



**More in
Common**

Out of reach?

Men, masculinity and mainstream politics

November 2025

Foreword from Alistair Stathern MP, Co-chair for Labour Men and Boys Group

Male disillusionment with the political mainstream has been in the spotlight in recent years. As ultra-masculine influencers like Andrew Tate and Jordan Peterson have become household names, thanks in no small part to the cut-through of Stephen Graham's *Adolescence* last year, political demand has grown to tackle the crises of isolation and radicalisation among boys. While implementation of the Online Safety Act has provided an important avenue for action on online misogyny, politicians have often failed to move beyond the superficial when it comes to tackling men's increasing skepticism of mainstream politics.

To focus attention just on young men ignores the fact that men of all ages are growing dissatisfied with our political system, and many feel they exist in a society that does not listen to their concerns, speak to their aspirations or value their contribution. The security of a job for life has been replaced by a growing sense that even if you work hard, there will always be a struggle to make ends meet.

This research is an important first step in understanding the frustrations and priorities of men who feel the social contract is broken. It shows us it is a mistake to conflate the priorities of those who engage in violent misogyny online with the much larger group of men who are frustrated with the status quo, and the many who have grown sceptical that any leadership can change Britain for the better.

Too many men of all ages feel politics has no relevance to their lives. Repeated failures to address 'bread and butter issues' like the cost of living have undermined their faith in our political system and left them open to more radical political actors. On top of this, our political squeamishness in talking about men's issues and aspirations on their own terms fuels a sense that politics doesn't speak to them, or create space for men to define manhood on their own terms.

Hard-right politics offer an easy solution to the problems Britain faces: tear down our existing institutions and start from scratch. We owe these men and boys far better than this. This report tells us they are socially disconnected, highly pessimistic, and feel they lack the agency to improve their lives. We need to empower these men to take back control. Only then can we break the doom loop that says Britain's problems - and by extension their own - cannot be solved.

Introduction

It is a well-worn observation that people are increasingly disillusioned with politics. Many feel overlooked by elites, distrustful of traditional institutions and lack faith in mainstream politics to improve their lives. The effect of this has been significant, with the two traditional main political parties - Labour and the Conservatives - now attracting the support of fewer than two in five people between them, a modern low. Though men and women share disillusionment, they express it differently - with disillusioned men forming the base of rising support for Reform UK.

The last few years have seen more attention paid to the impact of our shifting social and political dynamics on men and serious questions asked about whether enough focus has been paid to supporting men in navigating those changes. There have been a number of studies and research which suggests some young men in particular are becoming more disengaged from society and finding comfort in extreme ideologies: hating women, embracing violence, shunning social connections.

These two trends - political disillusionment among men, and the radicalisation of some boys and young men - are often conflated. Yet they represent distinct, if sometimes overlapping, phenomena. It is true that within the youngest generation of men there is a minority with extreme views on gender roles, whose politics is dominated by cultural issues. Yet men who have become disillusioned with politics are principally not this group, but an older cohort - who care primarily about their ability to build a decent life and provide for their families, a basic aspiration that feels out of reach. They want the state to do more to enable them to meet that aspiration.

Who really are the men disillusioned with mainstream politics? What would it take to win them back? This research seeks to provide a starting point in answering these questions, and signals how political parties can better speak to the concerns of disillusioned men in a way that resonates, before disillusionment turns into grievances with the potential to fuel either further disengagement or even extremism. There is an electoral imperative here too: understanding the perspectives of those men who feel society isn't currently working for them is vital for any party seeking electoral success and policymakers attempting to rebuild trust and support.

Key insights

Disillusionment is widespread across the British public - but men and women have increasingly divergent politics.

Disillusioned men are financially worse off than other men, less happy and more socially disconnected.

Underlying disillusioned men's frustration with politics is a belief that a decent life where they can provide for their family is out of reach - and that changing that requires government support.

It is a mistake to conflate the priorities of those who engage in online debates around masculinity with those of disillusioned men across the country - who most want to see action on bread and butter issues.

Messengers seen as 'straight talkers' are most appreciated by disillusioned men. Leaders seen as strong and tough can also connect with this group.

Disillusioned men feel unable to speak freely about masculinity and tend to think politicians care less about challenges facing men.

Disillusionment among men and boys

There is growing disillusionment across the British public

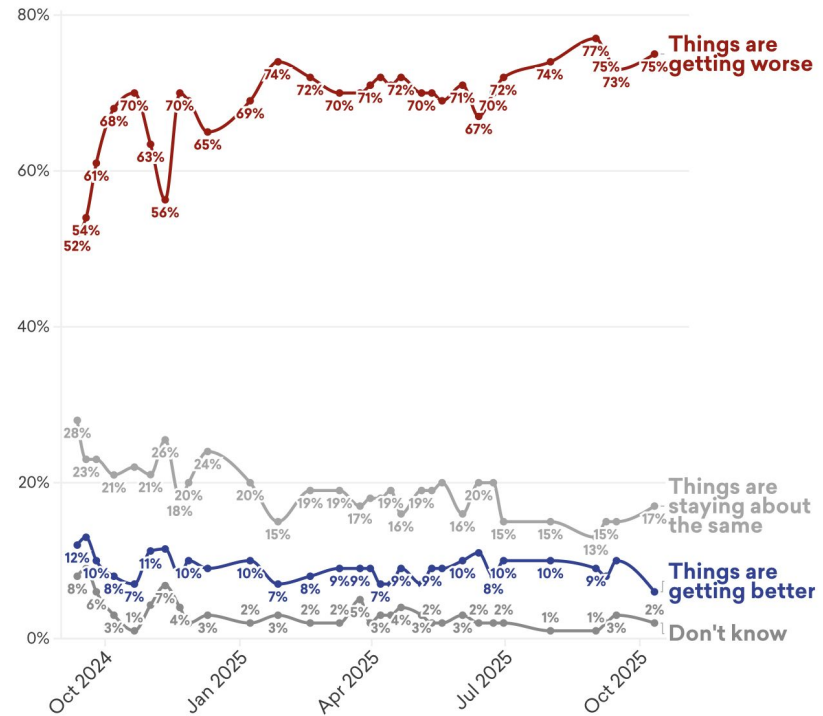
Much of the British public is deeply unhappy with the status quo, and there is little optimism that things will improve. Seven in ten Britons feel that the country is getting worse - a proportion which has grown significantly over the past year.

Against this backdrop, many are disengaging from politics. Nearly one in two feel that voting and politics don't matter 'because we always get the same kind of politicians in charge'. If you ask people which political leader would be the best Prime Minister (from the three leading parties) - the most popular answer is 'none of the above'.

"It seems like things are getting a lot more expensive, but the salaries aren't rising to match the cost. And just like public services seems to be getting worse... everything in general just seems to be getting worse and more expensive."

Frank, Black Country

Most think things are getting worse
Thinking about the UK today, would you say...



Disillusionment is not unique to men...

Political disengagement has been well documented and was highlighted clearly by the 2024 General Election, which had the lowest turnout in modern history.

Though discourse has tended to centre on young people's attitudes towards politics, and in particular young men, disillusionment is not unique to one demographic group, but widespread across the country.

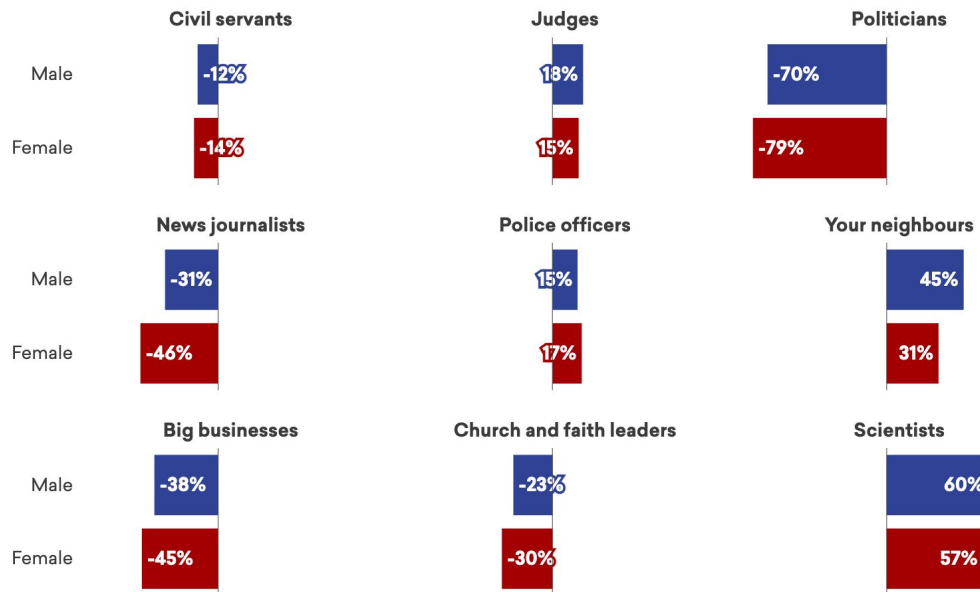
Men and women have similar levels of pessimism and distrust in politics. In fact women tend to be slightly more sceptical of institutional actors such as news journalists and politicians than their male counterparts.

"I just think the news channels are, especially the mainstream media is very, very subjective... I just don't believe most of what they're saying, it's just telling us their own narratives."

Abdu, Leeds

How much trust do you have in the following?

Showing % who said they trust 'A great deal' or 'Quite a lot' - 'Not Very Much' or 'Not at all'



...But men and women have divergent politics

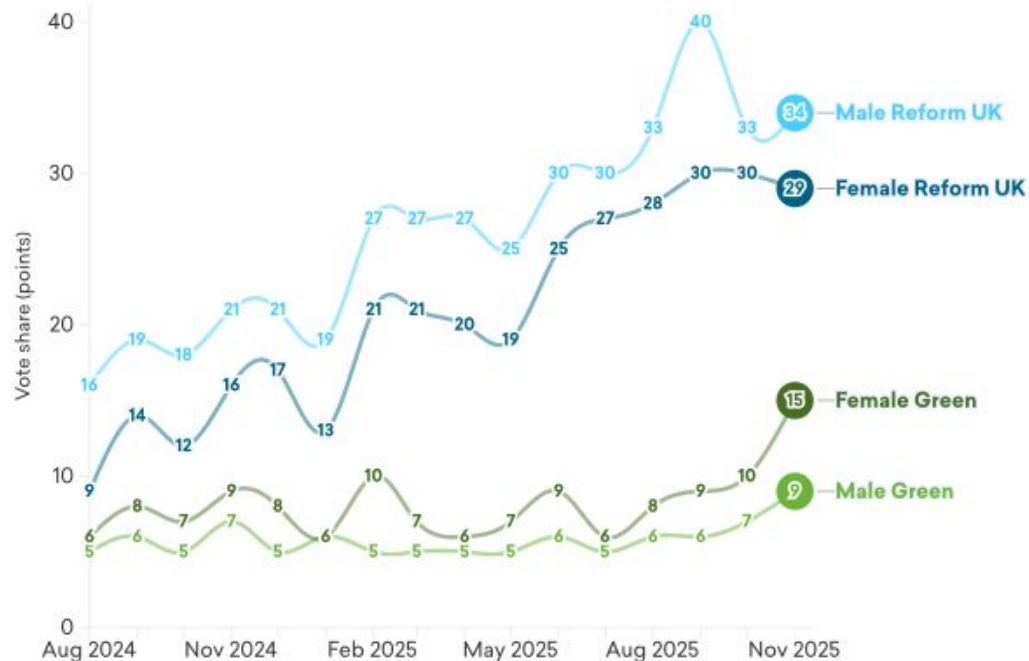
Yet gender is a key faultline in British politics today.

