



**European
Movement
International**

EXPLORING TOGETHERNESS

An Analysis of the Attitudes of Young Britons Toward the European Union

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for European Movement International

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**Co-funded by
the European Union**

THE SURVEY

During the first two weeks of May 2023, **YouGov** fielded a poll developed by Matthew C. MacWilliams for the **European Movement International** with co-funding from the European Union to understand the attitudes of British citizens between 18-29 years of age toward the European Union.

A total of **1,010 young Britons** were surveyed.¹

These respondents were asked a wide range of questions to ascertain their:



fundamental worldviews,



attitudes toward current social and economic issues and challenges,



hopes for the future,



perspectives on the present relationship between the United Kingdom and the European Union, and



sentiments concerning the future relationship between Britain and the European Union.

¹ Respondents were matched to a sampling frame by gender, age, and education. The frame was constructed by stratified sampling from the 2019 EuroBarometer survey with selection within strata by weighted sampling with replacements (using person weights from the public use file). Matched cases were weighted to the sampling frame using propensity scores. The matched cases and the frame were combined and a logistic regression was estimated for inclusion in the frame. The propensity score function included age, gender, and education. The propensity scores were grouped into deciles of the estimated propensity score in the frame and post-stratified according the deciles. Weights were then post-stratified on gender, age, and education to produce the final sample weight.

INITIAL FINDINGS & PRESENTATIONS

These opinions were then analysed and summarized in a report of initial findings that was presented in June and July of 2023.

As part of these presentations, a final section of the report was developed concentrating on what the findings meant and how they could be applied to future communications.

This learning focused on targets and messages for developing work on communications.



THIS REPORT

This report builds on those initial presentations, putting in written form the observations and conclusions from the analysis of the survey work as well as the recommendations for future targeting and messaging. While this learning can be readily and confidently applied to strategic communications as is, further testing of specific messages and message approaches through online qualitative boards or focus groups with targeted segments of young Britons would help finetune messaging and define a visual vocabulary.

The content of the report is divided into five sections:

1

Worldviews

Reveals how young Britons perceive the world. These are the lens through which they process and understand the world around them and the opportunities and challenges it poses. Generally, worldviews are not ephemeral. They can change over time, but they are theoretically more stable constructs than the usual attitudes and perceptions quantified in most polling. Based on statistical analyses of the data discussed in later sections of the report, some of these worldviews appear to be excellent tools for understanding young Britons and segmenting them into different communications targets.

2

Perceptions of the Economic, Social, and Political Landscape in the United Kingdom

Summarizes how young Britons feel today about the post-Covid, post-European Union world in which they are living. These perceptions are more susceptible to change based on current events and experiences. They are the typical products of survey research —the basic questions asked and answered in polling. They define what young Britons see and how they feel when they look through their worldview lens at the United Kingdom and the world.

3

The United Kingdom and the European Union Today

Unpacks how young Britons view Britain's potential economic and political partners in the world, including the European Union right now. It also delineates the importance to them of a close relationship with the European Union versus the today's reality as well as what they perceive as the effects of Brexit on the United Kingdom and why it matters to them years later.

4

The United Kingdom and the European Union Tomorrow

Reveals how important young Britons think it is to build a new, stronger relationship with the European Union. It also identifies which young Britons want a closer relationship with the European Union and what is behind their attitude.

5

Targeting and Messages

Specifies the target audiences for related work on communications and the core, secondary, and tertiary messages that strike a responsive chord with those young Britons.

Worldviews

The worldviews of young Britons, including **democracy, populism, authoritarianism, nationalism, and patriotism**, were estimated using several batteries of questions. Feelings of disenfranchisement as well as empowerment were also assessed.

The survey found that they are:



more likely to be populists,



less likely to be authoritarians,



not nationalistic, and



not patriotic.

A plurality of young Britons (**45%**) are consistent supporters of democracy.² By comparison just **26%** of Americans between 18 and 29 years of age are consistent supporters of democracy.³ Young Britons are also more likely to feel disenfranchised and disempowered.

Only 9% of them strongly agree that they can make a difference when it comes to fixing the problems confronting the United Kingdom.

² Consistency of support for democracy is estimated using a standardized, five-question battery (see Appendix 1)

³ Survey of Americans (N=800 with an additional N=399 oversample of 18–29-year-old Americans) conducted for the Freudenberg Foundation with the assistance of the German Marshall Fund in October of 2022. Report of the quantitative analysis of the poll and qualitative results of follow-up focus groups are available upon request.

DATA

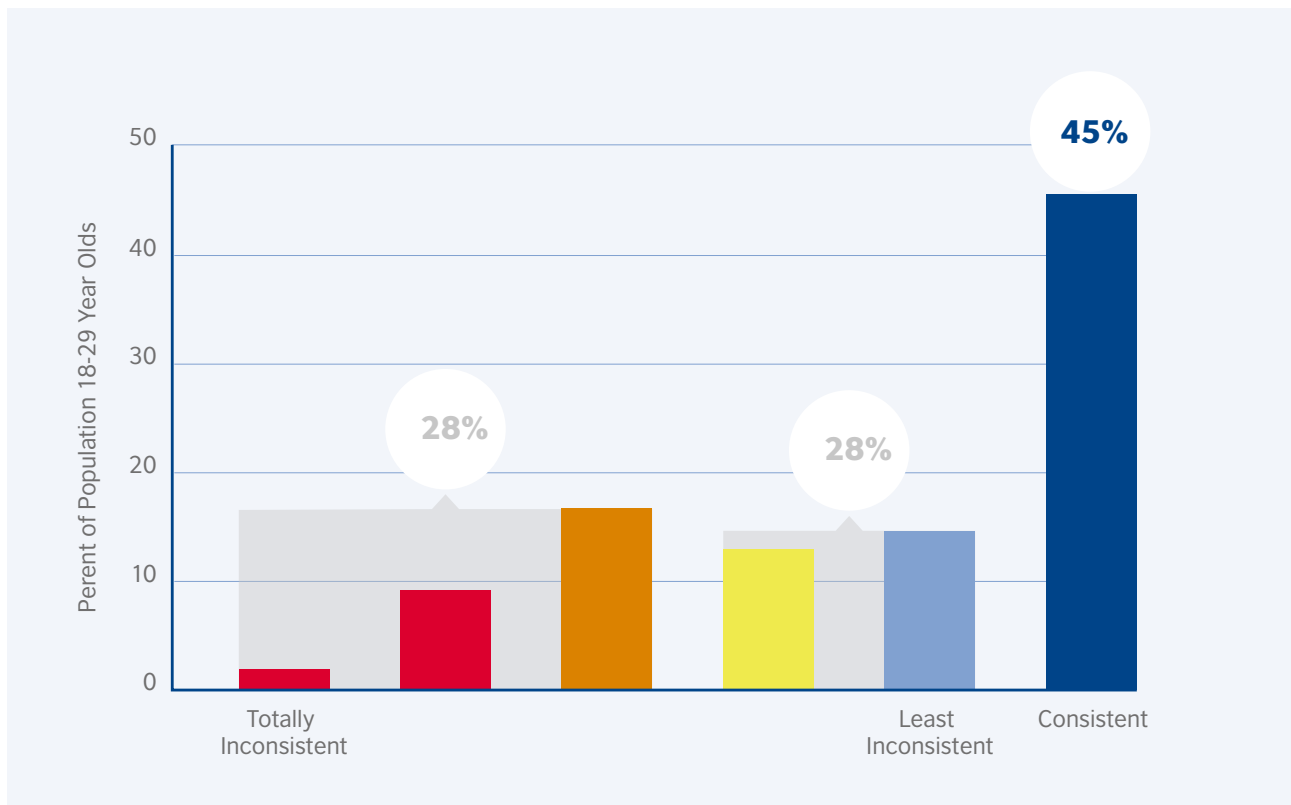
Consistent Support of Democracy

A plurality of young Britons (45%) are consistent supporters of democracy.

While this is a minority of all youth in the United Kingdom, the support for democracy in the United Kingdom is significantly higher than in the United States where just **26%** of Americans 18 to 29 years of age are consistent supporters of democracy.

Another quarter of youth in the United Kingdom (**28%**) are inconsistent supporters of democracy on one-to-two of the five questions used to estimate support for democracy (blue and yellow bars on the graph). Citizens in this group are prime candidates for communications designed to bolster support for democratic practices and institutions. Another quarter of young citizens (**28%**), those represented by the orange and red bars, pick anti-democratic answers on three or more of the five questions asked. These citizens are unsupportive of democracy and unlikely to change their attitudes towards it over time.

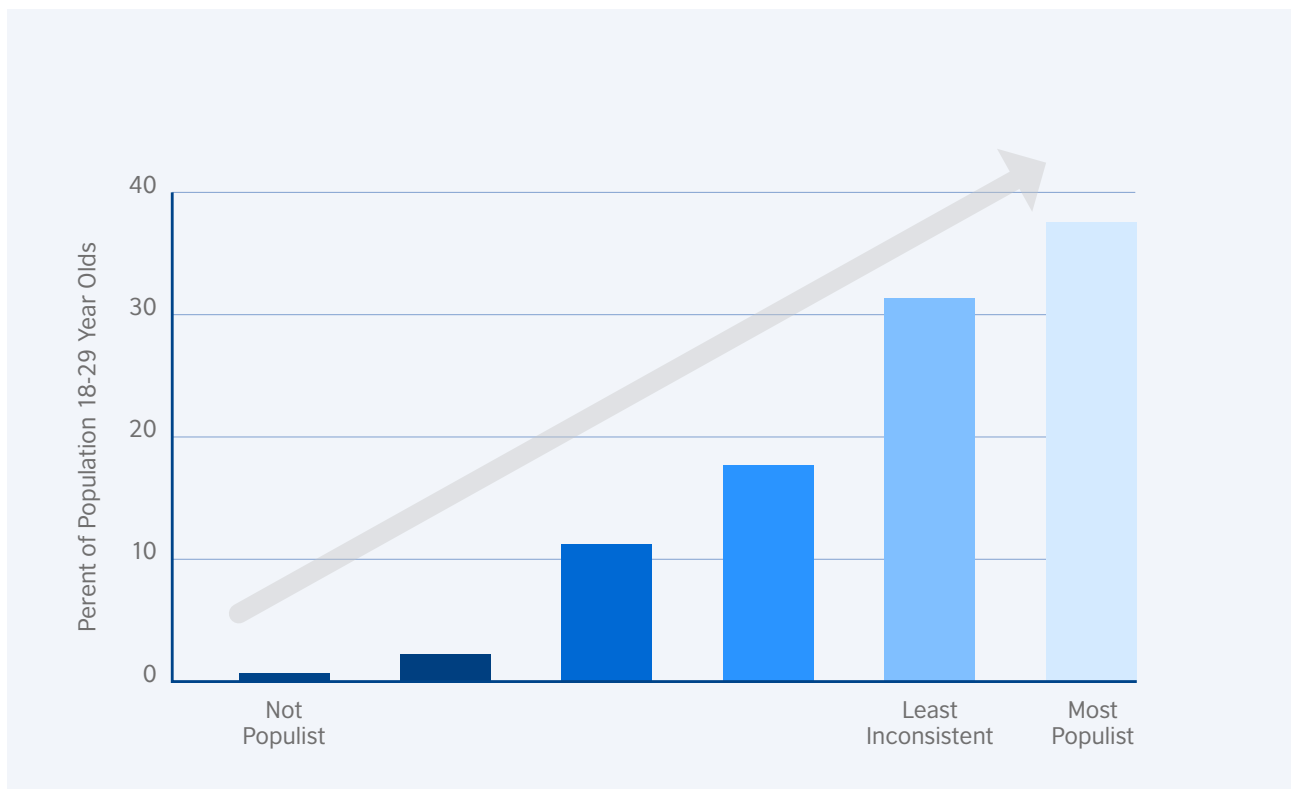
DEMOCRACY: CONSISTENCY OF SUPPORT



Populism

Young Britons are much more likely to hold populist attitudes. They are more likely to agree that (1) Members of Parliament quickly lose touch with ordinary people, (2) the differences between people and elites are much greater than the differences among ordinary people, and (3) the people should have the final say on the most important political issues by voting on them directly in referenda.

POPULISM



It is important to distinguish the difference between populist leaders in Europe and populism as a worldview among citizens.

- **Right-wing populist leaders** in Europe and elsewhere oppose liberal democracy and seek to undermine it or hollow it out to create “illiberal” democracies —an oxymoron if there ever were one. In short, populist leaders are, in many cases, aspiring authoritarians whose views and political goals are antithetical to democracy.
- **Populist citizens**, on the other hand, are statistically more likely to be consistent supporters of democracy and democratic practices.

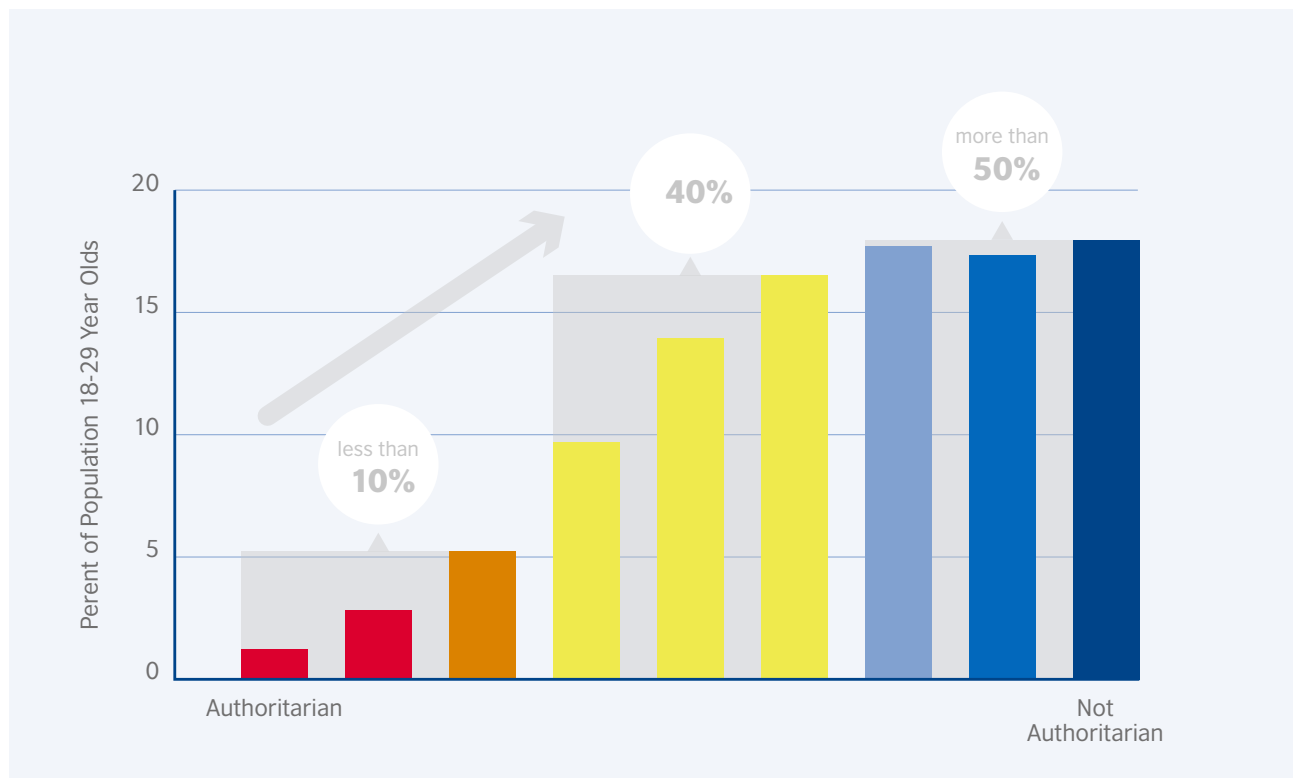
As such, the skew among young Britons toward populism does not mean they are more likely to endorse increasing authoritarianism. Quite the contrary, the data show that populist citizens are statistically more likely to support democracy and democratic practices in the United Kingdom. This finding is not an anomaly. The same findings have been observed in surveys across Europe.⁴

Authoritarianism

Young Britons are much less likely to be favourably disposed to authoritarianism.

