

IPSOS Economy and business polling

February 2026

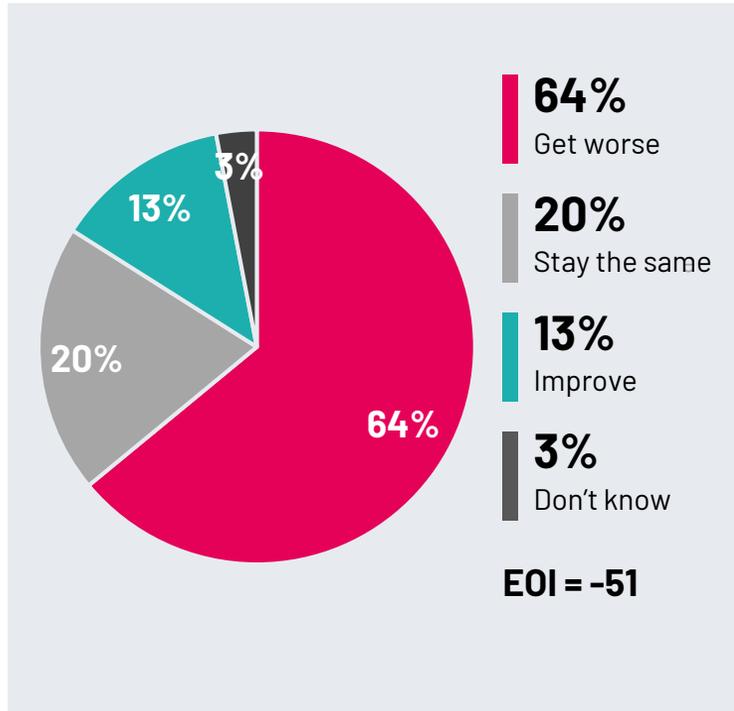


Economic Optimism

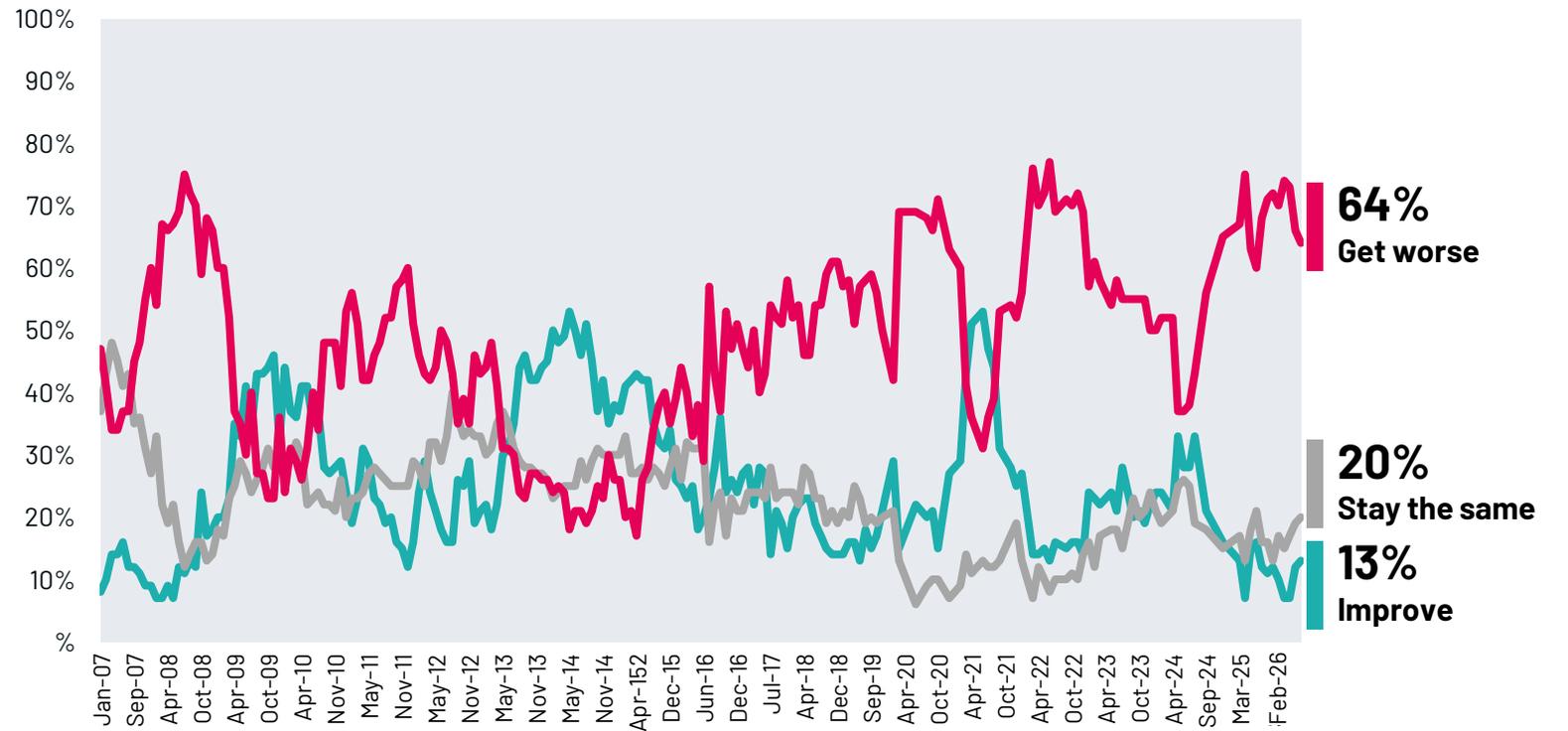
Ipsos Economic Optimism Index

Do you think that the general economic condition of the country will improve, stay the same or get worse over the next 12 months?

February 2026



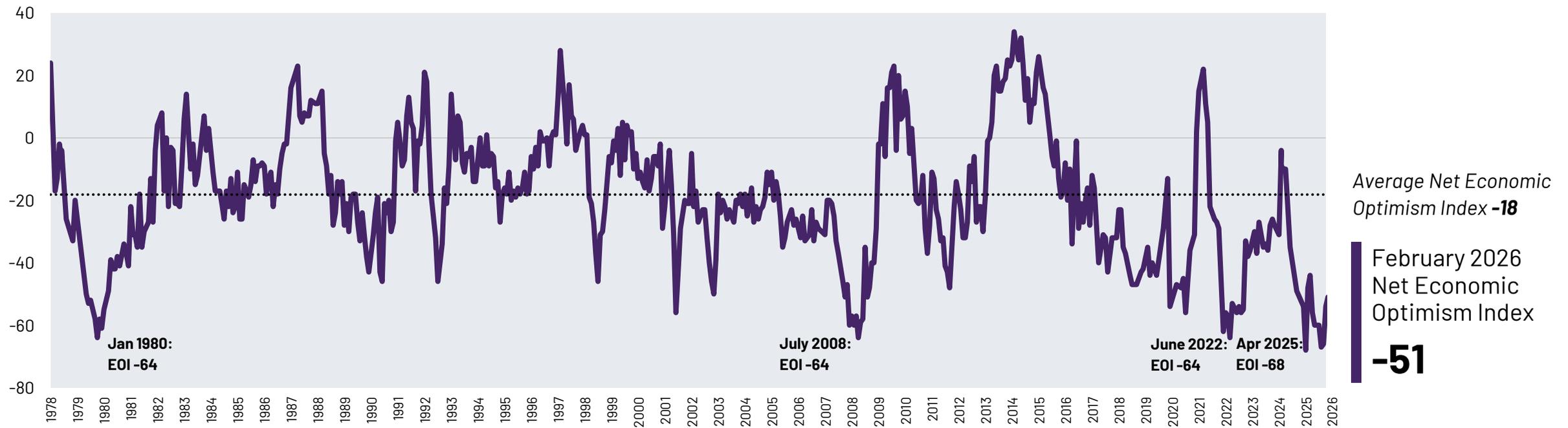
January 2007 – February 2026



Base: 1,004 British adults 18+, interviewed via telephone, 4 – 10 February 2026

Ipsos Economic Optimism Index (1978-2026)

Do you think that the general economic condition of the country will improve, stay the same or get worse over the next 12 months? *Net Economic Optimism Index = % get better minus % get worse*



Note: Data collected prior to February 2008 was collected via face-to-face methodology; data collected from February 2008 is via telephone;

Base: c.1,000 British adults 18+ each month

Net Economic Optimism Index: *By Prime Minister*

Do you think that the general economic condition of the country will improve, stay the same or get worse over the next 12 months? *Net Economic Optimism Index = % get better minus % get worse*



Note: Data collected prior to February 2008 was collected via face-to-face methodology; data collected from February 2008 is via telephone;

Base: c.1,000 British adults 18+ each month

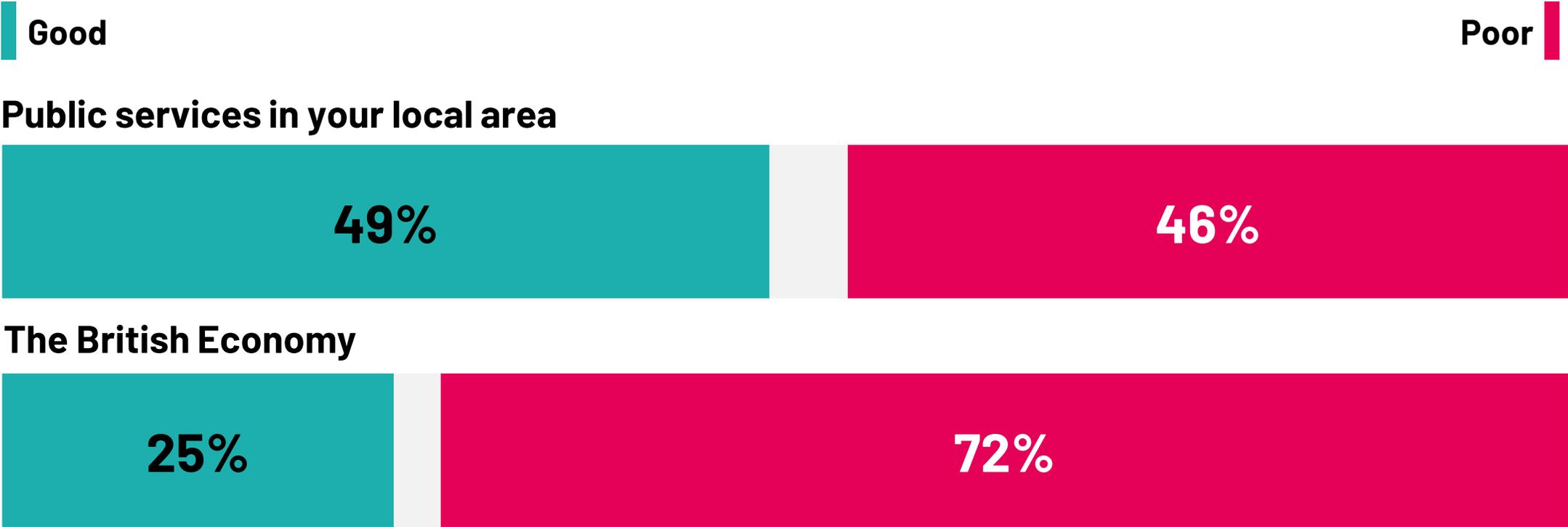
General public economy polling

February 2026



Whilst Britons are split on the state of public services in their local area, seven in ten think the economy is in a poor state

How would you describe the current state of ...? Would you say it is...?