In 2024, the main parties' electoral coalitions were more or less evenly split between the genders. But women were far more likely to stay home while men were far more likely to vote Reform. Today, three in five likely Green voters are women.

It's not just party support that sets men and women apart. Attitudes diverge on issues such as technology, where men tend to be more optimistic, and climate change, where men are more sceptical of climate commitments. Men are also more likely to take a tougher stance on immigration.

It is therefore important for those interested in understanding disillusionment to understand the contours of this new gender politics to explore what shapes disillusionment in men and women, and identify effective approaches to rebuilding political trust.

Voting intention for non mainstream parties



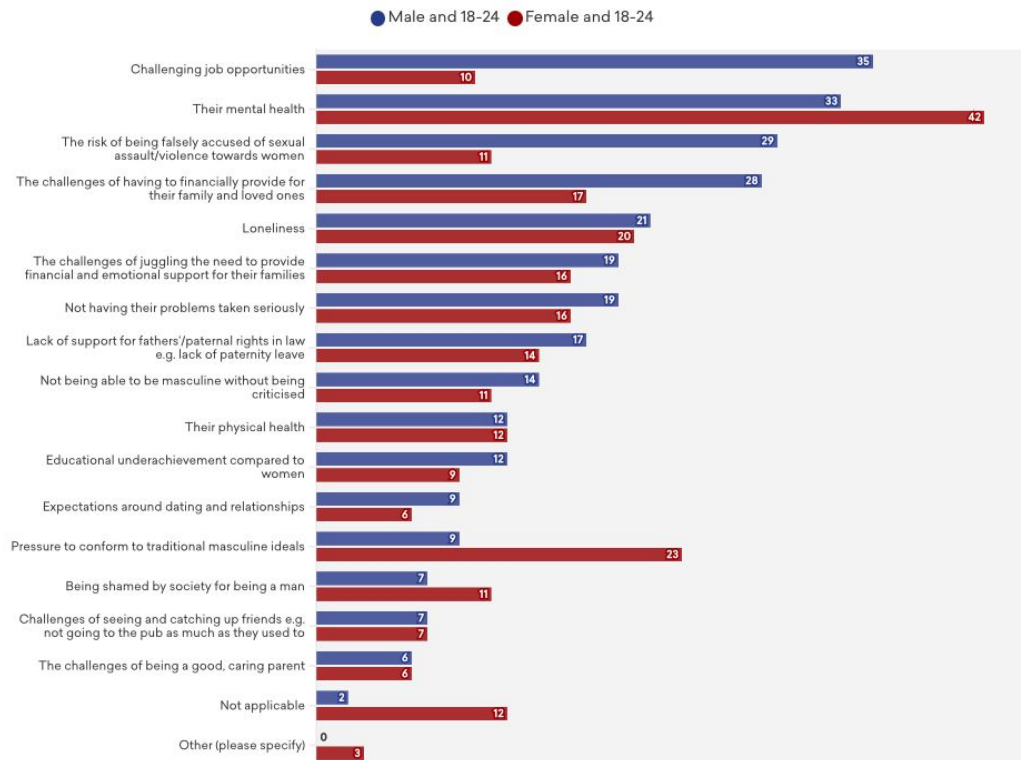
Young men have outlier views on gender roles and masculinity

Political disillusionment among men and the radicalisation of boys and young men are often conflated, yet they represent distinct, if sometimes overlapping, phenomena.

Within the youngest generation of men a significant minority hold more extreme views on gender roles, and cultural issues often form a larger part of their political views. Young men are more concerned than others about false accusations of sexual violence - they are twice as likely as men from other generations to see this as one of the main problems facing men in Britain.

Yet men who have become disillusioned with politics are principally not this younger group, but an older cohort - whose politics centres on bread and butter issues such as the cost of living and immigration.

What do you think the biggest problems facing men in Britain today are? Please select up to three.



Who are the disillusioned men?

Jack

“At the minute I'm a bit sort disillusioned with politics to the point where - I would never necessarily condone this - but you start thinking, well what's the best option? Would Reform be a better option now? I mean it's a discussion. No, at the minute I'm disillusioned with politics. I think they're all well, they're all as bad as each other, the only caveat I will say is I am on Twitter and I do follow Zach Polanski from the Green Party who has actually really sort of endeared me a little bit as a person, as a leader. Seems a little bit more out there. So if I'm looking for a change, my stance used to be Labour, whilst at one point I might have considered Reform, I definitely, I don't think I would now. Whether I would even consider voting in future, I don't know.”

Jack works as a delivery driver in Liverpool. He feels significant pressure each day to provide for his family. While he doesn't have a rigid idea of what a man's role is, he wishes he could afford for his wife to have the choice to work less and spend more time with their son.

He's deeply disillusioned with politics, chiefly because of what he sees as a lack of action on cost-of-living pressures like rising food prices and energy bills. Having once supported Jeremy Corbyn, he feels let down by Labour. While he finds some aspects of Reform UK and the Green Party appealing, he thinks it's most likely he won't vote in the next general election. To win him back, he says he'd want to see a clear, honest and tangible plan to tackle the cost-of-living pressures he experiences every day.

James

"I wouldn't be surprised if [Farage] was just another typical politician. Says all the right things of what people wanna hear and then they get into power and actually do nothing... It doesn't really feel like it makes any difference. Sometimes I think the damage is already done."

James is a father of two young children who works in construction in Liverpool. It's difficult to juggle parenting and work and, even though it might seem old-fashioned, he'd love to be able to provide enough for his wife that she could stay home with the kids - though he thinks she prefers having her own career.

Things are going well for him and his family, but when he looks at the country he thinks it isn't in the best state. He doesn't get chance to watch the news much but he sees political content on social media and talks about it with his dad, who he looks up to.

James doesn't think of himself as right wing but wants to give Reform a go. He isn't convinced by Labour, pointing to their failures to stop the boats or clear asylum seekers out of hotels. He wants to feel hopeful that a Reform government would be different but nothing changed after he voted Brexit, which makes him think the system just gets in the way of progress. Someone like Trump would give him more confidence because he was right about immigration and he says what he thinks.

Karl

"I just want someone that if they say they're going to do something, do it. And I know that's politics, but I suppose a good example whether we agree or disagree from in America: Trump. What he says he wants to do, he's doing, whether that's right, wrong or indifference, you're never going to please everybody. And he's quite clear on that. He just goes and does what he feels is right, whether it's right or wrong or every, he speaks out of turn, I just want someone with a bit of backbone and they want to get from A to C and they'll get there whatever happens."

Karl works as a plumber in the north of England. While he grew up in a Labour family, he voted Reform at the last General Election, seeing Labour as a bit too left-wing but not wanting to vote Conservative. However, since then he has become a bit more disengaged and is not sure how or whether he will vote in the next election.

As the breadwinner in his family, it's important to him to provide for his wife, who works part-time, and two children. Being self-employed, he's worried about being sick and not being able to pay the bills. Despite financial pressures he has recently taken out private health insurance, as he is concerned about queues in the NHS if either of his children gets ill. He isn't wedded to the idea of being a breadwinner, and would be comfortable with his wife doing this if she had a high-paying job, but recognises the impact having children has on women's careers and so sees it more as his role. He wants politicians with integrity first and foremost: someone who sticks to what they say they will do, and does what is right. He wants someone with a backbone to tackle the key issues that are affecting people like him: the cost of living and the NHS.

Sam

"I think a big part of the issue for men nowadays is there is always going to be a stigma of men need to be providers for the house, but it's becoming more and more difficult with the cost of living crisis to provide the job markets really, really difficult lately to get a job getting on the property ladder as well is just, to me it's just, I'm looking at it and I'm thinking I'm not going to be on there until I'm like 35, you know what I mean? I'm 20 now, there's just no chance I ever earn enough money with the cost of living to then get onto to the property ladder as well."

Sam is 20 and has just started a Law degree in Birmingham. Sam isn't disengaged - he consumes lots of news on social media - but he's disillusioned. He thinks all politicians are just out there to serve themselves not the people, particularly after 'partygate'.

Sam is not confident about the future. His aspirations in life aren't radical - he just wants to be able to have a family he can provide for without having to worry about paying the bills. Sam's not sure that even with a good degree he will be able to buy his own home until he's middle-aged.

Sam didn't vote at the last election because he thought Labour's victory was guaranteed. He intends to vote next time. Though temperamentally a Conservative, he says it will be a choice between Reform and the Greens as both Labour and the Conservatives represent the past of British politics. Put off by some of the strength of Reform's rhetoric on race issues and immigration, he will probably vote Green. Sam just wants political leaders who are honest with the public - including explaining why they are making tough decisions.

The disillusionment index

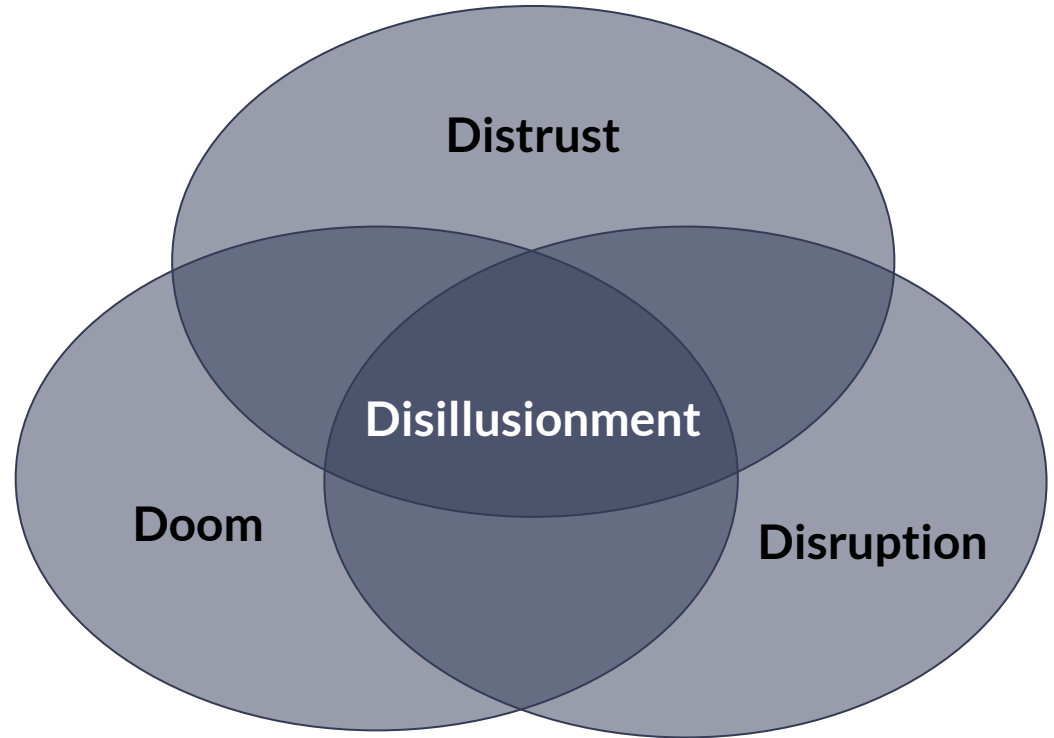
Healthy scepticism of politicians is certainly nothing new, and arguably a sign of a robust democracy.

