

YouGov Survey Results

Sample size: 2072 adults in GB

Fieldwork: 7th - 8th September 2026

	Vote in 2024 GE					EU Ref 2016			Gender		Age				Socio-economic classification (NS-SEC)			Country			Region in England			
	Total	Con	Lab	Lib Dem	Reform UK	Green	Remain	Leave	Male	Female	18-24	25-49	50-64	65+	Higher	Intermediate	Routine	England	Wales	Scotland	North	Midlands	London	Rest of South
Weighted Sample	2072	373	533	189	224	119	727	740	1001	1071	218	854	512	489	702	464	620	1792	99	180	491	340	251	711
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	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Do you think that water companies are currently doing a good or bad job on the following?

Cost of water bills

Very good job	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	3	1	2	6	2	1	1	1
Fairly good job	17	14	21	18	13	9	19	12	17	17	22	17	15	16	16	16	18	16	18	30	19	20	16	11
TOTAL GOOD JOB	19	15	23	20	15	11	20	14	19	19	24	19	17	18	17	18	21	17	20	36	21	21	17	12
Fairly bad job	32	37	31	36	29	34	34	33	32	32	28	30	33	35	34	35	31	33	26	19	32	38	28	35
Very bad job	37	38	37	37	48	46	35	44	40	35	24	36	43	38	39	36	37	39	41	17	38	30	47	42
TOTAL BAD JOB	69	75	68	73	77	80	69	77	72	67	52	66	76	73	73	71	68	72	67	36	70	68	75	77
Don't know	12	10	9	7	7	9	10	8	10	14	23	14	6	10	9	11	12	10	12	28	10	12	9	11

Investing in water infrastructure

Very good job	2	1	3	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	5	2	2	1	1	2	3	2	1	5	2	1	4	1
Fairly good job	12	13	14	12	9	4	12	12	12	13	13	11	11	15	12	11	14	11	10	25	12	16	10	9
TOTAL GOOD JOB	14	14	17	13	10	6	13	13	14	15	18	13	13	16	13	13	17	13	11	30	14	17	14	10
Fairly bad job	24	25	25	23	28	25	24	25	25	23	26	22	23	28	23	24	24	24	34	18	23	28	19	24
Very bad job	38	39	38	47	47	49	40	44	44	32	24	35	46	40	45	39	32	39	33	22	34	27	46	47
TOTAL BAD JOB	62	64	63	70	75	74	64	69	69	55	50	57	69	68	68	63	56	63	67	40	57	55	65	71
Don't know	24	22	21	18	15	21	23	17	18	30	32	31	18	16	18	25	27	24	22	30	29	29	20	19

Protecting the natural environment

Very good job	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	3	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	0	7	1	1	1	1
Fairly good job	14	16	17	11	10	4	13	14	13	15	13	12	14	16	12	13	17	12	13	28	12	19	11	10
TOTAL GOOD JOB	16	18	19	12	11	5	15	15	14	17	16	14	15	18	13	15	18	13	13	35	13	20	12	11
Fairly bad job	26	27	24	29	26	24	28	27	26	25	25	23	28	29	28	23	26	26	38	17	29	21	24	27
Very bad job	37	34	41	44	43	60	41	39	42	33	33	37	41	36	42	38	33	39	34	27	31	31	48	44
TOTAL BAD JOB	63	61	65	73	69	84	69	66	68	58	58	60	69	65	70	61	59	65	72	44	60	52	72	71
Don't know	22	21	17	15	20	11	17	19	17	26	27	26	16	17	16	24	23	22	16	22	27	27	16	18

Reliably providing clean water

Very good job	13	17	12	15	14	10	15	12	14	13	13	14	13	13	13	13	15	13	8	22	15	17	10	10
Fairly good job	48	50	48	54	47	44	50	48	51	46	45	46	51	52	50	51	47	48	59	45	53	51	44	45
TOTAL GOOD JOB	61	67	60	69	61	54	65	60	65	59	58	60	64	65	63	64	62	61	67	67	68	68	54	55
Fairly bad job	16	16	18	14	18	17	15	18	15	17	13	16	16	18	16	14	17	17	15	8	14	15	17	20
Very bad job	13	12	12	11	17	22	12	15	14	12	12	13	14	13	14	12	12	14	8	8	9	10	21	16
TOTAL BAD JOB	29	28	30	25	35	39	27	33	29	29	25	29	30	31	30	26	29	31	23	16	23	25	38	36
Don't know	9	5	9	5	4	7	7	6	7	12	17	12	6	5	7	10	9	9	9	17	9	7	8	9

