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Democracy in theory and practice: how UK attitudes compare internationally

April 2023

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THE BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS TEAM



SOCIAL CHANGE INITIATIVE



Introduction

The World Values Survey (WVS) is an international research programme devoted to the study of people's social, political, economic, religious and cultural values around the world. Running since 1981, the WVS is the world's largest and most widely used social survey, with over 800,000 data downloads per year. The WVS covers 120 countries represented across seven waves of data, with the most recent wave – 7 – the largest wave yet.

The questionnaire has extensive coverage of a huge range of attitudes, beliefs and values. The WVS also has a 50% overlap with the European Values Survey (EVS), opening up comparisons with another five waves of European data.

In the UK, fieldwork was completed Mar-Sept 2022 by Ipsos, among a random probability sample of **3,056 adults aged 18+**. This included respondents in England (1,645) and boost samples in Scotland (523), Wales (437) and Northern Ireland (446). This means not only can we compare the UK against other countries around the world, but also the four UK nations against each other. (See the technical details section at the end of this report for more information on the UK sample and international samples.)

How countries were selected for inclusion in this report

This is wave 7 of WVS, which included around 90 countries and ran from 2017 to 2022. This report focuses on comparison with a cross-section of 24 countries from WVS wave 7 and EVS wave 5 (see table for fieldwork years).

Countries were initially shortlisted based on the availability of reliable and accurately weighted data and then narrowed down, focusing on global coverage (based on the [UN's standardised country coding system](#)), regional coverage and population size. This selection gives coverage of 12 of the 17 UN M49 geographic regions across 24 countries, representing almost 50% of the world's population (source: [World Bank](#)).

Latest data for the UK was collected in 2022. However, for analysis of trends over time, data is for Great Britain due to a lack of available trend data from Northern Ireland.

Questions with 10-point scale response options

For several questions in this report, respondents were asked to give their answer on a numerical scale between 1 and 10, with only these two points on the scale labelled. For our analysis, following examination of the profile of responses and comparison with similar questions from other studies that use fully labelled semantic scales, we group the top three and bottom three response items together, with items 4–7 considered a middle group.

Countries included and latest years for which data is available

Australia (2018)	Japan (2019)
Brazil (2018)	Mexico (2018)
Canada (2020)	Morocco (2021)
China (2018)	Nigeria (2017/2018)
Egypt (2018)	Norway (2018)*
France (2018)*	Philippines (2019)
Germany (2017/2018)	Poland (2017/2018)
United Kingdom (2022)+	Russia (2017)
Greece (2017)	South Korea (2017/2018)
Indonesia (2018)	Spain (2017/2018)*
Iran (2020)	Sweden (2017/2018)*
Italy (2018)*	United States (2017)

* European Values Survey (EVS) country; 50% question coverage.

+ UK used comparing WVS7 data; Great Britain used for analysis over time due to data availability.

1. Democracy in theory

Widespread concerns about how democracy is delivering for people in practice have not dented Britons' support for democracy in principle, which has in fact risen in recent decades



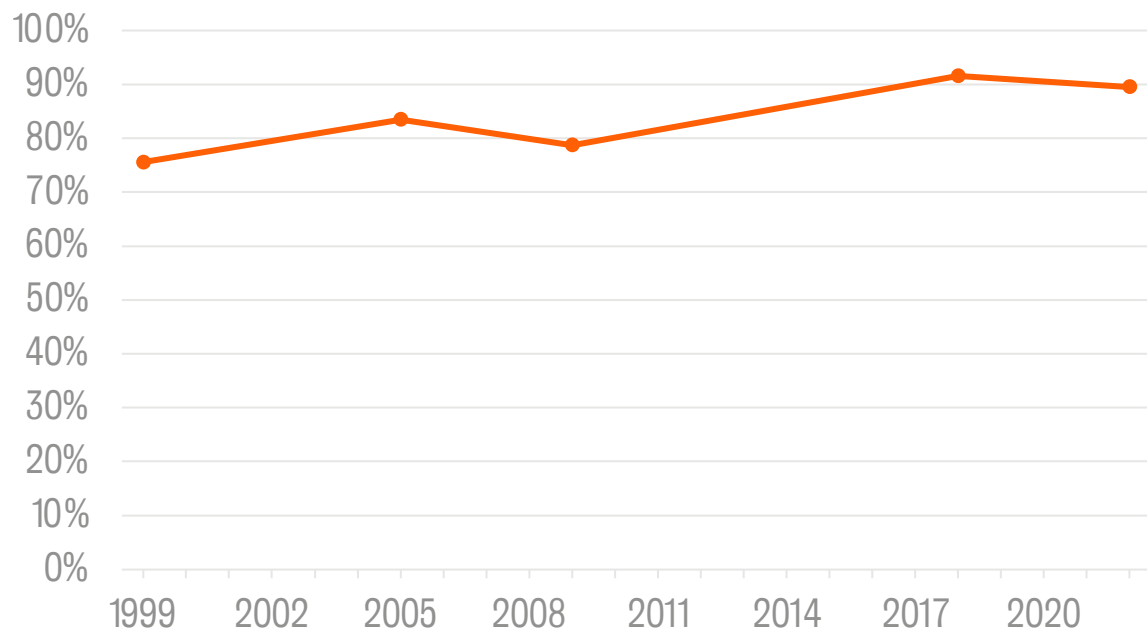
The British public have become more positive about democracy in principle over the last two decades

In 1999, 76% of people in Britain thought democracy was a very or fairly good way of governing. By 2018, this had risen to 92% – virtually the same as the support it had in 2022 (90%).

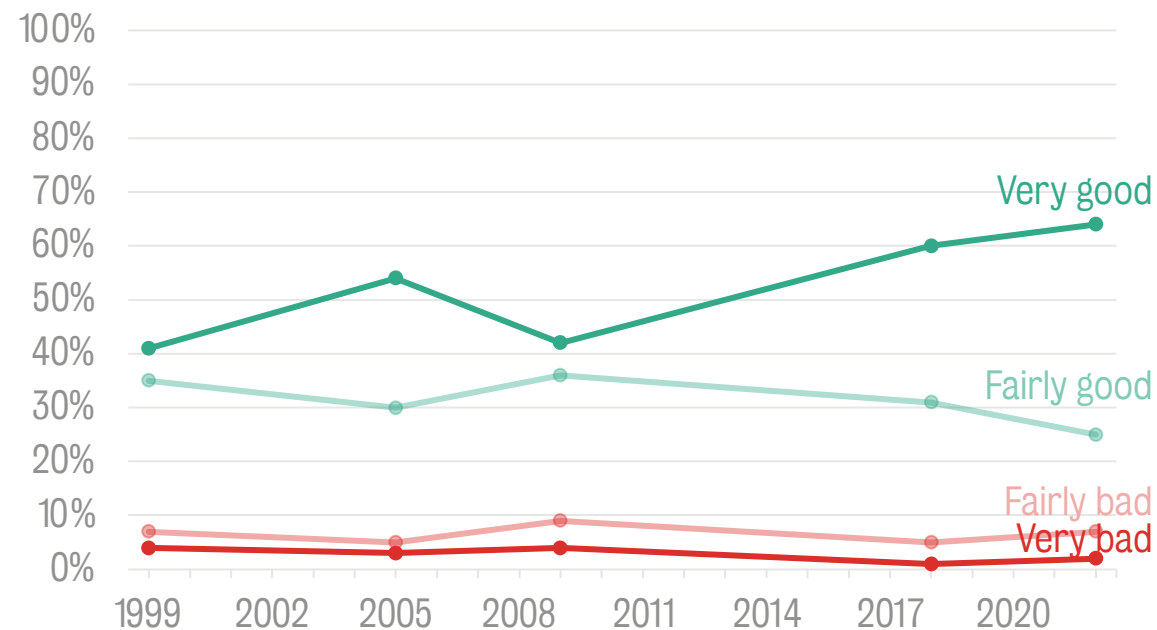
Much of this shift has come from a growing share of the public who think democracy is a *very* good way of governing. In 1999, 41% were of this view; in 2022, 64% were.

I'm going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing this country. For each one, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad way of governing this country? **Having a democratic political system**

% who say very/fairly good in Britain



All views in Britain



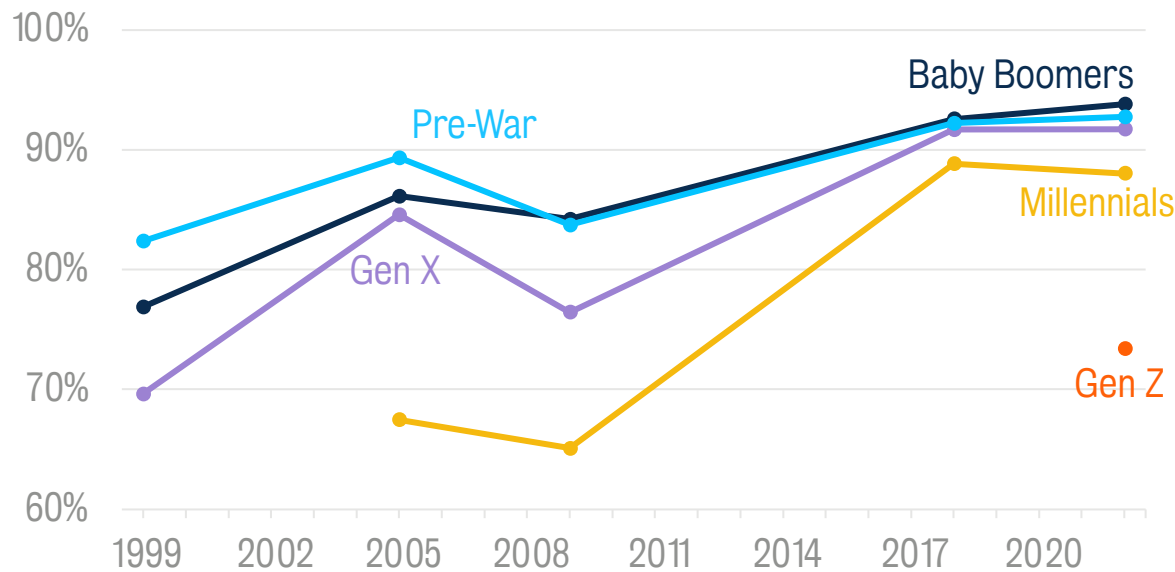
Millennials were much less positive about democracy, but have since come into line with older generations

In 2005, there was an 18-percentage-point gap between Millennials (67%) and Gen X (85%) in views on whether democracy is a very or fairly good way of governing Britain. By 2022, this gap had shrunk to just four points. Now it is Gen Z who stand out on this question, with 73% holding this view – compared with just under 90% or more among other generations.

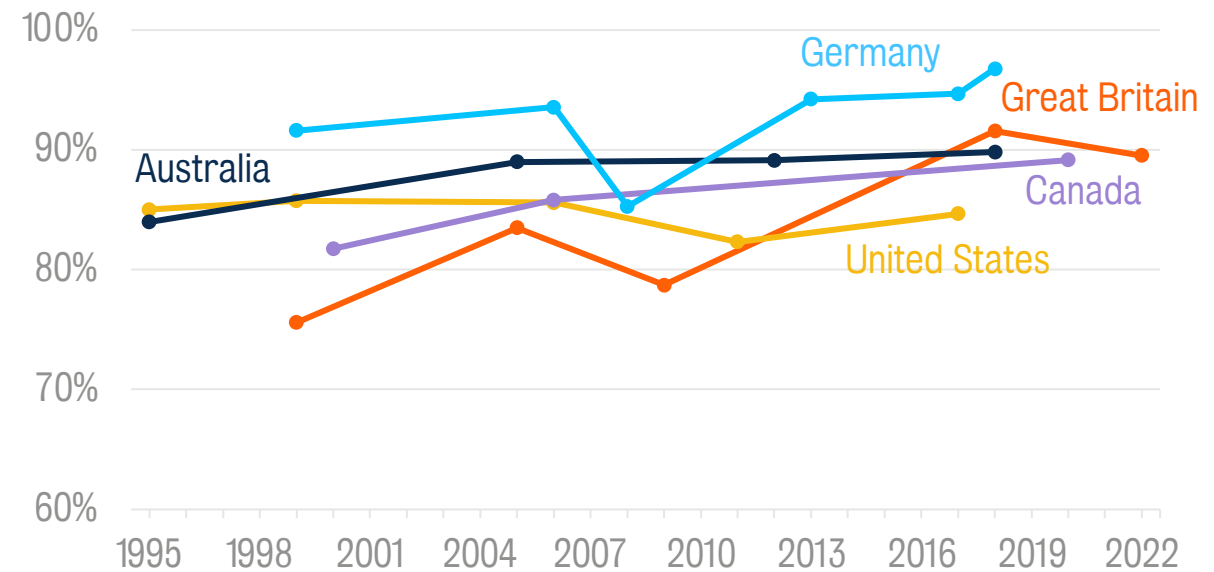
Looking internationally, the trend in Britain of increasing positivity about democracy has largely been mirrored in other western nations, although in the US, the share of the public who think democracy is a good way of governing was the same in 2017 as it was back in 1995 (85%) – although US trends did start from a point of greater positivity.

I'm going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing this country. For each one, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad way of governing this country? **Having a democratic political system**

% who say very/fairly good by generation in Britain



% who say very/fairly good across nations

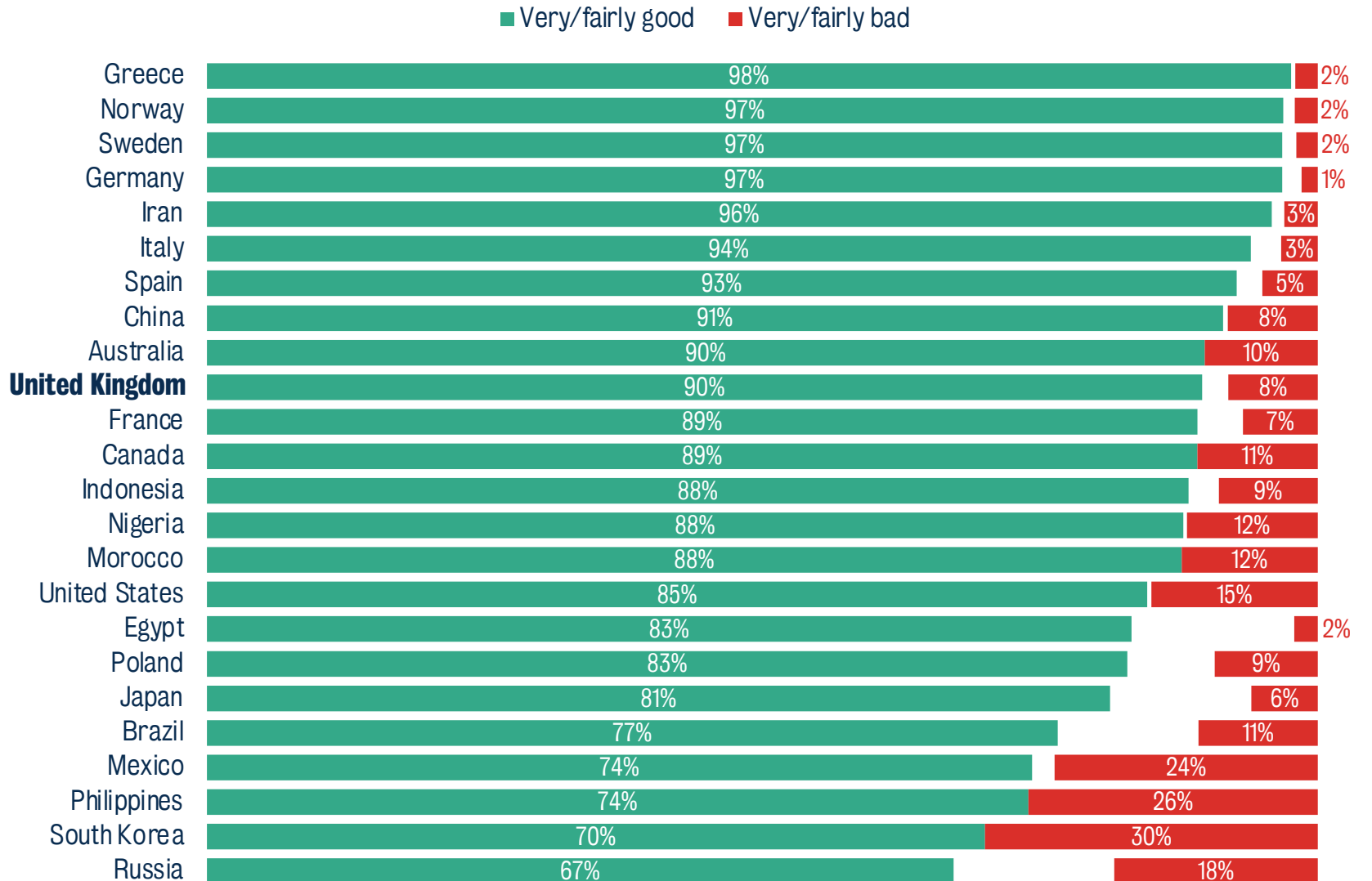


Majorities in all countries have a favourable view of democracy, with the UK ranking in the top half

Nine in 10 (90%) people in the UK say that having a democratic political system is a very or fairly good way of governing the country – similar to several other western nations but behind others, such as Greece (98%), Norway (97%), Sweden (97%) and Germany (97%).

