



TENT

PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF THE REFUGEE CRISIS

UNITED KINGDOM
JANUARY 2016



TENT

The TENT Foundation commissioned global research agency AudienceNet to conduct in-depth research into public perceptions of the refugee crisis.

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES



SHIFTING PUBLIC OPINION

Watershed moments in the evolution of the refugee crisis can have a profound effect on public opinion.

The widespread dissemination of the photo of three year old Aylan al-Kurdi lying dead on a beach in Turkey provoked a profound surge in empathy and a desire to help, while terrorist attacks foment an atmosphere of fear and suspicion.

LONGITUDINAL PICTURE

AudienceNet's mixed-method research provides in-depth insights and tracks more generalized trends over time.

In this way, an evidence base is built for communications strategies and policy approaches that work best in proactively promoting progressive and humanitarian responses in the public.

BEYOND FEAR












This research project seeks to address the fears present among the public and to move beyond them. It examines the kinds of positive messaging to which people respond and tracks the evolution of this response over time.

It provides a basis for governments, international organizations and NGOs to show true leadership in bringing a message of solidarity to the public.

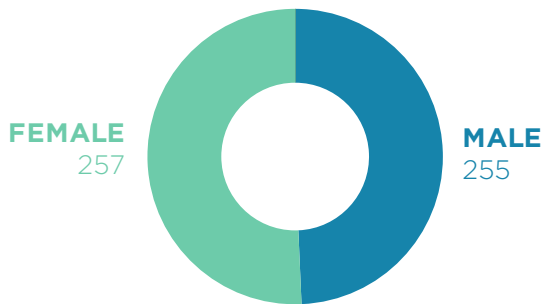
SAMPLE



TOTAL SAMPLE
6,433
(Nov'15: 11,128)

										
Australia 511 (1,019)	Canada 506 (1,057)	Germany 512 (1,037)	Greece 509 (1,063)	Hungary 493 (1,080)	Serbia 521 (1,070)	Sweden 516 (1,059)	Turkey 513 (1,059)	UK 512 (1,152)	UK 512 (1,583)	France 1,070 (N/A)

GENDER: UK



Following the terror attacks on November 13th in Paris TENT commissioned a re-contact survey in order to explore possible changes in perceptions of the refugee crisis. The re-contact survey is comprised of half of the respondents from the nationally representative surveys conducted in November 2015.



QUANTITATIVE PROFILING

AudienceNet ran an interactive online survey in each country identified by TENT.

The sample involved re-contacts at random with half of the respondents who took part in the original research.

The original research was statistically and demographically representative of the population above the age of 18 years, with strict quotas to ensure the correct representation of: age, gender, region and household income.

QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS

We propose recruiting representatives of the key segments identified in Part 1 into a week-long interactive online community forum. The forum will comprise 40 respondents per country.

The forums will be moderated in the respondents' own language by AudienceNet's team of highly experienced qualitative researchers and will include a series of questions, discussion topics and research tasks to be agreed with TENT.

CONNECTED & INTERACTIVE

With round the clock operations from our London, Washington DC & Melbourne offices, genuine 24/7 dialogue is established with the target groups.

The steering group can observe the platform at anytime and to contribute to research tasks/discussion topics, in real-time, via direct links to the insights platform and moderators.

'Sleep mode' will be maintained beyond the initial phase of insights, at no cost to the client, i.e. the ability to wake the community up at any subsequent stage.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – UNITED KINGDOM



POLITICAL LANDSCAPE IN THE UK

The period from the first launch to the subsequent re-issue of the survey saw strongly worded discussions, not just about the UK's role in the refugee crisis, but also her wider role in Europe, with talks of a 'Brexit'.

Ministers in the UK agreed to resettle 20,000 Syrian refugees, but were criticized both by those who didn't think the UK was doing enough and those who worried the UK wouldn't be able to manage the amount of refugees entering the country.

Home Secretary Teresa May announced measures to limit the right to claim asylum amid criticism from refugee groups. All the while, thousands of refugees are stranded in the French port of Calais, hoping for transit to the UK.

CATEGORIZATION

AudienceNet divided respondents into segments based on their perceptions of refugees relative to economic, security and financial matters as well as one's sense of responsibility to help.

This information was used to profile respondents as "overtly positive", "overtly negative" and the mainstream of those with "mixed views". These were combined with other demographic indicators of age, gender and income to get a full picture of public opinion.

THE BRITISH PUBLIC

For the November survey, the British were amongst the most negative towards refugee assistance, surpassed only by the Hungarians. By January, they were overtaken by Germans and Americans. Polls indicated that there was a slump in support for refugee relief after the November 13 attacks in Paris.

Overall, Young Britons were much more overtly positive than older cohorts, while those on low and middle incomes were the most likely to hold negative views.

The strong majority of UK respondents said they would be happy for their country take in a quota of refugees, but they were not prepared to open the borders for an unlimited number.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - UNITED KINGDOM



PERCEPTION OF REFUGEES

British respondents understood the severity of the refugee crisis, with a large majority saying it was the worst crisis since World War II.

Most people in the UK recognized that the refugee crisis was caused by war in Syria, however there were also many who thought the crisis was caused by people who were seeking better economic opportunities in wealthier countries.

In spite of this, the British were among the most likely to think that refugees were willing to work hard and not just looking for handouts.

RESPONSES TO VARIOUS MESSAGES

Very few indicated that they had changed their opinion on refugee relief in recent months. Most of those who had changed their perspective had become less sympathetic.