Responding to customer complaints

Very good job	2	3	1	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	3	3	2	1	1
Fairly good job	14	15	15	11	10	2	12	12	14	14	18	13	14	14	12	13	17	13	23	16	14	18	12	10
TOTAL GOOD JOB	16	18	16	13	13	4	14	14	16	16	18	15	16	16	14	16	19	15	26	19	17	20	13	11
Fairly bad job	21	21	23	23	24	25	21	23	24	19	22	20	24	21	22	20	21	22	18	16	22	21	23	22
Very bad job	21	21	22	21	24	33	22	25	24	19	19	20	23	23	23	20	20	22	22	14	17	16	27	27
TOTAL BAD JOB	42	42	45	44	48	58	43	48	48	38	41	40	47	44	45	40	41	44	40	30	39	37	50	49
Don't know	42	41	40	43	39	38	44	38	36	46	40	45	38	40	42	45	41	41	34	51	45	43	37	39

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	Vote in 2024 GE					EU Ref 2016		Gender		Age				Socio-economic classification (NS-SEC)			Country			Region in England				
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	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Do you think that water companies should be nationalised and run in the public sector, or privatised and run by private companies?

Should be run in the public sector	74	67	84	79	67	83	79	74	79	69	75	71	76	75	79	72	71	73	75	79	70	71	78	74
Should be run by the private sector	6	10	4	6	13	5	4	9	9	4	4	5	8	9	7	7	6	6	9	7	8	8	2	6
Don't know	20	23	12	14	20	12	17	17	13	26	21	24	16	16	14	21	23	21	16	15	22	21	20	20

Which of the following best describes why you feel water companies should be run in the public sector?

[Asked only to respondents who said that water companies should be run in the public sector; n=1538]

I think the public sector is generally better at running things than the private sector	29	18	34	18	30	34	27	26	26	32	34	32	28	22	24	31	32	28	29	34	32	27	31	25
While I think the private sector are generally better at running things, this has not been the case where water companies have been privatised	27	43	25	33	28	15	27	31	32	21	21	26	27	30	31	23	26	27	24	22	21	26	32	30
While I don't think either the public or private sectors are inherently better at running things, the public sector would do a better job in this case	39	38	36	45	39	47	43	38	38	41	37	35	43	44	41	40	37	40	41	38	40	41	35	40
Don't know	5	2	4	4	3	4	3	5	4	6	8	6	3	4	4	6	4	5	6	6	7	5	2	4

Which of the following best describes why you feel water companies should be run in the private sector?

[Asked only to respondents who said that water companies should be run by the private sector; n=136]

I think the private sector has done a good job at running the water companies	14	12	9	19	11	0	15	11	11	20	35	19	16	4	11	12	12	14	10	15	21	22	0	6
While I don't think the private sector has done a good job at running the water companies, the public sector would do worse	67	85	54	60	85	54	72	76	69	64	27	54	70	83	77	76	61	72	60	32	72	68	72	73
While I think the public sector could do a better job at running the water companies, it is not worth the change	8	0	30	21	0	0	11	8	8	7	0	8	10	7	7	7	9	6	0	31	2	5	0	11
Don't know	11	3	7	0	5	46	3	4	12	9	38	19	4	5	4	5	17	8	30	22	6	5	28	10

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	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

If the water companies were nationalised in their entirety, do you think that the following would get better or get worse relative to them being run in the private sector?

Cost of water bills

Get a lot better	9	6	13	8	10	18	10	6	11	7	20	10	8	4	9	6	10	9	11	10	8	11	16	7
Get a little better	31	24	36	34	28	40	32	30	30	31	30	33	33	24	33	29	30	31	27	26	30	31	30	32
TOTAL GET BETTER	40	30	49	42	38	58	42	36	41	38	50	43	41	28	42	35	40	40	38	36	38	42	46	39
Get no better or worse	25	28	28	32	26	22	30	29	26	24	12	21	27	36	28	25	24	25	25	26	24	28	22	25
Get a little worse	9	13	7	10	7	4	9	10	9	9	9	7	9	13	9	11	9	9	13	9	9	9	10	9
Get a lot worse	9	15	4	4	16	3	5	12	9	8	4	8	9	11	8	11	8	9	5	5	9	8	7	11
TOTAL GET WORSE	18	28	11	14	23	7	14	22	18	17	13	15	18	24	17	22	17	18	18	14	18	17	17	20
Don't know	17	14	12	13	13	13	14	13	14	21	25	21	13	13	13	17	19	17	19	24	20	14	15	16