Measured using the standard, eight-question childrearing battery, more than **50%** (blue bars) of British youth are not authoritarian. By comparison, only **10%** of young Britons (orange/red bars) are dispositional authoritarians.⁵

AUTHORITARIANISM



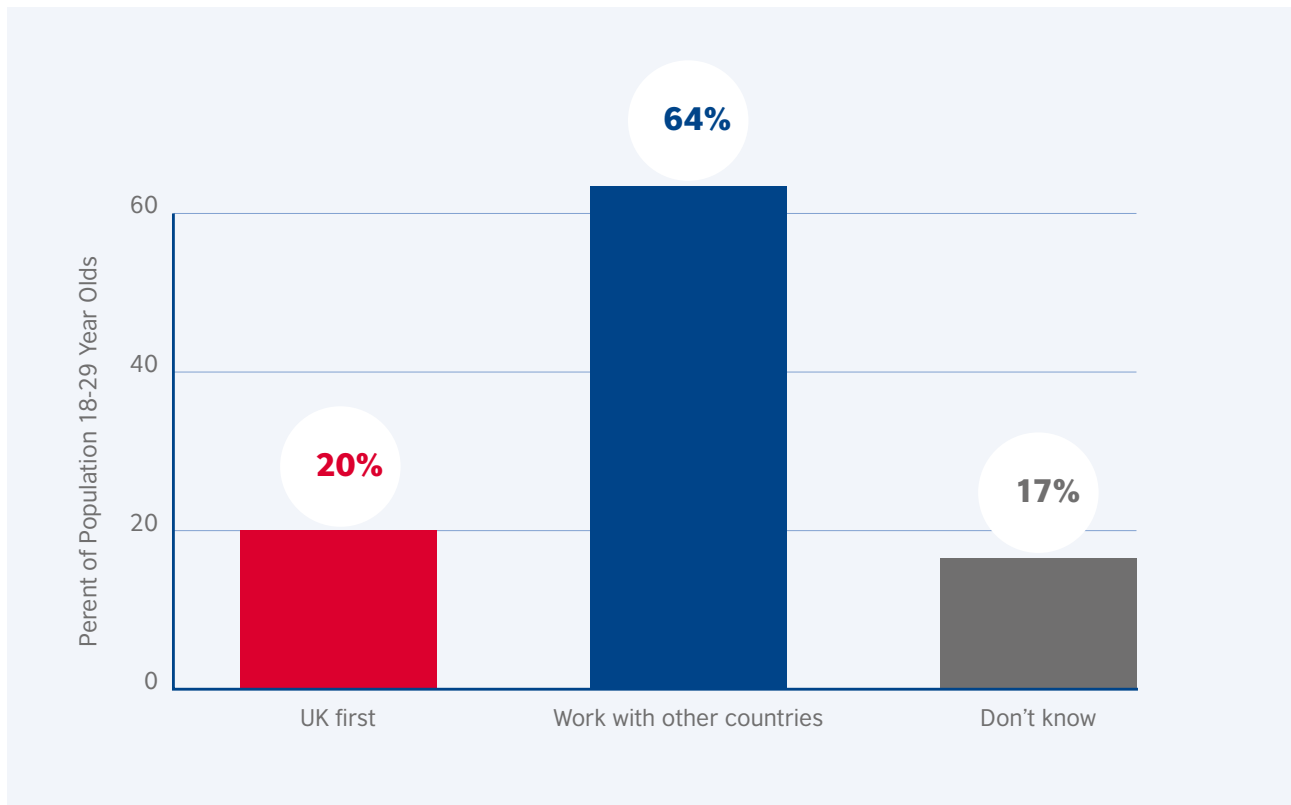
⁴ The misuse of the term populism by the media and elites to describe what are aspiring authoritarian leaders is the root of this problem.

⁵ See *Advancing the Measurement of Authoritarianism* by Engelhardt, Feldman and Hetherington in *Political Behaviour*, 12 May 2021.

Nationalism

When asked to choose between a nationalistic or cooperative approach to foreign relations, almost two-thirds of British young people (**64%**) chose cooperation over Britain-first nationalism (**20%**). Importantly, **17%** did not choose either answer.

Nationalism



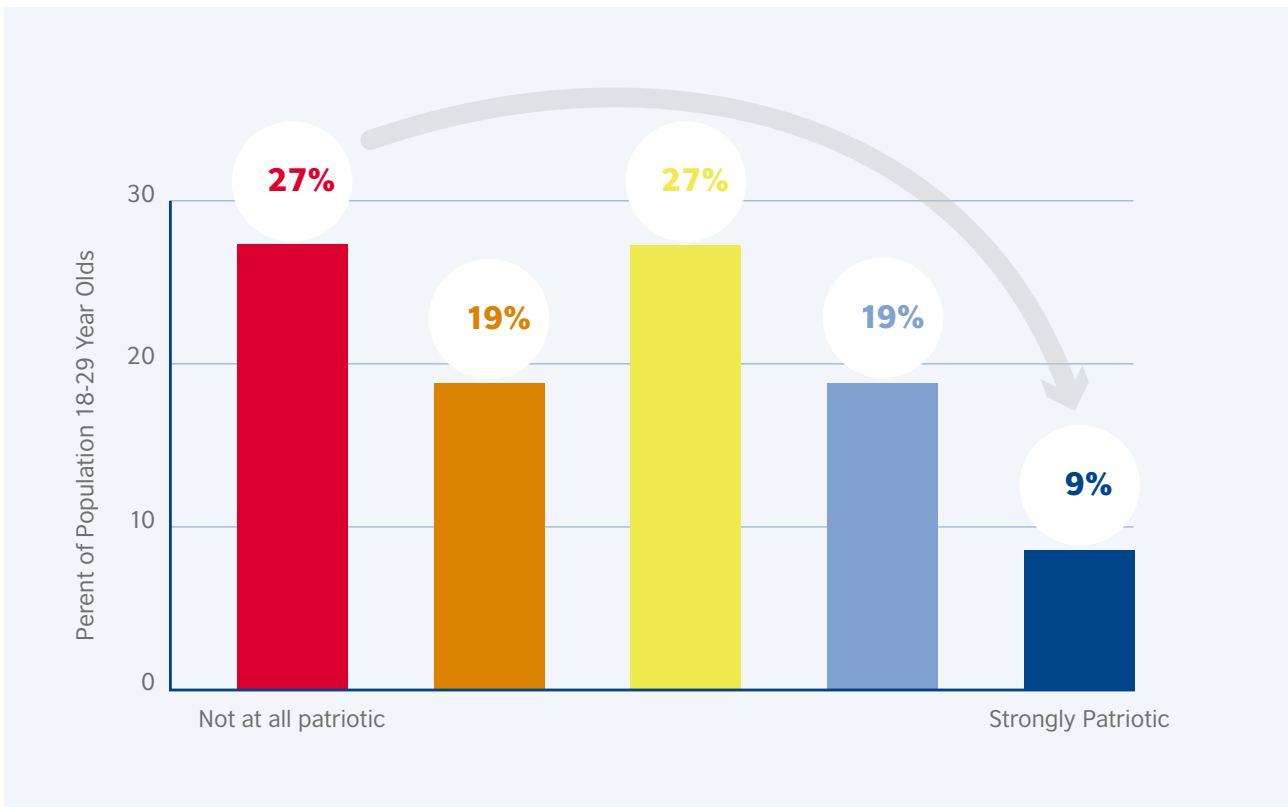
The question choices were:

- Britain does best when we put our own interests first and make our own decisions rather than worry about what other countries think. **(20% UK-First Nationalism)**
- **Britain does best when we work together with other countries who have a similar interest even though it may require some compromise. (64% Cooperate)**
- Don't Know **(17%)**

Patriotism

Young Britons are 3 times more likely to be not at all patriotic (**27%**) than strongly patriotic (**9%**). And nearly a majority of British youth (**46%**) say they are not devoted to and a strong supporter (patriotic) of the United Kingdom.⁶

PATRIOTISM



⁶ Patriotism was estimated using a 10-point scale with 1=Completely unpatriotic and 10=strongly patriotic. Forty-six percent of young Britons chose 1 through 4 on the 10-point scale. Twenty-seven percent chose 1 to 2 on the scale.

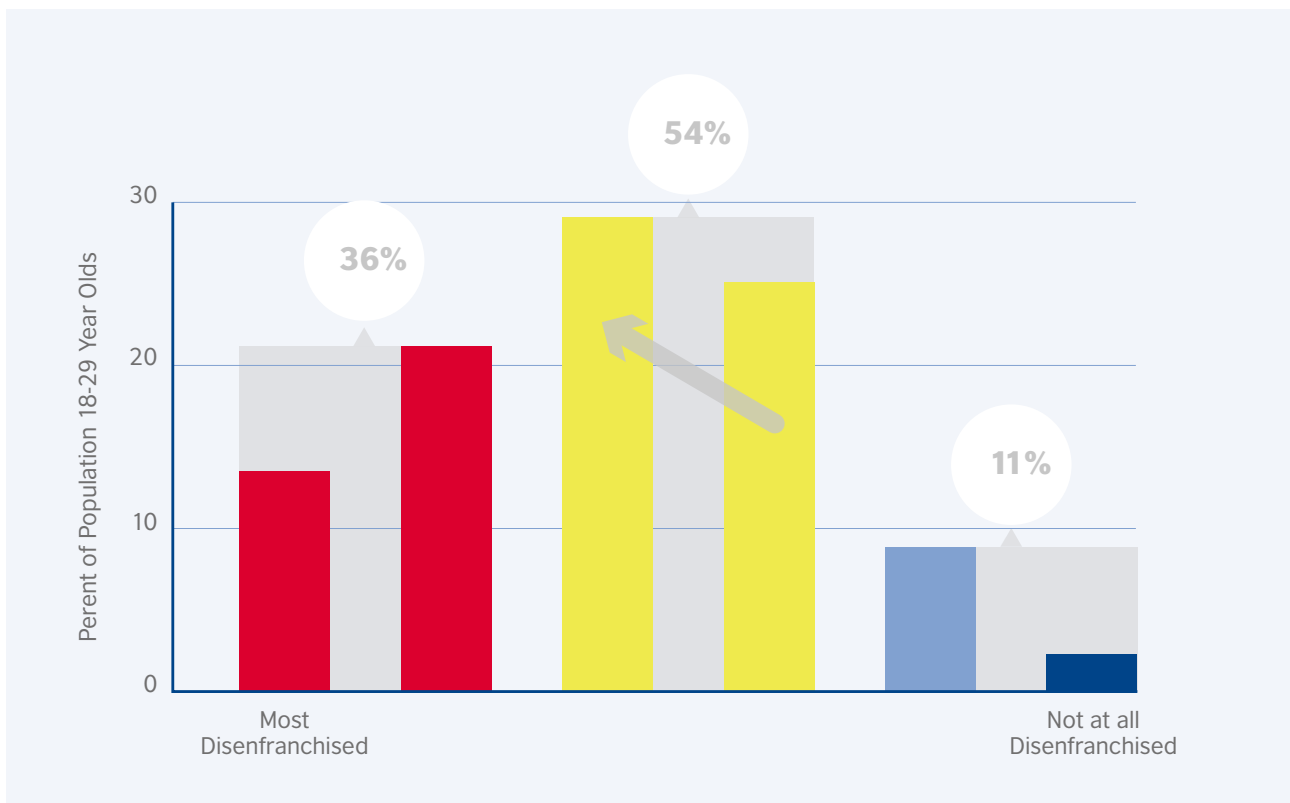
Disenfranchisement

By a more than a 3 to 1 margin (**36% to 11%**), young Britons are more likely to feel disenfranchised. They are more likely to agree that (1) people like me are being left behind, (2) people like me do not benefit enough from the United Kingdom's economic success, (3) sometimes I feel like a stranger in my own country, (4) our best days in the United Kingdom are behind us, and (5) economic and social inequality are growing in the United Kingdom.

Importantly, when it comes to feelings of disenfranchisement, while 54% of British youth are in the middle, a majority of this segment skews toward disenfranchisement.

Recognizing and addressing their fears, which lead to these feelings, are important for the future health of British society.

DISENFRANCHISEMENT



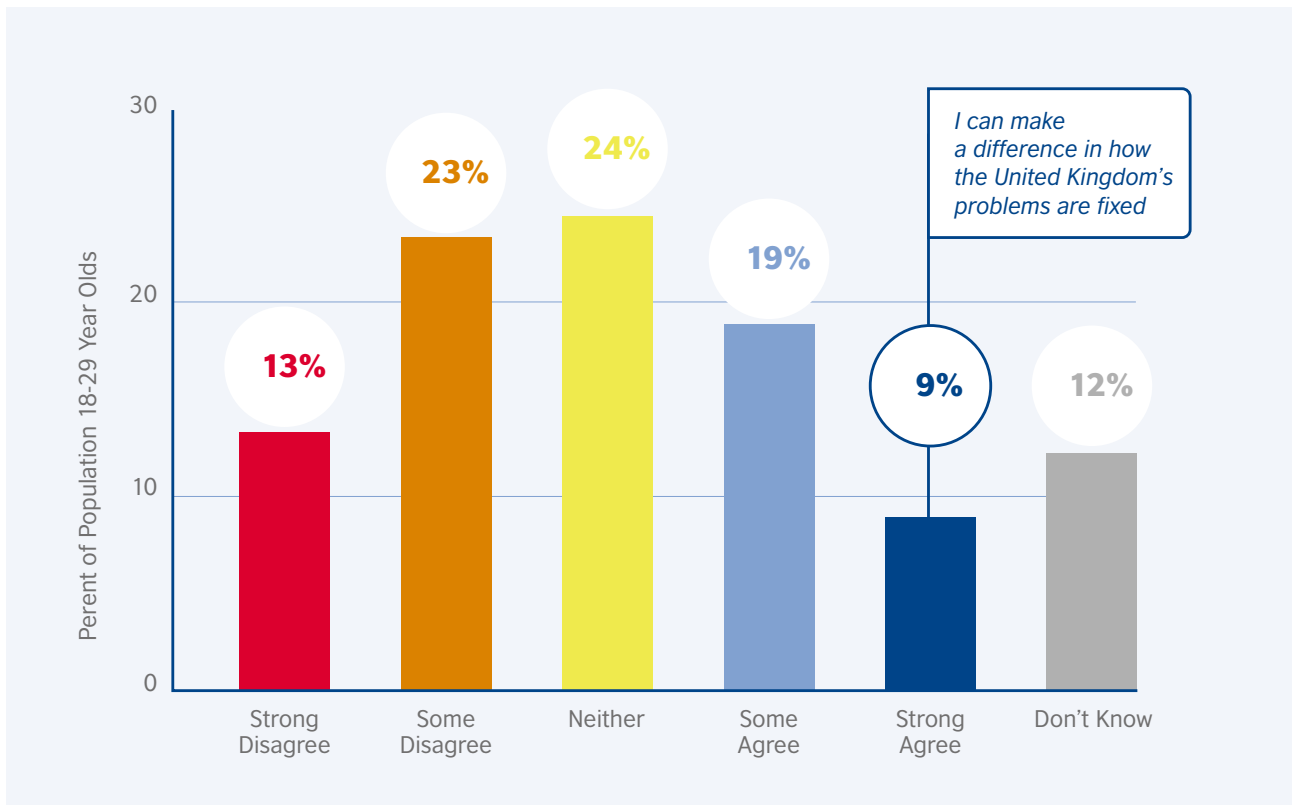
Empowerment

As expected, with youth disenfranchisement high in the United Kingdom most young Britons also feel disempowered.

Only **9%** of British youth feel strongly that “they can make a difference in how the United Kingdom’s problems are fixed.”

Thirteen percent strongly disagree with the proposition, another **23%** somewhat disagree and more than one in ten (**12%**) simply do not know if they can make a difference.

EMPOWERMENT: I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Social, Economic, & Political Landscape

When young Britons look through their worldview lens at the post-Covid, post-European Union social, political, and economic landscape in the United Kingdom, what **they see is a challenging and discouraging personal reality nested in a very dangerous world.**

These young citizens say:



the economy is poor,



the world is increasingly a dangerous place, and



their generation will end up worse off economically than their parents

They do not trust the government of the United Kingdom. They think **Brexit was bad for them personally and, even more of them agree, that Brexit was bad for Britain.** These young Britons' dislike of Brexit is focused on overarching dimension — the continuing, macro-economic effects of leaving the European Union.

One glimmer of hope in the data is expectation of some young Briton's that their life will be better next year.

Of course, this expectation is relative, estimated against the despair and anguish they feel now. It is a *"things cannot get much worse so maybe they will improve"* attitude rather than a ringing endorsement of their future prospects in Britain.

