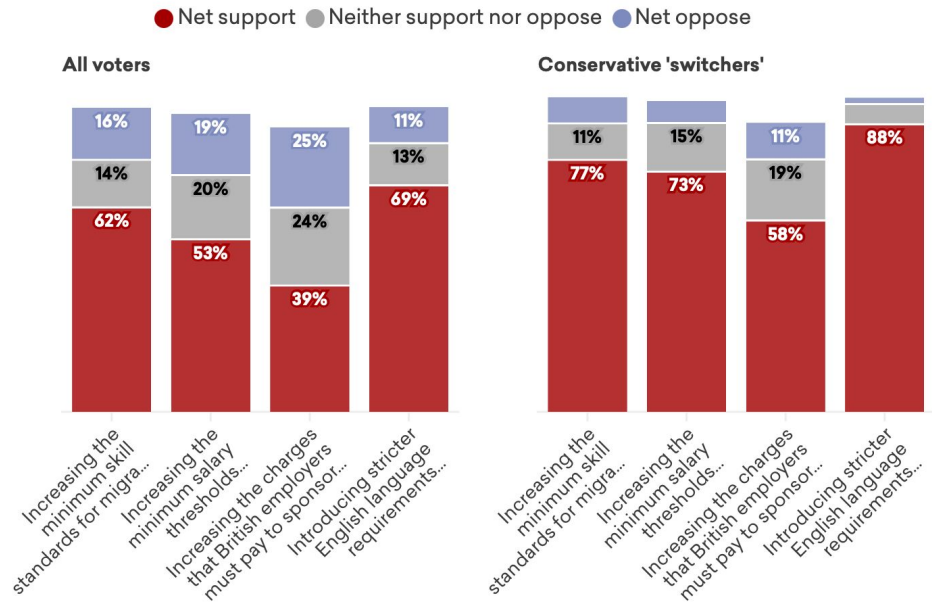
A desire for control most strongly shapes attitudes toward migration...

The public backs more stringent entry requirements to the UK: **62% back raising minimum skill standards** and **69% support stricter language requirements**. Conservative switchers are broadly supportive of similar measures the government outlined in the White Paper, aside from added responsibilities for British employers.

Concerns over border control remain high - **62% think it is too easy to enter the UK illegally**.

A third of voters also favour deporting asylum seekers to a third country for processing - **43% now say scrapping the Rwanda plan was a bad decision**, including Established Liberals - the segment most similar to the 'Cameronite' wing of the Conservative Party.

Voters broadly support the proposals in the white paper that would make it harder to live and work in the UK



...and is fuelling concerns about crime and foreign nationals

The belief that the UK cannot deport foreign criminals is a **major driver of anti-migration sentiment**, fuelling perceptions of a lack of control. This issue especially animates migration-sceptic groups, particularly those with high threat perception.

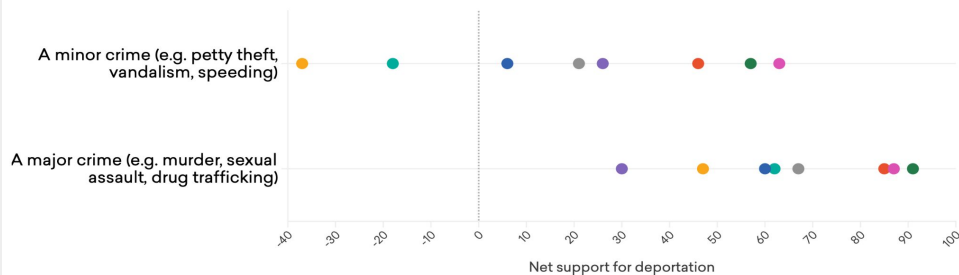
Most segments support deporting asylum seekers not only for serious crimes but also minor offences, especially Dissenting Disruptors, Rooted Patriots, and Traditional Conservatives, core parts of the 2019 Conservative base.

