



More in
Common



After Rwanda: new directions for migration, refugee and asylum policy

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.

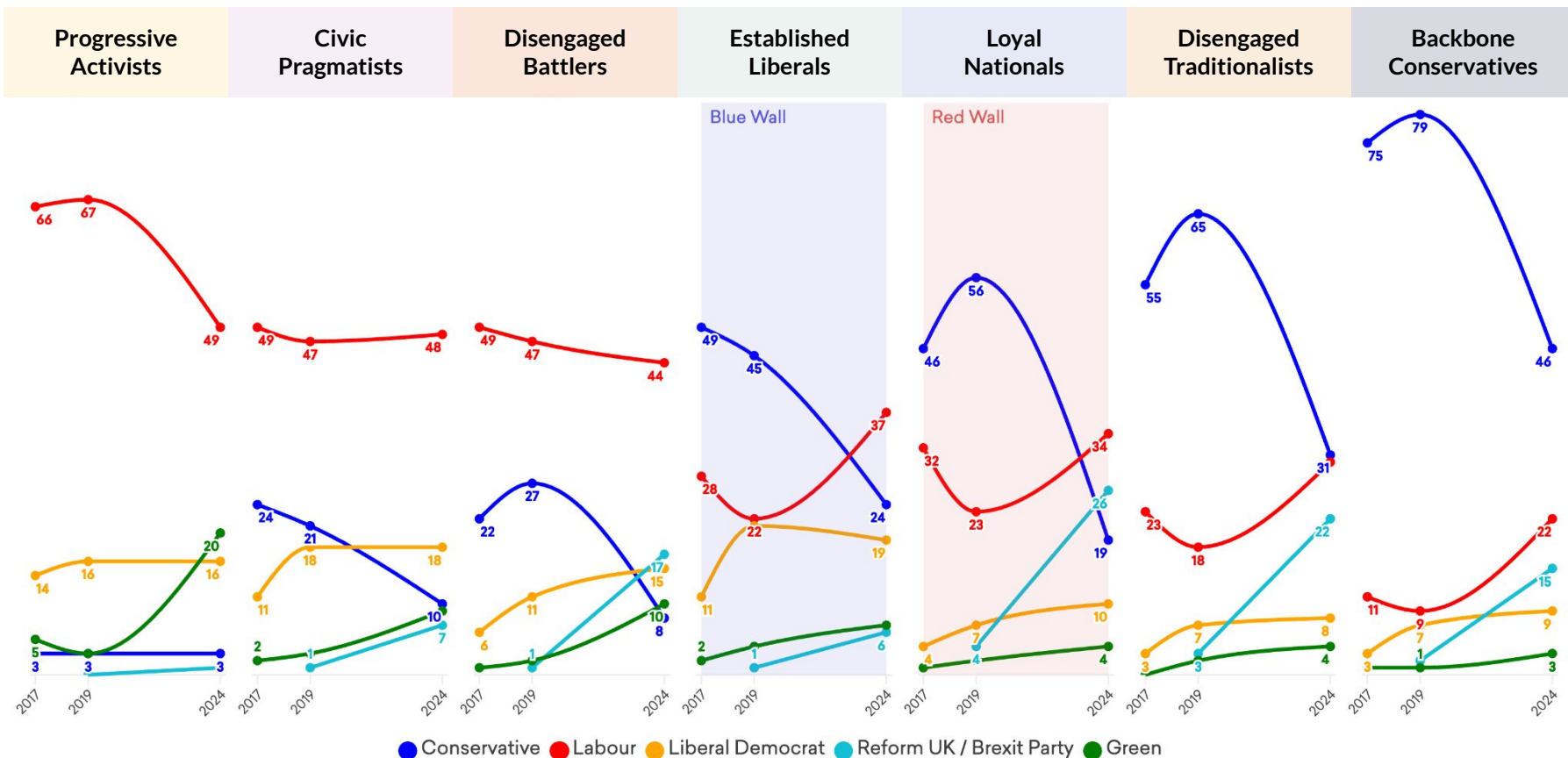
...a group that has done well and means well towards others, but also sees a lot of good in the status quo.

...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.