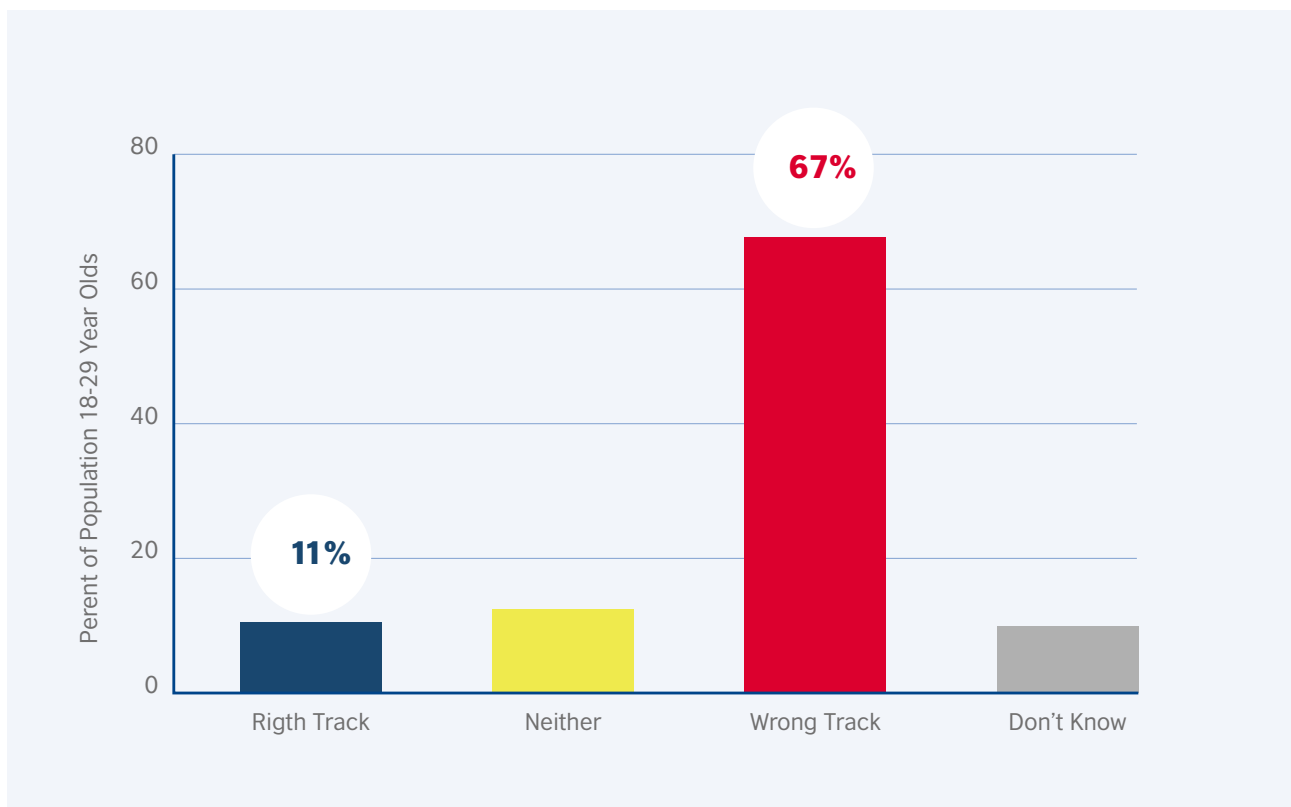
DATA:

Britain is on the Wrong Track

Two thirds of young people in Britain say “things in the United Kingdom are heading in the wrong direction.”

This is an alarming measurement underscored by the finding that only **11%** agree Britain is headed in the right direction. (To put this disturbing right-track percentage into perspective, in 2021 more British adults —by a four-percentage point margin— claimed to believe that Martians could come to dominate the Earth within the next 20 years.⁷)

BRITAIN: ON THE WRONG TRACK



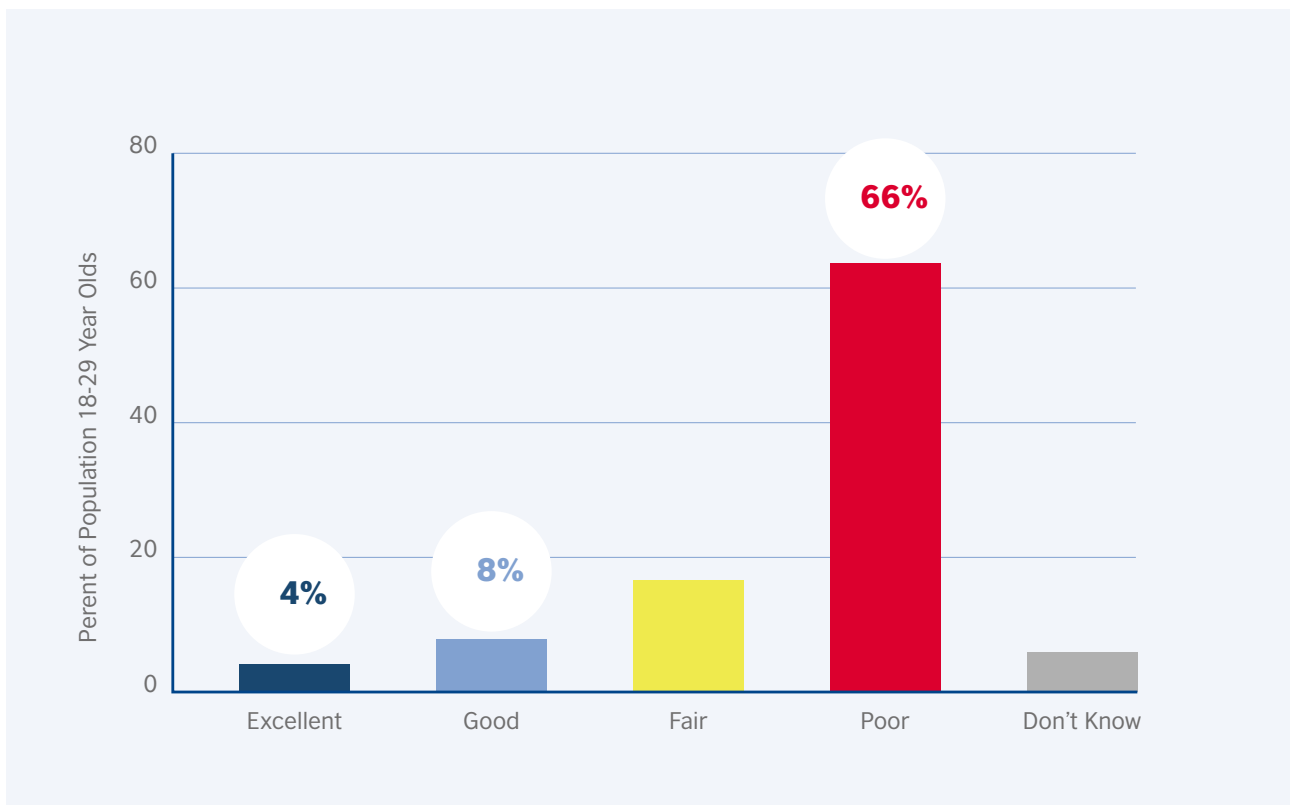
⁷ See <https://www.blaze.tv/series/british-publics-thoughts-ufos-revealed-new-survey-commissioned-blaze>. Note Bene: I do not attest to the statistical accuracy of this UFO survey.

The Economy Is Poor

Two-thirds of young Britons also say “economic conditions in the United Kingdom today” are poor.

Only **4%** rate economic condition as excellent with another **8%** agreeing they are good. Again, these are alarming measurements.

BRITAIN: POOR ECONOMY

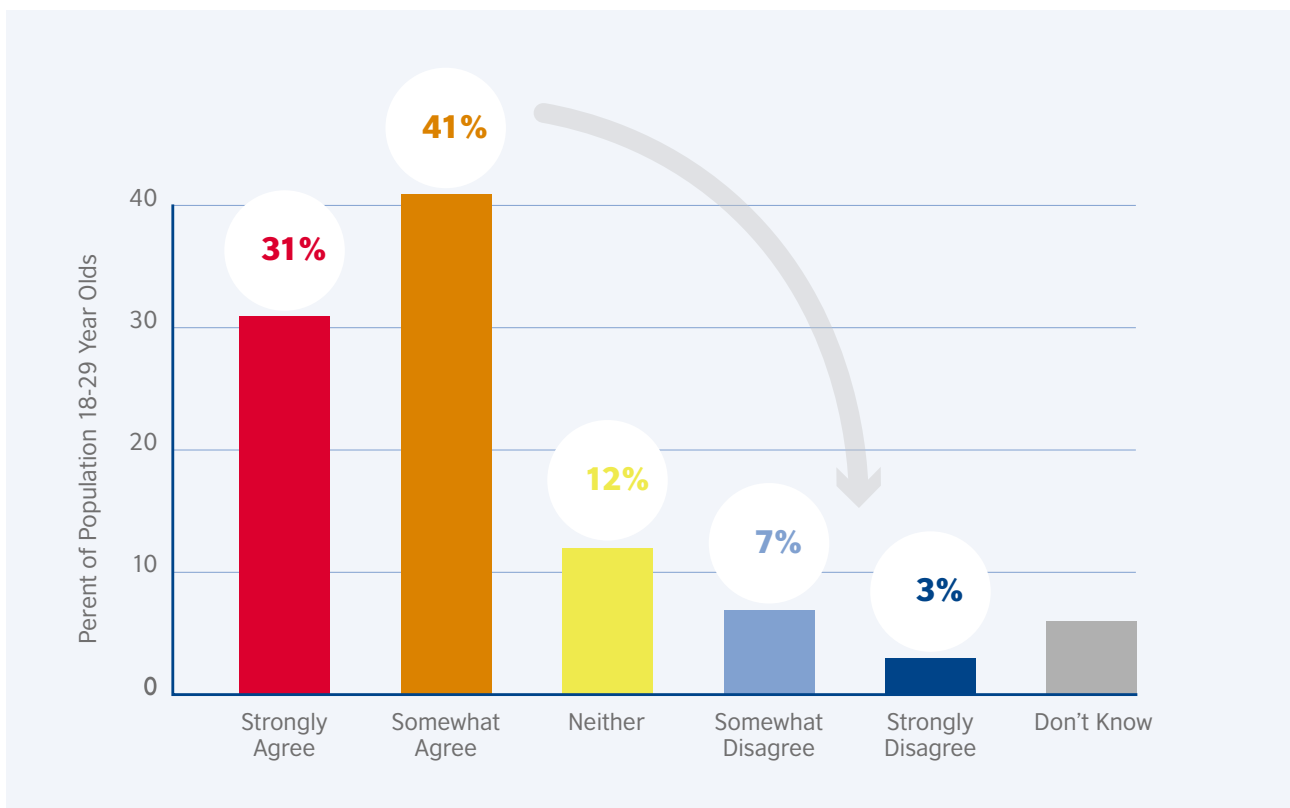


The World Is a Dangerous Place

More than 7 out of every 10 young Britons (72%) agree that the world is increasingly a dangerous place,

with nearly a third of them (31%) strongly agreeing that danger in the world is rising. Only 10% say the world is not a dangerous place.

WORLD: INCREASINGLY A DANGEROUS PLACE

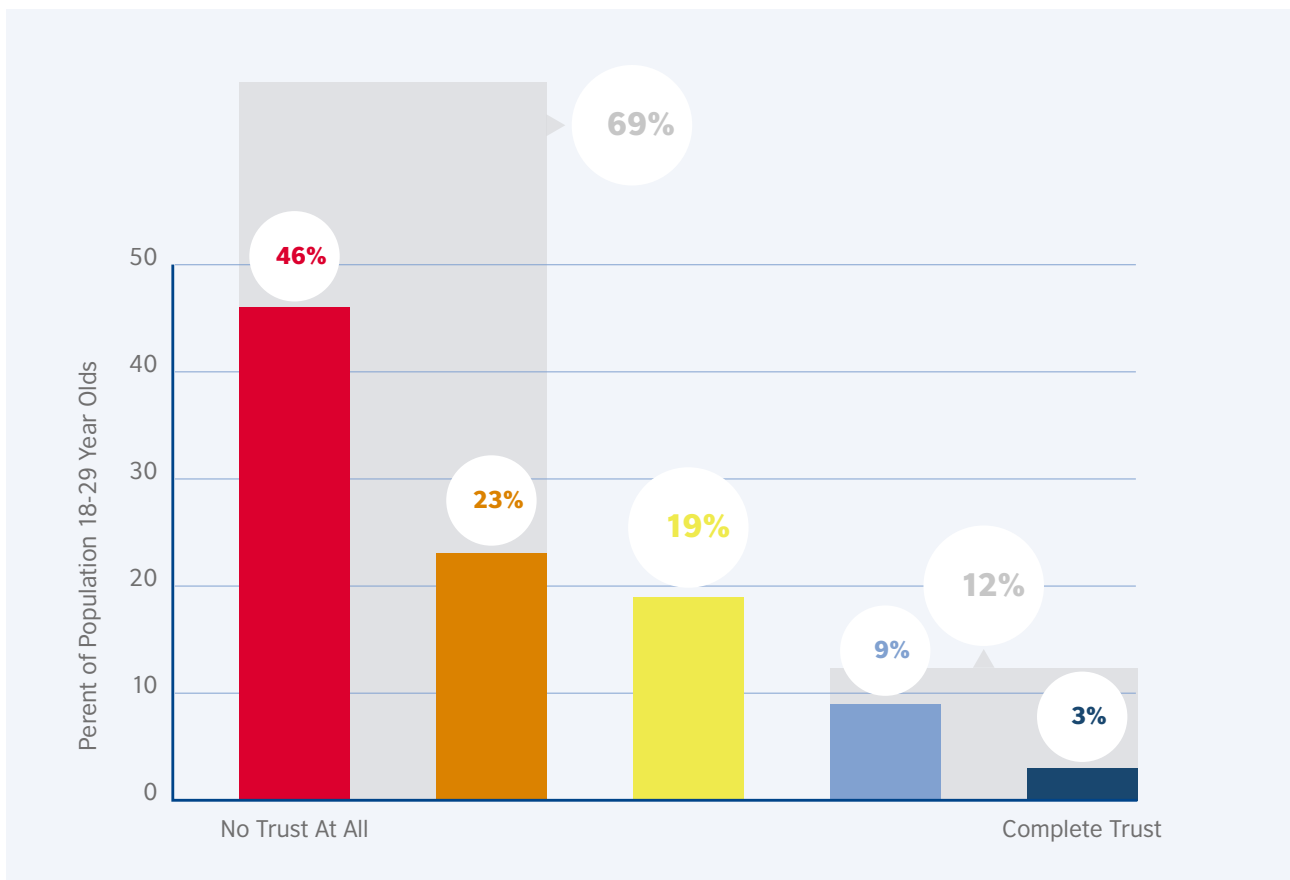


The British Government Is Not Trusted

Almost half of young Britons (46%) have no trust at all in the government of the United Kingdom.

Another **23%** have little trust in the government, with **19%** sitting in the middle between no trust and complete trust.

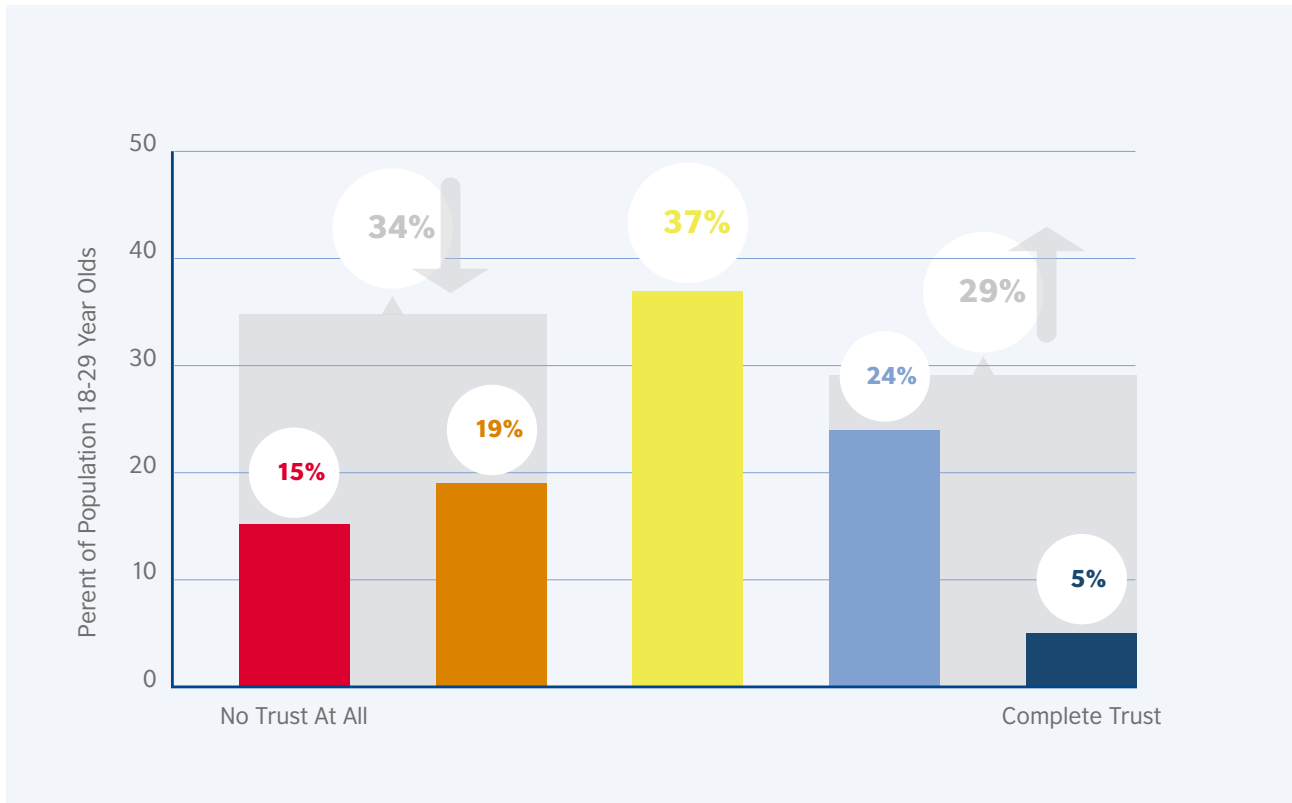
TRUST: THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT



By comparison, only 34% of young Britons do not trust the European Union (35 percentage points less than those who do not trust the British government).

And almost 3 in every ten (**29%**) claim to trust the European Union (17 percentage points more than those who trust the British government.)

