



More in
Common

END
VIOLENCE
AGAINST
WOMEN

Women and Girls versus Big Tech? Ending Online Violence Against Women and Girls



Monday, 29 September



18:30 to 19:30



Sherwood Arena Room
Secure Zone, ACC



**Sophie
Stowers (Chair)**

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**Jess
Phillips MP**

Minister for Safeguarding
& Violence Against
Women & Girls



**Joani
Reid MP**

Member,
Home Affairs
Select Committee



**Natalie
Fleet MP**

Member, Women &
Equalities Select
Committee



**Catherine
Fookes MP**

Member, Women &
Equalities Select
Committee



**Andrea
Simon**

End Violence
Against Women
Coalition



**Emma
Pickering**

Refuge



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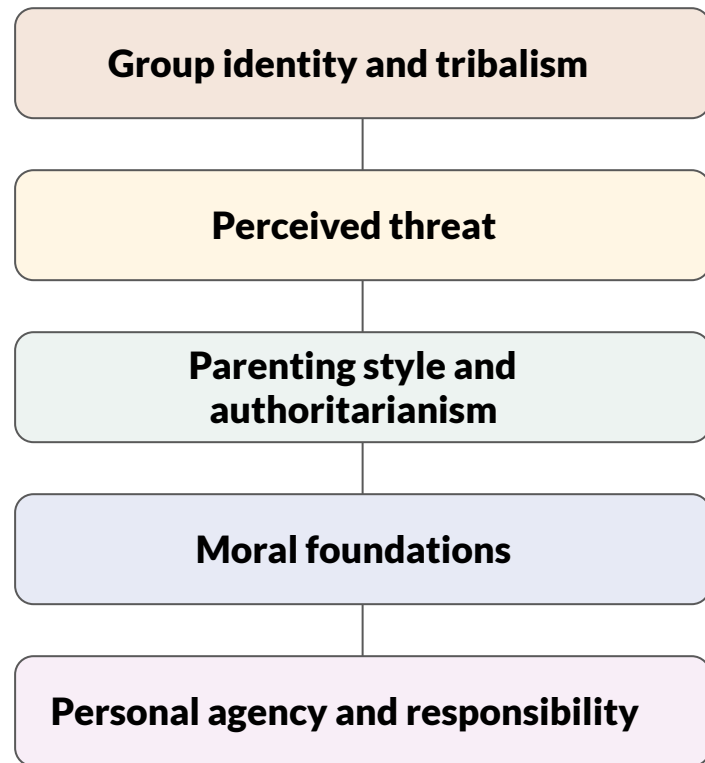
Women and Girls versus Big Tech?

Ending Online Violence Against Women and Girls

Labour Party Conference Fringe Event 2025

Our unique lens - The British Seven Segments

- The 'British Seven' segments were formulated in our 'Shattered Britain' report, published in 2025
- They are created entirely from questions around areas of core beliefs, drawn from social psychology: group identity and tribalism, perceived threat, parenting style and authoritarianism, moral foundations, personal agency and responsibility
- No demographic information (race, class, or gender) is used for the segmentation, though the segments created by this process often have demographic differences
- Segmentation shows that values and beliefs are powerful in influencing how individuals form opinions about issues and their behaviour. Often, the segments are more predictive of beliefs than any other metric



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

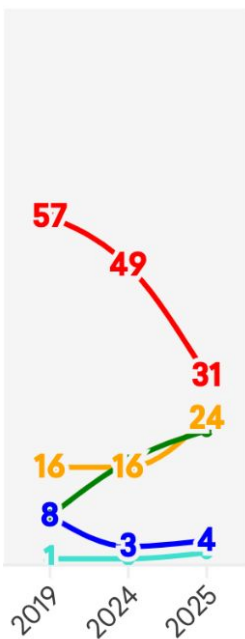
... a nostalgic group that respects tradition, authority and personal responsibility, while remaining sceptical of rapid change

... 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?