However current levels of disillusionment go beyond that healthy scepticism, leading people to question not just individual politicians but democratic institutions themselves, while others seek to disengage entirely.

Political disillusionment - expressed as a rejection of mainstream politics or engagement with the political system - is a foundational shift in attitude. It is the culmination of a sustained erosion of trust, a loss of attachment to civic systems and institutions, and a lack of hope that things might improve.

The disillusionment index measures these three dimensions of distrust, doom and disruption.

Through the lens of the disillusionment index, we can learn about Disillusioned Men - what their lives are like, what shapes their attitudes and how politics may be able to better connect with them.



The disillusionment index

Distrust

Deep-seated distrust in politicians is a foundational feature of disillusionment.

Rather than a short-term loss of trust in an individual or particular party, this represents a long-term erosion of trust in politicians as a class and the institutions they work in.

Distrust is measured by the belief that in Britain politicians only do what they think is best for themselves - a view shared by 63 per cent of British men.

Doom

Entrenched pessimism is another key dimension of disillusionment.

While many are facing tough times, it is a lack of hope and fatalism that things won't improve any time soon, if ever, that marks out political disillusionment.

We measure doom in the feeling, held by two in three British men, that in the UK today things are only getting worse.

Disruption

Those who feel disillusioned with the status quo lose attachment to the institutions that sustain it and favour disruption and radical overhaul.

We measure disruptive attitudes by whether people agree more with the statement *"When I think about our political and social institutions, I cannot help thinking 'just let them all burn'"* than *"Our political and social institutions are worth preserving and improving, not destroying"*. One in three British men would rather see institutions burned down.

It is the combination of distrust in politicians, sense of doom about the future and preference for disruption that characterises Disillusioned men.

Disillusionment is widespread, with one in eight deeply disillusioned

13 per cent of men in Britain today can be thought of as deeply politically disillusioned - with a further 60 per cent partially disillusioned. The challenge for mainstream politics and civil society then is how to bring disillusioned men back into the fold.

There is a generational divide between disillusioned men and other men. **Disillusioned men are more likely to be aged 35-54** - and least likely to be from younger Gen Z.

The most disillusioned group exists outside the so-called metropolitan elite. They are **less likely to live in London or to have gone to university** - fewer than one in four have a degree, compared to 42 per cent of non-disillusioned men. Nine in ten are ethnically white (a higher proportion than the general population) and most are not religious.

Middle-aged men are the most politically disillusioned

● Disillusioned men ● Partially disillusioned men ● Not disillusioned men



Disillusioned men are more likely to vote Reform

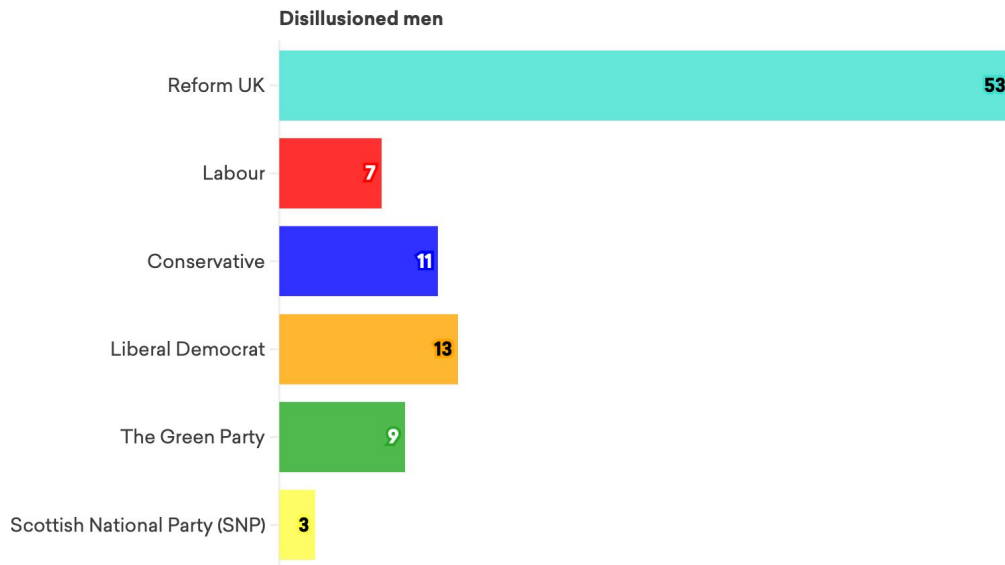
By virtue of the fact they are less likely to vote, the views of disillusioned men can go unnoticed by Westminster. **Turnout at the last General Election was significantly lower among this group** than other men, and they are half as likely as other men to post daily about current affairs on social media.

When they do participate in politics, this group's dissatisfaction with the status-quo has made them look for alternatives to the mainstream political parties. Disillusioned men have a particularly strong anti-incumbent sentiment: Labour earns the support of just 7 per cent with this group. Instead, this group would predominantly vote reform - half of disillusioned men say in an election tomorrow they would vote Reform, and Reform leader Nigel Farage has an approval rating of +3 with this group (compared to -16 among the general public).

Farage's plain speaking and Reform's insurgent platform has succeeded in renewing optimism and trust among some disillusioned men. **One in two say that if Reform UK won the next election they would have at least some hope that they would deliver the change Britain needs.**

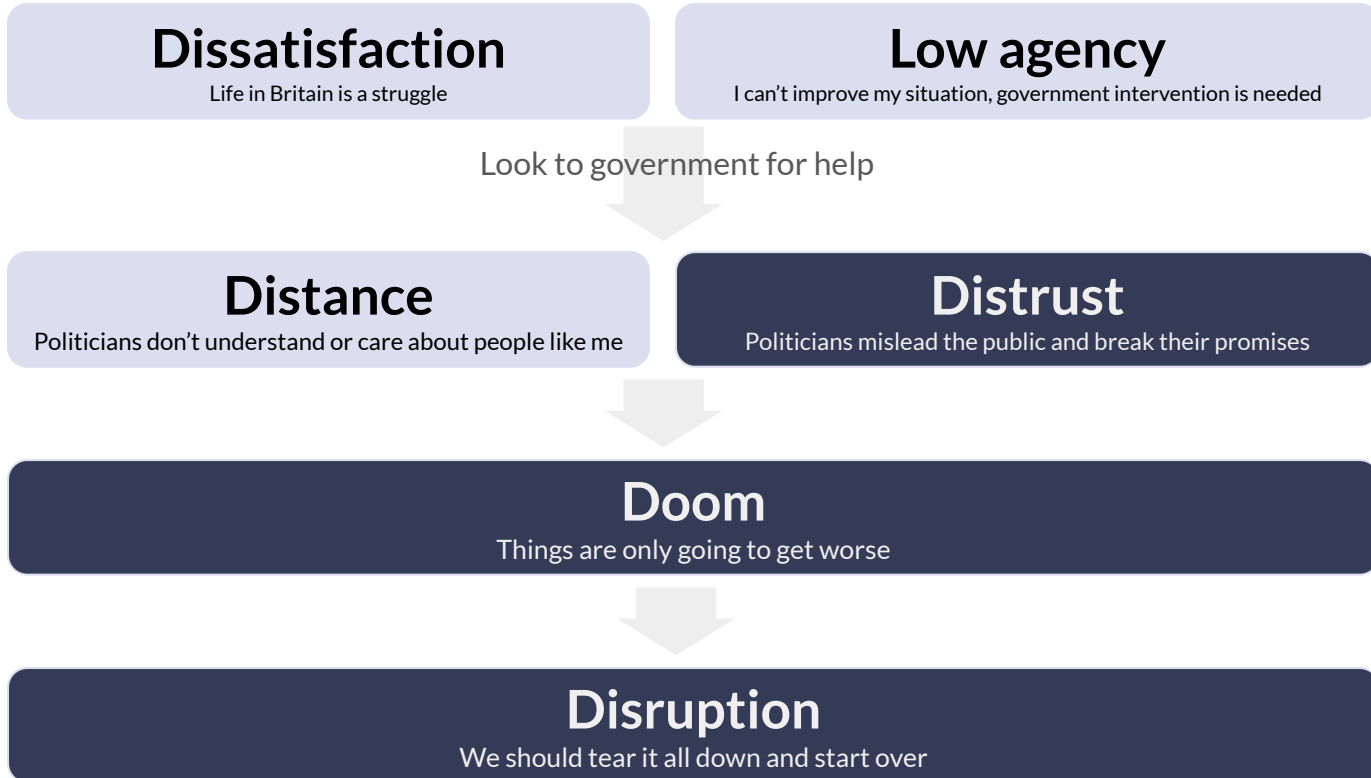
More than half of Disillusioned men say they would for Reform UK

If a general election was called tomorrow, which party would you vote for?



What shapes disillusioned men's attitudes?

The disillusionment mechanism



Dissatisfaction

Disillusioned men tend to be worse off financially

Just over half of Britons consider themselves financially comfortable, but only 36 per cent of disillusioned men. At the other end of the spectrum, one in four disillusioned men say they struggle to make ends meet, and often go without essentials.

To some extent financial struggle defines this group - in conversations about their lives, the cost of living is an inescapable undercurrent. Their personal experiences feed a broader sense that the system does not work, and creates a divide between those around them who are finding life hard and others who do not have to struggle.