Meanwhile, a range of nations that have more authoritarian systems of government nonetheless have large majorities who say democracy is a good way of governing, including Iran (96%) and China (91%).

Please indicate what you think about this as a way of governing this country*: **Having a democratic political system**



*See full wording of question stem on page 4

UK base: 3,056 people in the UK aged 18+, surveyed 1 Mar–9 Sept 2022. Other countries all surveyed in wave 7 of WVS at various points between 2017 and 2022. See [WVSA website](#) for sample information

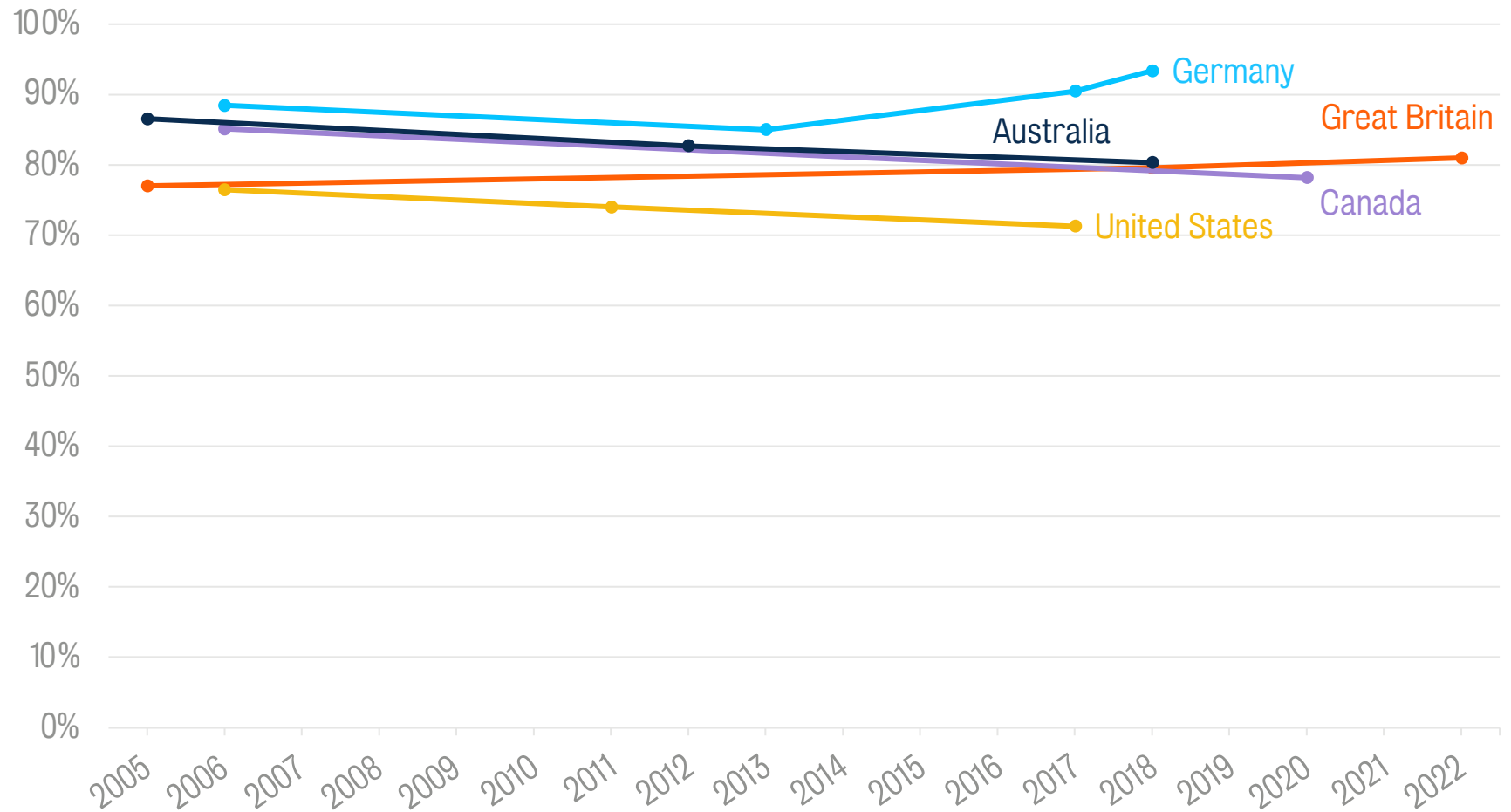
Views on the importance of democracy have remained stable in Britain over the last 17 years

The British public's views on the importance of democracy have remained relatively stable since 2005, when 77% said it's important for them to live in a country that is governed democratically. This compares with 81% who feel this way today – a slight increase.

Germany has also seen a small rise over a similar period, while Australia and Canada have seen slight declines, bringing them into line with Britain.

Among this group of higher-income nations, people in the US are least likely to say democracy is important for them, with the share of the public holding this view falling a small amount, from 76% to 71%, over the 11 years since 2006.

How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically? On this scale where 1 means it is “not at all important” and 10 means “absolutely important” what position would you choose?
(% who say important [8–10])

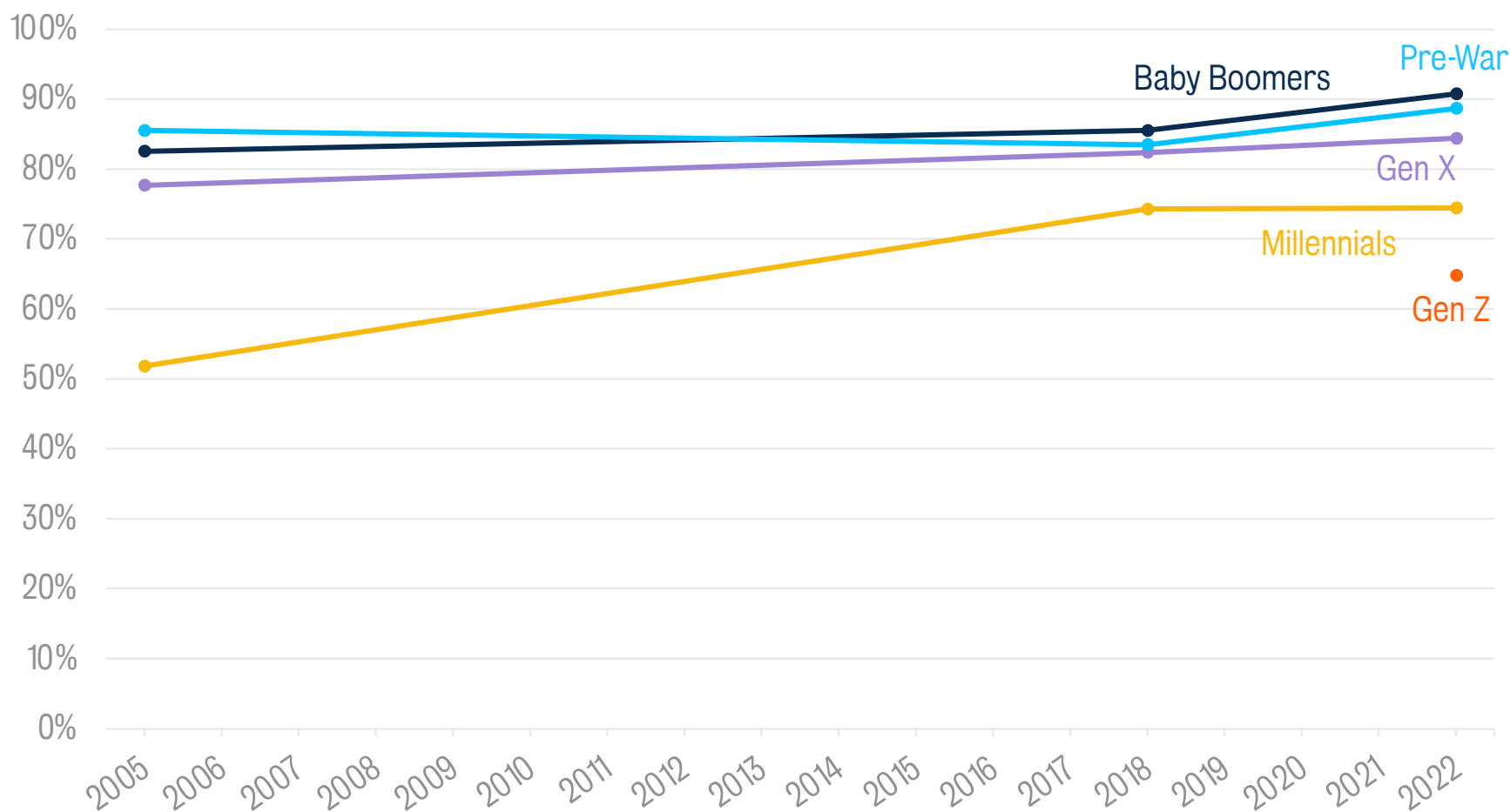


There has been a big rise in the share of Millennials saying it's important for them to live in a democratic country

In 2005, around half (52%) of Millennials said living in a democratically governed country is important to them, far below other generations. But this had risen to three-quarters (74%) by 2018 and was at the same level in 2022, suggesting there may be a lifecycle element to attitudes, whereby views change as people age, rather than meaningful differences between cohorts.

However, the latest data shows that Millennials are still less likely than older generations to say it's important to live in a democracy – and this is continuing with Gen Z, who are now the least likely to say this (65%).

How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically? On this scale where 1 means it is “not at all important” and 10 means “absolutely important” what position would you choose?
(% who say important [8–10] by generation in Britain)

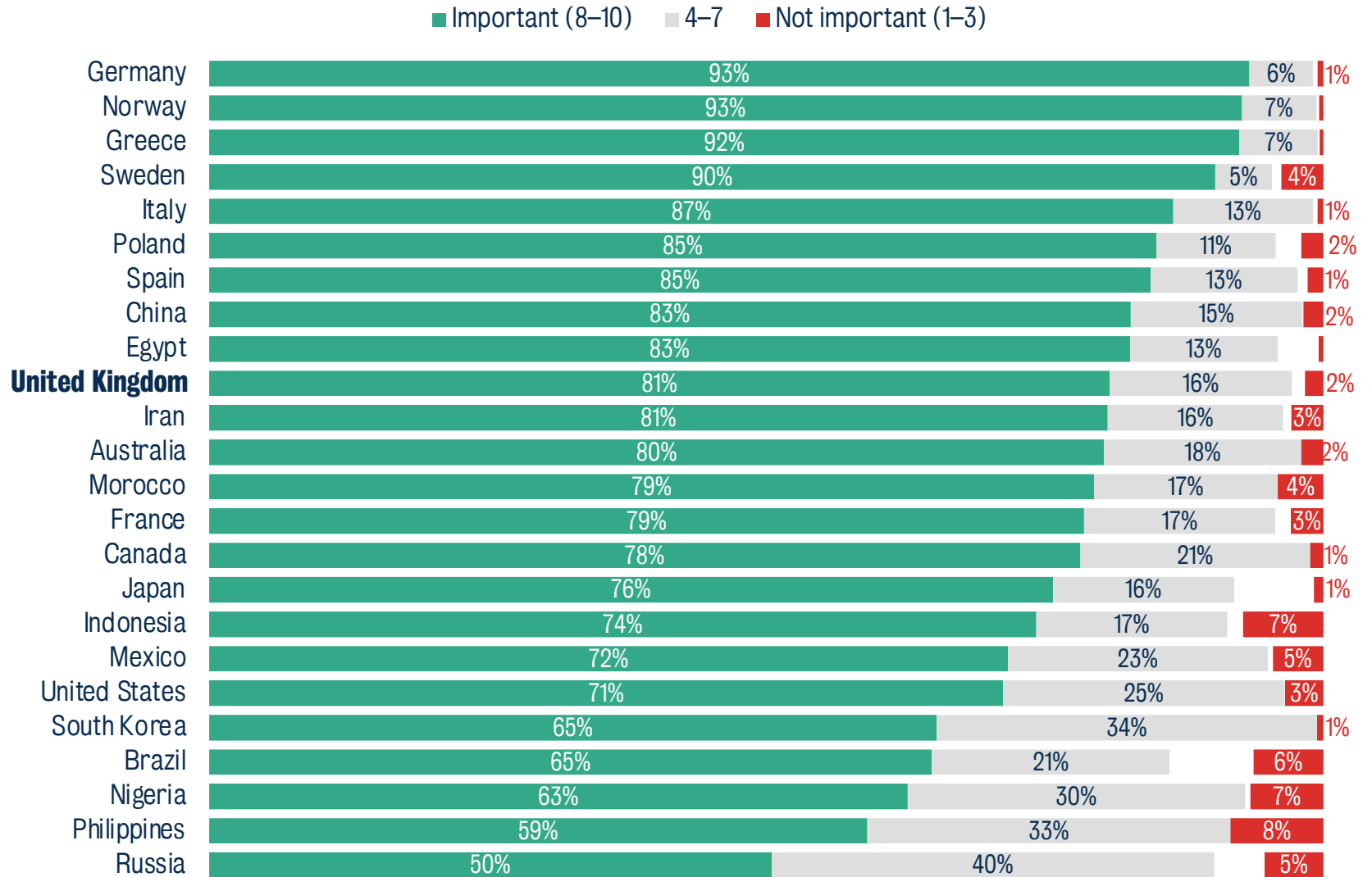


Being governed democratically is of high importance in countries around the world, including the UK

A majority in all countries except Russia (50%) say it is important for them to live in a country that is governed democratically.

Views on this question in the UK (81%) are on a par with similar nations such as Australia (80%), France (79%), Canada (78%) and Spain (85%), although other higher-income countries including Germany (93%), Norway (93%) and Greece (92%) all rank higher for valuing democracy.

How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically? On this scale where 1 means it is “not at all important” and 10 means “absolutely important” what position would you choose?



UK base: 3,056 people in the UK aged 18+, surveyed 1 Mar–9 Sept 2022. Other countries all surveyed in wave 7 of WVS at various points between 2017 and 2022. See [WVSA website](#) for sample information

2. Democracy in practice

Despite largely positive feelings about democracy in theory, the UK – and Northern Ireland in particular – rank below many peer nations for satisfaction with how the political system is functioning in reality, and relatively few think the UK is a highly democratic nation, even if trends are improving



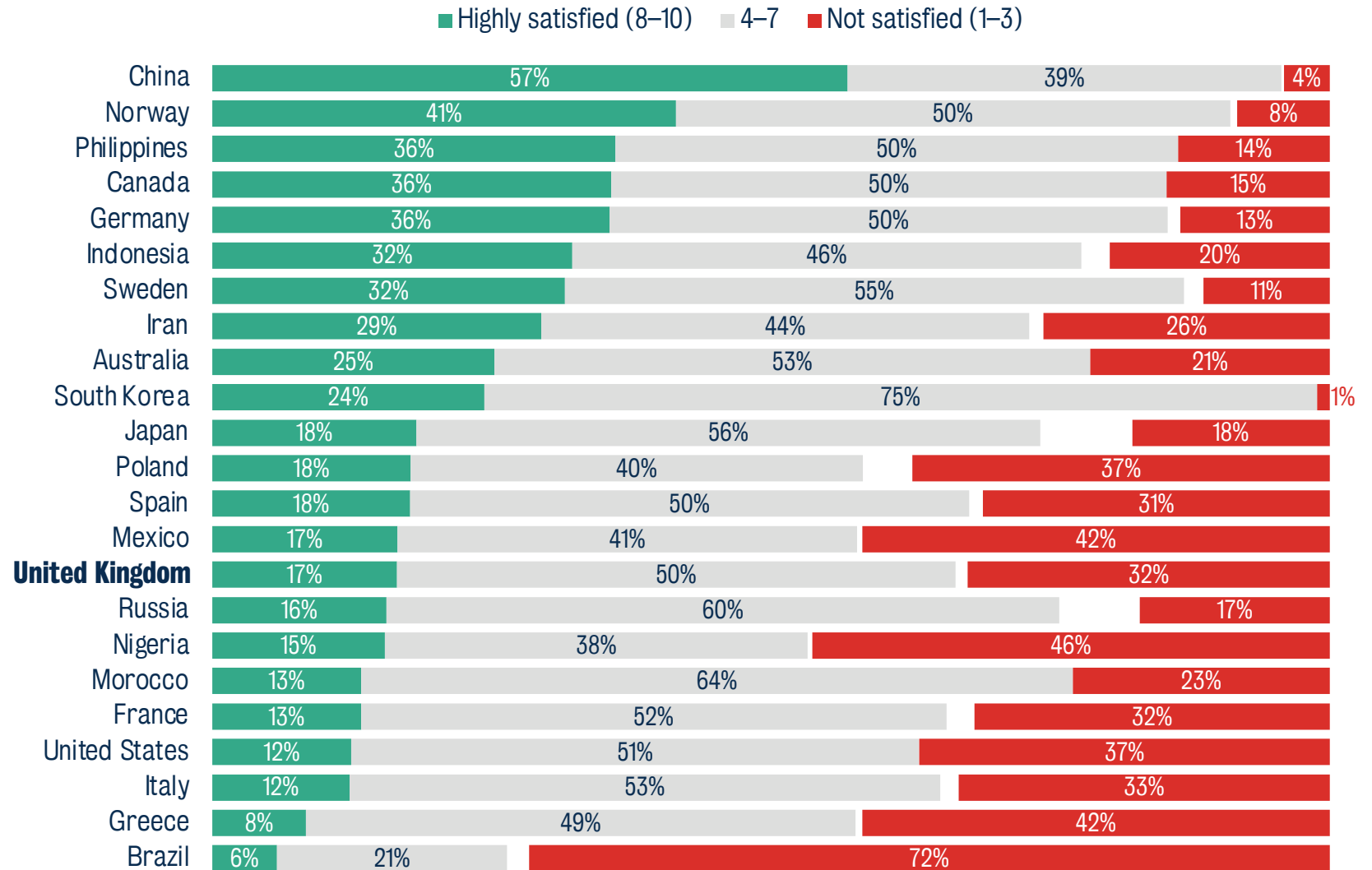
Few in the UK are highly satisfied with the political system, with the country ranking below many peer nations

One in six (17%) people in the UK give a response indicating they are highly satisfied with how the country's political system is functioning, compared with around double this proportion (32%) who say they are dissatisfied with it and half (50%) who rate it somewhere in between.