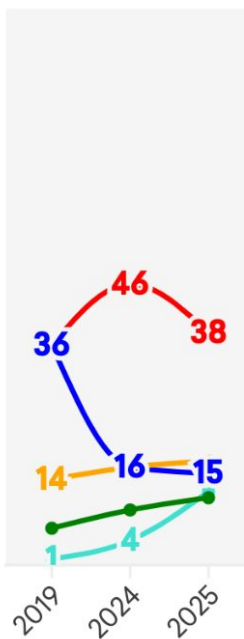
Progressive Activists

"Corbynites"



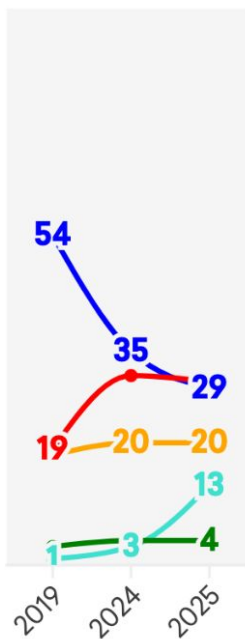
Incrementalist Left

"Social democrats"



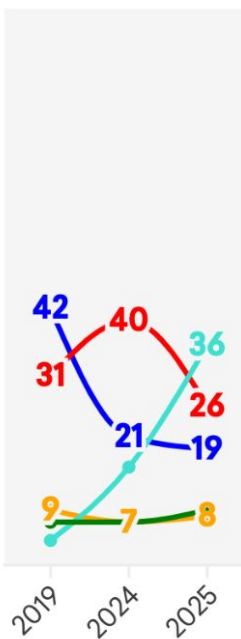
Established Liberals

"Blue Wall"



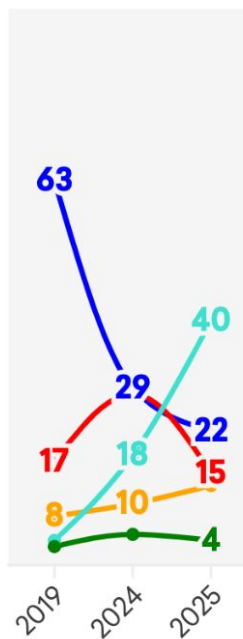
Sceptical Scrollers

"Online Disengaged"



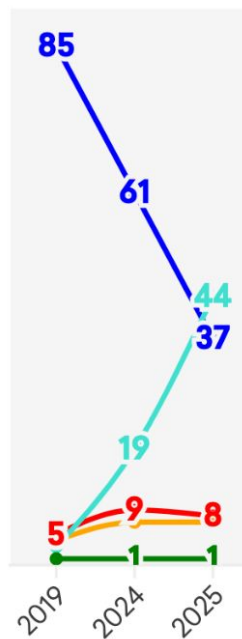
Rooted Patriots

"Red Wall"



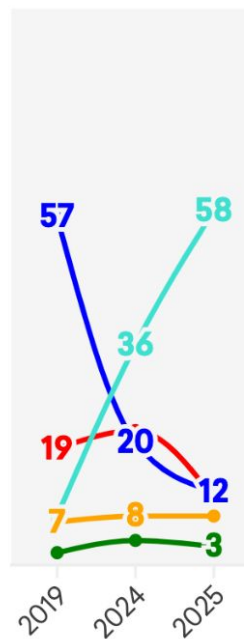
Traditional Conservatives

"Shire Tory"



Dissenting Disruptors

"Populist Right"



Labour's 2024 coalition

The Seven Segments' views on online violence and the Online Safety Act



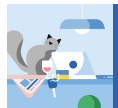
Progressive Activists

This group's focus on inequality and women's rights mean they are deeply concerned about violence against women. However, they worry about OSA restricting the content people can freely access online.



Incrementalist Left

This group is trusting of institutions and the law and in turn trusts the OSA to protect children. They are one of the most likely to link online harassment to rising levels of violence against women.



Established Liberals

This group shares IL's trust in the OSA and their belief in the internet's role in increasing levels of violence against women. They are concerned about the ability of children to evade the safeguards of the OSA.



Sceptical Scrollers

The most online group, they reject links between being online and harassment/violence against women. Sceptical Scrollers fear the OSA enables government surveillance and can be easily bypassed with VPNs.



Rooted Patriots

This group's high threat level means they are concerned about violence against women, particularly young girls. However, they fear both circumvention of the OSA's safeguards and accidental limits on content on issues like migration.



Traditional Conservatives

The least online group, they are most likely to see online harassment as fueling violence against women, support stricter content restrictions, and trust that privacy and circumvention risks are minimal.