Debates around the ECHR often stem from this concern. **Majorities of 2024 Conservative and Reform voters back leaving**, and framing the ECHR as a block on deportations is most persuasive. However, **half of Britons prefer the UK to remain a member**, with little wider appetite for debate on another European institution.

Most segments believe that if an asylum seeker is found to have committed any crime- no matter how minor- they should be removed from the UK

Imagine someone seeking asylum in the UK had been convicted of a major/minor crime. What should happen to them?
(Net support for deporting them from the UK, even if they risk persecution or torture)

Segment: All (grey), Progressive Activists (orange), Incrementalist Left (teal), Established Liberals (blue), Sceptical Scrollers (purple), Rooted Patriots (red), Traditional Conservatives (green), Dissenting Disruptors (pink)



Source: More in Common • August 2025

"Bringing someone in, do we know if these people are actually properly vetted? I've got two young kids, I probably stay away from schools that have got heavy numbers of immigrant children in there, I'm not really sure of their backgrounds and stuff and you see crime increase when immigration kind of increases. There should be limits on who we are bringing in, how many we're bringing in."

Voters want the Conservatives to set out a tougher stance on migration

The public wants the Conservative party to be setting out a tougher stand on migration. **47% say the party should be doing this as a priority, reaching 68% or more among the segments which made up the bulk of the 2019 Conservative coalition.**

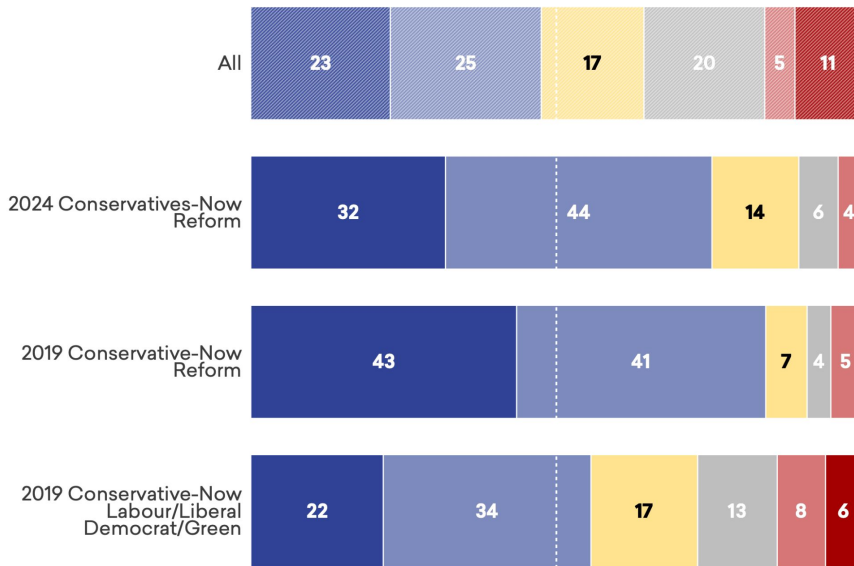
More than **seven in ten** of those who have switched from supporting the Conservatives to Reform at or since the 2024 election say the same.

Meanwhile half of those who have switched from the Conservatives to the Greens, Liberal Democrats or Labour since 2019 - also say that the Conservative's current migration policies are too weak.

Those who defected from the Conservatives to other parties on the left and right believe the party's migration policies are too weak

From what you've seen and read, would you say that the Conservative Party's proposed immigration policies are...

● Far too weak ● A bit too weak ● About right ● Don't know ● A bit too tough ● Far too tough



However, the public sees abolishing Indefinite Leave to Remain as unfair

Public opinion is divided on Reform's proposals to abolish ILR: roughly a quarter support keeping it, a quarter support extending the waiting period to 10 years, and a quarter support abolishing it entirely.

