

# Revolt on the left: Getting to know Labour's 'progressive defectors'

A Persuasion UK report with 38 Degrees

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## **Acknowledgements**

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## Foreword

Matthew McGregor

CEO, 38 Degrees

Joseph McNamara, a 77-year old man living in Gorton, told the *Independent* last week why he had switched from voting Labour to voting Green in the by-election. “Starmer is for the higher-ups rather than the lower-downs. He promises things and says, ‘Oh yes I’ll do this, do that’. At the end of the day nothing happens.”

Labour has lost the support of swathes of voters who backed the party in 2024 as Keir Starmer swept to a historic landslide win. Much of the media commentary about this collapse in support has focused on those Labour voters who now say they’ll vote for Nigel Farage’s Reform party. This coverage has in turn resulted in the debate about what the Government can do to arrest this decline becoming dominated by the issue of immigration.

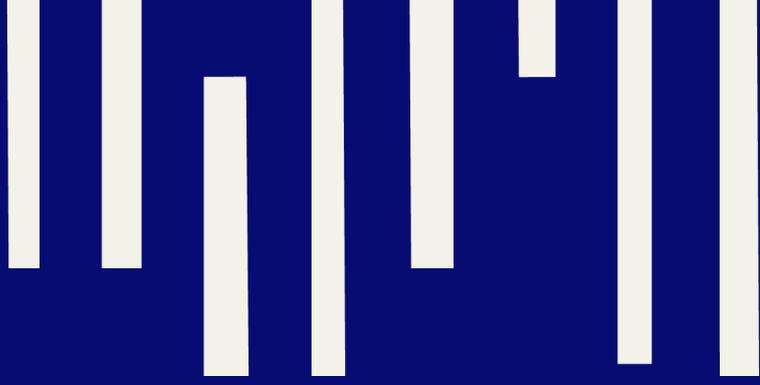
If the next general election were held tomorrow, it is highly likely that the government would be swept from office. But this new and important research highlights that for every two former Labour voters who have defected to a party of the right, there are three former Labour voters who have defected to another party of the left. These ‘left defectors’ are just as likely to be found in a battleground constituency where the next election will be decided as they are to be found in a safe Labour seat. They are most likely to be a younger, lower middle class professional, working as a teacher or IT support worker. This is not the cliched stereotype of a “woke lefty” in Islington or Hackney.

Any party that seeks to keep rightwing populism out of office needs to find a unifying mission for all of these voters. What unites those voters that Labour has lost to its left, and to its right, is a feeling that the economy doesn’t work for working people. Political parties need to respond to what people care about, made clear in this research: people want higher pay, lower bills, affordable rents. Bread and butter issues, which will materially improve people’s lives – fought for and delivered in the face of a hostile media and other special interests who will scream about the so-called extremism or recklessness of these simple steps.

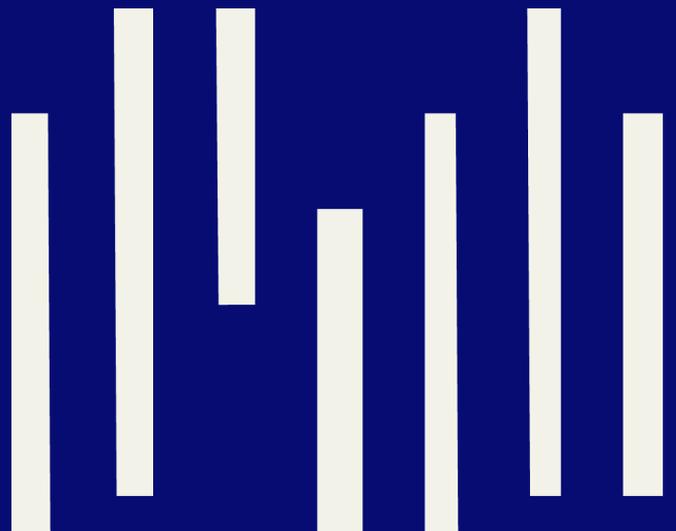


Labour won't win back votes with a crude 'lesser of two evils' message – what strategists call a “squeeze message”. Yes, showing voters where their 'X' is best placed to keep Reform out in a First Past The Post system matters. But it is the last mile of a journey predominantly trod with policies that improve people's living standards, and a compelling story about bold changes made in the interests of working people, over those whose interest the economy is currently stacked in favour of.

Any political party hoping to keep Reform at bay in the upcoming local elections – and the General Election further down the line – needs to make it clear whose side they're on, and whose interests they will govern in. Crucially, they also need a policy platform that not only promises to improve people's lives, but can actually deliver on that promise in government.



# Executive summary





- **The number of 2024 Labour voters going to left parties now outnumbers those going to right parties in a majority of battleground seats.** Nationally, for every 10 voters the government is losing to Reform or the Conservative, it is losing 16 to the Greens, Liberal Democrats, Plaid or SNP. That figure is 10 to 14 in the marginal constituencies won from the Conservatives at the 2024 general election.
- **While the strategic value of Labour → Reform/Conservative voters should never be ignored, progressive defectors do damage too.** Messy as it is, it's important to hold two thoughts in our head at once: defectors to the right 'count twice' in most battleground seats (since they are one off the government's vote and one on to its nearest competitor) and this gives them extra strategic importance. But there are still 138 battleground seats of different types where progressive defectors are the most strategically valuable voter group for Labour. This is especially true in Wales and across the Blue Wall commuter-belt seats of England especially. Ultimately, it needs both left and right swing voters to win.
- **In addition, the ceiling on defections to the left is higher - with room for much greater spillage in this direction, splitting the progressive vote in many Reform or Conservative facing battleground seats.** 55% of the Labour vote is open to switching left, compared to 21% to the right. This is a reflection of the way the sociology of the Labour vote has changed since the 1990s, despite various mythologies to the contrary. The more votes lost to other left parties, the more areas in which Labour lose claim to being the clear anti-Reform option. The efficiency of progressive voters in battleground seats remains an under-appreciated factor of Labour's 2024 election victory.
- **Crude 'squeeze' campaigning tactics are unlikely to automatically bring left defectors back, even if many remain open to persuasion.** The good news for the government is that progressive defectors are more reasonable-minded, and less ideological, than many online left activists. And unlike defectors to Reform, most are amenable to returning. But it shouldn't be assumed they will do so naturally under the threat of Reform. Crude squeeze questions no longer capture the messy real-world information environment voters will likely face in many seats. When you model this environment in an experiment, the rate of natural return to Labour shrinks dramatically. Everything about progressive defectors' suggests most are genuine swing voters and should be treated as such.



- **Demographically, most progressive defectors are frustrated lower middle class Millennials - not affluent urbanites or a PMC 'lanyard class'.** Though they have liberal social values, many are frustrated graduates; Millennials with a mortgage or rent they are struggling to afford - primary school teachers, IT support or clerical workers. In short, the face of the modern social democratic voter.
- **The nature of progressive voters' disaffection is more values based than other defector groups.** While frustration at the slow pace of change in the country unites progressive defectors with their right-moving equivalents, there is an added ideological dimension. They have come to see the party as being 'Tory-lite' or 'too right wing'. In many cases, these views are out of line with actual policy decisions actually made by the government since 2024. For instance, a plurality have come to see Labour as a pro-austerity party.
- **There is the need for the government to re-think its electoral coalition for the next election - with progressive defectors part of a wider 'winnable left' up for grabs.** Once one looks at which votes are still available to Labour for the next election, most of the winnable swing vote sits in the 'left bloc' of British politics, including in battleground seats. Adding right-leaning swing voters to this will be vital too especially in Brexit voting areas, but it's unlikely to come solely from clawing back Labour/Reform switchers - most are now beyond reach. A new group of soft 2024 Conservative or Reform voters will need to be sought.
- **A winnable Labour coalition can be brought together by a relentless focus on 'cost of living populism'.** There are some issues which matter disproportionately to left-leaning swing voters - such as climate change or child poverty. Meanwhile, small boats and the public realm matter to everyone. But it is populist cost of living policy - and, crucially, attention grabbing fights around these topics with clear enemies - that has the potential to be the most effective at bridging the cultural and demographic divides in the Labour electoral universe. This is less about policy delivery than illuminating whose side the party is on, and whose side it is not on. 'For the people not the powerful' type narrative strategies are likely the only way cross-class, cross-generational social democratic coalitions can be sustained into the future.



# Research objectives, methodology and introduction

In this paper, we are seeking to understand the following:

- Who are Labour's 'progressive defectors', demographically, geographically and attitudinally?
- Why are they switching and how does that compare to defectors overall?
- What could Labour do in terms of policies and outcomes to win the loyalty of this group back without alienating the Reform leaning part of their coalition?
- Will most 'left defectors' vote Labour regardless to avoid a Reform led government?
- How does this more 'messy' tactical voting context impact progressive voters' likelihood to tactically vote?

To do this, we undertook the following research covering around 9,000 UK voters:

- A core survey, including a special sample boost of 2024 Labour voters. This was commissioned via NorStat in December 2025/January 2026.
- MRP analysis of different groups within the electorate. Unfortunately this was only viable in England and Wales owing to the uniqueness of the voter groups and tactical voting dynamics in Scotland.
- A multi-factorial Randomised Control Trial (RCT) experiment, known as a 'vignette experiment', to isolate and analyse different factors shaping voting intention. The full outline of this is in Annex A of this report.



# Section 1: Where is the Labour vote currently going?

## **A brief note on provider uncertainty**

In order to answer the questions we have set for ourselves, we first need reliable data. An under-appreciated challenge here is the level of divergence that currently exists across pollsters on the present intentions of the 2024 Labour vote.

As we can see below, this ranges from Find Out Now or YouGov – who show well over twice as many voters defecting left as right – to Survation, who actually show Labour losing more to the right than left.

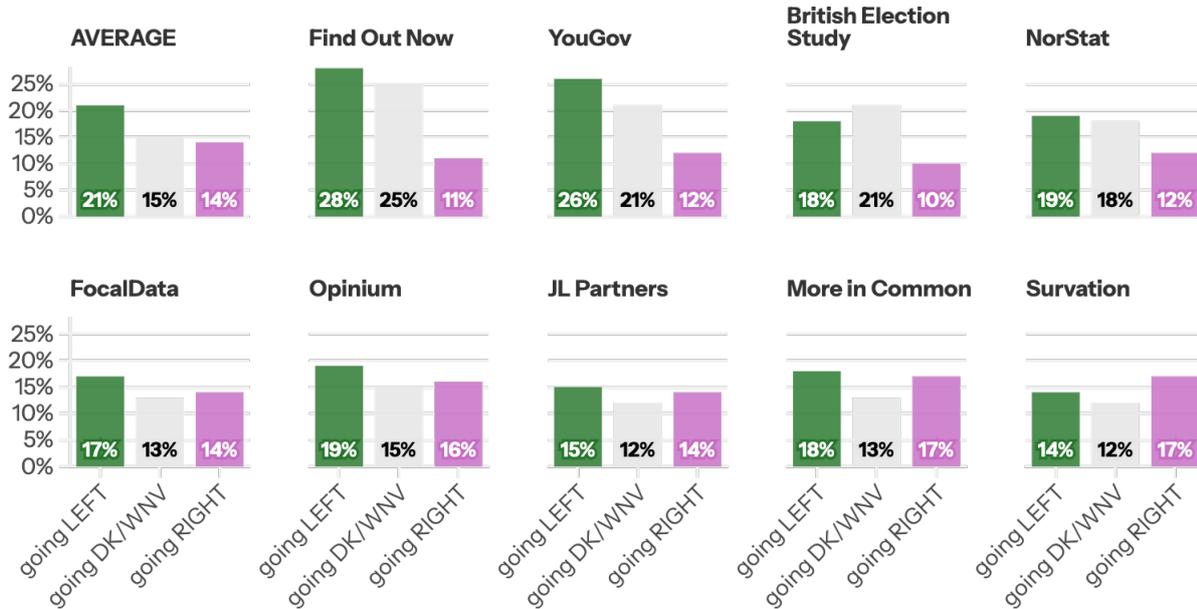
Averaging these, happily we find a ratio similar to the pollster used for this research (NorStat). Nevertheless, given the volume of public polling in the UK, these differences pose a problem. They create a surfeit of conflicting data – data different factional or partial interests can cherry pick and amplify as they see fit – whipping up a confusing picture for neutral observers. This threatens to misinform narratives or debates which have consequences for the way the country is governed.



## How much of the Labour 2024 vote is going LEFT, RIGHT and DON'T KNOW / WILL NOT VOTE?

As of January 2026, there are significant provider differences on this question.

■ going LEFT 
 ■ going DK/WNV 
 ■ going RIGHT



Left = to Green, Lib Dem, Plaid, SNP. Right = to Reform, Con. DK/WNV = currently saying don't know or will not vote.

Based on latest provider survey as of January 2026.



Looking under the bonnet, a lot of this appears to be driven by differences in the share going to the left – especially the Greens – rather than too much volatility in the share moving right.



### Provider differences on where the Labour 2024 vote is going, as of last voting intention poll

There is a relatively large range between providers, with some showing twice as many Labour voter are going left as right, and some showing a more equal picture. This comes primarily from a large range in how much of the Labour vote is going to the Greens and Lib Dems. This creates an uncertain strategic picture for the party and commentators, although averages still suggest left defectors do clearly outnumber right.

	Fieldwork date	Multiple of left defectors to right	Total % of Lab 24 voters going to left parties	Total % of Lab 24 voters going to right parties	Total % to DK/WNV	Still Labour
Find Out Now	Jan 2026	2.55	28%	11%	25%	33%
Verian	Dec 2025	2.43	34%	14%	*	51%
YouGov	Jan 2026	2.17	26%	12%	21%	38%
British Election Study	May 2025	1.8	18%	10%	21%	49%
NorStat	Jan 2026	1.6	19%	12%	18%	49%
FocalData	Jan 2026	1.21	17%	14%	13%	55%
Opinium	Jan 2026	1.19	19%	16%	15%	48%
JL Partners	Nov 2025	1.07	15%	14%	12%	57%
More in Common	Jan 2026	1.06	18%	17%	13%	53%
Survation	Jan 2026	0.82	14%	17%	12%	56%
AVERAGE		1.59	21%	14%	15%	49%

Left parties = Green, Lib Dem, Plaid, SNP. Right = Conservative, Reform.

\* - pollster does not publish this number in their unadjusted VI figures. Research conducted 22/01/2026.



The reasons for these differences are not clear, though some theories exist.<sup>1</sup> Pollsters naturally have an incentive to talk up their data and talk down competitors, limiting public spaces of inquiry. Nevertheless it remains a good idea for the industry to get together behind closed doors and work out what is going on here, given the stakes. Until that happens, data uncertainty remains an important caveat to the arguments of this report.

1 These mostly involve sample quality. For instance, one possibility is that some pollsters are sampling too many Labour Leave voters. Another is that some might be over-sampling more engaged or progressive voters. A further possibility for some might be problems around 'false recall' of past vote.



### Provider differences on where the Labour 2024 vote is going, as of last voting intention poll

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	Lab to Plaid	Lab to don't know	Labour to will not vote	Labour to Con	Labour to Reform	Lab to Green	Lab to Lib Dem	Lab to SNP
Find Out Now	1%	25%	*	3%	8%	18%	8%	1%
Verian	2%	*	*	6%	8%	16%	15%	1%
YouGov	1%	17%	4%	4%	8%	15%	9%	1%
British Election Study	0%	19%	2%	2%	8%	8%	9%	1%
NorStat	1%	16%	2%	3%	9%	10%	8%	1%
FocalData	1%	12%	1%	3%	11%	7%	8%	1%
Opinium	0%	14%	1%	3%	13%	10%	8%	1%
JL Partners	0%	12%	*	3%	11%	8%	7%	0%
More in Common	1%	12%	1%	6%	11%	8%	8%	1%
Survation	1%	12%	*	4%	13%	7%	5%	1%
AVERAGE	1%	15%	2%	4%	10%	11%	9%	1%

Left parties = Green, Lib Dem, Plaid, SNP. Right = Conservative, Reform.

\* - pollster does not publish this number in their unadjusted VI figures. Research conducted 22/01/2026.