Dissenting Disruptors

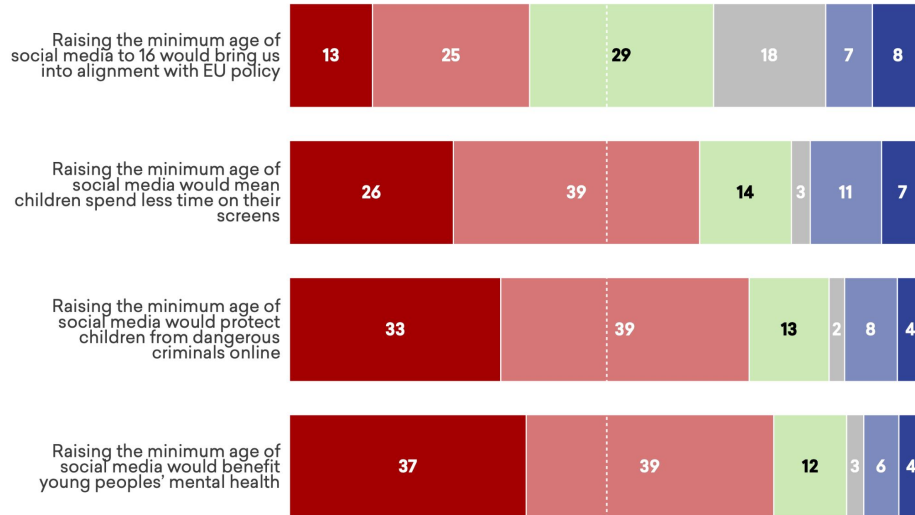
Highly online and deeply opposed to the OSA. They see it as government censorship of free speech and while concerned about VAWG, are more likely to link it to asylum and migration than cyberbullying.

The most effective case for raising social media age limits highlights protection and safety

People find arguments which frame a minimum age for social media as a way to protect young people are most convincing

Below are a series of arguments in favour of raising the minimum age of social media to 16. How convincing do you find them?

● Very convincing ● Somewhat convincing ● Neither convincing nor unconvincing ● Don't know
● Somewhat unconvincing ● Very unconvincing



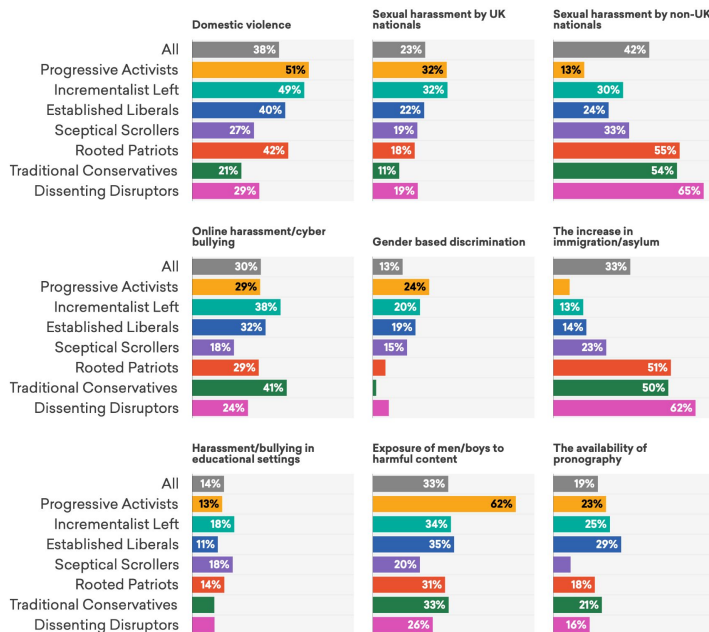
Arguments which call for a minimum age for social media accounts are most effective when they are framed as a way to protect young people's mental health, and protect them from criminals online, as opposed to focusing on screen time or regulatory benefits. **This is the particularly the case among Gen Z.**

However, there is an age split with regard to the apps that people are most likely to think need age restrictions. While older people tend to say apps like Facebook, YouTube and multiplayer gaming sites (e.g. Fortnite) need restrictions, young people are more likely to focus on Instagram and Snapchat.