TRUST: THE EUROPEAN UNION

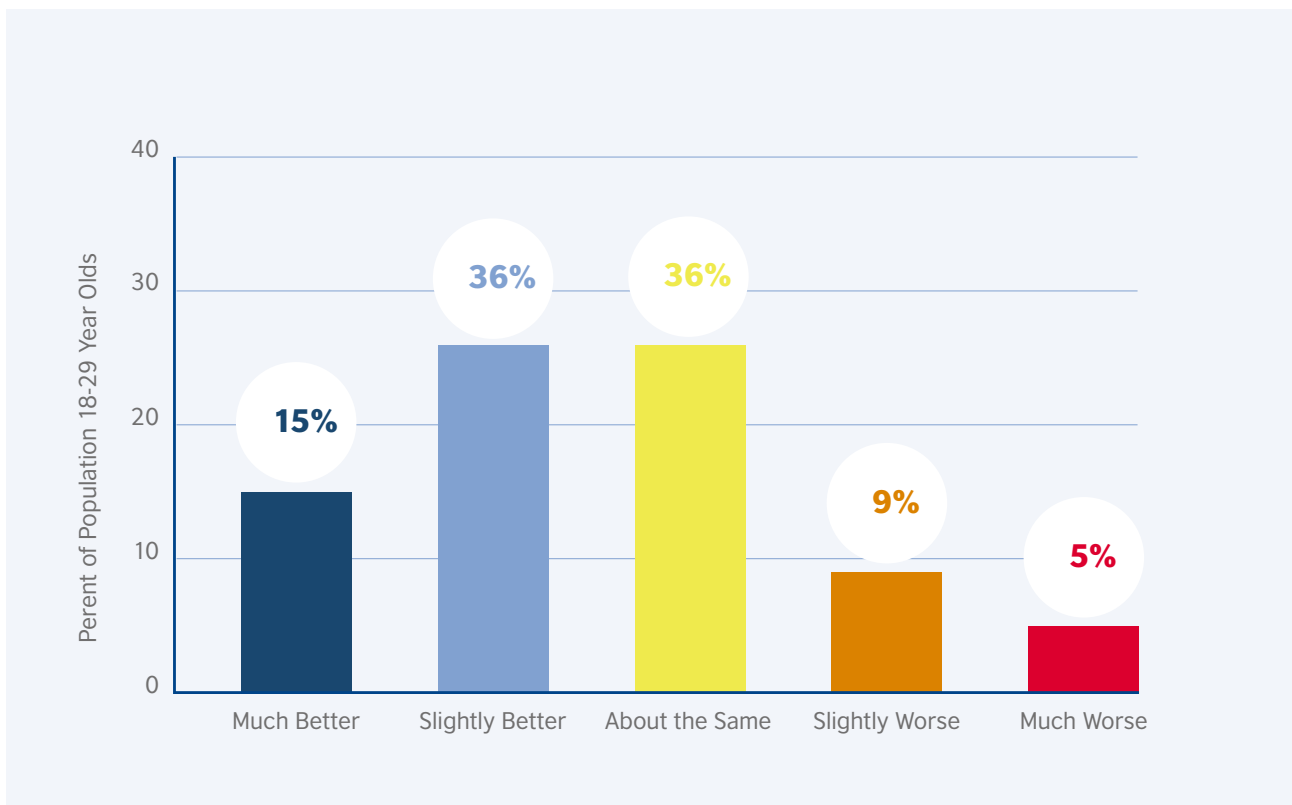


Expectations: Next Year

Over half of young Britons (52%) expect their life to be better next year with just 15% asserting their life will be much better.

The rest think their life in Britain has hit bottom (**36%**) or will get even worse (**14%**).⁸

PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS: LIFE NEXT YEAR



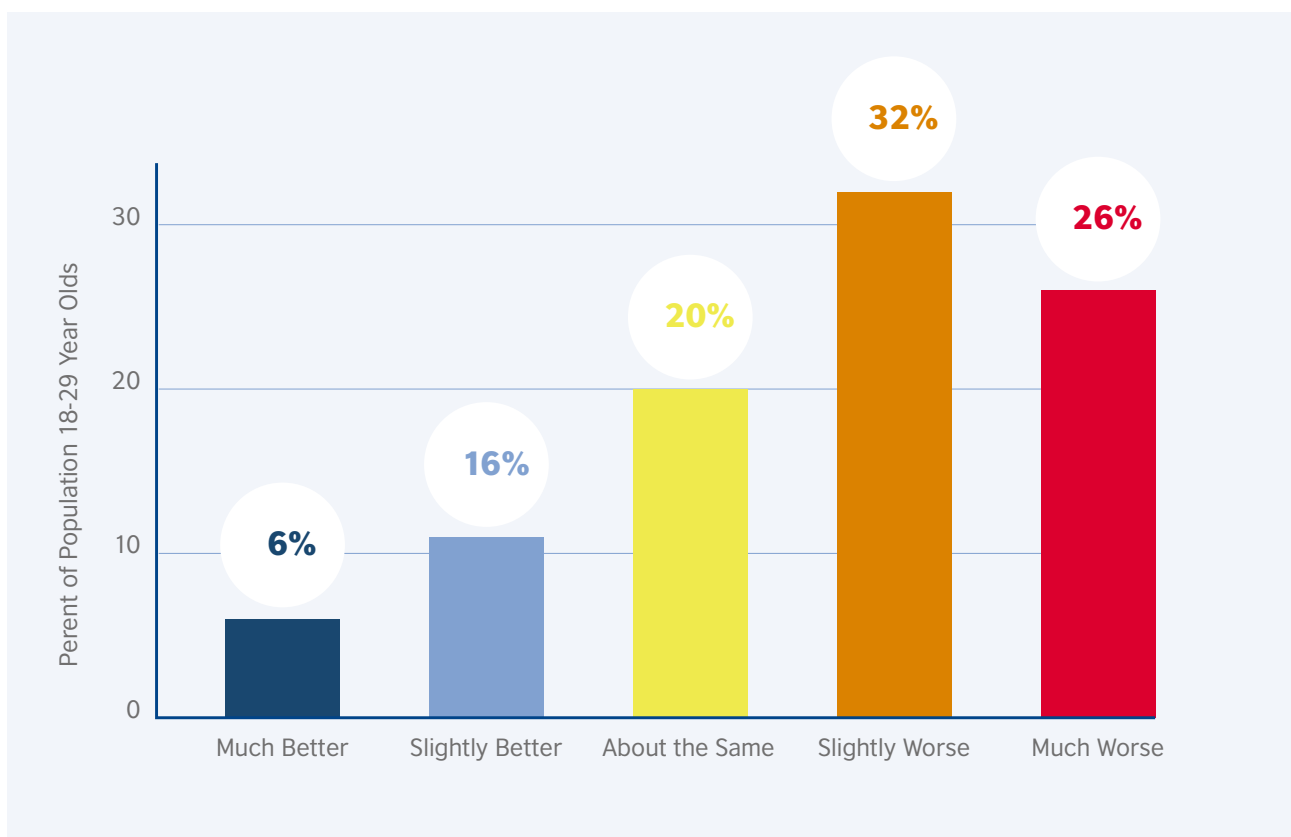
⁸ Rounding results in percentages that do not always equal 100.

Expectations: Compared to Parents' Generation

While young Britons are more likely to be somewhat sanguine about the outlook for next year,

nearly 6 in 10 of them (58%) think their generation will have a slightly or much worse life overall than their parents' generation.

PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS: BETTER/WORSE THAN PARENTS



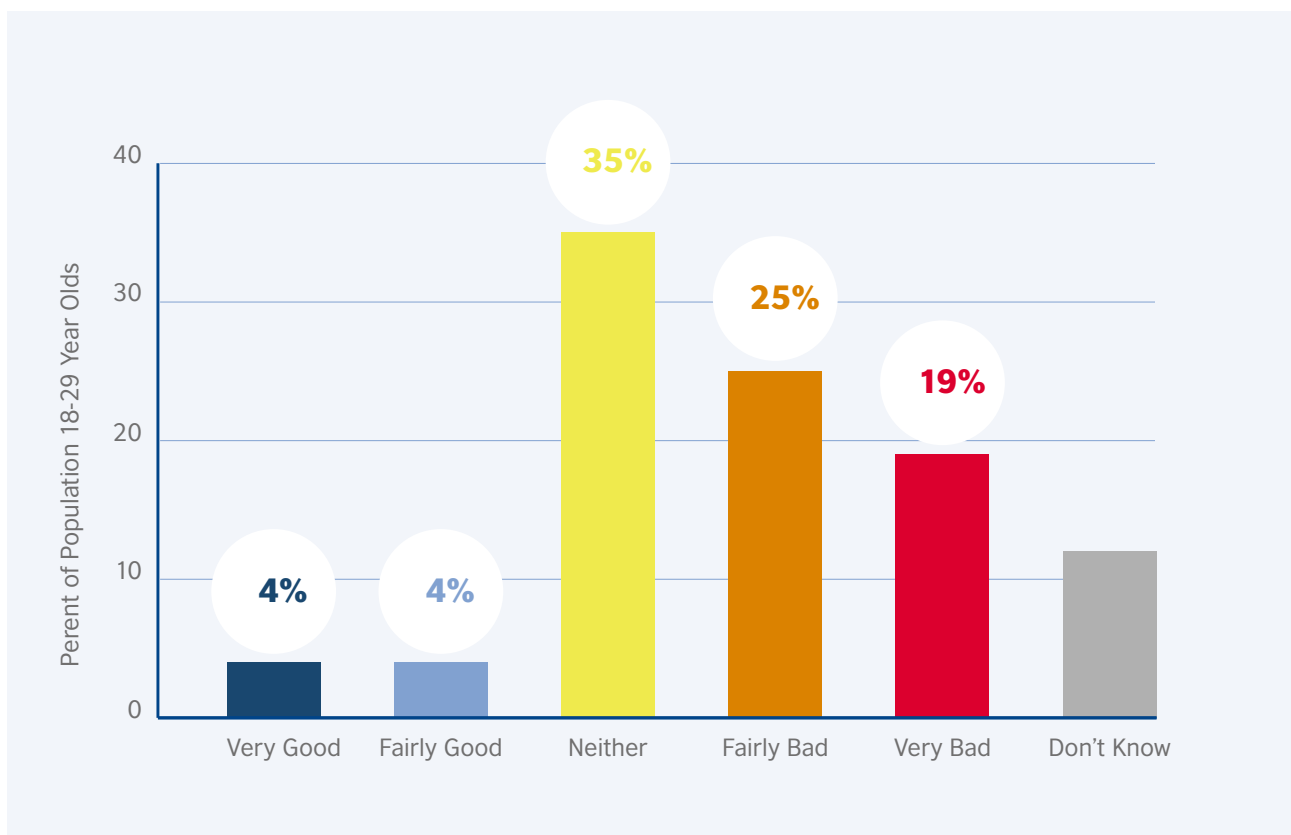
Implication: Brexit on Personal Life

The economic and societal woes confronting young Britons personally are partially viewed as an outcome of Brexit

with 44% saying that Brexit was fairly or very bad for them personally.

Only **8%** think Brexit was a boon to them personally.

BREXIT: GOOD OR BAD PERSONALLY?

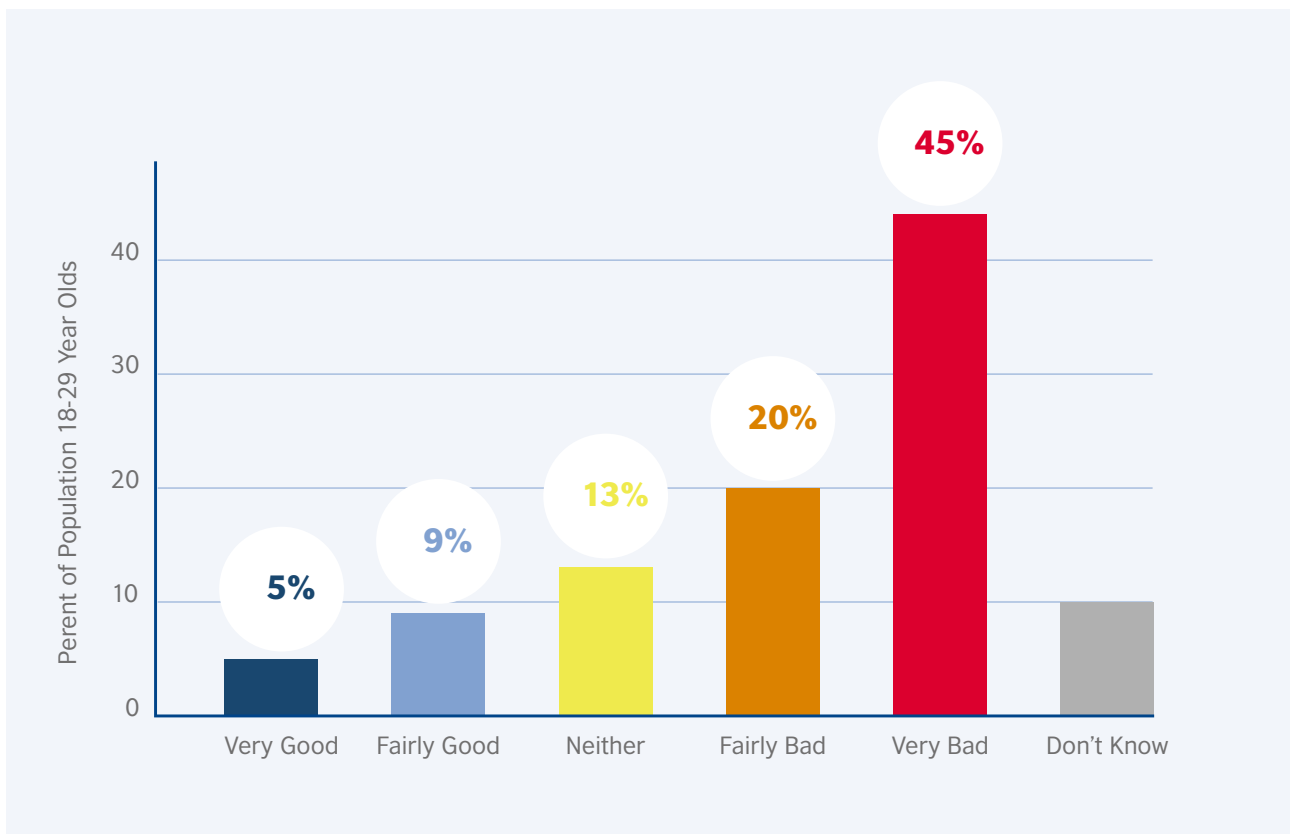


Implication: Brexit on United Kingdom

While **44%** of young Britons think Brexit was bad for them personally, a larger number (20 percentage points more or,

64% in total, think Brexit was bad or very bad for the United Kingdom.

BREXIT: GOOD OR BAD FOR UK?



Moreover, while the overall effects of Brexit are perceived negatively by a majority of British youth, the macro effects of Brexit on Britain's economy are viewed more negatively by them than all other tested outcomes.

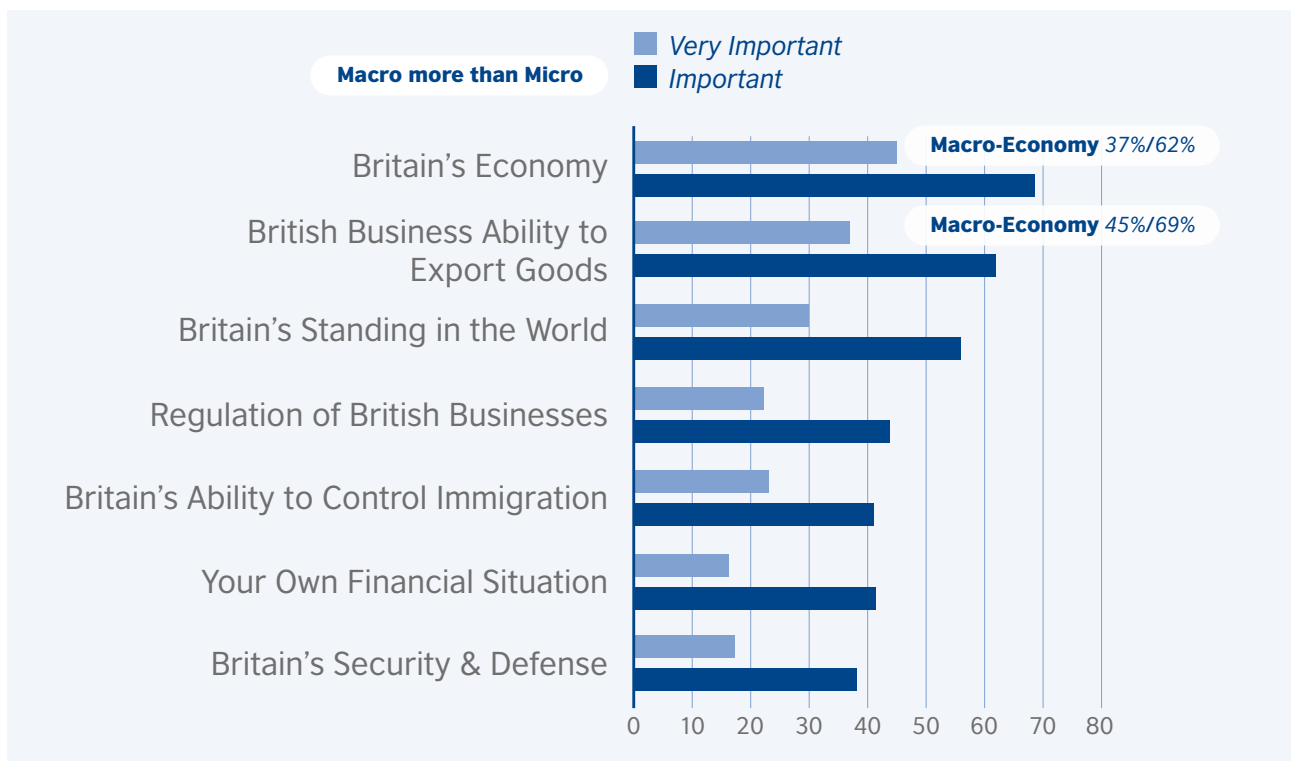
Nearly 7 in 10 young Britons (69%) agree that Brexit was bad for Britain's economy, including 45% who answer very bad.