## The current state of play – broken down by geography

Overall, progressive defectors - those who have left Labour for the Greens, Liberal Democrats, Plaid or the SNP - make up a slightly larger share of Labour's vote in battleground seats than in the country at large, outnumbering defectors to the right - Reform and the Conservatives - in both. Breaking it down a little further, a greater share is being lost to the left in Wales given the potency and profile of Plaid there. In Scotland, defections to the right are more prominent, something we have seen in previous research and largely reflective of the different demographic make-up of the Scottish Labour vote.<sup>2</sup>

2 See 'Getting to know Reform curious Labour voters', Persuasion UK, April 2025.

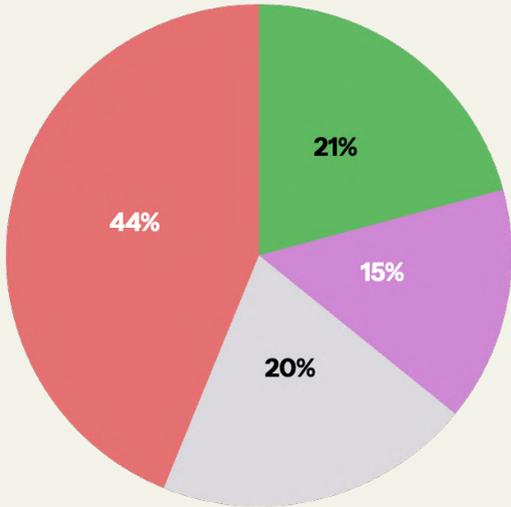


## Destination of Labour 2024 voters, in marginals and nationally, as of January 2026

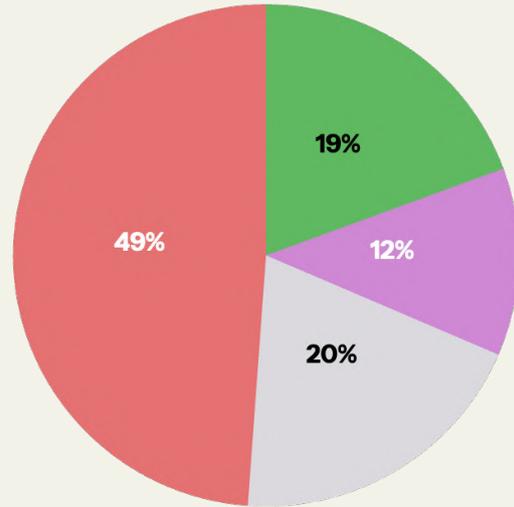
Progressive defectors do not just exist in safe Labour seats but in marginals too

- Defected to left (to Green, Lib Dem, Plaid, SNP)
- Defected to right (to Reform, Con)
- Don't know or will not vote
- Still Labour

In seats Labour won from Con in GE2024



All Labour 2024 voters



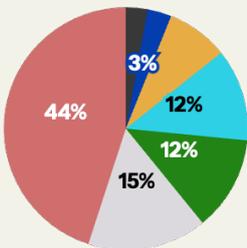
NorStat for Persuasion UK, January 2026



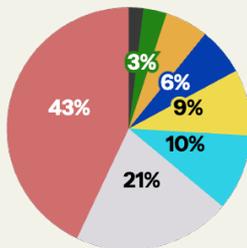
## Destination of Labour 2024 voters, in marginals and nationally, as of January 2026

- Conservatives
- Don't know
- Green Party
- I would not vote
- Labour
- Liberal Democrats
- Plaid Cymru
- Reform UK
- Scottish National Party (SNP)

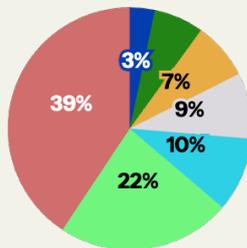
In all UK seats Labour won from Con in GE2024



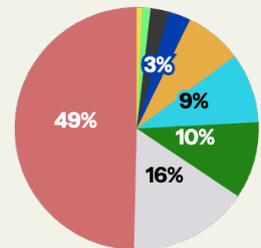
In Scotland



In Wales



UK wide



NorStat for Persuasion UK, January 2026  
Current Westminster voting intention.



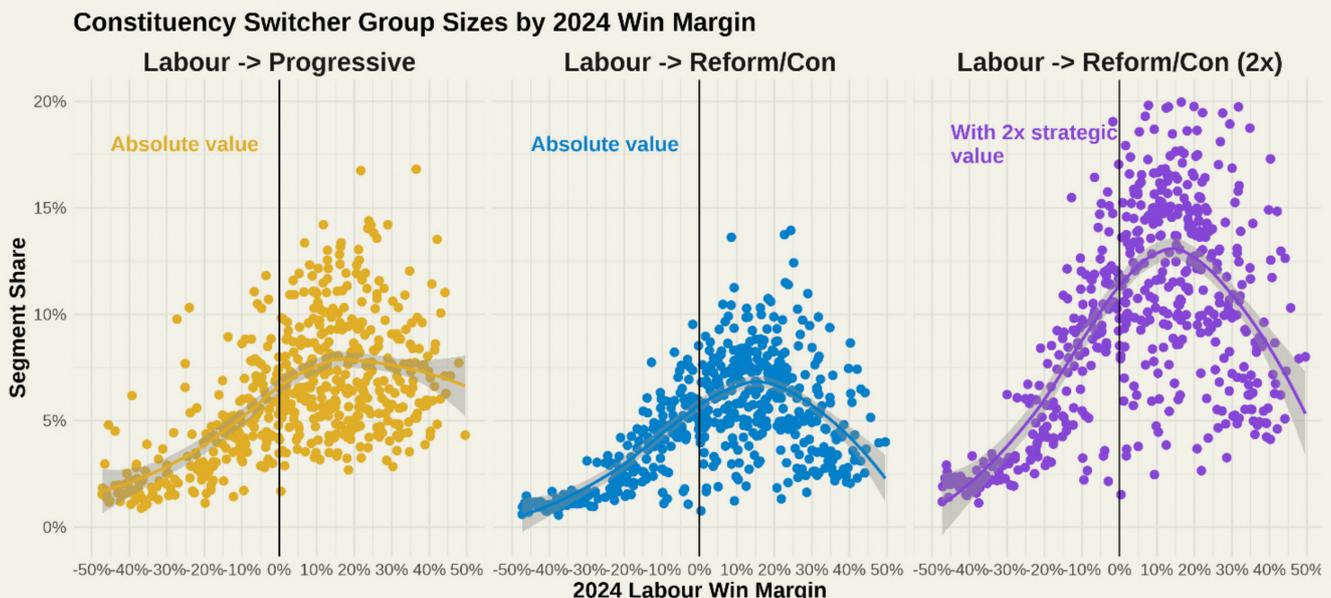


There are two arguments commonly made against the electoral potency of Labour left defectors. The first is that these voters only tend to live in safe Labour seats.<sup>3</sup>

The second is that they are less strategically valuable than voters Labour loses to the right, since the latter in effect ‘count twice’ under first past the post. The logic here is that in Labour vs Reform or Conservative seats, a right defector is one off of Labour’s column and one on their closest opponents’ – which in most seats is still a right-leaning party.<sup>4</sup>

The first of these is easy to dispense with. As discussed, across all marginal seats won from the Conservatives at the last election – which was the bulk of Labour gains – defectors to the left are actually greater in number not smaller.

The second argument poses a fairer challenge. As we can see below, looking at the marginality of Labour held seats, the yellow dots cluster at a higher range around the most marginal seats (-20% to +20% win margin) – meaning a greater share of the Labour vote in these seats has defected left. However if you do double the value of right defectors to reflect their strategic importance, they still hold most weight in most places.



3 See, for instance, ‘Myth busting the progressive illusion after the local election results’, Luke Akehurst for LabourList, May 2025.

4 It is something approximate to a ‘six pointer’ fixture in football.



This shows you why you cannot be cavalier in underplaying the importance of Labour's lost vote to Reform and the Conservatives, even if they are smaller in number.

That said, there are a few caveats here. Firstly there are many seats – especially in Scotland, Wales and London – where Labour is at direct threat from another left party, not Reform or the Conservatives. Secondly, and more pressingly, there are still a lot of Labour vs Reform/Conservative constituencies where progressive defectors are more than double in number to right defectors, hurdling the latter's strategic importance.

In total, there are about 138 Labour-held Westminster seats where progressive defectors are arguably the most strategically valuable group in the electorate. This comprises 104 constituencies where the second placed party is either the Greens, Plaid, the SNP, the Liberal Democrats or Gaza Independents. In these places, it is progressive defectors who 'count twice'. On top of that, there's a further 34 seats where Labour is first and a right party – Reform or the Conservatives – were second in 2024 but where MRP analysis tells us Labour defections to the left are currently greater than twice in number than defections to the right.

Looking below at marginal seats in England and Wales where progressive defectors are more than double right defectors, we see a strong Welsh flavour. They are also disproportionately found in Remain leaning suburban constituencies or commuter towns on the outer edges of metropolitan areas, at Blue Wall seats as they were originally termed.<sup>5</sup> These are places like Banbury, Rushcliffe, Altrincham and Sale West, Truro and Falmouth.

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5 See '[The Blue Wall](#)', Steve Akehurst, April 2021. This term has since become more synonymous with Lib Dem/Conservative battlegrounds only, but many of the trends that benefit the Lib Dems in seats across the South East, for instance, benefit Labour elsewhere in the region. In reality, the two party's electorates are now more similar than party apparatchiks like to admit, they simply sorted themselves on the basis of who is best placed to beat the Conservatives locally.



## Labour held marginal seats where progressive defectors are more than double right defectors - top 20

Areas where progressive defectors are >x2 more than right defectors tend to be 'Blue Wall' seats in England as well as Welsh constituencies

Constituency name	% Labour voters defecting to left (Green, Lib Dem, SNP, Plaid)	% Labour voters defecting to right (Reform, Con)	GE2024 majority %
Bangor Aberconwy	14%	4%	12%
Banbury	13%	6%	7%
Southport	13%	5%	13%
Rushcliffe	13%	5%	13%
East Thanet	13%	6%	16%
Neath and Swansea East	13%	5%	17%
Llanelli	12%	3%	4%
Altrincham and Sale West	12%	5%	8%
Truro and Falmouth	12%	5%	16%
Shipley	12%	5%	18%
Mid and South Pembrokeshire	11%	5%	4%
Wycombe	11%	4%	10%
Caerphilly	11%	4%	17%
Watford	10%	3%	11%
Bristol East	10%	4%	14%
Cardiff West	10%	3%	16%
Luton North	10%	3%	16%
Burnley	8%	3%	9%
Ilford South	8%	2%	12%
Birmingham Yardley	5%	2%	2%
Oldham West, Chadderton and Royton	5%	2%	5%

Graph shows: seats where progressive defectors are >x2 bigger than right defectors AND seat has a Lab majority of <20% at GE24.





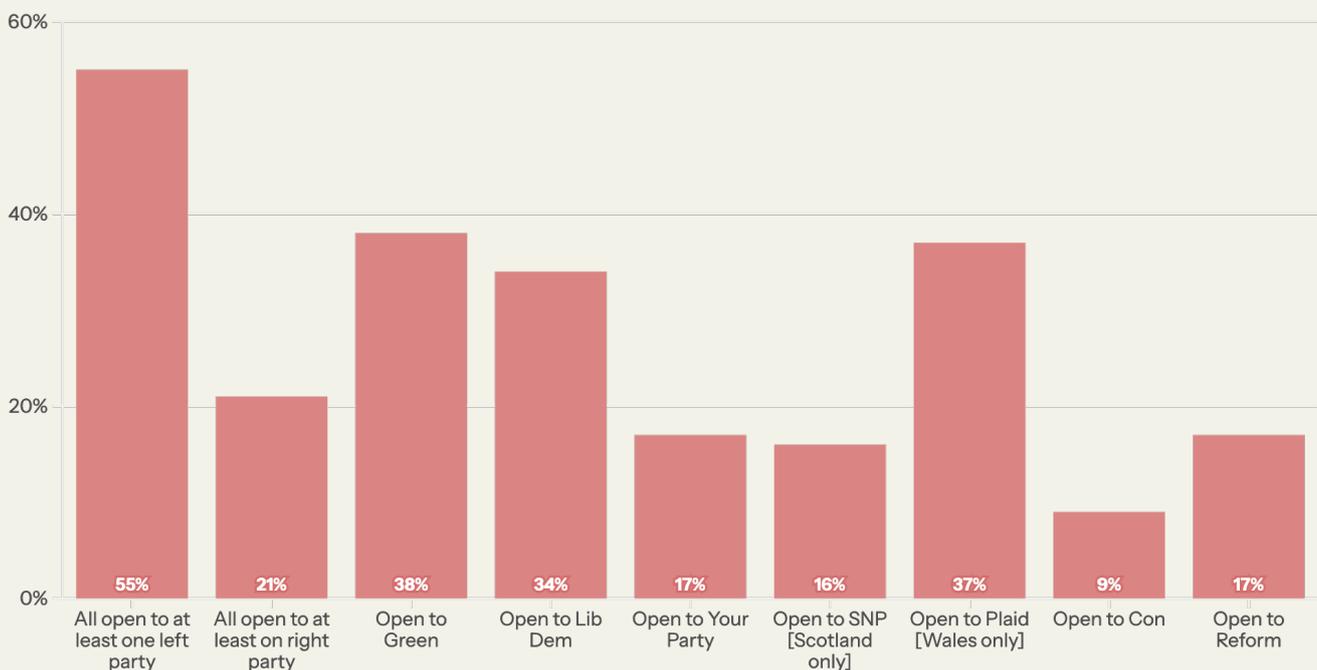
Winning these kinds of seats, often for the first time, was a crucial but often neglected part of Labour’s victory at the 2024 general election.

### The potential for more slippage to the left

Finally, we can see the ceiling on left defections is higher than the right. 55% are considering or are open to defecting to another left party, 21% of which have gone. Meanwhile, the total ceiling on right defection is 21%, with 15% already gone, leaving a larger pool (34% to 6%) of current Labour voters vulnerable to further slippage in this direction.

This reflects the fact that more of Labour’s vote than ever is composed of graduates, who themselves are more socially liberal and thus more attracted to left bloc parties.<sup>6</sup> It also reflects the reality that there are a greater number of alternative parties in the UK’s left bloc than right.

**% of Labour 2024 voters open or vulnerable to voting for another party**



NorStat for Persuasion UK, January 2026

"On a scale of 0-10, with 0 being 'I definitely will not vote for this party' and 10 being 'I definitely will vote for this party', how likely are you to consider voting for each of the following political parties at the next UK general election?"

Open/vulnerable to = 6 or above.



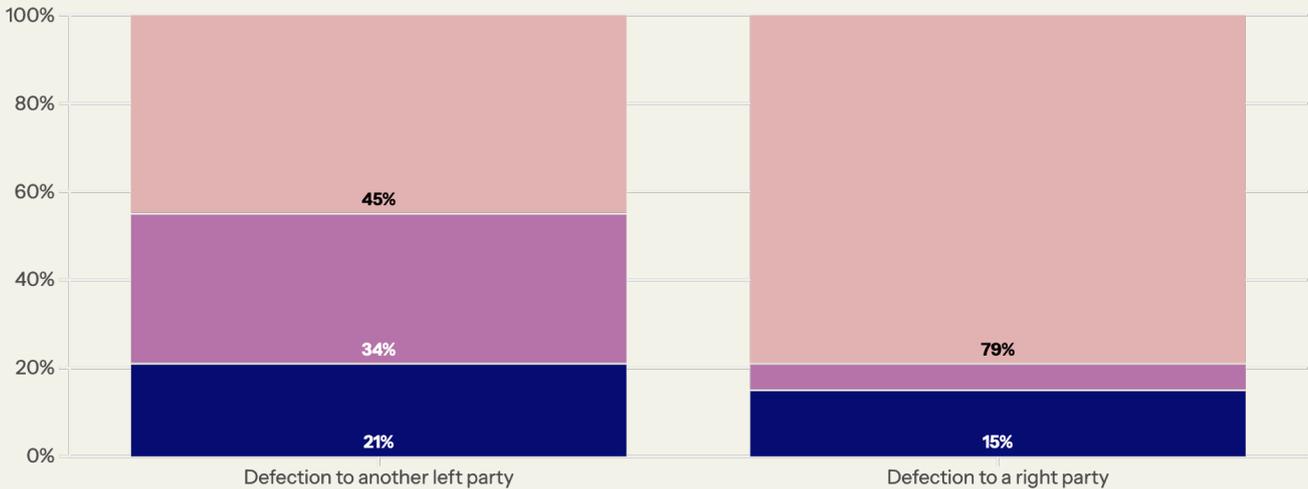
6 For more on this see [‘Getting to know Labour’s new electoral coalition’](#), Steve Akehurst, March 2024.



### Among Labour 2024 voters: total pool of potential and actual switchers

The ceiling on Labour defection to the left is higher than the right, because the total pool of those open to left parties is much higher.

- Already defected this way
- Not yet defected, but open to
- Not open to defecting this way



'Not yet defected, but open to' = 6 and above out of 10 willing to vote for a left or right party.



### The need for both wings

In many ways, recent debates over the value of left bloc voters (eg Lab to Green) or left-right bloc defectors (eg Lab to Reform) to the government are false binaries; it is about balance, not absolutes. The reality is that it is hard for the government to win a majority with one and not the other.

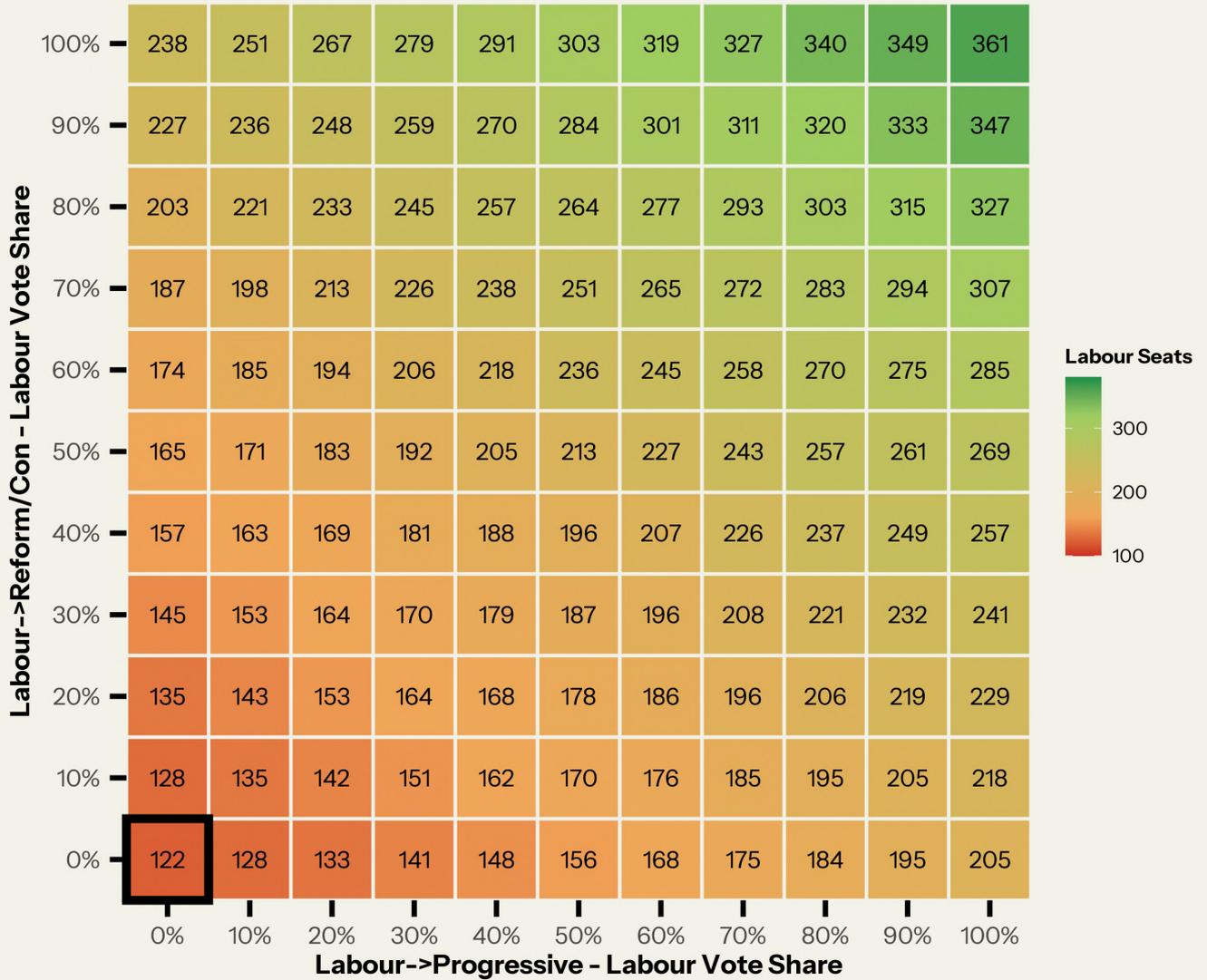
The below MRP modelling shows - holding all else currently equal - Labour's seat count (albeit only in England and Wales) when different proportions of progressive defectors and right defectors return to Labour. It highlights that if Labour won 100% of Labour to Reform and Conservative voters back but does not win back progressive defectors, it only ends up on 238 English and Welsh seats.