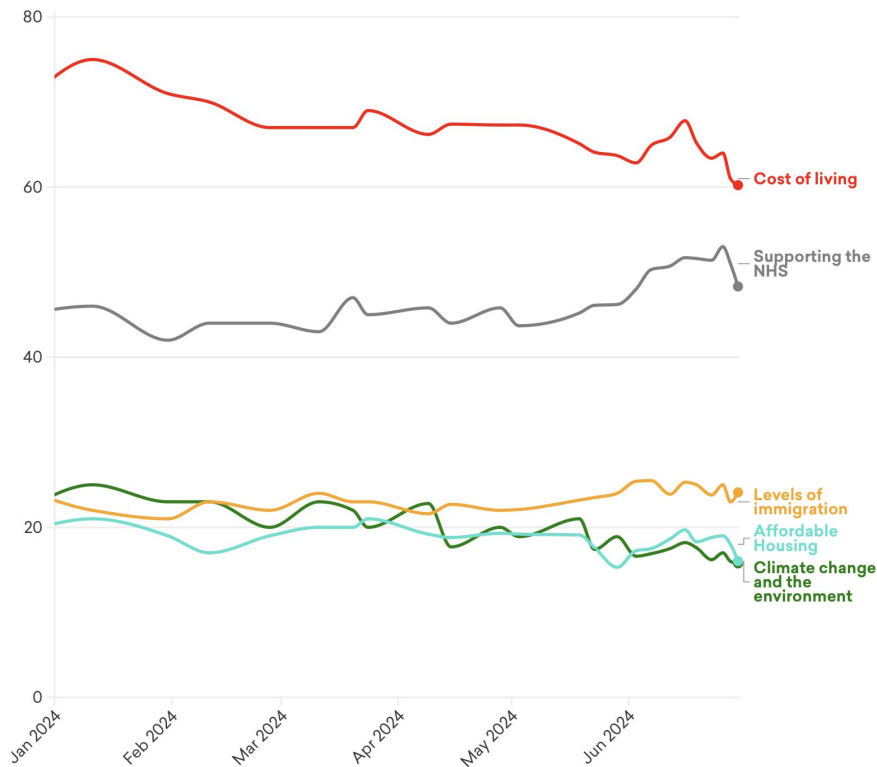
... a group who are proud of their country, optimistic about Britain's future and who keenly follow the news.

How did the Seven Segments vote?

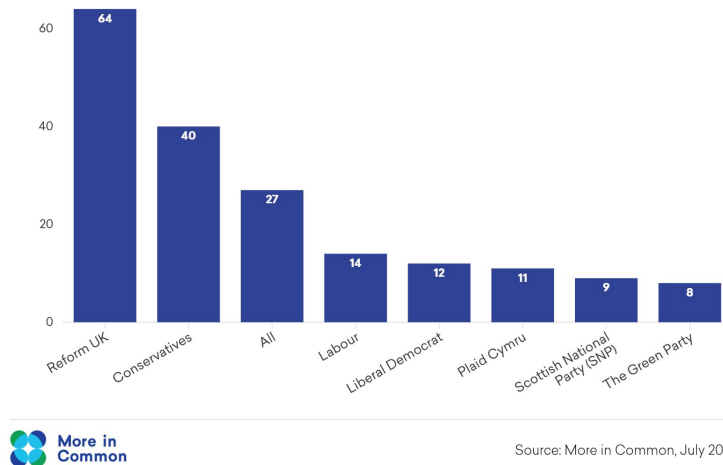


The public's starting points on migration and asylum issues

2024 wasn't an immigration election for Labour voters - but was for many Reform and Conservative voters



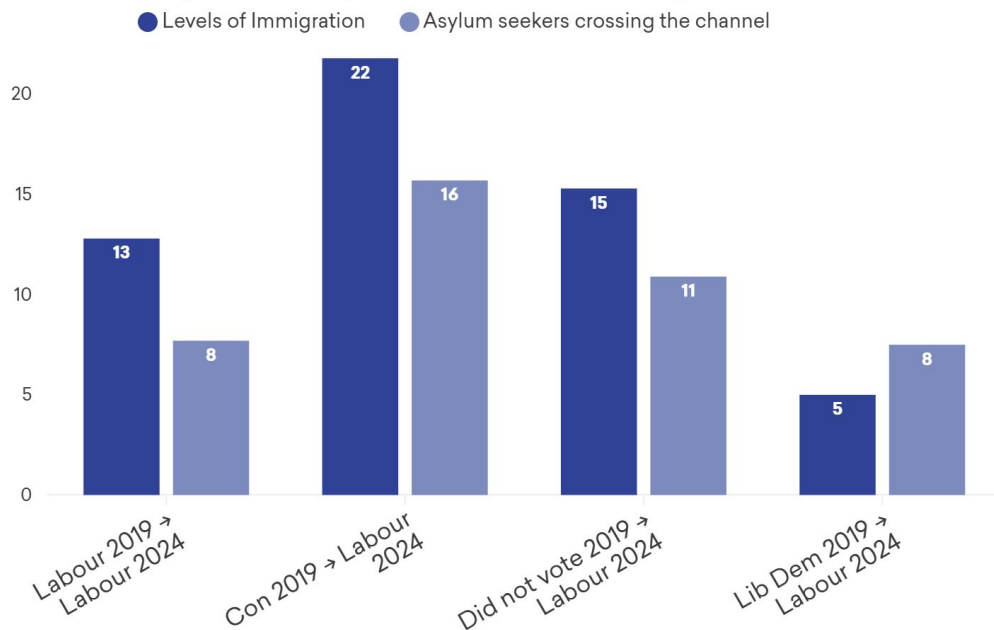
Thinking about the General Election, which of the following issues had the biggest impact on how you voted? Please select up to three
% Selecting 'Levels of immigration'