Those who had become more sympathetic, were influenced by news reports and were affected by seeing pictures of dead refugees. Those who had become more negative towards the refugee crisis, stated a fear of increased security risks with the arrival of refugees.

The media therefore has a strong role to play in increasing public awareness about the refugee crisis.

A NARRATIVE FOR NEXT STEPS

The media and high profile politicians have had a role to play in this with saber-rattling and loose talk conflating victims of terrorism with the very perpetrators from whom they flee. The UK press diverged considerably between those who advocated greater support for refugees and those who spoke of “threats” to the UK’s borders.

The government’s political wrangling at EU level also inhibits effective coordination with continental European neighbors, further exacerbating the stagnation and slow progress in ameliorating the plight of refugees.



▲
SECTION 1
—
**RESPONDENT
PROFILING**

CHALLENGES OF CATEGORIZATION



BEYOND DEMOGRAPHY AND POLITICAL CLEAVAGE

Robust analysis of public perceptions of the refugee crisis involves a much more nuanced approach to categorization and segmentation than traditional polling and market research.

Demographics and political perspective are important but so are the truths behind other stated opinions.

A FULL PROFILE

AudienceNet has compiled the most important data from across the U.K. The results allow for cross analysis based on nationality, gender, age, household income and political orientation.

There is also significant intelligence on media consumption and personal preoccupations available in this report

REFUGEE CRISIS IN SHARP FOCUS

In spite of the wealth of other data available, these seemed insufficient for adequate categorization of survey respondents.

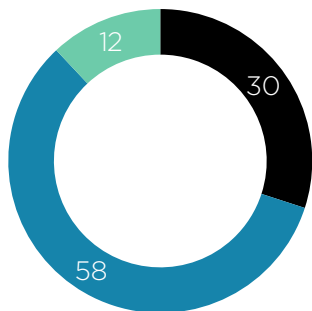
AudienceNet segmented respondents based on stated opinion in 4 categories: perceived responsibility to help refugees; economic considerations; security; and attitudes to types of financial assistance offered to refugees.

SEGMENTATION FACTORS

RESPONSIBILITY TO HELP

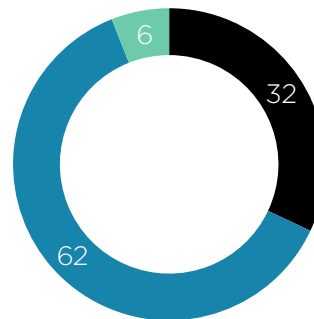


INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE



- My country has no responsibility to accept refugees
- I would be willing for my country to take in a quota of refugees
- I would be willing for my country to take in any number of refugees

UK



- My country has no responsibility to accept refugees
- I would be willing for my country to take in a quota of refugees
- I would be willing for my country to take in any number of refugees

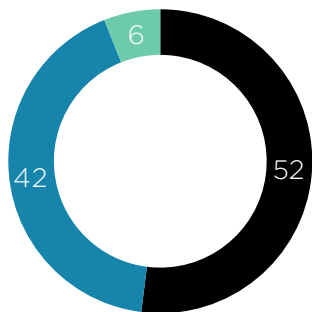
QUESTION: Which statement best represents your position? BASE: 6,433

SEGMENTATION FACTORS

ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

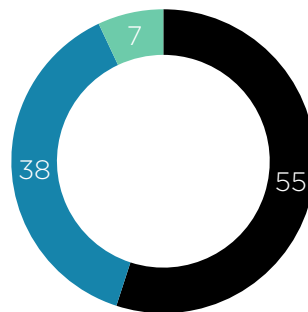


INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE



- Refugees are a burden on the economies of countries that accept them
- Refugees can positively contribute to the economies of countries that accept them
- New arrivals from other countries benefit our economy

UK



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- Refugees can positively contribute to the economies of countries that accept them
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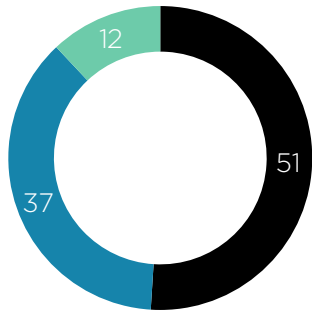
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SEGMENTATION FACTORS

SECURITY

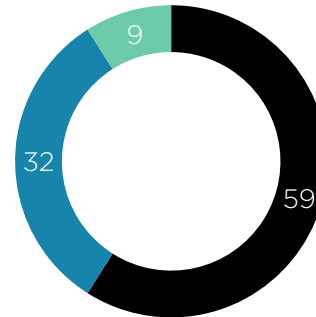


INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE



- The more refugees my country accepts, the greater risk to our security
- The risk from refugees is a legitimate concern but can be effectively managed
- Refugees pose no risk to my country's security

UK



- The more refugees my country accepts, the greater risk to our security
- The risk from refugees is a legitimate concern but can be effectively managed
- Refugees pose no risk to my country's security

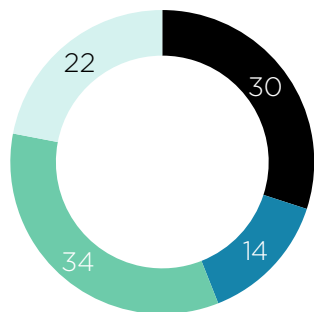
QUESTION: Which statement best represents your position? BASE: 6,433

