



Public attitudes to the provision of adult social care in the UK

Key findings from our poll of UK opinion
to the provision of social care.

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Summary

- Adult social care is seen as a **lower priority** for the government compared to other issues, such as reducing the cost of living, investing more in NHS capacity and enforcing stricter border controls to reduce immigration.
- Most Brits are **concerned about how they will pay** for social care in the future, but have 85% have not made plans for it.
- There is a general consensus that the current means test system is **unfair** because the savings threshold for getting financial help for adult social care is too low.
- Most believe that the government should be responsible for paying adult social care to some extent and that they should be responsible for organising it, alongside local authorities.
- More than half support the option for a compulsory **government-run insurance scheme**.

Findings

Perceived importance and level of concern around Adult Social Care

Among the general population, investing in social care was seen as a low priority for the UK Government when compared to reducing the cost of living for households and investing in NHS capacity.

When asked to select the most important issues for the UK government to tackle to improve public life, the four most important issues were:

- Reducing the cost of living for households (43%)
- Investing more in NHS capacity (40%)
- Stricter border controls to reduce immigration (35%)
- Growing the UK's economy (30%)

In comparison, around 1-in-10 (12%) selected investing more in social care. This was a slightly greater priority for those aged 65+ (20%).

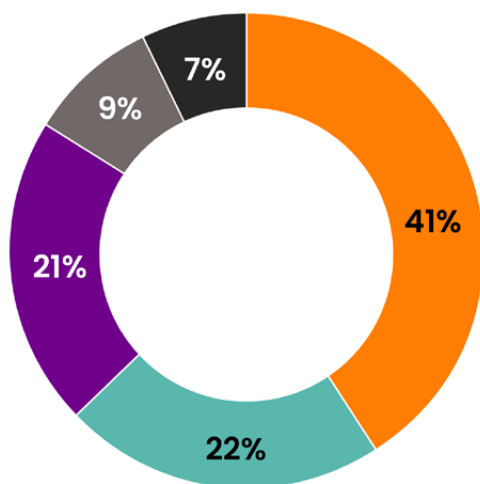
Only a small minority of adults thought the UK government should prioritise investing more in education (10%), reducing unemployment (9%), and national debt (7%).

- Affordable housing was seen as more of a priority for 18–24-year-olds (40%) compared to the average (19%).
 - Reducing the cost of living was seen as more of a priority by younger adults than older adults (52% for 18–24-year-olds vs 33% for 65+).
 - Growing the UK's economy was seen as a more of a priority for males (40%) than females (22%).
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Planning for Adult Social Care

Most people report that they have not made any plans for how they would pay for adult social care they may need in the future, and that they are concerned about paying for it.

- 85% of adults have not made any plans for how they would pay for adult social care in the future – this drops slightly to 75% for those aged 65+.
- 62% of adults are very/concerned about paying for adult social care they may need when they're older, with 21% expressing that they are very concerned.
- Overall, concern seems to steadily increase with age. For 18–24-year-olds, 41% express concern, which increases to 54% at 35–44 and 77% at 65+.
- Those who currently receive adult social care or have a relative who receives it were more likely to express concern (75%) compared to those who have no experience of adult social care (45%).



How concerned are you about paying for any adult social care that you may need when you are older?



Discussing social care with family and friends

The majority of adults feel comfortable discussing plans for their care with their family and friends, but slightly less comfortable discussing how it will be paid for.

- 75% of adults reported feeling comfortable discussing plans for their care with family and friends, while 66% reported feeling comfortable discussing how it would be paid for.
- Young people were less likely to feel comfortable, with 69% of those aged 18-24 reporting that they'd be comfortable discussing plans for their care compared to 79% of those aged 65+.

Social care concerns for family and friends

The general population express concern about how their friends and family will afford the costs of any adult social care they may require in the future.

- Two thirds of adults expressed concern (67%), with 23% expressing that they are very concerned.
- Those who currently receive adult social care or have a relative who currently receives adult social care were more likely to express concern (80%) than those who have no experience of adult social care (62%).