The effect of Brexit on British businesses ability to export goods —another macro-outcome— ranks second (**62%**) in negative outcomes caused by Brexit.

The difference between these effects is statistically significant, and both macro-economic effects are statistically more important than every other item evaluated, including Britain’s standing in the world, ability to control immigration, and security and defence.

Young Britons even consider the macro-economic effect of Brexit more important than how it impacted their “own financial situation.”

WHY CARE? IMPACT OF BREXIT ON...



The reason young Britons think Brexit was bad for United Kingdom could not be clearer —It is the economy, stupid!

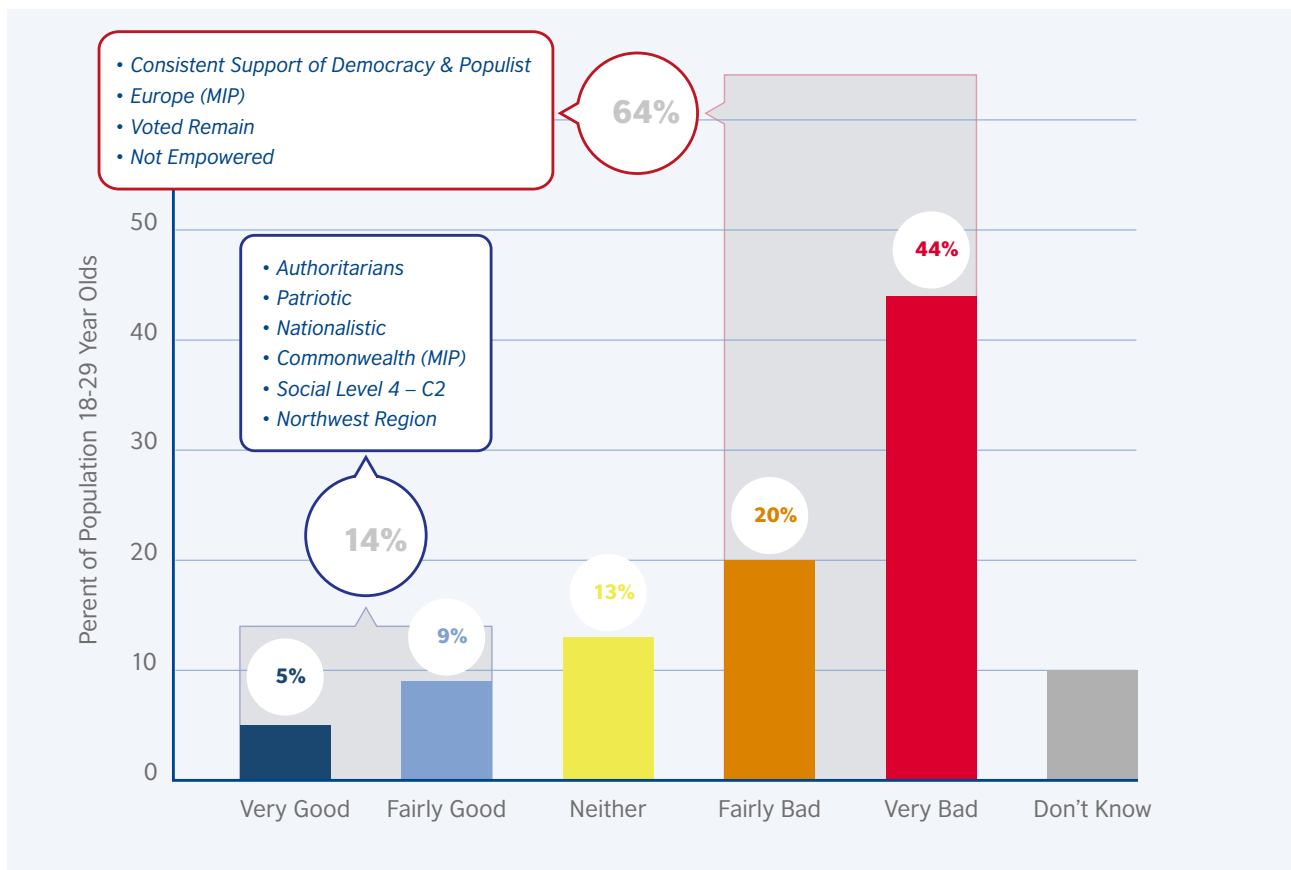
Who Thinks Brexit Was Bad for Britain?

The young Britons who say today that Brexit was bad for Britain is also clear. In terms of worldview, they are more likely to be consistent supporters for democracy and populist. They are also more likely to feel disempowered, agree that Europe is Britain's most important international partner (*see the next section*), and among those who voted in the 2016 referendum, were more likely to have voted for Britain to remain in the European Union.

Those who think Brexit was good for Britain, a small 14% minority, are more likely to be authoritarians, nationalists, and patriotic.

They think the Commonwealth is the most important partner for the United Kingdom and are more likely to be members of social grade C2.

BREXIT: GOOD OR BAD FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM



THE UNITED KINGDOM & THE EUROPEAN UNION TODAY

Young Britons are more likely to:



say the European Union is Britain's most important partner,



want a closer relationship with the European Union, and



feel that the present relationship between Britain and the European Union is too distant.

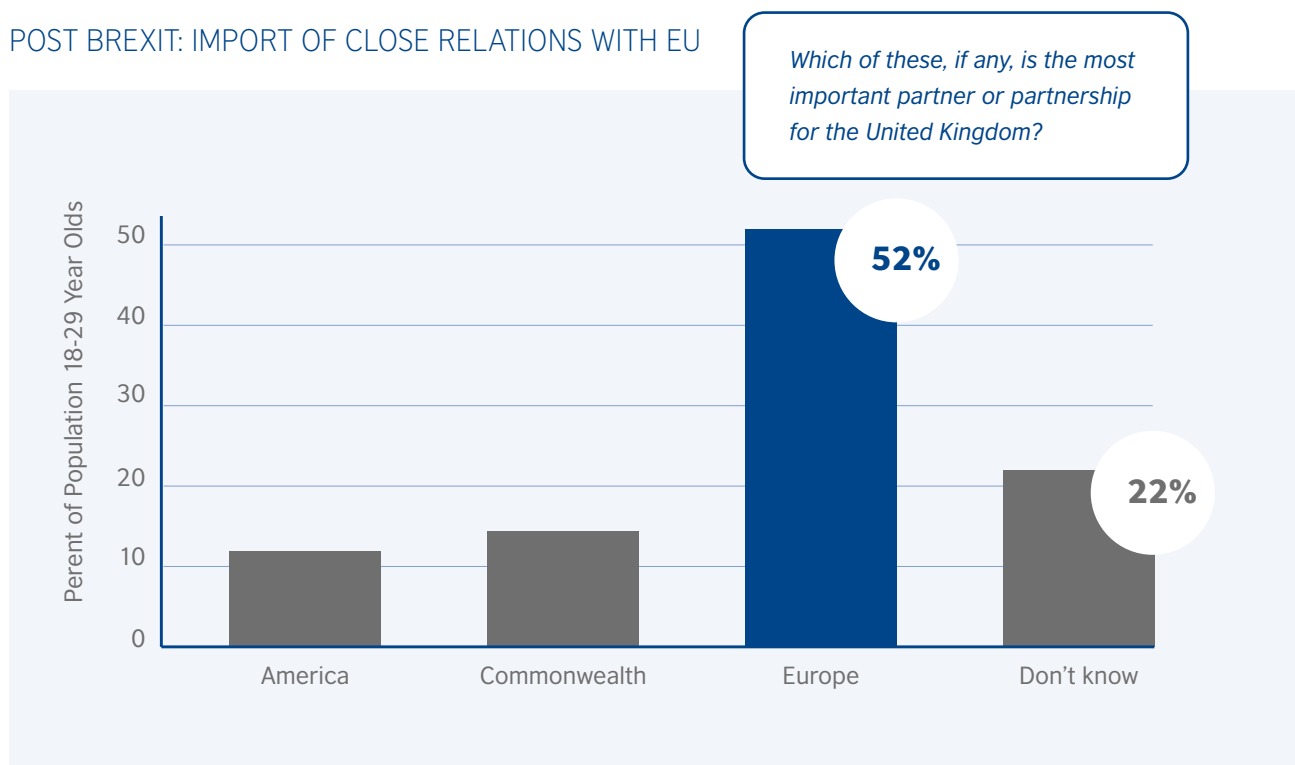
DATA

The United Kingdom's Most Important Partner

A majority of British youth (52%) select Europe as the most important partner or partnership for the United Kingdom.

The United States and Commonwealth Nations are each selected by fewer than **15%** of young Britons, trailing “*Don't Know*” as a preferred partner.

POST BREXIT: IMPORT OF CLOSE RELATIONS WITH EU



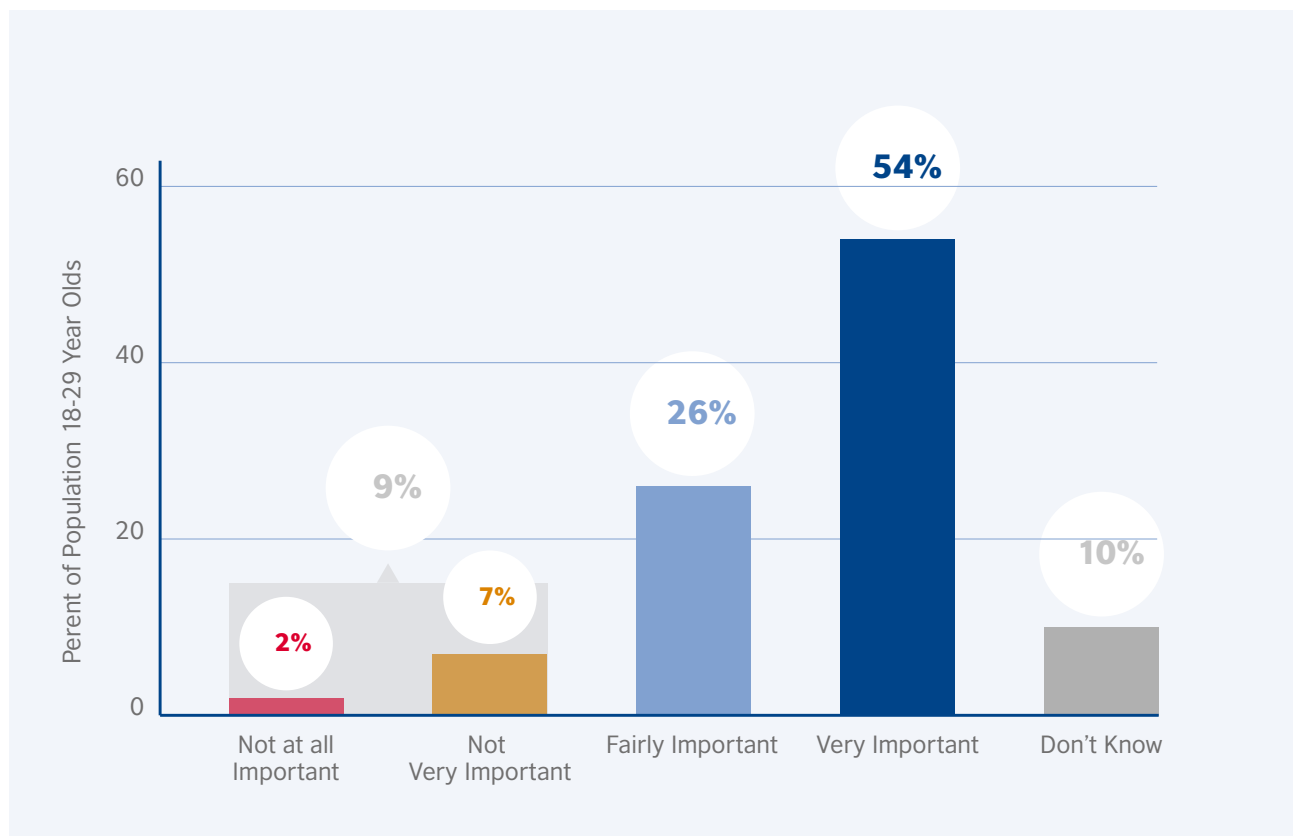
Importance of a Close Relationship Between Britain and the European Union

When asked “now that Britain has left the European Union, how important, if at all, do you think it is for Britain to maintain a close relationship with the European Union?,” a majority of young Britons (**54%**) say it is very important. Another **26%** say it is fairly important,

meaning that 8 in 10 think maintaining close relations with EU is important.

Only **9%** say close relations are not very important or not important at all.

POST BREXIT: IMPORTANCE OF CLOSE RELATIONS WITH EU



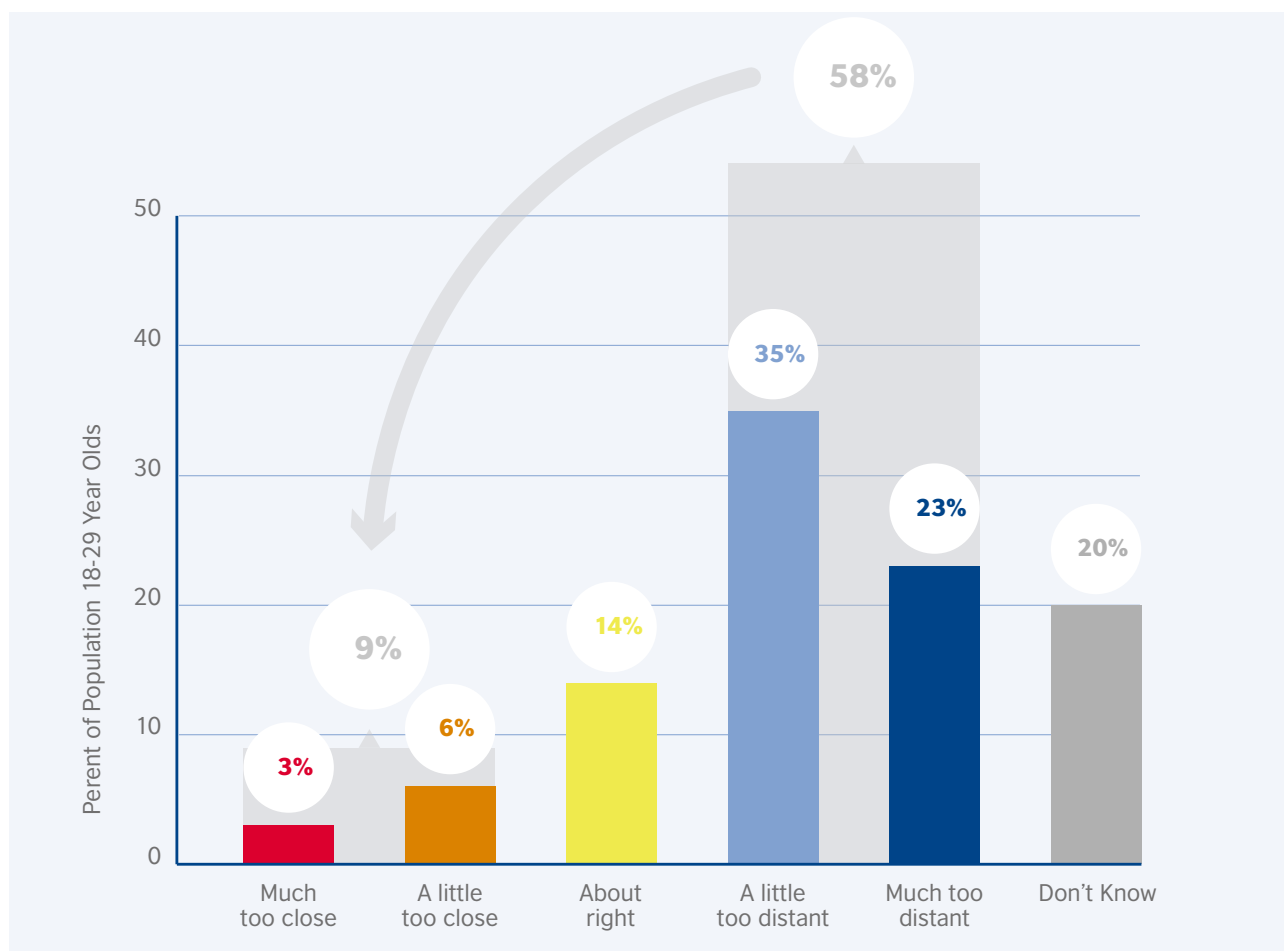
Assessment of the Current Relationship Between Britain and the European Union

While an overwhelming majority British youth think a close relationship between Britain and the European Union is important,

58% of them believe that the current relationship is too distant.