Almost six in ten think women and girls have become less safe in recent years

The most online segments- Sceptical Scrollers and Dissenting Disruptors- are the least likely to link women's safety to online harassment

You said that the safety of women and girls is at greater risk now than in recent years. From the options below, please choose the three options that you think pose the greatest risk to women and girls



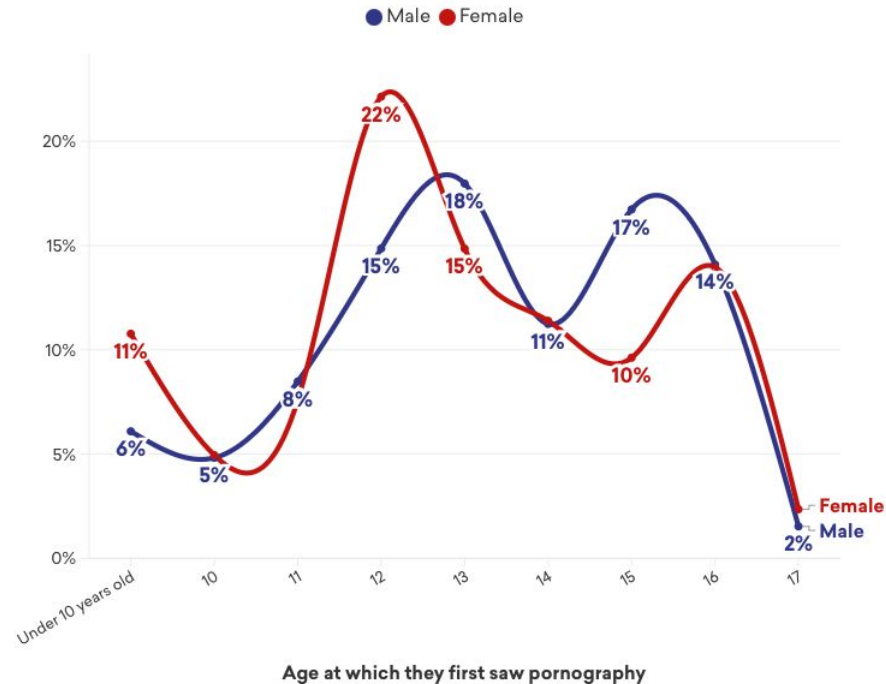
59% say that safety of women and girls is at greater risk now than in recent years. **30%** say one of the main reasons for this is online harassment and cyberbullying, though the most online segments are the least likely to say this is the case.

Half of Britons believe that violence against women and girls has got worse in recent years, with just **11%** believing rates have improved.

Those who voted **Labour**, **Liberal Democrat** and **Green** at the last election are the most likely to say they would be more likely vote Labour if the government introduced a target to reduce violence against women and girls.

Young girls are exposed to explicit content at an earlier age

Girls are likely to have first seen porn earlier than boys



95% of young people say they have seen pornography or explicit content before the age of 16. A third have seen it before the age of 13.

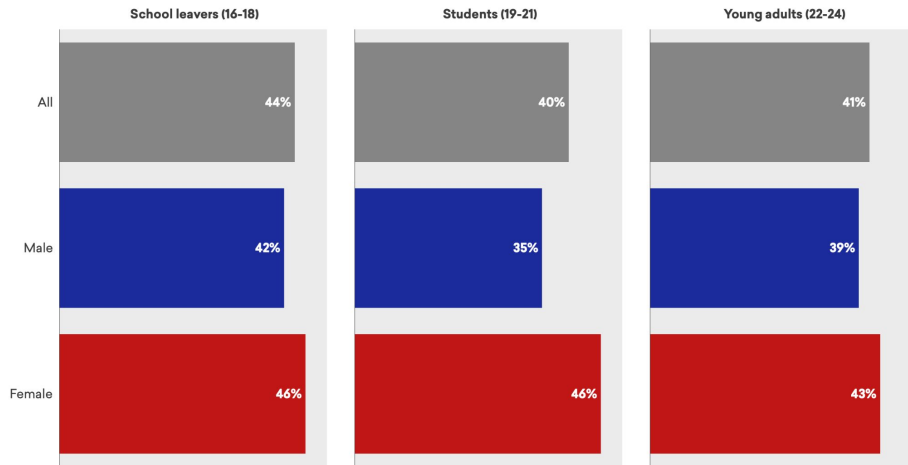
Young girls are more likely to be exposed to explicit content at a younger age than boys. 11% of girls aged 16-17 say they saw pornography before the age of 10, while 61% say they saw such content before they were 13.