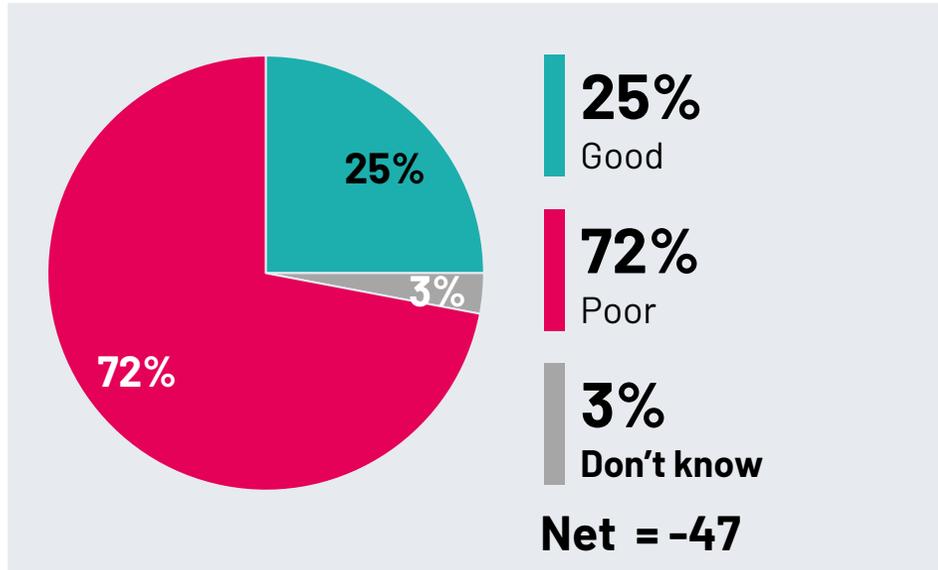
Base: 1,002 Online British adults aged 18-75, 20-23 February 2026



Perceptions of the British economy: Trend

How would you describe the current state of the British economy? Would you say it is...?

February 2026



Base: 1,002 Online British adults aged 18-75, 20-23 February 2026

November 2021 - February 2026



Perceptions of public services: Trend

How would you describe the current state of the public services in your local area? Would you say it is...?



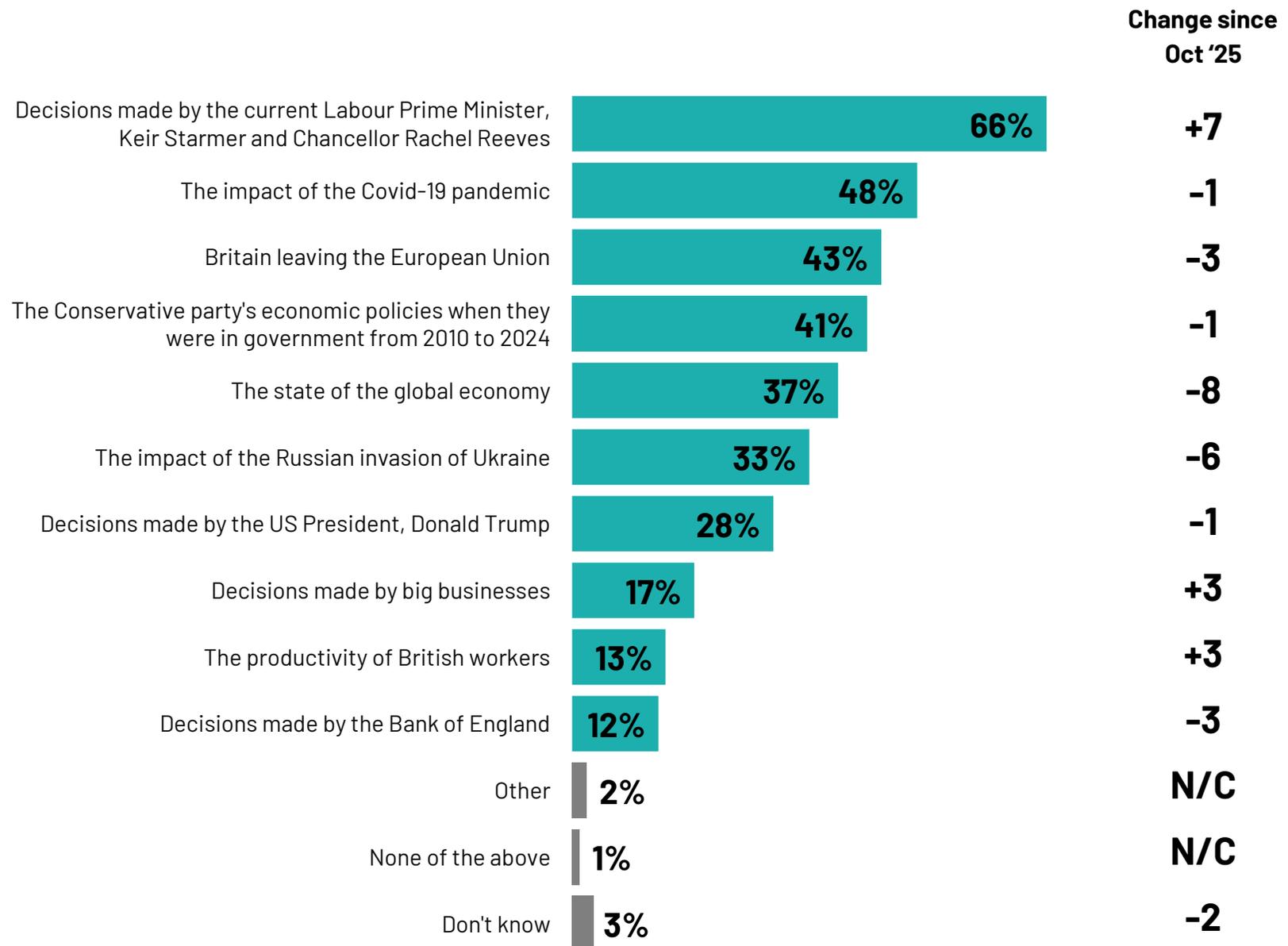
Base: 1,002 Online British adults aged 18-75, 20-23 February 2026



Two thirds of Britons who think the economy is in a poor state say decisions made by Keir Starmer and Rachel Reeves have contributed most

Which of the following, if any, would you say have contributed MOST to the British economy currently being in a POOR state?
Please pick as many as apply.

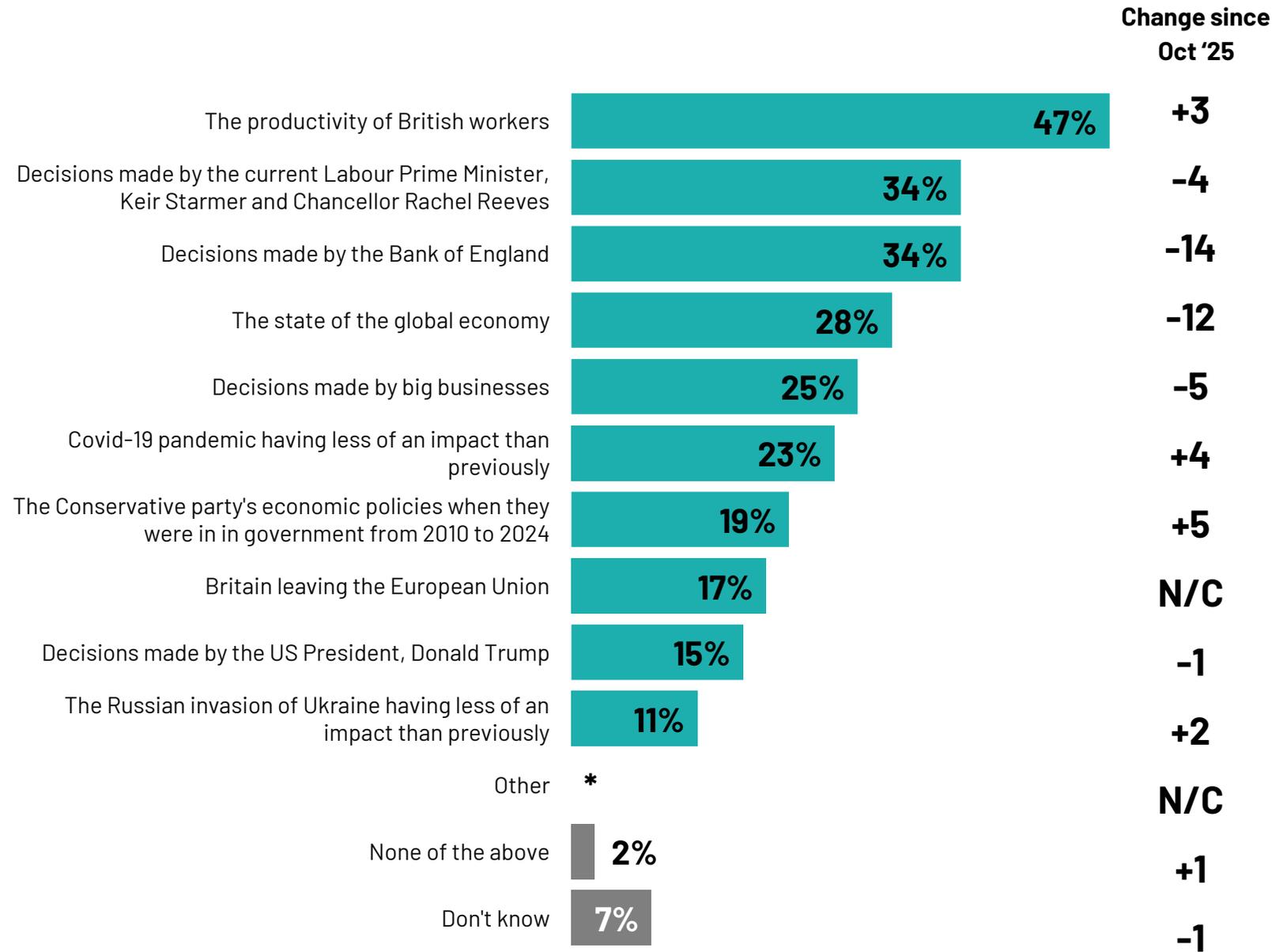
Base: 709 Online British adults 18-75 who described the British economy as being in a poor state, 20-23 February 2026



Almost half of Britons who think the economy is in a good state say the productivity of British workers has contributed most to this

Which of the following, if any, would you say have contributed MOST to the British economy currently being in a GOOD state?
Please pick as many as apply.

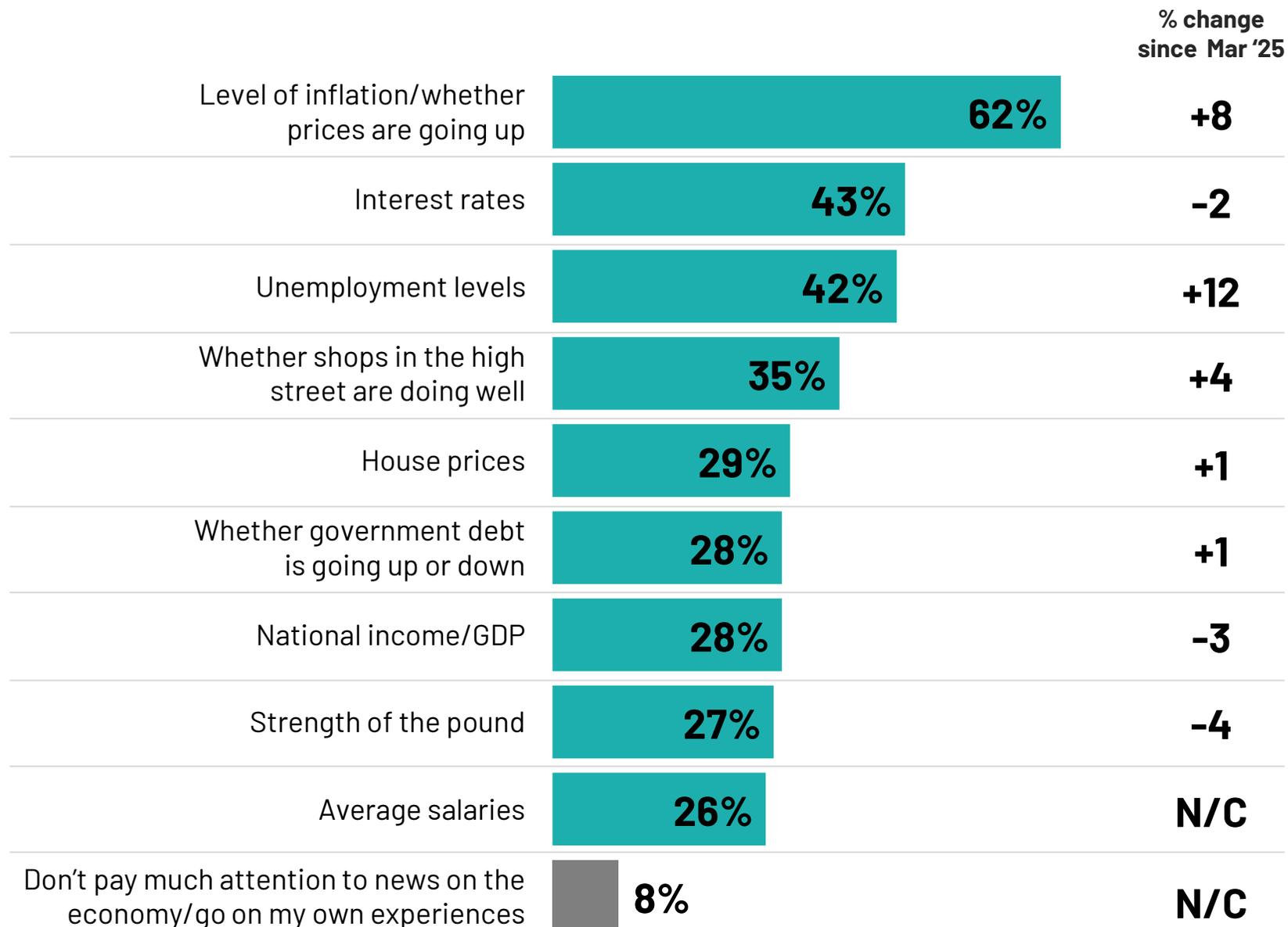
Base: 264 Online British adults 18-75 who described the British economy as being in a good state, 20-23 February 2026



Six in ten Britons say that inflation is what influences their views of how the economy is doing most

When you hear about the state of the economy in the news, what specific types of information most influence your view of how the economy is doing?