The reverse is true, also. In short, yes, Labour needs right leaning voters back in its coalition - but it also badly needs 'bloc efficiency' through clawing back people who have left them for the Greens and Lib Dems.



## Labour seats by % of switchers won (excluding Scotland)

Highlighted box = current scenario (0%, 0%)





# Section 2: Who are progressive defectors? Demographics, values and issue importance

Turning to this group’s demographics, a few things jump out. Somewhat surprisingly, these voters do not appear to be particularly affluent. They mostly fall into NS-SEC occupational categories we can code as ‘lower middle class’ – lower managerial and professional jobs, intermediate occupations. Examples might include an IT support worker, a project manager or a teacher.<sup>7</sup>

## Demographics of switcher groups

Progressive defectors are defined by being disproportionately Millennial, lower middle class and mortgage holders.

	Defectors to Left (Green, Lib Dem, Plaid, SNP)	Defectors to Right (Reform, Con)	Still Labour	Labour to Green	Labour to Lib Dem	Labour to Reform	All UK voters
Female	56%	51%	44%	57%	55%	54%	50%
Male	44%	49%	56%	43%	46%	46%	50%
Gen Z (18-28)	14%	9%	12%	17%	13%	7%	15%
Millennial (29-44)	34%	29%	35%	42%	24%	28%	29%
Gen X (45-59)	26%	26%	21%	24%	28%	29%	24%
Boomer (60+)	27%	37%	31%	17%	35%	36%	32%
Upper middle class	9%	9%	15%	11%	8%	6%	6%
Lower middle class	42%	30%	43%	50%	35%	30%	33%
Small business owner/self-employed	3%	1%	3%	3%	3%	1%	5%
Working class	15%	25%	15%	20%	9%	26%	22%
Long term unemployed	60%	46%	62%	66%	54%	44%	40%
Retired	40%	54%	38%	44%	46%	56%	60%
Non-White British	14%	12%	17%	18%	11%	9%	18%
White British	86%	88%	83%	82%	89%	91%	82%
Graduate	60%	46%	62%	66%	54%	44%	40%
I am a homeowner – with a mortgage	28%	30%	30%	34%	22%	28%	21%
I am a homeowner – without a mortgage	30%	37%	42%	19%	43%	37%	34%
I live with my parents	10%	4%	4%	13%	7%	3%	9%
I rent from a council/Housing association	13%	16%	11%	12%	11%	20%	16%
I rent from a private landlord	18%	13%	13%	22%	15%	12%	17%

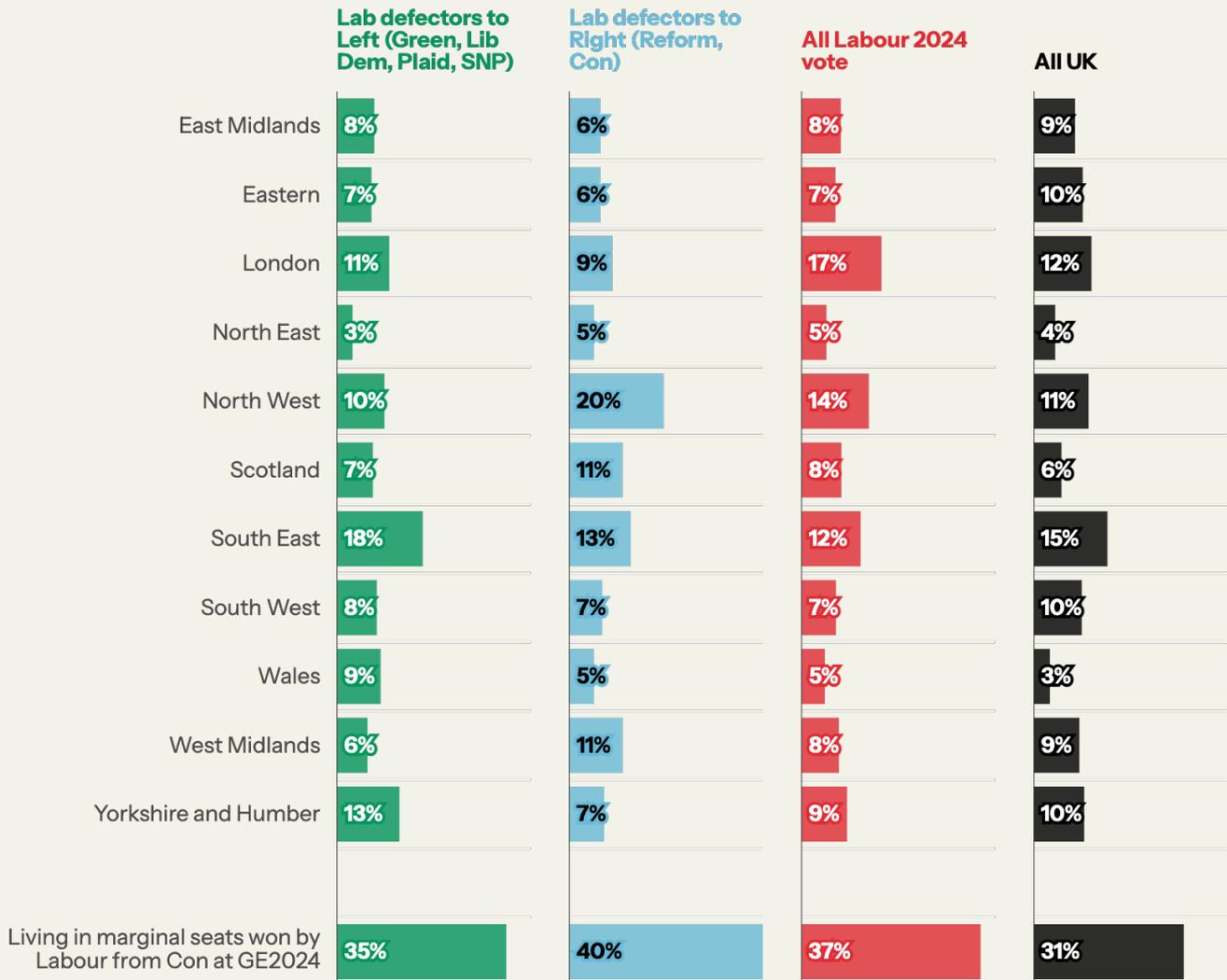
NorStat for Persuasion UK, n=4000 UK adults, December 2025.  
Created with Datawrapper

<sup>7</sup> Class markers in this graph are decided by occupational categories: upper middle class - higher managerial and professional class. Lower middle class - lower managerial and professional; intermediate occupations. Working class - lower supervisory and technical, routine and semi-routine.



## Regional breakdown of defector groups

Progressive defectors are disproportionately based in the South East of England (outside London)



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In terms of values, fairly predictably, progressive defectors are broadly left/ liberal - egalitarian and socially liberal. However, they are not especially ideologically extreme or far left even on social questions. The further question wording for these is contained in the annex of this report.

Looking at their values compared to right defectors, we see a familiar pattern. Namely, the Labour vote is furthest apart on cultural questions but much closer together on classic left-right divides.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> This was a strong feature of the Labour coalition's values dynamics last time we looked at them in the ['Reform curious Labour'](#) report of 2025.

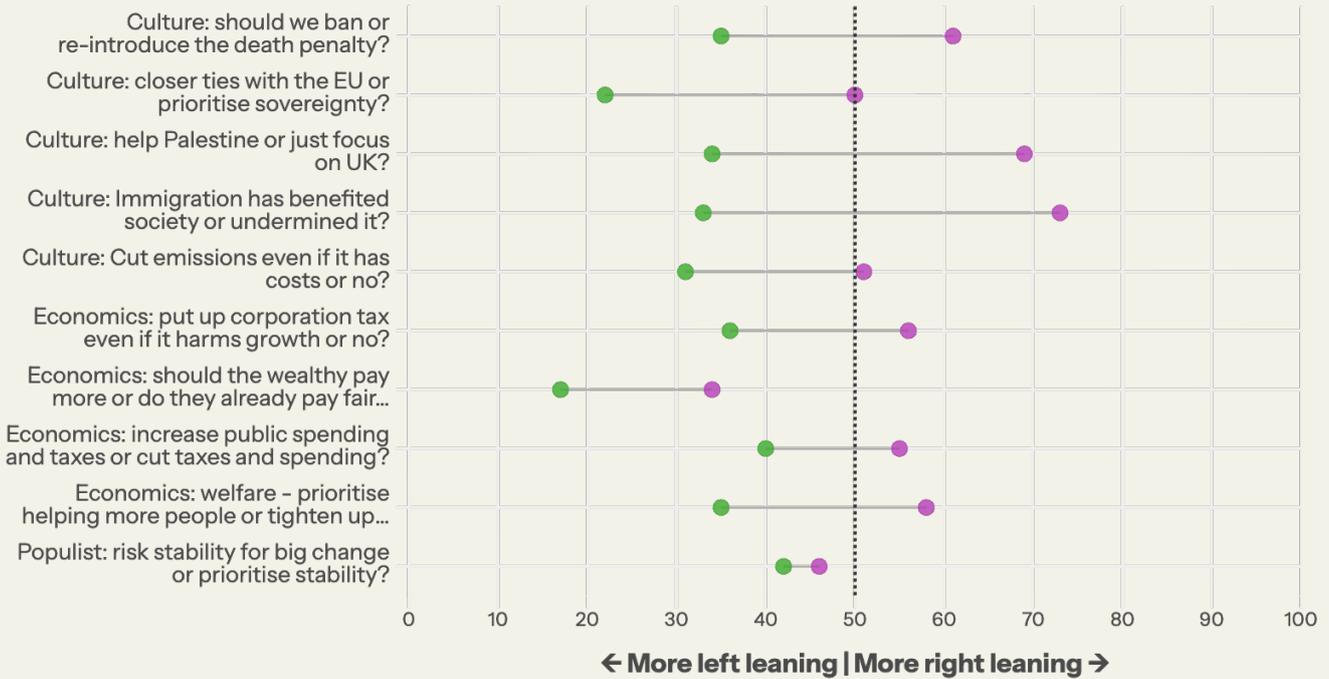


## Values of left and right defectors from Labour, cultural and economic issues

Generally speaking, Labour's defector groups are far apart on cultural questions but closer together on economic ones

"Place yourself on this scale from 0-100..."

● Lab defectors to left ● Lab defectors to right



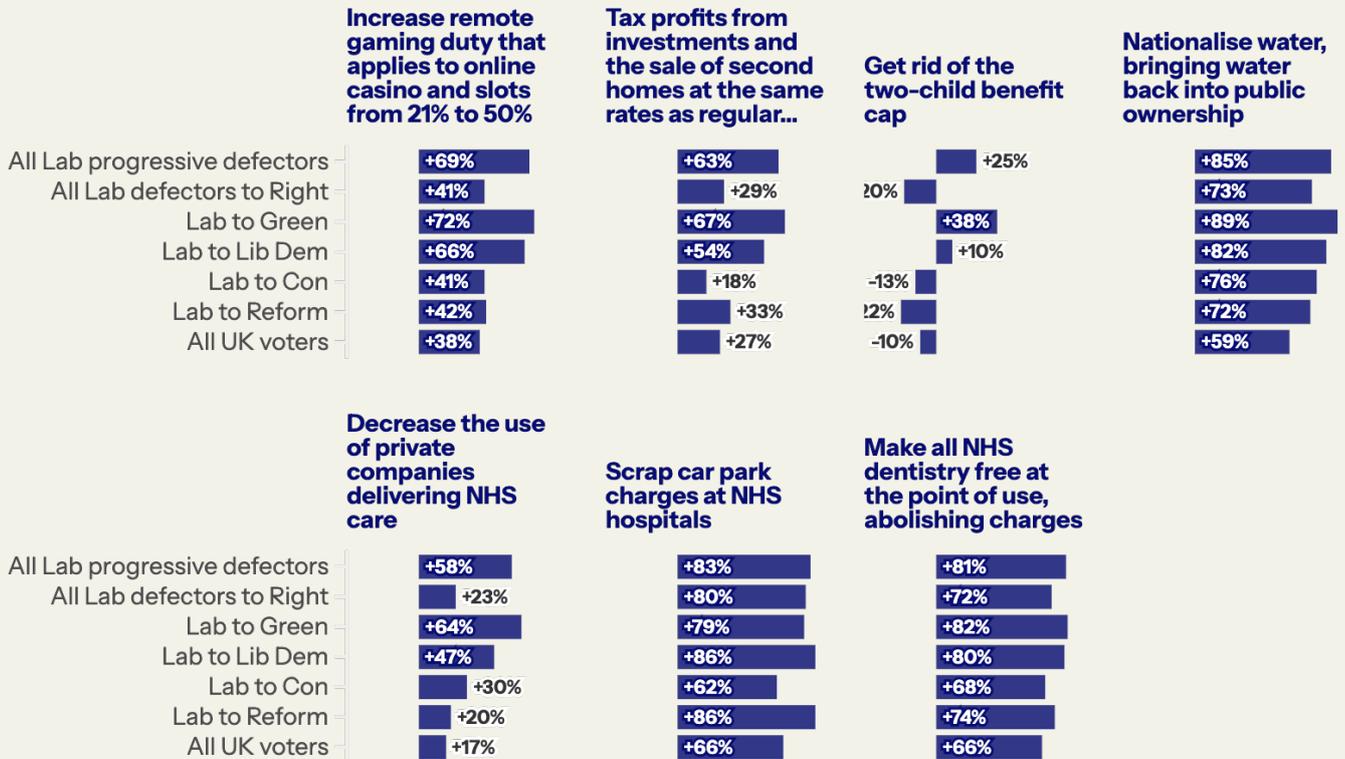
NorStat for Persuasion UK. Left-leaning end of the scale is 0, right-leaning end is 100. Dots represent average response among those surveyed.



Unsurprisingly, then, all groups find themselves supportive of policy ideas put forward by 38 Degrees for this report. The only exception is the two-child benefit cap, which splits people a little more. This is partly because welfare itself is something of a cultural divide lurking inside an ostensibly economic issue, being as it is about what groups in society are perceived to be deserving of help and which are not.



## "To what extent, if at all, do you support or oppose the following policies?" - 38D policy ideas



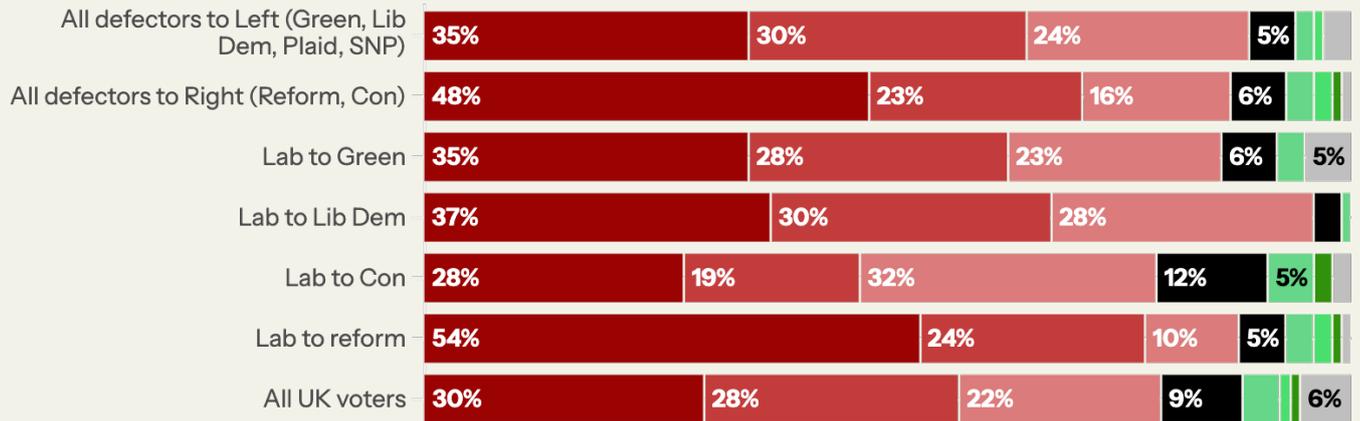
 Persuasion UK

Taking a step back, we can see that progressive defectors feel the same sense of decline afflicting the UK in the past ten years as the rest of the country, but their narrative about why this differs. The beginning of the story for them is located in the UK's exit from the European Union, whereas for more right leaning voters and - narrowly - the country at large, the story of decline starts with increased immigration.