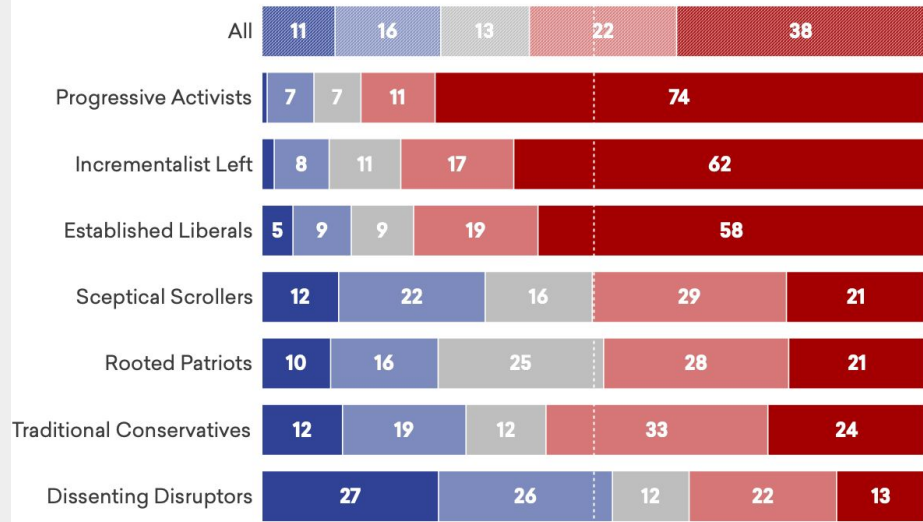
Dissenting Disruptors, the most radical segment and core of Reform's base, **are the only group with a majority in favour of abolition**. Among Traditional Conservatives, 40% support abolition, while 48% prefer keeping or reforming it. Rooted Patriots are more likely say it should remain amended than abolished.

While voters want action on migration, **the policy of removing ILR from those already with it appears unfair**: 70% of Tory-Liberal Democrat/Labour/Green switchers view removing ILR from those previously granted settled status as unfair, as do 37% of Tory-Reform switchers. Dissenting Disruptors are the only segment to consider it fair; most others, including TCs and RPs, do not.

Dissenting Disruptors is the only segment where a majority think Reform's proposal to revoke settled status would be fair

If Indefinite Leave to Remain were abolished, and people who had previously been told they were permanently settled were now told that they were no longer allowed to stay in the UK, do you think this would be...

● Very fair ● Mostly fair ● Don't know ● Not that fair ● Not fair at all



Most people now say scrapping the Rwanda plan was a bad idea

The week after Labour's election victory, **44%** of people said that scrapping the policy to resettle asylum seekers in Rwanda introduced by the previous Conservative government was a good idea, while **32%** said it was a bad one.

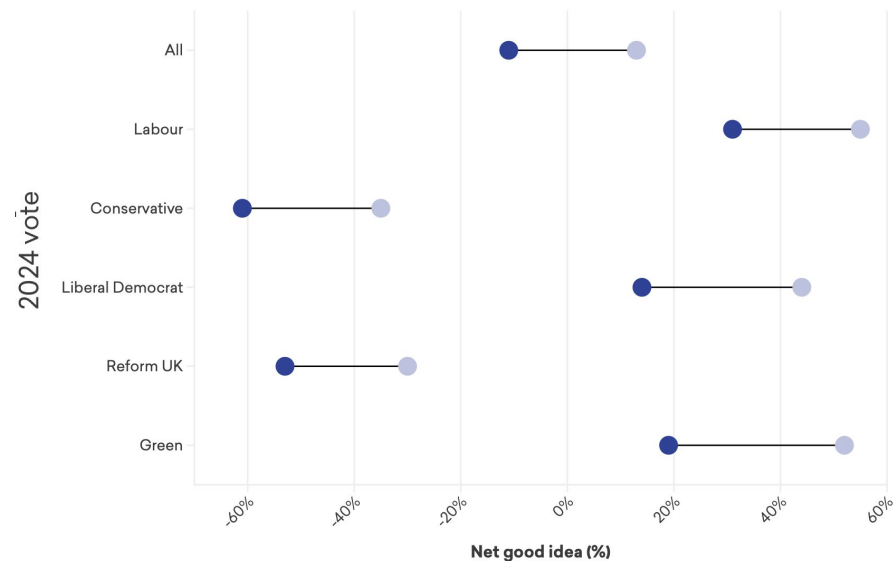
Just under 18 months later, **32%** now say this was a good idea- while **43%** say it was a bad idea to scrap the Rwanda policy.

