

The TUC's Middle Britain Poll



All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 1,195 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 14th to 19th Jan 2009. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).

Here are more details of the poll that forms the basis of the TUC Touchstone Pamphlet *Life in the Middle - the Untold Story of Britain's Middle Earners*

		Quintiles based on equivalised income					
		1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile	
All GB Adults	Total	1195	222	226	236	259	253
Unweighted Sample		1195	239	239	239	239	239
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Social grade

AB	26	11	12	20	29	55
C1/C2	50	53	57	54	55	32
DE	24	36	31	26	17	13

Newspaper Type

Express / Mail	16	13	17	16	16	18
Sun / Star	22	30	25	26	20	10
Mirror / Record	16	22	21	18	12	8
Guardian / Independent	4	3	2	3	5	6
FT / Times / Telegraph	10	5	5	8	7	21
Other Paper	13	9	12	14	15	12
No Paper	20	18	18	15	24	24

Headline Voting Intention

[Excluding Don't Knows and Wouldn't Vote]

Con	44	38	34	44	42	57
Lab	35	35	44	37	37	22
Lib Dem	13	17	11	10	15	13
Other	9	11	11	8	6	8

Non Voters

Would Not Vote	8	14	8	10	5	5
Don't know	13	15	16	13	12	12

Generally speaking do you think of yourself as left wing right wing or in the centre?

Left wing	7	8	7	11	6	4
Left of centre	15	14	14	13	18	18
Centre	33	26	36	30	40	33
Right of centre	13	8	9	11	11	24
Right wing	6	5	5	5	6	6
Don't know	26	39	29	30	19	14

How many adults are there living in your household?

1	18	19	31	14	14	14
2	56	44	51	61	55	68
3	15	16	11	14	21	13
4	8	13	8	9	9	4
5 or more	2	8	0	1	2	0

		Quintiles based on equivalised income				
Total		1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile
1195		222	226	236	259	253
All GB Adults	1195	239	239	239	239	239
Unweighted Sample	%	%	%	%	%	%

How many children under the age of 18 do you have living at home with you?

None	73	63	69	65	82	85
1	11	14	12	14	7	9
2	11	16	12	16	9	5
3	3	7	4	4	1	1
4	1	1	2	1	1	0
5 or more	0	0	0	0	0	0

Do you have any children aged 18 or older (whether living at home with you or not)?

Yes	43	38	51	42	43	42
No	57	62	49	58	57	58

Which of the following best describes your home?

Owned outright	28	23	33	28	29	24
Buying with a mortgage/ loan	40	18	23	49	46	57
Rented from local authority or housing association	15	32	24	9	8	3
Rented from private landlord	12	16	16	8	11	10
Live rent-free (including rent-free in relative/ friend's property)	5	7	3	4	5	5
Other	1	3	1	1	1	1
Don't know	0	1	0	1	0	0

		Quintiles based on equivalised income				
Total		1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile
801		93	127	182	195	205
All homeowners	801	105	141	186	187	201
Unweighted Sample	%	%	%	%	%	%

Did you buy your home through the Right to Buy scheme?

Yes	8	6	12	12	5	4
No	92	91	88	87	94	96
Don't know	1	2	0	1	1	0

		Quintiles based on equivalised income				
Total		1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile
1195		222	226	236	259	253
All GB Adults	1195	239	239	239	239	239
Unweighted Sample	%	%	%	%	%	%

Which of these best applies to you?

Working full time (30 or more hours per week)	46	20	31	45	60	68
Working part time (8 - 29 hours per week)	13	12	15	16	14	11
Working part time (Less than 8 hours a week)	2	4	2	3	3	1
Full time student	5	14	3	4	1	4
Retired	19	14	32	20	16	13
Looking after family full time	4	11	5	2	3	2
Unemployed	3	6	4	3	2	0
Not working for health reasons	6	15	7	6	1	0
Not working for other reasons	2	4	1	1	1	1

		Quintiles based on equivalised income					
		1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile	
All those working	Total	736	80	107	150	197	203
	Unweighted Sample	706	91	105	147	176	187
		%	%	%	%	%	%

In which of the following sectors do you work?

Private sector	51	45	45	49	52	56
Public sector	41	39	47	42	41	39
Not-for-profit (e.g. charities NGOs)	4	4	4	4	2	4
Other	4	12	3	6	5	1

		Quintiles based on equivalised income					
		1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile	
All GB Adults	Total	1195	222	226	236	259	253
	Unweighted Sample	1195	239	239	239	239	239
		%	%	%	%	%	%

Have you been unemployed for any period of time in the last TEN years?