## "Overall, would you say that things in Britain have gotten better, worse, or remained about the same over the last 10 years?"

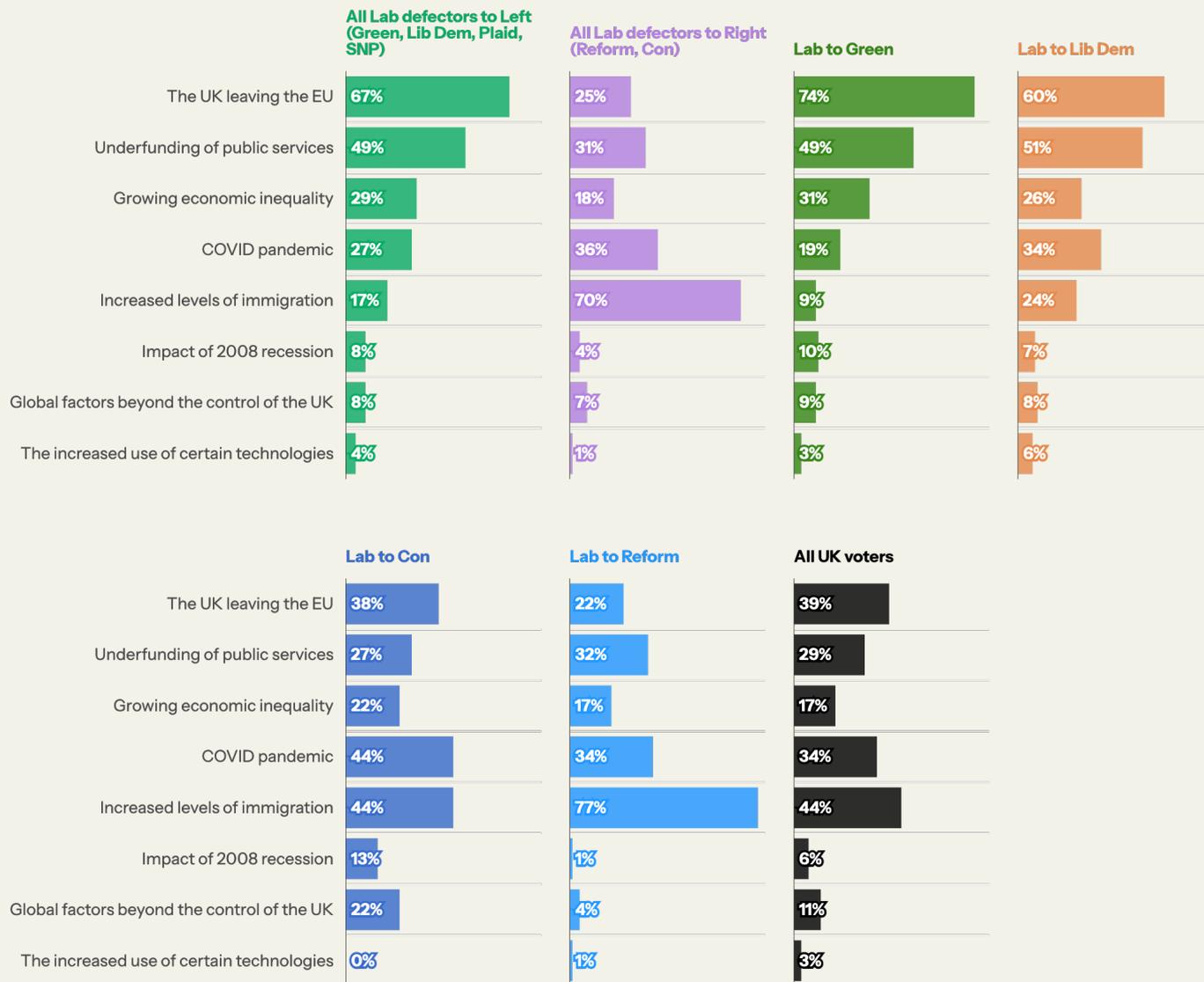
■ Got much worse ■ Got a fair amount worse ■ Got a little worse ■ Stayed about the same ■ Got a little better  
■ Got a fair amount better ■ Got much better ■ Don't know





## "And which of the following, if any, do you blame the most for things getting worse in Britain in the last 10 years? Choose up to 3"

Asked only of those saying the country has got worse in the last decade (see previous graph)

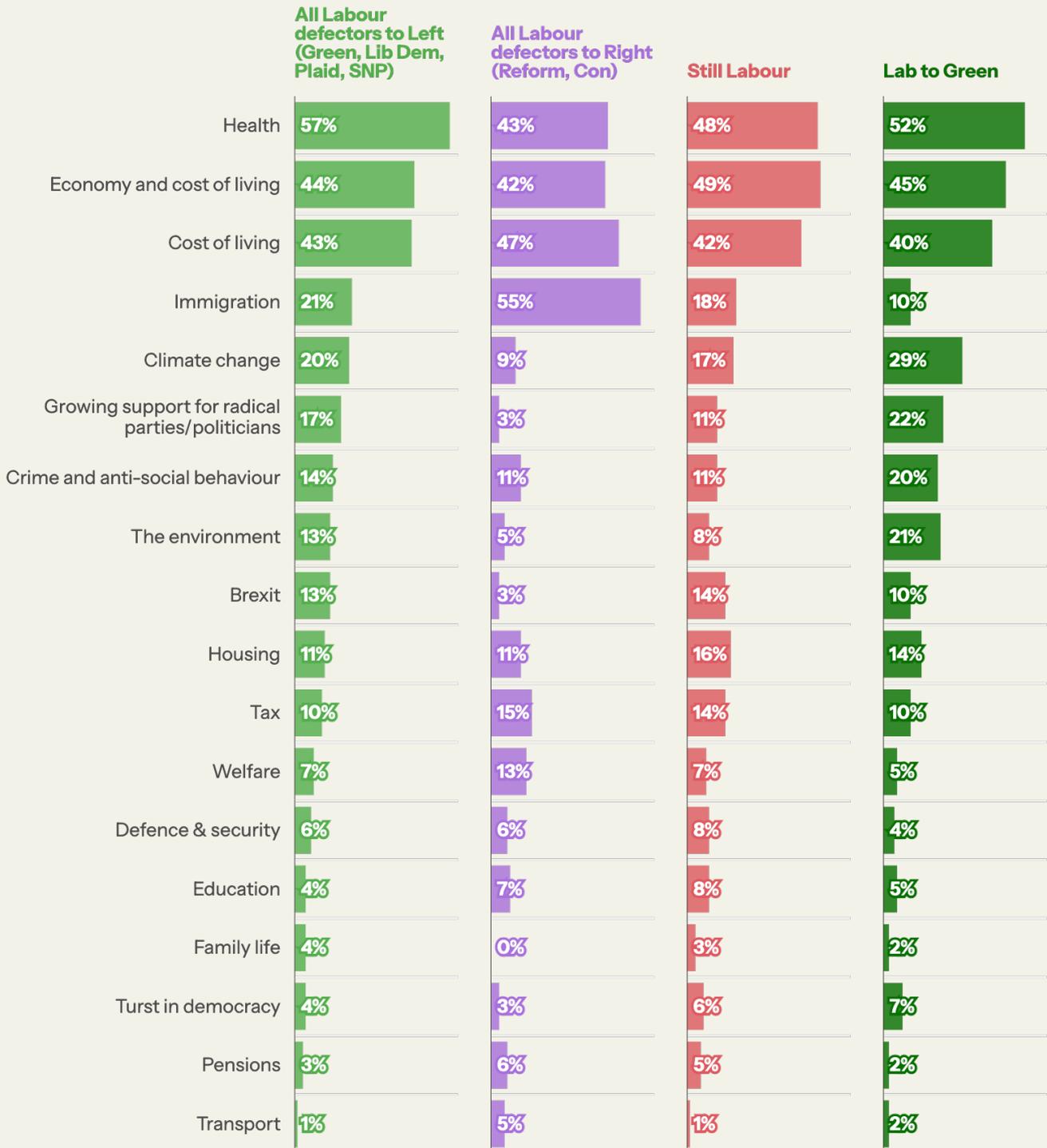


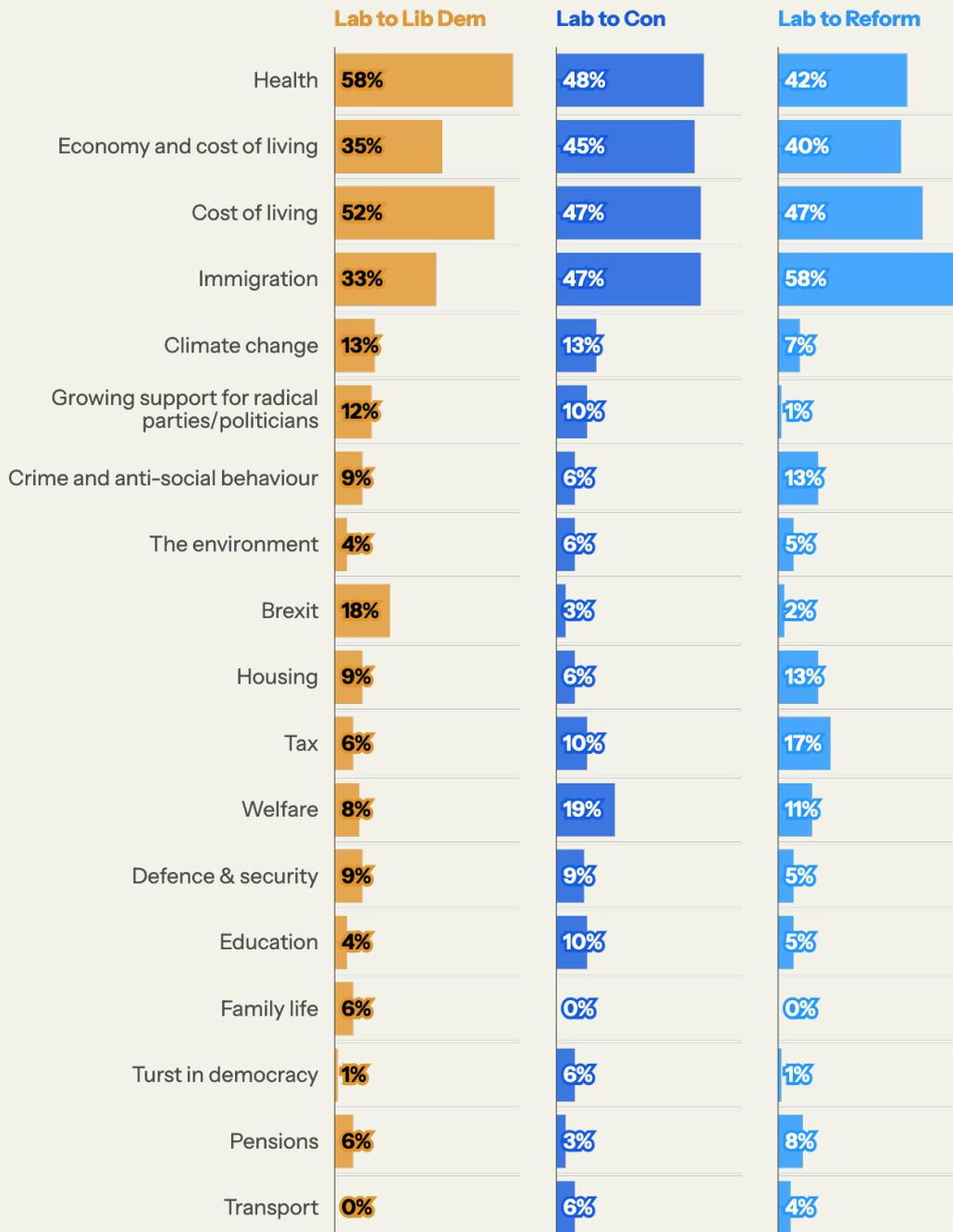
In terms of issue salience, there is a lot of similarity but climate/Net Zero has disproportionate salience with left defectors and Labour to Green voters especially.



## Top 3 issues facing the country

"Which of the following, if any, are the most important issues facing the country?"





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### \*Demographic profile of progressive defector\*

*'Debbie the defector'*

- Female
- Aged 38
- Social worker
- Earns £40,000 a year before tax
- Graduate
- White British
- Recent first-time-buyer on a high interest rate mortgage
- Lives in Altrincham and Sale West
- Labour 2024, currently intending to vote Green - but worried about Reform and open to returning
- Lib Dem 2010 and 2019



## Section 3: Why have progressive defectors deserted Labour?

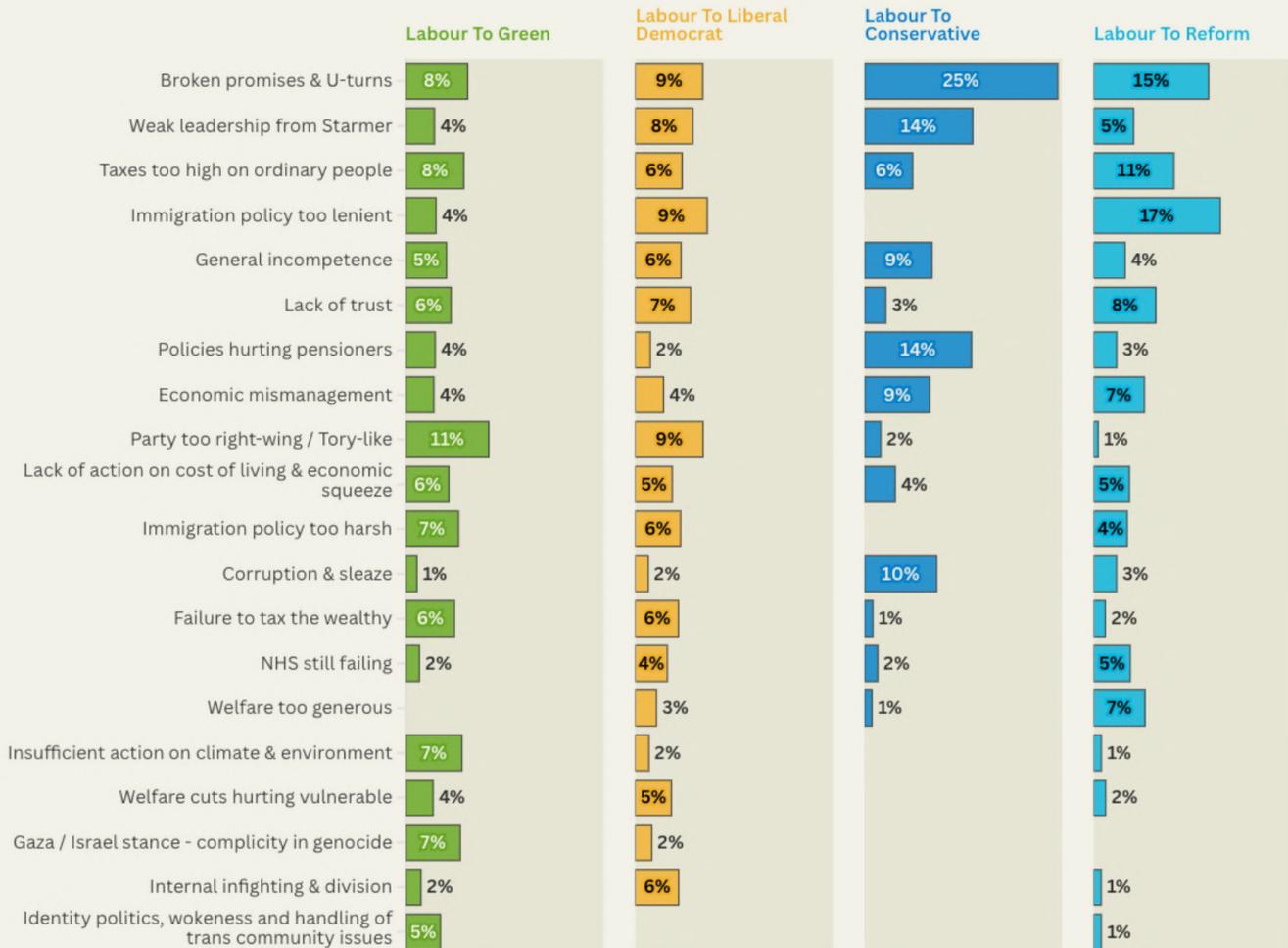
To understand this, we started by asking Labour defectors to put into their own words why they are currently intending to vote for another party, via an open response box in a survey. AI was then used to analyse and code up the responses into categories.

Generally speaking, Labour to Reform switchers are pre-occupied with immigration, Labour to Conservative a sense of broken promises. Labour to Green and Labour to Lib Dem, however, it is a pretty broad mix of things. The most prominent category is ‘the party is too right wing / Tory lite’, while Gaza is also prominent. Immigration policy that is too harsh also features for Labour to Green, although Labour to Lib Dems are more split on this.



Why would you would vote [party] over Labour? Please tell us in your own words.