SEGMENTATION FACTORS

FINANCIAL REASONS

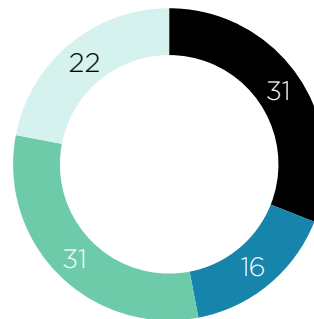


INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE



- Not willing to provide any financial support
- Willing to donate to charities, but not via taxes used by the government to support refugees
- Happy for the government to provide support for refugees, but not willing to donate to charities
- Willing to donate to charities in addition to support provided by the government

UK

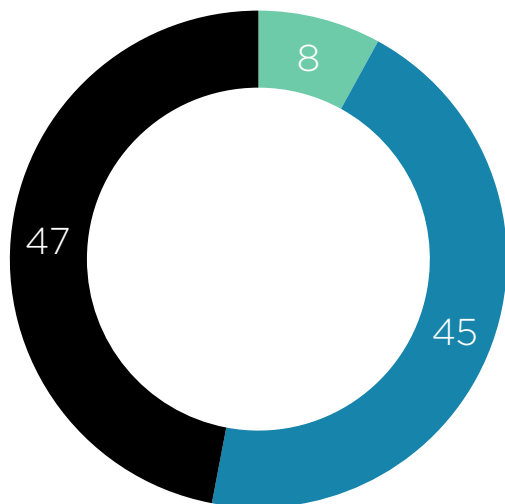


- Not willing to provide any financial support
- Willing to donate to charities, but not via taxes used by the government to support refugees
- Happy for the government to provide support for refugees, but not willing to donate to charities
- Willing to donate to charities in addition to support provided by the government

QUESTION: Which statement best represents your position? BASE: 6,433

ATTITUDES TOWARDS REFUGEES

UK



8% OVERTLY POSITIVE

Answered positioning questions positively or neutrally with no negative responses

45% MIXED VIEWS

Mixture of positive, negative & neutral responses. The priority target audience

47% OVERTLY NEGATIVE

Answered positioning questions negatively or neutrally with no positive responses

QUESTION(S): Based on a points system attributed to the answers in the position single choice questions (%) BASE: 512

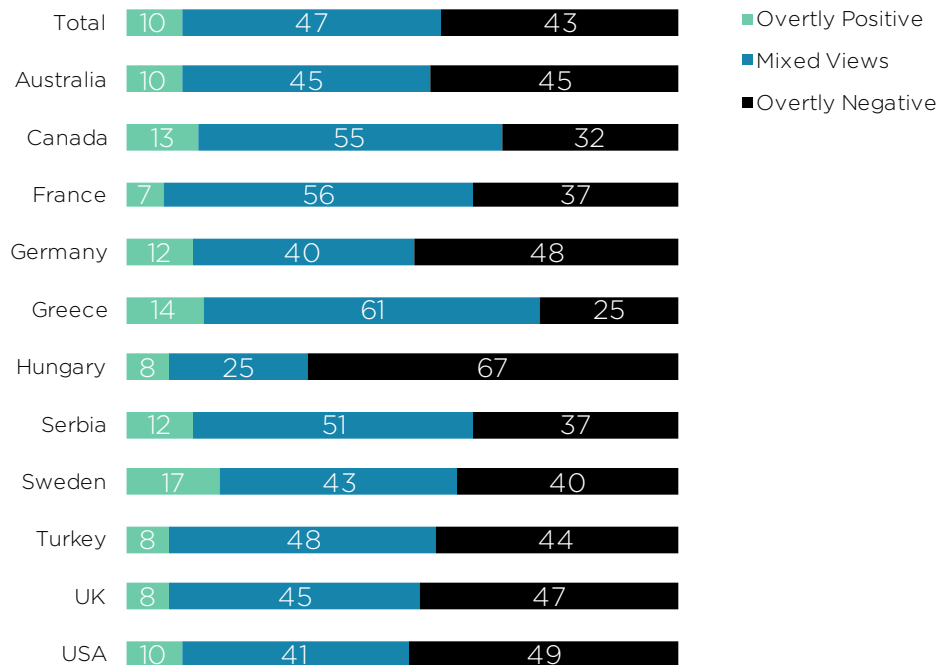
COMPARED TO OTHER COUNTRIES

ATTITUDES TOWARDS REFUGEES

In the January 2016 survey, 8% of U.K. respondents had overtly negative attitudes towards refugees, compared to 10% in the November 2015 survey.

A few other countries such as Germany and Sweden had become significantly more negative in their views since the first survey. The Germans went from having 35% with overtly negative views to 48%.

The Greeks were the least likely to be negative (25%) and the Swedish were most likely to be in the 'overtly positive' segment (17%).