Yes have been unemployed	32	46	37	32	29	21
No have not	68	54	63	68	71	79

		Quintiles based on equivalised income					
		1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile	
All those working	Total	736	80	107	150	197	203
	Unweighted Sample	706	91	105	147	176	187
		%	%	%	%	%	%

Do you pay standard or higher rate income tax?

Standard rate	82	79	85	93	92	66
Higher rate	11	3	2	2	6	29
Don't know	7	18	13	6	2	5

	Quintiles based on equivalised income					
Total	1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile	
All those working/unemployed	1195	222	226	236	259	253
Unweighted Sample	1195	239	239	239	239	239
	%	%	%	%	%	%

Union membership (recoded)

Yes	20	13	18	22	22	23
No	80	87	82	78	78	77

All GB Adults

Unweighted Sample

Which of the following best describes the highest level of educational qualification you have?

Higher degree or equivalent	9	2	4	6	8	22
Degree or equivalent	24	18	13	22	24	39
A Level or equivalent	26	28	20	26	30	25
GCSE level or equivalent	28	30	38	33	32	11
Below GCSE level or equivalent	5	6	10	3	3	3
No qualifications	9	17	16	9	4	0

How many cars does your household have the use of for private motoring?

None	16	27	25	12	13	7
1	46	51	54	50	42	36
2 or more	37	22	21	38	46	57

Which, if any, of the following types of pension scheme do you have? [Please tick all that apply]

Employer pension (salary related)	42	20	35	44	48	58
Employer pension (money purchase)	6	1	8	6	6	10
Personal/ private pension scheme (including stakeholder)	19	9	16	22	18	29
Other	4	2	5	7	4	4
Don't have a pension scheme	37	62	42	33	33	18
Don't know	3	8	3	2	3	2

		Quintiles based on equivalised income					
		1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile	
All those working	Total	736	80	107	150	197	203
Unweighted Sample		706	91	105	147	176	187
		%	%	%	%	%	%

How confident are you about your future job/ career prospects?

Very confident	11	5	6	9	13	16
Fairly confident	56	52	52	51	56	64
Not very confident	23	24	28	29	24	17
Not confident at all	7	14	12	9	5	3
Don't know	2	5	2	2	3	1

		Quintiles based on equivalised income					
		1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile	
All GB Adults	Total	1195	222	226	236	259	253
Unweighted Sample		1195	239	239	239	239	239
		%	%	%	%	%	%

Thinking about your standard of living would you describe yourself as...

Very well off	1	1	0	1	0	4
Well off	12	6	3	4	11	34
About average	66	51	63	70	83	60
Poor	18	32	31	22	6	3
Very poor	3	8	3	2	0	0
Don't know	1	2	0	1	0	0

		Quintiles based on equivalised income					
		1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile	
All GB Adults	Total	1195	222	226	236	259	253
Unweighted Sample		1195	239	239	239	239	239
		%	%	%	%	%	%

To your knowledge how does your standard of living compare with that of your parents when they were around the same age as you are now?

Much higher	22	12	12	18	31	32
A little higher	34	25	32	32	35	43
About the same	23	28	27	28	20	16
A little lower	11	17	14	10	9	4
Much lower	6	8	13	7	1	3
Don't know	4	10	2	6	3	1

In general how do you think the overall standard of living in Britain NOW compares with the standard of living ten years ago?

Much higher	11	10	7	6	14	16
A little higher	36	26	33	38	34	48
About the same	20	17	23	19	24	18
A little lower	21	27	25	23	20	13
Much lower	9	16	10	9	7	3
Don't know	3	5	2	4	2	1

Over the next five years do you expect your standard of living to...

Rise a lot	3	4	4	3	3	4
Rise a little	22	20	19	19	23	26
Stay the same	35	26	34	38	38	39
Fall a little	26	26	28	26	28	25
Fall a lot	10	17	11	10	6	5
Don't know	4	7	5	5	3	1

		Quintiles based on equivalised income					
		1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile	
All GB Adults	Total	1195	222	226	236	259	253
	Unweighted Sample	1195	239	239	239	239	239
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

How important a goal is it for you to improve you/ your family's quality of life over the next ten years?

Very important	36	32	41	40	35	32
Fairly important	41	47	36	35	43	46
Neither important nor unimportant	18	14	19	21	19	18
Fairly unimportant	2	2	2	1	1	3
Very unimportant	1	1	0	2	0	0
Don't know	2	4	2	1	1	1

How important do you consider it is for YOU to achieve more in life than your parents have/ did?