% of Labour 2024 voters who now would vote for a different party in a general election tomorrow



Aggregates derived from AI coded open ended responses

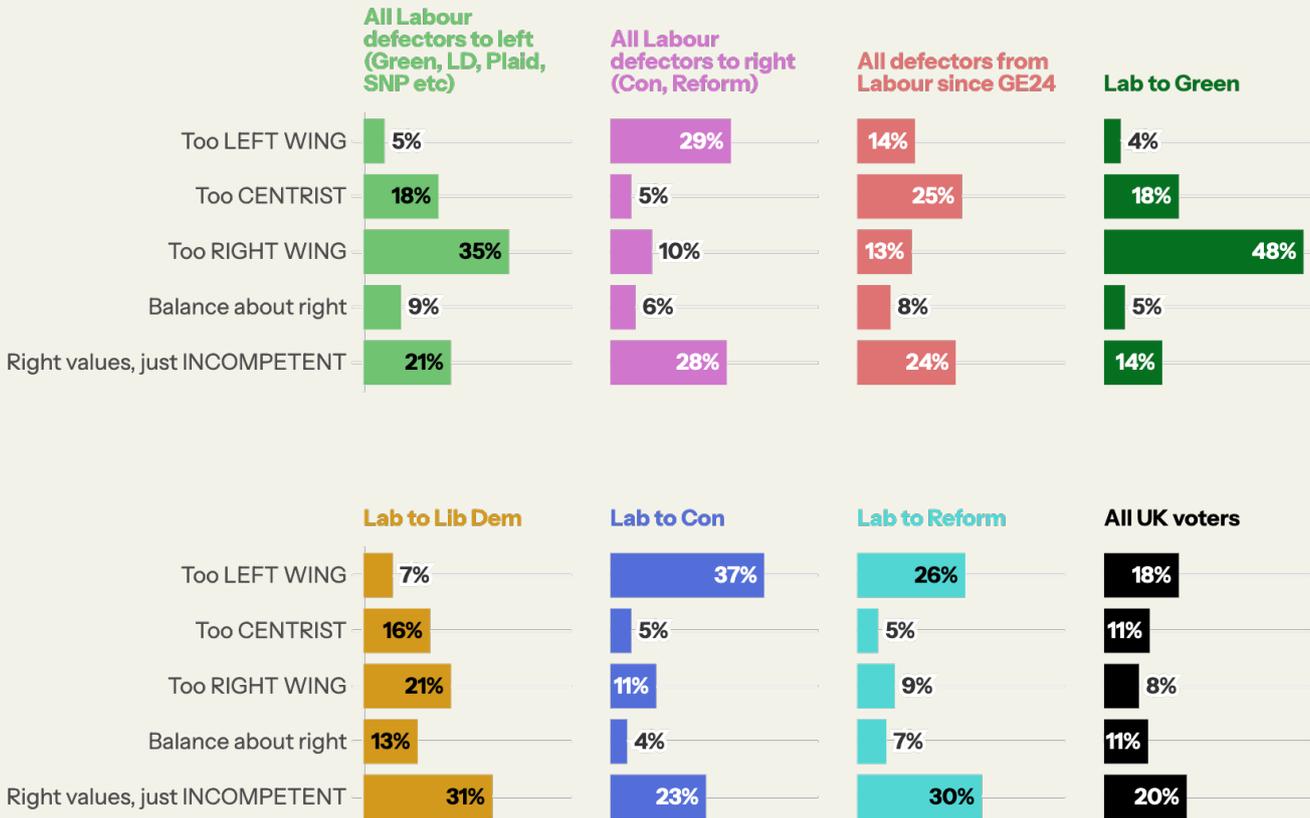
For progressive defectors, frustration with Labour is more likely to have an ideological flavour than their right-leaning counterparts. A plurality say Labour has been too right wing or centrist, whereas Reform and the Conservatives are more minded to say Labour has been incompetent than anything else.



## Has Labour been too left wing, right wing or neither?

Progressive defectors are more likely to say Labour have the wrong values; defectors to the right tend to complain more about competence. This gap is especially notable comparing Labour to Green and Labour to Reform defectors.

*"And generally speaking, which of these best describes the current Labour government led by Keir Starmer?"*



For ease of visualisation, graph excludes those saying 'neither' (~9% of voters) and 'don't know' (~20% of all voters).



This leads to a curious distortion in the perception of the government's ideological leanings. For instance, a plurality believe Keir Starmer's administration to be a pro-austerity government - a majority think they are cutting spending and investment or keeping it the same. In addition, the ideological distance between progressive defectors and Labour - the gap between where they place their values and where they place the government's - is largest on taxing the wealthy and getting close to the EU.

This is striking because it is not consistent with actual policy choices the government has made to increase taxation on the wealthy, increase investment (especially capital investment and NHS spending) and move closer to the European Union. It suggests, at the very least, a failure of the government to drive attention to these policy changes - either by accident or intention.

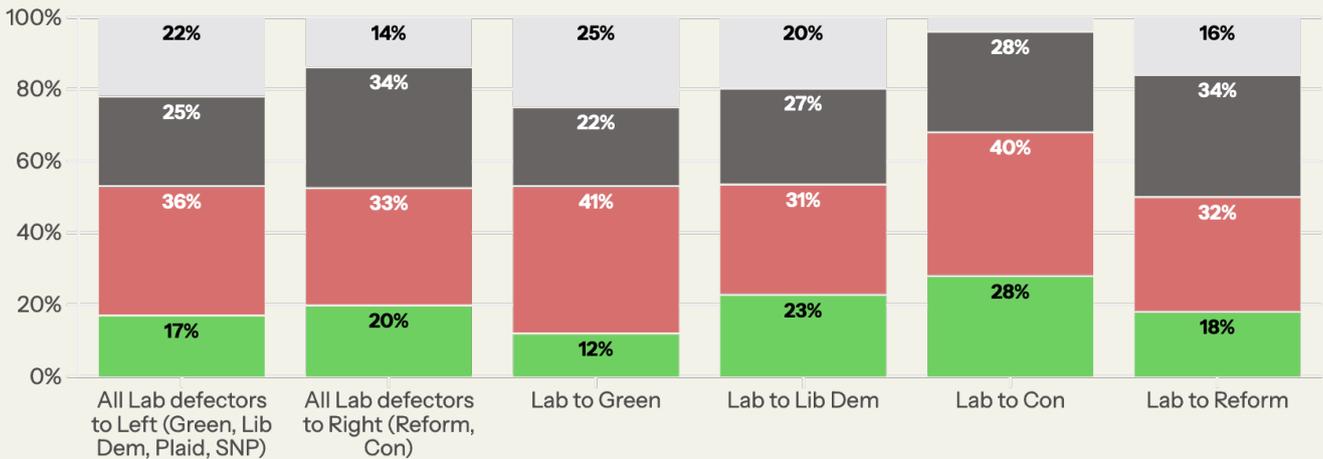


## Is Labour increasing spending, keeping it the same or cutting it?

Only 17% of progressive defectors have noticed Labour is increasing spending / investment - Labour to Green voters especially are more likely to think Labour is cutting spending and investment

"Overall, which comes closest to your view on the Labour government's management of the economy and public services?"

- The Labour government is increasing spending and investment
- The Labour government is implementing austerity and spending cuts
- The Labour government is neither increasing spending nor introducing spending cuts
- Don't know



NorStat for Persuasion UK

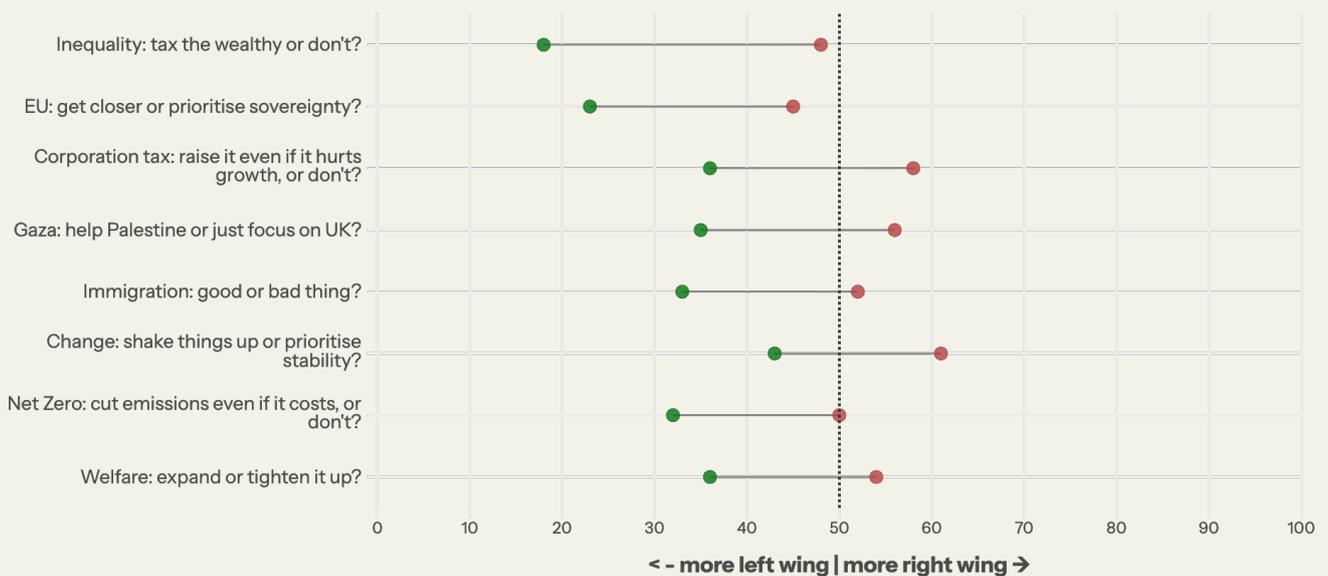


## Where defectors from Labour to other left parties place their own values in relation to Labour's?

The two areas of biggest perceived ideological difference between progressive defectors and Labour are on taxing the rich and getting closer to the EU - two things Labour have actually arguably done in practice.

'Place your views and what you think Labour's views are on this scale, from 0-100...'

- Where left defectors place their own views
- Where they place Labour's views



NorStat for Persuasion UK. Left-leaning end of the scale is 0, right-leaning end is 100. Dots represent averages among relevant respondents.





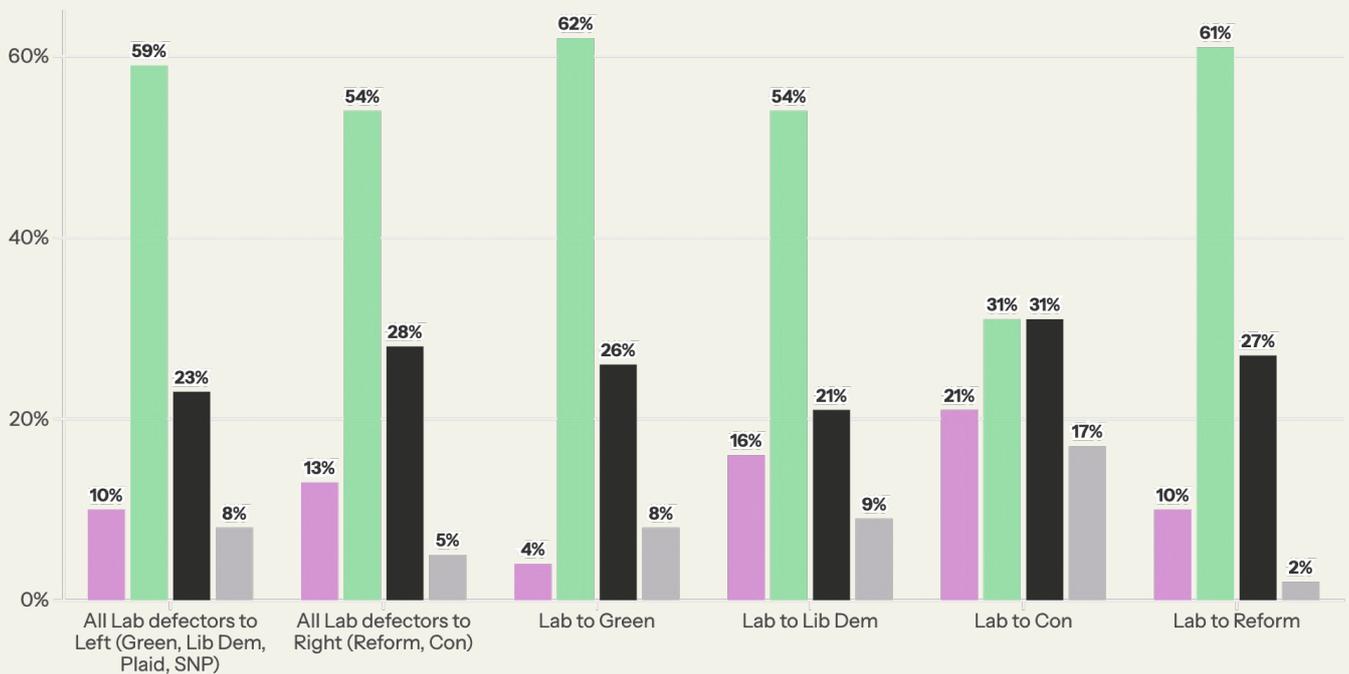
However, all defector groups are united by a sense of impatience over change, and a belief the government isn't moving fast enough.

### Is change coming too fast or too slowly?

Labour defectors are united by an impatience for change

"Which of these comes closest to your view regarding the Labour government?"

- In most areas, the government is moving TOO FAR AND TOO FAST - it should slow down
- In most areas, the government is NOT MOVING FAR OR FAST ENOUGH - it should speed up
- Neither
- Don't know



Many of the policies the government has enacted on the economy are popular with progressive defectors, but few seem to have heard and absorbed it into their understanding of the government's brand. Instead, they have only absorbed perceived mishandling of issues like Gaza, immigration and welfare reform.



## Section 4: Might tactical voting bring back progressive defectors?

Up to now, a good amount of hope appears to be placed by the government on the view that voters who have left Labour for other left parties can be ‘squeezed’ back on the basis of wishing to avoid a Reform victory in their area and nationally. Of these voters, an ally of Morgan McSweeney, the Prime Minister’s former chief of staff, was reported to have told journalists “they may hate us, but they hate Farage more”.<sup>9</sup>

How robust is this assumption? In this section we weigh up the evidence, utilising a unique experiment to interrogate things properly.

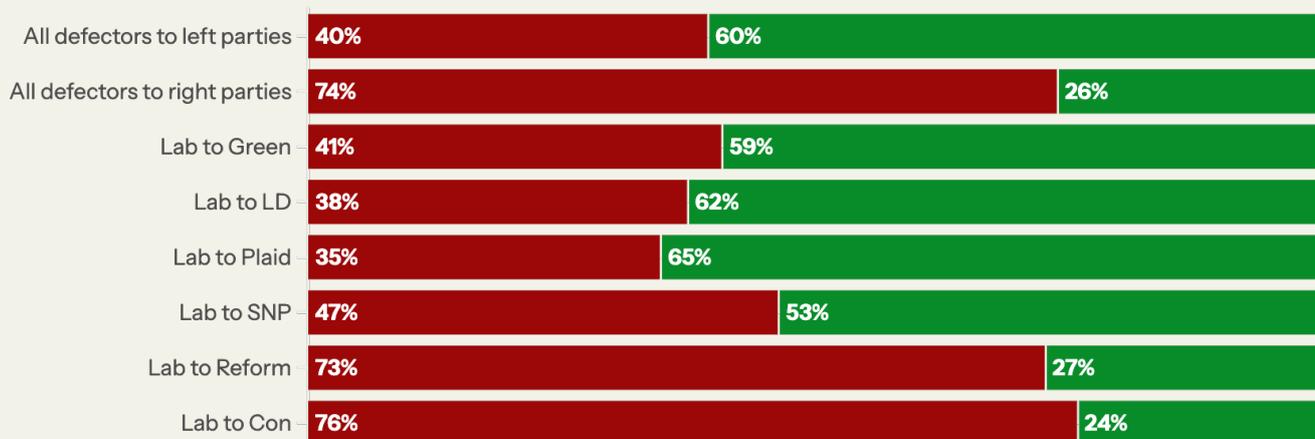
### Progressive defectors are more open to returning to Labour than right defectors

In general, it is true that many progressive defectors are open to returning to Labour. About 60% place themselves above a 5 on a 10 point scale of willingness to vote for the party at the next election. This compares to just 26% of Labour defectors to the right.

#### Willingness to consider returning to Labour, by defector group

Labour defectors to left parties tend to be more willing to consider returning than defectors to the right

■ Not open to returning to Labour ■ Open to returning to Labour



"On a scale of 0-10, with 0 being 'I definitely will not vote for this party' and 10 being 'I definitely will vote for this party', how likely are you to consider voting for each of the following political parties at the next UK general election?". Willing to return = 5 and above. Unwilling to return = 4 and below.  
NorStat for Persuasion UK, January 2026



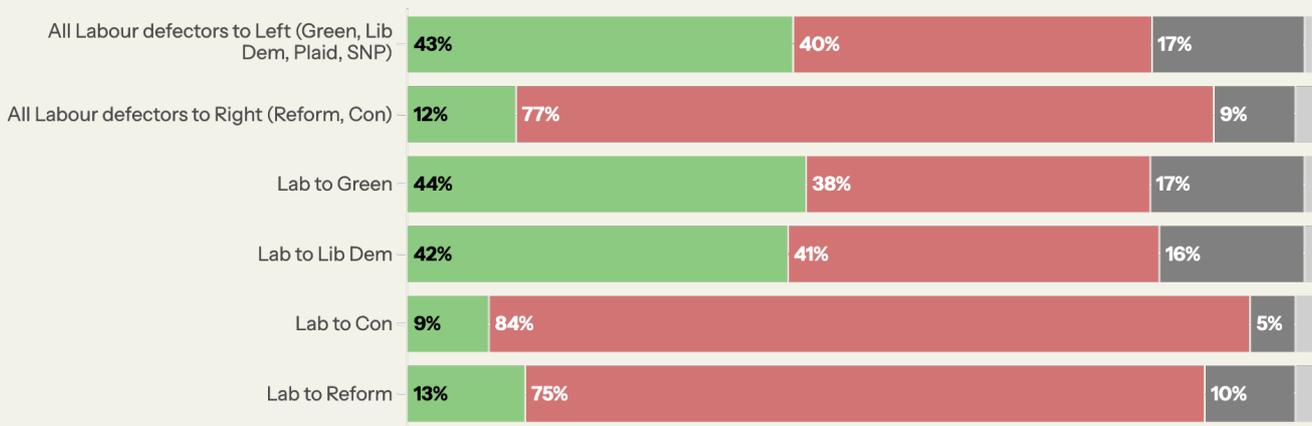
9 As reported by [Pippa Crerar](#).