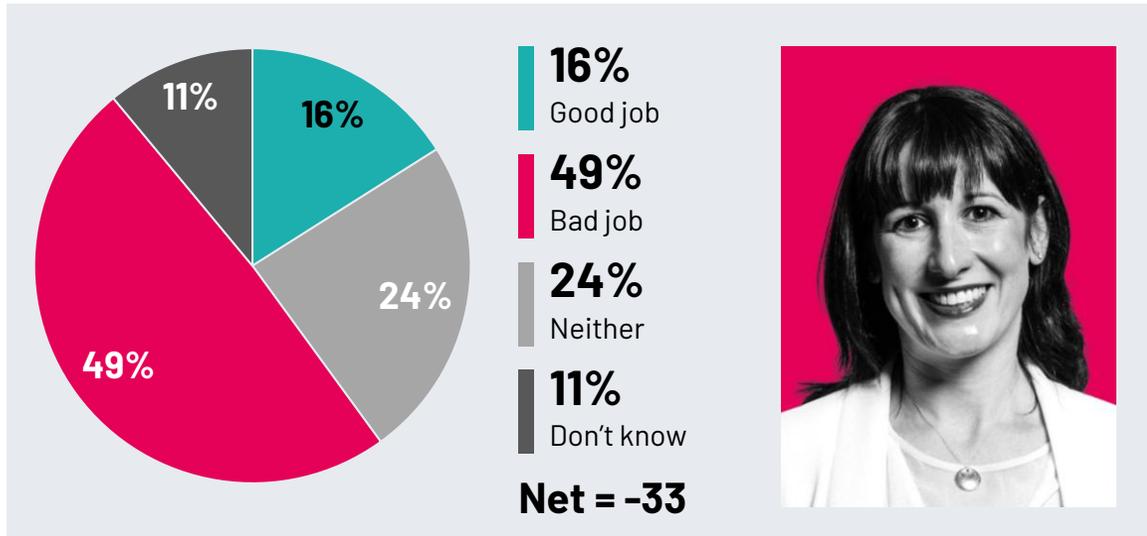
Base: 1,002 Online British adults aged 18-75, 20-23 February 2026



Rachel Reeves: Good or bad job as Chancellor of the Exchequer?

To what extent, if at all, do you think Rachel Reeves has been doing a good job or a bad job, in her role as Chancellor of the Exchequer, or neither?

February 2026



August 2024 - February 2026

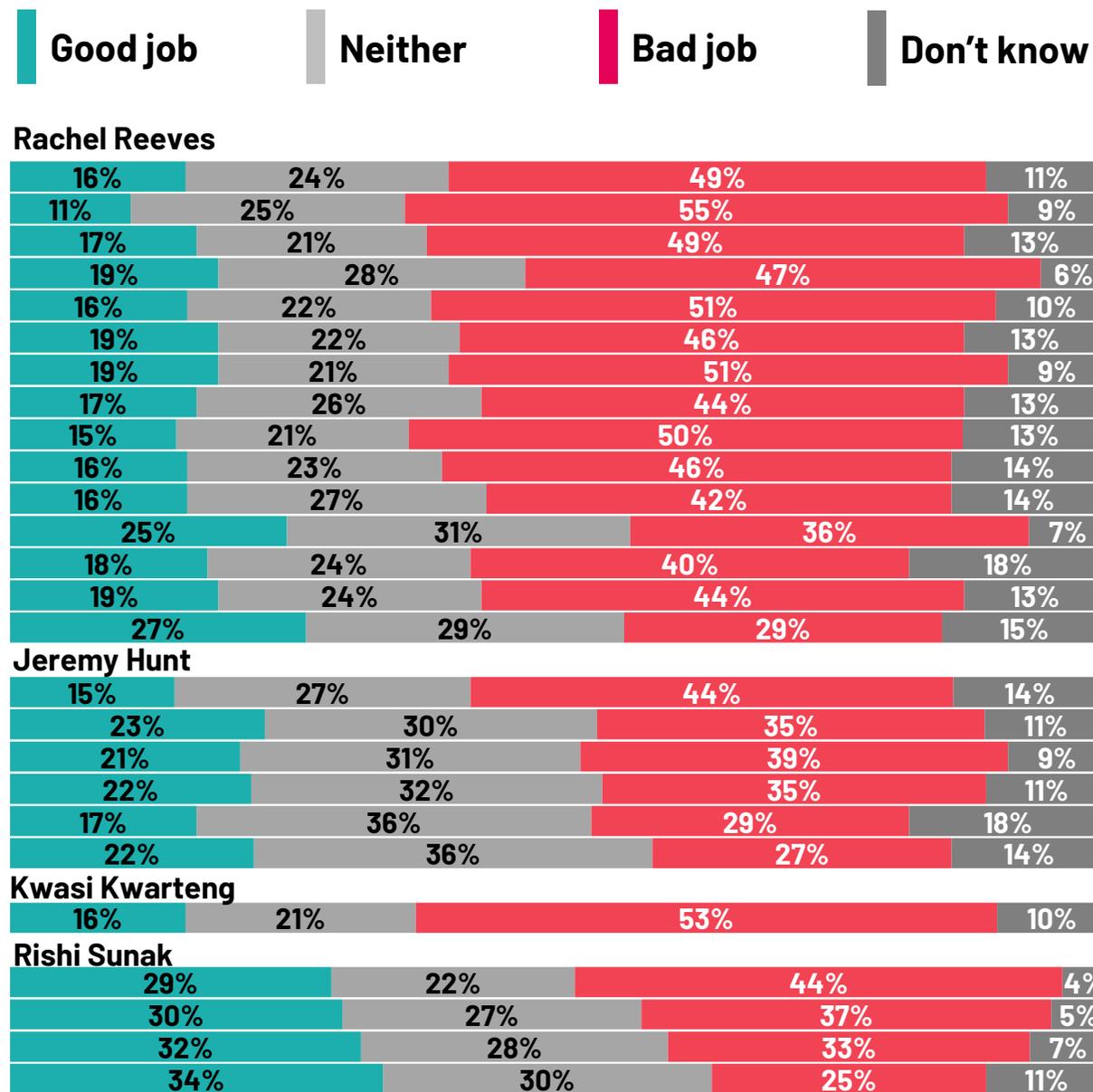


Base: 1002 Online British adults aged 18+, 20-23 February 2026

Long-term trends for performance as Chancellor of the Exchequer

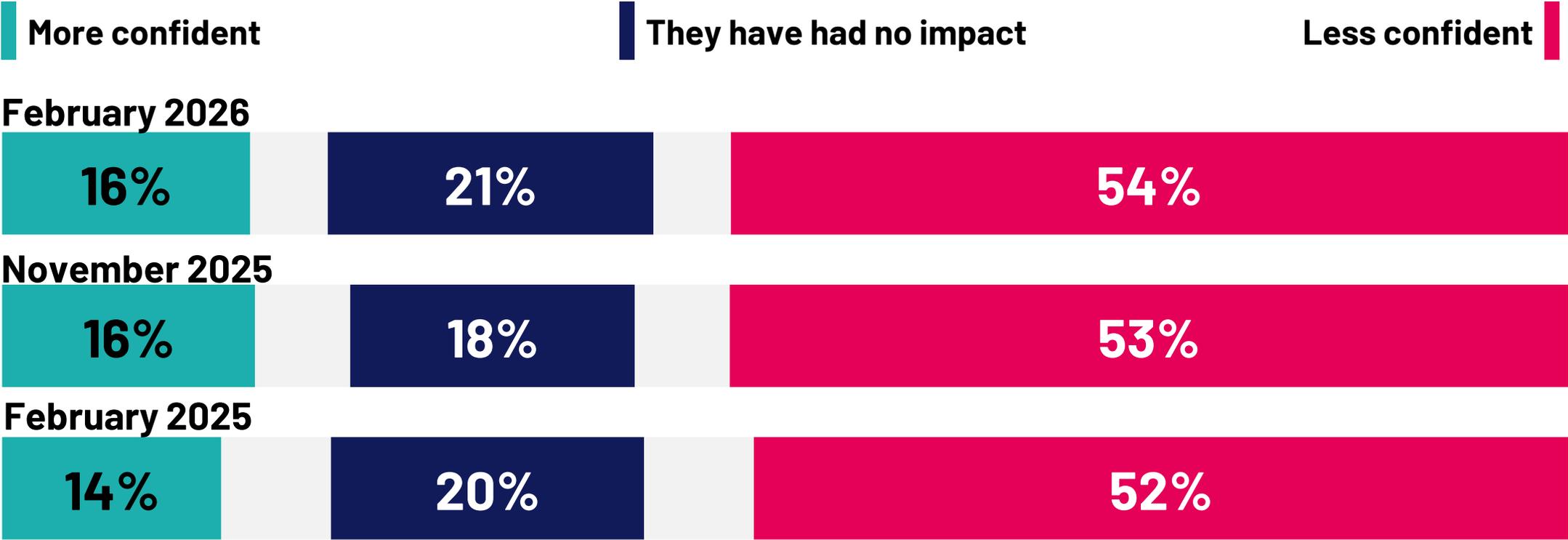
To what extent, if at all, do you think Rachel Reeves has been doing a good job or a bad job, in her role as Chancellor of the Exchequer, or neither?

Base: 1,002 Online British adults aged 18-75, 20-23 February 2026



Half of Britons said that Rachel Reeves' decisions have made them less confident that the economy will grow

And have her decisions made you more or less confident that the economy will grow, or have they had no impact?



Base: 1,002 Online British adults aged 18-75, 20-23 February 2026



Half of Britons are fearful of the impacts of announcements made in the Spring Statement on the economy

As you may know, the Spring Statement will be delivered on Tuesday 3rd March. To what extent, would you say you are hopeful or fearful of how announcements in the upcoming Spring Statement might impact...

█ **More fearful**
█ **Equally fearful and hopeful**
█ **More hopeful**
█ **It won't have any impact**
█ **Don't know**

... the British economy



... British businesses



... the quality of public services?



... your own financial situation?