This places the UK well below several other higher-income democracies such as Norway, Canada, Germany and Sweden, all of which do better on public satisfaction with the political system – although China is the only nation where a majority say they are highly satisfied.

But the UK does rank above certain other peer nations on this measure, including France, the US and Italy, which all fare slightly worse.

On a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 is “not satisfied at all” and 10 is “completely satisfied”, how satisfied are you with how the political system is functioning in your country these days?

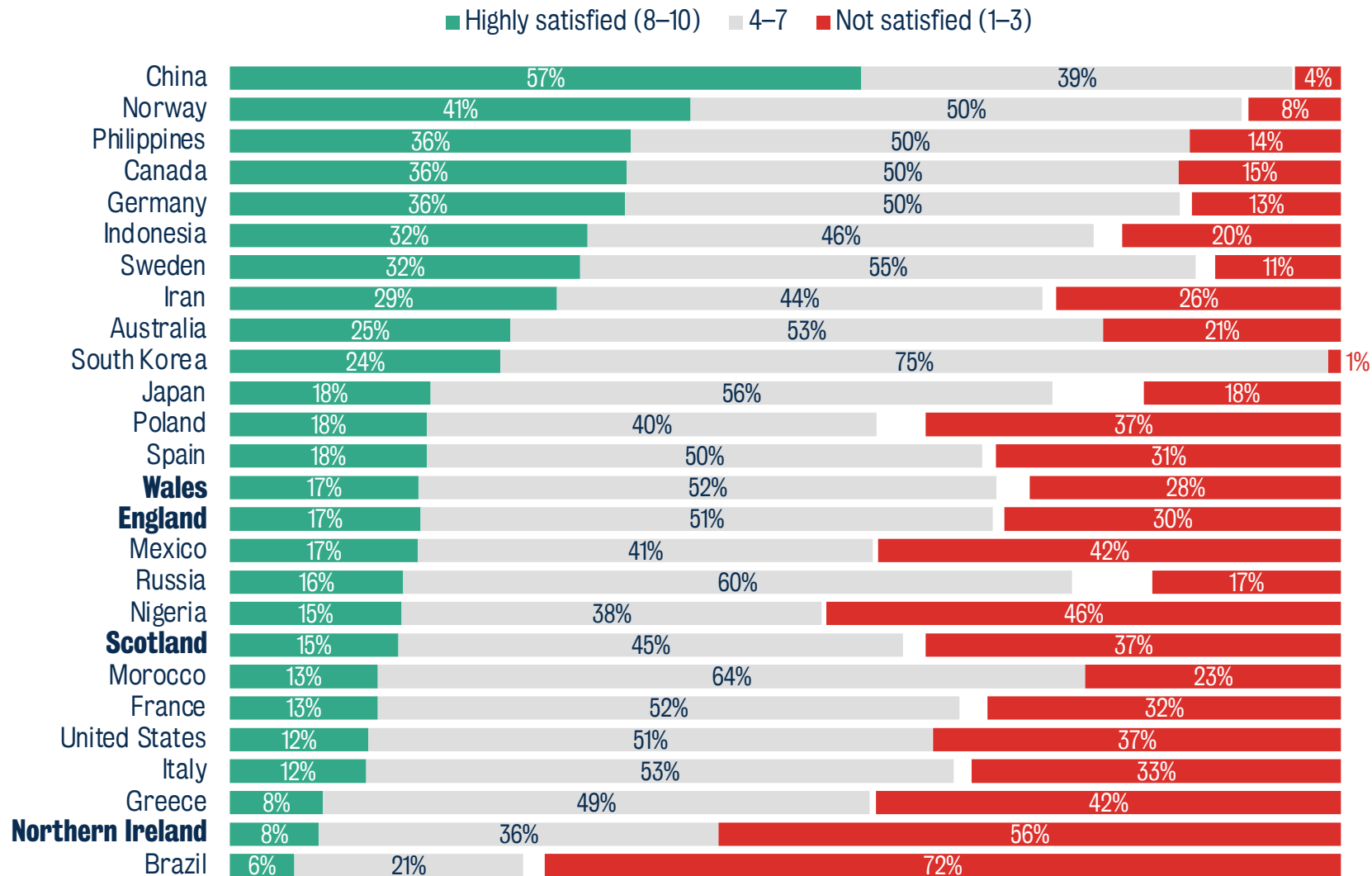


Among UK nations, Northern Ireland is by far the least satisfied with how its political system is functioning

With the lack of a functioning government in Northern Ireland, just 8% of the country's population indicate they are highly satisfied with how their political system is functioning these days – around half the proportion who say the same in the other nations that make up the UK.

Northern Ireland is also the only UK country where a majority (56%) indicate they are not satisfied with the political system. Internationally, only people in Brazil (72%) are more likely to feel this way.

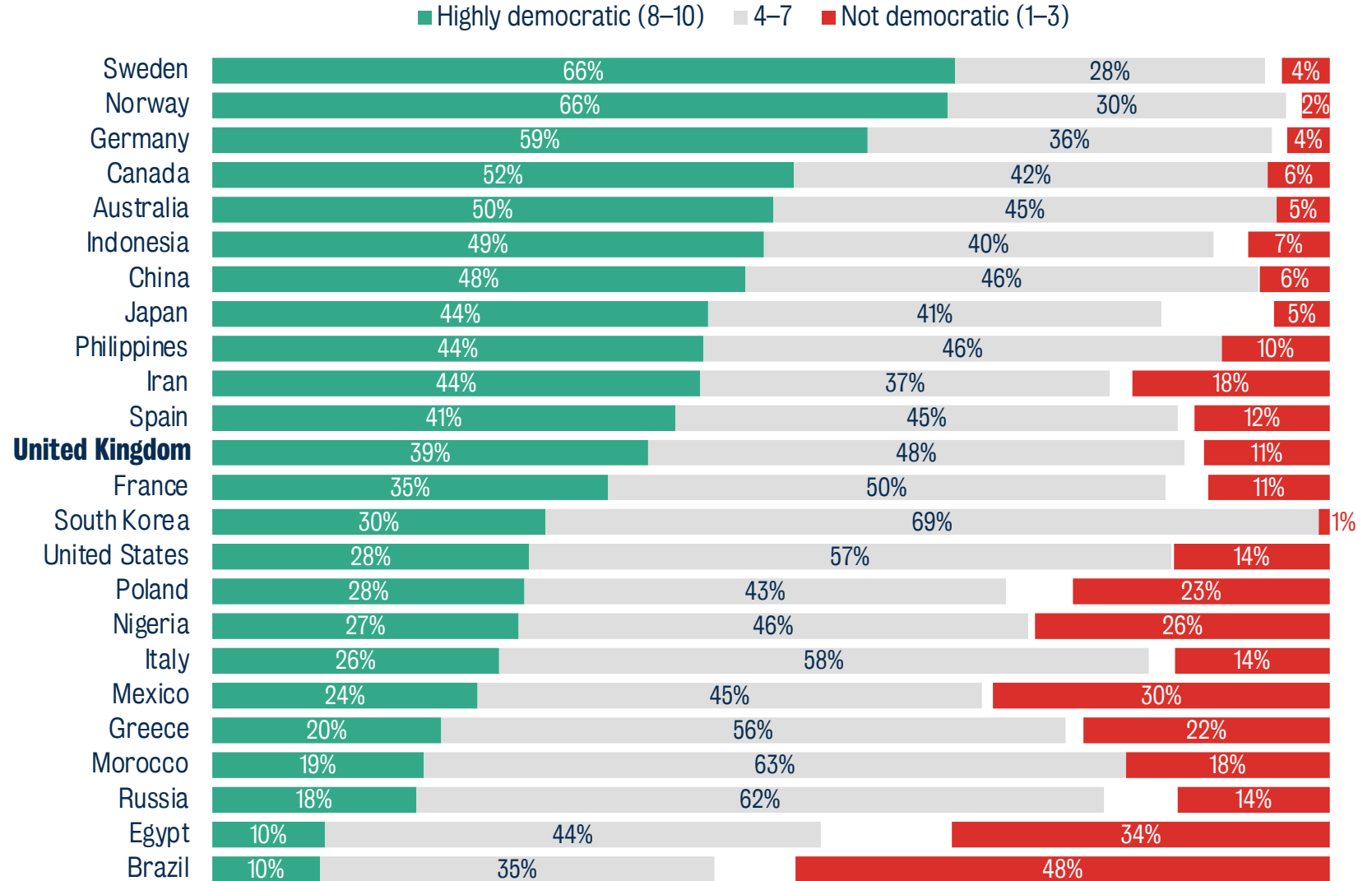
On a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 is “not satisfied at all” and 10 is “completely satisfied”, how satisfied are you with how the political system is functioning in your country these days?



The UK ranks only mid-table for perceptions of how democratically it is governed in practice

39% of people in the UK indicate they believe the country is governed in a highly democratic way – similar to the share of the public who say the same in France (35%) and Spain (41%), but far below other western nations such as Australia (50%), Canada (52%), Germany (59%), Norway (66%) and Sweden (66%).

And how democratically is this country being governed today? Again, using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means that it is “not at all democratic” and 10 means that it is “completely democratic”, what position would you choose?



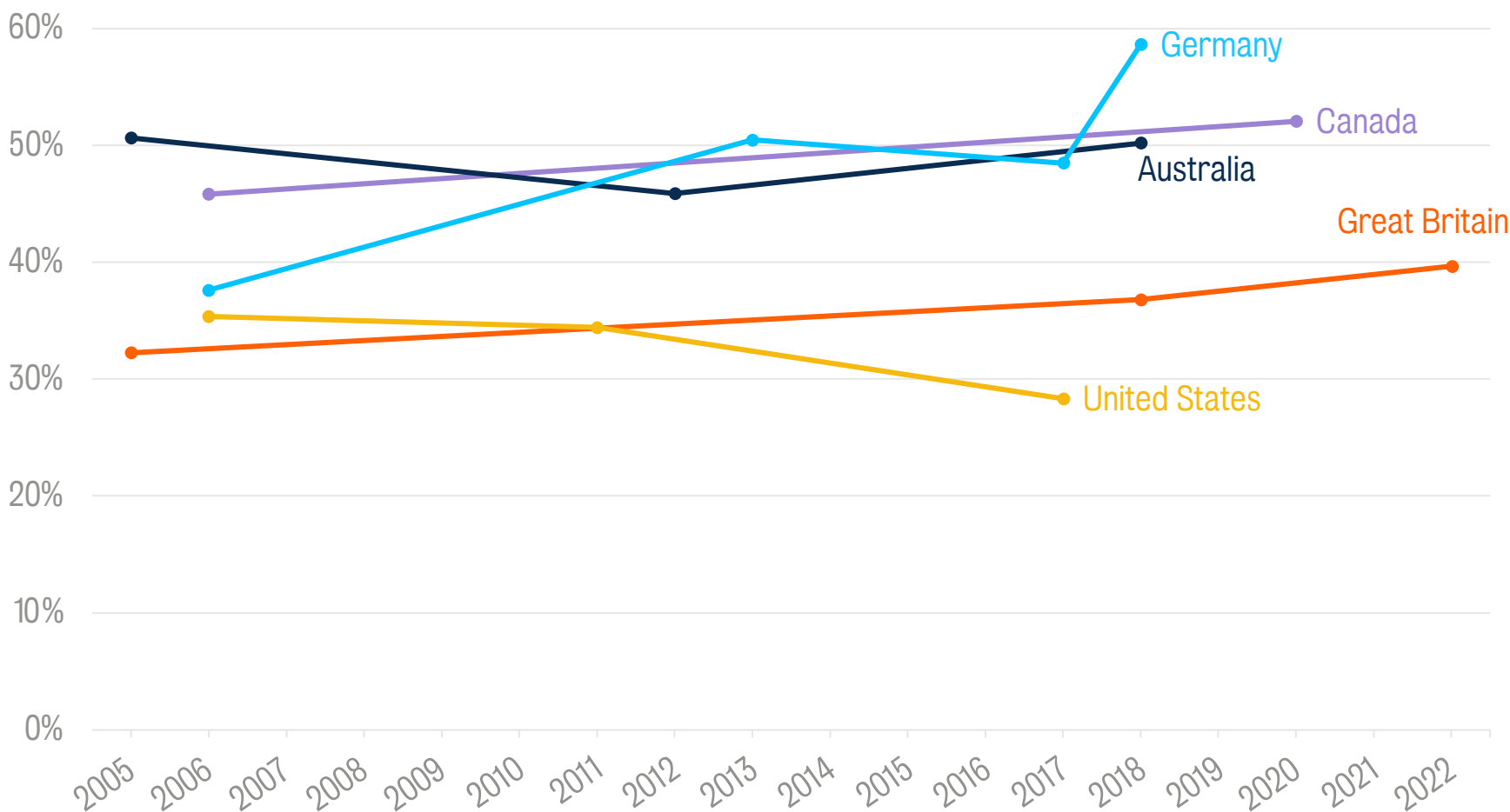
UK base: 3,056 people in the UK aged 18+, surveyed 1 Mar–9 Sept 2022. Other countries all surveyed in wave 7 of WVS at various points between 2017 and 2022. See [WVSA website](#) for sample information

But there has been a slight increase in perceptions that Britain is highly democratic – in contrast to the US

40% of Britons say their country is governed in a highly democratic way – up from 32% in 2005 – although this is still lower than other higher-income nations.

The US, by contrast, has seen a decline in the proportion who feel their country is strongly democratic, falling from 35% in 2006 to 28% in 2017.

And how democratically is this country being governed today? Again, using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means that it is “not at all democratic” and 10 means that it is “completely democratic”, what position would you choose? (% who say highly democratic [8–10])

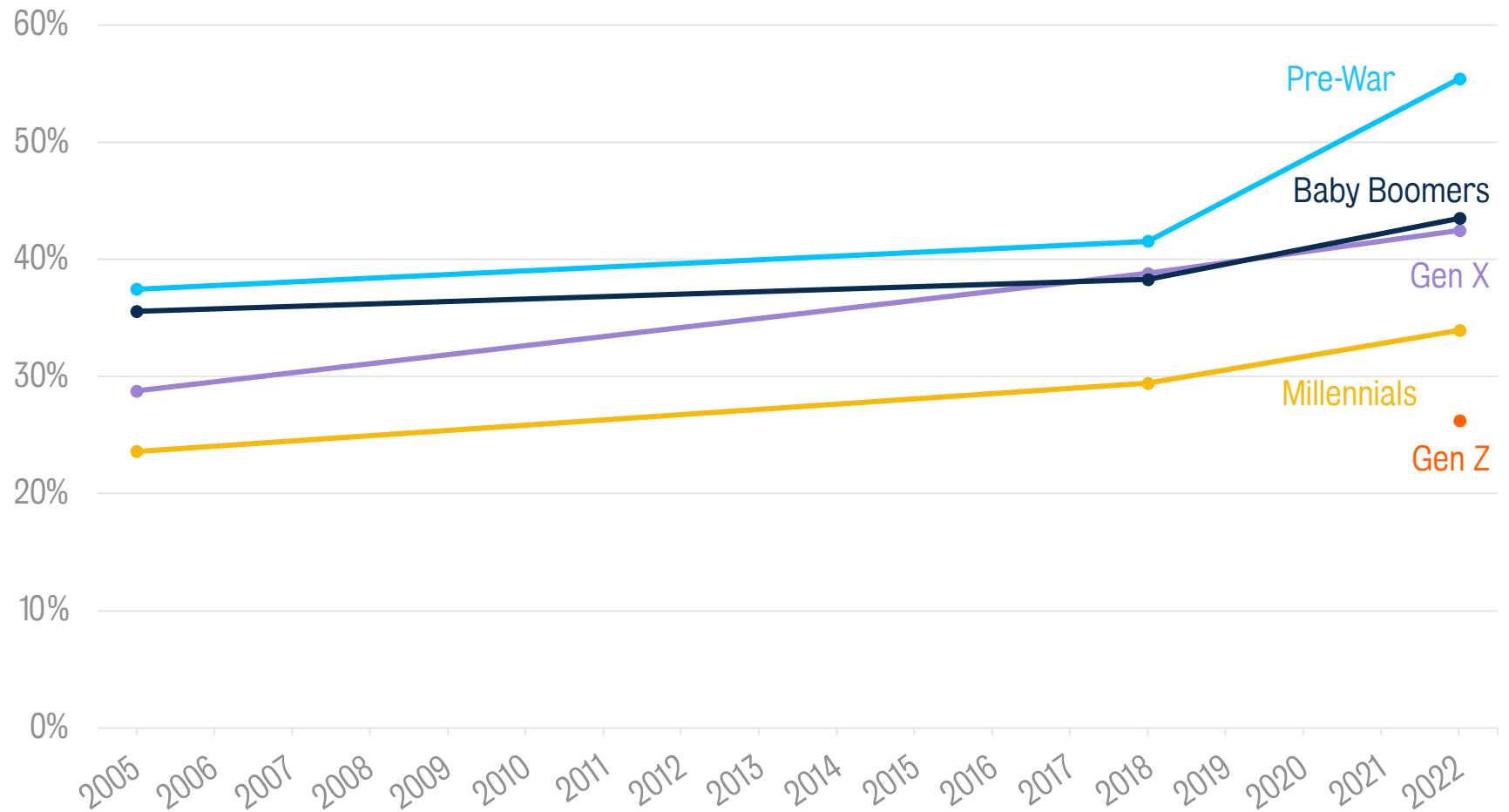


The youngest generation is now half as likely as the oldest to see Britain as a highly democratic nation

In 2018, 42% of the Pre-War generation said that Britain was a highly democratic nation. This has since risen to 55% in 2022 – more than double the proportion of Gen Z (26%) who feel the same.