The equivalent figures for 16-17 year old boys are 6% and 52%.

Young women are especially worried about their images being shared online

Young women are more likely than young men to be worried about a personal image of them being shared online

Thinking about your everyday life, how worried, if at all, are you about becoming a victim of revenge porn/your intimate images being shared online?
(% saying they are concerned)



Young people - but particularly young women - are concerned about the risk of having a private image of themselves shared online.

13% of 16-17 year olds say they have shared an explicit image of themselves before, while **36%** say they have not but know someone who has.

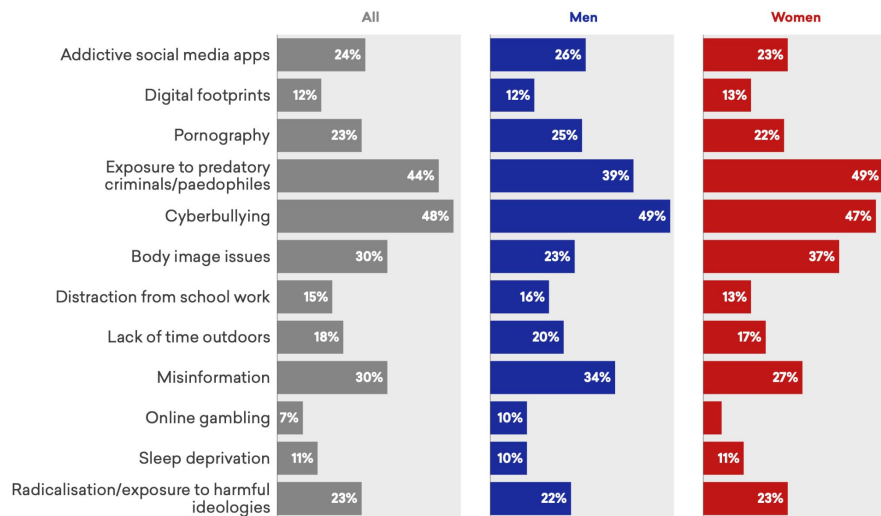
42% of 16-24 year olds are concerned about the risk of their image being shared, with Gen Z women 6 points more likely to be concerned than Gen Z men.

This number increases to **66%** when looking at 18-21 year olds.

A majority of parents are concerned about the impact of social media on their children

Women are more likely to identify body image concerns and exposure to predators as the main risks that social media poses to young people

Which of the following would you say present the biggest risk to young people from social media? Select up to three.



Almost **three quarters** of parents say they are concerned about the impact of social media on their children's wellbeing. **At least 70% of every group of party supporters feel the same.**

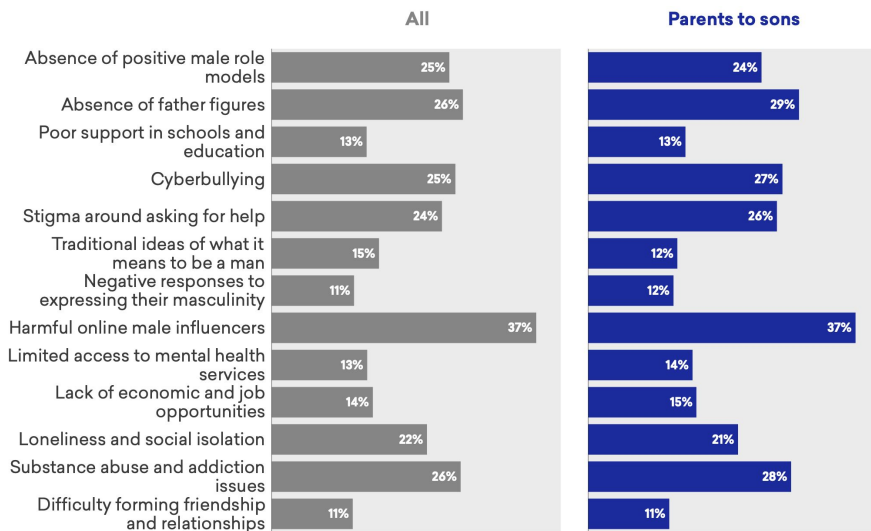
74% support increasing the age threshold for young people to access social media. Again, **at least 70% of every voter group supports this idea.**

When it comes to what people think are the biggest threats to young people from social media, respondents express a variety of concerns, from cyberbullying, to exposure, to inappropriate content. **However, women are particularly likely to be concerned about social media's impact on how people think of their body image (37% v 23% of men) and the exposure it offers to predators (49% to 39%).**

The 'Adolescence' effect

Women are more likely to identify body image concerns and exposure to predators as the main risks that social media poses to young people

Which of the following would you say present the biggest risk to young people from social media?
Select up to three.



