

YouGov Survey Results

Sample Size: 2,042

Fieldwork: 26th - 28th March 2007

	Currvote			Gender		Age			Social Grade		Region					
Total	Con	Lab	Lib Dem	Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 54	55 +	ABC1	C2DE	Lon-don	Rest of South	Midlands & Wales	North	Scot-land	
ALL	2042	599	490	256	981	1061	654	662	727	1101	937	428	409	491	531	184
Unweighted Sample	2042	628	588	247	1039	1003	501	535	1006	1218	820	329	487	444	601	181
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Taking everything into account, what do you think Britain's military role in the world should be?

Britain should try to expand its military influence in the world – if necessary by increasing Britain's spending on the armed forces	7	12	8	5	9	6	6	9	7	7	8	6	10	7	8	2
Britain should play roughly the same world role that it does now	19	17	30	16	21	17	23	19	16	19	19	20	15	20	18	24
Britain is already over-extended, Britain should reduce its commitments, spend less and not seek to have as much military influence in the world as Britain has at present	65	67	55	75	66	65	57	67	72	67	64	66	67	64	66	64
Don't know	8	4	7	4	4	12	13	7	5	6	10	8	8	9	8	9

Some people talk about other kinds of influence, that involve overseas aid, the work of the British Council, peaceful diplomacy and so on. What do you think Britain should do?

Britain should try to expand this kind of influence in the world – if necessary by increasing its spending on these activities	25	21	34	36	29	22	29	25	23	29	21	33	24	21	23	28
Britain should play roughly the same world role that it does now	30	33	37	29	29	31	27	32	30	33	27	29	31	28	30	32
Britain already spends too much in these areas. Britain should reduce its commitments, spend less and not seek to have as much influence in the world as Britain has at present	33	39	20	24	36	31	27	34	38	31	36	28	35	35	36	30
Don't know	12	7	8	11	7	16	17	9	9	8	16	10	10	16	11	10

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In recent years, Britain has been involved in a number of foreign conflicts – in the Gulf, Bosnia, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere. Against that background, which of these statements comes closer to your own view?

Britain should continue to intervene in foreign conflicts if it is in Britain's interests to do so – even if it means maintaining high levels of defence spending	19	22	30	14	25	14	23	19	16	20	18	20	17	20	19	21
Britain should be reluctant to become involved in any foreign conflict unless it is absolutely clear that it is in Britain's own interests to do so	72	73	61	79	69	75	63	74	78	72	71	73	75	68	72	69
Don't know	9	5	9	7	6	12	14	7	6	8	11	8	7	12	9	10

In cases such as Bosnia, Kosovo and Sierra Leone, Britain was engaged in what are loosely called 'peace-keeping operations' – trying to bring an end to local conflicts and prevent large numbers of civilians being killed. Do you think Britain should, or should not, continue to engage in such operations even if they are costly and inevitably risk the lives of British soldiers?

Yes, Britain should continue to engage in peace-keeping operations	54	58	67	61	61	47	57	54	51	57	50	56	48	54	55	57
No, Britain should no longer do so	35	37	24	28	33	36	26	35	42	33	36	35	41	31	33	35
Don't know	12	6	9	10	7	17	17	11	8	10	14	10	11	15	12	9

Some people say that, although Britain is now only a middle-ranking power, Britain should as a nation continue to try to 'punch above its weight' – that is, have more influence in the world than our military and economic strength would seem to indicate. Do you personally think Britain should, or should not, continue to try to punch above its weight?

Yes, Britain should	30	36	41	26	40	21	34	29	27	33	27	30	31	29	28	37
No, Britain shouldn't	55	56	47	60	54	56	45	57	62	55	56	55	56	54	56	52
Don't know	15	9	13	14	7	23	20	14	11	13	18	16	13	17	16	12

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Which of these three statements comes closest to your own view about the overall direction British foreign policy should take?

Britain should continue to base its foreign policy on its close relationship with the United States	9	10	16	4	13	6	9	10	8	9	9	8	8	11	9	7
Britain should remain in the Nato alliance with America but should take a more independent line in the way that, for example, France does	64	68	63	73	64	64	62	63	67	67	61	68	67	59	64	65
Britain should not be closely allied with any other country and should pursue its own line in foreign affairs	19	18	15	18	18	20	16	20	20	18	20	18	18	22	19	17
Don't know	8	4	7	5	5	11	13	7	5	6	10	5	8	9	9	10

If you had a son, would you like to see him go into one of the armed forces as his life's work?

Yes, I would	19	25	23	10	23	15	14	22	20	18	20	16	20	19	21	17
No, I wouldn't	69	65	66	82	64	74	74	64	70	72	66	71	68	69	68	71
Don't know	12	11	11	8	13	11	12	15	10	10	14	12	12	12	11	12

If you had a daughter, would you like to see her go into one of the armed forces as her life's work?

Yes, I would	15	19	21	7	18	12	12	17	16	15	15	12	16	16	16	15
No, I wouldn't	75	73	70	85	71	78	78	70	75	76	72	78	74	72	74	73
Don't know	11	9	10	8	11	10	11	13	9	9	13	10	10	12	10	11

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Some people say that it would be good for young people – especially teenage boys and young men – if national service were reintroduced and young people had to spend a year or two in one of the armed forces. In your view, would the reintroduction of national service be a good idea or a bad idea?