The belief that Britain is governed democratically has also grown among Gen X and Millennials, although today there is still an eight-percentage-point gap in views between the two, with Millennials less likely to feel this way.

And how democratically is this country being governed today? Again, using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means that it is “not at all democratic” and 10 means that it is “completely democratic”, what position would you choose? (% who say highly democratic [8–10] by generation in Britain)

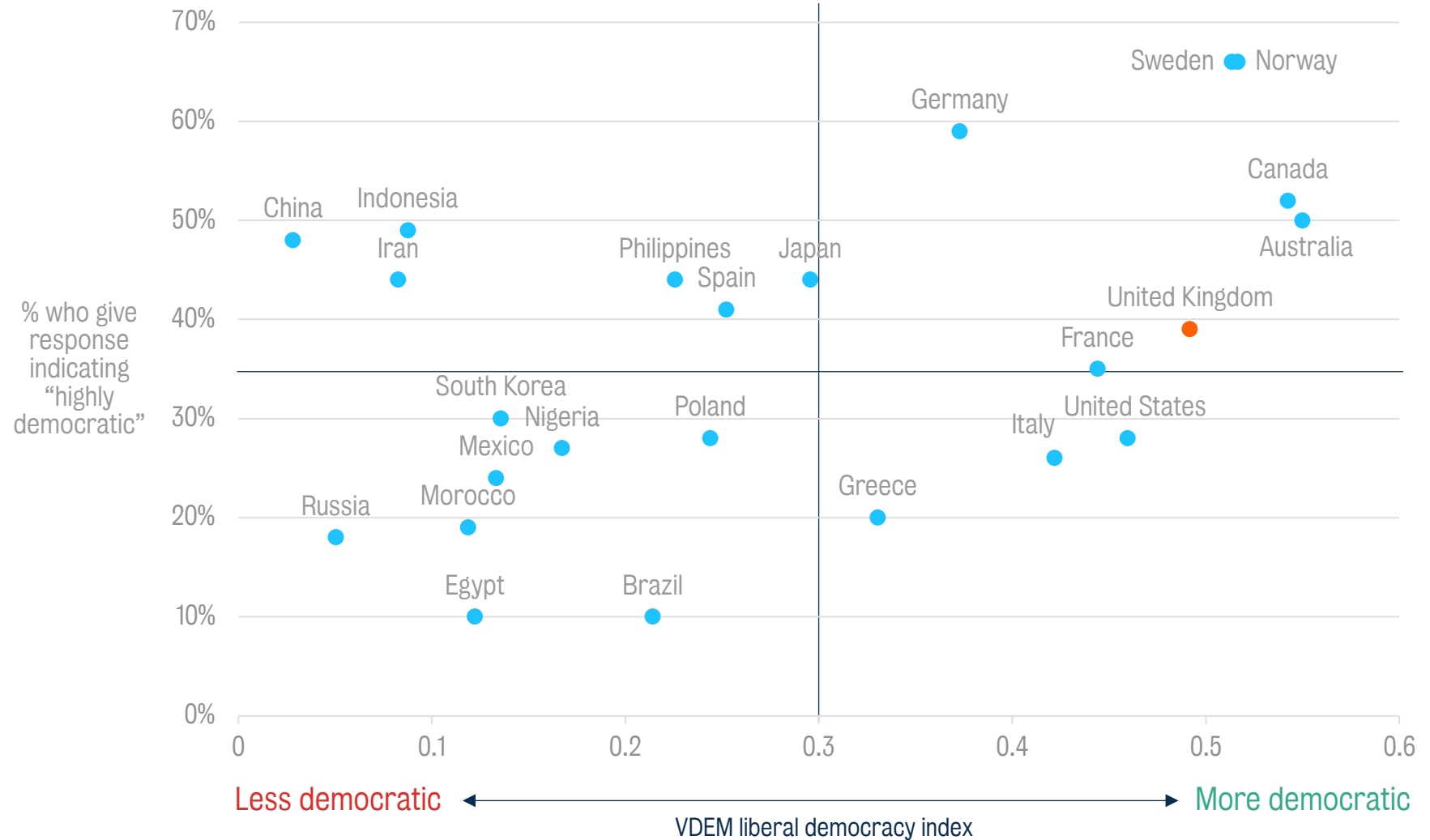


There is not always a clear link between how democratic a country is and how democratic it is perceived to be

Using the VDEM liberal democracy index – which combines information on voting rights, the freedom and fairness of elections, freedoms of association and expression, civil liberties, and executive constraints – it is possible to compare how democratic a country is in reality (at least by western liberal standards) with how democratic it is seen to be by its population.

The findings reveal there is not always a clear relationship between the two. China and Indonesia, for example, rank highly for perceptions of how democratic they are, despite scoring badly on measures of how democratic they are in practice. The reverse is true of the UK, France, Italy and the US, where perceptions are worse even though these nations score much better on the democracy index.

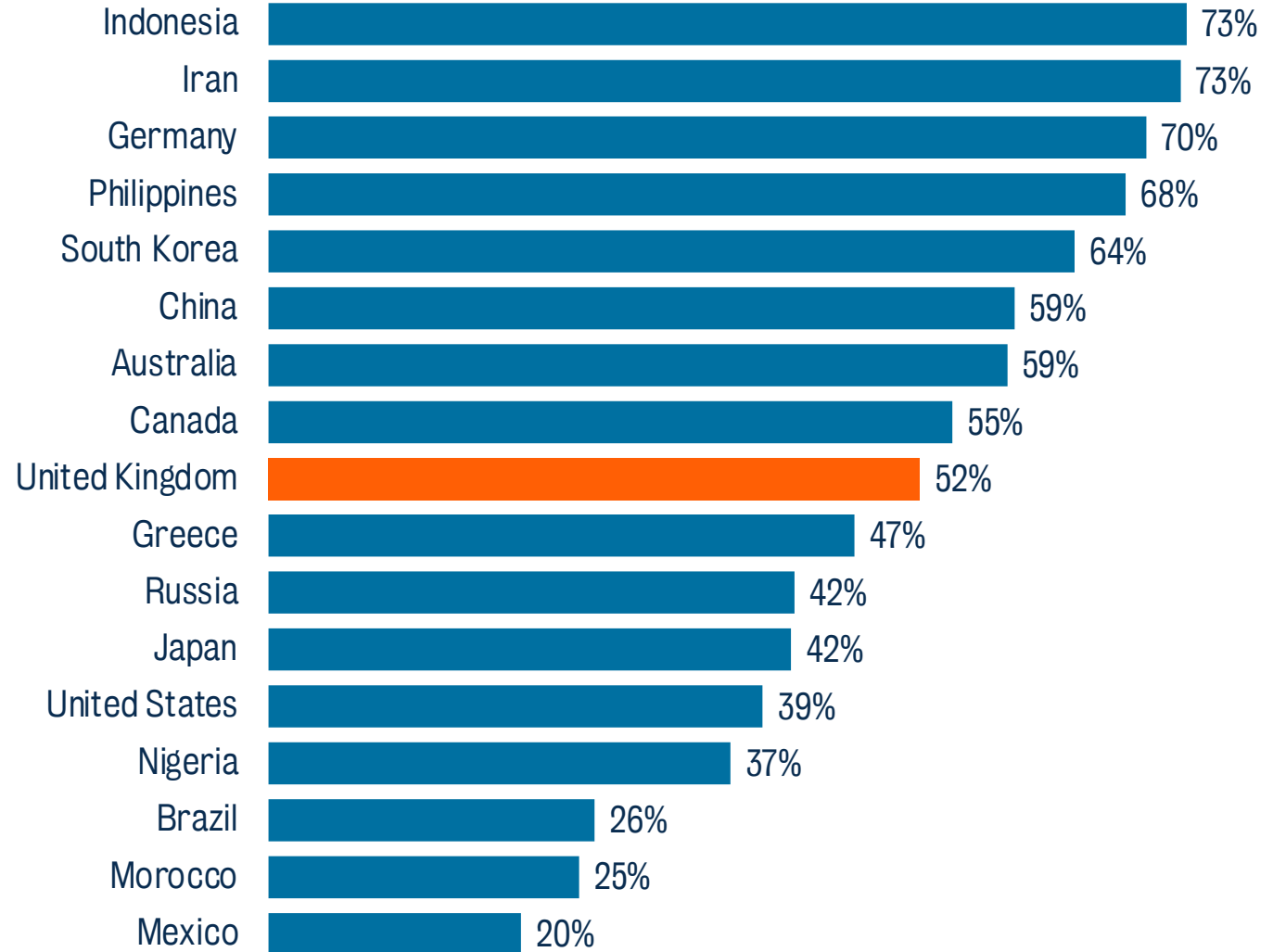
And how democratically is this country being governed today? Again, using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means that it is “not at all democratic” and 10 means that it is “completely democratic”, what position would you choose?



Only half of the UK public say they have a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in elections...

52% of people in the UK say they have confidence in elections, putting the country above the US (39%) but below some other higher-income democratic nations such as Germany (70%), South Korea (64%) and Australia (59%).

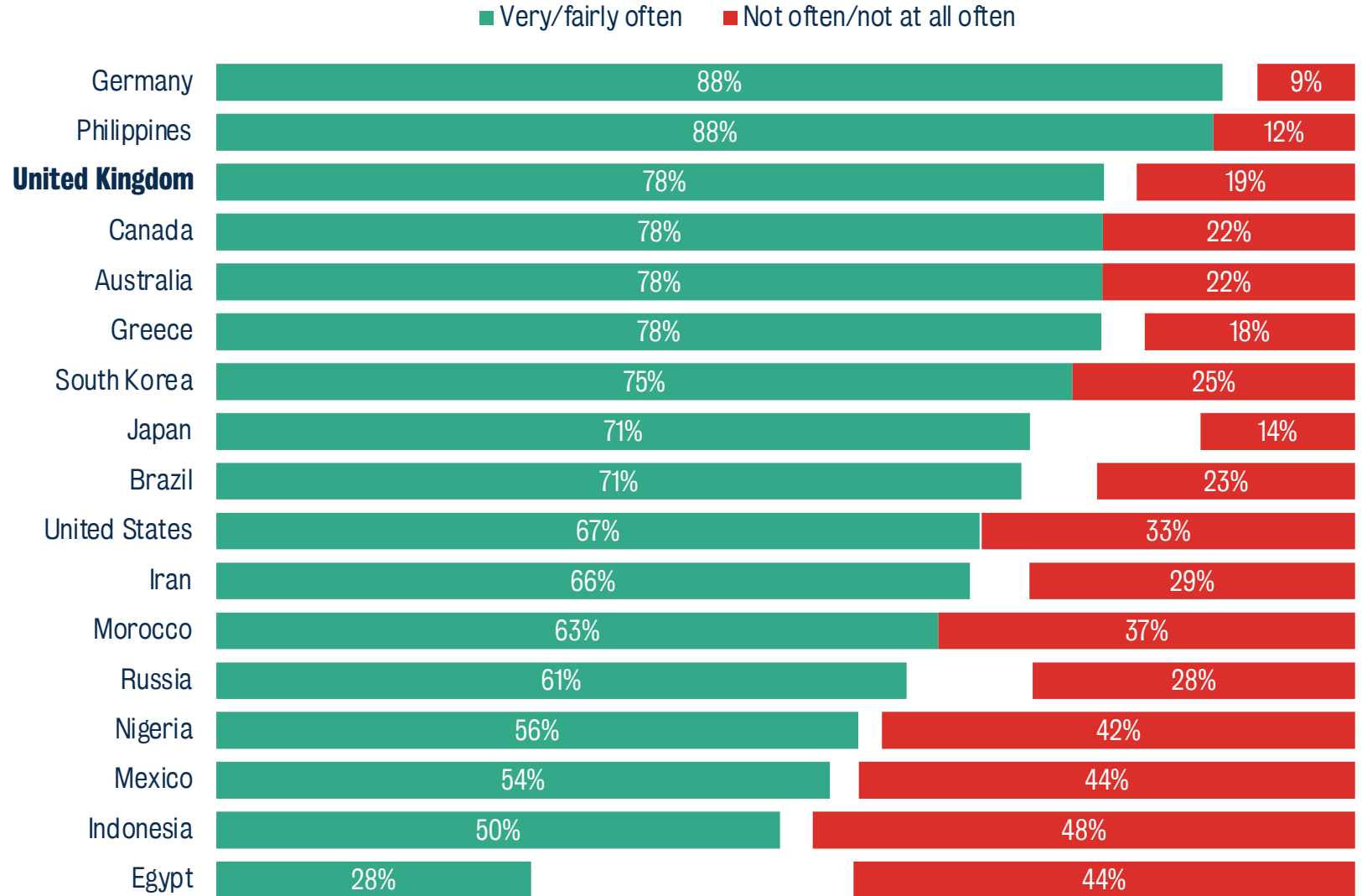
Below is a list of organisations. For each one, please indicate how much confidence you have in them.
Elections (% who say a great deal/quite a lot)



...although the UK is among the most likely to think voters are offered a genuine choice in elections

Among higher-income nations, the UK (78%) is second only to Germany (88%) when it comes to the share of the public who feel that voters are offered a genuine choice in elections – although Canada, Australia and Greece, are equally likely as the UK to feel this way.

In your view, how often do the following things occur in this country's elections? **Voters are offered a genuine choice in the elections**



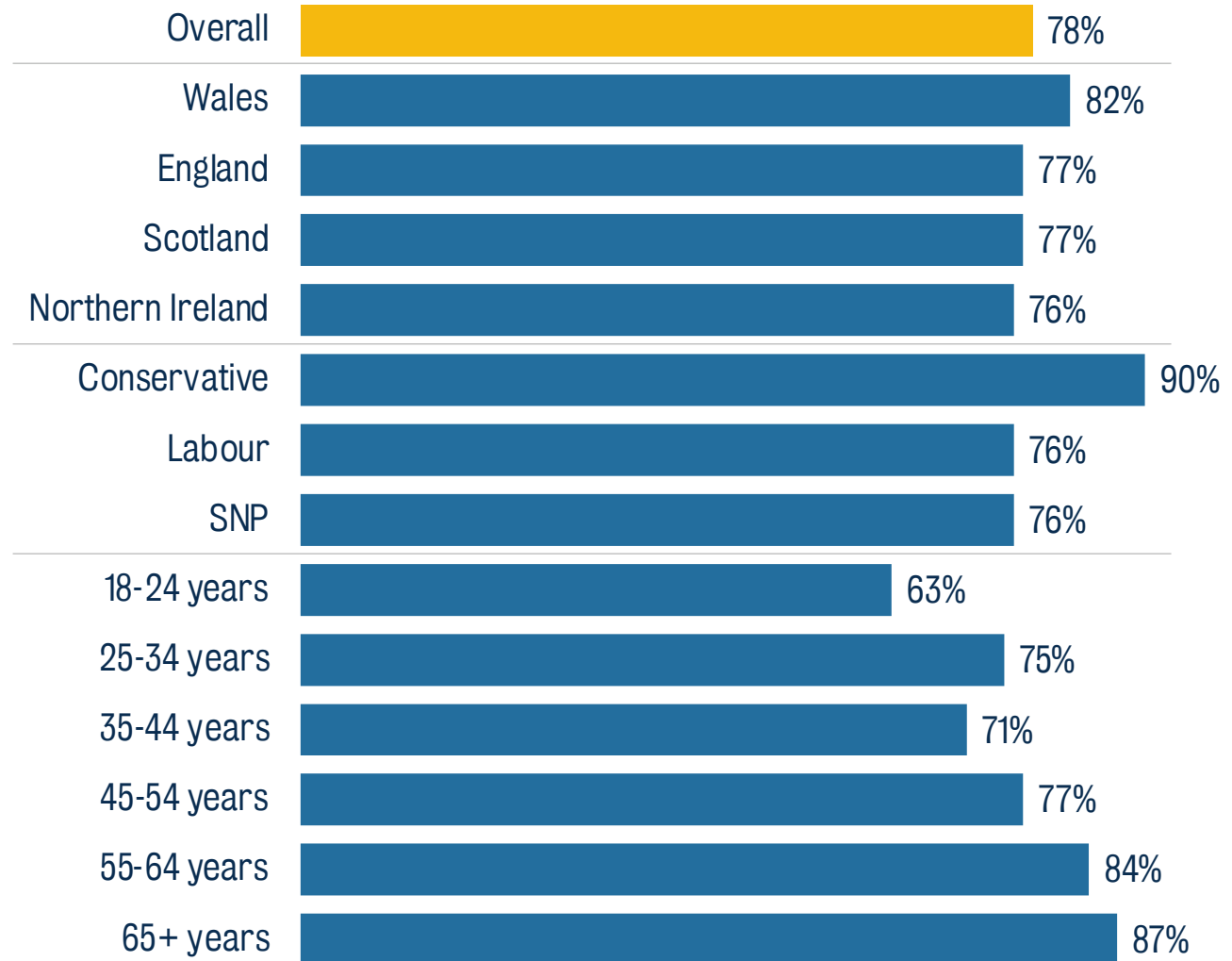
And there is virtually no difference in views across the four nations that make up the UK

Despite tensions over devolution and independence, there is little difference in views across the UK on whether voters are given a genuine choice in elections, with people in Wales (82%), England (77%), Scotland (77%) and Northern Ireland (76%) roughly equally likely to feel that they often have such a choice.

