

**STATE OF THE NATION 2006
 SUMMARY RESULTS**

BASE: 2,231
 METHODOLOGY: FACE TO FACE, NATIONALLY REPRESENTATIVE
 FIELDWORK DATES: 21st – 30th OCTOBER 2006

Q1 Generally speaking, do you strongly agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Agree strongly	Agree slightly	Neither	Disagree slightly	Disagree strongly	DK
Government power in Britain is too centralised	31%	29%	17%	7%	4%	12%
Local communities should have more say over decisions that affect them	59%	25%	9%	2%	2%	3%
More of the money spent by local councils should be raised locally	23%	23%	22%	11%	11%	9%
The length of a parliament should be fixed, removing the Prime Minister's power to choose the date of the next election	40%	22%	15%	8%	7%	8%
Britain needs a written constitution, providing clear legal rules within which government ministers and civil servants are forced to operate	43%	25%	14%	3%	5%	9%

Q2 Which of the following two alternatives do you agree with most?

	Total	Con	Lab	LD	Oth
As now the Prime Minister should retain the power to decide whether or not to commit Britain to war or other military action	14%	14%	15%	11%	9%
The Prime Minister should be bound by law to seek approval from Parliament before committing Britain to war or other military action	81%	84%	79%	85%	86%
Don't know	6%	2%	5%	4%	5%

Q3 The government is currently thinking about who should sit in the House of Lords. Which of the following options do you think the government should choose?

	Total	Con	Lab	LD	Oth
A wholly elected second chamber	22%	24%	26%	26%	18%
A mixture of elected and appointed members, with more than half of them elected	43%	52%	44%	35%	41%
A mixture with a third of the members elected and two thirds appointed	15%	13%	13%	22%	17%
Don't know	21%	11%	17%	16%	24%

Q4 How much influence DO you think you have over decisions affecting public services in your local area? Please tell me whether you think you have a great deal of influence, a fair amount, a little, or none at all over decisions affecting the following public services in your area. READ OUT

	A great deal	A fair amount	A little	None at all	DK
Schools	3%	10%	28%	47%	12%
Hospitals	2%	6%	23%	57%	11%
Police	2%	7%	23%	57%	11%
Transport	2%	10%	23%	54%	11%

Q5 How much influence do you think you SHOULD have over decisions affecting public services in your local area? Please tell me whether you think you SHOULD have a great deal of influence, a fair amount, a little or none at all over decisions affecting the following public services in your area. READ OUT

	A great deal	A fair amount	A little	None at all	DK
Schools	33%	46%	14%	4%	3%
Hospitals	37%	44%	14%	3%	2%
Police	31%	43%	18%	5%	3%
Transport	35%	43%	15%	4%	3%

Q6 I am going to read out a number of policies and proposals, and I would like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with each. READ OUT

	Agree strongly	Agree slightly	Neither	Disagree slightly	Disagree strongly	DK
This country should adopt a new voting system that would give parties seats in Parliament in proportion to their share of votes	30%	30%	16%	5%	7%	12%
A referendum should be held on changing the system we use to elect MPs	29%	27%	17%	6%	7%	14%
Elections for local authorities should use a new voting system that would give parties seats on local councils in proportion to their share of the vote	32%	30%	17%	5%	5%	12%
Compulsory voting should be introduced in Britain, and people who do not vote in general elections might be fined	20%	19%	14%	13%	26%	7%
Ordinary people should be given the right to initiate and vote on new laws and changes to government or local policies	31%	34%	15%	7%	5%	8%
Ordinary people should be given the right to initiate public inquiries and hearings into public bodies and their senior management	32%	35%	14%	5%	4%	9%

Q7 With the decline in membership of the main political parties, parties are now relying more on funding from other sources, such as wealthy individuals, trade unions and businesses to help them play their part in the political process.