In fact, young Britons are more than 6 times more likely (**58% to 9%**) to say the relationship is too distant than too close.

UK: CURRENT RELATIONSHIP WITH EU



THE UNITED KINGDOM & THE EU TOMORROW

Young Britons want the United Kingdom to build a new, stronger relationship with the European Union than it has now.

This attitude, which was measured twice —near the beginning and at the end of the survey, increased marginally indicating that discussions of the United Kingdom’s relationship with the European Union may focus and increase support among British youth for closer relations.

DATA

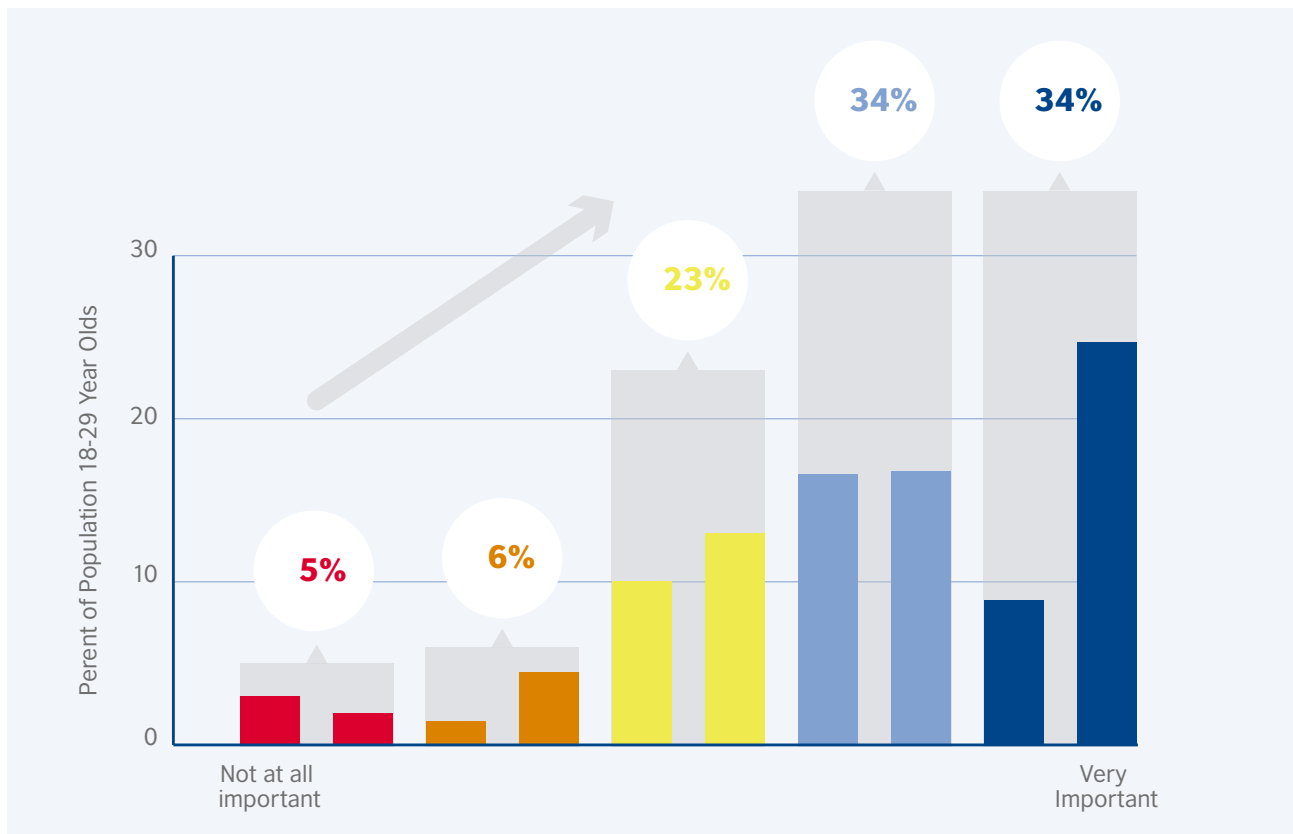
Future Relationship with the European Union

(Initial Question – T1)

When first asked, one third of young Britons (34%) say it is very important to build a new, stronger relationship with the European Union than it has now.

Another third (34%) say it is somewhat important. Only 5% say it is not important at all.

IMPORTANCE: BUILD NEW, STRONGER RELATIONS EU (T1)

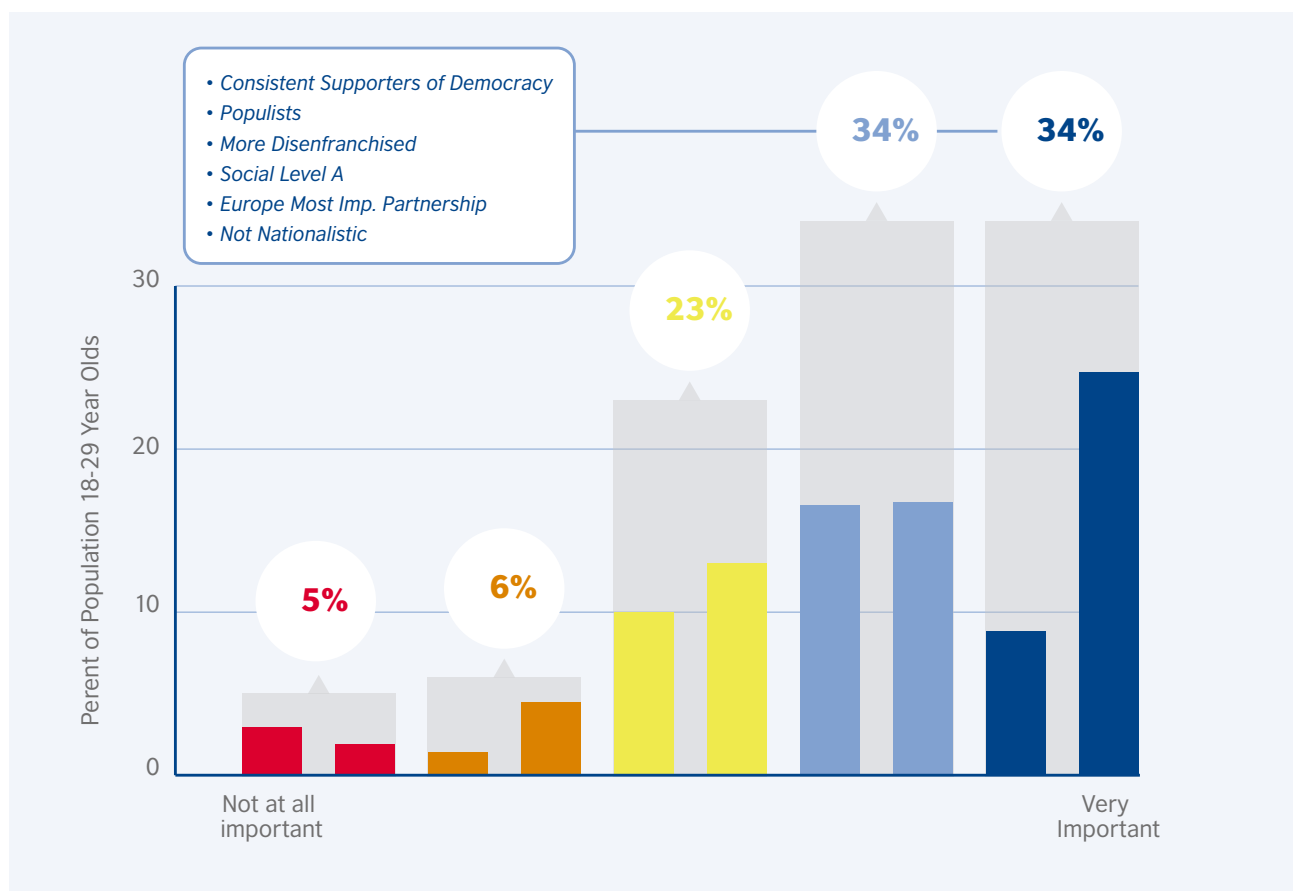


Those who are more likely to say it is important are:

- Consistent supporters of democracy,
- Populists,
- More likely to feel disenfranchised, and
- Not nationalistic

They are also more likely to belong to social grade A and think that Europe is the United Kingdom's most important partner.

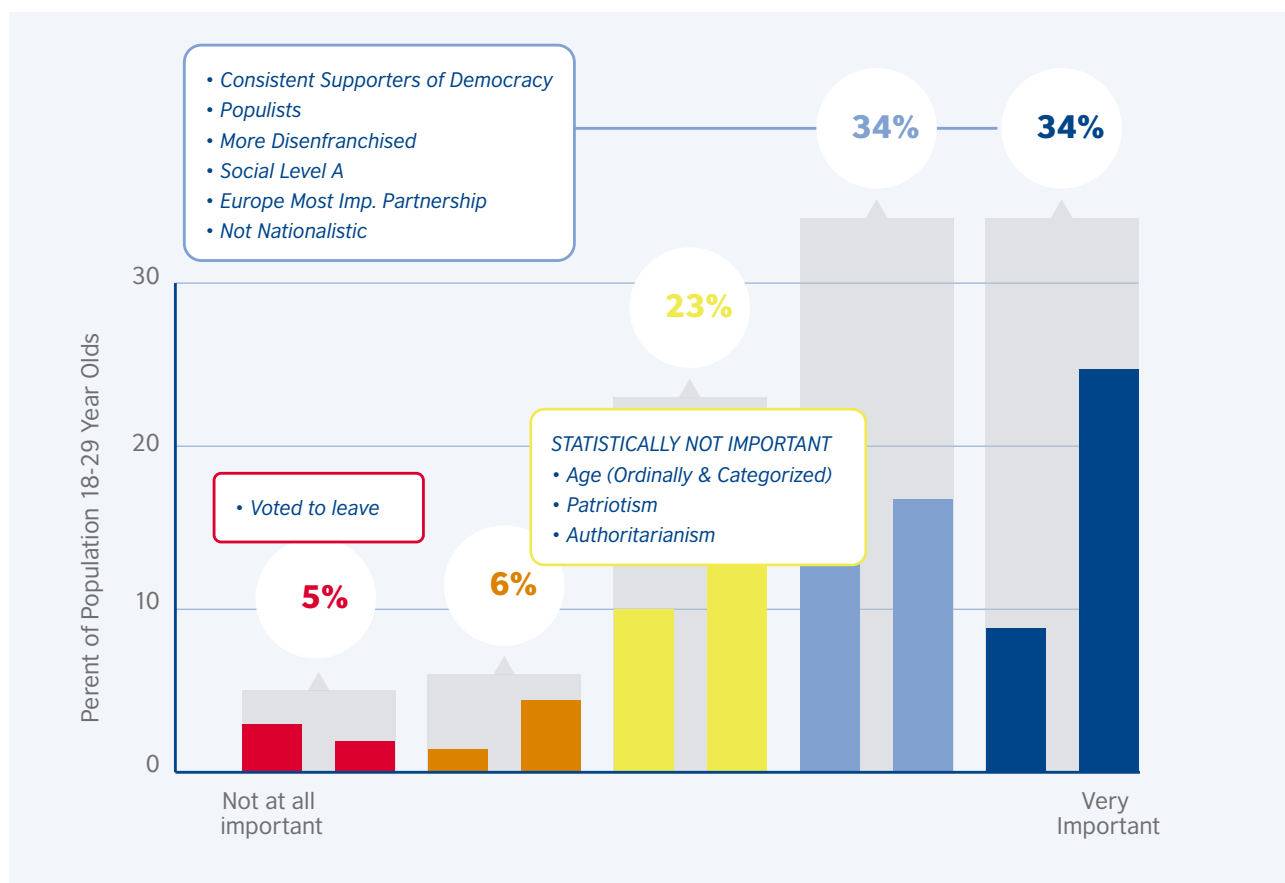
WHO? BUILD, NEW, STRONGER RELATIONS WITH EU (T1)



Age of respondents (including a division of young Britons into those who were old enough to vote during the Brexit referendum and those who were not) has no statistical bearing on attitudes toward the United Kingdom’s future relationship with the European Union. Patriotism and authoritarianism are also statistically not correlated (positively or negatively) with the question.

And, as expected, only those who voted to leave (based on existing panel information) are more likely to aver that building a new stronger relationship with the European Union was not important at all.

WHO? BUILD, NEW, STRONGER RELATIONS WITH EU (T1)



Future Relationship with the European Union

(Follow-up Question – T2)

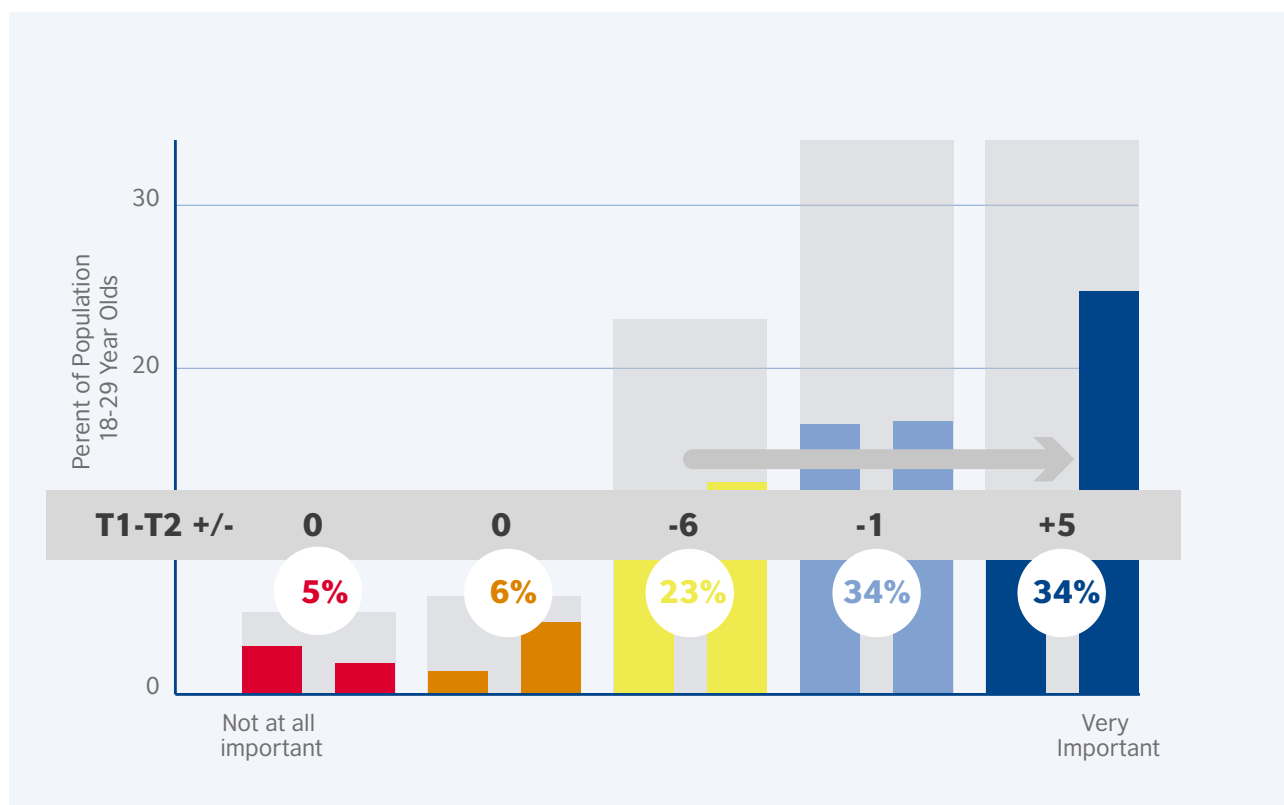
When asked again about future relations between the United Kingdom with the European Union (near the end of the survey),

39% of young Britons say it is very important to make this new relationship stronger than it is now

—a 5 percentage point increase from the initial reading. In the follow up question, a total of **72%** of British youth agree building a new, stronger relationship with the European Union is important.

