

Statistical bulletin

# Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: April 2026

Social insights on daily life, including cost of living and attitudes to important issues and elections, from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

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# 1 . Main points

The following information is from data collected from 1to26April 2026, based on adults in Great Britain.

- The most commonly reported important issues facing the UK today were the cost of living (90%), the NHS (80%), and the economy (74%).
- The proportion of adults reporting international conflict as an important issue (63%) was the same as last month, but has increased since February 2026 (50%); this is currently the highest it has been since we started asking this question in October 2022.
- The most commonly reported important issues among younger adults aged 16 to 29 years were the cost of living (96%), the NHS (72%), and the economy (70%); the most commonly reported issues among older adults aged 70 years and over were the NHS (88%), the cost of living (83%), and immigration (76%).
- Around 4 in 5 adults (79%) reported that their cost of living had increased compared with one month ago; this is an increase from 67% who reported this in March 2026, and 56% who reported this in February 2026.
- Just over half of adults (51%) agreed or strongly agreed that elections in the UK are fair and democratic, while 28% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 20% disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- Almost 4 in 5 adults (78%) reported being most concerned about the spread of misinformation, disinformation, and “fake news”; this makes it the most commonly reported issue when thinking about future elections in the UK.

## 2 . Important issues facing the UK

In the latest period (1to26April 2026), the most frequently reported issues facing the UK today continued to be:

- the cost of living (90%)
- the NHS (80%)
- the economy (74%)

Other commonly reported issues during this time included international conflict (63%), crime (58%), immigration (56%), housing (54%), and climate change and the environment (54%).

The proportion of adults reporting international conflict as an important issue (63%) has increased since February 2026 (50%). This proportion is the same as last month and is the highest it has been since we started asking this question in October 2022.

### **Figure 1: Reporting of international conflict as an important issue is at its highest level since October 2022**

Proportion of adults reporting each important issue, Great Britain, October 2022 to April 2026

Notes:

1. Respondents could select more than one option.
2. The length of each data collection period presented in this time series may be different.

There were differences in how demographic groups perceived the importance of the issues facing the UK.

In the latest period, the important issues most commonly reported by younger adults (aged 16 to 29 years) were:

- the cost of living (96%)
- the NHS (72%)
- the economy (70%)
- housing (64%)
- employment (64%)

The important issues most commonly reported by older adults (aged 70 years and over) were:

- the NHS (88%)
- the cost of living (83%)
- immigration (76%)
- the economy (75%)
- international conflict (72%)

Younger adults (aged 16 to 29 years) were more likely than older adults (aged 70 years and over) to report the cost of living, housing, and employment as important issues. Older adults were more likely than younger adults to select the NHS, crime, and immigration as important issues.

## **Figure 2: Adults aged 16 to 29 years were more likely to report the cost of living as an important issue**

Proportion of adults reporting each important issue, by age group, Great Britain, 1 to 26 April 2026

### **Notes:**

1. Respondents could select more than one option.
2. See our accompanying datasets for additional response options and further breakdowns.

Men were more likely to report the economy as an important issue facing the UK (78%) compared with women (71%); women were more likely to select the NHS (83%) as an important issue, when compared with men (76%).

## **3 . Cost of living**

In the latest period (1 to 26 April 2026), nearly 4 in 5 (79%) adults reported that their cost of living had increased compared with one month ago. This is an increase from 67% reporting this between 4 and 29 March 2026 and 56% between 4 February and 1 March 2026.

## Reasons for increases in the cost of living

Among those who reported that their cost of living had increased compared with a month ago, the most commonly reported reason was the price of food shopping (92%). This has been the case since we first asked this question in November 2021. Other commonly reported reasons included:

- price of fuel (80%)
- gas or electricity bills (60%)

## Actions taken because of increases in the cost of living

In the period 1 to 26 April 2026, the most common actions reported because of increases in the cost of living included:

- spending less on non-essentials (62%)
- shopping around more (40%)
- using less fuel, such as gas or electricity, in their home (39%)
- spending less on food shopping and essentials (39%)
- cutting back on non-essential journeys in their vehicle (37%)

Around 2 in 5 (40%) adults reported shopping around more because of the increases in the cost of living. Adults aged 16 to 29 years (20%) were least likely to report this, compared with:

- 41% of those aged 30 to 49 years
- 54% of those aged 50 to 69 years
- 41% of those aged 70 years and over

Around 2 in 5 (39%) adults reported using less fuel, such as gas or electricity, in their home because of the increases in the cost of living. Younger adults were less likely to report this than older adults. This is broken down as:

- 17% of those aged 16 to 29 years
- 37% of those aged 30 to 49 years
- 49% of those aged 50 to 69 years
- 49% of those aged 70 years and over

Around 2 in 5 (39%) adults reported spending less on food shopping and essentials because of increases in the cost of living. Those aged 70 years and over (26%) were least likely to report this, compared with:

- 37% of those aged 16 to 29 years
- 44% of those aged 30 to 49 years
- 42% of those aged 50 to 69 years

Almost 2 in 5 (37%) adults reported cutting back on non-essential journeys because of the rising cost of living. This is an increase from 31% reporting this between 4 and 29 March 2026, and from 25% this time last year (2 to 27 April 2025).

## Ability to save money

Around 2 in 5 (38%) adults reported that they think they would be unable to save any money in the next 12 months, which is an increase from 33% in the period 4 to 29 March 2026.

Adults aged 16 to 29 years (28%) were less likely to report that they think they would be unable to save any money in the next 12 months, compared with:

- 40% of those aged 30 to 49 years
- 43% of those aged 50 to 69 years
- 41% of those aged 70 years and over

## 4 . Public perceptions of UK elections

### Fairness of elections in the UK

In the latest period (1 to 26 April 2026), we asked adults in Great Britain to what extent they agree or disagree with the statement: "Elections in the UK are fair and democratic". Just over half of adults (51%) agreed or strongly agreed that elections in the UK are fair and democratic. Around 3 in 10 adults (28%) neither agreed nor disagreed, and 2 in 10 (20%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. The proportion of adults who agreed or strongly agreed that elections are fair and democratic was lower than in the period 5 to 30 March 2025, when it was 58%.

In the latest period, adults aged 70 years and over were more likely to agree or strongly agree that elections in the UK are fair and democratic (61%), compared with:

- 41% of those aged 16 to 29 years
- 49% of those aged 30 to 49 years
- 54% of those aged 50 to 69 years

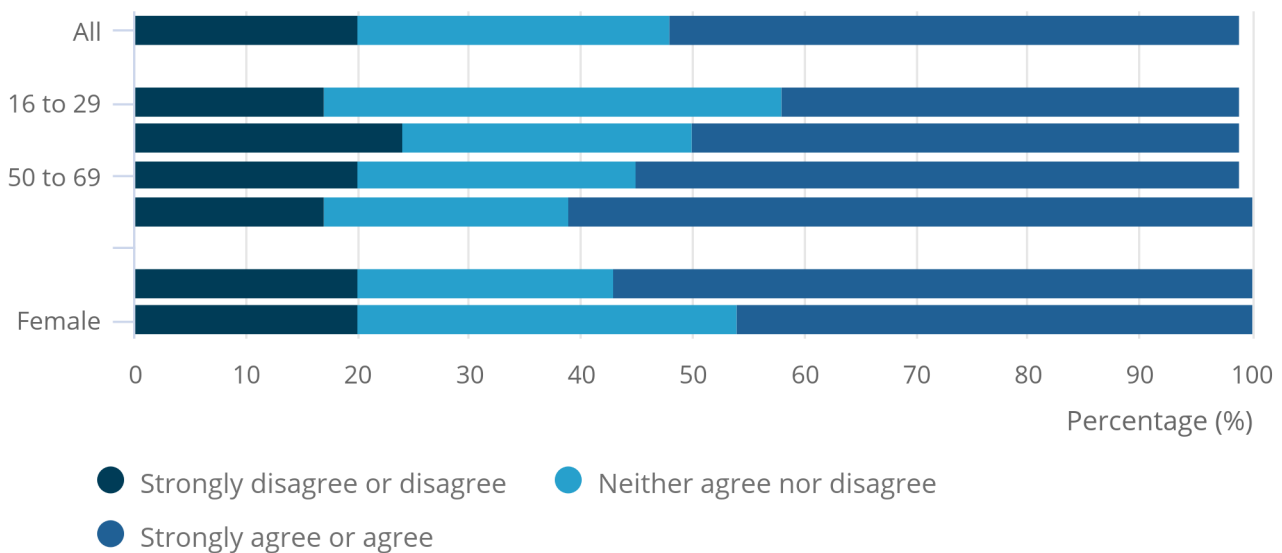
Men (57%) were more likely to agree or strongly agree with this statement than women(46%).