Awareness of Adult Social Care provision

The general population think that local councils are currently most responsible for organising adult social care.

- When asked who is the most responsible for organising adult social care in the UK, the majority selected local councils (69%), followed by relatives/family members of those that require care (34%), National government (28%), and the NHS (25%).

Responsibility for providing social care

The general population favoured shared responsibility between national and local government for organising social care, with some appetite for a shared role with the private sector.

Adults were asked to consider private sector involvement in social care, and to choose whether the national government or the private sector should be mainly responsible for organising social care. 53% selected national government, 43% selected both national government and private sector and just 4% selected private sector on its own.

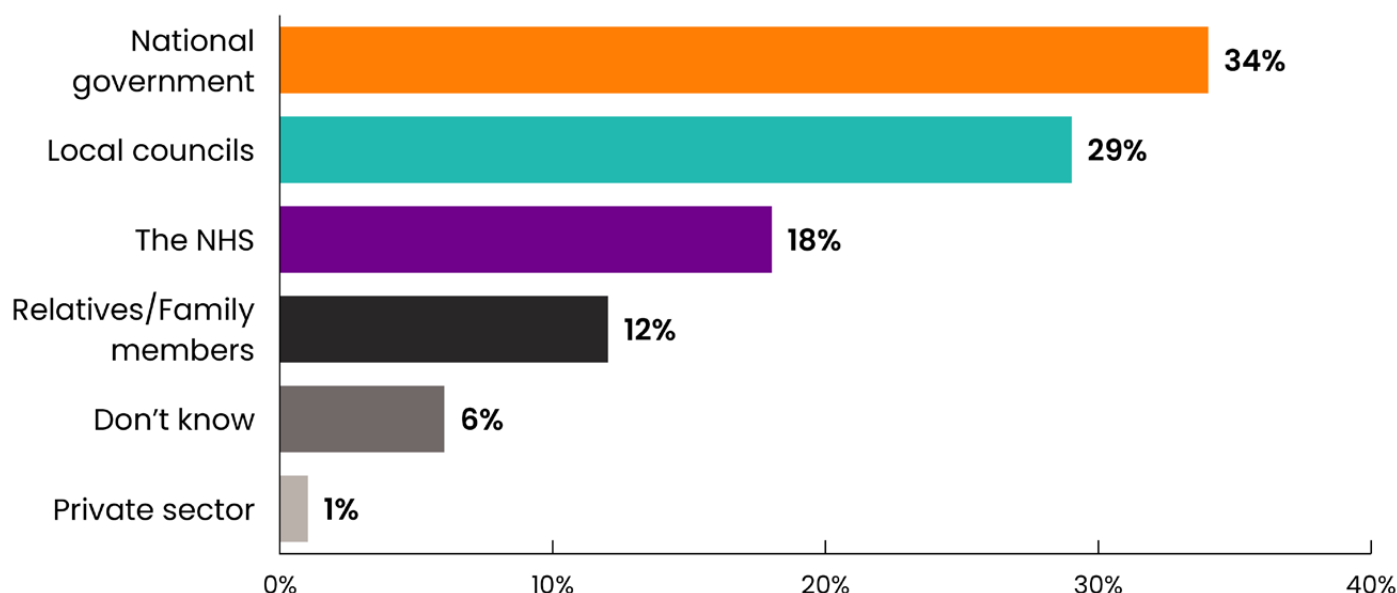
- When given the choice of who should be responsible for organising adult care, around a third selected National government (34%), followed by local councils (29%), and the NHS (18%).

Private sector involvement

Around half agree that the government should have responsibility for organising social care private sector involvement, whilst four in ten favour joint responsibility between government and private sector.