This reflects a slightly more generous disposition among these voters towards the government, with a plurality open to the argument that they deserve ‘more time’ to effect change.

**Is it too soon to definitively judge the government or not?**

Progressive defectors are a little more kind in their assessment of the government's inheritance than defectors to the right

- It's only fair that we give Labour a bit more time to make improvements to the country, given how bad things were
- Even considering how bad things were when Labour got into power, things should be much better now than they currently are
- Neither
- Don't know



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Both graphs also underscores how difficult - close to impossible - it will be for Labour to claw back the majority of voters who have left them for Reform or the Conservatives, whatever their strategic value. They will likely need to be replaced with new voters within any electoral coalition the government tries to assemble next time.

**But Labour cannot rely on tactical voting alone to bring them back**

At the moment, polling on squeeze scenarios rely on asking voters who they support if only Labour or Reform could realistically win in their area. These typically show large numbers of progressive defectors returning to Labour in that scenario.<sup>10</sup>

There are arguably a few problems with such polls, even if they are certainly better than nothing or mere headline intent. Principally, they are premised on an information environment that arguably lacks ecological validity.

<sup>10</sup> For instance, see [‘Tactical voting could block Nigel Farage’s path to No 10, polls show’](#), The Times, November 2025.



Typically the polling wording flatly and neutrally informs voters it is realistically Labour or Reform in their area. In reality, though, there are many areas where this sort of information will be unclear to voters or at least hotly disputed.

In particular, as Labour loses more votes to the Greens, Zack Polanski's party starts to have an at least plausible claim to be competitive in more Labour held marginals where the party is facing Reform or the Conservatives. And unlike the Liberal Democrats, with whom Labour has struck a sort of informal electoral pact in recent times, the Greens show an intent and capacity to actively fight Labour in those seats, vying to be the 'anti Reform' vehicle locally.

This means voters will receive credible-seeming information from several parties - leaflets with conflicting MRPs or bar charts on them - as to their credentials as the best anti-Reform vehicle.

This doesn't just risk Labour being jettisoned for another party, as happened at the recent Caerphilly by-election. It also increases the chances of high levels of confusion among anti-Reform voters as to who to vote for. At the time of writing, we are seeing this exact dynamic play out in the Gorton and Denton by-election.<sup>11</sup>

It stands to reason, then, that good 'squeeze polling' should at least try to reflect these dynamics.

To do so, we set up a large-scale RCT/vignette experiment. This involved exposing people to different bits of information to see how it affects their vote choice, ranging from Labour policy positions to attack messages on the government. The exact set up of this RCT is outlined in Annex A of this report, but an example trial is below - alongside the structure of each trial.

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<sup>11</sup> A More in Common newsletter recently reported high levels of tactical confusion among anti Reform voters over who to vote for to stop the party ("A first glance at Gorton and Denton", newsletter from Luke Tryl, 30th January 2026). The election has also been subject to relentless [claim and counter claim](#) between the Greens and Labour in the media.



## Example trial

**THE LABOUR PARTY SAY...**  
"Labour is building a fairer society where people who work hard and do the right thing are rewarded."

**THE GREEN PARTY SAY:**  
"Labour have shown themselves to be no different to the Conservatives."

Since coming to government, Labour did the following...

Cost of Living	Workers' Rights
Applied a limit to the amount by which food retailers can increase their prices each year.	Have banned zero hours contracts and strengthened rights for freelancers.

**SINCE LABOUR CAME TO GOVERNMENT...**  
"You've noticed that it's easier to get an NHS appointment."

You've received the following:

A leaflet from Labour: "In your area, only Labour or Reform can win. A vote for anyone else puts Nigel Farage in No. 10."

A leaflet from the Green Party: "Tactical voting is pointless this time. Voting Green is the only way to make Labour bolder."

### 1. Strategic Narrative

Randomly see one framing from the Labour Party - or no framing.

### 2. Rival Attack

Randomly do or do not see an attack on Labour from a rival progressive party.

### 3. Policy

Randomly allocated to see two policies

### 4. Real-World Outcomes

Randomly shown or not shown a tangible outcome from Labour's time in power.

### 5. Squeeze Messages

Various combinations of different squeeze messaging from Labour and other progressive parties - sometimes 'clean' (no conflicting information), and sometimes 'messy' (squeeze messaging tells different stories from different parties)

As we can see, part of this is varying the information people receive about tactical voting. Voters were exposed to one of the following:

- A 'crude squeeze' message from Labour alone: it's Labour or Reform in your area. OR
- A 'rumours' scenario - respondents are told they have heard rumours from their neighbour that it's probably Labour or Reform who are best placed to win locally.
- A 'messy information environment' scenario. Here, as in the example above, we have contesting messages from Labour and the Greens as to who can win locally.

They were then asked how they'd vote at the next election under these conditions.

As we can see in the below graph, the results are striking. While in the 'crude squeeze' scenario, about 30% of progressive defectors automatically come back to Labour when Reform are competitive locally, in the 'messy information environment' this percentage is halved - to just 15%.

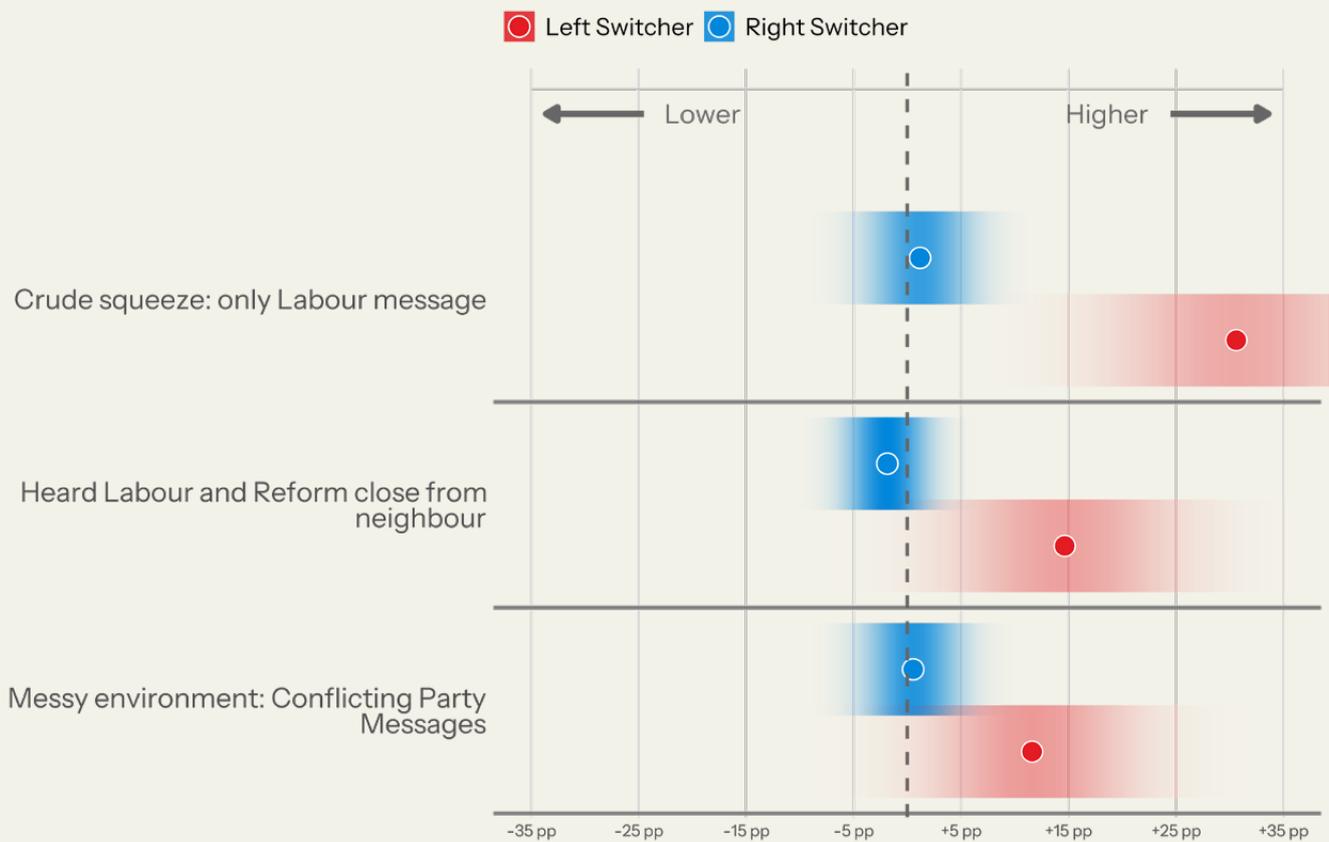
In addition, in genuine four way marginals (Lab vs Reform vs Green vs Other), it is just 5-7%.



This matters because in many Labour vs Reform seats a messy information environment remains the likeliest information environment, come the next election - unless the Green party falls in vote share or decide to focus their resources elsewhere.

### % of defectors returning to Labour in Lab vs Reform scenario, by different types of information environment (results from RCT experiment)

How effectively are progressive defectors squeezed back to Labour in a Labour vs Reform marginal, in different information environments?



In many ways, the above is consistent with what we find when we analyse the voting history of progressive defectors. Isolating these voters in the latest British Election Study (BES) from May 2025, we can trace back their voting history over the last twenty years.

As the below graph shows, while most have a history of voting Labour prior to 2024, they are by no means consistent or reliable Labour voters. A plurality voted Liberal Democrat in 2010, for instance, while many others have not voted either out of choice or because they were too young.



Only 11% of progressive defectors from Labour since 2024 have voted Labour in every election since 2010.

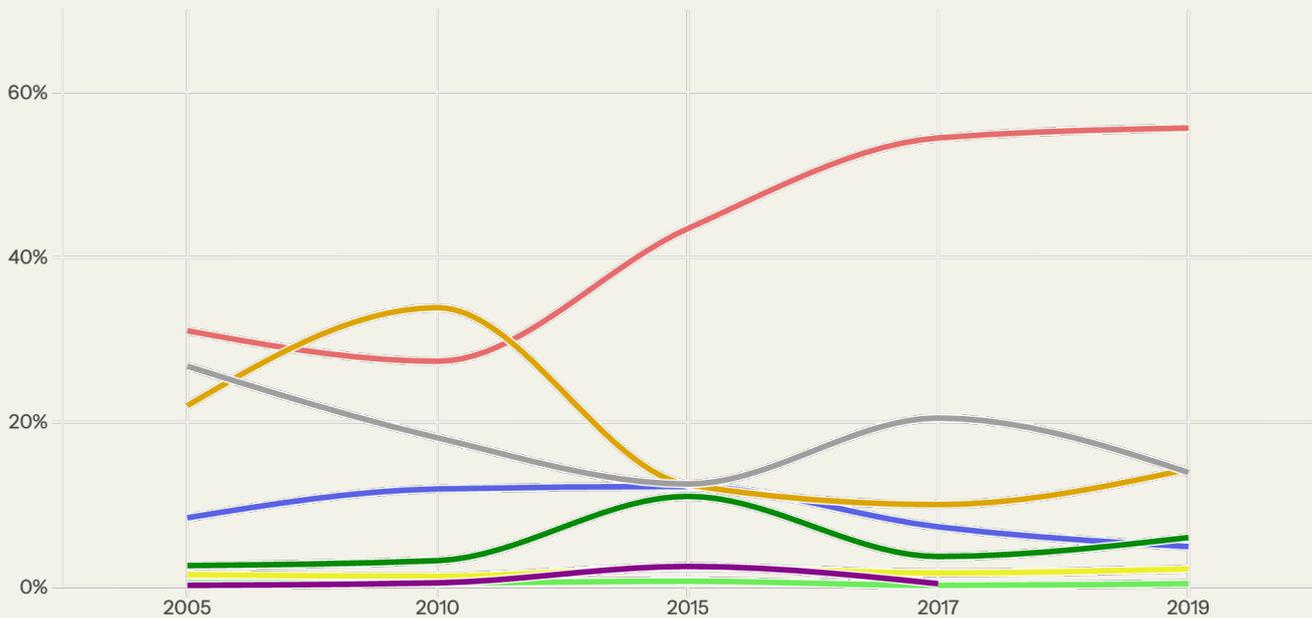
This should dispense with the idea that these voters are simply momentarily restless Labour base voters.

Neither, as the subsequent graph shows, are they a function of ‘tactical unwind’ - the idea being that some people voted Labour tactically, due to local dynamics in their area, but are now temporarily returning to their ‘natural party’ nationally, before inevitably returning to Labour at the next election. While these voters are slightly more likely to have voted tactically, most of them are at the very least a combination of tactical and conviction voters.

### Voting history of progressive defectors from Labour

Progressive defectors from Labour since GE2024 have a history of voting for other parties. Between 2010–2024, of those of voting age, only 11% voted Labour in every election. They should not be understood as traditional Labour base voters.

■ Conservative ■ Labour ■ Liberal Democrat ■ SNP ■ Plaid Cymru ■ UKIP ■ Green Party ■ Did not vote\*



British Election Study (BES), May 2025

Graph excludes 'other' and 'Brexit Party' since these are <1% of past vote. Figures for progressive defectors as of May 2025.

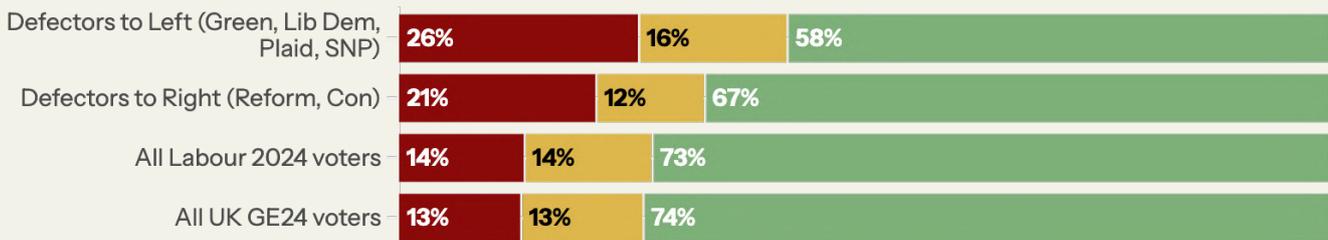
Persuasion UK



## What % of Labour defectors were tactical voters in 2024?

Though progressive defectors are slightly more likely to have been tactical voters in 2024, overall they were not tactical voters. The argument, therefore, that the large number of these voters simply represents 'tactical unwind' - tactical voters returning to their 'natural' party mid-term - is not really supported by the evidence. In this sense they are like defectors to the right.

- Voted in 2024 mostly to stop another party winning
- A bit of both
- Voted in 2024 mostly because they supported what Labour were standing for



"At the 2024 election, you told us you voted [X]. Was this more because you wanted to stop a particular party winning in your constituency, or more because you believed what [X] were standing for at the time?". More to stop a particular party winning = 0-3. A bit of both = 4-6. More because I believed in what Labour were standing for 7-10.



Taken together, the sum of evidence in this section is clear: progressive defectors are not 'grumpy Labour base voters' who will return come what may. *They are swing voters and should be thought of and approached accordingly.* Squeeze messaging is a necessary, but not sufficient, part.

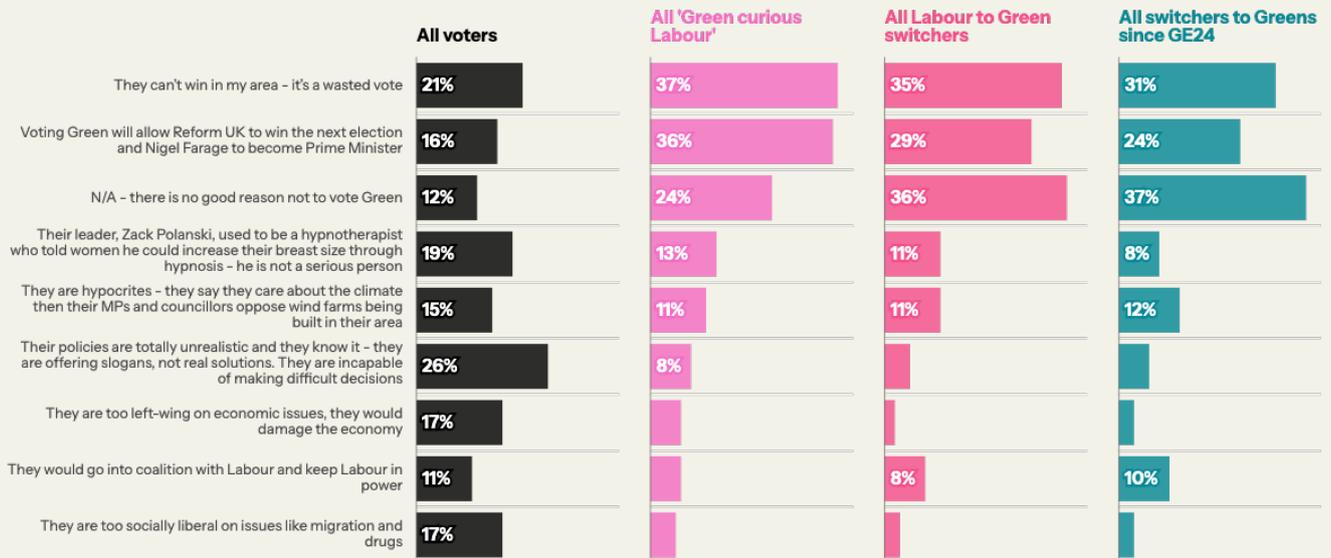
It is also particularly dangerous for Labour for their status as the clear anti-Reform alternative to be eroded by losses to the Greens especially. This is because tactical voting considerations are currently the only glue binding 'Green curious' Labour voters to the government.