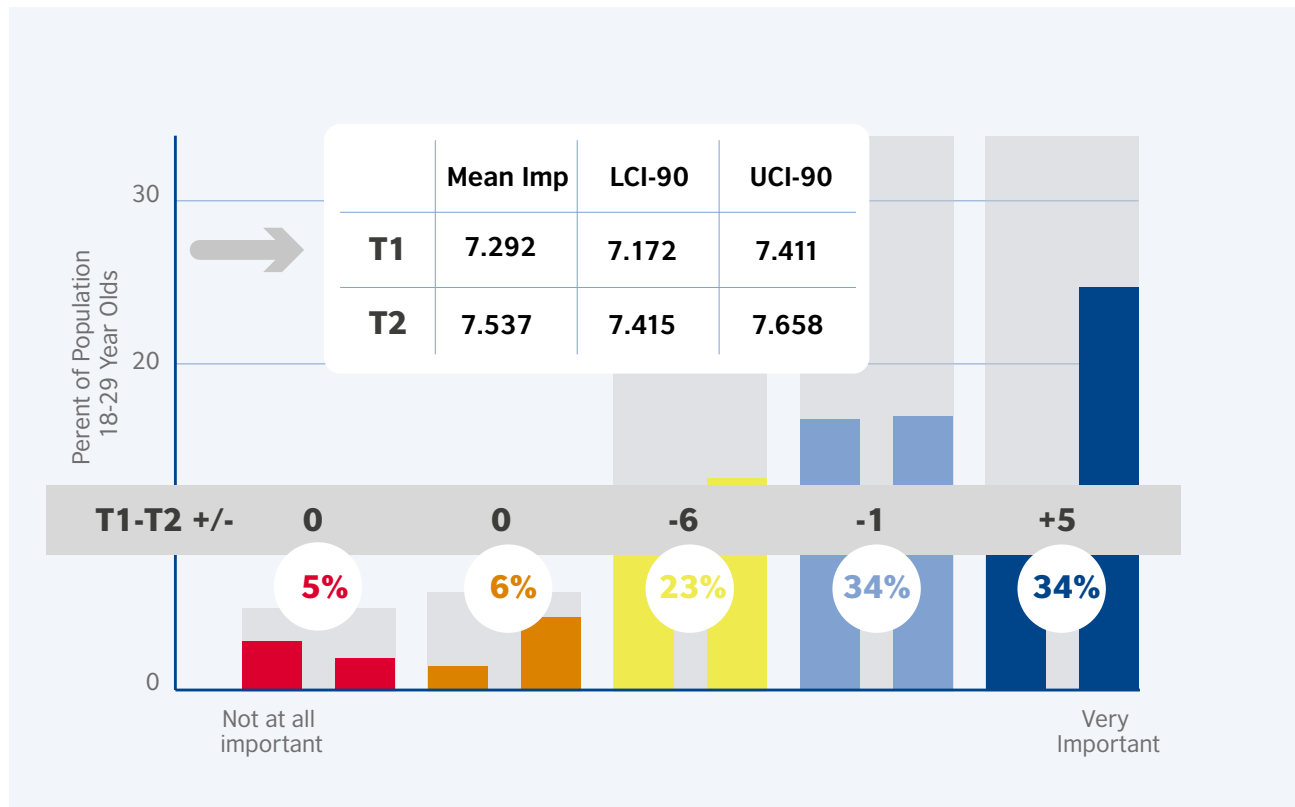
The attitudinal shift measured between the initial and follow-up question comes primarily from those young Britons who are initially in the middle of the spectrum (between important and not important) on the question.

WHO? BUILD, NEW, STRONGER RELATIONS WITH EU (T2)



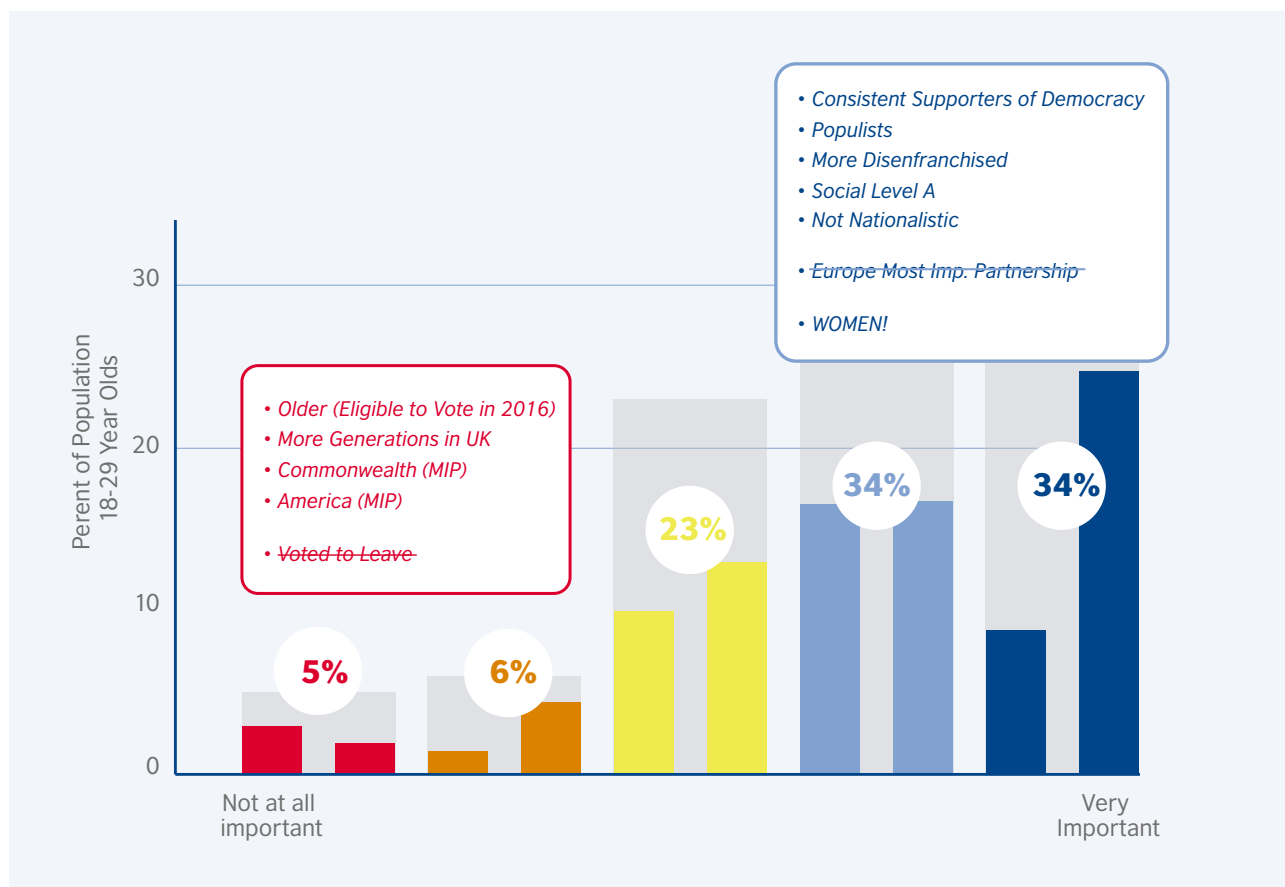
One important caveat: The percentage shift in attitudes observed between these two questions is statistically significant at a **90%** confidence interval. It is not significant, however, at a **95%** interval. Thus, it may be real movement or could simply be noise in the data.

WHO? BUILD, NEW, STRONGER RELATIONS WITH EU (T2)



Between the initial and follow-up questions, the segments and demographics of those who agree stronger relations are more or less important changes.⁹ On the follow-up question, women are now more likely to agree stronger relations are important. Older young Britons (to be clear: this means those who were eligible to vote on Brexit), those respondents with longer lineages in the United Kingdom, and those who think the Commonwealth or the United States is Britain’s most important global partnership are more likely to say a new, stronger relationship is not important at all.

WHO? BUILD, NEW, STRONGER RELATIONS WITH EU (T2)



⁹ While the change in top-line attitudes between the initial and follow-up questions is statistically significant at a 90% percent confidence interval, the variables in the regression model specified here are all significant at a 95% confidence interval.

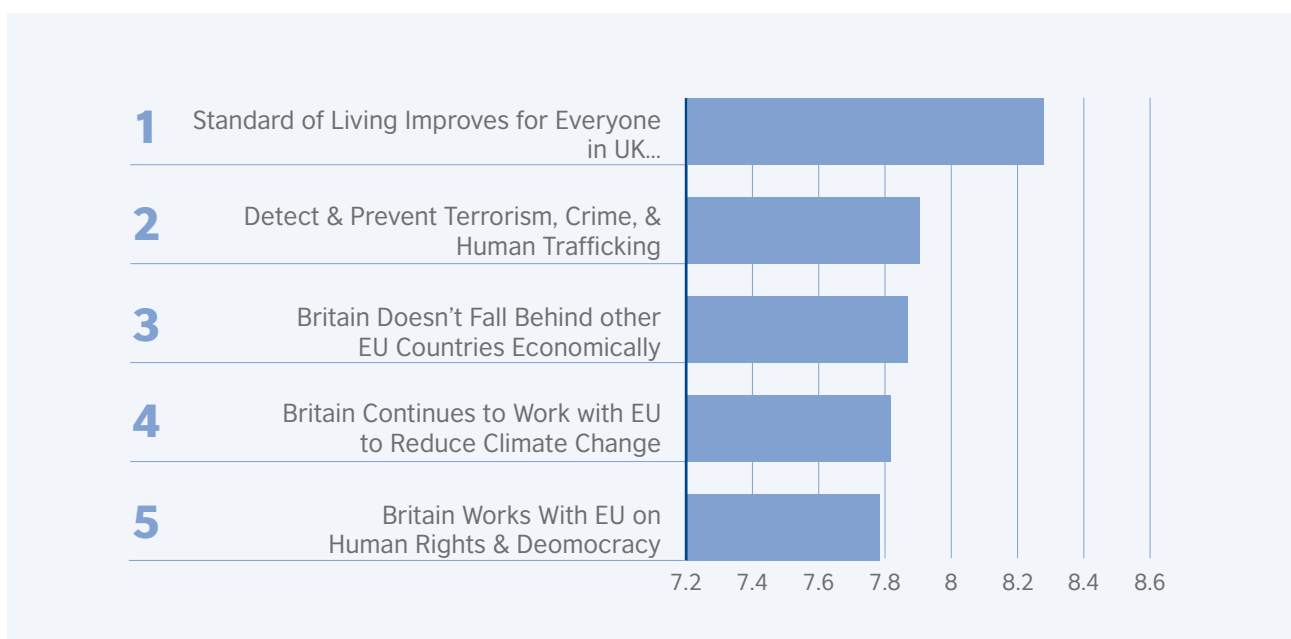
Rationale: Why It Is Important to Build a Stronger Relationship with the European Union

Why build a stronger relationship than Britain has now with the European Union?

While seventeen reasons were offered in two separate batteries, one answer was the clear winner: **Building a stronger relationship with the European Union will improve the standard of living for everyone in the United Kingdom.** This reason is statistically (see confidence interval “whiskers”) significant at a **95%** interval.

Once again, economic concerns dominate and shape the attitudes of young Britons toward Europe.

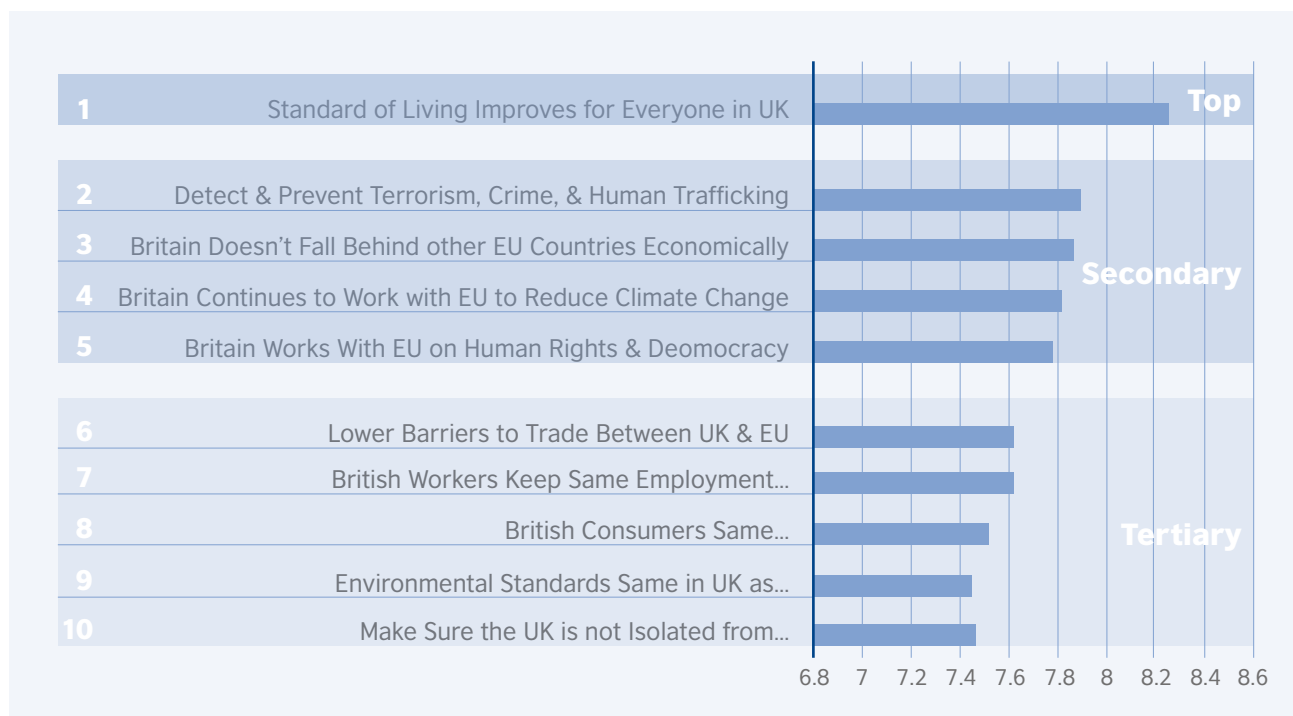
WHY BUILD, NEW, STRONGER RELATIONS WITH EU?



Secondary reasons (2-5) for building stronger relations with the European Union include (2) detecting and preventing terrorism, crime, and human trafficking, (3) to keep Britain from falling behind EU countries economically, (4) to work with EU countries to reduce climate change, and (5) to work with the EU on human rights and democracy. While these reasons are ranked 2 through 5, statistically they are equally important to young Britons and less important than the economic concern —improving the standard of living in the United Kingdom.

The five tertiary reasons for building stronger relations are also equally important statistically and, importantly, much less salient to young Britons than the top and secondary reasons.

WHY BUILD, NEW, STRONGER RELATIONS WITH EU?



The **bottom seven reasons** are noted in the table below. Two of these —popular EU programs like the student exchange program and restoring the freedom of movement between the UK and Europe— are regularly used in messaging promoting closer relations with the Europe Union.

The wholesale future use of these in communications should be reconsidered and carefully calibrated to particular audiences.

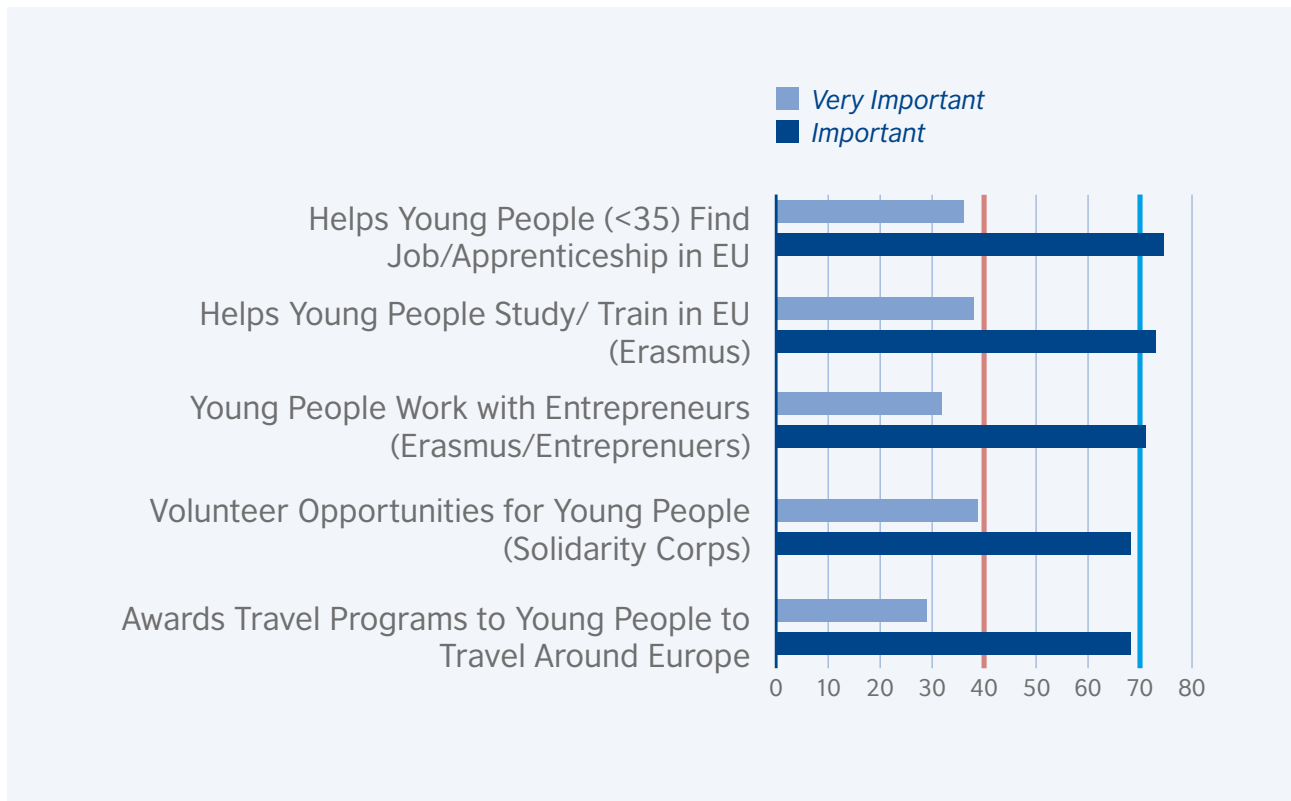
WHY BUILD, NEW, STRONGER RELATIONS WITH EU? - BOTTOM 7 REASONS

- 1** British citizens regain access to popular EU programs —like the student exchange program
- 2** Restore the freedom of movement of people between the UK and Europe
- 3** Increase investment in British businesses and parts of the regional UK economy from EU businesses and investors
- 4** Lessen the tensions within British society and decrease divisions between UK nations
- 5** Help the UK regain influence in international affairs
- 6** Improve how people in other countries feel about the UK
- 7** Strengthen UK borders and work together with EU to reduce illegal immigration into Britain

Importance: EU Programs

There is no statistical difference in the importance of the five EU programs tested in the survey. While approximately **70%** of young Britons say each program is important, the very important ratings of the programs are tepid.