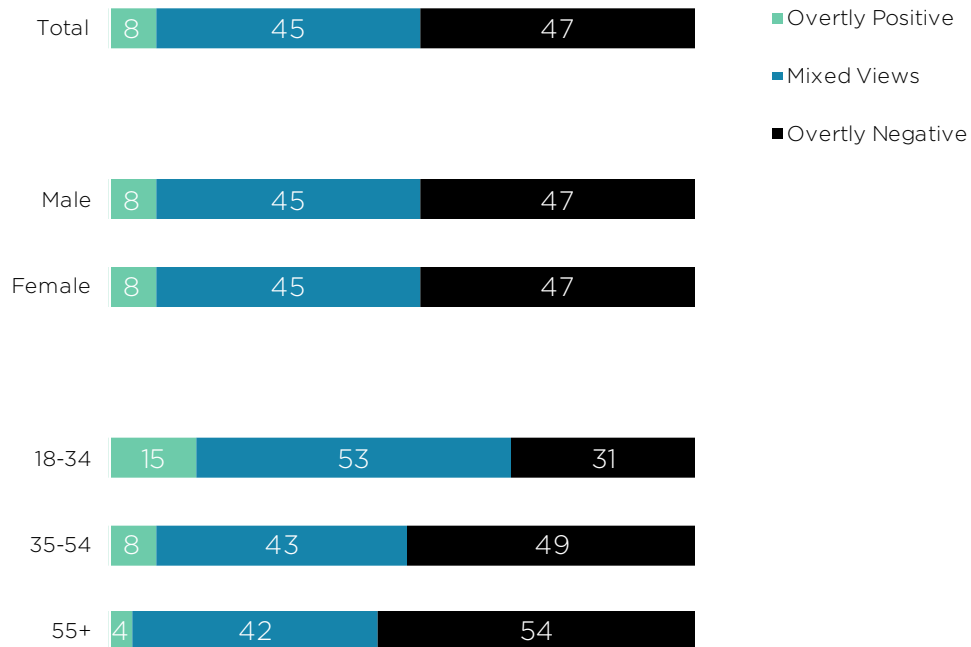


SEGMENTS BY GENDER AND AGE

ATTITUDES TOWARDS REFUGEES

There were no differences by gender in the U.K.

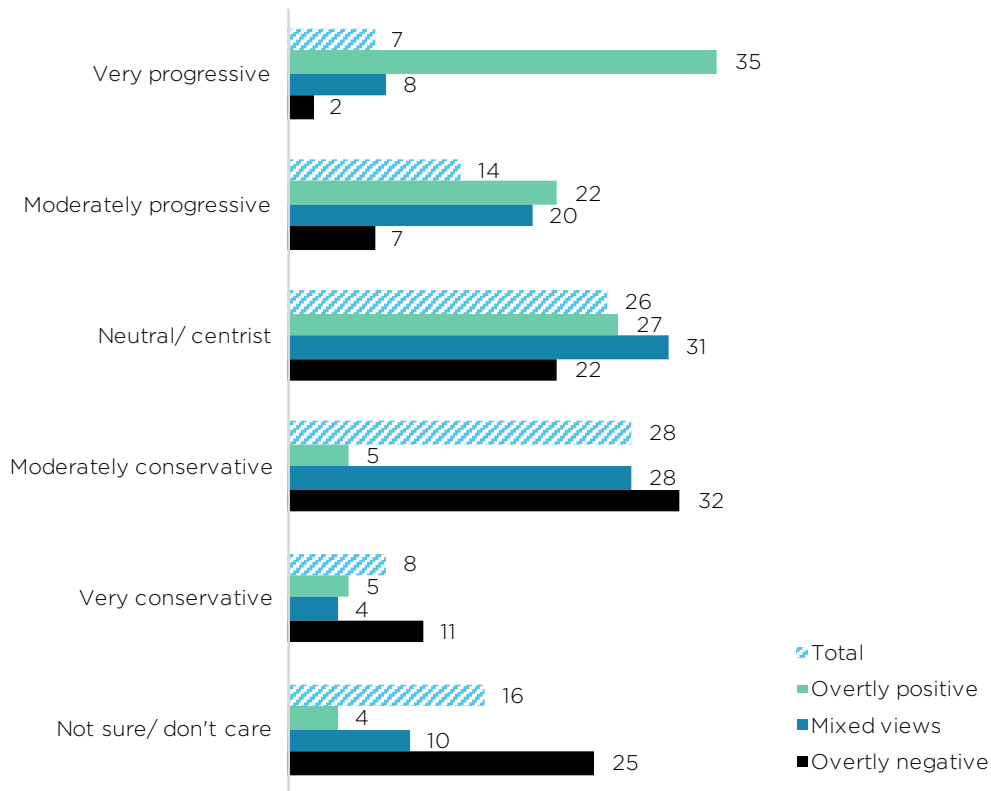
The youngest generation (Millennials) were most likely to hold 'overtly positive' or mixed views. The 55+ year olds were by far the most negative group (54% were overtly negative).



POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

Those overtly positive towards refugees were most likely to identify as very progressive.