### Top 3 reasons not to vote Green - by possible defector group

While the electorate overall provide practical or values reasons not to vote Green, most potential Labour/Green switchers only provide tactical ones

**"Moving on, below are some reasons some people have suggested NOT to vote for the Green Party and their leader Zack Polanski at the next general election. Which of these, if any, do you find most convincing?"**



YouGov for Persuasion UK w/c 20th October 2025, n=3000 voters.

'Green curious Labour' = Labour 2024 but >5/10 willing to vote Green. This is the total pool of switchers and potential switchers from Lab. Graph excludes other and don't know.





## Section 5: Thoughts on re-assembling a viable electoral coalition for Labour

The previous sections of this report have outlined the problem of progressive defection for Labour - a problem largely of their own making. It is incumbent on us though to at least try to illuminate possible paths out of this predicament for the government.

In doing so we can explore how bridgeable or not divides within their coalition are. What sorts of platforms or outcomes might bring 'left bloc' voters to Labour while at least not pushing more voters to right parties (and ideally bringing some back)? Are there even any?

### Defining a winnable coalition

First it's important to start with what a winnable coalition even is for the government at this point. The reality is that a lot of Labour to Reform or Conservative defectors are very far along their journey to defection, and likely not returning. This is also true of a portion of progressive defectors, albeit a fairly small one.

The sensible thing to do, therefore, is to look at voters who are *still open to voting for the government*, regardless of their current or past voting intention, and go from there.

When we do this, we see there is a 33%/34% of likely voters still open to Labour. But it is composed slightly differently to their 2024 coalition.

Within it, there are three basic blocs the government needs to put together. The first is the Labour base: Labour in 2024, still Labour now, despite the government's dire predicament.

The second is 'winnable left' swing voters - these are a mixture of voters who have left Labour since 2024 for other progressive parties, but are open to returning, and crucially an extra group of 2024 voters who voted for another left party in 2024 but is open to switching to Labour. All told this is about 10% of the electorate.



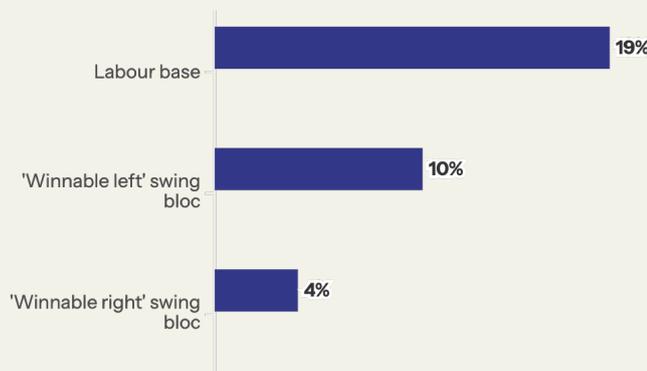
Around 4% of the electorate is a small but still strategically important group of ‘winnable right’ voters – currently weighing up either voting Reform/ Conservative or backing the government. This is split equally between the slither of right defectors open to returning and soft Conservative or Reform vote from 2024.

### Re-building a realistic Labour coalition: all voter groups still open to Labour, as a % of likely electorate

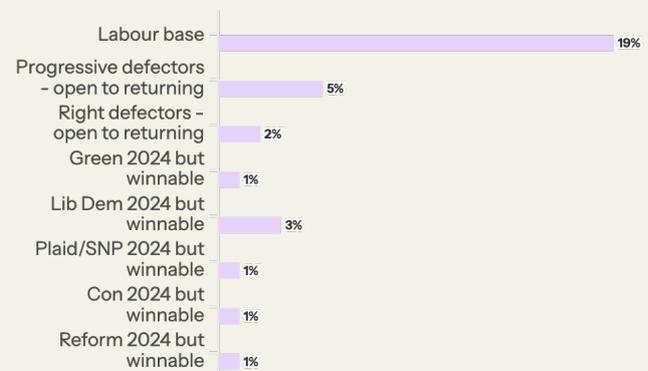
This could plausibly get Labour back to 33% of the vote. Most of the available vote is left-leaning swing voters, though there is also some Conservative and Reform vote that can be won over.

*Labour base = Labour 2024, still Labour now. 'Winnable left' – deciding between Labour and another left party. 'Winnable right' deciding between Labour and Reform or the Conservatives.*

Winnable blocs (as % of electorate)



Broken down (as % of electorate)

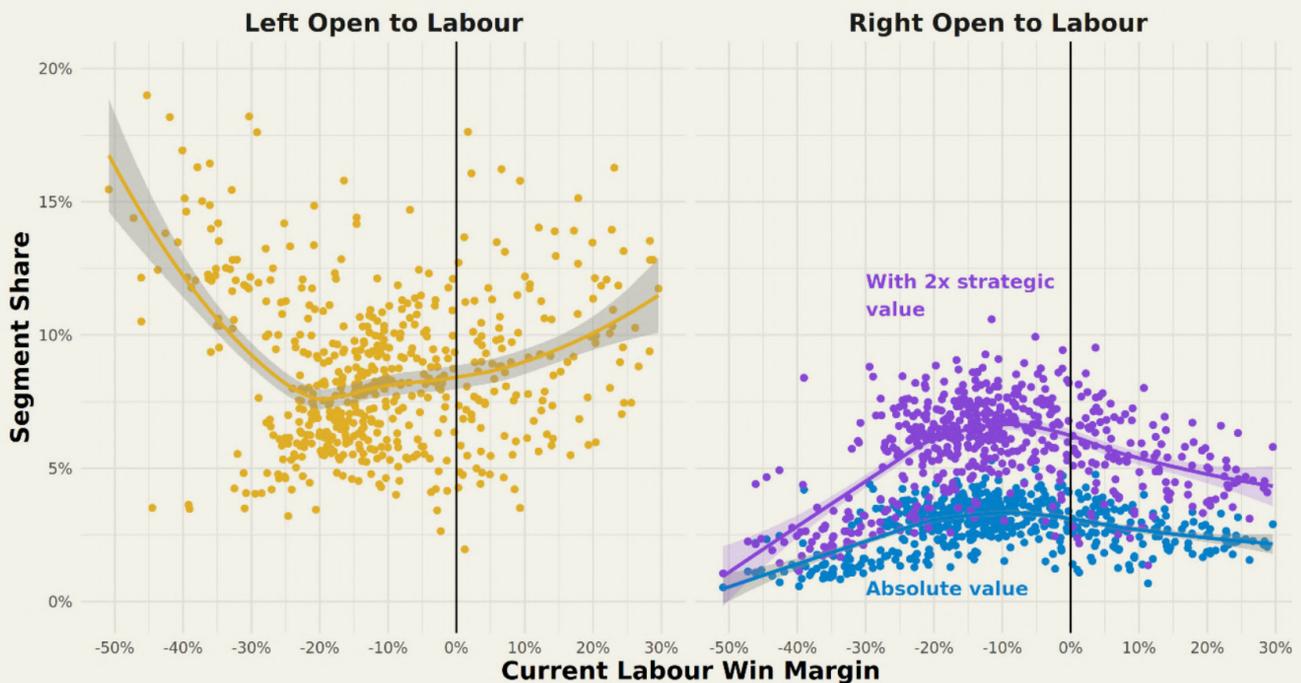


\* Figures here are % of likely electorate, excluding likely non-voters.

As we can see below, once we look at this new coalition, geographically the ‘winnable left’ swing group (labelled ‘left- open to Labour’) is efficiently distributed across marginals and has slightly more strategic value than the right group (‘right - open to Labour’) – even when doubling the latter’s strategic worth (the ‘count twice’ logic) – because of its sheer size. The progressive swing, then, is an even more important part of the government’s new coalition than its previous one.



## Constituency Segment Sizes by Current Win Margin



What might work to bring the two swing blocs together?

### How our testing experiment worked

An outline of the full multi-level RCT vignette experiment is contained in Annex A, but in precis we did the following:

- Invite around 9,000 UK voters into an experiment, including a boost of 1,000 Labour 2024 voters.
- Respondents were asked who they would vote for in different scenarios, with scenarios varied by:
  - What policy platform Labour was standing on
  - How opponents are attacking the government
  - What policy failures or successes the government has overseen
  - Different tactical voting or squeeze messaging information environments
  - How the government is defending itself in narrative terms.
- We can then observe how the above categories impact on reported voting intention in the experiment across thousands of different combinations and scenarios.



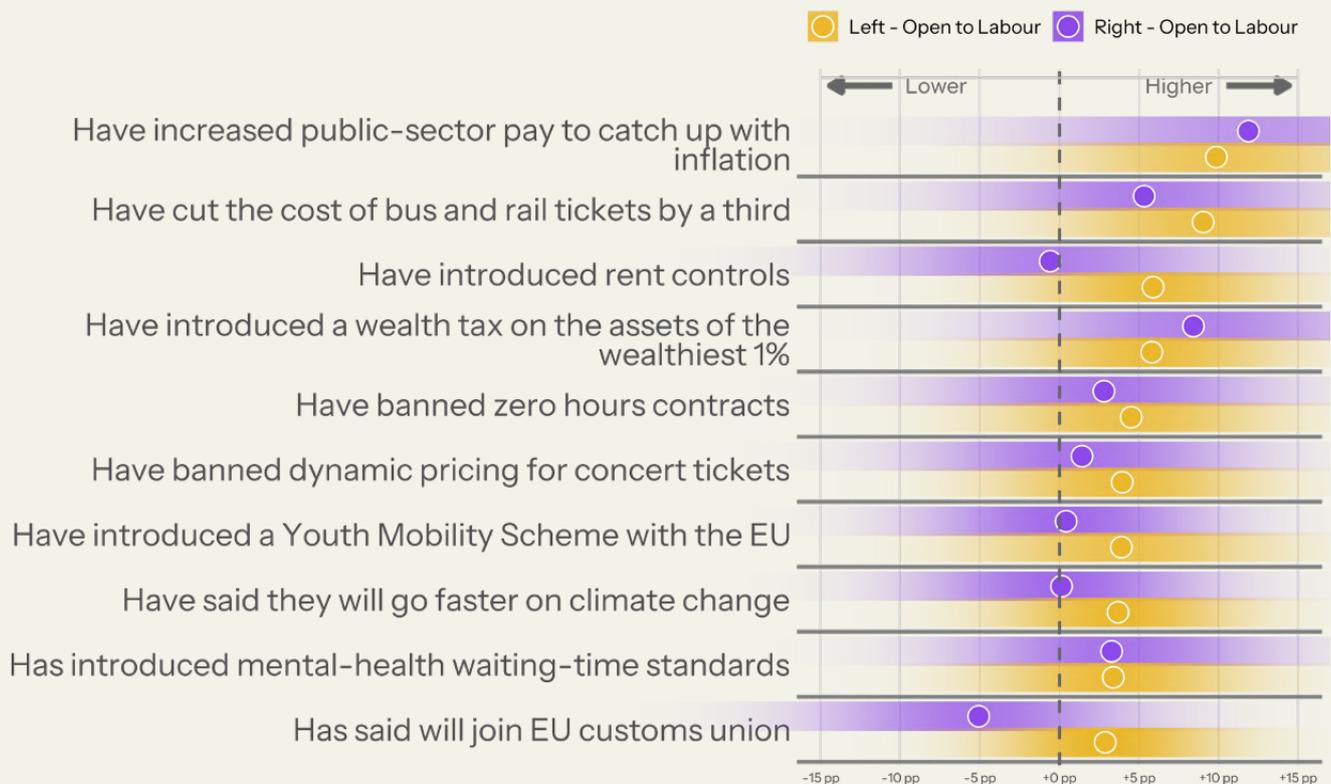
## Results: pulling together the coalition

Throughout the experiment, we found that it was the policies Labour was standing on - rather than outcomes delivered - which led to the most statistically significant variation in voting intention. This is reflective of the power of 'position issues' when got right.

Looking at the top ten policies that brought the 'winnable left' voters - including progressive defectors' open to returning - to Labour, we can see a few clear things. Firstly, of the nearly fifty policies tested, **the most powerful with this group were all economic**: public sector pay, rail and bus tickets, rent controls. Despite the 'winnable lefts' social liberalism, economic populism can move them also, when clearly presented. Secondly, and as importantly, these policies are not off-putting to the 'winnable right' - in fact many of them were actively attractive and vote moving for these voters too, in this experiment.

### Top 10 Policies for Left - Open to Labour

Estimated change in Labour vote share when item shown.

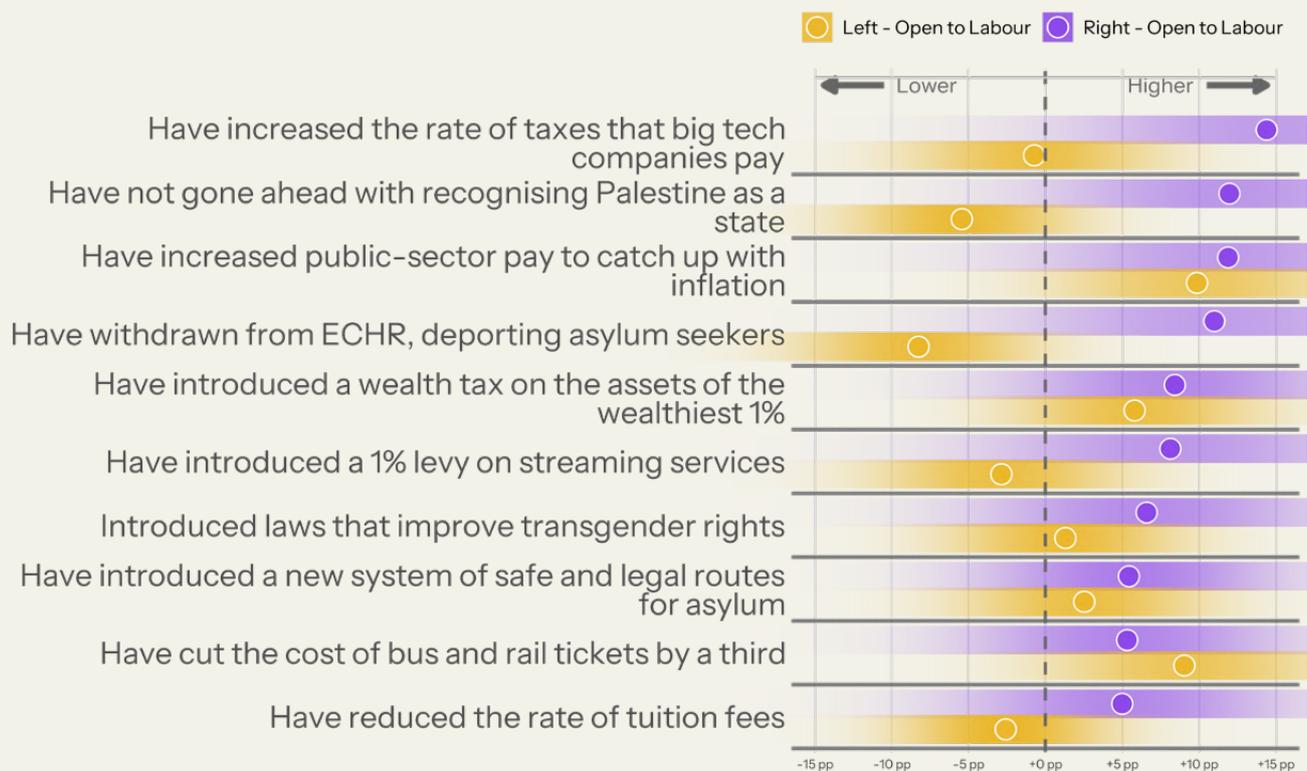




Looking at the top performing policies for the ‘winnable right’, we can see that there are also many economically populist ideas in and around the top of the chart. That said, the danger of solely chasing this voter group is made clear - there are many ideas, such as leaving the ECHR or taking an anti-Palestine position which are potentially popular and vote moving with this group but also very off putting to the winnable left group, such that they’d likely end up being net vote losers.

### Top 10 Policies for Right - Open to Labour

Estimated change in Labour vote share when item shown.



In short then, it is economics which unites the Labour coalition while culture potentially divides it. In addition, the below two actual deliverist outcomes were statistically significant of those we tested.

Crucially, this cannot just be about policy delivery - that would be a misreading of these results. The government’s record on some of the areas that performed well in this conjoint is already quite progressive. But very few of these voters know about them or have absorbed them into their view of the government. This is partly to do with other things getting in the way. But it is partly about how government competes in the attention economy of modern media. Without being comfortable having a fight - with clear enemies - it is hard to use these issues to get the attention of voters and illuminate value divides between you and your opponents.



Beyond that, the below deliverist outcomes also shape voting intention for the winnable left bloc, including left defectors, in the experiment. The first is small boats, with success and failure being rewarded and punished by both swing blocs, contrary to what some might expect. The other is child poverty.

Estimated change in Labour vote share when item shown.