Every voter group, regardless of the party they supported in 2024, has become more likely to say that scrapping the Rwanda plan was a bad idea.

Every group of voters has become more likely to say scrapping the Rwanda plan was a bad idea

The Labour Government has scrapped the Conservatives' policy to resettle asylum seekers in Rwanda. Do you think that is a good idea, bad idea, or neither?

Category ● July 2024 ● September 2025



People want migrants to play a positive role in the UK economy and social fabric

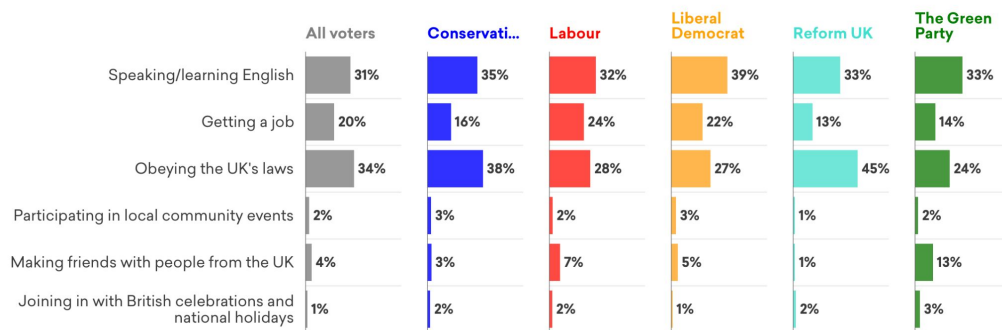
Voters also expect that those who come to live in the UK **contribute to the country**. At the moment, many voters think migrants **'give more than they take'** - for example, 52% of voters think the main reason immigrants come to the UK is to take advantage of public services like welfare and the NHS.

Voters also want immigrants to contribute to the social fabric of the UK - by obeying the law, respecting British institutions, and learning English. Very few voters think the main reason immigrants come to the UK is to be a part of British culture (5%), while 16% think migrants want to impose their culture on Britons - including 41% of 2024 Reform voters.

70% support revoking migrant's visas if they fail to 'properly integrate' into British society.

Voters believe that speaking English and following UK laws are key for migrants to successfully integrate into society

Which of the following, if any, do you believe is the most important for migrants to integrate into the UK?



Source: More in Common, July 2024

"There are certain areas where the population aren't integrated. So thinking just about a few areas in North Manchester, they have got a high population density of people from certain parts of the world. If everyone that's coming to the country is going to just move into this area, not bother to get involved in our customs and everything like that, then we are not going to be too happy with them."



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Later today....



More in
Common

Rebuilding the Coalition: A Tory Reset



Tuesday, 7 October



18:00 to 19:15



Stanley Suite, Secure
Zone, The Midland



Emily Maitlis
(Chair)

The News
Agents



**Greg
Smith MP**

Shadow Transport & Shadow
Energy Security & Net Zero
Minister



**Claire
Coutinho MP**

Shadow Energy Security
& Net Zero Secretary



**Luke
Tryl**

More in
Common



**Cllr Aled
Richards-Jones**

Leader, Conservative
Group, Wandsworth
Council



**Sir Gavin
Williamson MP**

MP for Stone, Great
Wyrley and Penkridge