Immigration is a top priority because of the impact it has on services, on your schools, your hospitals, your doctors, your dentists, housing... it has such an impact on your infrastructure. And that's the thing [Nigel Farage] says he calls out the elephant in the room, doesn't he? Whereas politicians for many years have shied away from it. Jill, Local Authority Worker, Doncaster

Labour's electoral coalition divided on immigration issues

Thinking about the General Election, which of the following issues had the biggest impact on how you voted? Please select up to three



Labour brought together a pragmatic coalition rather than an ideological coalition. The challenge facing Labour on migration issues is that different parts of the coalition place different levels of importance on both overall levels of immigration and channel crossings.

Former Conservative voters who switched to Labour in 2024 are much more likely to cite immigration and asylum as one of their top issues.

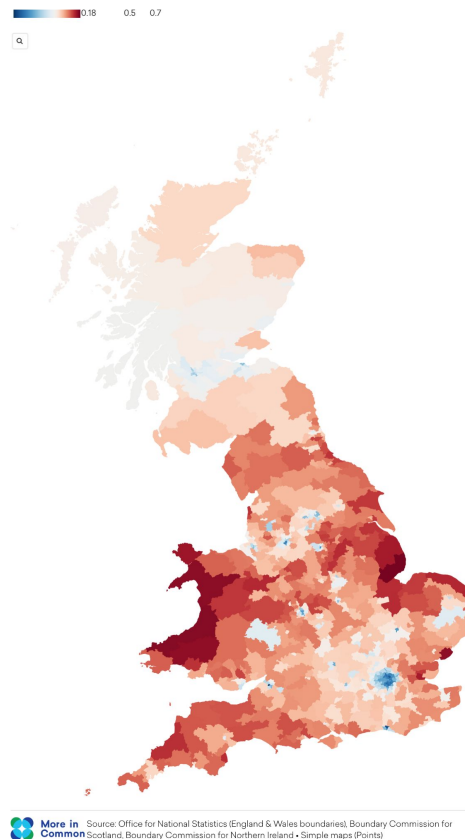
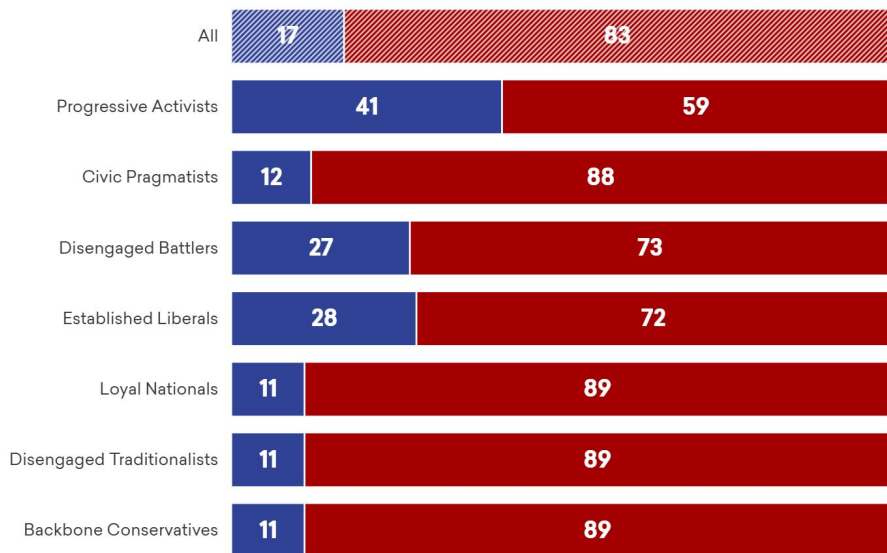
The Labour voters retained from 2019 and those gained from the Liberal Democrats are significantly less concerned about immigration.

*A lot of people don't believe Labour have got any plan, any workable plan, to do anything about it.
Pete, Retired, Doncaster*

Concern about channel crossings and levels of immigration are widespread

Which of the following comes closest your view?