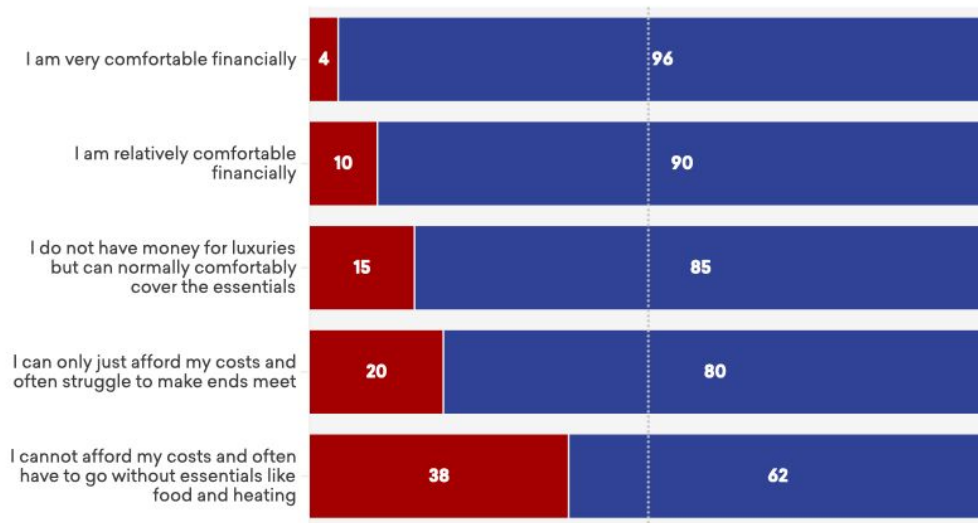
"You're working literally just to survive from week to week or month to month. When you look, reality is, and I say it quite often, I go to the office every single day, I'm out every weekend and I sit there and I try to justify myself doing so many hours because I'm no better off than the bloke that sits in the house all day and just claims the benefits. So you literally just go to work to survive. And that's reality."

Sam, Wolverhampton

Men struggling to make ends meet are far more likely to be Disillusioned

How well off would you say you feel?

● Disillusioned ● Not Disillusioned



Disillusioned men feel they are losing while others win

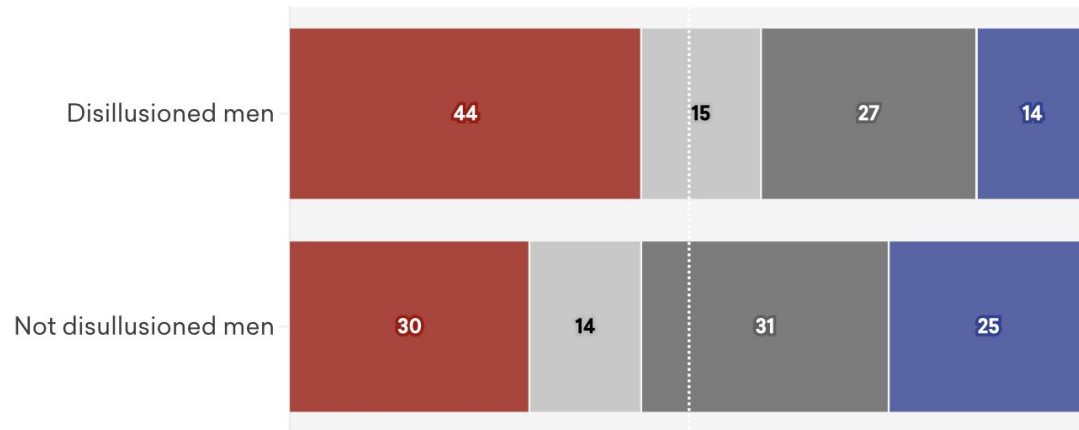
Economic circumstances have fuelled zero-sum thinking about government priorities. Disillusioned men are not only dissatisfied with their own lot, but have a sense that others are winning while they are losing out.

In focus group conversations, many take a zero sum approach to debates about who the government should prioritise, assuming a focus on immigrants is detracting from the government's ability to help existing British citizens. Spending cuts, such as the decision to restrict the Winter Fuel Allowance for pensioners or disability benefit cuts, have exacerbated zero sum thinking as the public perceive public spending debates in terms of how to divide an ever smaller pie.

Disillusioned Men are more zero-sum on gender equality

Thinking about the progress over the last few decades that has been made to help progress the rights and opportunities of women, like in the workplace, which of the following comes closest to your view?

- This progress has come at the expense of men
- This progress has had no significant effect on men
- Don't know
- This progress has benefitted men



Disillusioned men are less happy in their personal lives

It is perhaps no surprise that disillusioned men, many of whom experience financial difficulty, are less content with their lives than others. They are twice as likely as other men to score their life satisfaction at less than five out of ten.

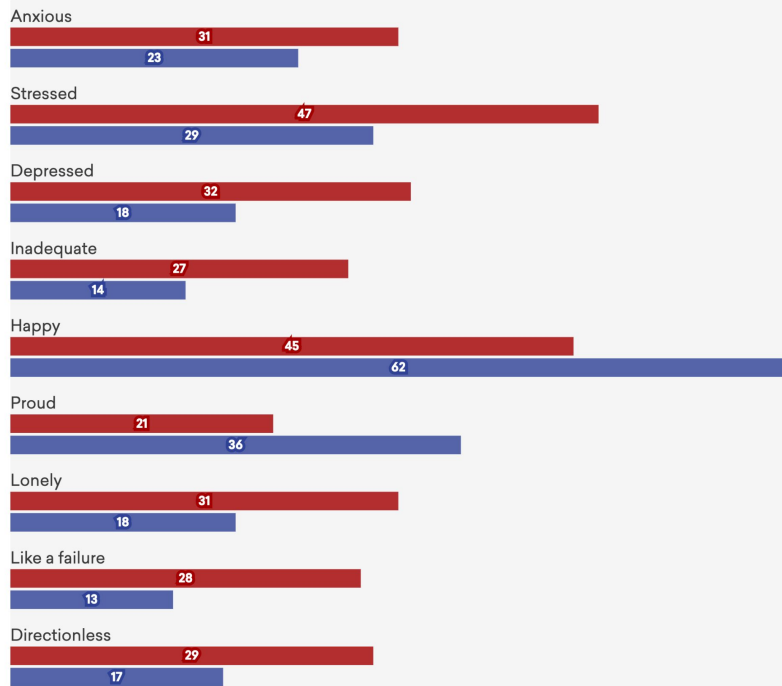
The poor emotional wellbeing of this group is striking. When asked how they feel about life at the moment, the word used most often is 'depressed' - and three in ten say they feel depressed multiple times a week. Half feel stressed several times a week - more than the proportion who feel happy. They also report feelings of inadequacy and directionless more often than other men.

"I'd like to do nice things with [my son] and I just think those things were coming few and far between.. So that's having an impact on my quality of life really as a father. I want to be able to provide for my son, take him to do nice things and I just feel like maybe just don't have as many opportunities to do that. It's more work or no, we can't have that now and I just think it is definitely impacting on your life a little bit."

Jack, Liverpool

Disillusioned Men are more likely to feel stressed, lonely and like a failure than not disillusioned men

How often, if at all, would you say you have felt the following over the last 12 months?
(per cent selecting daily or several times a week)



Disillusioned men are socially disconnected

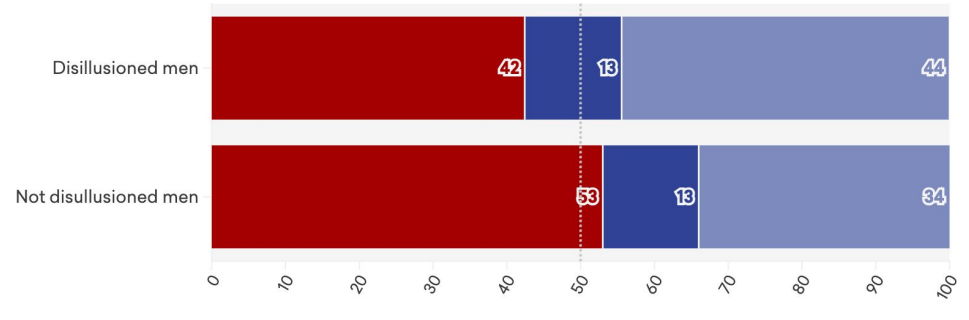
As well as discontentment in their personal lives, most disillusioned men feel disconnected from society at large. **Two in three (65 per cent) say they feel disconnected to society around them**, compared to 42 per cent among other men.

Many are socially isolated - less than half say friends or family seek out advice from them. One in ten feel they have no good friends and, in an average week, most spend no time with friends at all.

Less than half of disillusioned men feel that friends and family come to them for advice

Which of the following best describes you?

- Friends, family members and those I know often seek my advice on problems they are facing
- Don't know
- Friends, family members and those I know rarely seek my advice on problems they are facing



Source: More in Common • November 2025

"I used to go to the pub and socialise and talk to a lot more people pre covid and I think since the covid it's made me a little bit more unsociable... I don't go to the pub as often as I did... obviously it's not helping with the pub closures as well."

Gordon, Dudley

Disillusioned men have less pride in place

This group's social disconnection extends to a lack of pride in place. While most still have national pride, **a third of disillusioned men do not feel proud to be British** - twice the proportion as non-disillusioned men. It is likely their disillusionment that means many in this group find it hard to take pride in a Britain they think has lost its way.

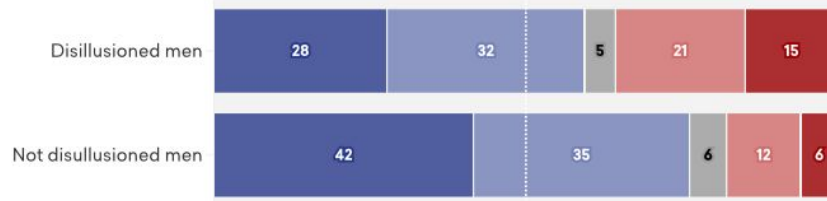
Nearly three in ten say they are not proud to be from their local area or community. As well as suggesting that disillusioned men lack strong roots in their community, this may reflect the current state of the places they live. **Just one in three say that their local area has good and affordable spaces where they can catch up with friends**, compared to half of men more generally.

Disillusioned men are less proud to be British

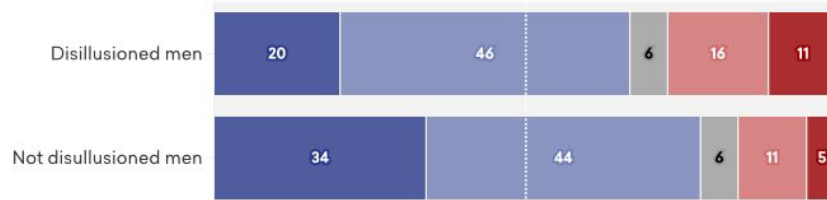
How proud are you of the following:

● Very proud ● Somewhat proud ● Don't know ● Not very proud ● Not at all proud

Being British



Being from you local community/town/city



Source: More in Common, November 2025

"Starmer saying he's very proud of this country and its free speech and he keeps going on about it - this country has got no free speech. It's worse than ever."

