

The Centre Holds

Despite Elites' Attempts to Divide Britain in the **Culture Wars**,
a Tolerant **Centre Ground Prevails**

- **New research reveals a surprising unity on the centre ground of British politics - including on issues perceived as highly divisive such as race and identity** - the week before the country faces local elections.
- Despite a narrative of increasing polarisation, **four in five British people believe that it's important to be attentive to issues of race and social justice** – a dictionary definition of 'woke'¹.
- The research also finds **strong support for taking in more Ukrainian refugees (43%), including amongst Conservative voters (30%)**, although there is still considerable support for wider restrictions on immigration.
- The new Global Future/YouGov poll also finds **strong support for ideas such as 'unconscious racial bias', traditionally more associated with the liberal left, which is now acknowledged by 68% of voters**. However, only 6% of us say that most white people are racist.
- A strong **majority (59%) of people believe we need radical or significant change to become a fairer society**, whilst rejecting ideas of revolution. There is also a **high degree of consensus about our history**, with three quarters of Conservatives acknowledging we have done damage in the past and over two thirds of Labour voters accepting we have also done good.
- This report reveals a nation surprisingly at ease with itself, with **over three quarters of us saying we're comfortable talking about race and identity**. Most people also believe that other members of the public hold a fair amount in common with themselves.
- However, **over two thirds of voters blame politicians and the media for undermining this tolerant, ethical consensus by perpetuating culture wars**. The greatest number, 71%, believe that social media divides us.

¹ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/woke>

- **How people voted in the EU referendum remains the greatest predictor of people's views, but this divide is more nuanced than media narratives suggest.** For example, three quarters of Leavers agree it is important to be attentive to issues of race and social justice and 39% of Remainers favour current or more restrictions to immigration.
- The report, '*The Centre Holds*' published by the think tank **Global Future** calls on culture warriors from both left and right to spend less time focussing on what tears us apart and more proportionate attention to what we have in common.

Isabel Doraisamy, co-author of the report and head of psychological research at Global Future said:

"Polarisation is often less about ideological differences than it is needing to feel that we belong in a certain tribe, and that our tribe is morally superior to others."

British politicians have a responsibility to bring our tribes together and make us realise that we share a huge amount of common ground. That is what true democracy is about."

Renie Anjeh, co-author of the report and a consultant at Global Future said:

"Our research shows there is a huge degree of complexity and nuance within British public opinion. Whilst value divides clearly play a greater role in politics in Britain than they used to, the vast majority of us do not match the prevailing culture war stereotypes of 'gammon', 'snowflake' and 'woke'. We actually have a lot more in common than we think and this nuance should inform our public discourse a lot more than it does at present."

NOTES

- All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2244 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 6th-7th April 2022. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).
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