- I am not concerned about the numbers of people who come to the UK illegally
- I am concerned about the numbers of people who come to the UK illegally

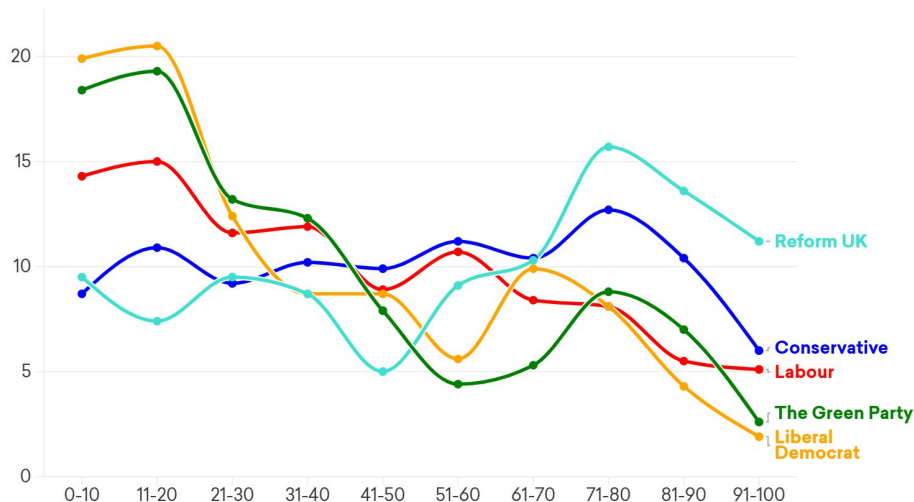


There are 455 seats where the more than 50% of the constituency say they would rather reduce immigration rather than increase or keep numbers the same, Among all voters over four in five are concerned about illegal immigration.

The public overestimates the scale of illegal migration

Reform voters think the proportion of illegal migration is much higher than other voter groups do

Thinking about immigration to the UK, what proportion of the overall number is made up of those who enter the UK illegally?

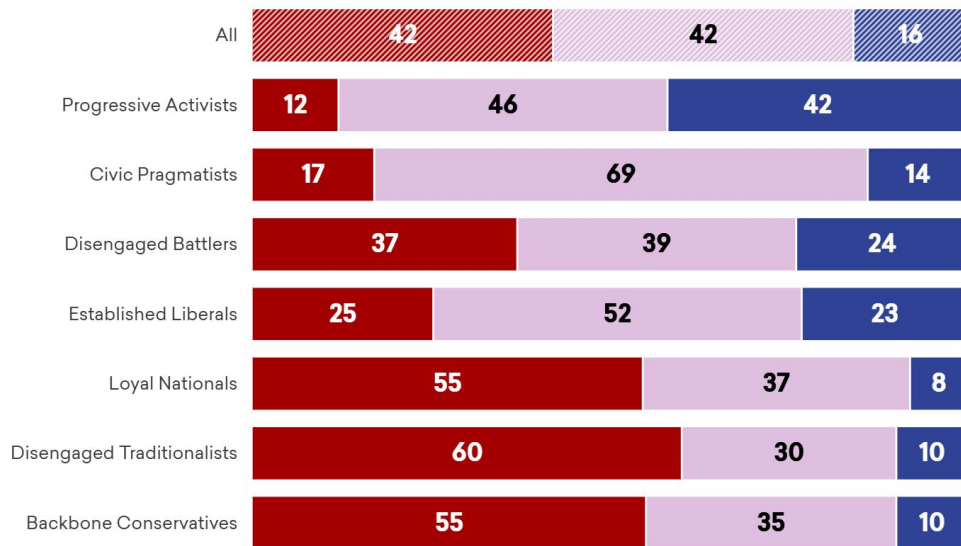


The average Briton thinks that 45 per cent of migration to the UK is illegal - but this number is 56 per cent for Reform UK voters, 50 per cent for Conservatives, 41 per cent for Labour voters and 37 per cent for Green voters.

Balancing control and compassion is key for public

Thinking about the UK's policy on refugees and asylum seekers do you think the next Government should prioritise...

- Controlling numbers who come to the UK
- Balancing controlling numbers who come to the UK with compassion for those in need
- Compassion for those in need



The public want a policy approach on refugee and asylum that balances controlling overall numbers with compassion for those in need.

Across Labour's coalition, there are segments who adopt a more balanced approach (Civic Pragmatists and Established Liberals), segments who adopt a more control-first approach (Loyal Nationals) and those who adopt a more compassion first approach (Progressive Activists).

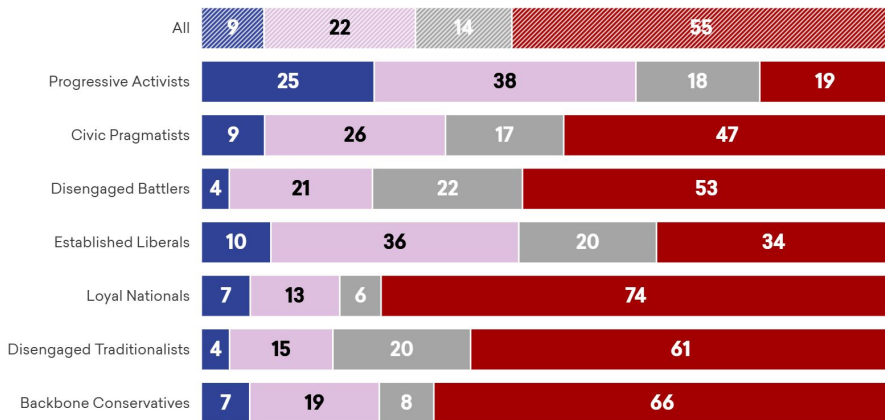
I'm not saying we should have billions of immigrants coming here or refugees, but we've got a moral right to look after people that are in danger and in need.