- When asked to choose between national government and the private sector responsibility, 53% selected National government, 43% selected that both national government and private sector should have responsibility for organising social care and just 4% selected private sector on its own.
 - › Of those who thought the government should be responsible for adult social care, six in ten agreed that the national government and local authorities should both be equally responsible for organising adult social care (59%), compared to just one having sole responsibility (national government, 22%; local authorities, 19%).
- Those who had a relative likely to require adult social care in the next 5 years were also more likely to favour government responsibility (60%) compared to those with no experience of adult social care (49%).
- 18–24-year-olds were more likely to favour some private sector involvement (59%) than the other age groups.

If you could choose, who should be most responsible for adult social care? (Single choice)



Views on current means tested system

The general population think that the current system is unfair because the upper capital limit is too low. The current system means that if you have savings of under £23,250, you may receive help towards some or all of the cost of your social care.

- 61% thought that the current system is unfair, with 36% selecting unfair and 25% selecting very unfair.
- Of those who thought that the current system is unfair, almost all (97%) thought this was because the limit was too low.

Views on maximum limits on adult social care payments

Almost two thirds think that it is unfair there is no upper limit to how much people pay towards to the cost of their own adult social care over their lifetime (61%). The majority think that there should be a maximum limit to how much any person must pay.

- 61% thought it was unfair that there was no upper limit, with 38% selecting unfair and 23% selecting very unfair.
- 82% thought that there should be a maximum limit to how much any individual person has to pay for adult social care over their lifetime.

Support for a compulsory government-run insurance scheme

- Overall, the general population appear to support the option of a compulsory government-run insurance scheme, where everyone contributes monthly payments towards a dedicated fund used exclusively to pay for all adult social care. In comparison, people are less interested in the alternative option of buying private insurance to help fund any adult social care.
- Over half (59%) of adults expressed support for a government-run insurance scheme, with 40% indicating that they slightly support it and 19% indicating that they strongly support it. Those aged 65+ were more likely to support this scheme, with 78% expressing support.
- In comparison, 40% expressed interest in the option of buying private insurance with only 6% stating that they were very interested in this option.
- Those aged 65+ showed the most interest in the option of private insurance (45%) compared to 18-24 year olds (33%). Those who currently receive adult social care or have a relative who receives it were more likely to express interest (44%) compared to those with no experience of adult social care (36%).

Polling Methodological Note

A representative sample of 1,285 adults in Great Britain was interviewed between the afternoon of 8th April and the morning of 14th April 2025. Our sample was drawn from Verian's random sample panel Public Voice.

This panel is used extensively for social research commissioned by government, academic and third sector organisations, including those based in the US and Europe. Membership of this panel is restricted to those living in a controlled sample of UK addresses drawn from the Royal Mail's master database. This restrictive method of panel-building is relatively expensive but will ordinarily provide benefits in terms of sample and data quality when compared with a panel that any adult resident in the UK can join. Although the short-period fieldwork web-only protocol used for this poll is much more limited than is typical for a social research survey, the demographic and political composition of the sample is only modestly degraded compared to what could be obtained using the full social research data collection protocol (two to three weeks using both web and telephone interview modes).

We used this random sampling approach for our 2024 General Election polling, and firmly believe that this enabled us to generate the most accurate voting intentions estimate [ahead of the election.](#)

The data was weighted in multiple stages. First, design weighting was applied to account for variations in sampling probability (both for selection into the Public Voice panel and for selection into this specific poll). Second, non-response modelling was used to account for variations in response probability that are associated with the extensive profiling data held about all Public Voice panel members. Finally, the data was calibrated to match population totals for age, gender, 2024 General Election voting patterns, education, region, and likelihood to vote in the next General Election. Further information about the benchmarks used in the final weighting stage can be found on page 3.

The response rate for this poll was 22% (1,285 completes out of 5,719 Public Voice panellists invited to take part in the survey).

About Verian

Verian is a world leading, independent research, evidence, evaluation, and communications agency, providing services to government and the public realm.

We work with our clients to help solve the next generation of public policy challenges. With offices across Europe, APAC and in the US, our consultants and researchers are supported by our unique global data ecosystem.

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