

## New polling shows concern about inequality extends beyond regional inequalities

What forms of inequality are people in Britain most worried about, and what impacts do they think inequality has on the economy, on democracy, on people’s health and self-esteem, on social cohesion and crime, and on fair opportunities and rewards?

Results from a nationally representative UK poll of 2,050 adults on 10-12 January 2024 run by Opinium

75% of people are worried about wealth and income inequalities, closely followed by health and educational inequalities; 62% also worry about social and political inequalities

Looking at inequalities between groups, people are most concerned about class, disability and ethnicity, as well as region, and less about gender, age, religion and sexual identity

Most think inequality has a negative impact on crime, health, self-esteem, and fair opportunities and rewards, but fewer are aware of the impacts on our economy, society and democracy

Our polling with Opinium uncovers a broad consensus of concern about inequality; levels of concern are particularly high among Labour voters, women, and people on higher incomes

### Inequalities of...

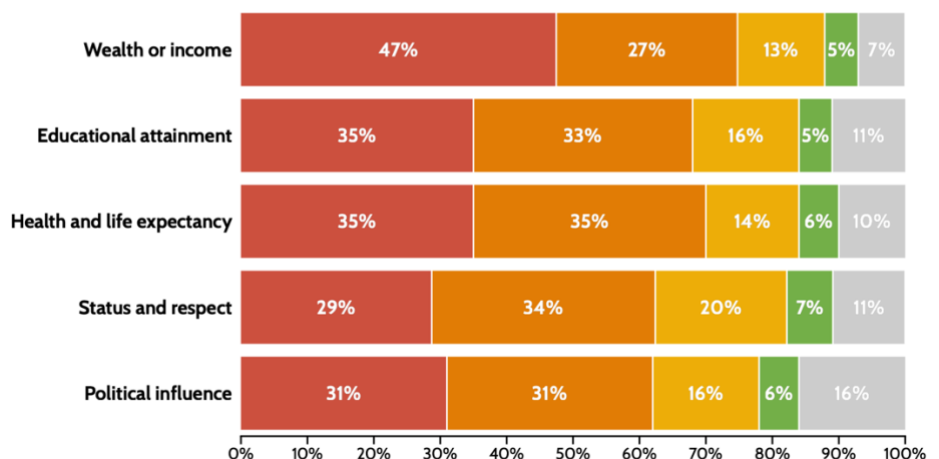
Wealth and income inequalities attract the most concern (75% say it is a moderate or big problem), but people are also worried about health and educational inequality (70% and 68%), with political influence, and status and respect, both close behind (62%).

Political attitudes have a big impact on views. 2019 Conservative voters are on average 20 percentage points less worried than 2019 Labour voters (although they are only 14 pp behind on health inequalities).

To what extent, if at all, do you think inequalities in the following areas are a problem in the UK today?

Inequalities of...

■ A big problem ■ A moderate problem ■ A small problem ■ Not a problem at all ■ Don't know