Martin, Retired, Farnham

The public want to see numbers down overall, but are more comfortable with immigration for certain professions

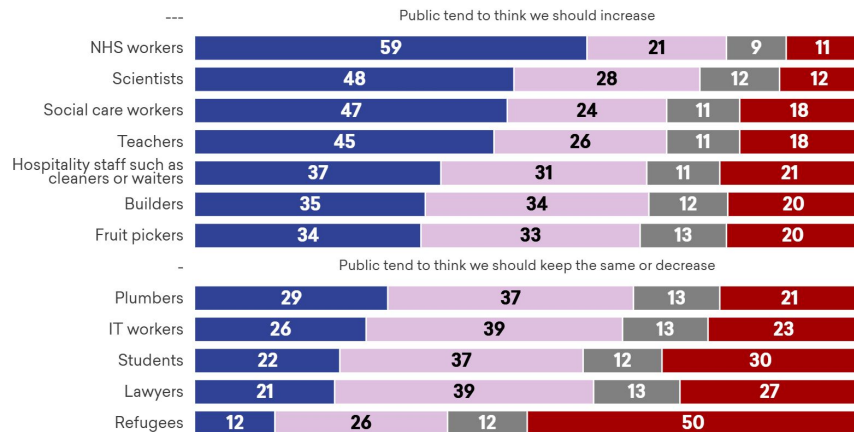
Thinking about the number of immigrants the UK Government accepts into the country each year, which of the following comes closer to your view?

- Government should increase the numbers
- Government should keep the number the same
- Don't know
- Government should reduce the numbers



For each of the following groups, please say whether you think we should increase or decrease the numbers coming to the UK.

- Increase
- Keep the same
- Don't know
- Decrease



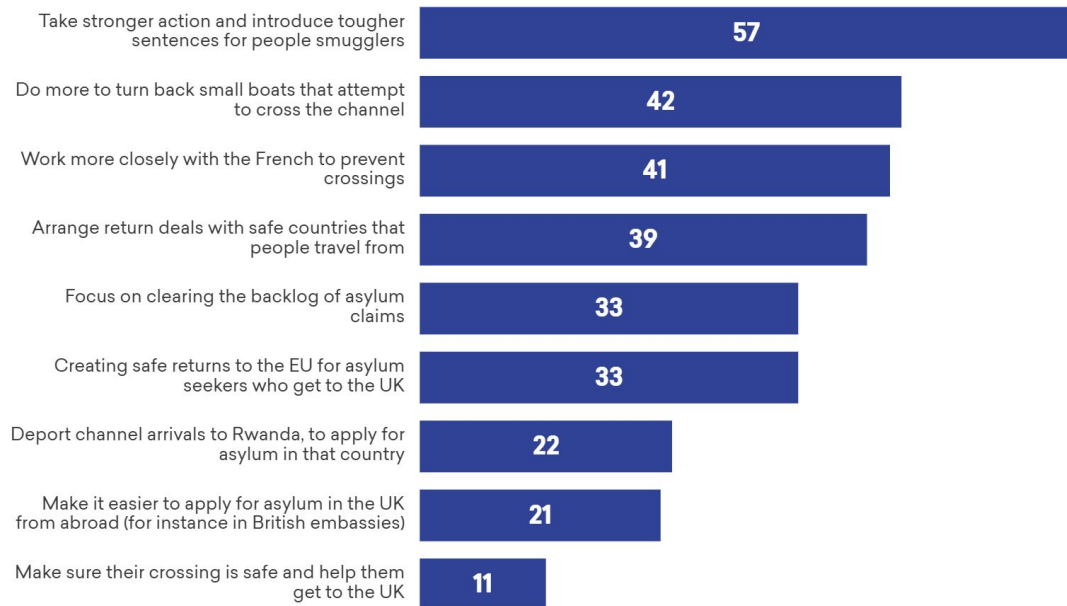
There's people coming from abroad that have been in different circumstances and they bring a lot to the table... Most doctors are from abroad, and they've learned a lot, and they're really good at what they do, it's good because they come over here and they share it with other doctors.

Emily, Dudley

An approach on migration and asylum issues that can command public support?

'Smashing the gangs' is popular, but it needs to work

Which of the following, if any, do you think the government should do in response to asylum seekers crossing the Channel in small boats? Select any which apply



The Government's focus on prosecuting the people smugglers is by far the most popular policy solution to illegal channel crossings among the public than other alternatives.