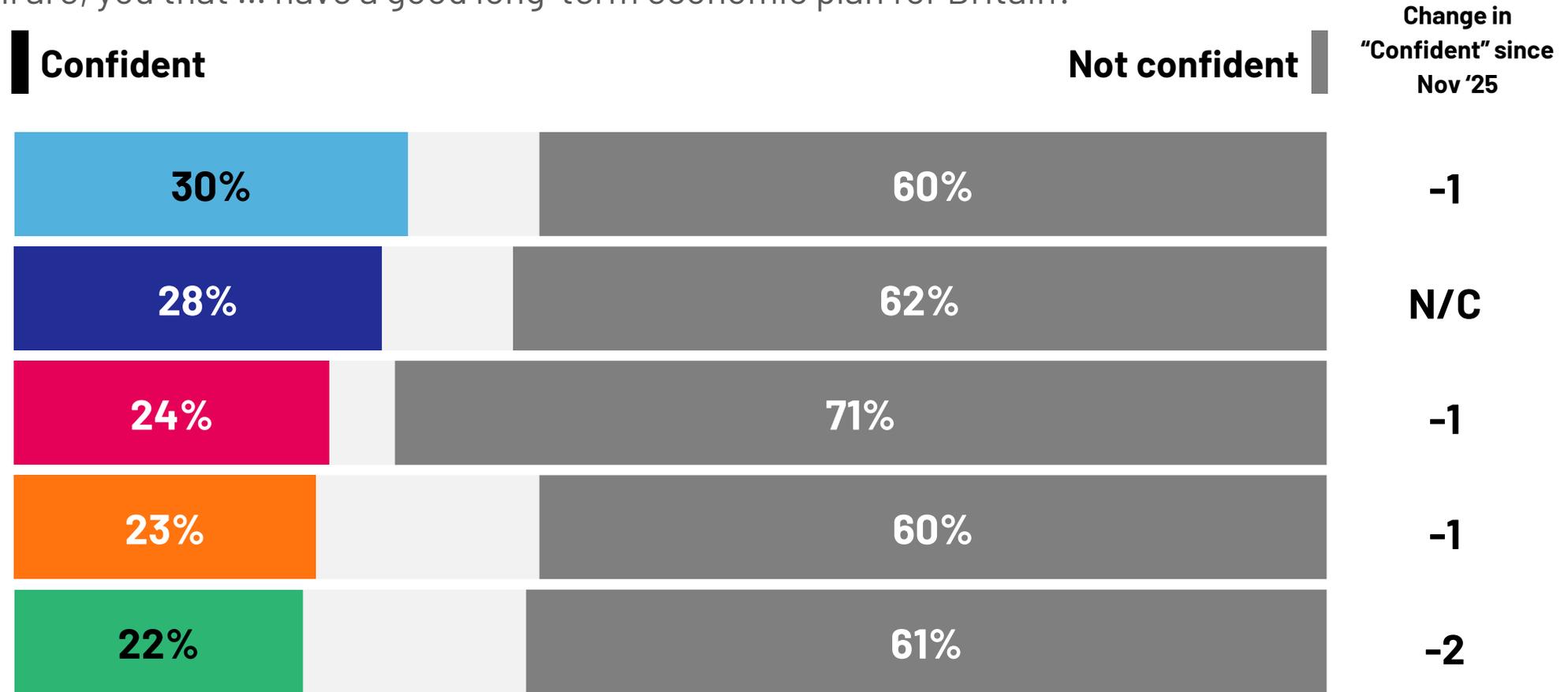


Base: 1,002 Online British adults aged 18-75, 20-23 February 2026



Seven in ten Britons are not confident that Labour have a good long-term economic plan for Britain

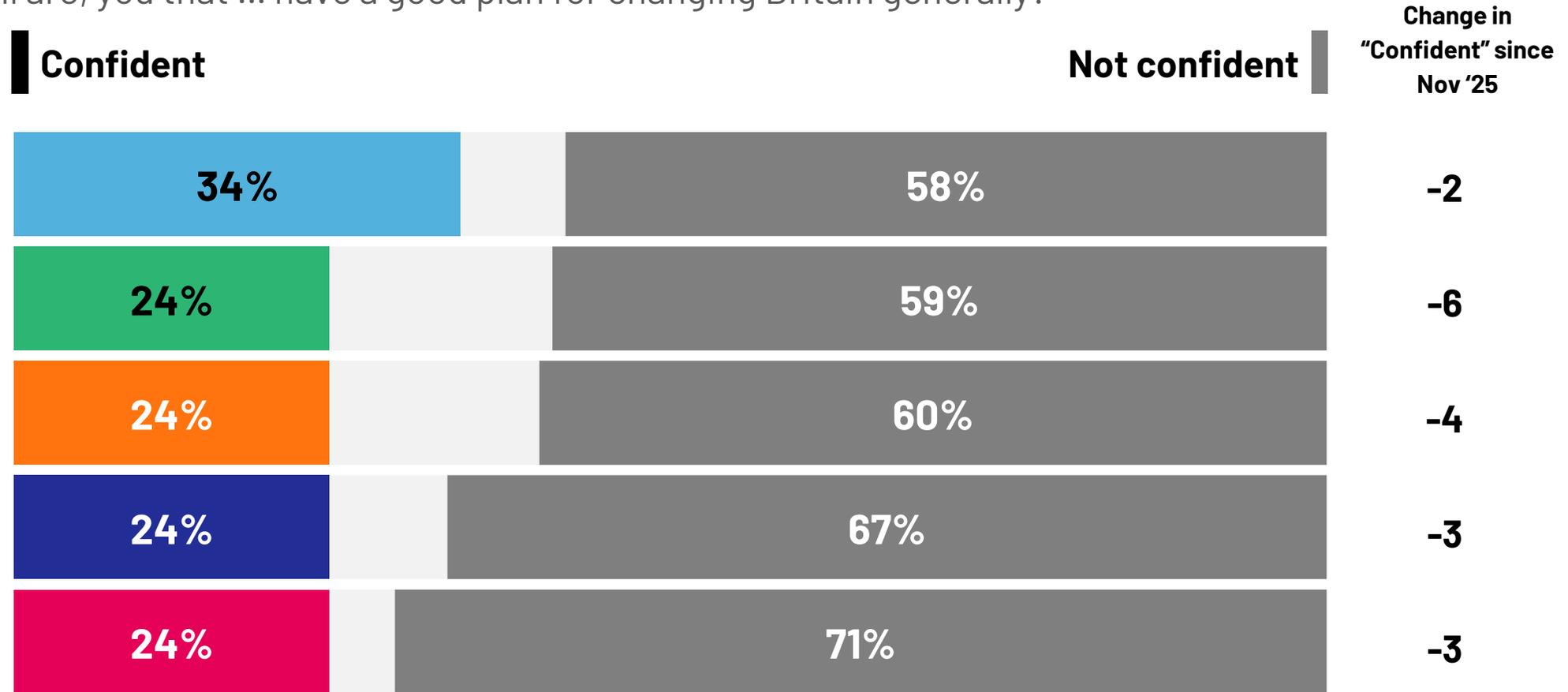
How confident, if at all are, you that ... have a good long-term economic plan for Britain?



Base: 1,002 Online British adults aged 18-75, 20-23 February 2026

Britons are not confident that any of the main political parties have a good plan for changing Britain generally

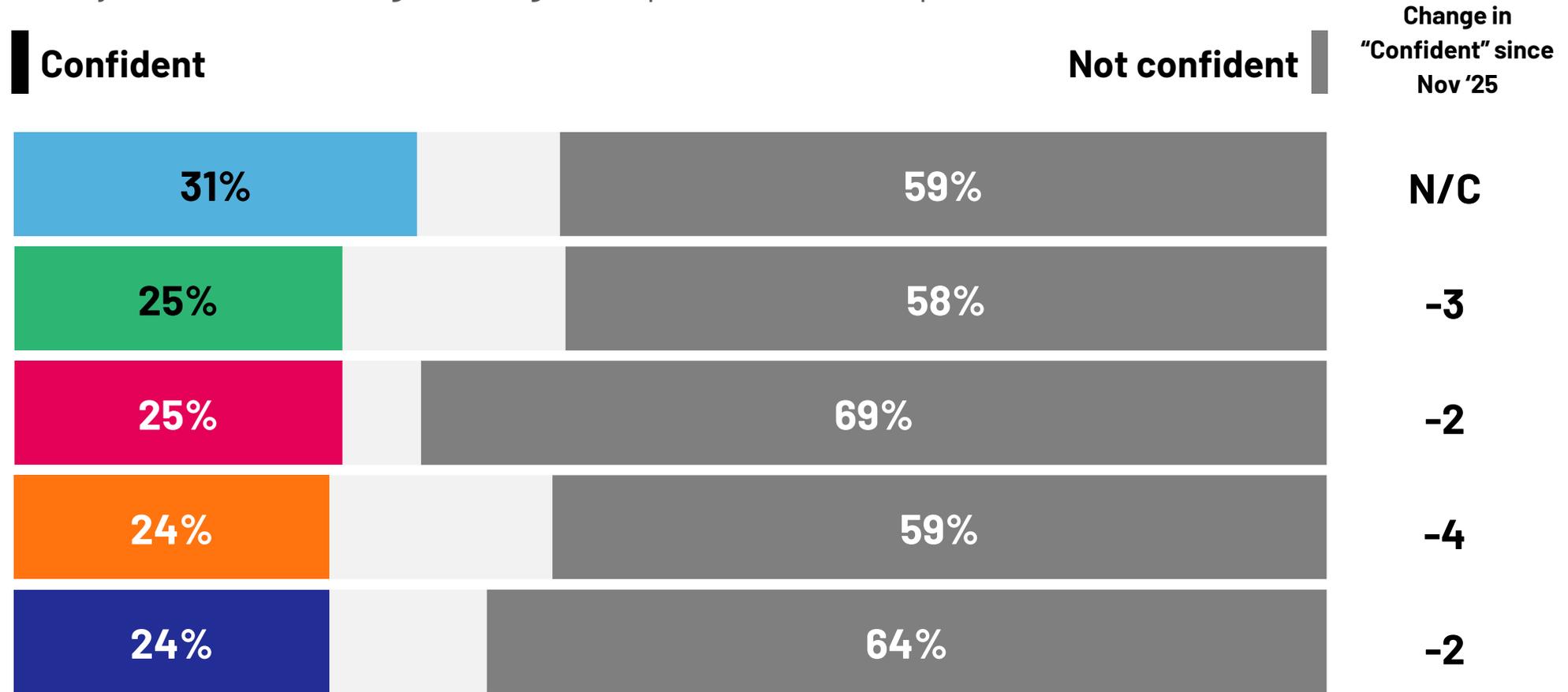
How confident, if at all are, you that ... have a good plan for changing Britain generally?



Base: 1,002 Online British adults aged 18-75, 20-23 February 2026

Britons are not confident that any of the main political parties have a good long-term plan for Britain's public services

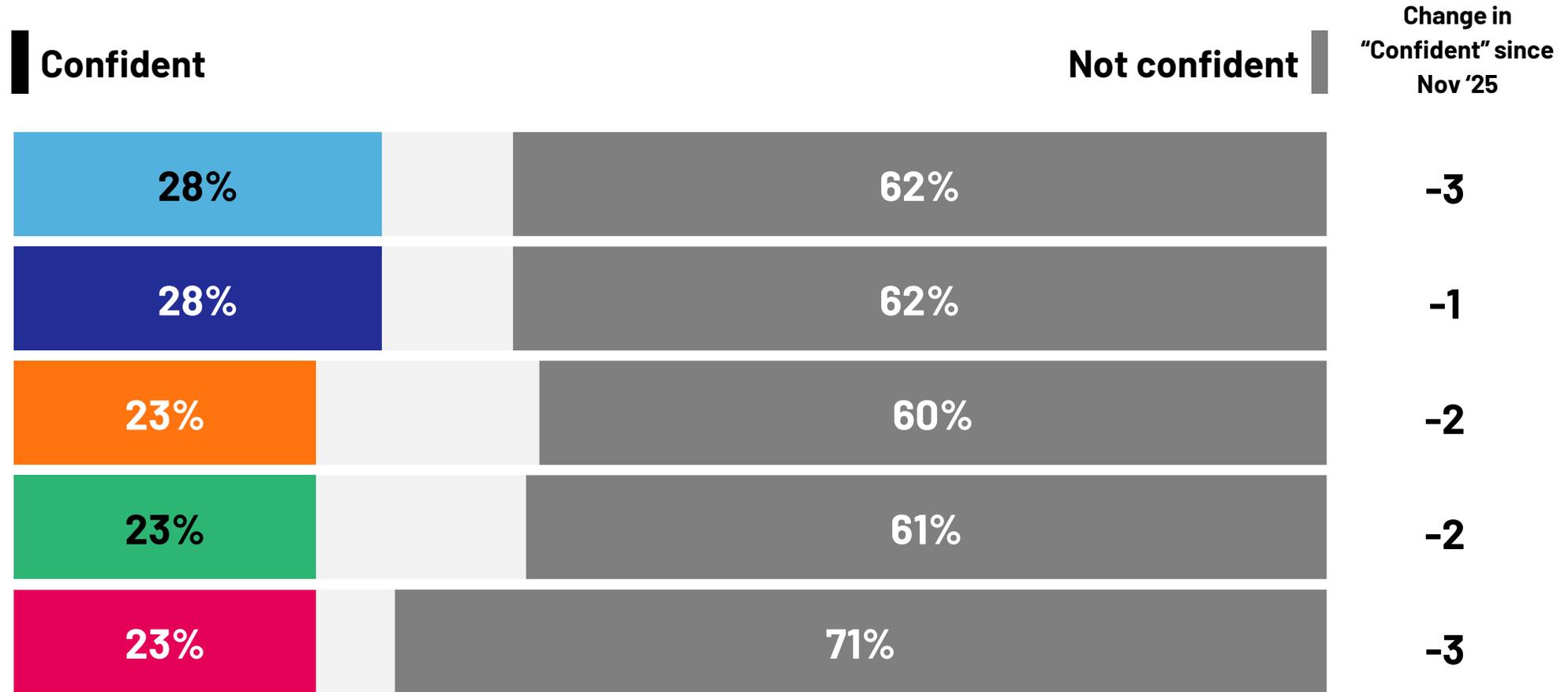
How confident, if at all are, you that ... have a good long-term plan for Britain's public services?