IMPORTANCE: EU PROGRAMS TO YOU



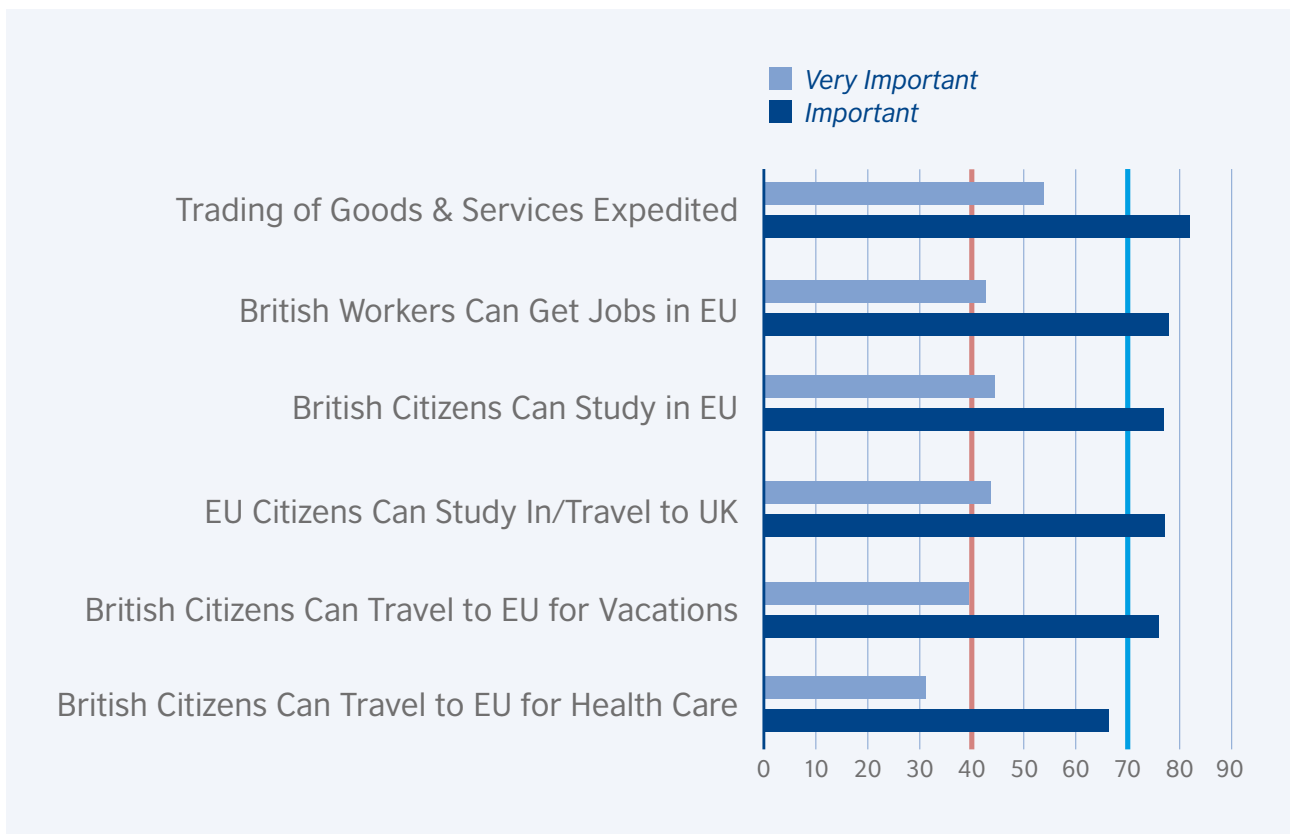
Importance: Freedom of Movement

The economic imperative at the core of young Britons support of a closer relationship with the European Union is once again apparent in the six questions exploring free movement between the United Kingdom and Europe.

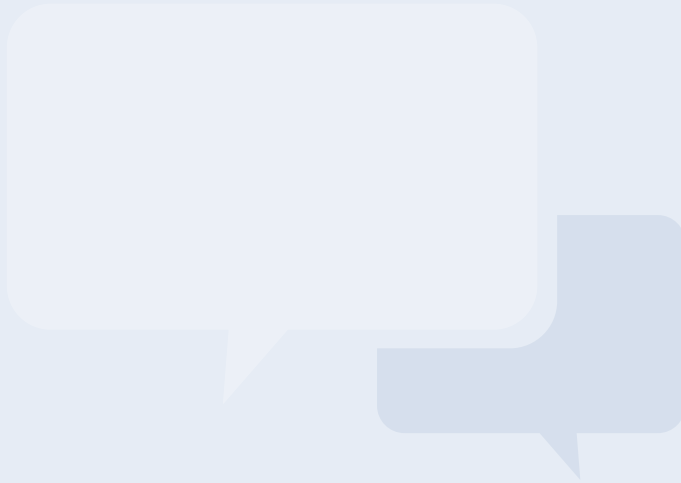
Over 50% of British youth agree that the trading (free movement) of goods and services between the continent and Britain is very important.

Free movement that abets study, travel, vacations, and travel for health care is perceived as much less important.

IMPORTANCE: EU PROGRAMS TO YOU



TARGETS & MESSAGES



Top targets, among young Britons, and core messages to persuade and mobilize them are quite clear.

Top Communication and Organizational Targets

Top targets among young Britons for communications and organizing in support of establishing a new, stronger relationship with the European Union can be specified using:



Worldviews,



Demography, and

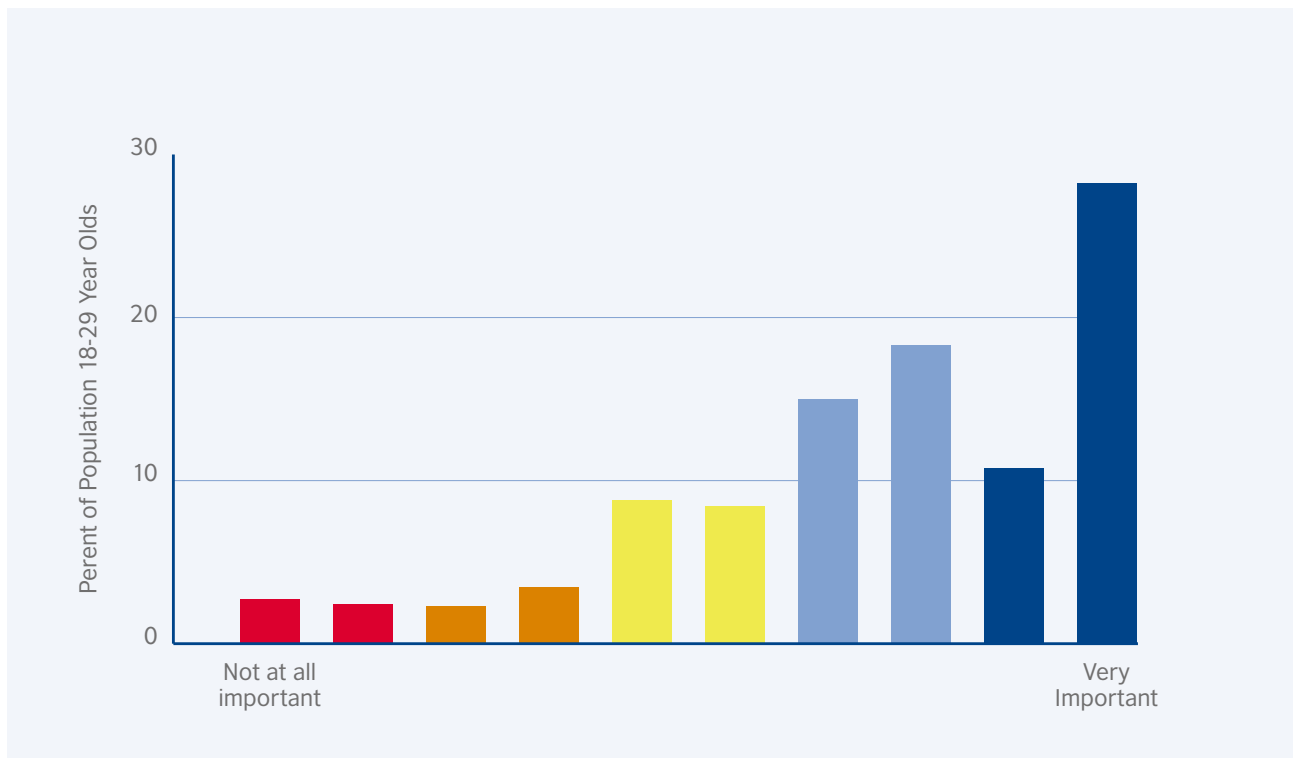
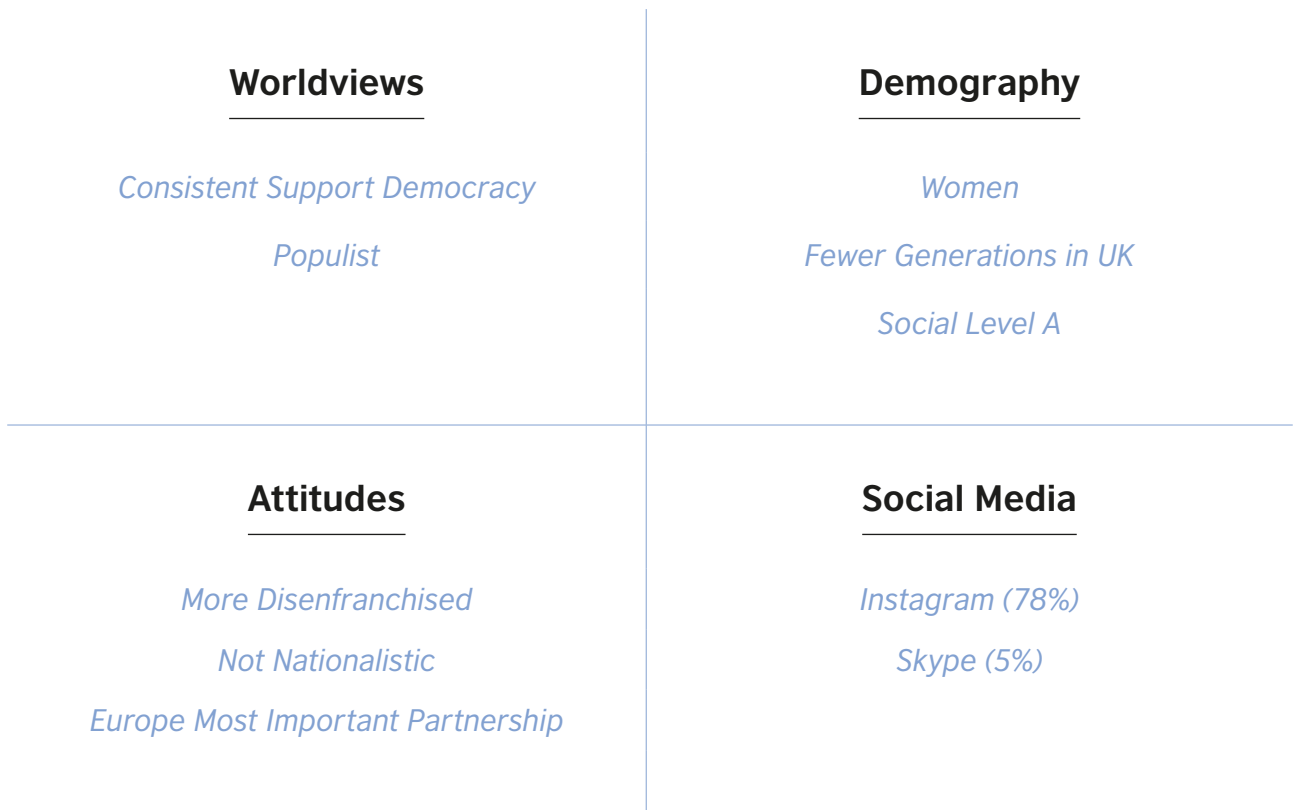


Attitudes



Social Media

Useful variables for targeting supportive or persuadable audiences within these **four categories** are listed in the graphic below. These variables can be used by themselves or in combination to target communications.



Core Message

The core communication and organizational message focuses on the economic benefits of a stronger and closer relationship between the United Kingdom and the European Union. The message takes the strongest findings from the poll and forges them into a persuasive and activating argument for reengaging with the European Union as follows:

#1

Identify the need: Build a new, stronger and closer relationship with the European Union

Why?

Europe is our most important partner

Britain is too distant from Europe now

Britain does better when we work with other countries

Britain is not doing well economically now

#2

Focus on the economy: A new, stronger and closer relationship with the European Union must be focused on the economy.

Closer economic ties that

Simplify export and import of good and services thereby invigorating the British economy

#3

Focus on the resulting benefits:

Building stronger economic ties with the European Union will

Improve the United Kingdom's economy

Lift the standard of living for all in the United Kingdom

Improve people's personal financial situations

Prevent Britain from falling behind other EU countries economically

Core Message

Need to build new, stronger & closer relationship with Europe

- *Europe is our most important partner*
- *Too distant from Europe now*
- *Britain does better when we work with other countries*
- *And we aren't doing well right now*

Stronger and closer relationship must focus first on economy: economic ties

- *Closer economic ties, simplified export/import, movement of goods and services*

WHY? Building stronger economic ties will

- *Improve UK economy*
- *Lift the standard of living for all in UK*
- *Improve people's personal financial situations*
- *AND protect us from falling behind other EU countries economically*

Secondary Message

Secondary messages promoting a new, stronger relationship between the United Kingdom and the European Union should focus on how a closer connection protects core values, including freedom, democracy, and human rights, better. This is even more important now because the world is a dangerous place.

A new, stronger and closer relationship with Europe will protect our values while addressing other important concerns:

- *Detect & Prevent Terrorism, Crime & Human Trafficking*
- *Work to Reduce Climate Change*
- *Protect Our Freedoms, Human Rights, and Democracy*
- *The World is a Dangerous Place.*
- *Working with partners in Europe we can protect our freedoms, democracy and our values better.*

APPENDIX 1

MEASURING CONSISTENCY OF SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY

Five questions were employed in this study to estimate consistency of support for democracy. These questions were used in the Democracy Fund: Voter Study Group's omnibus analysis (2017) of "the degree to which Americans are open to departures from democracy, and the motivations behind endorsing authoritarian alternatives."¹⁰ The report based on this analysis is called "Follow the Leader."¹¹

The five questions are:

Introduction Q1-Q3:

Various types of political systems are described in the three statements below. For each one, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad, or very bad way of governing the United States?

Q1. Having a strong leader who does not have to bother with Congress and general elections.

1** Very good 2** Fairly good
3 Fairly bad 4 Very bad

Q2. Having the army rule.

1** Very good 2** Fairly good
3 Fairly bad 4 Very bad

Q3. Having a democratic political system.

1 Very good 2 Fairly good
3** Fairly bad 4** Very bad

10 Democracy Fund Voter Study Group, *Follow the Leader*, www.voterstudygroup.org.

11 Democracy Fund Voter Study Group, *Follow the Leader*, www.voterstudygroup.org.

Q4. On a scale where **1** represents “Not At All Important To Me” and **10** represents “Very Important To Me,” how important is it to you to live in a country that is governed democratically?

Not at All Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very Important

1-7 = **

Q5. Which of these statements comes closest to your view?

Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government 1

In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable. 2**

For someone like me, it doesn’t matter what kind of government we have. 3**

*Answers marked ** are inconsistent with support for democracy.¹² For example, agreeing that “having a strong leader who does not have to bother with Congress and elections” is a “very good” or “fairly good” way of governing the United States (Q1 above) is considered inconsistent with the basic functioning of democracy. Supporting a President who ignores Congress—a co-equal branch of government—and flouts the outcome of a free and fair election is an anathema to democracy and also, as America found on January 6th, 2021, a recipe for insurrection.*

Whether a citizen is a consistent or an inconsistent support of democracy is a simple binary question. Anyone who answers all five these questions consistently is a consistent support of democracy. Everyone else is inconsistent.

The degree to which citizens are willing to depart from democracy and democratic norms may also be scaled, hypothetically, by how many questions they answer inconsistently. Theoretically, a person who answers one of the questions inconsistently may be more likely to be supportive of democracy than someone who answers four or five of these questions inconsistently.

For this study, and other studies done since this methodology was used by the Democracy Fund, all questions are given equal weight in the scaling. In future, once the stability in the measurement is established, a weighted scale may be developed to produce a more granular picture of support for democracy.

¹² Unlike the Democracy Fund: Voter Study Group, answers two and three in question five are considered inconsistent in this analysis.

EXPLORING TOGETHERNESS

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