And while those who say they intend to Conservative at the next general election (90%) are particularly likely to feel this way, there is no difference between Labour (76%) and SNP voters (76%).

Meanwhile, the belief that voters are given a real choice tends to become more common with age, with those 65 and above (87%) far more likely than those aged 18 to 24 (63%) to hold this view.

In your view, how often do the following things occur in this country's elections? **Voters are offered a genuine choice in the elections** (% who say very/fairly often in the UK)



3. Alternatives to democracy

There is very little support in the UK for more authoritarian alternatives to democracy – although the share of the public who say they'd like experts, rather than government, making decisions has risen to its highest level in over 20 years

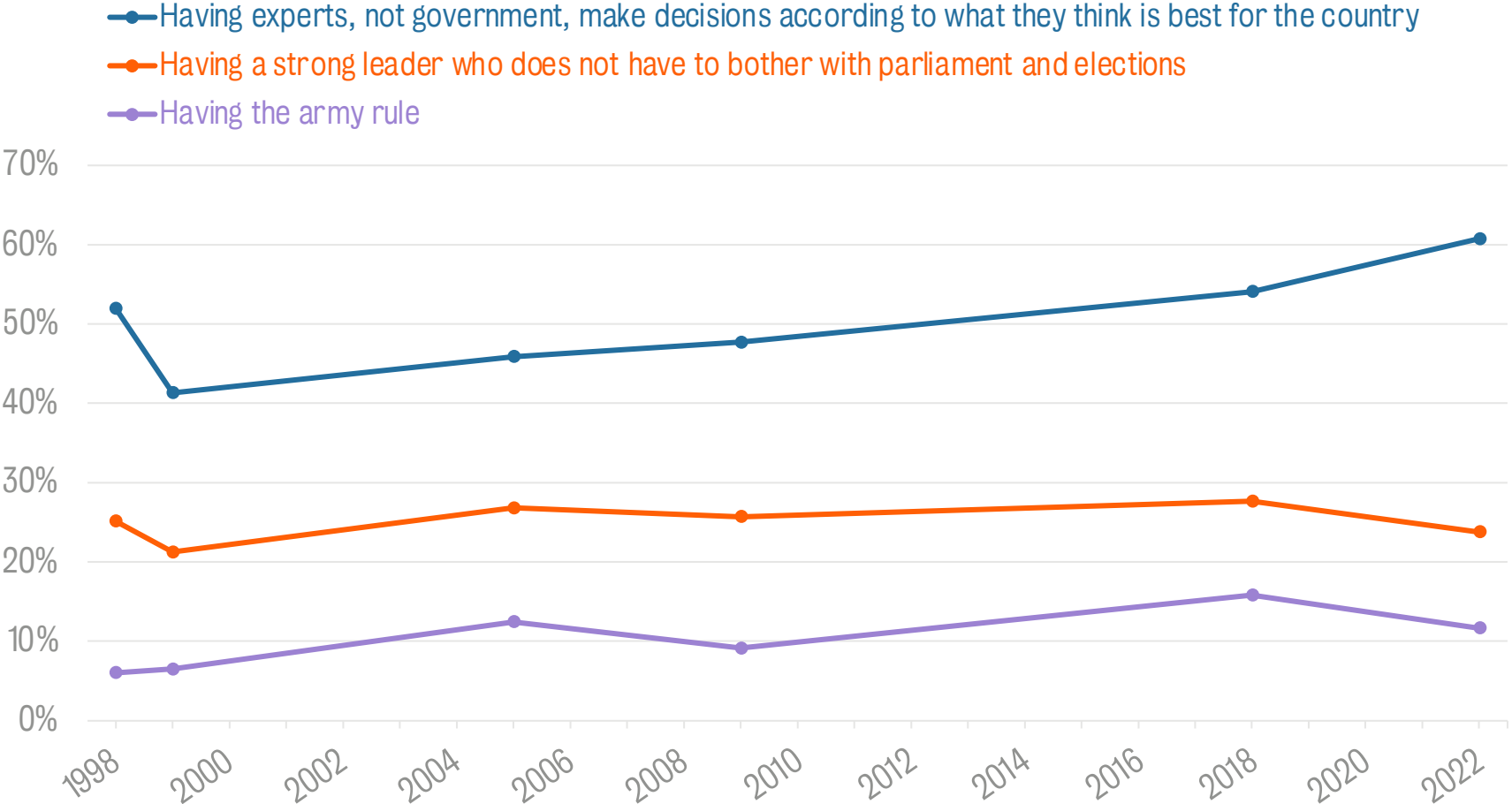


Support for more authoritarian forms of government remains low in Britain – but support for the idea of experts making political decisions is at a record high

12% of the British public say army rule is a good idea – a figure that has changed little over the past two decades. And a quarter (24%) of Britons today approve of having a strong leader who doesn't have to bother with parliament and elections, with views remaining stable since 1998.

But there has been a bigger shift in opinion on whether experts, rather than government, should make decisions: 61% now think this is a good way of governing – a view that has gradually become more widespread since the low point of 1999, when 41% felt this way.

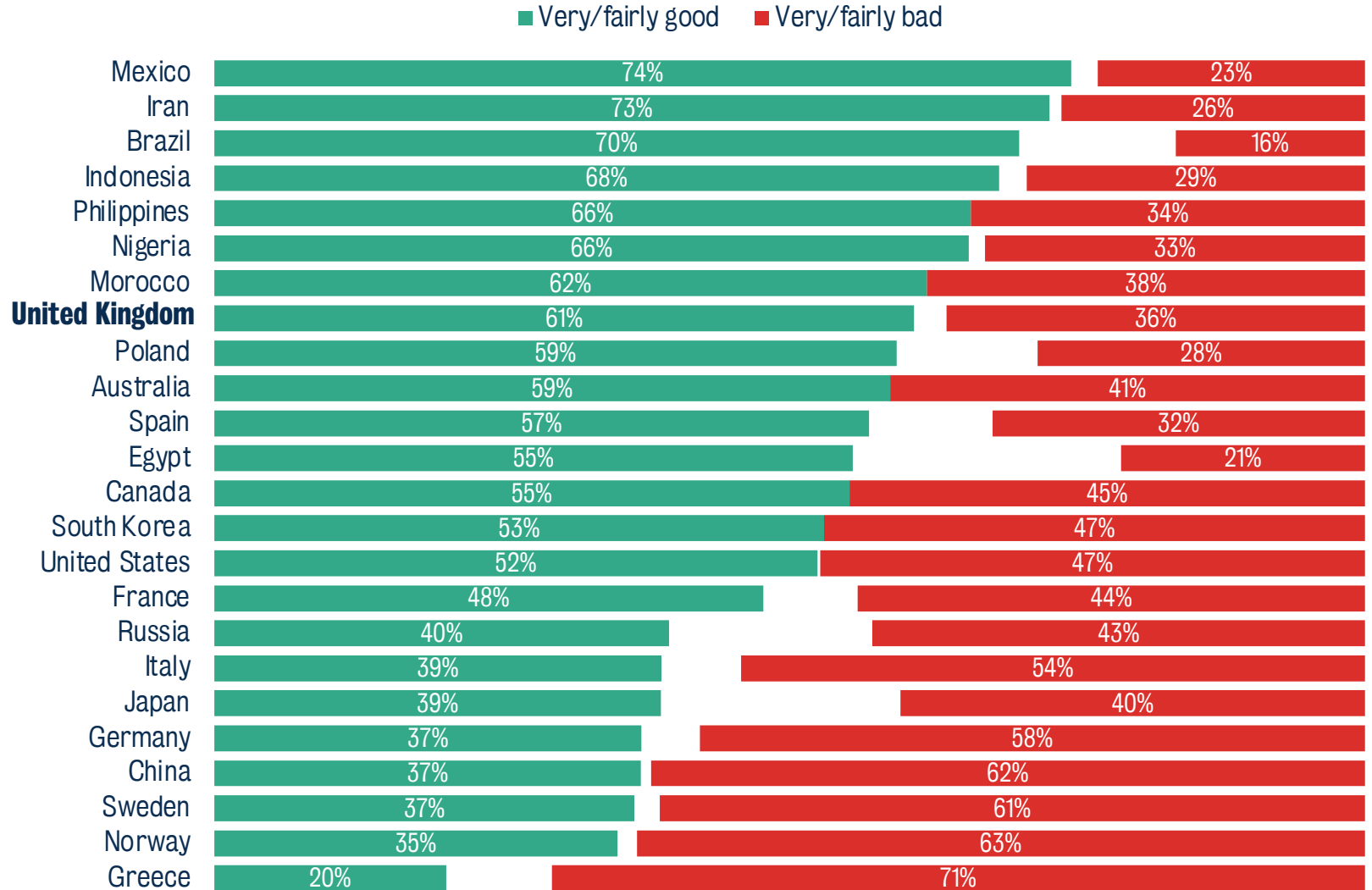
I'm going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing this country. For each one, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad way of governing this country? (% who say very/fairly good in Britain)



The UK is more likely than many other peer nations to say experts should replace government

The UK (61%) is more likely than many peer nations, including the US (52%), Italy (39%) and Germany (37%), to think that having experts, not government, make decisions is a good way of governing – although Spain (57%) and Australia (59%) are closer to UK levels of approval for this idea.

Please indicate what you think about this as a way of governing this country*: **Having experts, not government, make decisions according to what they think is best for the country**



*See full wording of question stem on page 4

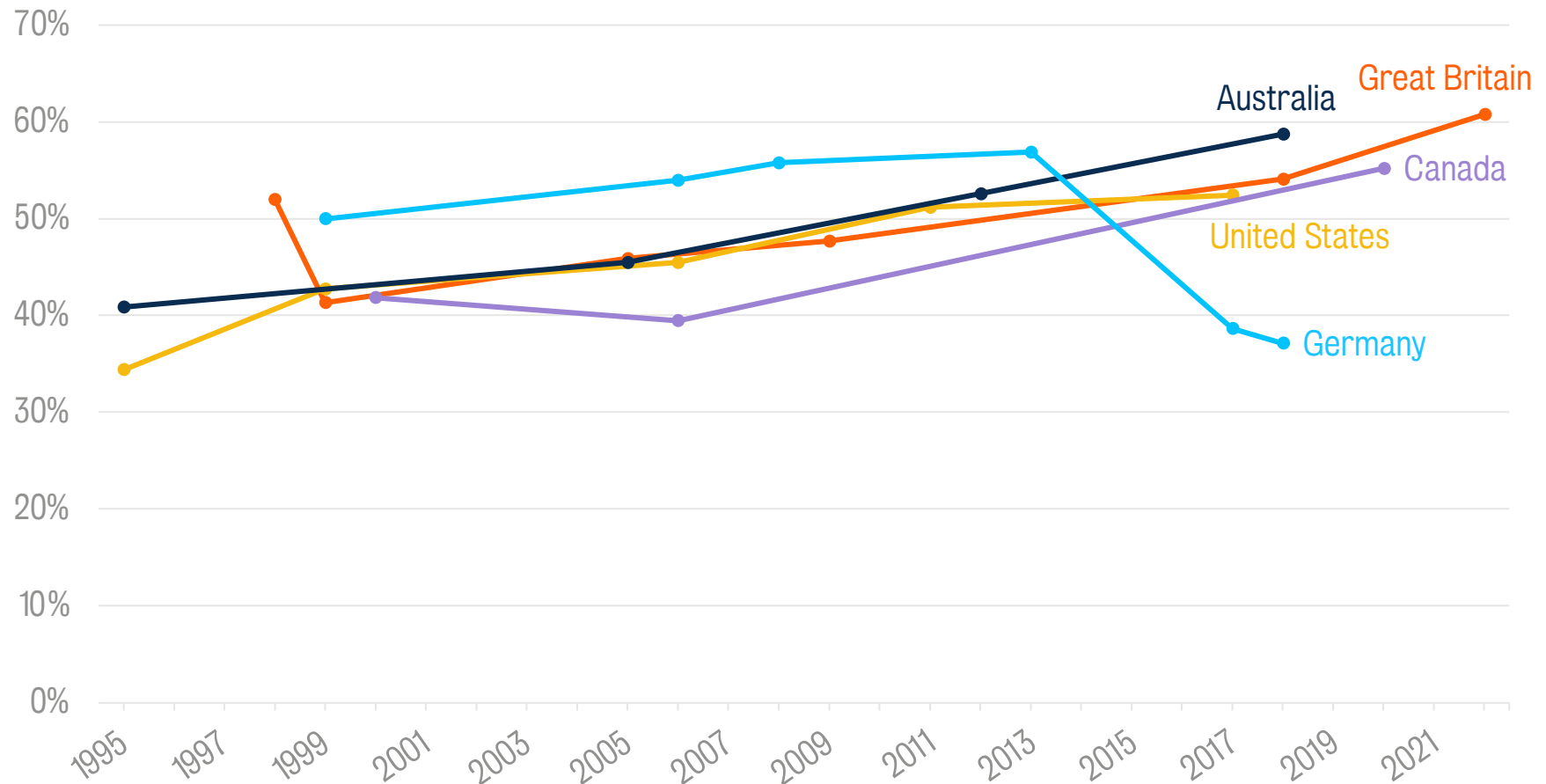
UK base: 3,056 people in the UK aged 18+, surveyed 1 Mar–9 Sept 2022. Other countries all surveyed in wave 7 of WVS at various points between 2017 and 2022. See [WVSA website](#) for sample information

But other countries have followed a similar trajectory of growing support for expert rule – with Germany a notable exception

The idea of experts, rather than government, making decisions has grown in popularity across other western nations. In the US, for example, the share of the public saying this is a good way of governing rose from 34% in 1995 to 52% in 2017.

But Germany stands out as going in the opposite direction. In 2013, 57% thought expert rule is a good idea – a figure that had fallen to 37% by 2018.