The parents of sons are particularly concerned about the impact that being online has on their children. **58% think that men and boys are too isolated from the rest of society today.**

More than a third (**38%**) think that one of the greatest risks to young men and boys is exposure to 'harmful' male influencers, while **27%** cite cyberbullying. There is clearly concern among an increasing number of parents about the affect online content has on how men think about **their own identity, masculinity, and women.**

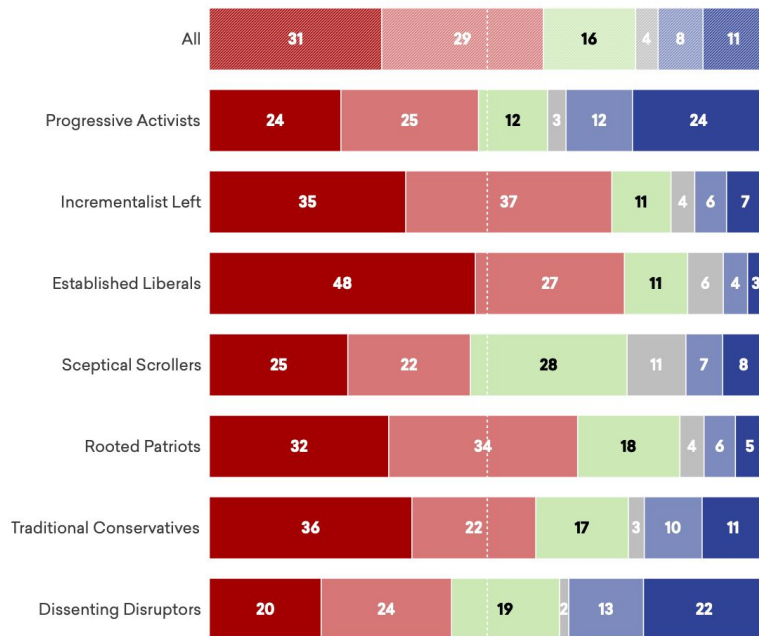
"The Adolescence thing, a couple of months ago, the big Stephen Graham thing. I learned a lot more from that because I didn't realise the different coloured hearts meant stuff and the kids educated me in that. I think there is a load of bullying that that goes on and we've just got to make sure they question everything when they see it."

The Online Safety Act

Support for the Online Safety Act is strongest among those segments with the highest trust in institutions

This week, a law came into force which requires internet companies showing age-restricted content to verify the age of their users, for example by using facial recognition, asking for Government ID, or using credit card information. To what extent do you support or oppose this law?