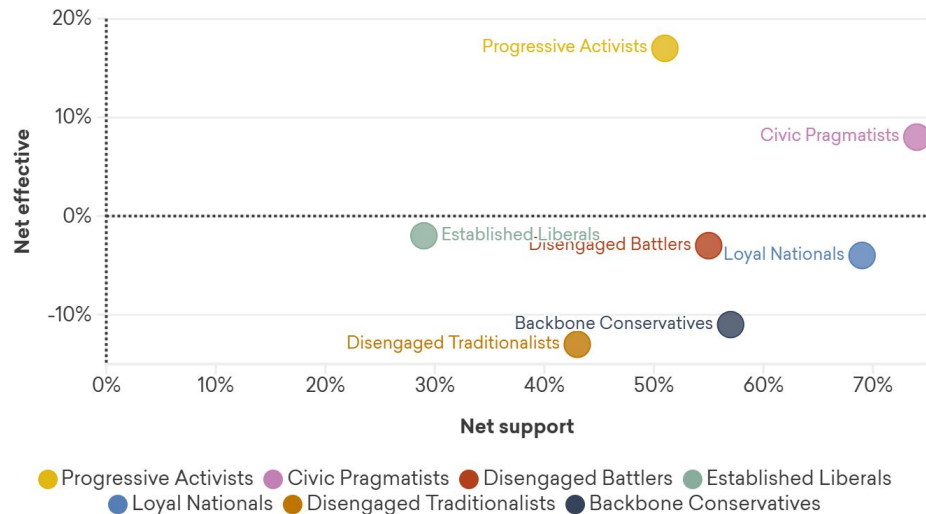
However, unless it succeeds in stopping the boats, it's unlikely that the public will support a policy that begins and ends with 'smashing the gangs'.

Labour needs to show that they are being constructive (working with the French and arranging returns deals with other countries) while also being tough on those who break the rules and cross illegally.

Support for Border Security Command in principle, but questions about its effectiveness

The Government has announced a Border Security Command to prosecute the gangs that transport asylum seekers across the English Channel.

In general, do you support or oppose this proposal? // How effective do you think this policy will be in reducing channel crossings?



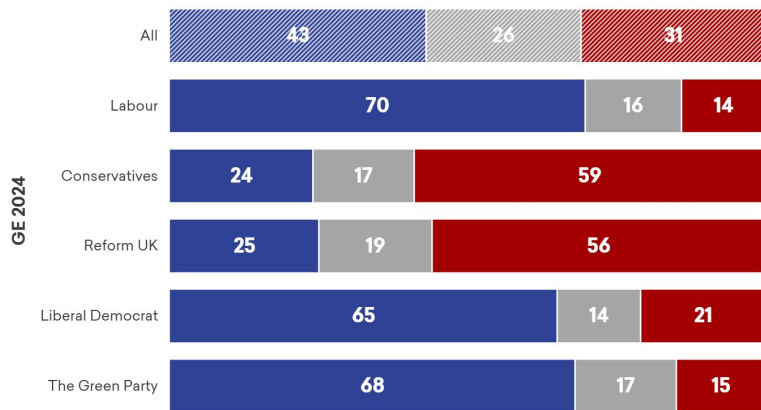
The public largely support the Government's new Border Security Command proposal - including those voters who didn't back the Government at the last election.

However, only the two most Labour supporting segments (Progressive Activists and Civic Pragmatists) are more likely than not to believe it will be effective.

Scrapping the Rwanda plan was popular because many didn't think it would work

The newly-elected Labour Government has scrapped the Conservatives' policy to resettle asylum seekers in Rwanda. Do you think scrapping the Rwanda scheme was a good decision or a bad decision?

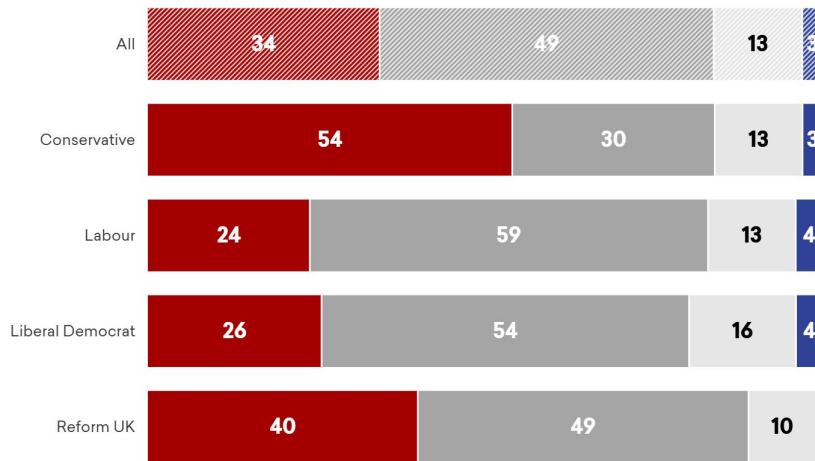
- Good decision
- Don't know
- Bad decision



Source: More in Common, July 2024

Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?