I am now going to read out a number of statements that people have made about the funding of political parties. For each one please tell me if you agree strongly, agree slightly, neither agree nor disagree, disagree slightly or disagree strongly. READ OUT

	Agree strongly	Agree slightly	Neither	Disagree slightly	Disagree strongly	DK
Funding parties by voluntary donations is unfair because there is a risk that wealthy individuals, trade unions and businesses can buy influence over parties	41%	26%	14%	5%	4%	10%
Political parties with significant public support should be provided with public funds to reduce their dependency on donations from wealthy individuals, trade unions and businesses	23%	27%	19%	9%	8%	14%
There should be limits on how much individuals and organisations can donate to political parties	42%	22%	13%	7%	5%	10%
If there is to be a system of state funding for political parties it should be targeted to support local activity by parties	24%	30%	21%	4%	4%	17%
Donations to political parties should be subject to tax relief, just like donations to charities	20%	20%	14%	11%	20%	15%
If individual members give informed consent Trade Unions should be allowed collect money from their members on behalf of a political party and money collected in this way should be treated as individual donations	15%	23%	23%	9%	12%	19%
Anyone who donates more than £1,000 to a political party should be banned from receiving a peerage or other honour for five years	34%	18%	17%	11%	7%	13%

Q8 In order to support local activity by political parties, it has been suggested that at a general election a voter should be able to tick a box allocating a £3 donation per year from public funds to a party of his or her choice to be used by that party for local activity in their area. Do you think this is a good idea or a bad idea?

	Total	Con	Lab	LD	Other
Good idea	35%	39%	44%	38%	32%
Bad idea	41%	42%	41%	38%	45%
Don't know	24%	19%	16%	24%	24%

Q9 Would you be willing to pay a membership fee to become a member of a political party?

	Total	Con	Lab	LD	Other
Yes	17%	22%	24%	19%	16%
No	72%	66%	69%	69%	76%
Don't know	10%	12%	7%	12%	8%

Q10 Would you consider being a registered supporter of a political party, without paying a membership fee, but maybe obtaining benefits, such as additional information and invitations to party events?

	Total	Con	Lab	LD	Other
Yes	25%	31%	32%	24%	26%
No	64%	60%	60%	64%	63%
Don't know	11%	9%	8%	12%	11%

Q11 In Britain how much power would you say each of the following groups SHOULD have over government policies?

	A great deal	A fair amount	A little	None at all	DK
Ordinary voters	42%	36%	13%	5%	4%
The media	8%	20%	34%	29%	10%
Large companies	6%	21%	37%	24%	11%
Parliament	42%	38%	13%	4%	4%
Trade unions	10%	31%	33%	16%	10%

Q12 In Britain how much power would you say each of the following groups DO have over government policies?

	A great deal	A fair amount	A little	None at all	DK
Ordinary voters	5%	12%	34%	40%	10%
The media	28%	37%	21%	7%	7%
Large companies	29%	38%	17%	6%	9%
Parliament	53%	27%	10%	4%	6%
Trade unions	18%	36%	28%	7%	11%

Q13 It is quite possible that no one party will command a working majority in Parliament after the next election, so it could be that more than one party leader could become Prime Minister and form a government. In such circumstances, how should the next Prime Minister be chosen?

	Total	Con	Lab	LD	Other
By the Queen on confidential advice from her Private Secretary and senior civil servants, as now	23%	30%	17%	23%	20%
By Members of Parliament in an election	61%	59%	72%	64%	63%
Don't know	16%	11%	11%	13%	17%

Q14 Which of these statements best describes your opinion on the present system of governing Britain?

	Total	Con	Lab	LD	Other
It works extremely well and could not be improved	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%
It could be improved in small ways but mainly works well	31%	27%	40%	31%	22%
It could be improved quite a lot	37%	38%	36%	45%	37%
It needs a great deal of improvement	27%	31%	18%	21%	38%
Don't know	3%	1%	3%	2%	1%

Q15a I would now like to ask you some questions about a Bill of Rights, which some people have been talking about. On this card is a list of rights that some people have said should be included in a Bill of Rights. I'd like you to go through the list and tell me, which, if any, you yourself think should be INCLUDED in a Bill of Rights?

	Total	Con	Lab	LD	Other
Right to a fair trial before a jury	89%	91%	88%	93%	92%
Right to privacy in your phone, mail and e-mail communications	82%	85%	83%	86%	81%
Right to know what information government departments hold about you	85%	88%	82%	88%	90%
Right to obtain information from government bodies about their activities	73%	77%	72%	80%	78%
Right of free assembly for peaceful meetings and demonstrations	73%	75%	72%	85%	79%
Right to join a legal strike without losing your job	77%	76%	80%	84%	83%
Right of a woman to have an abortion	72%	75%	69%	81%	77%
Right of British subjects to equal treatment on entering and leaving the UK, irrespective of colour or race	70%	75%	72%	78%	72%
Right to hospital treatment on the NHS within a reasonable time	88%	91%	89%	97%	88%
Right of those who are homeless to be housed	65%	62%	67%	70%	69%
Don't know	2%	2%	1%	-%	2%

Q15b Do you agree or disagree with the view that Britain needs a Bill of Rights to protect the liberty of the individual?