**Figure 3: Just over half of adults agreed UK elections are fair and democratic, while around 3 in 10 neither agreed or disagreed, and 2 in 10 disagreed**

Proportion of adults reporting the extent to which they agree or disagree that elections in the UK are fair and democratic, by age group and sex, Great Britain, 1 to 26 April 2026

Figure 3: Just over half of adults agreed UK elections are fair and democratic, while around 3 in 10 neither agreed or disagreed, and 2 in 10 disagreed

Proportion of adults reporting the extent to which they agree or disagree that elections in the UK are fair and democratic, by age group and sex, Great Britain, 1 to 26 April 2026



Source: Opinions and Lifestyle Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Estimates may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

## Concerns for future elections

In the latest period, we asked adults in Great Britain what issues they were most concerned about when thinking about future elections in the UK. Around 8 in 10 adults (78%) reported concerns about the spread of misinformation, disinformation, and “fake news”, making this the most reported concern. Over 6 in 10 adults (63%) reported being concerned about bias in the media, and over half (53%) reported being concerned about foreign influence on UK election results.

Other concerns that respondents reported when thinking about future elections in the UK included:

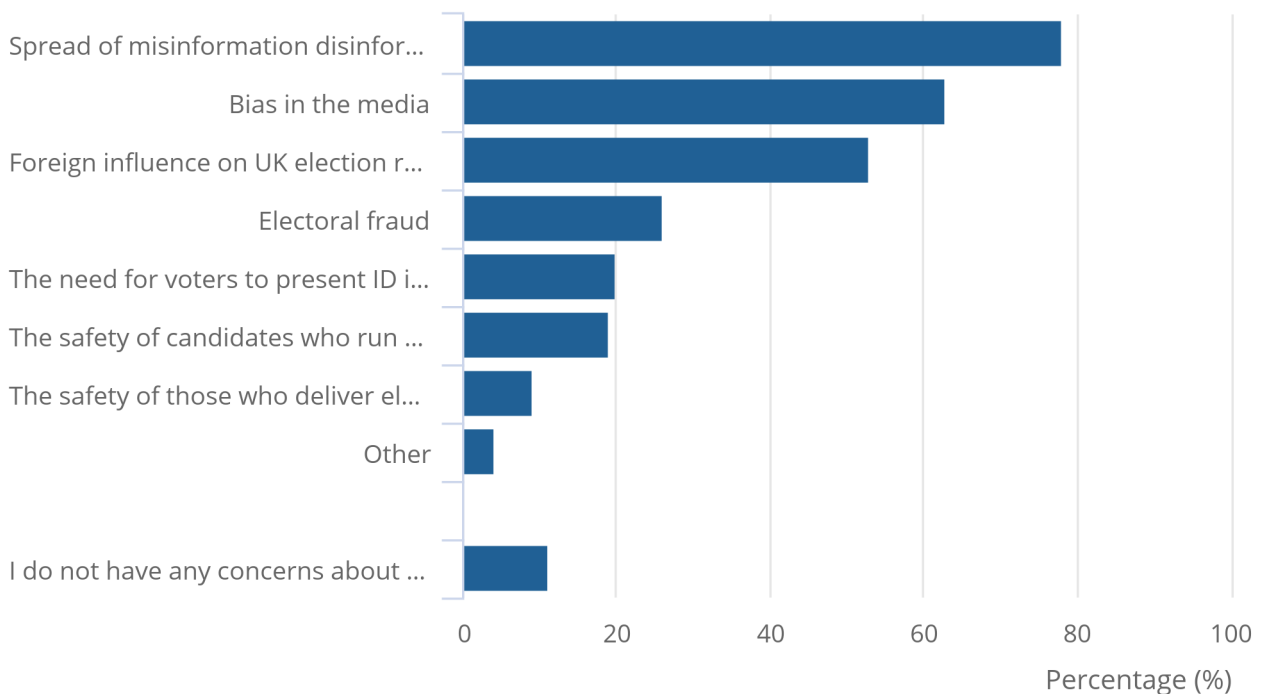
- electoral fraud (26%)
- the need for voters to present identification (ID) in certain elections (20%)
- the safety of candidates who run for election (including physical and online safety) (19%)