- The Rwanda policy will reduce the number of people who try to cross the channel
- The Rwanda policy will make no difference to the number of people who try to cross the channel
- Don't know
- The Rwanda policy will increase the number of people who try to cross the channel



Source: More in Common, May 2024

Even if it [the Rwanda plan] did work, the amount of people that they were going to send there is not even going to touch the sides anyways. So there isn't really a lot of point - that need to come up with a different plan that is going to work.

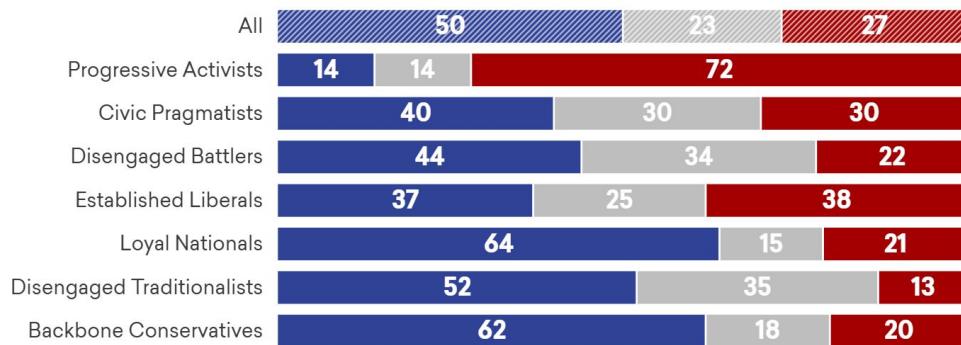
Samantha, Police Staff, Clacton

Strong support for an Italy-Albania-type scheme

There are suggestions that the Government is exploring adopting a scheme similar to one used in Italy where some asylum seekers who arrive in Italy are sent to Albania while their asylum claims are heard.

Which comes closest to your view?

- It would be better for Britain to identify a third country where asylum seekers can be sent while their claims can be processed rather than in the UK
- Don't know
- It would be better for Britain to process all asylum seekers claims here in the UK rather than in a third country



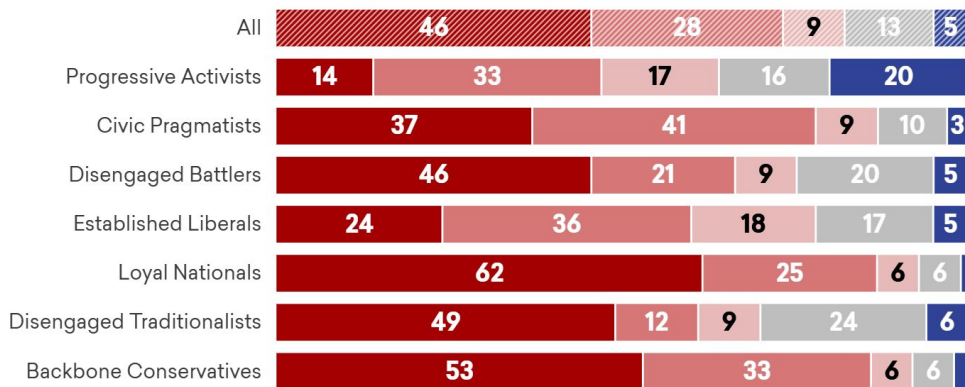
The public are twice as likely to support processing asylum claims in a third country (50% support) than here in Britain (27% support).

Progressive Activists are the only group who strongly back processing asylum claims in Britain, while Red Wall Loyal Nationals most strongly back processing asylum claims abroad rather than in the UK.

Public want government to stop the boats

Thinking about the issue of small boats and channel crossings by asylum seekers, what do you think is a reasonable goal for this Government?

- Stopping asylum seeker channel crossings entirely
- Significantly reducing the number of channel crossings by asylum seekers
- Reducing the number of channel crossings by asylum seekers a bit
- Don't know
- I do not think the Government should aim to reduce channel crossings by asylum seekers at all