Base: 1,002 Online British adults aged 18-75, 20-23 February 2026

Britons are not confident that any of the main political parties will get the right balance between taxation, borrowing and public spending

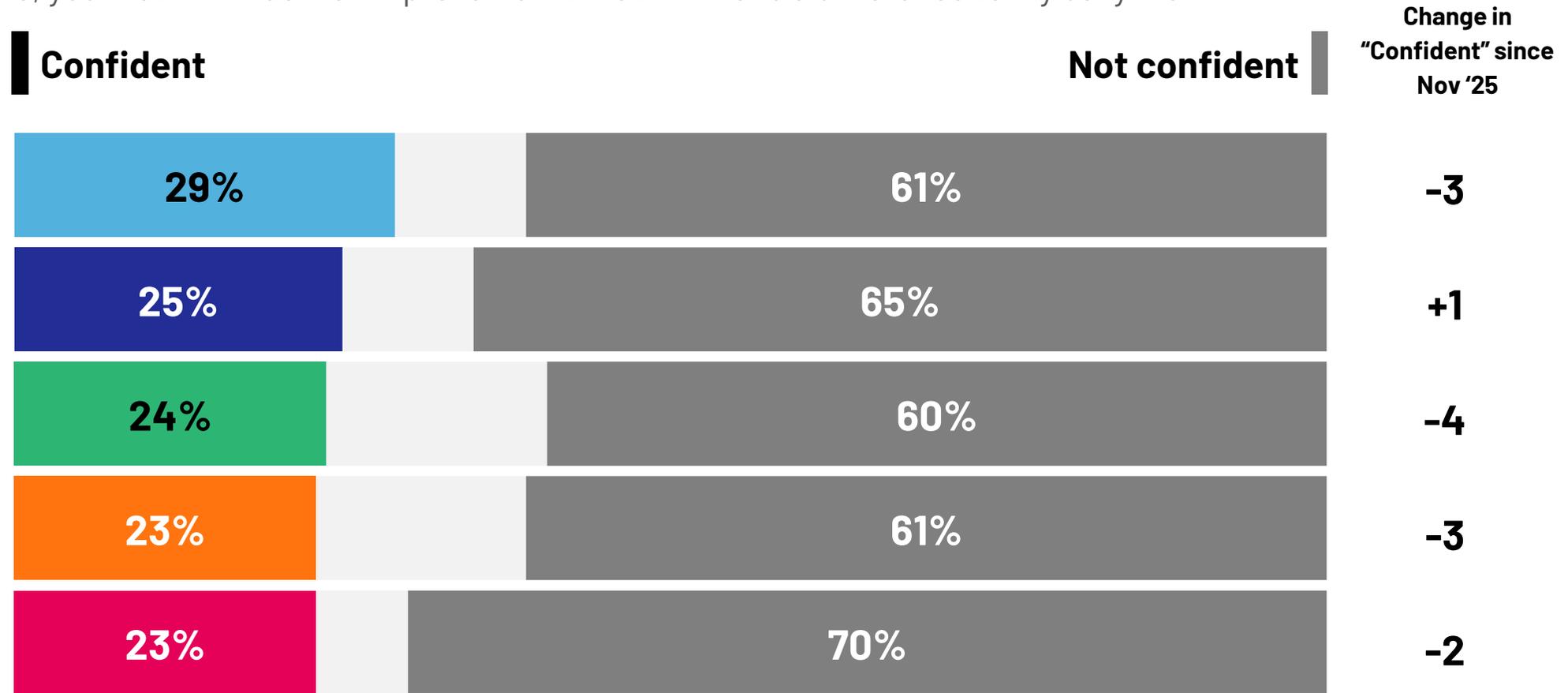
How confident, if at all are, you that ... will get the right balance between taxation, borrowing and public spending



Base: 1,002 Online British adults aged 18-75, 20-23 February 2026

Britons are not confident that any of the main political parties will deliver improvements that will make a difference to my daily life

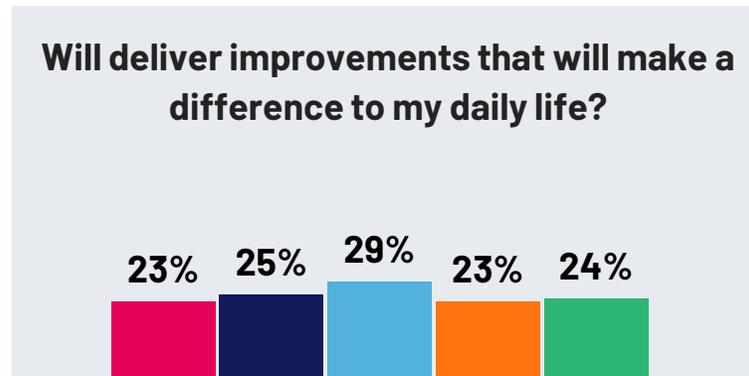
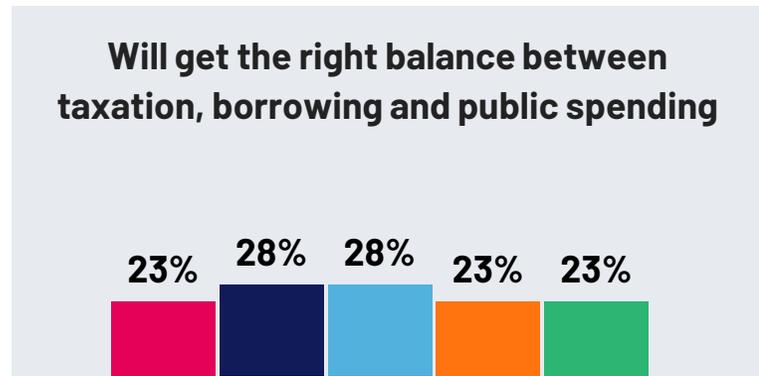
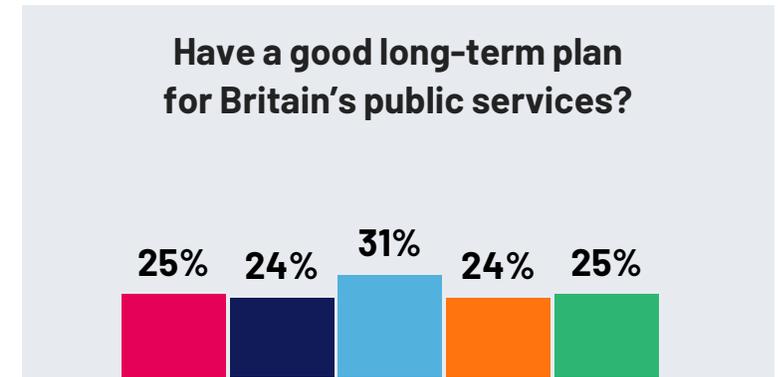
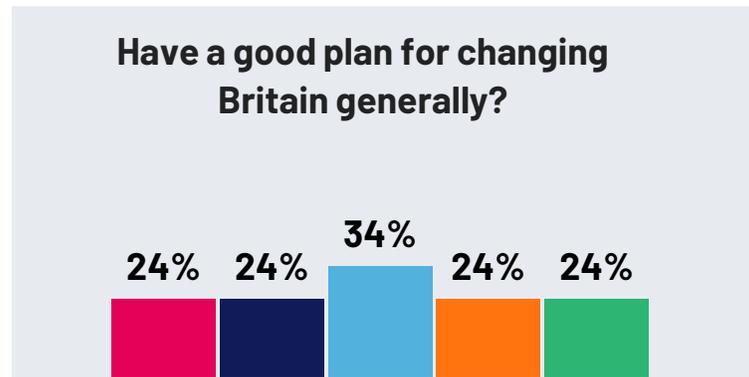
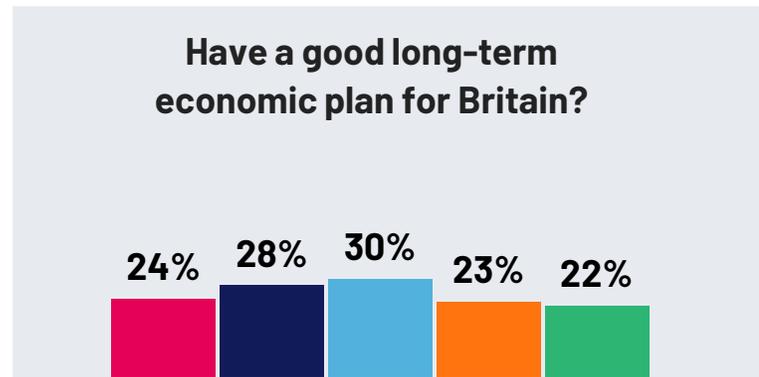
How confident, if at all are, you that ... will deliver improvements that will make a difference to my daily life



Base: 1,002 Online British adults aged 18-75, 20-23 February 2026

Do the main parties have good plans for...