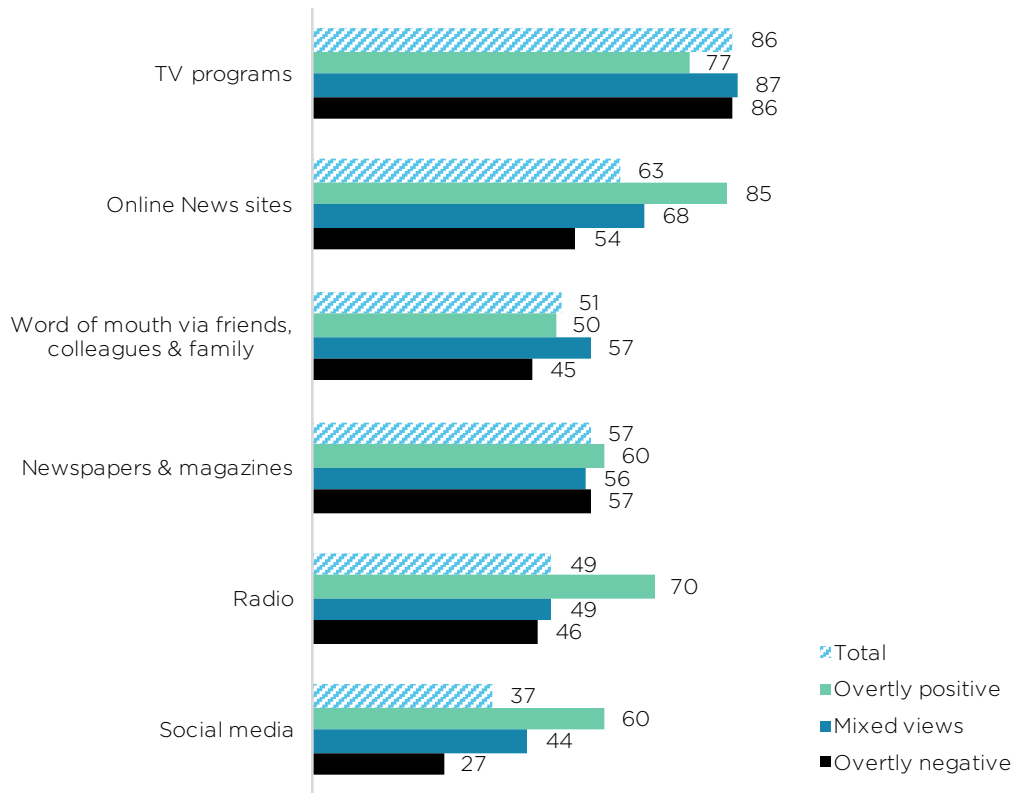
The majority of those with overtly negative views identified as being conservative.



PREFERRED MEDIA SOURCES

Those with overtly positive views towards refugees were more likely to favor online news sites, social media and radio as their news sources.

TV programs were the top choice for those with overtly negative and mixed views.



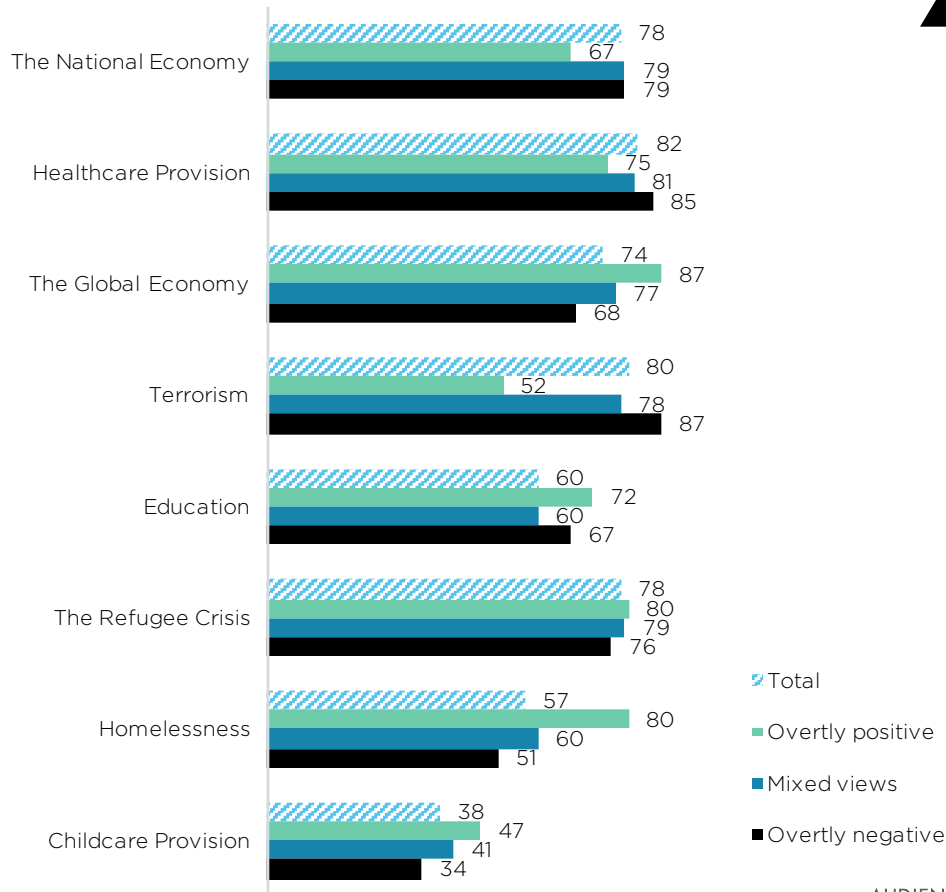
QUESTION(S): How frequently do you use each of the following as a means of keeping up with news/current affairs (%) BASE: 512

WHAT ARE THEY WORRIED ABOUT?

U.K respondents were, on the whole, most likely to be worried about the National Economy, Healthcare Provision, the Global Economy and Terrorism.

Those with overtly positive views were more likely to be worried about Education, the Refugee Crisis, Homelessness and Childcare Provision.

Respondents with overtly negative views were more likely to be worried about Terrorism and the National Economy.