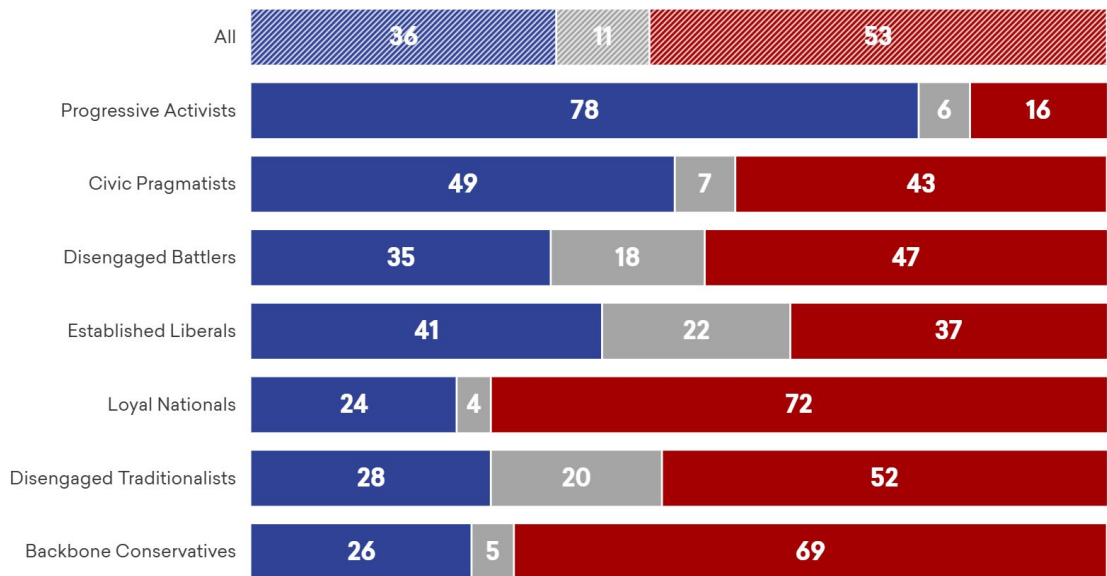
Nearly half the public (46%) want the Government to stop the boats and stop asylum seekers crossing the channel entirely. A further three in ten (28%) want to see a significant reduction.

Majorities in all segments - bar the Progressive Activists - want to see either the boats stopped or significant reductions in channel crossings, setting a high bar for government success or failure

Designing a system which allows migrants to contribute is key to shifting public attitudes

Thinking about why people want to come to the UK, which comes closest to your view?

- They think there are better opportunities to work and contribute to the UK
- Don't know
- They think the UK has a more generous benefit system that they will be able to live off



I think there's arguments for and against, I mean I agree we've got no doctors... But then, if they're coming over here and working and helping the economy essentially, then I don't see why not

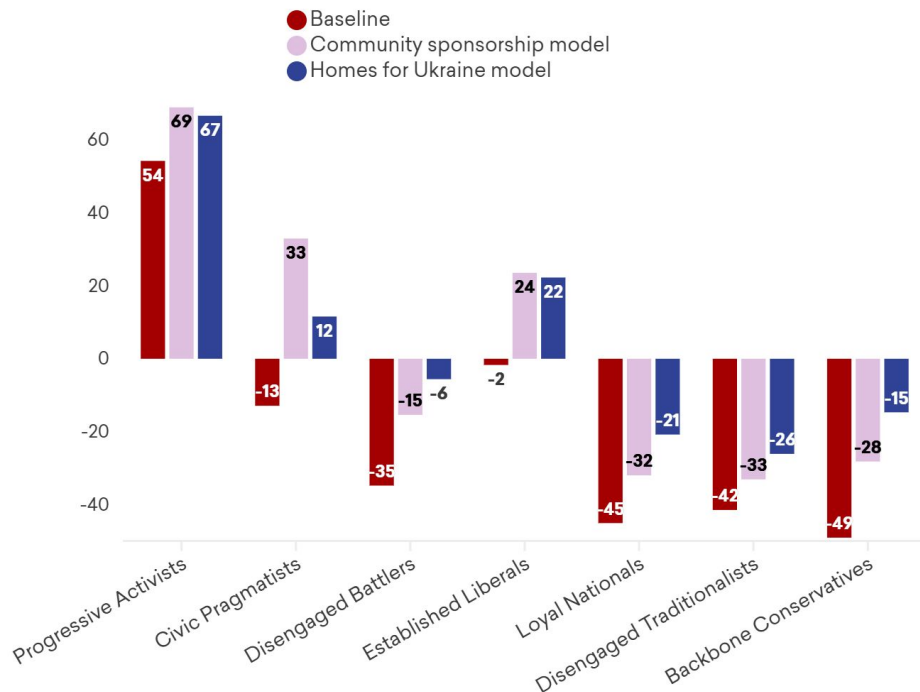
Kitty, Estate Agent, Loughborough

Everything comes back to immigration for me. The NHS is busting at the seams because there's just far too many people in the country. We've gone soft and I think that's everything. Jails are too soft. Everything's just too soft

Jamie, Forklift Truck Driver, Workington

A community sponsorship can increase support

Net support for accepting more refugees



Community sponsorship models like the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme increase support for accepting more refugees - turning Civic Pragmatists and Established Liberals from opposition to being supportive and reducing opposition among more sceptical segments.

In focus groups, many Britons tell us of their pride at ordinary people opening up their homes to welcome Ukrainian refugees and they see it as part of doing their part in the fight against Putin.

The thought that we actually helped in some tiny way; we couldn't stop the invasion, but we could give this one Mum a safe haven

Homes for Ukraine Scheme Host



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