Yes, reintroducing national service would be a good idea	52	63	50	39	54	50	42	51	63	50	55	51	53	47	59	46
No, it would be a bad idea	36	30	39	46	37	35	46	35	27	40	31	39	33	39	31	42
Don't know	12	7	11	15	9	15	12	14	10	10	14	10	14	14	10	12

In 1982 the British Government despatched a task force to the South Atlantic to recapture the Falkland Islands, which had been invaded by Argentina. The task force defeated the Argentineans and restored the Falklands to British sovereignty. Looking back, do you think the then Government was right to despatch the task force, even though it meant that many British servicemen lost their lives, or should Argentina have been left in control of the Falklands?

Britain was right to despatch the task force	61	77	62	54	73	50	45	70	67	62	60	56	62	60	64	64
Argentina should have been left in control	17	9	19	22	14	20	19	14	18	18	16	19	16	17	17	17
Don't know	22	14	19	24	13	30	36	16	14	20	24	25	21	23	20	18

Suppose Argentina were to invade the Falklands again. Is it your impression that under present circumstances Britain could, or could not, launch a similar task force today?

Yes, we could	41	36	56	42	49	33	41	43	38	40	42	41	34	39	45	46
No, we couldn't	41	52	27	38	41	40	30	41	49	43	38	38	49	38	40	38
Don't know	19	12	17	19	10	27	29	16	13	18	20	21	17	23	16	16

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Senior officers in the armed forces are increasingly saying that Britain's armed forces are overstretched, below strength and inadequately equipped. From what you know, is it your impression that the officers' concerns are well founded and that Britain's armed forces are in fact overstretched?

Yes, our armed forces are probably overstretched	84	94	78	89	88	81	76	85	91	85	83	85	89	82	81	86
No, they are not	5	1	10	2	5	4	6	5	3	5	4	4	4	5	5	3
Don't know	11	5	12	9	7	15	18	10	6	10	13	11	8	12	13	12

If Britain's armed forces actually are overstretched, what do you think the present Government or any other Government should do?

Reduce Britain's commitments overseas so that British forces do not become involved in crises overseas	60	56	54	72	58	61	59	58	62	62	57	60	61	59	60	56
Spend more on the armed forces so that British forces can continue to be deployed effectively overseas	30	40	38	19	35	25	25	33	32	30	30	29	30	30	30	31
Don't know	11	5	8	10	7	14	16	9	7	8	13	11	9	11	11	12

In your view, should British forces continue to be deployed in Iraq for at least the next year or two, or should they be brought home more or less immediately?

British forces should continue to be deployed in Iraq for at least the next year or two	29	29	46	26	39	19	30	26	30	30	27	29	24	31	29	34
British forces should be brought home more or less immediately	59	64	45	61	52	65	52	62	62	59	58	61	65	54	57	55
Don't know	13	7	9	13	8	16	18	12	8	11	15	10	12	15	13	11

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Should British forces continue to be deployed in Afghanistan for a least the next year or two, or should they be brought home more or less immediately?

British forces should continue to be deployed in Afghanistan for at least the next year or two	33	35	48	30	45	21	33	29	36	35	30	34	25	37	32	39
British forces should be brought home more or less immediately	53	57	41	56	48	59	46	59	54	54	53	53	62	47	54	50
Don't know	14	9	11	15	7	20	21	12	9	11	17	13	13	17	14	12

The House of Commons recently voted in favour of developing a new British weapons system to replace the Trident system when it goes out of service. Are you personally in favour of, or opposed to, Britain's continuing to possess its own nuclear weapons?

Britain should continue to possess its own nuclear weapons	50	65	55	35	58	43	46	50	54	52	49	45	52	50	55	48
Britain should NOT continue to possess its own nuclear weapons	32	23	32	45	32	32	31	34	32	34	30	41	30	29	27	39
Don't know	17	12	13	20	10	25	23	16	13	14	21	14	18	21	19	12

On the basis of everything you know as well as your own views, do you think Britain at the moment is spending too much on the armed forces and defence, too little or about the right amount?

Britain is spending too much on the armed forces and defence	20	15	15	31	22	18	25	18	18	22	18	24	20	18	18	23
Britain is spending too little	42	56	38	30	45	38	29	45	49	40	43	40	43	41	41	43
Britain is spending about the right amount	19	16	28	17	21	16	16	20	20	21	16	17	20	19	20	15
Don't know	20	13	19	22	11	27	29	17	13	18	22	19	17	21	21	19

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

Have you ever had any relatives or close friends serving in the armed forces?

Yes, I have had	57	61	58	54	57	58	50	60	62	58	57	54	60	57	58	62
No, I never have	34	31	36	40	31	36	41	33	29	35	32	41	31	32	34	26
I served in the armed forces myself	5	6	3	3	9	1	3	3	8	3	6	3	6	4	4	8
Don't know	4	2	3	3	3	5	6	5	1	3	5	3	3	6	4	5

Do you have any relatives or close friends serving in the armed forces at the moment?

Yes, I have	18	20	18	16	19	18	23	17	15	17	20	14	22	22	15	19
No, I don't have	78	78	79	82	78	77	71	78	84	80	75	82	75	73	81	75
I am serving myself at the moment	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	2
Don't know	4	1	4	3	3	5	6	5	1	3	5	3	2	6	4	4