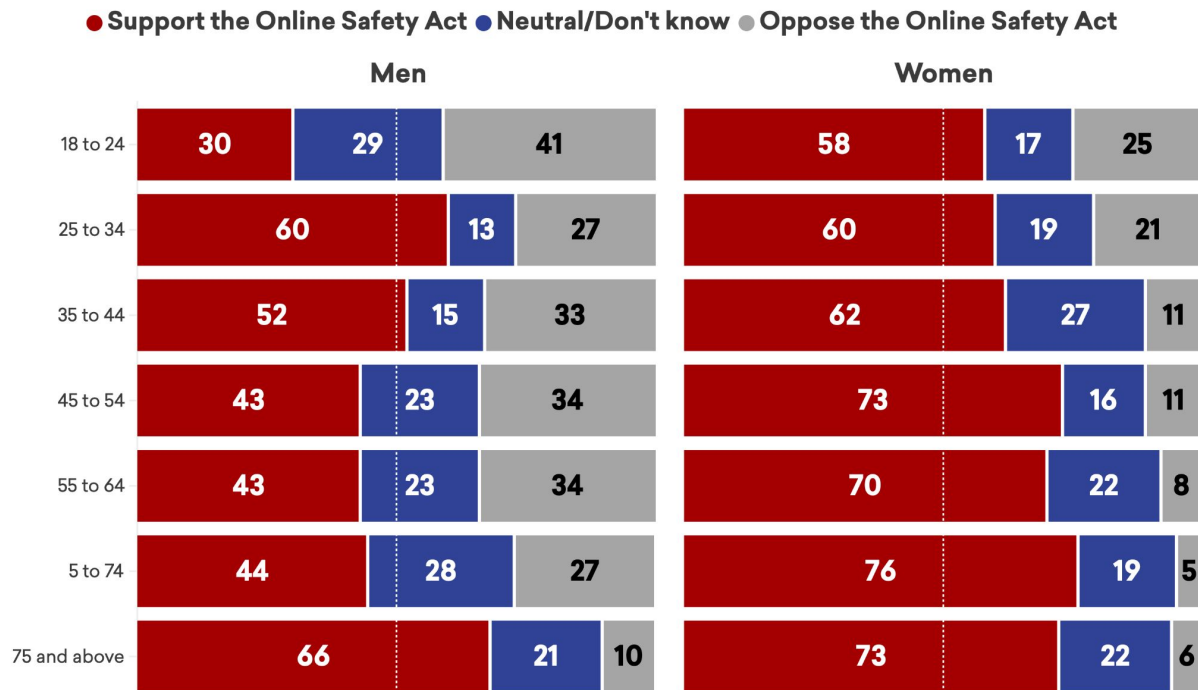
● Strongly support ● Somewhat support ● Neither support nor oppose ● Don't know
● Somewhat oppose ● Strongly oppose



59% support the Online Safety Act, while **20%** are opposed to it. The strongest support for the Act is found among **the Incrementalist Left and Established Liberals** - groups which tend to be the most trusting of institutions - and **Rooted Patriots**, a segment with a high level of threat perception and deep rooted worries about the future and the wellbeing of future generations.

Consolidating support among Rooted Patriots is key for Labour. Not only are they a pivotal swing voter group, essential to a Labour victory, but they are also susceptible to appeals that channel concerns about women's safety into support for more restrictive migration policies, rather than targeted action against online harms, which they often present as limiting free speech.

Women tend to be more supportive of the OSA than men



While a majority (**51%**) of men are supportive of the Online Safety Act, the figure among women is **67%**.

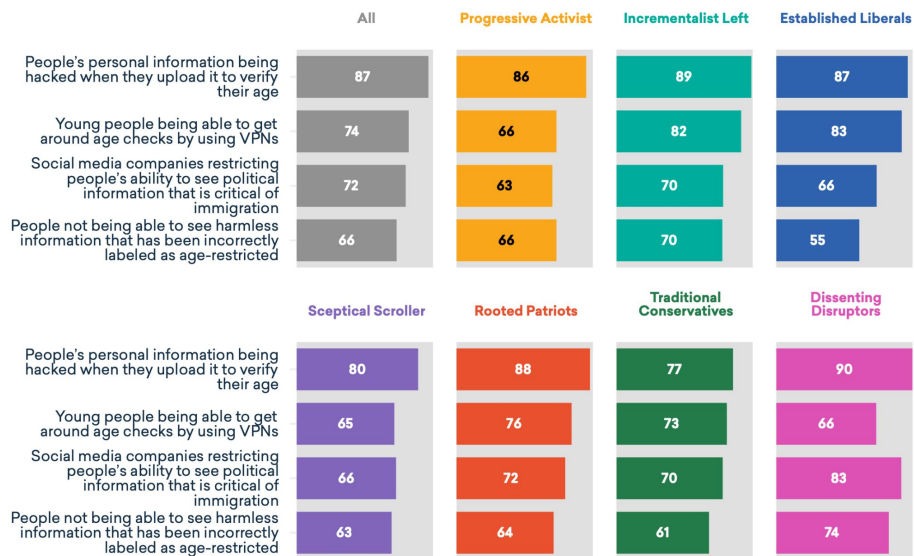
This is the case in every age bracket, but particularly among those aged 18-24.

"There's no reason why these companies can't do that (implement age verification)[...] It's not a cost on us, it's a cost on them and there's no reason why they shouldn't do it."