I'm going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing this country. For each one, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad way of governing this country? **Having experts, not government, make decisions according to what they think is best for the country** (% who say very/fairly good)

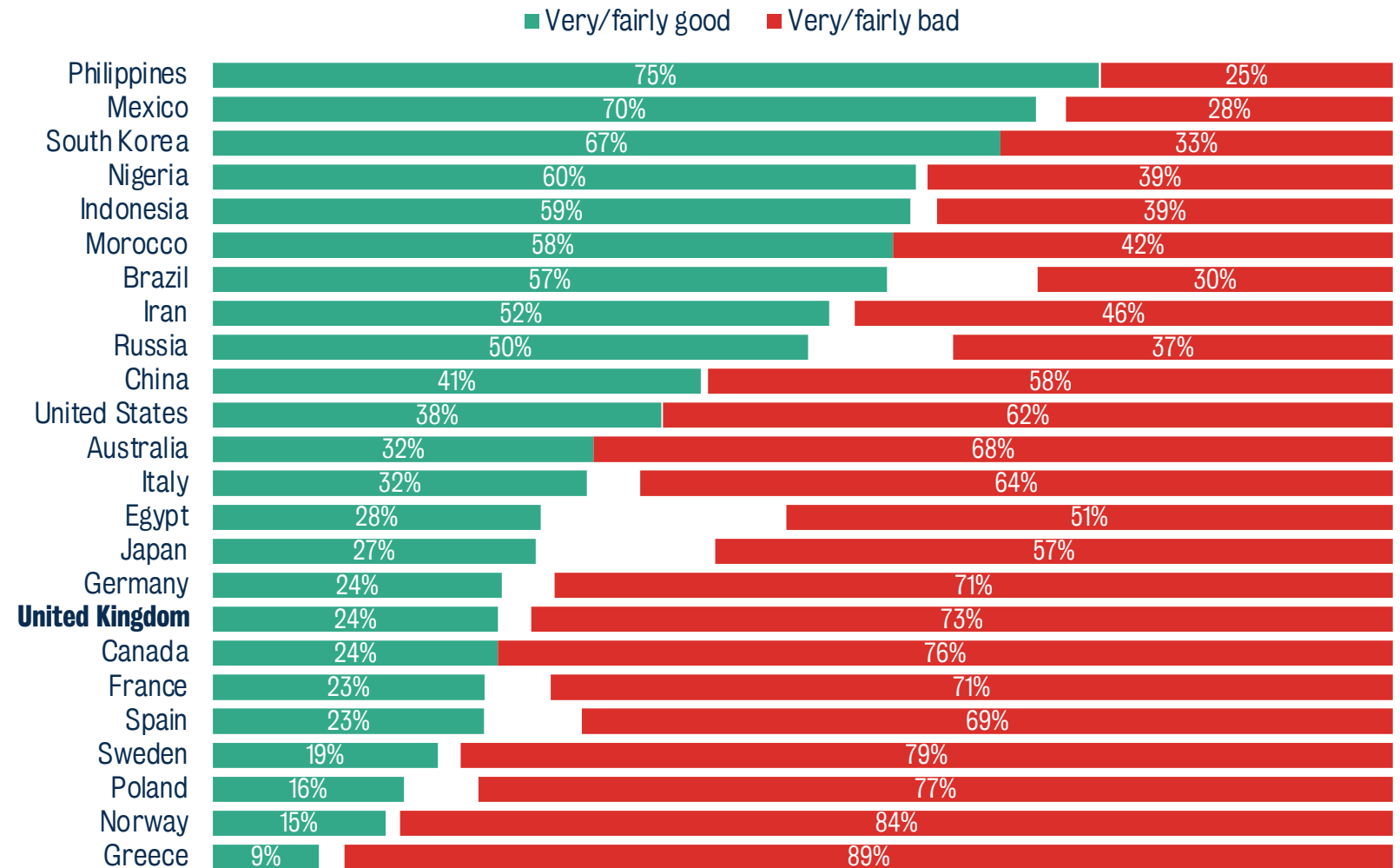


The UK is among the least likely to think having a strong leader who disregards parliament and elections is a good way to govern

The UK is similar to most other higher-income democratic nations in having relatively low levels of approval for the idea of a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament/congress and elections. While one in four (24%) in the UK think this is a good way of governing, three in four (73%) think it is bad – in line with Canada, Germany, France and others.

The US, however, has notably higher levels of support, with 38% saying a strong leader who is not bound by congress and elections is a good way of governing.

Please indicate what you think about this as a way of governing this country*: **Having a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament/congress and elections**



*See full wording of question stem on page 4

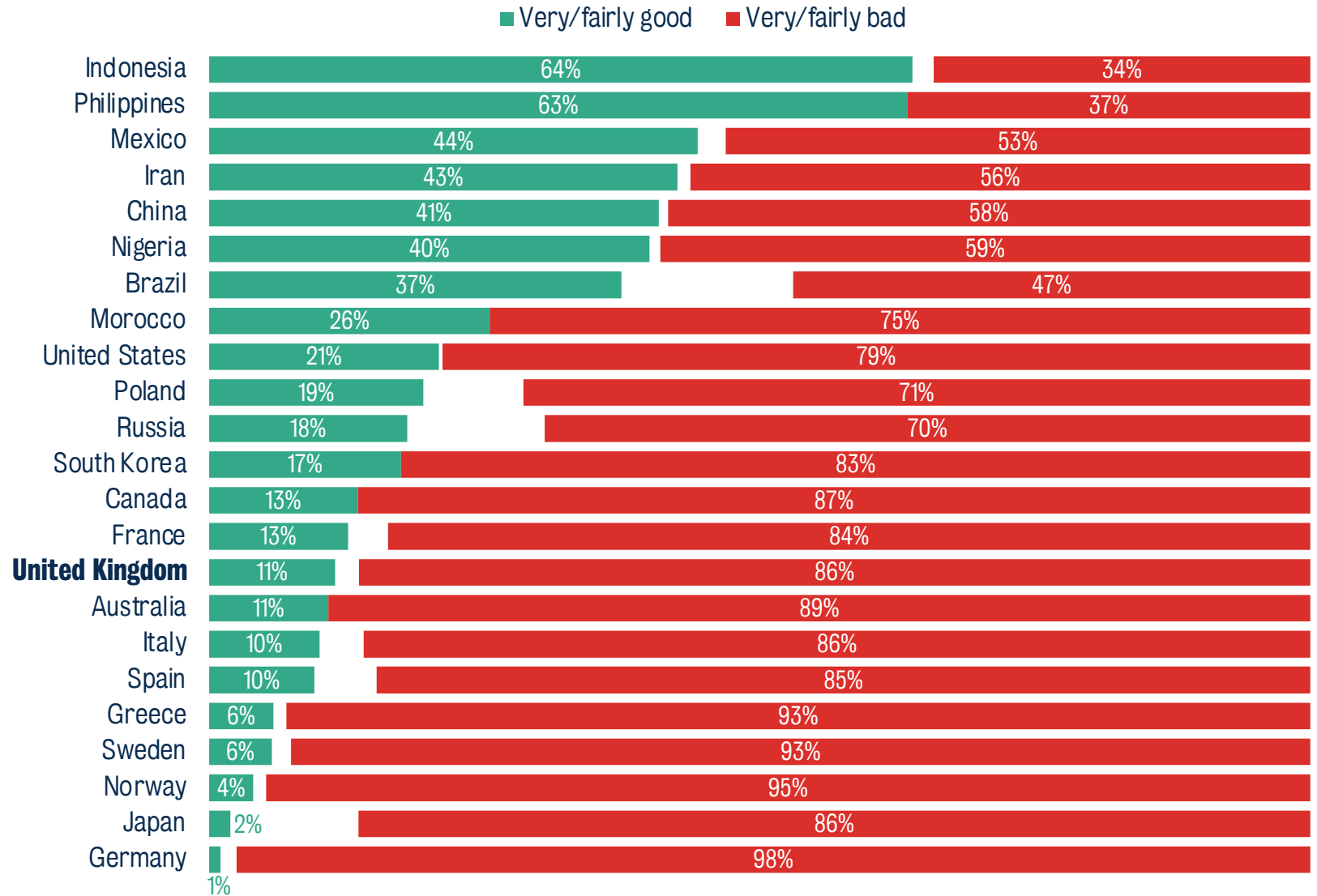
UK base: 3,056 people in the UK aged 18+, surveyed 1 Mar–9 Sept 2022. Other countries all surveyed in wave 7 of WVS at various points between 2017 and 2022. See [WVSA website](#) for sample information

The UK has among the lowest support for army rule

The UK (11%) is on a par with other western nations in having low levels of approval for army rule. The US, however, has notably higher support, with one in five (21%) people saying it is a good way of governing.

But it's the southeast Asian nations of Indonesia (64%) and the Philippines (63%) that are by far the most approving of army rule, while at the other end of the range hardly anyone in Germany (1%) or Japan (2%) supports this idea.

Please indicate what you think about this as a way of governing this country*: **Having the army rule**



*See full wording of question stem on page 2

UK base: 3,056 people in the UK aged 18+, surveyed 1 Mar–9 Sept 2022. Other countries all surveyed in wave 7 of WVS at various points between 2017 and 2022. See [WVSA website](#) for sample information

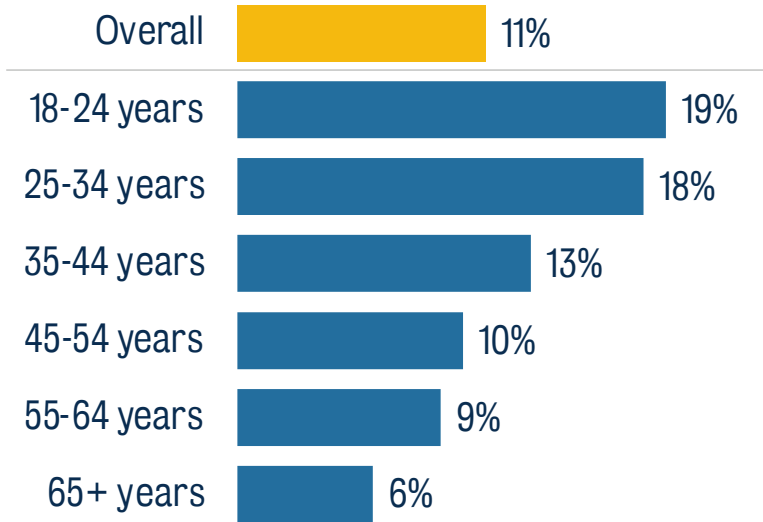
But army rule is nonetheless a more popular idea among young people in the UK

In the UK, the oldest age group surveyed – those 65 and above (6%) – are around three times as likely as the youngest (19%) to say that having the army rule is a good way of governing, with a steady gradient to views on this issue by age.

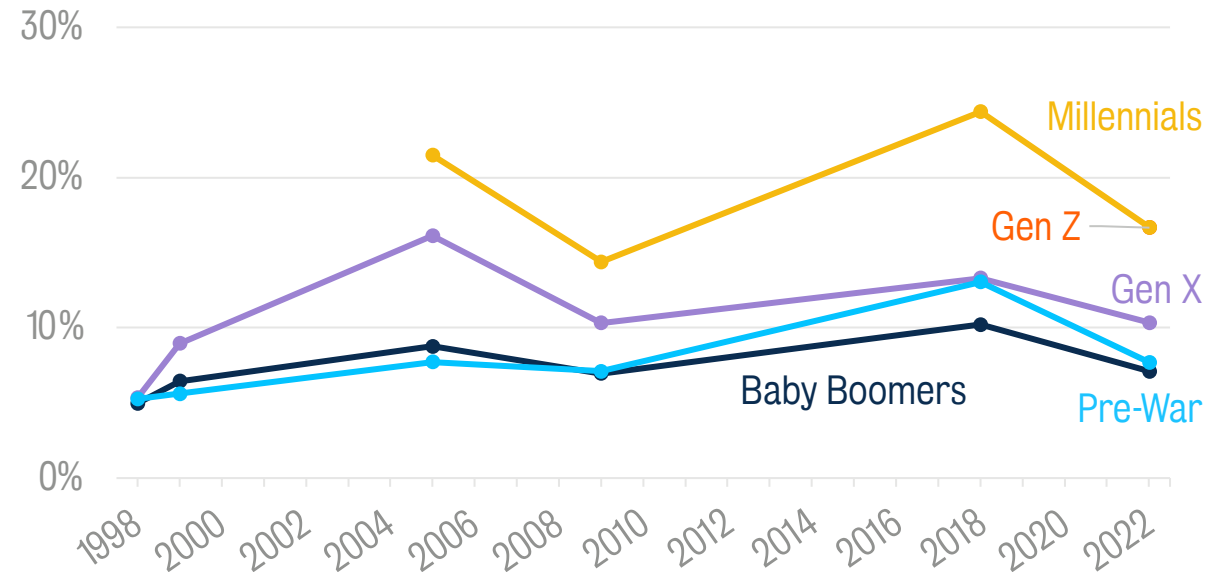
And this divide doesn't appear to be the result of a lifecycle effect, with views changing as people age: support for army rule among Millennials has not followed a clear pattern of declining as this cohort has got older, although the differences in views between generations should not be overstated, with relatively small gaps in overall percentage-point terms.

Please indicate what you think about this as a way of governing this country: **Having the army rule**

% who say very/fairly good in the UK



% who say very/fairly good by generation in Britain



More authoritarian approaches to governing have grown in popularity in the US

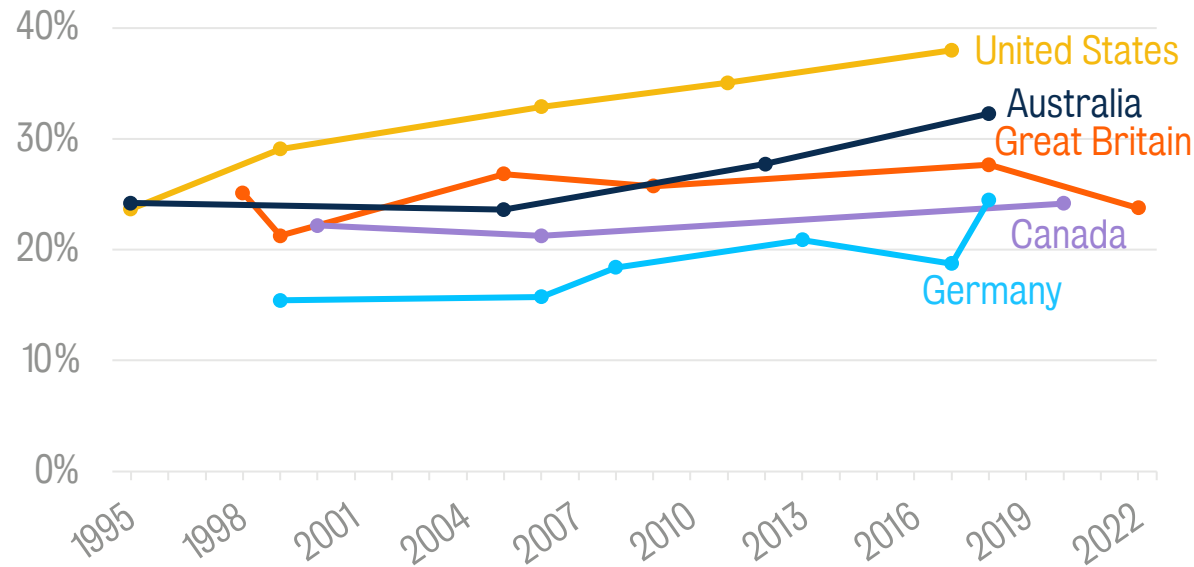
In 1995, 24% of the US public thought having a strong leader who does not have to bother with congress and elections is a good way of governing. By 2017, this had risen to 38%. Australia has also seen an increase in support for this approach, rising from 24% in 1995 32% in 2018.

Meanwhile, views on having the army rule have remained relatively stable among these western nations, but again, the US has seen a notable shift, with the share of the public thinking this is a good approach to governing rising from 6% in 1995 to 21% in 2017.

Please indicate what you think about this as a way of governing this country...

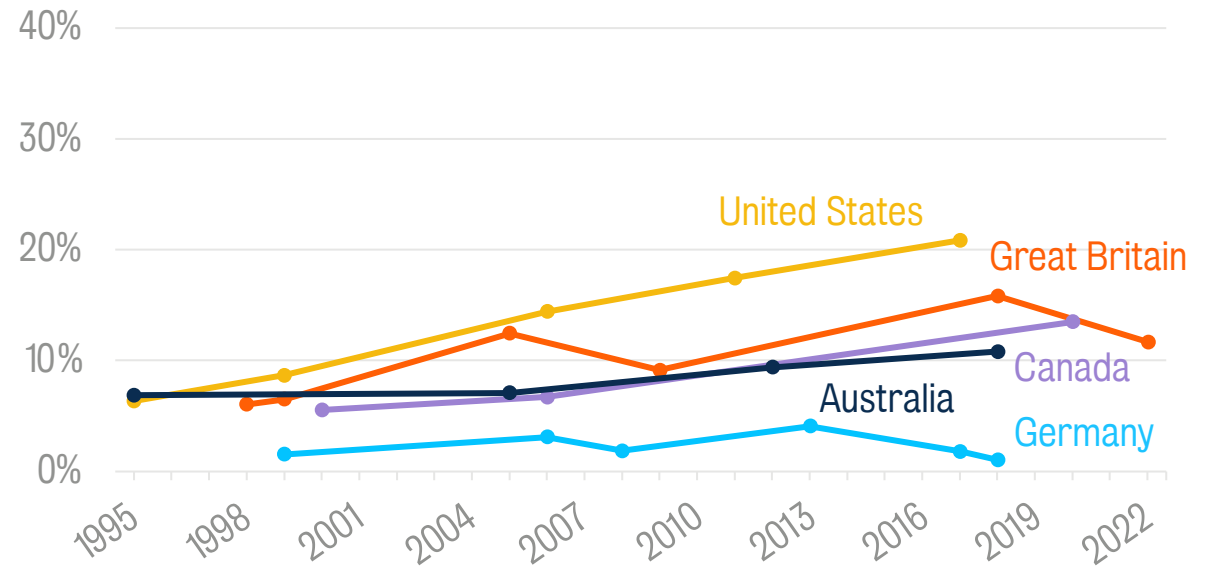
Having a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament/congress and elections