James, Liverpool

Lack of agency

Disillusioned men feel a lack of agency

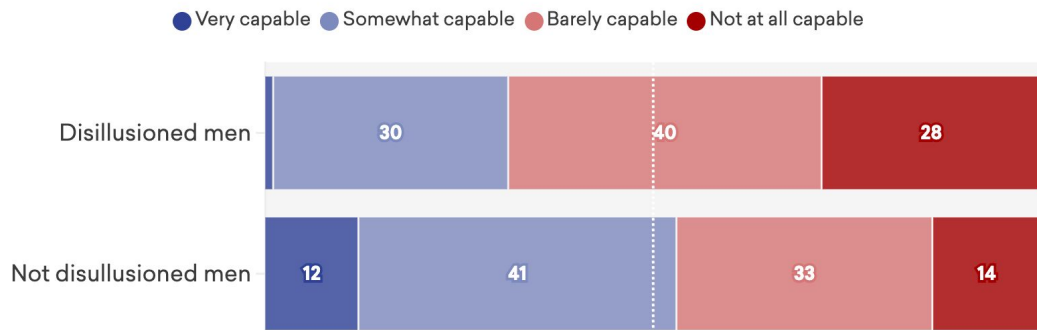
Underlying disillusioned men's frustration with 'politics as usual' is not only a dissatisfaction with their lives, but a belief that improving their circumstances is out of their hands and dependent on structural forces outside of their control.

While seven in ten men overall think that improving their finances depends more on personal than government action, 45 per cent of disillusioned men believe it depends more on government action. Many also believe government action has more sway over whether they can have a successful career (25 per cent) or improve their mental health (17 per cent). Other men are twice as likely as disillusioned men to feel very capable of changing their own life.

Disillusioned men are even less hopeful when it comes to bringing about wider societal change. Fewer than a third feel their actions would be even somewhat capable of changing their local community, let alone the country.

Disillusioned men do not feel they can make a difference, even to their local community

How much do you think the actions you take are capable of changing the following:
[Your local community]



Disillusioned men see the social contract as broken

In the eyes of this group, the social contract has been broken. Far from believing in a British dream, **seven in ten disillusioned men feel that no matter how hard you work you will always struggle to have a comfortable life in Britain** - they are more than twice as likely to take this view as other men.

This reinforces a sense of futility around working within the system if a good life is perceived to lie out of reach regardless of their efforts, and it also contributes to the group's openness to disrupting the status quo.

"I think everyone's in the same predicament, aren't they? You don't stand a chance unless you're a high earner. You're literally just working from paycheck to paycheck."

Alan, Liverpool

"It seems a little bit impossible at the moment to get onto the property ladder just with continuous rising costs in housing and shortage of housing."

Daniel, Black Country

Disillusioned men do not feel that hard work pays off

Please indicate which statement you agree with more using a scale of 1 to 4 where 1 means you completely agree with the first statement and 4 with the second statement

- 1- If you work hard enough, you will be able to enjoy a nice, comfortable life in Britain
- 2-
- 3-
- 4- No matter how hard you work, you will always struggle to have a comfortable life in Britain



Disillusioned men put the blame primarily on politicians

The low agency of this group means that they see other groups as responsible for the problems Britain faces. This is not only about the governing class - illegal immigrants are also seen as responsible for causing Britain's problems, as are the very wealthy and big businesses.

However, the bulk of the blame is laid at the feet of politicians - 89 per cent of disillusioned men say politicians are very or entirely responsible for the country's problems.

In theory, then, disillusioned men see politics as both primarily responsible for causing the current situation, and the vehicle for solving it. Counter-intuitively this group look to politics for help, and its failure (whether through incompetence or unwillingness) to deliver that help further reinforces their disillusionment.

Disillusioned men blame politicians for the country's problems

How much do you think each of the following are responsible for the problems Britain faces today?

● Almost entirely responsible ● Very responsible ● Don't know ● Somewhat responsible ● Not at all responsible

Disillusioned men



Source: More in Common, November 2025

"When Blair came in, I thought that was a really good move... you could see the direction, you could see where he wanted to go and at the time it seemed like they were putting the policies, everything was just going right. But obviously in hindsight now looking back, he was as dodgy as everyone else."

Karl, Liverpool

Illegal immigration is deemed a driving factor

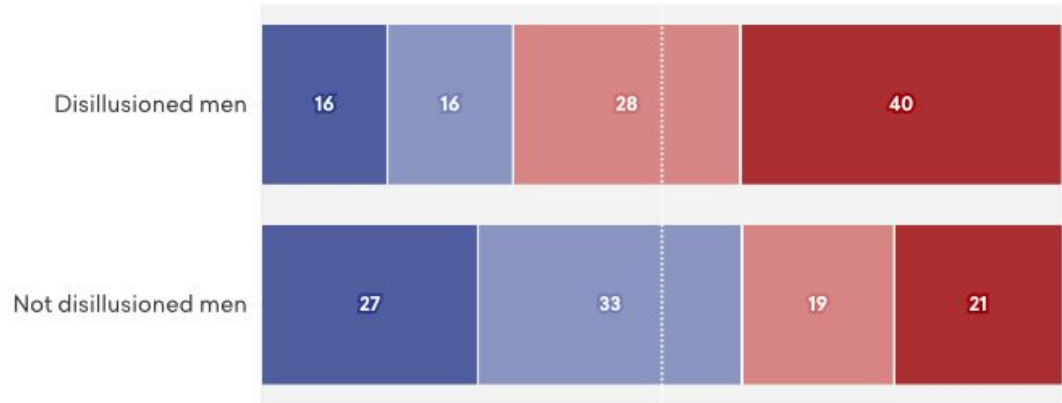
Immigration, alongside the cost of living, are the key issues shaping public opinion across the country - and for disillusioned men, concerns about migration are particularly salient.

Most disillusioned men see illegal immigrants and asylum seekers as being partly responsible for the problems Britain faces today. A perceived failure to secure British borders contributes to a sense that the government lacks capability to fix the country's problems or control over what is happening in the UK.

Disillusioned men feel multiculturalism threatens our national identity

Which comes closest to your view?

- 1 - Multiculturalism benefits our national identity
- 2 -
- 3 -
- 4 - Multiculturalism threatens our national identity



Distance and distrust

Disillusioned men don't see themselves represented in politics

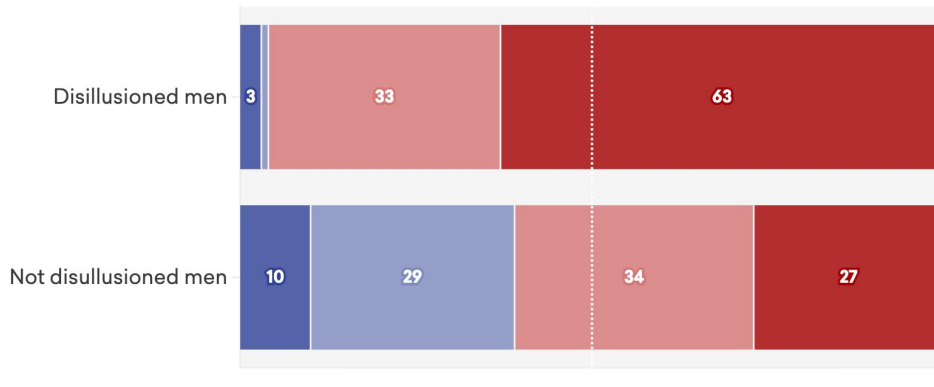
Beyond issues of delivery, a deeper driver of distrust and disillusionment is a sense among these men that politicians are not like them - and do not respect, understand or represent them.

Nine in ten disillusioned men say politicians do not care about areas like theirs or people like them. Instead, politicians are seen to perpetuate a system that works first and foremost for themselves and the wealthy and powerful - 84 per cent of disillusioned men agree there is one law for the rich and one law for the poor.

Disillusioned Men overwhelmingly feel politicians do not care about their community

Please indicate which statement you agree with more using a scale of 1 to 4 where 1 means you completely agree with the first statement and 4 with the second statement

- 1- Politicians care about areas like my local community ● 2- ● 3- ● 4- Politicians do not care about areas like my local community



Source: More in Common, November 2025

"Most of the people who progress generationally into politics are from politicians or people of wealth. They probably all go to Eton or Oxford. We need to start spreading that and getting more people within parliaments who are from normal walks of life, who've got real life experience like ours."

Andrew, Liverpool

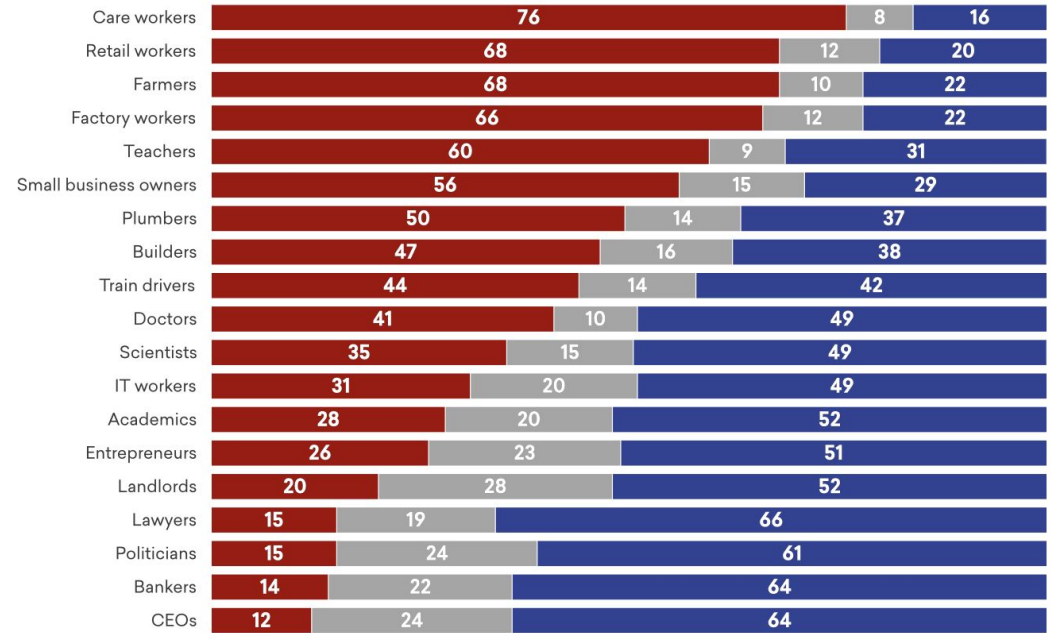
Perceived lack of respect breeds low trust

More in Common's previous research with UCL Policy Lab identified a link between feeling disrespected by politics and institutions, and low levels of institutional trust.