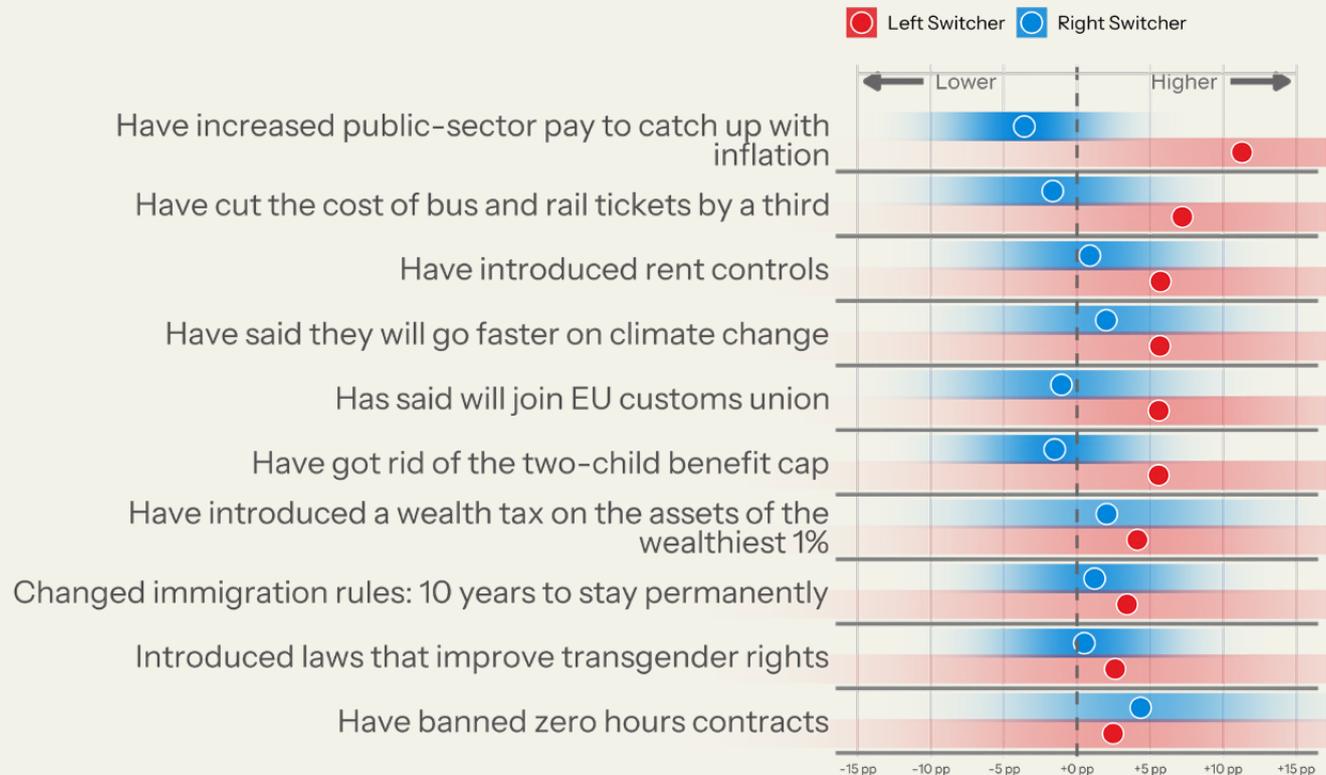
Finally, there are still some issues that have a unique appeal to progressive defectors. One of them is the EU, and the other is climate change and Net Zero. We can see this turns up in both the most salient policy stands. This does not repel 'winnable right' voters - making it a fairly no-lose position to lean in proudly to the pro-renewables, pro-action on climate positions the government has in practice taken but not always sought to talk about across government. Labour being seen to actively turn against or fail on this agenda would be a major opening for the Greens.

Isolating the most successful platform just among switchers from Labour since 2024, we see a similar pattern of results among left switchers to the winnable left bloc generally - albeit with a bit more prominence for moving closer to the EU.



### Top 10 Policies for Left Switcher

Estimated change in Labour vote share when item shown.



Taken together, then, this research supports findings from the last time Persuasion ran such an experiment in our ‘Reform curious Labour’ report.

That is, there are *some* things that Labour can do to appeal to its different swing groups in isolation. And policy delivery still matters. But overall it is leaning into the economic axis of British politics - trying to raise its salience through attention and conflict seeking, connecting that to economic populist policy that helps with the cost of living - that is the party’s best hope of tying together its coalition, rather than trading them off against one another.



# Top-line conclusions

- Defections from Labour to other left parties should be taken seriously as a factor shaping the UK's next general election. They could play a vital role in deciding the fate of hundreds of Parliamentary seats.
- Progressive defectors should not be caricatured as affluent urbanites or ideologically extreme left-wing activists. In reality, they tend to be frustrated lower middle class Millennial graduates. Their disaffection with Labour does have a values component – and inflammatory rhetoric around migration and the handling of the conflict in Gaza has had some impact – but they are also hit by many of the same day-to-day problems as voters at large.
- In order to win next time, Labour will likely need to re-imagine its electoral coalition. The vast majority of voters it has lost to the right are very unlikely to return. There is, however, a chunk of 'left bloc' swing voters – some 2024 Labour voters, some not – who are still open to backing the government and could yet be united with a slice of moderate centre-right voters, including soft 2024 Conservatives.
- But it shouldn't be assumed progressive swing voters will switch to Labour automatically through messaging about tactical voting, especially if the Greens become plausible competitors for the 'anti Reform' mantle in certain seats. The 'winnable left' – including most progressive defectors – are genuine swing voters and should be courted as such by any party looking to win them over.
- Evidence consistently suggests that swing voters on left and right can be brought together by a focus on an economically populist affordability agenda, one which seeks to raise the salience of conflicts in this area over the prevalence of cultural divides. In addition, progressive defectors can be appealed to in isolation through confident signalling on issues like climate and a closer relationship with the EU without any automatic trade-off elsewhere in the Labour coalition.



# Annex A: RCT vignette experiment design

**THE LABOUR PARTY SAY...**  
"Labour is building a fairer society where people who work hard and do the right thing are rewarded."

**THE GREEN PARTY SAY:**  
"Labour have shown themselves to be no different to the Conservatives."

Since coming to government, Labour did the following...

Cost of Living	Workers' Rights
Applied a limit to the amount by which food retailers can increase their prices each year.	Have banned zero hours contracts and strengthened rights for freelancers.

**SINCE LABOUR CAME TO GOVERNMENT...**  
"You've noticed that it's easier to get an NHS appointment."

You've received the following:

**A leaflet from Labour:** "In your area, only Labour or Reform can win. A vote for anyone else puts Nigel Farage in No. 10."

**A leaflet from the Green Party:** "Tactical voting is pointless this time. Voting Green is the only way to make Labour bolder."

- 1. Strategic Narrative**  
Randomly see one framing from the Labour Party - or no framing.
- 2. Rival Attack**  
Randomly do or do not see an attack on Labour from a rival progressive party.
- 3. Policy**  
Randomly allocated to see two policies
- 4. Real-World Outcomes**  
Randomly shown or not shown a tangible outcome from Labour's time in power.
- 5. Squeeze Messages**  
Various combinations of different squeeze messaging from Labour and other progressive parties - sometimes 'clean' (no conflicting information), and sometimes 'messy' (squeeze messaging tells different stories from different parties)

## Experiment Design: Full Wordings

### Outcomes

Outcome
You've noticed that it's easier to get an NHS appointment
You've noticed that it's still as difficult to get an NHS appointment as it was over the last few years
You've heard that the UK economy is doing better generally with higher growth and lower interest rates
You've heard that the UK economy hasn't improved much with growth still slow and interest rates not much lower
You've noticed that bills like food, energy and water have become a bit less expensive over the last few years
You've noticed that bills like food, energy and water are still as expensive as they were in the last few years
You've noticed that bills like food, energy and water are more expensive than they were in the last few years



<b>Outcome</b>
You've noticed that you have a bit more money left over at the end of each month than a few years ago
You've noticed that you have the same amount of money left over at the end of each month as you did a few years ago
You've noticed that you have less money left over at the end of each month as you did a few years ago
You've noticed that local services like the police, schools, roads, and public transport have become better
You've noticed that local services like the police, schools, roads, and public transport haven't improved in the last few years
You've heard that most asylum seekers are no longer being housed in hotels
You've heard that many asylum seekers are still being housed in hotels
You've heard that the number of small boats crossing the channel has fallen in the last few years
You've heard that the number of small boats crossing the channel hasn't changed over the last few years
You've heard that child poverty in the UK has fallen over the last few years
You've heard that child poverty in the UK has risen over the last few years
You've heard that the UK has made significant progress on climate change in the last few years and is on track to meet hit net-zero targets
You've heard that the UK has failed to make much progress on climate change in the last few years and is not on track to hit net-zero targets
You've heard that lots of people are losing their jobs due to AI and struggling to find new ones

## Narratives

<b>Narrative</b>
Labour is building a fairer society where people who work hard and do the right thing are rewarded.
Labour is building a better Britain for working people.



Narrative
Labour is fixing our NHS and public services after over a decade of under-investment.
After years of insecurity under the Tories, Labour has brought stability back to all of our finances.
Labour is bringing growth and opportunity to Britain, restoring business confidence and attracting investment across the country.
Labour will stand for decency against division - we'll resist those who want to turn this country against itself
Labour is on the side of the many, not the few - we'll stand up for workers and consumers against powerful interests
Labour will stand up to those who incite hatred and racism, and fight to keep Britain a decent, pragmatic, and tolerant country.
Labour has chosen the path of renewal not the politics of grievance, taking decisions that aren't easy but will drag Britain out of decline instead of more 'miracle cures' that don't work.
Labour is ending the experiment in open borders - we'll take back control of immigration with clear, fair rules that cut numbers, choose skills we need, and back British workers.

### Tactical Voting Scenarios and Squeeze Messages

Scenario	Source	Message
Close between Labour and Reform	Labour	This election is going to be close between Labour and Reform. In your area, only Labour or Reform can win. A vote for anyone but Labour here puts Nigel Farage one step closer to Number 10.
Close between Labour and Reform	Liberal Democrats	The Lib Dems are the best placed local challenger to Reform - in the most recent local elections in your area the Lib Dems were closest to Reform, with Labour out of the race.



Scenario	Source	Message
Close between Labour and Reform	Green	This is a moment of change when the Greens are surging like Reform and can win anywhere - that's why thousands of ex-Labour voters are voting Green for the first time.
Close between Labour and Reform	Objective	You've heard that it will effectively be close between Reform and Labour in your constituency.
Four way fragmented fight	Labour	This election is going to be close between Labour and Reform. In your area, only Labour or Reform can win. A vote for anyone but Labour here puts Nigel Farage one step closer to Number 10.
Four way fragmented fight	Liberal Democrats	The Lib Dems are the best placed local challenger to Reform - in the most recent local elections in your area the Lib Dems were closest to Reform, with Labour out of the race.
Four way fragmented fight	Green	This is a moment of change when the Greens are surging like Reform and can win anywhere - that's why thousands of ex-Labour voters are voting Green for the first time.
Four way fragmented fight	Objective	You've heard that it's difficult to say who will win in your constituency - Labour won the seat in 2024, but now Reform, Labour, the Conservatives and the Greens all have a chance

## Policies

Category	Policy
AI	Has introduced regulations to prevent businesses replacing employees with AI
AI	Has introduced a new re-training scheme for those who have either lost their job or cannot get a job because of AI



Category	Policy
Arts	Have introduced a 1% levy on streaming services (Netflix, Spotify, etc.) to fund UK creative industries and grassroots venues
Arts	Have banned dynamic pricing for concert tickets, so everyone pays the same price for concert tickets regardless of the demand
Asylum seekers	Have withdrawn from the European Convention on Human Rights, deporting all asylum seekers who arrive by small boat
Asylum seekers	Have introduced a new system of safe and legal routes for people wishing to seek asylum in the UK so they can apply before they attempt to travel here
Cost of living	Have rebalanced energy bills, deducting £100/year off of the price of the average household's energy bill
Cost of living	Applied a limit to the amount by which food retailers can increase their prices each year
Cost of living	Have introduced rent controls limiting the amount a landlord can charge for different property types in different areas
Cost of living	Have cut the cost of bus and rail tickets by about a third with subsidies and caps
Cost of living	Have introduced a new cost of living payment of a few hundred pounds to anyone in work
Cost of living	Have introduced 25 hours of free childcare a week for every child in the country
Cost of living	Have established a Competition and Consumer Protection Board with power to investigate any price increase over 5% and force companies to justify it or roll it back
Cost of living	Have increased public-sector pay to catch up with recent inflation
EU	Has said that if re-elected they will rejoin the European Union
EU	Has said that if they are re-elected they will join the European customs union (but not the European Union)



Category	Policy
EU	Have introduced a "Youth Mobility Scheme" with the EU that gives young people from the UK the right to live, work and study in the EU for a few years and vice versa for young people in the EU
Health	Have abolished prescription charges in England
Housing	Have introduced a new tax on vacant properties, where those who own properties and leave them empty pay a tax of 3% of the value of the property to the government each year to encourage property owners to either sell or rent out properties they're not living in
Immigration	Has said they will put a complete stop to all immigration
Immigration	Has cut low-skill migration while increasing other kinds of migration, presenting migration as positive for Britain
Immigration	Changed immigration rules so immigrants have to wait 10 years instead of 5 before they can stay permanently in the UK
Immigration	Have toughened immigration rules, like higher pay/skill bars for work visas, A-level English requirements, stricter tests for bringing family, restrictions on graduate visas, and ending social care visas
Misc	Have decriminalised marijuana
Misc	Has made it harder to protest peacefully in public
Misc	Has strongly backed Palestine becoming a state and publicly pushed Israel to adopt a two state solution
Misc	Have relaxed their stance on Palestine becoming a state and said that it is for Israel to decide if there is a two state solution
Misc	Have introduced a new mandatory digital ID card scheme
Net Zero	Have said they will move slower on climate change to protect household finances, like pushing back the ban on new diesel/petrol cars in 2030
Net Zero	Have said they will go faster in the UK's efforts to limit climate change, moving to renewable energy faster
Net Zero	Has rolled back climate change policies, approving new North Sea oil drilling and a third runway at Heathrow



Category	Policy
Taxation	Have introduced an additional tax on banks and big businesses that applies when they make a very high profit in a given year
Taxation	Have introduced a wealth tax on the assets of the wealthiest 1% of the population
Taxation	Have increased the rate of taxes that big tech companies pay
Taxation	Have reduced the rate of tuition fees for students going to university
Taxation	Have increased the higher income tax rate by 2% (affecting those earning more than £50,271) breaking their pre-election promise not to raise income tax
Taxation	Have increased the basic rate of income tax by 1% breaking their pre-election promise not to raise income tax
Taxation	Has reformed property taxes to be more progressive, with high-value houses paying more tax
Welfare	Have got rid of the two-child benefit cap, decreasing child poverty, but increasing welfare spending
Welfare	Has made the criteria for receiving personal independence payments along with incapacity (disability benefits) stricter
Welfare	Has reduced the amount people can receive in disability benefits, including both incapacity benefit and personal independence payments
Workers	Have banned zero hours contracts and strengthened rights for freelancers and gig workers
Workers	Have strengthened workers' power over companies by requiring worker representation on company boards and expanded rights to unionise in workplaces
Trans rights	Introduced laws that improve the rights of transgender people, while acknowledging that certain safeguards are needed to protect women



Category	Policy
Anti Trump	Have publicly denounced Donald Trump's policies and conduct and distanced the UK government from working with the US government while Trump is president
Welfare (Essentials)	Has introduced an "Essentials Guarantee" so Universal Credit can't fall below a legally set, independently reviewed minimum that covers adults' basic essentials
NHS	Has introduced mental-health waiting-time standards (urgent cases seen within hours, routine within weeks) and 24/7 mental health crisis hubs in every area as an A&E alternative



## Annex B: values questions from graphs in section 2 & 3

The below is the full question wordings from graphs seen in section 2 and 3 of this report relating to social values. These have been abridged in the graphs for ease of visualisation, but were the below:

***NOTE: For each pair of statements, people should be asked to place themselves, Labour, The Green Party and The Liberal Democrats. Scales should be 0-100, plus don't know.***

### **MigrationScale**

Where would you place your view and the view of these parties on this scale?

0 - Immigration has undermined society

—

100- Immigration has benefitted society

---

### **SpendTaxScale**

Where would you place your view and the view of these parties on this scale?

0 - Right now, the priority should be investing in front-line public services – even if that means raising taxes, including taxes on ordinary people

—

100- Right now, the priority should be cutting taxes on ordinary people – even if that means cutting spending on front-line public services



### **EconPopScale**

Where would you place your view and the view of these parties on this scale?

0 - The wealthiest and high earners already pay their fair share of tax

—

100- The wealthiest and high earners should pay much more tax

---

### **NetZeroScale**

Where would you place your view and the view of these parties on this scale?

0 - We should reduce our use of fossil fuels (the pollutants that cause climate change, like oil and gas) even if it means some extra inconvenience or cost to ordinary people

—

100- We should not reduce our use of fossil fuels (oil and gas) if it is going to mean any extra cost or inconvenience to ordinary people - even if that means less UK action on climate change

---

### **DeathPenaltyScale**

Where would you place your view and the view of these parties on this scale?

0 - We should not reintroduce the death penalty, even for people convicted of the most the serious crimes

—

100 - We should reintroduce the death penalty for people convicted of the most the serious crimes



## **EUScale**

Where would you place your view and the view of these parties on this scale?

0 - The UK SHOULD have closer economic ties to the EU even if it involves giving up ultimate authority on rules

—

100 - The UK should NOT have closer economic ties to the EU if it involves giving up sovereignty on rules

---

## **WelfareScale**

Where would you place your view and the view of these parties on this scale?

0 - The Government should prioritise making sure that everyone that deserves help from the welfare system gets it, even if that means that some are more easily able to take advantage of it

—

100 - The Government should prioritise making sure that people are not able to take advantage of the welfare system, even if that means that more people who deserve help don't get it

---

## **RadicalChange**

Where would you place your view and the view of these parties on this scale?

0 - The thing the UK needs most is a period of radical change, with big ideas for challenges facing the country, even if that means some disruption and risk taking

—

100 - The thing the UK needs most is a period of stability and order, even if that means things not changing much



## Corporation taxes

Where would you place your view and the view of these parties on this scale?

0 - We should increase taxes on big business, it will benefit the UK more than it will hurt it

—

100 - We should not increase taxes on big business, it will cause more harm than good to the UK

---

## Israel/Gaza

Where would you place your view and the view of these parties on this scale?

0 - The UK has a responsibility to try and stop the ongoing violence in Palestine even if negatively impacts the UK's relationship with Israel, the US and others

—

100 - The UK does not have a responsibility to stop the ongoing violence in Palestine and the government should be focussing on issues affecting people in the UK