Very important	17	15	20	17	14	21
Fairly important	29	25	25	29	35	28
Neither important nor unimportant	41	42	43	41	37	41
Fairly unimportant	7	9	8	7	7	5
Very unimportant	4	5	2	4	6	4
Don't know	2	3	2	2	1	0

		Quintiles based on equivalised income					
		1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile	
All with children under 18	Total	319	83	69	82	47	38
	Unweighted Sample	302	85	66	75	43	33
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

How important is it to you that they achieve more in life than you have been able to do?

Very important	34	44	30	36	24	29
Fairly important	39	31	46	38	52	32
Neither important nor unimportant	23	19	18	26	22	36
Fairly unimportant	2	2	7	0	0	3
Very unimportant	1	2	0	1	2	0
Don't know	1	2	0	0	0	0

On balance do you think it is likely or unlikely that one or more of them will go to university in the future?

Likely	66	54	56	72	79	83
Unlikely	18	22	26	14	10	10
Don't know	16	24	18	14	10	8

		Quintiles based on equivalised income				
Total	1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile	
All with children 18 and over	515	85	115	99	110	106
Unweighted Sample	515	93	118	106	98	100
	%	%	%	%	%	%

Thinking about your children going to university which one of the following statements BEST applies to you?

One or more of my children has been to university OR is likely to go to university in the future	51	45	42	47	51	71
My children have not been to university and are not likely to go in the future	44	42	51	50	47	28
Don't know	5	13	6	3	2	1

		Quintiles based on equivalised income				
Total	1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile	
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	%	%	%	%	%	%

If everyone's income was arranged in order from lowest to highest, where do you think your income would be on this scale?

Towards the bottom (lowest income)	28	56	47	26	12	6
Below the middle	32	24	33	45	38	18
In the middle	25	12	13	22	38	36
Above the middle	10	4	3	4	9	31
Towards the top (highest income)	2	1	0	0	2	7
Don't know	3	4	4	2	1	2

Do you think of yourself as belonging to a particular class?

Do not think of myself as belonging to a particular class	27	38	25	23	29	20
Working class	32	34	45	40	29	16
Lower middle class	13	10	11	20	13	13
Middle class	21	9	16	14	22	39
Upper middle class	3	3	1	0	2	8
Upper class	0	0	0	0	1	0
Other	0	1	0	1	0	0
Don't know	3	4	3	3	2	3

Which class would you say your parents belong(ed) to?

Do not see them as belonging to a particular class	12	18	9	12	13	7
Working class	52	53	61	56	52	39
Lower middle class	13	10	12	12	14	14
Middle class	17	11	12	14	15	31
Upper middle class	4	3	4	4	4	7
Upper class	0	1	0	0	1	0
Other	0	1	0	0	0	0
Don't know	2	3	2	1	1	2

		Quintiles based on equivalised income				
Total		1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile
All those working	736	80	107	150	197	203
Unweighted Sample	706	91	105	147	176	187
	%	%	%	%	%	%

How do you think your job compares with the one your father had when he was the same age you are now. Would you say the level/ status of your job is...

Much higher	10	7	8	6	7	18
Higher	26	16	14	23	31	34
About equal	30	31	39	27	31	26
Lower	19	11	20	30	19	15
Much lower	8	17	13	10	5	4
Don't know	5	18	5	3	3	2
Father wasn't working at that age	2	0	0	2	4	1

		Quintiles based on equivalised income				
Total		1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile
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	%	%	%	%	%	%

Ordinary working people do not get their fair share of the nation's wealth

Strongly agree	26	37	31	28	20	18
Agree	42	32	46	45	50	36
Neither agree nor disagree	24	26	17	22	22	32
Disagree	7	5	4	3	7	14
Strongly disagree	1	0	1	2	1	0

Government should redistribute income from the better off to those who are worse off

Strongly agree	17	24	18	24	11	9
Agree	32	30	38	31	34	26
Neither agree nor disagree	30	29	30	32	32	27
Disagree	17	13	10	11	18	31
Strongly disagree	4	5	4	2	4	7

Which of the following do you consider to be MORE important for society?