The perceived disconnect between politicians and the communities disillusioned men inhabit, along with a sense that politicians don't respect their contributions to society, feeds an anger at politicians who they see as not having their best interests at heart.

Thinking about the following groups of people, do you think generally they get the respect they deserve or don't get the respect they deserve?

● Don't get the respect they deserve ● Don't know ● Get the respect they deserve



Distrust defines disillusioned men's outlooks

Deep-seated distrust of the political classes and the ability of politics to bring about positive change are defining features of disillusionment. Just eight per cent of disillusioned men expect the Labour Government to improve the lives of people like them.

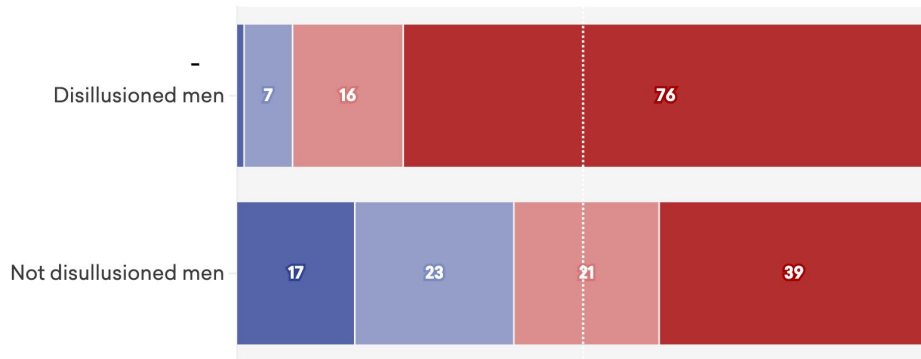
Rather than it being a short-term issue of losing trust in an individual or single party, this represents a long-term erosion of trust, fuelled by a sense of disrespect from politicians as a general class.

The fundamental challenge to those seeking to engage this group is that attempts to rebuild trust are likely be met with scepticism. That in turn may suggest that starting with demonstrating respect is a better way to rebuild trust in the longer term.

Very few disillusioned men expect the Labour Government to improve their lives

Please indicate which statement you agree with more using a scale of 1 to 4 where 1 means you completely agree with the first statement and 4 with the second statement

● 1- I expect the Labour government will improve the lives of people like me ● 2- ● 3- ● 4- I do not expect the Labour government will improve the lives of people like me.



Source: More in Common, November 2025

“Over the years as I've grown up, they always come through with these empty promises and then never follow through on them. Like Labour in government now and they promise all of us are now taxes go up astronomically and they say it's to sort out the NHS, but the NHS is still not, it doesn't even seem like it's getting sorted and now they're on about trying to build more houses, but you don't really see much of that happening. And I feel like there's big crisis like homelessness, things like that they need addressing more as well and I feel like they never really do.”

Sam, Black Country

Doom

Disillusioned men are pessimistic that things will get better

Low faith in politics is not a question of partisan frustration with one government or another - this group are more likely than others to say that even with good political leadership, Britain's problems are insoluble. This stands in contrast to the United States, where faith in politics and optimism around the country improving is highly correlated with whether a voter's preferred party is in charge.

Instead in Britain, disillusioned men's pessimism is entrenched - a sense that it has become harder to succeed in Britain and that the country is getting worse.

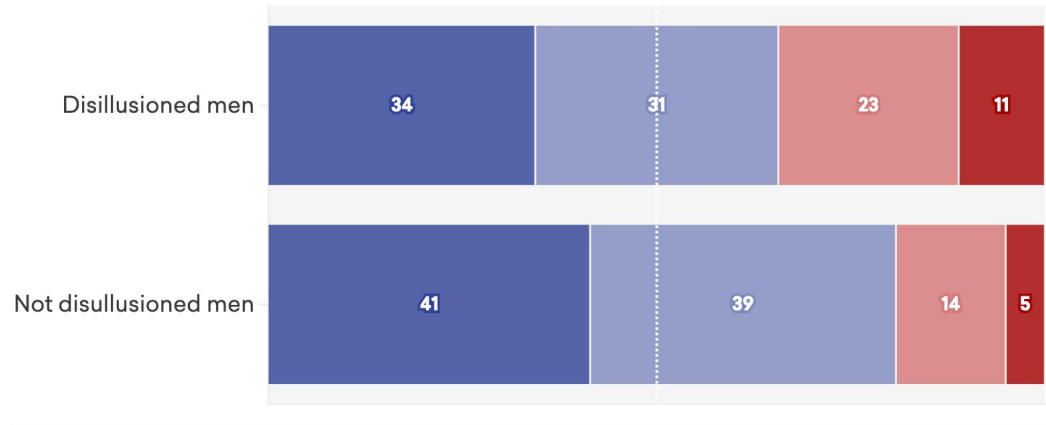
"Seems that a government comes in, they break the system, another government comes in, they fix it, but they don't make it better than what it was previous to the previous government. And then it goes round in a big and then they all blame each other... We're just the lowest of the low. We have no control."

Alex, Liverpool

A third of disillusioned men think that Britain's problems cannot be solved

Please indicate which statement you agree with more using a scale of 1 to 4 where 1 means you completely agree with the first statement and 4 with the second statement

- 1- Britain's problems are capable of being solved with the right political leadership
- 2-
- 3-
- 4- Britain's problems can't be solved even with good political leadership



Disruption

Disillusioned men favour disruptive change

Given disillusioned men's deep sense of malaise and lack of hope that things can be improved - either by individuals or by politics - it is understandable that disillusioned men have little attachment to the status quo and the systems and institutions that sustain it.

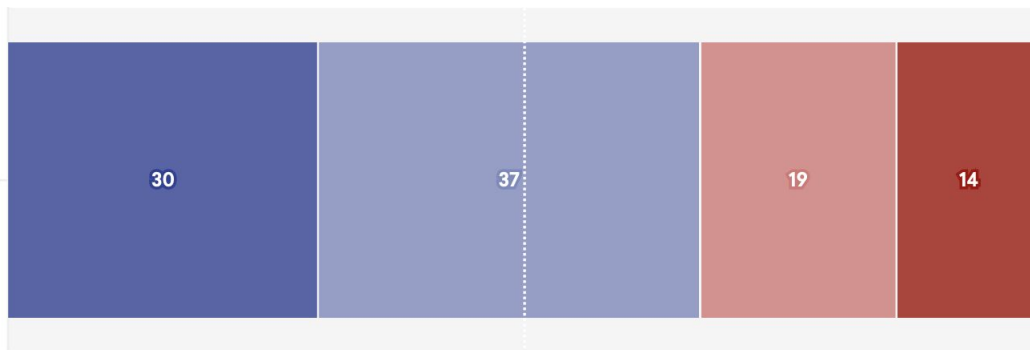
A desire for radical change means many would now prefer to see institutions torn down to start from scratch, rather than have them preserved and improved.

For those who seek to protect British institutions, this highlights the importance of rebuilding political trust among disillusioned men and demonstrating that our shared systems can work for people like them.

Two in five Britons want to burn down rather than preserve and improve institutions

Which comes closest to your view?

- 1 - Our political and social institutions are worth preserving and improving, not destroying.
- 2 -
- 3 -
- 4 - When I think about our political and social institutions, I cannot help thinking "just let them all burn."



Disruption can extend to violence and misogynistic views

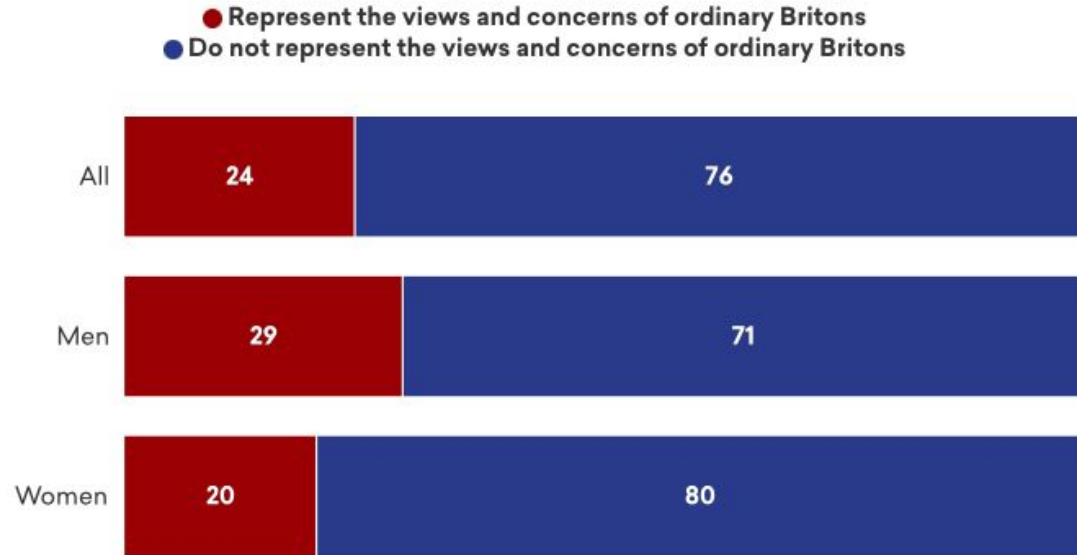
A desire for radical change and disruption renders disillusioned men open to more extreme expressions of political views. This can include violent protests, such as the riots of Summer 2024 - after which men were more likely than women to say the action represented the concerns of ordinary Britons.

Some wish to reverse the direction of travel on social issues, including gender equality. 28 per cent of men feel that society today gives women advantages over men. Three in ten 16-17 year old boys think Britain would be better if we reinstated more traditional gender roles.

Leaving disillusionment to fester represents a risk to those in power that resentment builds to a breaking point and means that radical or even extreme anti-system solutions are seen as the only path forward.

Men are more aligned to Summer 2024 rioters

People participating in these riots...



Addressing disillusioned men's concerns

Disillusioned men's priorities are similar to the rest of the country...

The policies that would most rebuild disillusioned men's confidence are first and foremost bread and butter issues - reducing NHS waiting lists, improving the economy (increasing economic growth, reducing energy bills and reducing grocery costs) and stopping small boat channel crossings.