	Total	Con	Lab	LD	Other
Agree strongly	51%	54%	51%	52%	53%
Agree slightly	26%	26%	27%	28%	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	12%	12%	14%	15%
Disagree slightly	4%	5%	4%	4%	3%
Disagree strongly	2%	2%	3%	1%	3%
Don't know	4%	2%	3%	2%	4%

Q16 I am now going to read out a number of policies and proposals, and I would like you to tell me to what extent you support or oppose each.

	Strongly support	Tend to support	Neither	Tend to oppose	Strongly oppose	DK
Allowing the police to take a DNA sample from a person BEFORE they are charged with an offence	29%	19%	8%	15%	26%	3%
Allowing the police to keep a person's DNA profile on a database permanently, even if they are never charged with an offence, or are acquitted	24%	19%	9%	15%	30%	3%
Requiring teachers, doctors, nurses, police and social workers to notify a central database if they have any concerns about any family	36%	33%	11%	8%	8%	4%
Allowing government departments and public bodies to share personal information they hold about children without parental consent	15%	20%	14%	17%	29%	5%
Allowing government departments and public bodies to share personal information they hold about ANY person without consent	8%	15%	15%	19%	37%	5%
Requiring everyone resident in the UK to possess an identity card containing biometric information, such as fingerprints	27%	21%	14%	11%	22%	5%
Requiring everyone's medical records to be stored in a centralised database for access by civil servants and government officials, with no right to opt out	12%	15%	14%	17%	36%	6%

Q17 For each of the following please tell me whether you think the police should keep a person's DNA profile on a database permanently, whether there should be a time limit, or whether they should not keep them at all?

	Keep permanently	Time limit	Not at all	DK
If they are convicted of a serious violent or sexual offence, such as rape or murder	92%	6%	1%	1%
If they are convicted of burglary	49%	43%	5%	2%
If they are convicted of a public order offence, such as being drunk and disorderly, or taking part in an illegal demonstration, in England and Wales; or Breach of the Peace in Scotland	21%	38%	37%	4%

Q18 The police and customs officials stop and search many people on the basis of their ethnic appearance in their efforts to stop terrorism. What is your view on how stop and searches should be conducted?

	Total	Con	Lab	LD	Other
Stop and search powers should continue to be used as they are now, even if they alienate communities on whom the police depend for information and cooperation	41%	47%	42%	31%	41%
The police and officials should stop and search individuals only if they have a reasonable suspicion that they may be involved in terrorism	49%	48%	51%	63%	45%
Stop and search powers are almost always discriminatory and counter productive and should be used only very rarely	6%	3%	6%	5%	10%
Don't know	4%	1%	3%	1%	4%

Q19 Some western countries allow evidence from surveillance and interceptions of phone calls and other communications to be used in serious criminal and terrorist trials in court as a means to secure more prosecutions. Britain bans their use as evidence in court to keep the operations of the security services secret. Which of these alternatives do you agree with most?

	Total	Con	Lab	LD	Other
Such information should always be made available to make more prosecutions of criminal or terrorist suspects possible	45%	42%	46%	38%	46%
Such information should be available but intelligence and security services should be able to withhold it where necessary to protect their operations	40%	47%	40%	53%	39%
The ban on the use of such information should remain in place	9%	6%	10%	4%	11%
Don't know	6%	4%	4%	5%	3%

Q20 Britain has long-standing rules and principles that have been put in place to protect people from being arrested and wrongly held for an indefinite time in custody. Some people think that these rules make it too hard to bring prosecutions. Please tell me how important each of the following is to you. READ OUT.