% who say very/fairly good



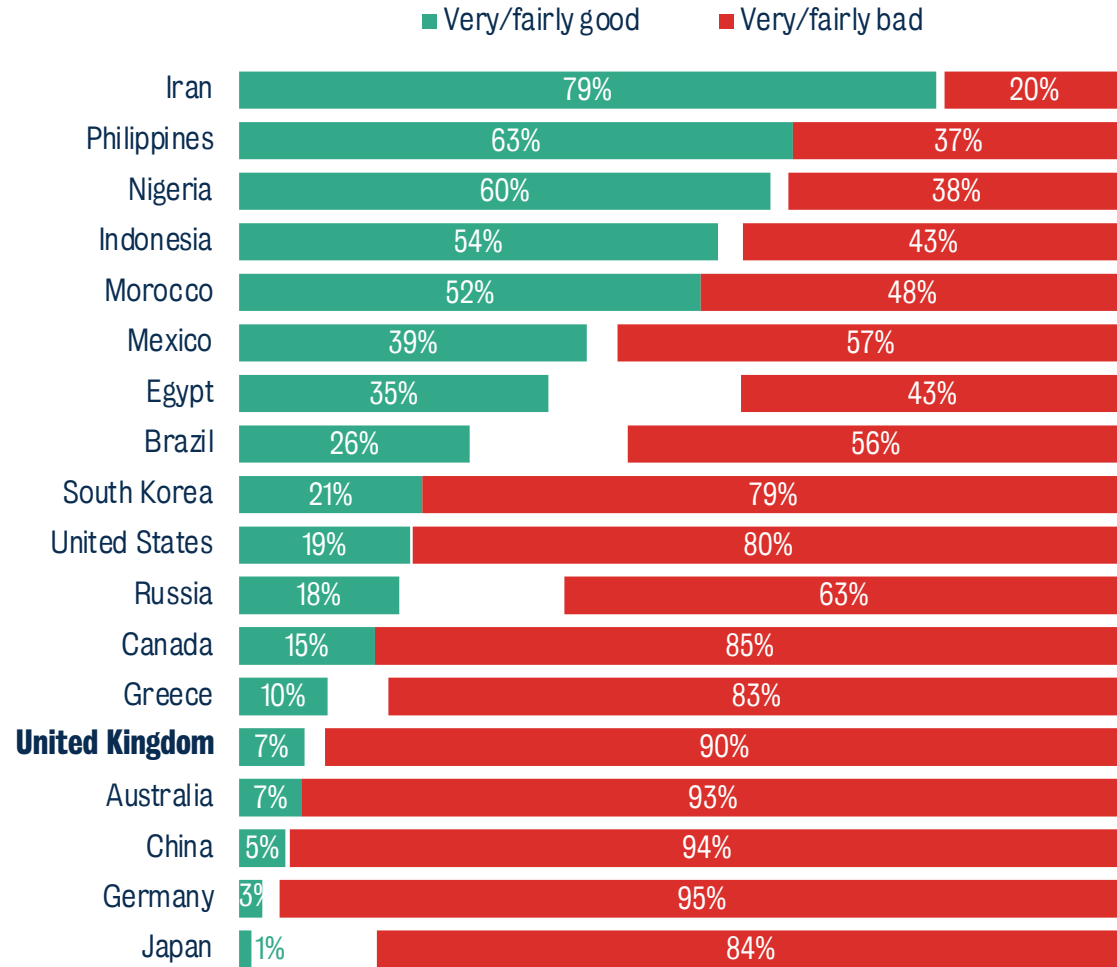
Having the army rule

% who say very/fairly good



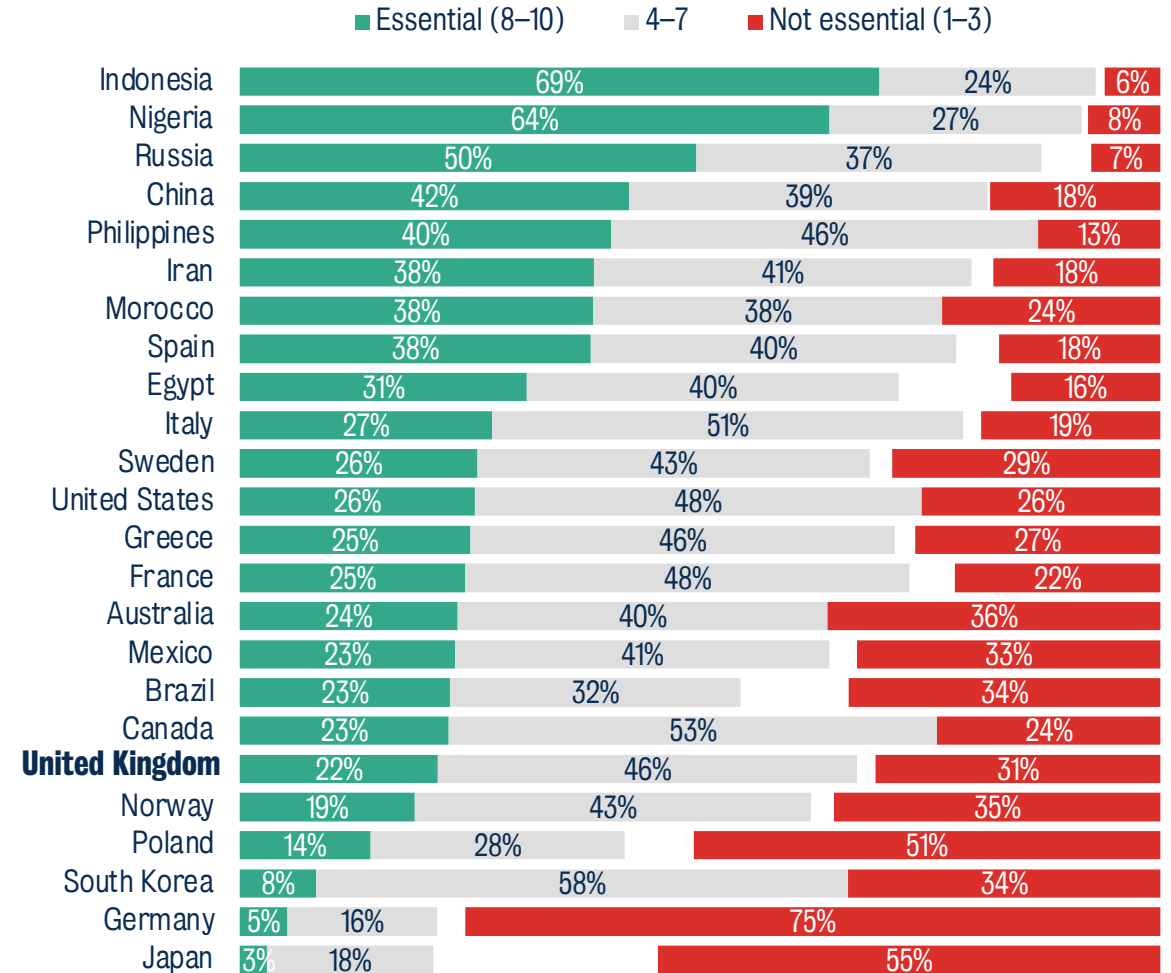
The UK ranks low for support for religious law or the view that obeying rulers is essential for democracy

Please indicate what you think about each as a way of governing this country*:
Having a system governed by religious law in which there are no political parties or elections



*See full wording of question stem on page 4

Many things are desirable, but not all of them are essential characteristics of democracy. For each of the following things, how essential do you think it is as a characteristic of democracy? **People obey their rulers**



UK base: 3,056 people in the UK aged 18+, surveyed 1 Mar–9 Sept 2022. Other countries all surveyed in wave 7 of WVS at various points between 2017 and 2022. See [WVSA website](#) for sample information

4. Political and societal change

Most of the UK public think society should be improved gradually, rather than through radical action

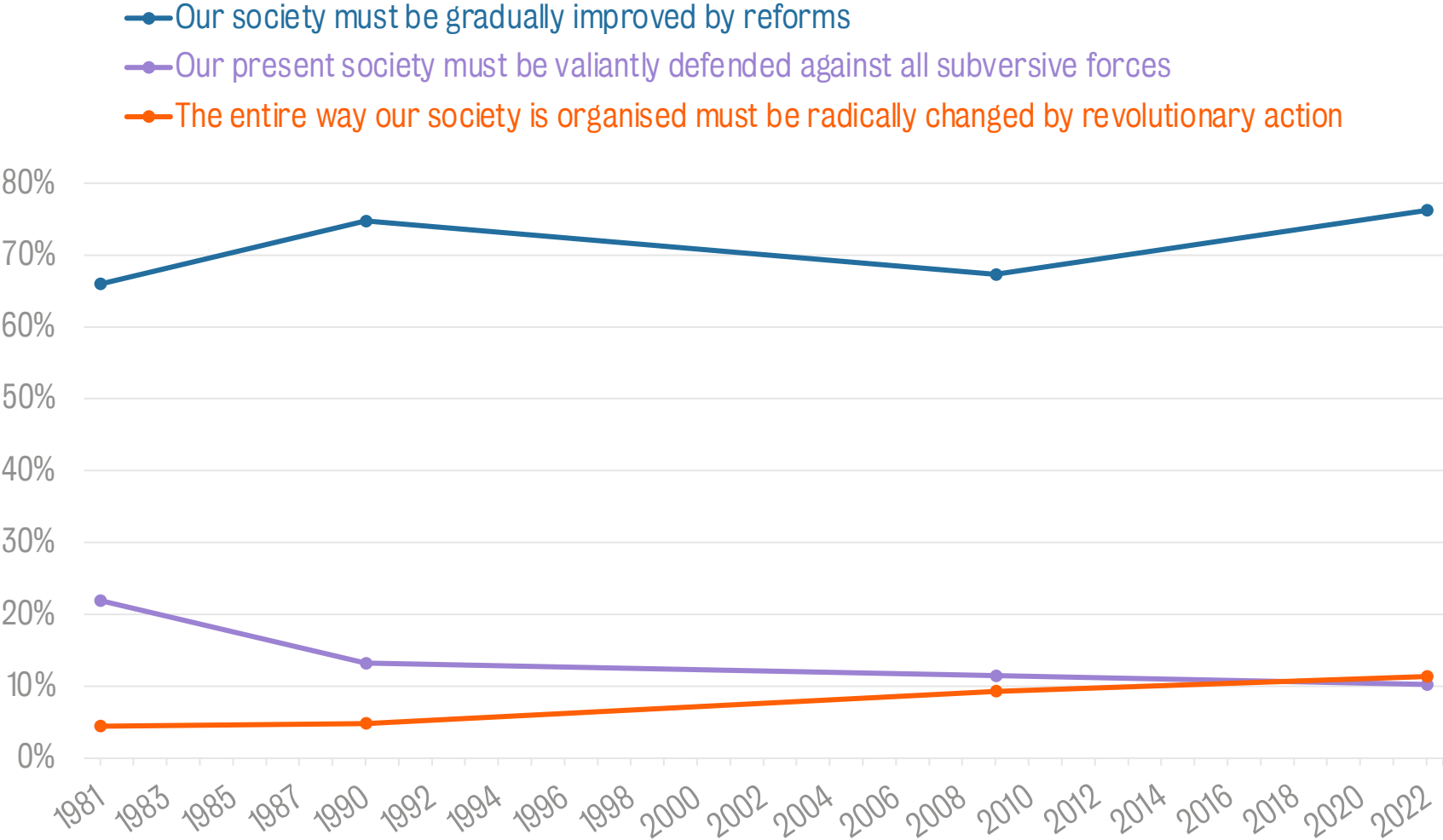


Most people in Britain want gradual change, not revolution – a view that has been consistent for decades

Views on how British society should be organised have changed little since the early 1980s, with the vast majority feeling that it should be gradually improved by reforms. In 2022, 76% held this view, which has been relatively consistent over the years.

Other forms of societal change remain minority preferences in Britain. 11% now think society must be changed by revolutionary action – up slightly from 4% in 1981. And over the same period, the share of the public who say society must be valiantly defended against subversive forces has declined from 22% to 10%.

Below are three basic kinds of attitudes concerning the society we live in. Please choose the one which best describes your own opinion? (% who select each option in Britain)

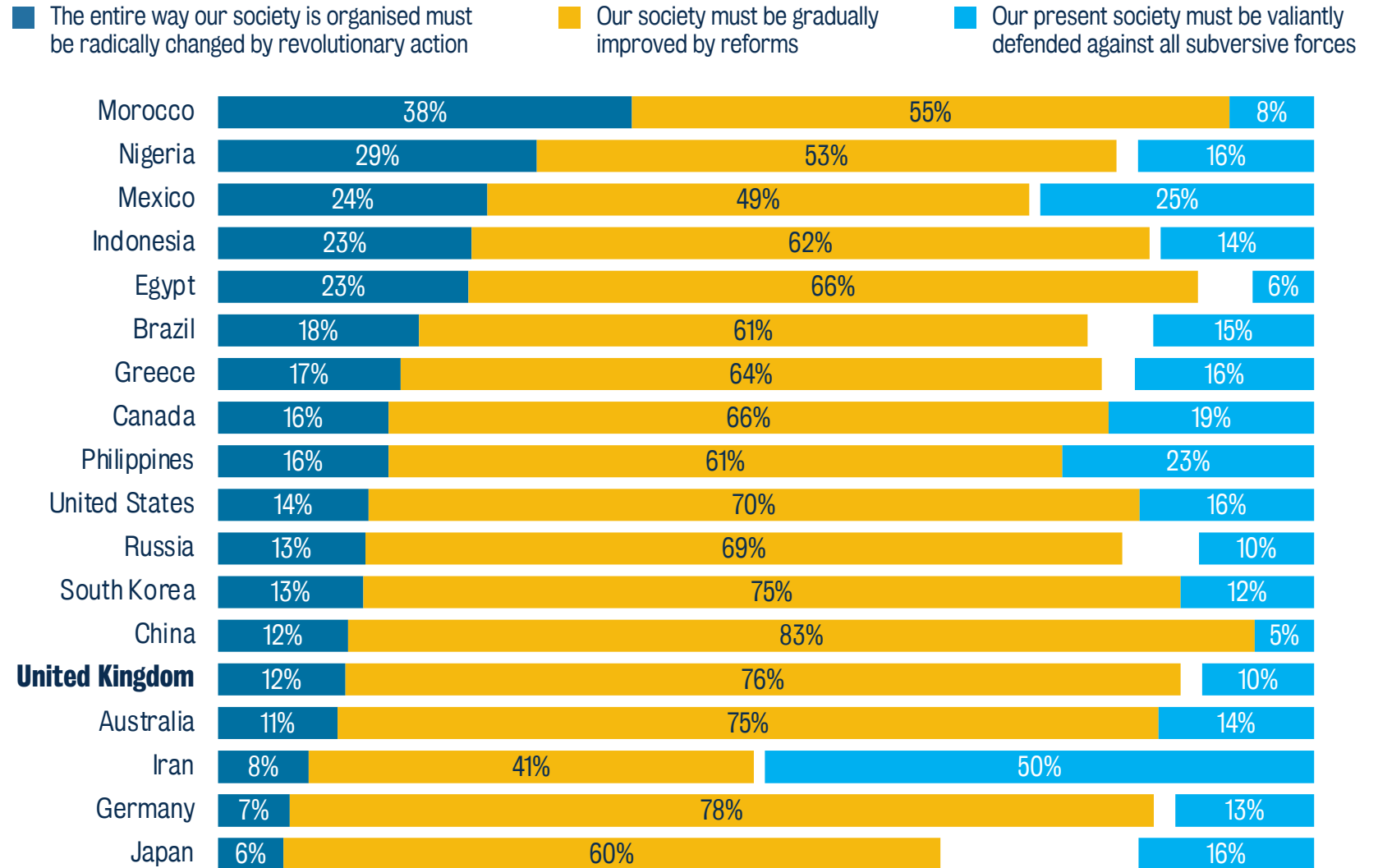


The UK is similar to other western nations when it comes to views on how society should be organised

With three-quarters (76%) of the public preferring a society that is improved through gradual reforms, views in the UK are in line with other higher-income countries such as Australia (75%), Germany (78%), the US (70%) and South Korea (75%), although this is still the most widespread view across all nations except Iran.

While other options remain fringe positions in most nations, there is some important variation – two five (38%) people in Morocco, for instance, favour radical change through revolutionary action, while one in five (19%) people in Canada say society must be valiantly defended against subversive forces.

Below are three basic kinds of attitudes concerning the society we live in. Please choose the one which best describes your own opinion.