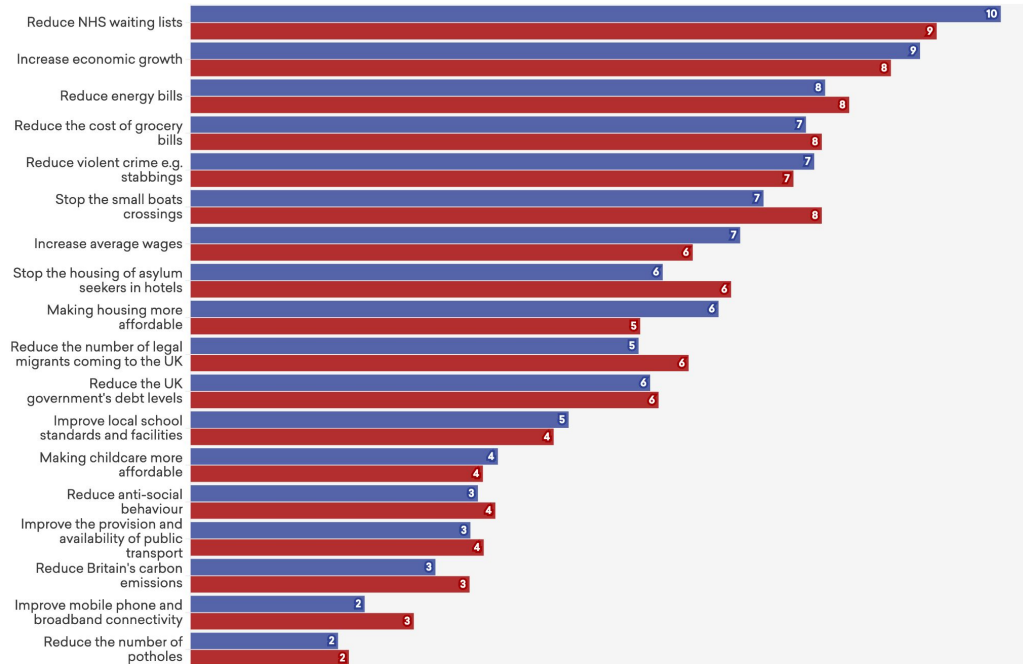
These concerns are broadly in line with the priorities of the public at large. Those engaged in debates around disillusioned men should not conflate cultural issues, on which this group can sometimes have outlier views, with their key priorities.

Indeed until this group feel tangible economic improvements - such as being able to afford their supermarket shop or having something left at the end of the month - it will remain difficult for those in power to challenge a perception that the political system is not working for them.

Disillusioned men have similar priorities to the British Population

Relative score, based on MaxDiff analysis

Please indicate which of these policy outcomes, if achieved, would give you most confidence in the government's ability to address Britain's challenges and which would give you the least.



...But emphasis differs

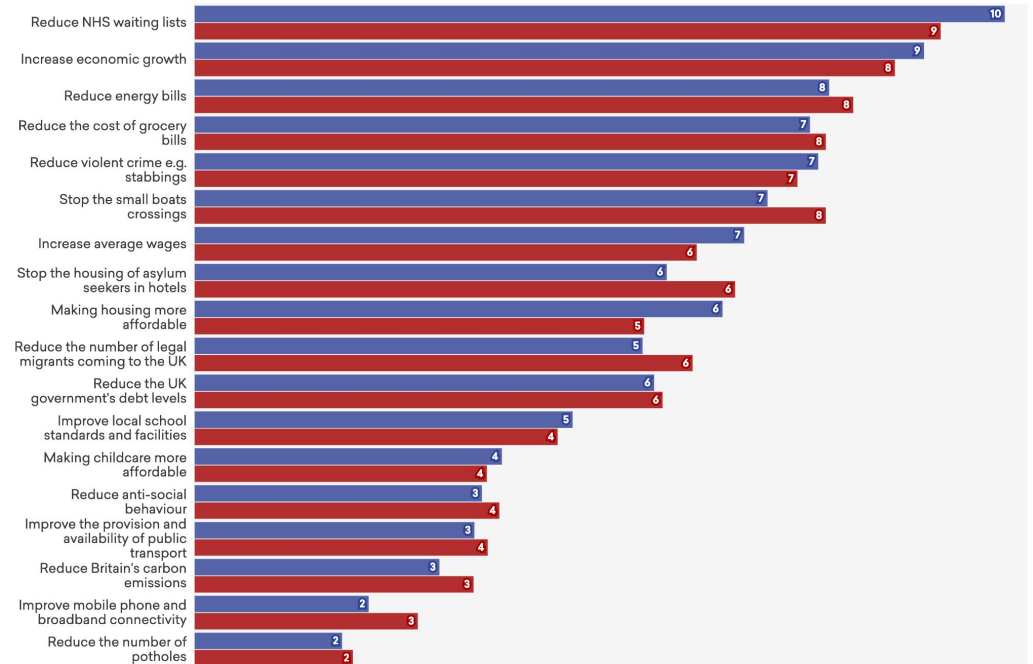
However, where this group most wants to see delivery from government differs slightly from the average Briton. Compared to other men, disillusioned men are more likely to prioritise migration concerns - stopping the small boat crossings, moving asylum seekers out of hotels and bringing down levels of legal migration.

Tangible economic outcomes that make their lives easier - such as cutting energy bills and reducing grocery costs - are seen as more important by this group than others, whereas the more high level or abstract aim of increasing economic growth is relatively less important. Real-world rather than abstract targets may speak more directly to this group's concerns.

Disillusioned men have similar priorities to the British Population

Relative score, based on MaxDiff analysis

Please indicate which of these policy outcomes, if achieved, would give you most confidence in the government's ability to address Britain's challenges and which would give you the least.



Masculinity

Disillusioned men feel unable to talk about masculinity

Nearly half of disillusioned men are worried that they can't talk about what it means to be a man and men's issues with other men for fear of being criticised.

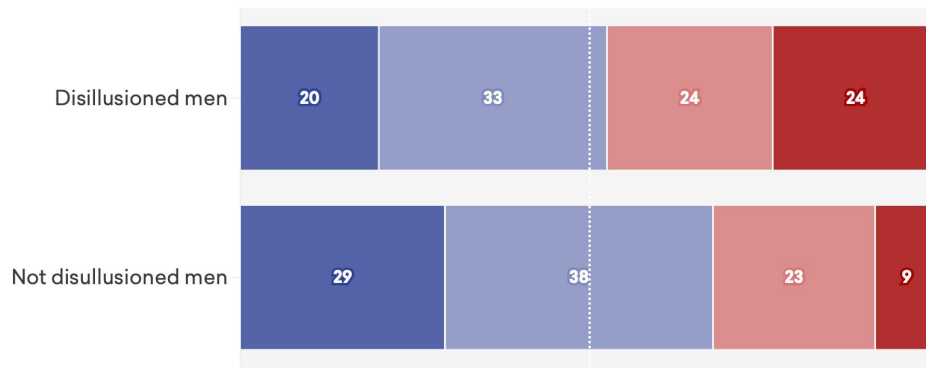
Society's view of men and masculinity ranks higher on disillusioned men's list of problems they have to face in Britain today when compared to other men. In focus groups, disillusioned men share feelings of pressure to provide financially.

Shutting down debates on this topic, or mocking attempts to discuss masculinity, may play a part in furthering this group's sense of social disconnect.

Almost half of disillusioned men fear being criticised if they discuss men's issues with other men

Please indicate which statement you agree with more using a scale of 1 to 4 where 1 means you completely agree with the first statement and 4 with the second statement

- 1- I can talk about what it means to be a man and men's issues with other men without fear of being criticised
● 2- ● 3- ● 4- If I talk about what it means to be a man and men's issues with other men I fear being criticised



Source: More in Common, November 2025

"This might be sound bad, but I'm quite fortunate with my job that it's quite flexible so I can go and pick my little boy up and stuff like that...my wife's in a full-time job fortunately, but if I look to my parents, my dad worked full-time, my mom worked part-time, she minded the kids... Now what I'd like to do is also be able to provide so that she didn't have to so she could focus more on my little boy and work and stuff like that. So I guess it's impacting my mental health, not that I have to chip in, I'm absolutely happy to do that. But it hurts me that I can't free up more of her time to focus on being a mum and being at home with the little boy."

Jack, Liverpool

Politicians are seen to care less about men's issues

Despite the deep concerns disillusioned men have for themselves and where they fit into society, they do not see these concerns reflected in elite debates. In fact a plurality of disillusioned men feel that people in power care more about the problems women face than the problems men face.

Politicians acknowledging the specific challenges men face and validating their concerns may go some way to helping these men feel more understood and represented by those in power.

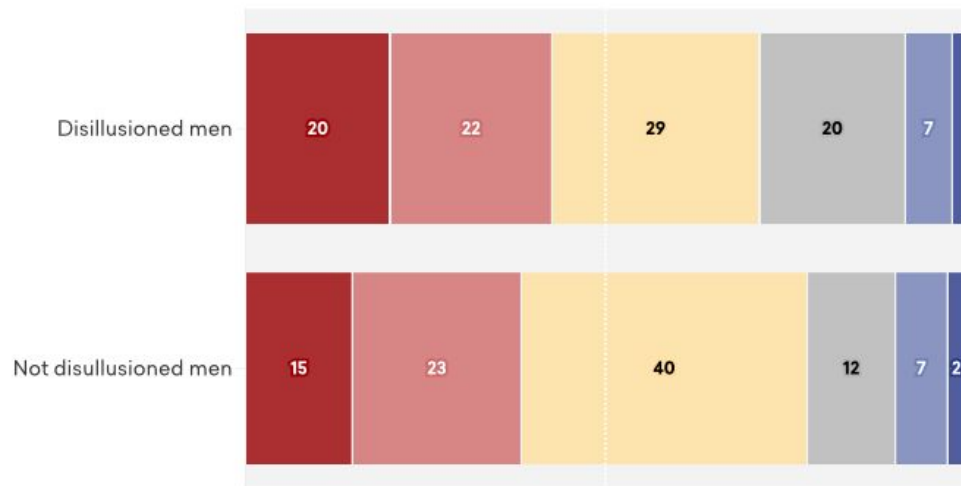
Previous research with the Movember Institute of Men's Health found highlighting issues specific to men is unlikely to alienate women, who often share these concerns on behalf of their loved ones.

"You hear that we're privileged, certainly white men in England, you're privileged, you've got no worries, but I'm thinking - I'm the same. I treat everyone whether you're man, woman, Ukraine, Palestine, I don't care. But you tell me what I've got that's easy."
Andy, Liverpool

A plurality of disillusioned men think people in power care more about women's problems than men's

Which of the following comes closest to your view about how much those holding power in Britain care about the problems affecting men and women

- They care much more about the problems women face
- They care slightly more about the problems women face
- They care equally about the problems men and women face
- Don't know
- They care slightly more about the problems men face
- They care much more about the problems men face



Men see provision as a key part of being a good man

Most men, and particularly men from the Millennial generation, feel pressure to be the primary breadwinner for their family. And **the provider role is one many men embrace** - men are far more likely than women to see providing financially for loved ones and making money as important characteristics defining what it means to be a good man today.