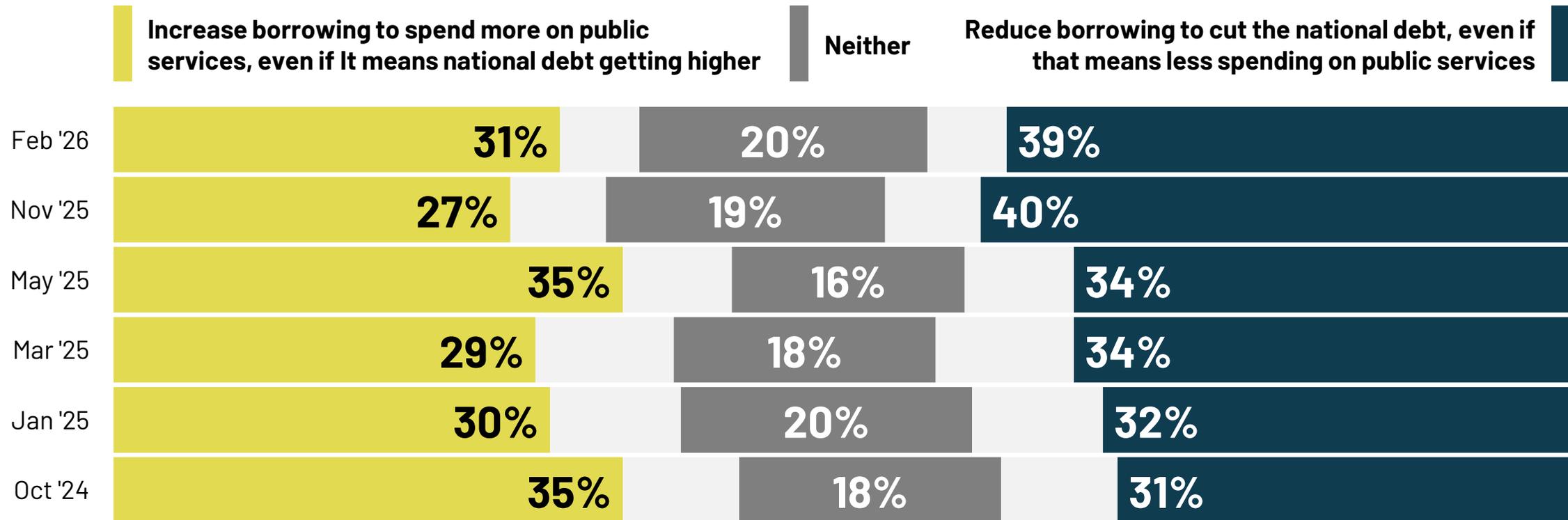
How confident, if at all are you that... % confident



Base: 1,002 Online British adults aged 18-75, 20-23 February 2026

Britons continue to prefer reducing borrowing to cut the national debt, even if it means less spending on public services, rather than increasing borrowing

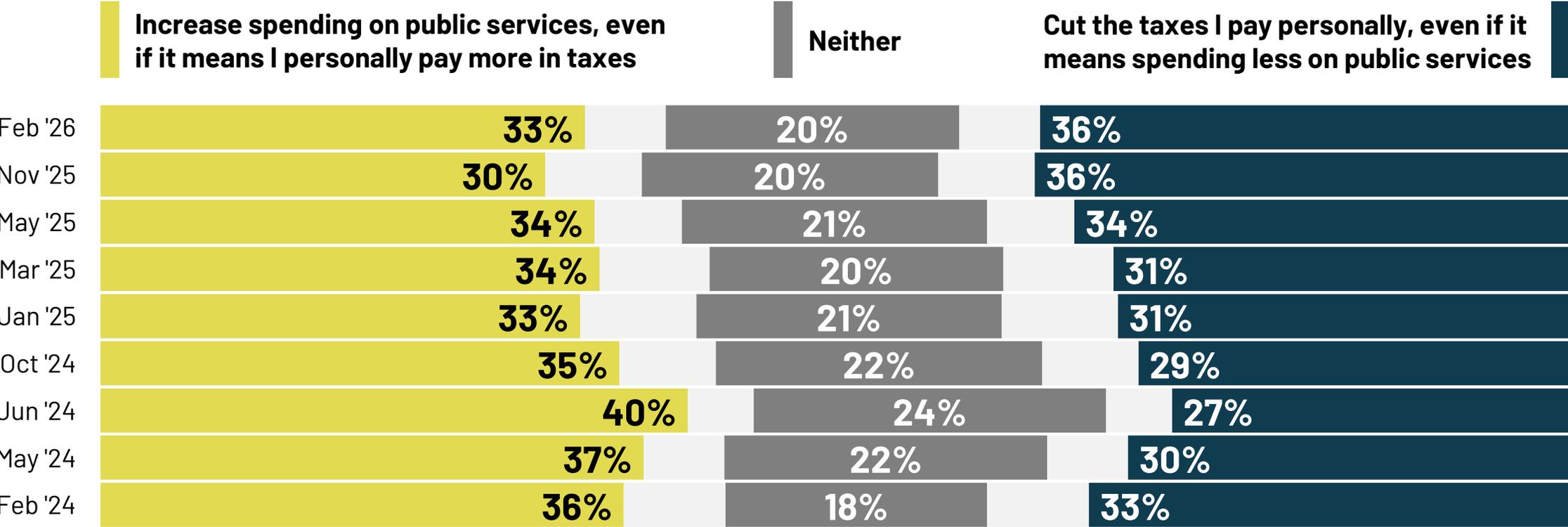
Imagine the Chancellor had the choice between increasing borrowing to spend more on public services, even if it means the national debt gets higher, or reducing borrowing to cut the national debt even if it means less spending on public services. Which of the following would you prefer?



Base: 1,002 Online British adults aged 18-75, 20-23 February 2026

Britons slightly prefer cutting taxes they pay even if it means spending less on public services, rather than increasing spending on public services if it meant they personally paid more in taxes.

Imagine the Chancellor had the choice between cutting taxes for individuals, meaning you personally pay less tax even if it means spending less on public services, or spending more money on public services, even if it means you personally paying more in taxes. Which of the following would you prefer?

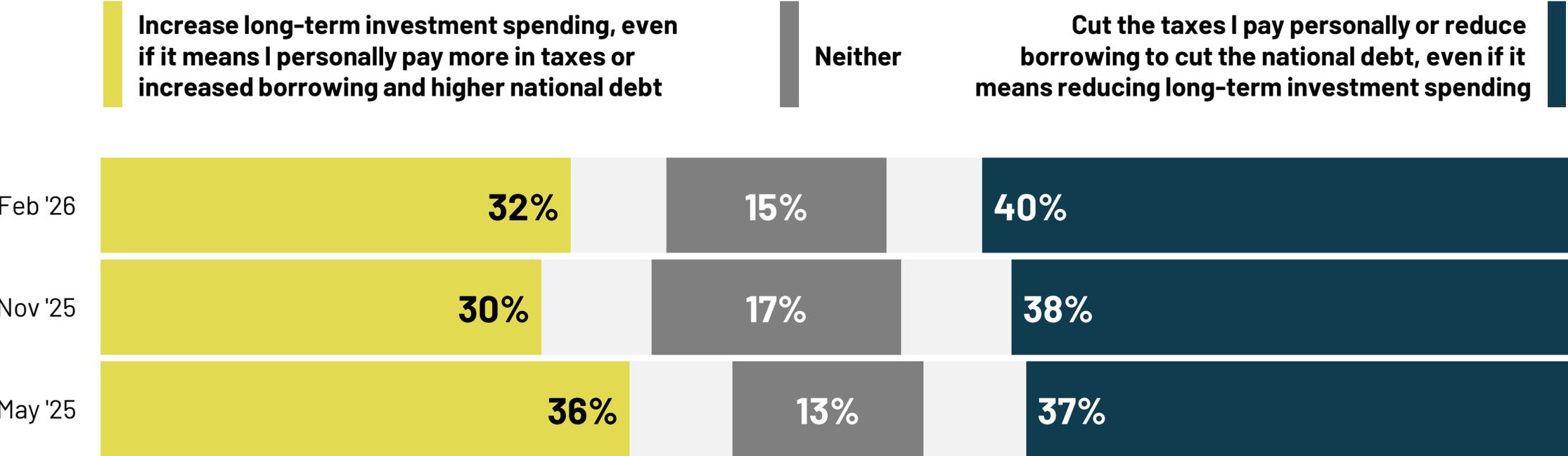


Base: 1,002 Online British adults aged 18-75, 20-23 February 2026



Britons prefer cutting taxes they pay or reducing borrowing to cut the national debt, even if it means reduce long-term investment spending

Imagine the Chancellor had the choice between spending more on long-term investment (e.g. buildings and equipment for hospitals or schools or roads or power and energy infrastructure, not day-to-day costs such as staff or pensions) even if that meant increasing taxes you personally pay or borrowing more, OR cutting the taxes you personally pay or reducing borrowing, even if that meant spending less on long-term investment. Which of the following would you prefer?



Base: 1,002 Online British adults aged 18-75, 20-23 February 2026



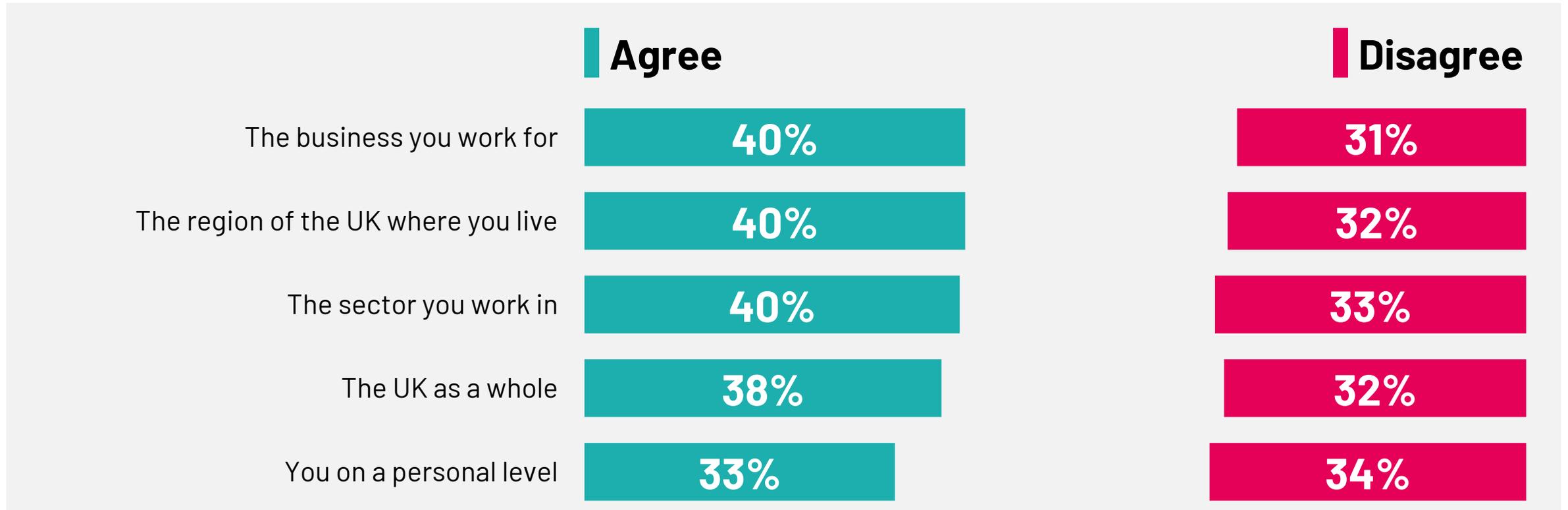
IPSOS Business polling

February 2026



Two in five businesses say the government's economic policies will benefit them, their sector, and their region

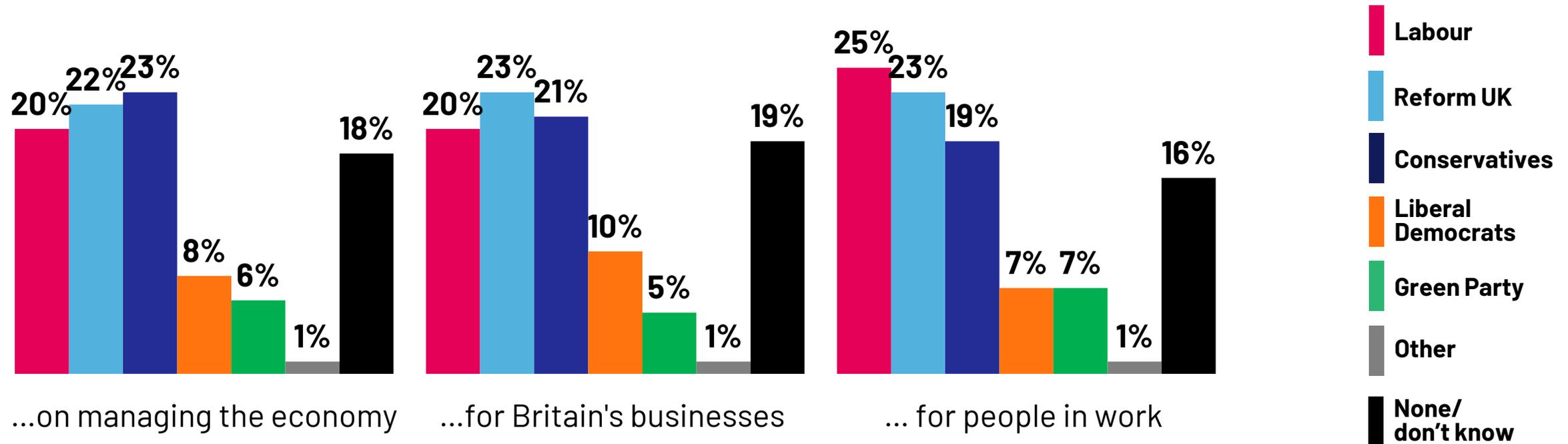
To what extent do you agree or disagree that the government has economic policies that will benefit...?