QUESTION(S): To what extent are you concerned or worries about the following issues? (data shows NET: Great deal /some extent %) BASE: 512



SECTION 2

PERCEPTIONS OF REFUGEES

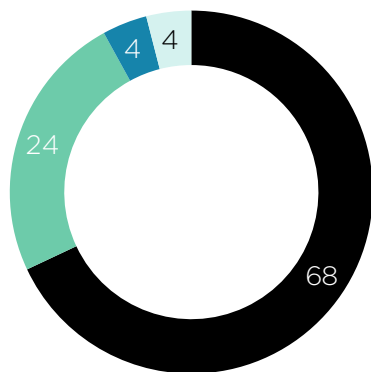


EXTENT AND CAUSES OF THE REFUGEE CRISIS

People in the U.K. are well aware of the main causes of the crisis, while many acknowledge the scale of the situation in historical context.

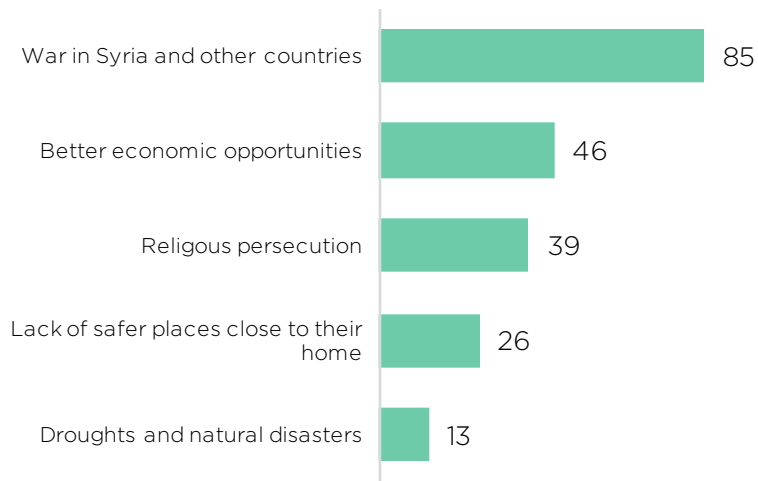


COMPARED TO OTHER CRISES



- The refugee crisis is the worst since World War II
- The refugee crisis is serious, but it is similar to other recent crises
- The refugee crisis is nothing out of the ordinary
- Don't know

CAUSES OF THE REFUGEE CRISIS



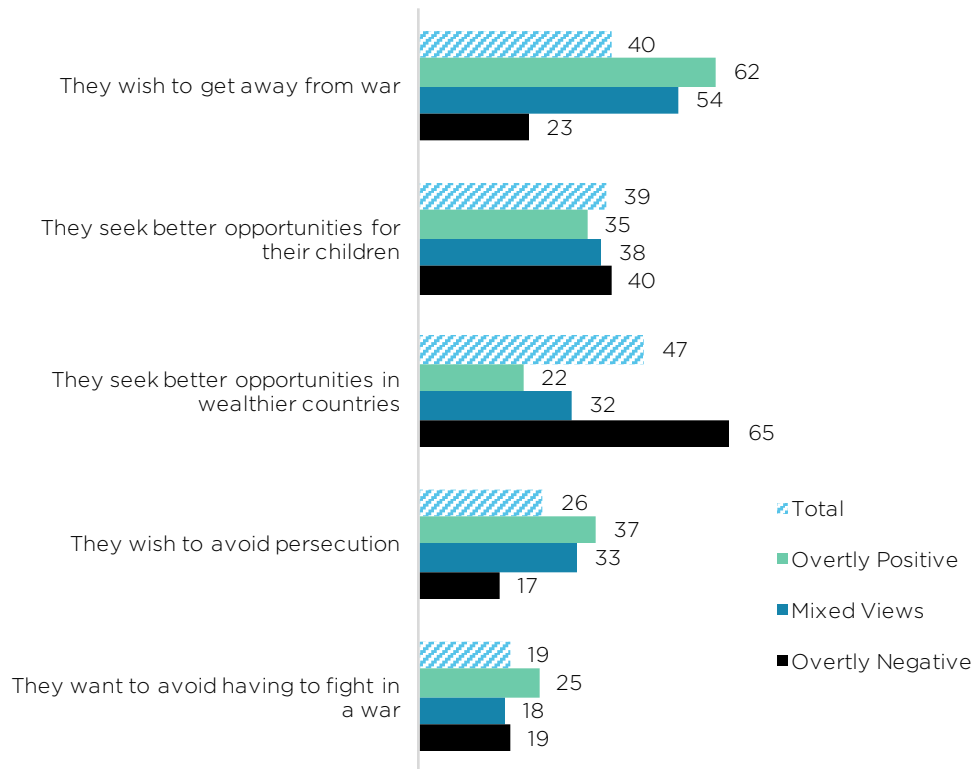
QUESTION(S): How would you describe the scale of the refugee crisis? What do you think has led to the refugee crisis? (%) BASE: 512

WHY REFUGEES ARE LEAVING THEIR HOMELANDS

There are mixed opinions on what motivates refugees to leave their home countries.

Two thirds (65%) of those with overtly negative views thought that the majority of refugees were fleeing their homelands for economic reasons.