	Very important	Fairly important	Not very important	Not at all important	DK
We should retain the rule that someone is innocent until proved guilty	80%	14%	3%	1%	2%
Previous offences should be withheld from a jury until they have come to a verdict on the evidence before them	36%	23%	10%	23%	8%
The police should charge someone they are holding in custody with an offence within as short a prescribed period as possible or release them	44%	28%	11%	10%	7%

Q21 In the case of people who are suspected of being involved in terrorism, how long do you think the police should be allowed to hold them in custody WITHOUT charge?

	Total	Con	Lab	LD	Other
Up to 7 days	9%	7%	9%	14%	13%
Up to 14 days	9%	7%	8%	8%	9%
Up to 28 days	18%	19%	22%	20%	19%
Up to 60 days	15%	20%	15%	16%	13%
Up to 90 days	39%	40%	39%	33%	34%
Don't know	10%	6%	7%	9%	12%

Q22 Which one of the following alternatives do you agree with most?

	Total	Con	Lab	LD	Other
It is necessary to reduce some of our traditional liberties in order to protect the public against terrorism	35%	35%	38%	37%	30%
We should not sacrifice any of our basic liberties, even if this means risking further terrorist attacks	19%	20%	20%	19%	17%
We should not sacrifice any of our basic liberties because their removal or reduction harms us and does nothing to protect us against terrorism	17%	24%	13%	17%	19%
We should retain our basic liberties because they form a bond which can unify all communities in the battle against terrorism	20%	18%	22%	22%	22%
Don't know	8%	4%	7%	5%	11%

Q23 Please tell me which of the main political parties you trust most to...

	Con	Lab	LD	Other	DK/None
Protect your civil liberties	20%	20%	11%	11%	39%
Protect the environment	16%	18%	13%	17%	36%

Q24 Which of the following is in your opinion the most important issue facing Britain today?

	Total	Con	Lab	LD	Other
Immigration	36%	46%	32%	32%	33%
Terrorism	15%	10%	17%	11%	14%
National Health Service	12%	9%	17%	11%	10%
Law and order	10%	8%	11%	16%	10%
Education	8%	7%	11%	7%	8%
Iraq	6%	4%	7%	6%	9%
Taxation and government spending	4%	5%	4%	6%	3%
The economy generally	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%
European Union	3%	4%	3%	3%	1%
Jobs	3%	2%	3%	3%	2%
Interest rates	1%	1%	1%	-%	*%
Don't know	4%	2%	1%	1%	5%

Q25 Where do you go first to get your information about what is happening in national or local politics in Britain?

	Total	Con	Lab	LD	Other
Newspapers	42%	50%	43%	42%	32%
Television	65%	56%	69%	60%	64%
Radio	12%	10%	13%	12%	13%
Internet	9%	7%	8%	12%	15%
Friends/family	5%	4%	5%	4%	8%
Don't know	2%	3%	2%	1%	2%

Q26 I would like you to think about the political parties, and for you to tell me, in turn, how much you like or dislike them.

	Average score / 7
Conservatives	3.65
Labour	3.48
Liberal Democrat	3.69
Green Party	3.7
UK Independence Party	2.99
British National Party	2.35
Respect	2.78
Plaid Cymru (Wales only)	4.00
Scottish National Party (Scotland only)	3.95
Scottish Socialist Party (Scotland only)	2.88

Q27 For each political party please tell me which of the following statements is true.

	I might vote for them	I could never vote for them	Neither	DK
Conservatives	43%	30%	15%	12%
Labour	40%	35%	14%	11%
Liberal Democrat	37%	28%	21%	13%
Green Party	25%	35%	25%	15%
UK Independence Party	13%	44%	25%	18%
British National Party	10%	55%	19%	15%
Respect	7%	44%	23%	26%
Plaid Cymru (ASK IN Wales only)	38%	24%	14%	24%
Scottish National Party (ASK IN Scotland only)	41%	33%	10%	15%
Scottish Socialist Party (ASK IN Scotland only)	13%	55%	14%	17%

Q28 Finally, could I ask you which political party you feel you most closely identify yourself with?

	Total
Conservatives	24%
Labour	26%
Liberal Democrat	11%
Green Party	4%
UK Independence Party	1%
British National Party	2%
Respect	1%
Plaid Cymru (Wales only)	*%
Scottish National Party (Scotland only)	2%
Scottish Socialist Party (Scotland only)	*%
Other party	1%
Refused	7%
Don't know	22%