Some groups are more likely to emphasise free speech over protections

The segments with higher threat perception are more concerned about children being able to outsmart the Online Safety Act than its impact on free speech

From what you've seen and read about this policy so far, how concerned, if at all, are you about the following?



Those segments which tend to be more moderate and incrementalist in their politics- as well as those with high threat perception- tend to be less concerned about the implications of the OSA on people's ability to access information on social media about migration or other information they deem 'harmless' because of age verification.

Instead they are **more concerned that the Act may not be sufficient to protect young people**. Meanwhile this is not as high a priority for those on both the left and the right, who are more concerned about the Act's 'free speech' implications.

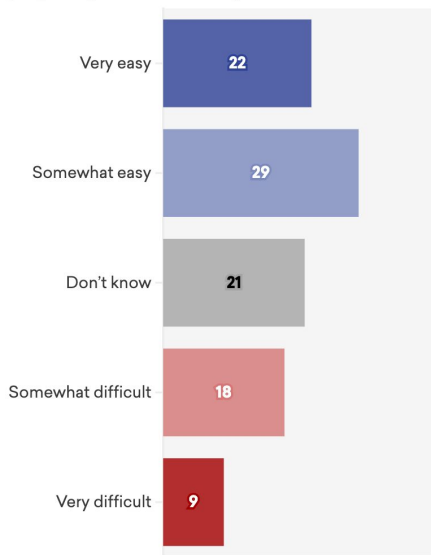
Progressive Activists and Dissenting Disruptors are both less likely than average to say that the government should ensure children are protected from harmful content, even if this means some content is incorrectly labelled as harmful.

What do young people themselves think?

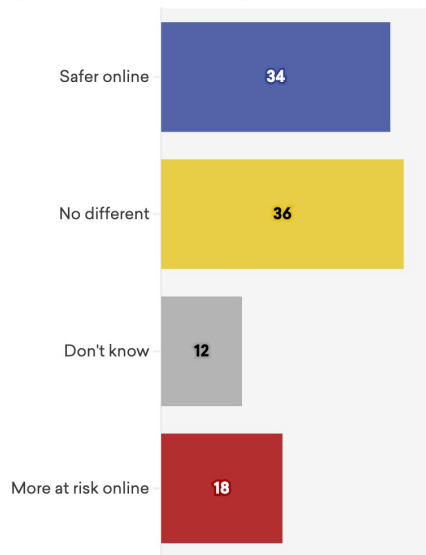
Most young people say it will be easy to bypass the Online Safety Act, and only a third think it will make them safer online

(Only 16 - 17 year olds)

Recently, a new law meant that porn websites and other age restricted material online must verify their users' age. How easy or difficult do you think it is for young people to get around these age checks?



Would you say that laws to verify people's ages on age-restricted websites make you feel...



Young people are broadly supportive of some age restriction on social media. Over 60% of 16-17 year olds say there should be some age limit on social media at 14 or above.

However, many do not think age verification will work. Based on what they have heard over half think it will be easy to circumvent.

As a result, teens are split on whether the OSA makes them feel safer online or not. While 34% say they will feel safer, 36% say they won't.

Young women are marginally more likely than young men to say the act makes them feel safer online.



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More in Common at Labour Party Conference 2025

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Monday 29 September

Come Together: A celebration of what connects us

More in Common, UCL Policy Lab and Citizen UK's Labour conference reception with guest speaker Ed Miliband MP, the Secretary of State for Energy and Net Zero

7:30PM onwards
RIBA North

Tuesday 30 September

What the public thinks: What's next for UK aid?

With Luke Tryl, Baroness Chapman, Dr Jeevun Sandher MP, Moazzam Malik and David Hudson

9AM-10AM

The heat is on: powering up Britain's home energy transition

With Charlie Cooper, Luke Tryl, Martin McCluskey MP (invited), Tom Iowe, Jane Dawson and Richard Hauxwell-Baldwin

10AM-11AM
Nova Scotia

Things can only get hotter: Is ambition on climate and nature a route for electoral success?

With Fiona Harvey, Luke Tryl, Toby Perkins MP, Luke Murphy MP and Angela Francis

12:15PM-1:15PM

What do we think of the speech? Expert analysis of the Prime Minister's speech to party conference

With Luke Tryl, Marc Stears, Josie Rourke, Tom Baldwin and Rachel Sylvester

5:30PM-6:30PM