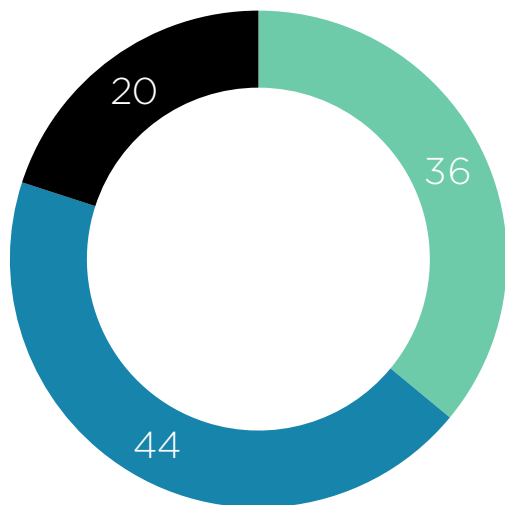
Those with overtly positive views were more likely to think that refugees are fleeing to avoid war/persecution.



QUESTION(S): To what extent do you think that each of the following motives apply to those who are currently fleeing their homelands? (%) BASE: 512

WORKING HARD VS SEEKING HANDOUTS

UK PERCEPTIONS



.....

36% WORKING HARD

The majority of refugees are “willing to work hard and try to fit into their new communities”

.....

44% HANDOUTS

The majority of refugees are “just looking for handouts”

.....

20% DON'T KNOW

“Don't Know / Not Sure”

.....

QUESTION(S): Do you think the majority of refugees are... (%) BASE: 512

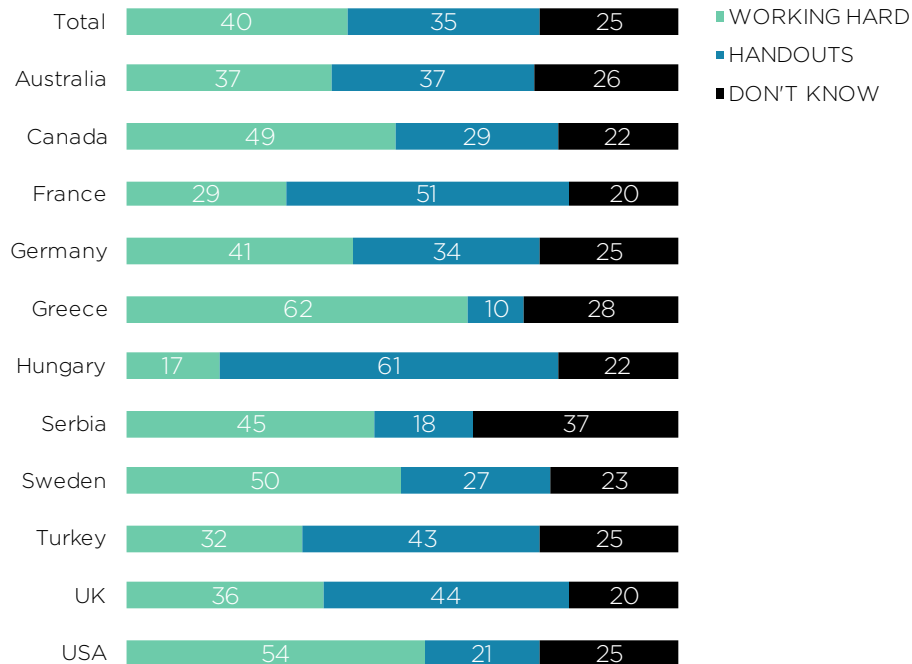
WORKING HARD VS SEEKING HANDOUTS UK COMPARED TO OTHER COUNTRIES

U.K. respondents were, compared to the international average (total), significantly more likely to think that refugees are just looking for handouts.

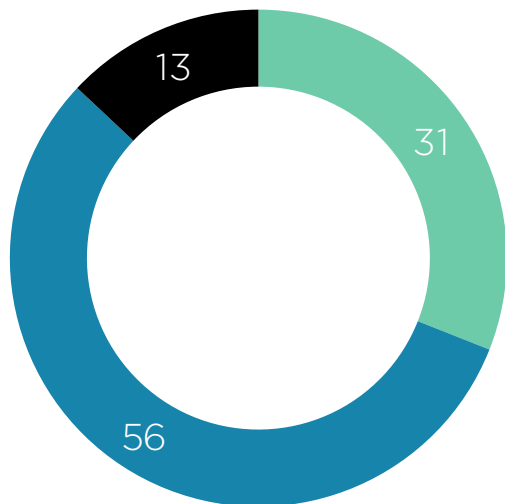
The Greeks were the most likely to think that refugees are willing to work hard and try to fit in (62%).

Hungary had the most negative attitude towards refugees with 61% believing that they were just looking for handouts. Serbians were, at 37%, the most likely to say 'Don't Know / Not Sure'.

THE MAJORITY OF REFUGEES ARE...



DURATION OF ASYLUM UK



.....

31% TEMPORARY SHELTER

Think that the majority of refugees caught up in today's crisis are looking for... "Temporary shelter until it's safe to return to their homeland"

.....

56% PERMANENT NEW LIFE

Think that the majority of refugees caught up in today's crisis are looking for... "A permanent new life in a different country to their homeland"

.....

13% DON'T KNOW

"Don't Know / Not Sure"

.....