Base: 1,164 UK businesses with annual turnover £250,000+, senior financial business decision makers, 2 - 19 February 2026

Labour, Reform UK and the Conservatives are tied among businesses on having the best policies for them or managing the economy

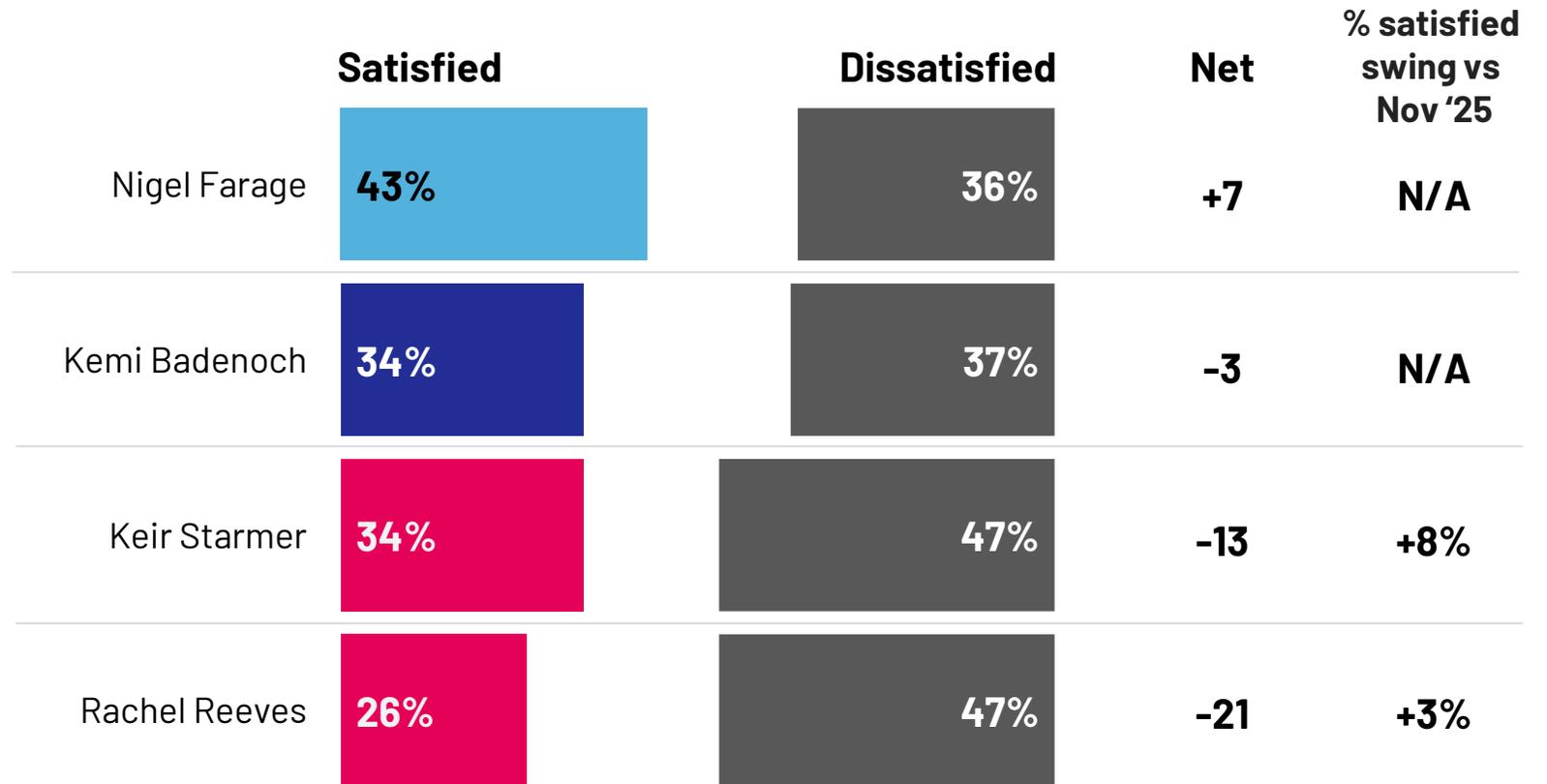
Which party, if any, do you think has the best policies ... ?



Base: 1,164 UK businesses with annual turnover £250,000+, senior financial business decision makers, 2 - 19 February 2026

Satisfaction with Starmer among businesses has increased since November, while only 1 in 4 businesses are satisfied with the Chancellor.

How satisfied or unsatisfied are you with the way each of the following are doing their job?

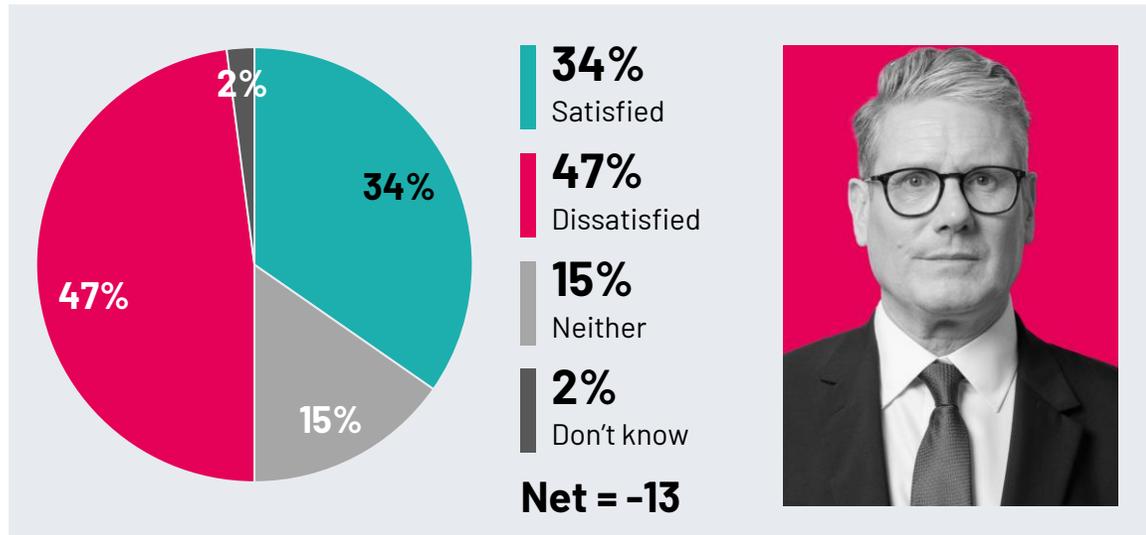


Base: 1,164 UK businesses with annual turnover £250,000+, senior financial business decision makers, 2 - 19 February 2026

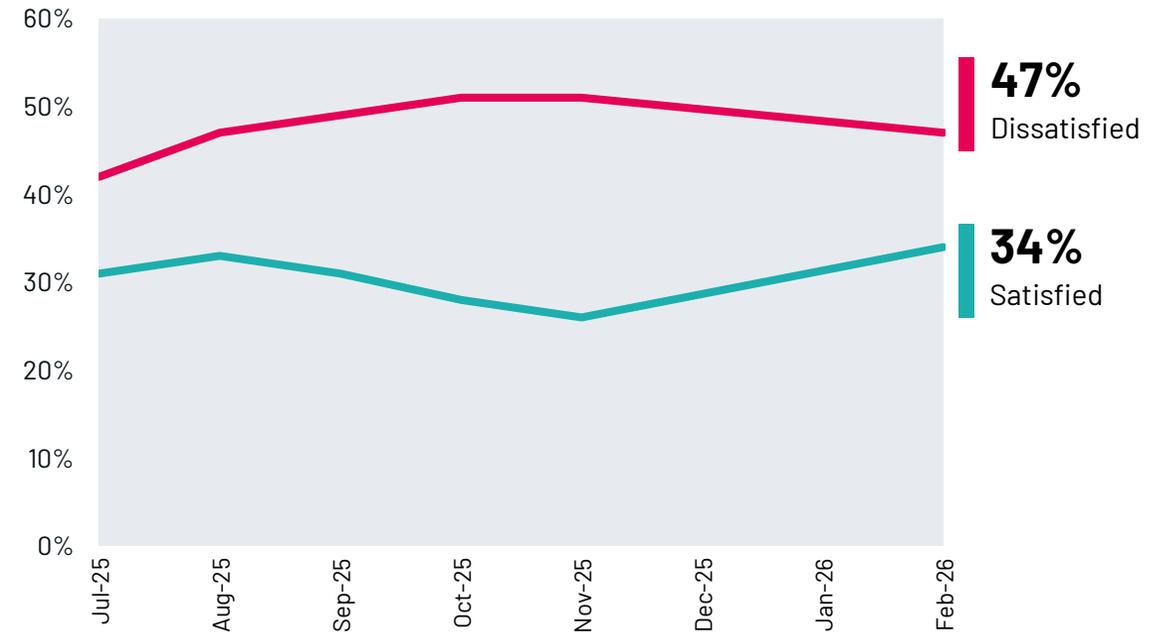
Keir Starmer: Satisfaction

How satisfied or unsatisfied are you with the way each of the following are doing their job? Keir Starmer as Prime Minister

February 2026



July 2025 – February 2026

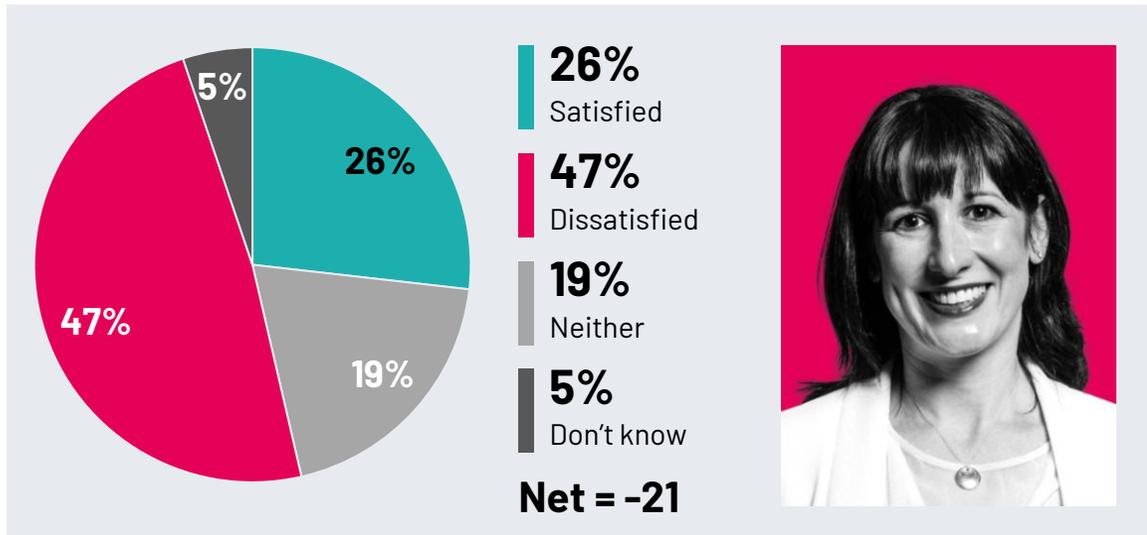


Base: 1,164 UK businesses with annual turnover £250,000+, senior financial business decision makers, 2 - 19 February 2026

Rachel Reeves: Satisfaction

How satisfied or unsatisfied are you with the way each of the following are doing their job? Rachel Reeves as Chancellor of the Exchequer

February 2026



July 2025 – February 2026



Base: 1,164 UK businesses with annual turnover £250,000+, senior financial business decision makers, 2 - 19 February 2026

Businesses are split on whether Keir Starmer should step down as Prime Minister

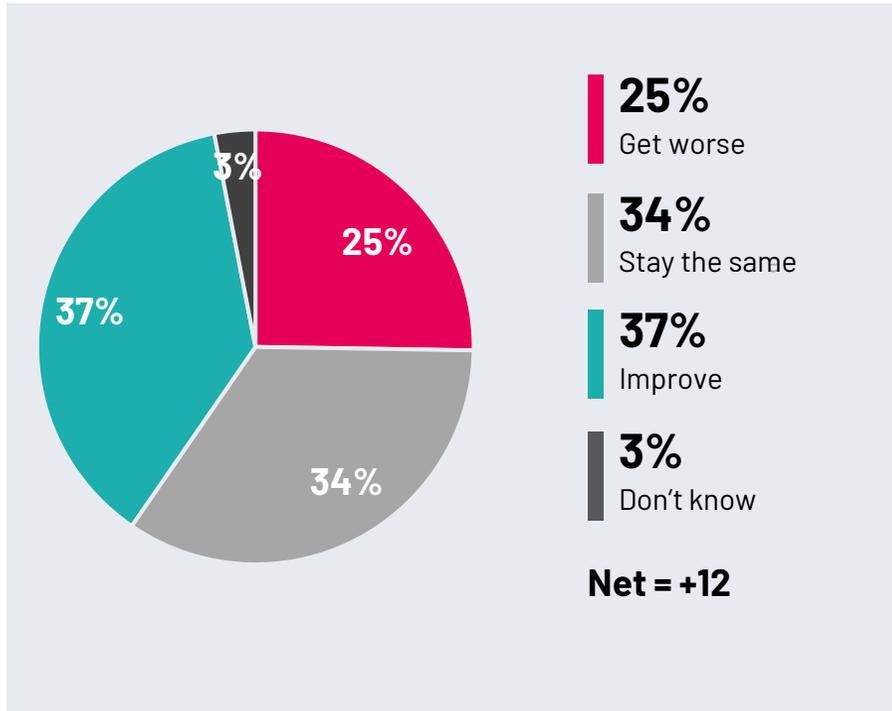
To what extent do you think Keir Starmer should continue as Prime Minister and Leader of the Labour party, or should he stand down and let someone else takeover?