Investing in water infrastructure

Get a lot better	17	11	28	15	15	30	22	15	25	11	23	18	20	12	21	16	14	17	21	19	17	13	21	18
Get a little better	38	35	40	46	38	43	42	39	40	36	28	36	39	43	40	35	40	38	39	34	36	41	33	39
TOTAL GET BETTER	55	46	68	61	53	73	64	54	65	47	51	54	59	55	61	51	54	55	60	53	53	54	54	57
Get no better or worse	16	23	13	20	16	12	14	19	12	20	12	15	17	20	15	20	16	16	13	21	15	16	15	17
Get a little worse	4	6	3	3	6	0	3	4	3	5	8	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	7	3	4	5	5	4
Get a lot worse	5	8	2	1	10	0	3	7	7	4	3	4	6	7	5	6	5	5	2	4	6	4	5	5
TOTAL GET WORSE	9	14	5	4	16	0	6	11	10	9	11	8	10	11	9	11	9	9	9	7	10	9	10	9
Don't know	20	17	14	14	15	14	15	16	14	25	27	23	15	15	15	18	23	20	18	20	22	21	20	18

Protecting the natural environment

Get a lot better	16	8	23	17	14	26	19	13	20	11	22	16	15	11	18	14	14	15	21	15	13	15	16	17
Get a little better	37	33	45	46	30	43	43	34	37	36	34	35	38	40	42	35	35	37	33	41	36	39	40	35
TOTAL GET BETTER	53	41	68	63	44	69	62	47	57	47	56	51	53	51	60	49	49	52	54	56	49	54	56	52
Get no better or worse	20	29	15	19	27	14	17	24	18	22	14	17	22	24	19	21	20	20	17	22	20	18	19	20
Get a little worse	4	3	4	2	5	2	4	4	4	4	4	5	3	3	4	5	3	4	9	2	4	3	3	4
Get a lot worse	5	8	2	3	7	0	3	7	5	4	2	3	6	7	4	6	4	5	1	2	6	3	2	6
TOTAL GET WORSE	9	11	6	5	12	2	7	11	9	8	6	8	9	10	8	11	7	9	10	4	10	6	5	10
Don't know	20	18	12	13	18	16	15	17	16	23	26	23	16	14	13	19	23	20	19	17	21	22	20	18

Reliably providing clean water

Get a lot better	11	6	16	12	7	20	13	8	12	9	16	11	11	8	11	9	10	10	13	16	9	9	8	11
Get a little better	29	21	38	34	22	32	32	25	28	29	29	28	30	30	33	27	28	28	37	32	22	33	37	27
TOTAL GET BETTER	40	27	54	46	29	52	45	33	40	38	45	39	41	38	44	36	38	38	50	48	31	42	45	38
Get no better or worse	36	46	32	39	45	33	37	42	39	33	23	34	38	43	38	39	34	37	26	30	40	34	33	38
Get a little worse	4	6	2	2	7	1	3	5	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	5	4	4	6	3	5	4	1	3
Get a lot worse	3	5	1	1	5	0	2	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	4	4
TOTAL GET WORSE	7	11	3	3	12	1	5	9	8	6	6	7	7	7	6	8	7	7	7	6	8	7	5	7
Don't know	18	15	12	12	14	13	13	15	13	22	26	21	15	12	13	17	20	18	18	17	20	16	17	17

Responding to customer complaints

Get a lot better	6	4	8	9	4	8	6	5	7	5	10	6	6	4	6	5	5	6	6	7	4	5	7	7
Get a little better	21	15	27	17	20	24	22	20	23	19	25	19	23	20	21	18	23	20	22	27	20	23	20	19
TOTAL GET BETTER	27	19	35	26	24	32	28	25	30	24	35	25	29	24	27	23	28	26	28	34	24	28	27	26
Get no better or worse	32	34	36	41	31	39	36	35	32	32	22	30	34	38	37	32	31	33	37	22	30	32	35	35
Get a little worse	10	12	6	12	13	7	9	9	11	9	11	11	8	9	10	11	8	10	8	12	13	9	5	10
Get a lot worse	8	12	5	4	11	0	5	9	8	8	7	7	8	8	7	9	7	8	5	5	7	8	12	7
TOTAL GET WORSE	18	24	11	16	24	7	14	18	19	17	18	18	16	17	17	20	15	18	13	17	20	17	17	17
Don't know	24	23	19	16	22	23	22	22	20	27	25	27	20	20	20	24	26	23	23	26	26	23	21	23

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	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Would you support or oppose the nationalisation of water companies in their entirety if...?