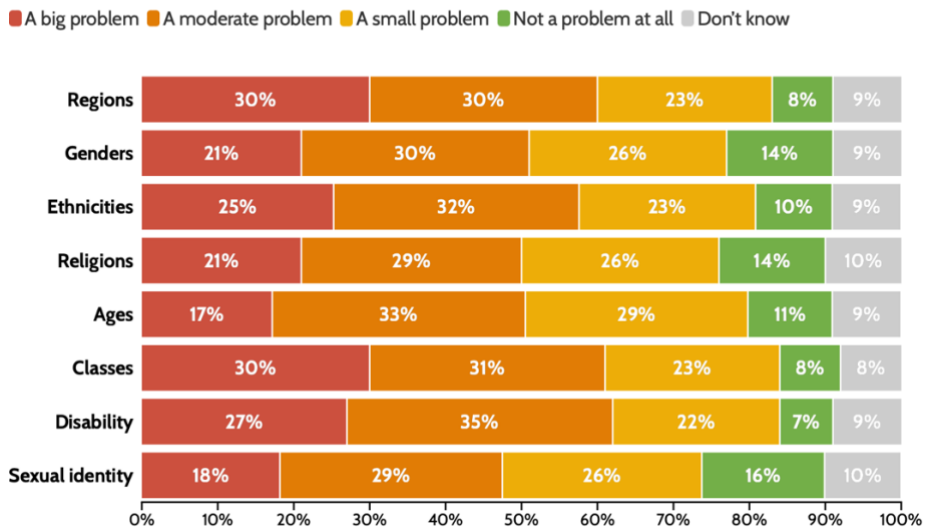


## Inequalities between...

The ‘horizontal’ inequalities that people are most concerned about are class and disability (62% say both are a moderate or big problem), followed by region (60%) and ethnicity (58%). Inequalities linked to gender, religion, age and sexual identity all elicit less concern. 2019 Conservative voters are on average 20 percentage points less worried than 2019 Labour voters (although they are only 13 pp behind on regional inequalities, and 16 pp behind on inequalities of age and religion).

## To what extent, if at all, do you think inequalities between the following groups in society are a problem in the UK today?

Inequalities between [people of]...



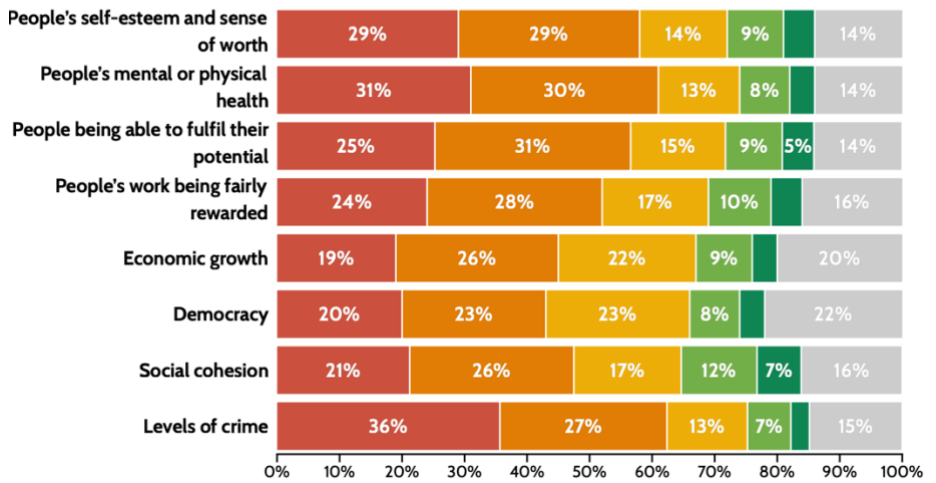
## Impacts of inequality

There is strong recognition of the negative impact of inequality on crime (63%), followed by health (61%); self-esteem is also picked up (58%). Fewer people think that inequality is bad for social cohesion, economic growth and democracy (47%, 45% and 43%), while fairness impacts are in the middle (56% on fulfilled potential and 52% on fair rewards). 2019 Conservative voters are on average 16 percentage points less likely to highlight the negative impacts of inequality than 2019 Labour voters (but only six pp behind on crime, and 14 pp behind on health).

## To what extent, if at all, do you think inequality has an impact on the following:

It makes it...

Much worse A little worse No effect A little better Much better Don't know



## Discussion

Our findings are broadly in line with the results from other recent attitudinal research in the UK, which consistently shows that people are concerned about economic and regional inequalities. However, our research suggests that many people are increasingly worried about inequalities of class, disability and ethnicity as well. Other ‘vertical’ inequalities - of health, education, political influence, and status and respect - are also increasingly salient. While there are unsurprising political differences in attitudes and awareness, there is a broad consensus of concern, including across generational divides, although women and those on higher incomes are more worried than men and those on lower incomes. And while there are high levels of concern about a range of inequalities, fewer people are aware of the impacts of inequality on ‘public goods’ such as social cohesion, democracy and economic growth.