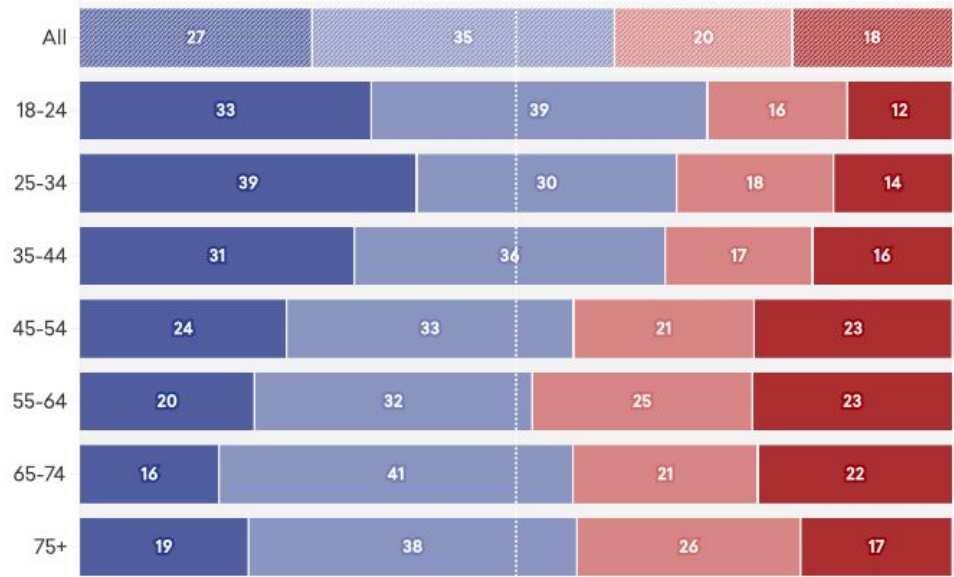
This runs contrary to popular societal narratives around gender roles and equality. In focus groups, many fear expressing the wrong opinion or saying the wrong thing about men's role. Indeed **a significant minority of men cannot speak about men's issues without fear of being criticised.**

There is evidently a gap between how men feel about questions of masculinity and what men feel able to talk about. Powerful voices framing providing for the family, which may not necessarily as the main breadwinner or even financially, as a positive dimension of masculinity may be one way to help bridge this gap.

Men of all age groups feel pressure to provide

Please indicate which statement you agree with more using a scale of 1 to 4 where 1 means you completely agree with the first statement and 4 with the second statement

- 1- As a man I still feel pressure to be the primary breadwinner for my family
- 2-
- 3-
- 4- I do not feel pressure as a man to be the primary breadwinner for my family



Reaching disillusioned men

Straight talkers speak to disillusioned men

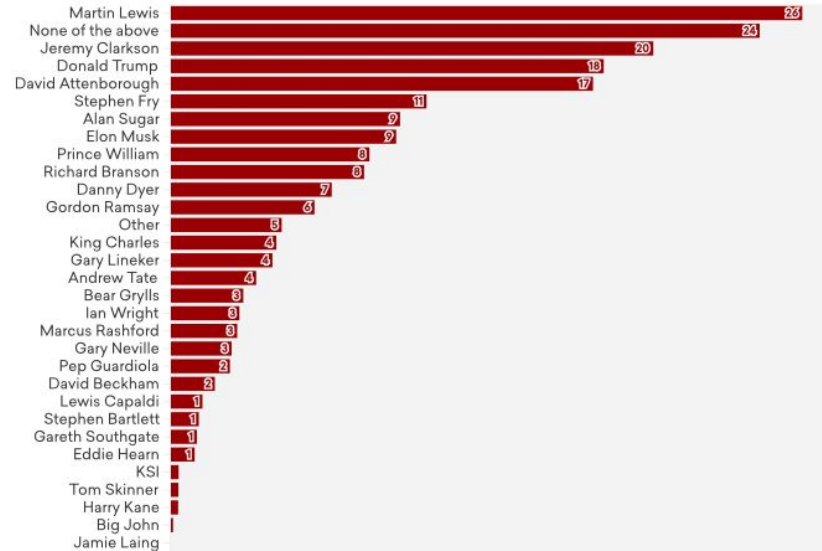
Rebuilding trust among disillusioned men in the medium term, and preventing disillusionment from become further entrenched, is first and foremost a question of delivery on their key concerns - particularly the cost of living.

In the shorter term, it is incumbent on the political classes to find a way to communicate government actions and priorities that can connect with disillusioned men.

From a list of celebrities they would pick as Prime Minister, disillusioned men were more likely than other men to select Jeremy Clarkson and Danny Dyer - along with Martin Lewis. Messengers perceived to say what they believe, even if people don't like hearing it, could be a powerful tool in re-engaging this group.

Disillusioned men's celebrity picks for PM include Martin Lewis, Jeremy Clarkson and Donald Trump

Imagine the following individuals were running to be Prime Minister of the UK. Which of them would you have the most confidence in to address the challenges Britain faces?



Source: More in Common • November 2025

"I don't like Trump, but with Trump I describe him as someone coming towards you with a knife or a bat or a gun. You know what you are going to get. You might not like it, but you know what you are going to get so you can cross the road if you want to avoid that man. And you can do the same with Boris Johnson and even Nigel Farage, he's not a nice man, but you know what you're going to get."

Andy, Liverpool

The appeal of strong man leaders

Leaders who present as strong and tough tends to land well with disillusioned men. They are more likely than other men to consider strength and willingness to break the system to get things done as important attributes in a leader. They are less likely than other men to consider it important for a leader to be intelligent, caring, empathetic or pragmatic.

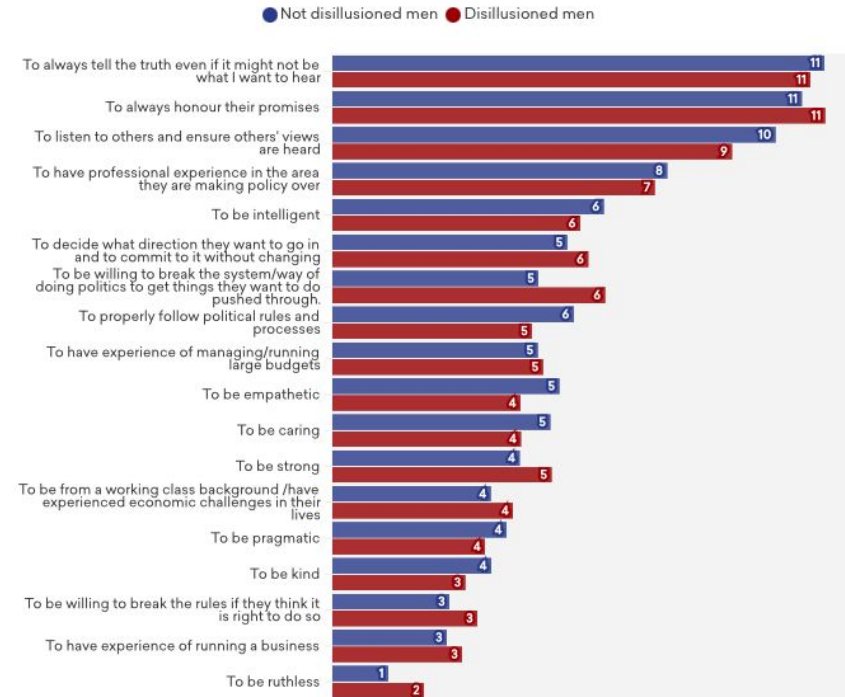
Displays of strength - through getting things done and showing ability to tackle the big issues the country faces - may speak to disillusioned men's attitude towards agency - providing reassurance that those in power are actually in control and have agency to make positive change in the country.

"I'd trust Elon Musk [as Prime Minister]... He's on business and if he said something he'd do it."

Mohamed, Black Country

Disillusioned men most value honesty and honouring promises

Importance rank, based on MaxDiff analysis



Privileged elites reinforce a sense those in power are out of touch

Messengers seen as out-of-touch and privileged, on the other hand, may struggle to reach disillusioned men. The Royals would be more unpopular picks for Prime Minister with this group than other men, as would David Beckham.

Indeed disillusioned men are more likely than others to feel it is important that a leader is from a working class background. This relates to the belief among disillusioned men that politicians do not understand or respect their lives or care about people like them. Messengers perceived as working class, or in touch with working class people, may be able to engage meaningfully with this group.

[a public figure for Prime Minister] *"Someone who's been in high pressure situations. Younger Alan Sugar... dealt with a lot of adversity and probably from a poor background as well. So he knows it from all aspects."*

"Jeremy Kyle comes across quite well... he still stuck to his morals and stuck to his guns. And I think he understands the British people a bit as well."

"Jurgen Klopp - he's trustworthy... Andy Burnham. I'd say he is probably the only one that's around who seems like he's got his ear to the ground and actually listens to people, actually cares."

"If you're talking about, say someone in finance, Martin Lewis, if you're talking about someone like a health minister, you don't need Andy Burnham or me.. You need someone who's maybe worked in the NHS for 30 years."

The challenge to reach disillusioned men through mainstream media

Rebuilding trust among disillusioned men first requires communicating with them. It may be harder to reach this group through traditional political channels as they follow the news less closely than other men. They are less likely to read a paper or watch TV news, and more likely to find out about current affairs from people around them.

It may be more effective to reach these men through social media. Though this group is less likely to engage with political content on social media, they are at least on the platforms - half use social media most days. As with the rest of the public, their main social media platforms are Facebook, Whatsapp and Youtube.

"I'd say it just feels like everything's on a bit of a knife edge at the moment. It just feels very tense. I don't think anything that you hear in the news really helps that at all."

Daniel, Black Country

Disillusioned men keep up less with current affairs

How much or how little would you say you follow the news?

● Very closely ● Somewhat closely ● Not very closely ● Not closely at all ● Don't know



Rebuilding trust

Learnings

It is a mistake to conflate the priorities of those who engage in online debates around disillusionment or masculinity with those of disillusioned men across the country - who foremost want to see action on bread and butter issues.

The loss of trust of this group is not irreversible - highlighted by the success of Reform UK in reigniting optimism in politics among disillusioned men.

Messengers perceived as straight talkers or representing the working class may help to reach this group.

Leaders demonstrating strength and a willingness to move fast and get things done lands well with disillusioned men.

Politicians acknowledging and validating problems and pressures faced uniquely by men may contribute to disillusioned men feeling more represented.

Efforts to empower this low agency group on a personal level - including enabling men to act as providers - may help to address political disillusionment at its source.



More in
Common

Out of reach?

Men, masculinity and mainstream politics

November 2025

Methodology

The polling cited here was conducted by More in Common, a member of the British Polling Council. This polling was conducted between 31st October and 5th November 2025 on a sample of 2,063 men and 1,039 women, representative of populations of British adult men and women. Respondents have been weighted according to age/sex interlocked, 2024 General Election vote, region, ethnicity and education level.

Focus groups were held with men aged over 40 with anti-system views in Liverpool, men aged under 35 with anti-system views in the Black Country and men aged under 35 with pro-system views in Hertfordshire.

Data tables are available on request. For any queries please contact anouschka@moreincommon.com.