**Figure 4: The spread of misinformation, disinformation, and “fake news” was the most commonly reported issue when thinking about future elections in the UK**

Proportion of adults reporting the issues they are most concerned about when thinking about future elections in the UK, Great Britain, 1 to 26 April 2026

Figure 4: The spread of misinformation, disinformation, and “fake news” was the most commonly reported issue when thinking about future elections in the UK

Proportion of adults reporting the issues they are most concerned about when thinking about future elections in the UK, Great Britain, 1 to 26 April 2026



Source: Opinions and Lifestyle Survey from the Office for National Statistics

**Notes:**

1. Respondents could select more than one option.

Adults aged 70 years and over were more likely to report electoral fraud as a concern when thinking about future elections in the UK (37%), compared with:

- 22% of those aged 16 to 29 years
- 18% of those aged 30 to 49 years
- 31% of those aged 50 to 69 years

Men (25%) were more likely than women (16%) to report the need for voters to present ID in certain elections as a concern, when thinking about future elections in the UK.

## 5 . Data on public opinions and social trends

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: household finances](#)

Dataset | Released 15 May 2026

People's experiences of changes in their cost of living and household finances in Great Britain; indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: social media use and attitudes towards elections](#)

Dataset | Released 15 May 2026

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) related to people's social media use and attitudes towards elections in Great Britain.

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: personal well-being and loneliness](#)

Dataset | Released 15 May 2026

Personal well-being, loneliness and what people in Great Britain felt were important issues; indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: social mobility](#)

Dataset | Released 15 May 2026

Social mobility and life opportunities across different generations in Great Britain; indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: working arrangements](#)

Dataset | Released 15 May 2026

Working arrangements of people in Great Britain; indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: winter pressures](#)

Dataset | Released 15 May 2026

People's experiences of winter pressures in Great Britain; indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

### [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey: sample sizes, response rates and user requested data](#)

Dataset | Released 15 May 2026

Survey information including sample sizes, response rates and user requested data for the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

## 6 . Data sources and quality

### Sample

The analysis in this bulletin is based on adults aged 16 years and over in Great Britain.

In the latest period, 1to26April 2026, we sampled 8,720 households. This sample was randomly selected from people who had previously completed the Transformed Labour Force Survey (TLFS) or Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN). There were 3,650 individuals in the responding sample for the latest period, representing a 42% response rate.

## Data quality

Survey weights were applied to make estimates representative of the population, based on our population estimates. Estimates for some groups of the population may be subject to greater [uncertainty](#) because of smaller sample sizes for these groups (for example, younger adults).

From the 1 to 26 April 2026 data collection period onwards, the population totals used in weighting OPN estimates are based on 2024 mid-year estimates using updated population projections. They are initially projected forward using scaling factors derived from 2022-based subnational population projections by local authority, age, and sex, and subsequently constrained to 2022-based national population projection totals. These estimates are adjusted to cover only the population living in households and student halls of residence.

We provide [confidence intervals](#) for all estimates in the datasets. Where comparisons between estimates are made, associated confidence intervals should be used to assess the [statistical significance](#) of the differences.

Further information on the survey design and quality is available in our [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey quality and methodology information \(QMI\)](#).

## 7 . Related links

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: March 2026](#)

Bulletin | Released 17 April 2026

Social insights on daily life, including experiences of the cost of living and attitudes to important issues, from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

### [Economic activity and social change real-time indicators, UK, dashboard](#)

Online tool | Updated 14 May 2026

An overview of the UK economy and society, based on rapid response surveys, novel data sources, and innovative methods.

### [Business insights and impact on the UK economy: 7 May 2026](#)

Bulletin | Released 7 May 2026

The impact of challenges facing the economy and other events on UK businesses, including financial performance, workforce, trade, and business resilience.

## 8 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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