UK base: 3,056 people in the UK aged 18+, surveyed 1 Mar–9 Sept 2022. Other countries all surveyed in wave 7 of WVS at various points between 2017 and 2022. See [WVSA website](#) for sample information

5. How the public identify politically

There has been a rise in the share of the British public saying their views are on the centre-left of the political spectrum – but people still tend to identify most with the centre



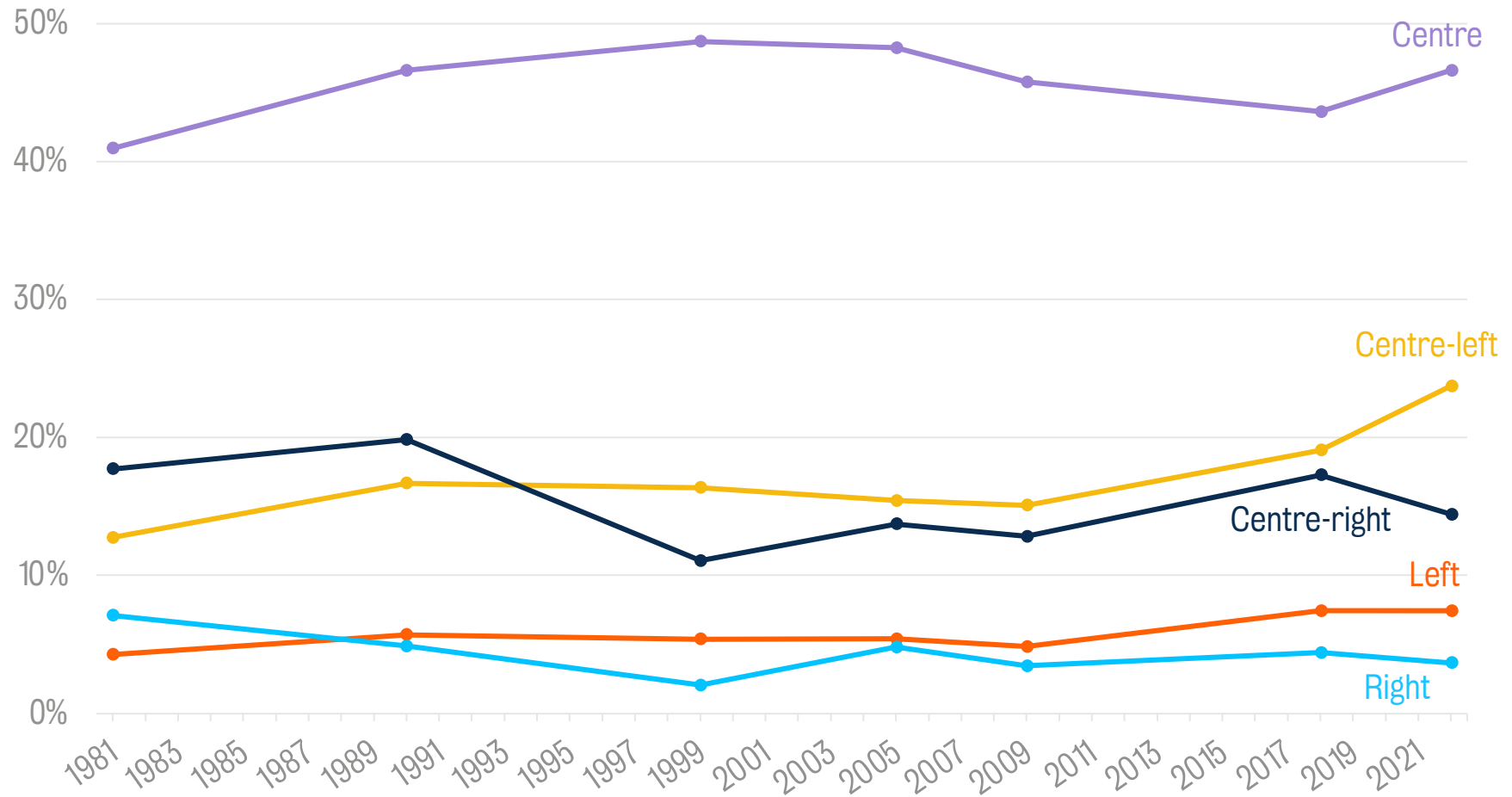
There has been a rise in the share of the British public identifying as centre-left politically

Britons have long been most likely to put themselves at the centre of the political spectrum – 47% said this best described their position in 2022, compared with 41% in 1981, with some variation in the intervening years.

Over the same period, the proportion of people identifying on the centre-right has declined slightly, falling from 18% to 14%.

But the biggest shift has been among those with centre-left views: 13% of the public identified this way politically in 1981, but by 2022 this had risen to 24%, with a rise of five percentage points since 2018.

In political matters, people talk of “the left” and “the right”. How would you place your views on this scale, generally speaking? (% who identify with each position in Britain)



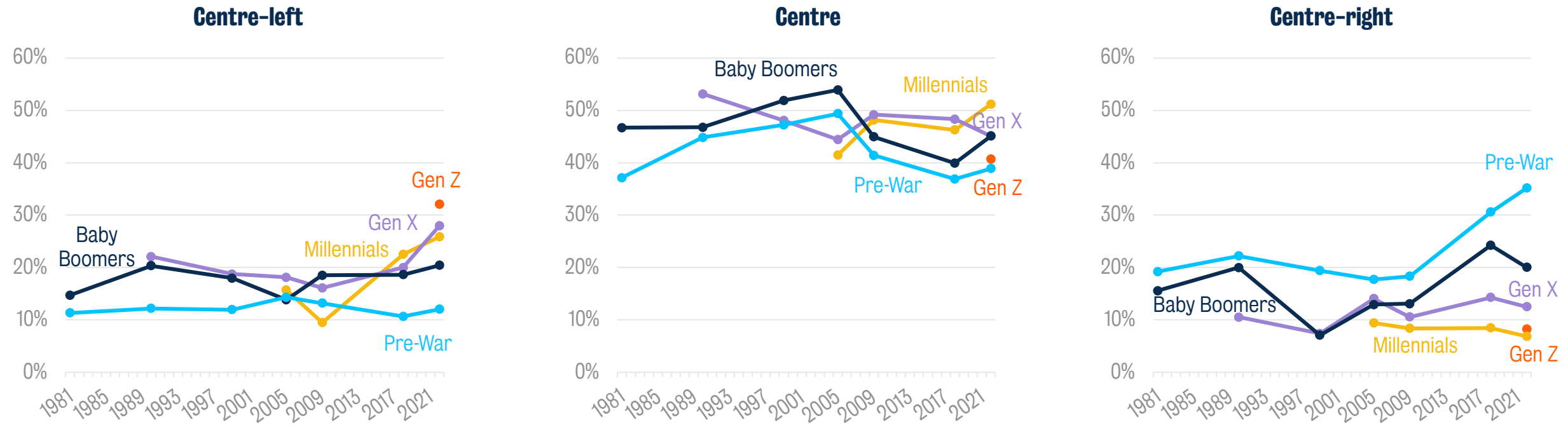
Generational divides in centre-left and centre-right views have become more pronounced in Britain

In 2005, all adult generations in Britain were roughly equally likely to identify as centre-left politically – but in subsequent years the gap began to widen, with Gen X and Millennials in particular becoming more likely to identify this way. By 2022, these two cohorts were twice as likely as the Pre-War generation to place themselves on the centre-left.

Similarly, older generations have become more likely to hold centre-right views, creating more of a divide between cohorts. The Pre-War generation have seen the biggest shift: in 2009, 18% were on the centre-right – not far off Baby boomers and Gen X – but this had almost doubled, to 35%, by 2022. Those born before 1945 are now around five times as likely as Millennials (7%) and Gen Z (8%) to see themselves as belonging on the centre-right.

In political matters, people talk of "the left" and "the right." How would you place your views on this scale, generally speaking?*

(% who identify with each position in Britain)

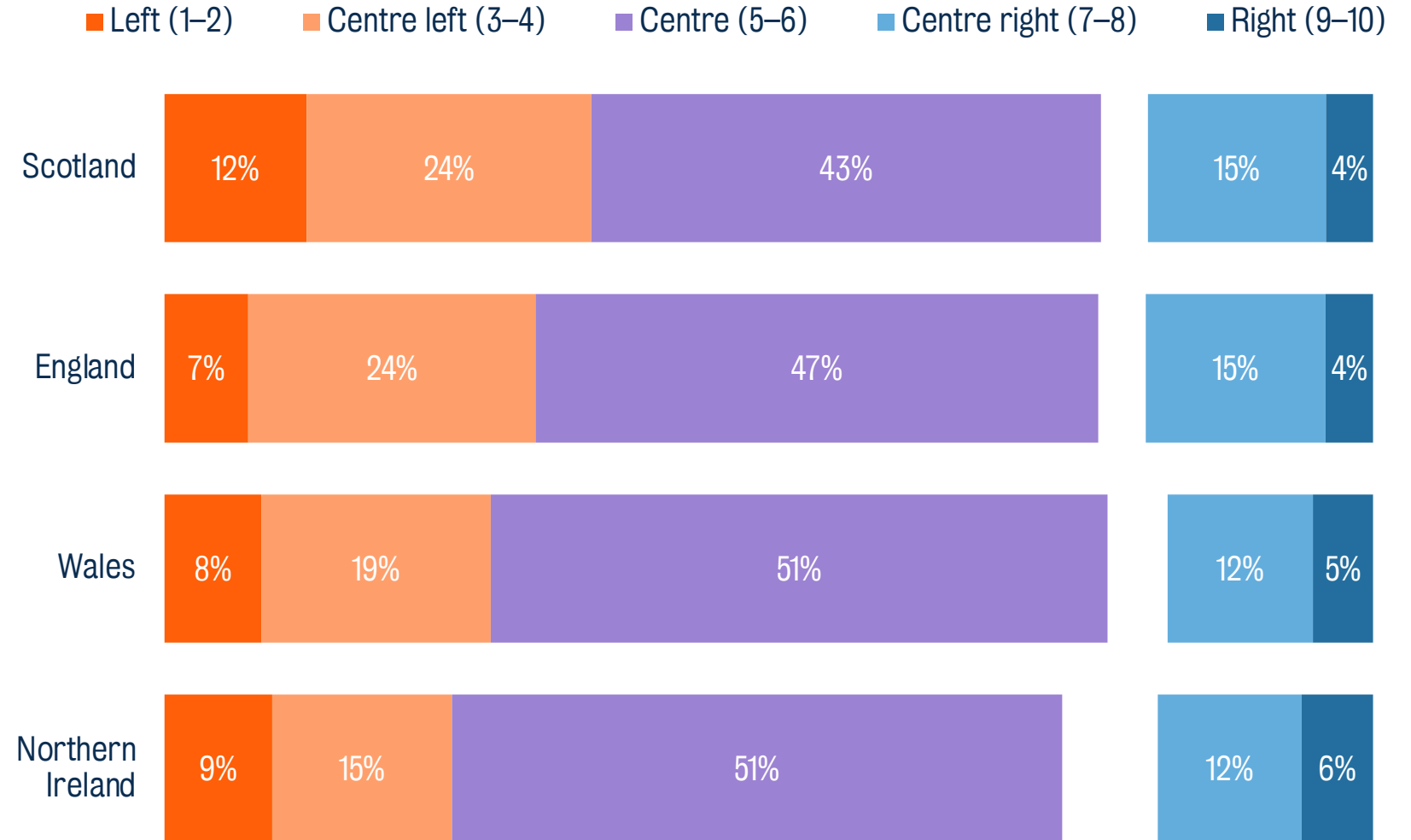


Scotland is the most left-leaning of UK nations, but by a relatively narrow margin

36% of people in Scotland identify as being on the left or centre-left politically. People in England (31%) are next-most likely to identify this way, with Wales (27%) and Northern Ireland (24%) least likely to.

Right-wing or centre-right views are most widespread in England, but only slightly more so than in other UK nations. But the most common response across all four countries is that people place themselves in the centre of the political spectrum.

In political matters, people talk of “the left” and “the right”. How would you place your views on this scale, generally speaking?^{9*} (% who identify with each position in Britain)

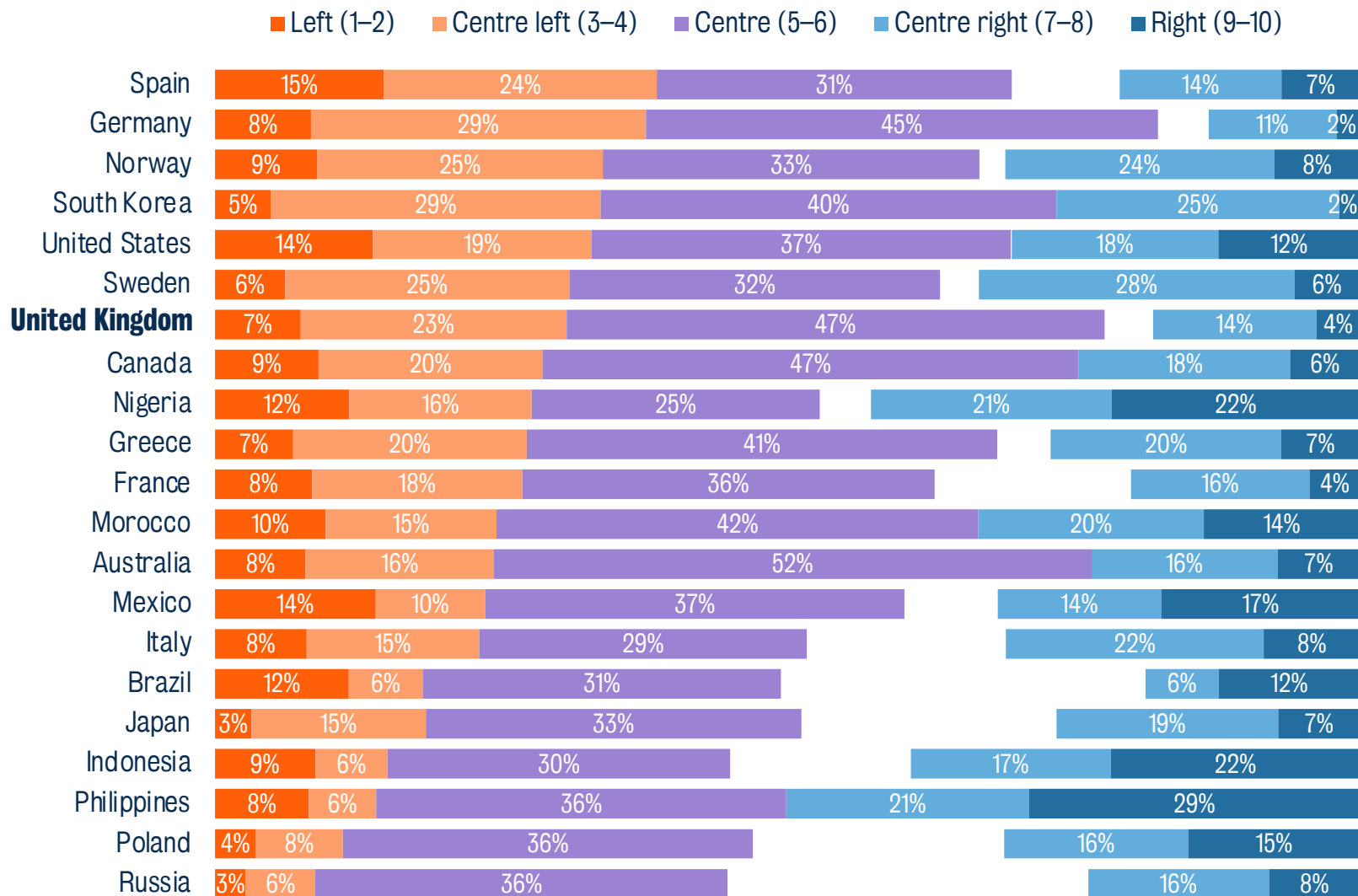


People in the UK are roughly as likely as those in other high-income nations to have left-leaning political views

In the UK, the share of the public (30%) who place themselves on the left or centre-left of the political spectrum is comparable to that in Canada (29%) and Sweden (31%), while those in Germany (37%) and Spain (39%) are slightly more likely to identify this way. The US (33%) is also on a par with the UK on this measure, but with twice as many people who put themselves at the left-most end of the spectrum (14% vs 7%).

And the UK public (18%) are among the least likely to identify as having centre-right or right-wing views, with only those in Germany (13%) less likely to – although the UK’s position is comparable to that of France (20%), Spain (21%) and Australia (23%).

In political matters, people talk of “the left” and “the right”. How would you place your views on this scale, generally speaking?^{9*}



*Responses given on numerical scale where 1 = Left and 10 = Right

UK base: 3,056 people in the UK aged 18+, surveyed 1 Mar–9 Sept 2022. Other countries all surveyed in wave 7 of WVS at various points between 2017 and 2022. See [WVSA website](#) for sample information

8. Technical details



Technical details

Ipsos interviewed a random probability sample of 3,056 adults aged 18+ across the UK. This included respondents in England (1,645) and boost samples in Scotland (523), Wales (437) and Northern Ireland (446). Data has been weighted by region, education and age interlocked with gender to be nationally representative. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic respondents were able to complete the survey either through a face-to-face survey (1,509 completes), an interviewer-led video interview through MS Teams (86), or through either a self-completion paper survey (592) or an online push-to-web follow-up (869). Fieldwork ran from 1 March to 9 September 2022. Ipsos is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules.

Further information on the sampling methodology for other countries included in this report is available via the [World Values Survey Association website](#).

VDEM liberal democracy index

The VDEM liberal democracy index combines information on voting rights, the freedom and fairness of elections, freedoms of association and expression, civil liberties, and executive constraints to arrive at a measure of how democratic a country is by western liberal standards, with 0 indicating “least democratic” and 1 indicating “most democratic”.

For more on the advantages of this index, see Vacaro, A. (2021) “Comparing measures of democracy: statistical properties, convergence, and interchangeability”, *European Political Science*, 20, 666-684.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41304-021-00328-8#Sec9>

Unweighted subgroup sample sizes	
Age	
18-24	199
25-34	438
35-44	467
45-54	452
55-64	494
65+	835
Voting intention	
Conservative	564
Labour	711
SNP	175

Unweighted sample sizes for UK nations	
England	1,645
Northern Ireland	446
Scotland	523
Wales	437
Region unknown	5
Total	3,056

The **UK** *in the* **WORLD** **VALUES** **SURVEY**

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