Making Britain more equal	44	54	52	46	45	25
Encouraging people to better themselves even if it makes for more inequality	45	34	36	44	45	65
Don't know	11	12	12	10	10	10

"It is the responsibility of Government to reduce inequality in society"

Strongly agree	12	17	14	15	11	6
Agree	38	33	39	43	42	36
Neither agree nor disagree	27	27	26	23	28	32
Disagree	15	16	14	13	13	21
Strongly disagree	2	1	1	0	1	4
Don't know	5	7	6	5	5	2

Do you support or oppose this idea?

Support strongly	7	12	7	9	7	3
Support	15	12	15	16	19	14
Neither support nor oppose	26	27	27	29	25	20
Oppose	26	25	27	23	28	28
Oppose strongly	21	17	17	20	17	33
Don't know	5	6	7	4	4	2

	Quintiles based on equivalised income					
	Total	1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile
All GB Adults	1195	222	226	236	259	253
Unweighted Sample	1195	239	239	239	239	239
	%	%	%	%	%	%

Britain's super-rich mostly...

Deserve their wealth because they have become rich through merit and/ or hard work	37	35	32	32	36	47
Don't deserve their wealth because they have become rich through unfairly exploiting other people	31	31	32	37	32	24
Don't know	32	34	36	31	31	29

Considering this overall do you think the amount of tax you pay is fair or unfair?

Fair	37	26	33	33	43	45
Unfair	52	50	53	56	51	51
Don't know	11	24	13	11	6	4

In this country the best people get to the top whatever start they've had in life

Strongly agree	4	4	5	3	4	4
Agree	30	26	26	32	31	35
Neither agree nor disagree	26	33	23	25	24	24
Disagree	30	27	35	26	33	28
Strongly disagree	8	6	7	12	7	6
Don't know	2	5	2	2	1	2

People like you have enough opportunities to improve their position in life

Strongly agree	6	5	4	4	7	9
Agree	43	32	30	42	46	59
Neither agree nor disagree	26	26	29	24	31	19
Disagree	18	23	26	22	13	10
Strongly disagree	5	9	9	7	2	1
Don't know	2	4	2	1	2	3

If welfare benefits weren't so generous, people would learn to stand on their own two feet

Strongly agree	22	14	18	28	19	27
Agree	37	24	36	32	44	44
Neither agree nor disagree	15	20	17	13	15	13
Disagree	18	26	19	21	17	9
Strongly disagree	6	11	8	5	2	4
Don't know	2	4	3	1	3	2

In your view should responsibility for solving social and economic problems lie mainly with Government or with ordinary people?

Should lie mainly with Government	53	47	52	62	56	48
Should lie mainly with ordinary people	29	25	26	26	27	38
Don't know	18	28	22	12	16	14

Do you own any stocks or shares?

Yes	24	12	18	19	25	43
No	74	83	80	80	73	57
Don't know	2	5	2	1	2	0

Thinking about the total value of your household savings and investments (excluding pensions insurance policies and property) how much would you say you have in savings/ investments?

Nothing	18	34	26	17	11	5
Less than £500	12	9	19	11	17	3
£500 to £999	6	6	8	7	3	6
£1 000 to £9 999	22	14	18	23	28	24
£10 000 or more	25	8	15	28	23	47
Prefer not to answer	12	18	10	9	13	10
Don't know	6	11	4	5	6	4

What is your total level of all your household debts (personal loans credit cards store cards overdrafts etc) EXCLUDING mortgages?

Nothing	26	25	28	23	25	31
Less than £500	11	11	14	9	7	12
£500 to £999	7	7	9	6	10	5
£1 000 to £9 999	24	17	21	32	27	23
£10 000 or more	17	18	19	15	13	19
Prefer not to answer	9	12	6	8	12	7
Don't know	5	11	3	5	6	3

Equivalised household income - banded

Up to £5k	9	47	0	0	0	0
£5k to £9,999	11	53	5	0	0	0
£10k to 14,999	16	0	84	0	0	0
£15k to £19,999	14	0	10	62	0	0
£20k to £24,999	14	0	0	38	29	0
£25k to £29,999	10	0	0	0	46	0
£30k to £39,999	14	0	0	0	25	39
£40k to £49,999	5	0	0	0	0	25
£50k a year or more	8	0	0	0	0	36

Equivalised income ranges for each quintile

0 to 9600	19	100	0	0	0	0
9600 to 15038	19	0	100	0	0	0
15038 to 22388	20	0	0	100	0	0
22388 to 32000	22	0	0	0	100	0
32000 to 375940	21	0	0	0	0	100

mean in quintile

£4,855	£12,497	£18,498	£26,598	£52,675
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