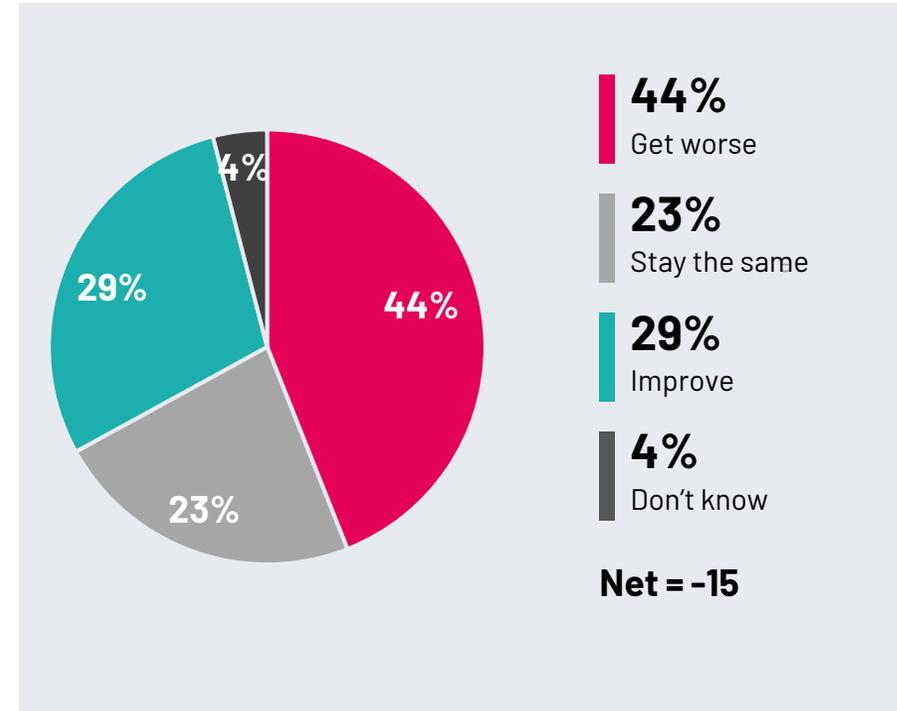
Base: 1,164 UK businesses with annual turnover £250,000+, senior financial business decision makers, 2 - 19 February 2026

Businesses are more positive about their own prospects than the economy

Do you think that the general **financial condition of your business** will improve, stay the same, or get worse over the next 12 months?



Do you think that the general **economic condition of the country** will improve, stay the same, or get worse over the next 12 months?



Base: 1,164 UK businesses with annual turnover £250,000+, senior financial business decision makers, 2 - 19 February 2026

Business economic outlook

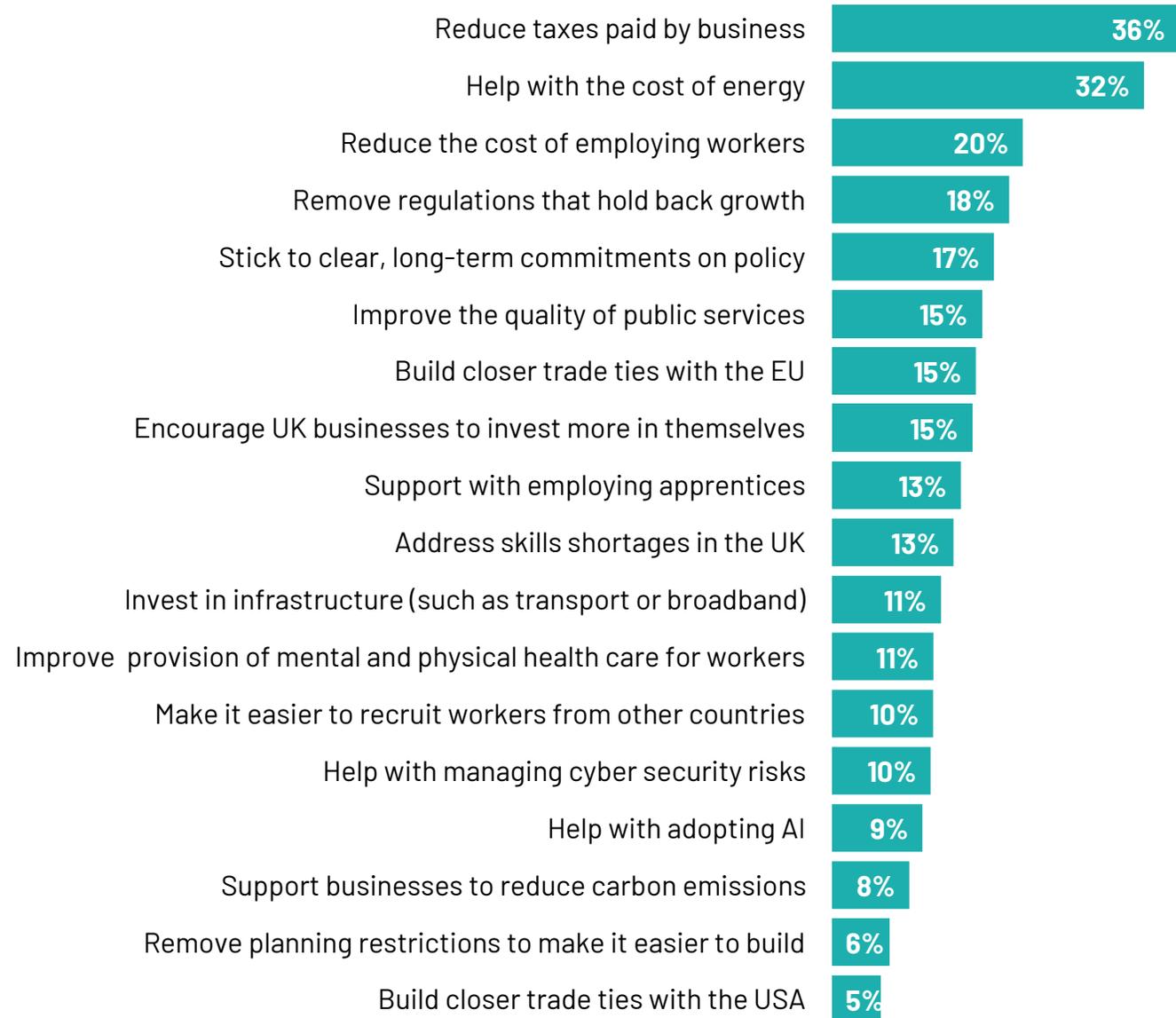
How concerned are you about the economic outlook over the next 6 months?



Base: 1,164 UK businesses with annual turnover £250,000+, senior financial business decision makers, 2 - 19 February 2026

Support with taxes and energy costs are the top priorities for businesses, followed by support with employment costs, removing regulations and commitments to long-term policy.

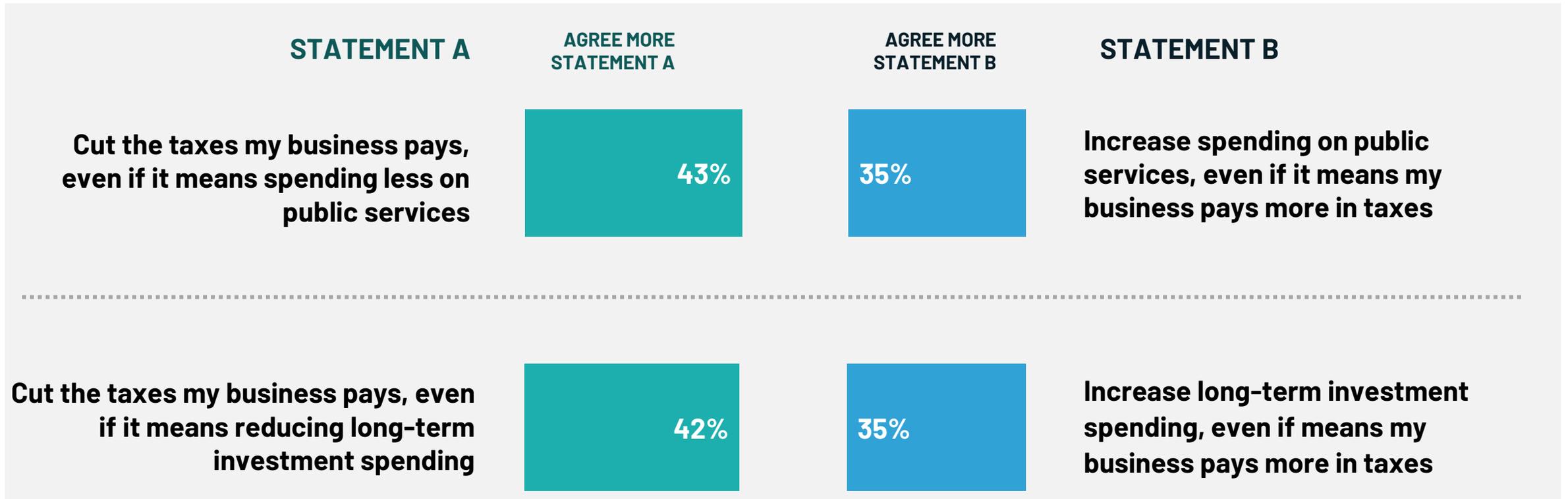
Which of the following do you think should be the top priorities for the UK Government to help support your business?
Please select up to 3.



Base: 1,164 UK businesses with annual turnover £250,000+, senior financial business decision makers, 2 - 19 February 2026

Businesses lean towards cutting taxes for businesses even if it means spending less on public services or reducing long-term investment spending – though a third would accept higher taxes

Which of the following would you prefer?



Base: 1,164 UK businesses with annual turnover £250,000+, senior financial business decision makers, 2 - 19 February 2026

Full questions: Imagine the Chancellor had the choice between cutting taxes for businesses, meaning your business pays less tax even if it means spending less on public services, or spending more money on public services, even if it means your business pays more in taxes. / Imagine the Chancellor had the choice between spending more on long-term investment (e.g. power and energy infrastructure, not day-to-day costs such as staff or pensions) even if that meant increasing the taxes your business pays, OR cutting the taxes your business pays, even if that meant spending less on long-term investment. Which would you prefer?



February 2026

Economy and business polling

For more information on the Ipsos Business
Opinion Omnibus :

[https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/business-
opinion-omnibus](https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/business-opinion-omnibus)

For more information

Gideon Skinner

Research Director

gideon.skinner@ipsos.com

Mike Clemence

Engagement Lead

michael.clemence@ipsos.com

Alex Bogdan

Research Director

alex.bogdan@ipsos.com

Oliver Fenton

Associate Director

oliver.fenton@ipsos.com