It did not lead to a significant change in water bills

Strongly support	25	18	37	30	16	37	32	23	30	20	19	21	30	28	29	27	20	25	27	24	24	21	25	27
Somewhat support	35	42	35	35	34	34	35	38	35	36	35	33	34	40	36	33	36	35	42	37	35	38	33	34
TOTAL SUPPORT	60	60	72	65	50	71	67	61	65	56	54	54	64	68	65	60	56	60	69	61	59	59	58	61
Somewhat oppose	13	13	11	16	17	12	11	13	14	12	11	14	12	11	13	11	14	13	11	10	11	14	16	12
Strongly oppose	7	9	5	4	9	4	5	8	8	6	8	6	7	6	7	6	8	7	4	5	9	7	6	6
TOTAL OPPOSE	20	22	16	20	26	16	16	21	22	18	19	20	19	17	20	17	22	20	15	15	20	21	22	18
Don't know	21	19	12	16	23	14	17	18	14	27	27	25	18	14	15	23	22	21	17	24	21	20	19	21

The government needed to increase taxes or borrowing in order to purchase the water companies

Strongly support	7	4	16	5	2	10	11	6	10	5	5	7	9	8	11	6	5	7	9	8	8	6	9	7
Somewhat support	24	13	33	33	13	46	30	18	28	20	30	23	25	22	25	22	22	23	25	28	24	20	27	23
TOTAL SUPPORT	31	17	49	38	15	56	41	24	38	25	35	30	34	30	36	28	27	30	34	36	32	26	36	30
Somewhat oppose	26	35	23	30	30	19	26	28	24	28	24	23	26	31	26	24	29	26	27	23	24	27	27	27
Strongly oppose	26	34	14	21	40	10	19	33	26	25	18	27	25	27	26	30	25	26	21	26	28	30	22	24
TOTAL OPPOSE	52	69	37	51	70	29	45	61	50	53	42	50	51	58	52	54	54	52	48	49	52	57	49	51
Don't know	17	14	13	12	15	14	14	15	12	22	23	20	14	12	12	18	19	17	18	15	18	17	15	18

The government needed to increase water bills, taxes or borrowing in order to operate the water companies and invest in infrastructure improvements

Strongly support	7	4	13	5	2	13	11	4	10	4	7	7	8	5	10	8	3	6	9	9	6	5	7	7
Somewhat support	23	15	33	28	16	35	30	18	27	19	27	22	22	25	25	20	23	22	28	30	20	20	27	22
TOTAL SUPPORT	30	19	46	33	18	48	41	22	37	23	34	29	30	30	35	28	26	28	37	39	26	25	34	29
Somewhat oppose	26	31	23	30	31	26	25	29	26	25	21	25	27	29	26	27	27	26	25	22	24	26	24	28
Strongly oppose	28	37	19	21	40	11	21	36	26	30	22	28	31	29	28	29	29	29	22	24	32	34	25	25
TOTAL OPPOSE	54	68	42	51	71	37	46	65	52	55	43	53	58	58	54	56	56	55	47	46	56	60	49	53
Don't know	16	13	13	16	11	16	14	13	11	21	23	19	13	12	11	17	18	16	15	15	17	14	16	17

And would you support or oppose the water companies being run by private companies, but with stricter regulation by the government?

Strongly support	12	13	12	15	13	14	12	12	12	11	10	11	13	13	14	12	11	11	12	15	10	13	13	11
Somewhat support	41	46	39	50	40	40	43	40	41	42	43	43	40	38	44	43	36	42	36	36	44	43	36	42
TOTAL SUPPORT	53	59	51	65	53	54	55	52	53	53	53	54	53	51	58	55	47	53	48	51	54	56	49	53
Somewhat oppose	16	13	18	15	13	24	18	15	18	14	16	14	17	18	17	14	18	16	21	15	13	16	16	18
Strongly oppose	11	5	15	9	15	9	12	12	15	7	8	8	13	13	11	11	10	11	10	12	10	9	15	9
TOTAL OPPOSE	27	18	33	24	28	33	30	27	33	21	24	22	30	31	28	25	28	27	31	27	23	25	31	27
Don't know	21	22	15	11	20	12	15	20	14	26	24	23	16	19	14	20	25	20	21	22	22	19	19	20

*Any percentages calculated on bases fewer than 100 respondents do not represent a wide enough cross-section of the target population to be considered statistically reliable. These figures should not be used.