QUESTION(S): What do you think the majority of refugees caught up in today's crisis are looking for? (%) BASE: 512

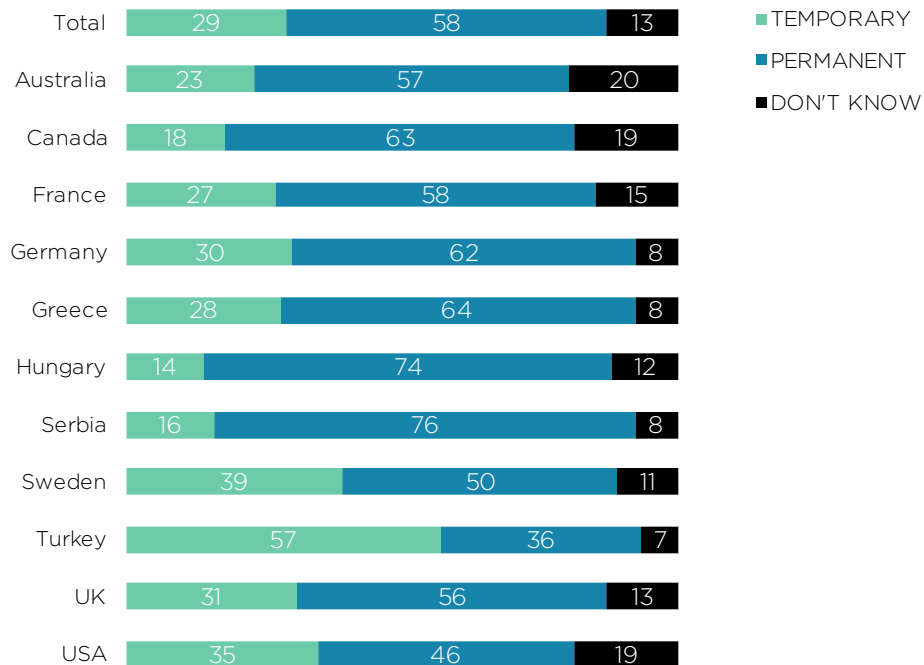
DURATION OF ASYLUM COUNTRY BY COUNTRY

DO THEY THINK THE MAJORITY OF REFUGEES ARE...

Just under a third of U.K. respondents (31%) thought that the majority of refugees are looking for temporary shelter, compared to the international average of 29%.

Turkey, the country closest to major refugee origin countries such as Syria, Afghanistan and Palestine, was the only country where over half (57%) thought that the majority of refugees are looking for temporary shelter.

Around three quarters of respondents in Hungary (74%) and Serbia (77%) thought that the majority of refugees are looking for a permanent new life.



ARE REFUGEES VIEWED EQUALLY?

Or do respondents wish to show favoritism to some refugees?

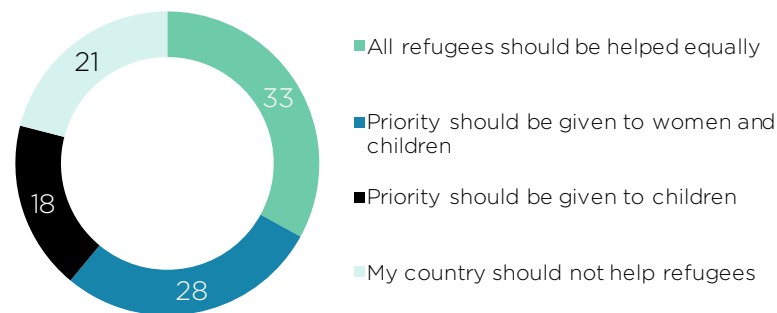


HIERARCHY OF NEED

Anecdotal evidence had emerged from the refugee-based NGO sector of public preferences for certain profiles of refugees. This was primarily focused on country of origin, but also on indicators such as age, gender and religion.

However, research from the U.K. showed that the largest proportion of respondents preferred for refugees to be treated equally, while there was a preference among a significant proportion for women and children refugees to given priority. About half of British respondents felt that country of origin and religion should not be determining factors.

AGE & GENDER



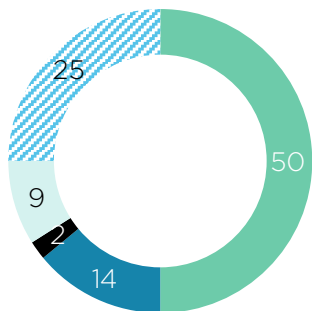
QUESTION(S): Which of the following statements comes closest to your views with regard to the level of help your country should offer refugees? (%) BASE: 512

ARE REFUGEES VIEWED EQUALLY?

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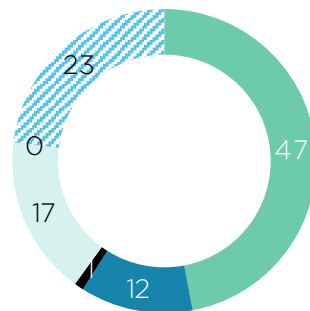


COUNTRY OF ORIGIN



- All refugees should be helped equally regardless of country of origin
- Priority should be given to migrants from Europe
- Priority should be given to people from sub-Saharan Africa
- Priority should be given to people from the Middle East & North Africa
- My country should not help refugees

RELIGION



- All refugees should be helped equally, regardless of religion
- Priority should be given to Christians
- Priority should be given to Muslims
- Priority should be given to groups that have faced religious persecution in their country of origin
- Priority should be given to other religious groups
- My country should not help refugees

QUESTION(S): Which of the following statements comes closest to your views with regard to the level of help your country should offer refugees? (%) BASE: 512

The background of the slide features a dramatic sunset scene. The sky is a vibrant mix of orange, yellow, and red, with the sun low on the horizon. In the foreground, the dark silhouettes of several people are visible, looking out towards the sunset. A large, dark, triangular shape is positioned in the upper left corner, partially overlapping the sunset scene. The overall mood is contemplative and inspiring.

▲
SECTION 3
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**RESPONSIBILITY
TO HELP**

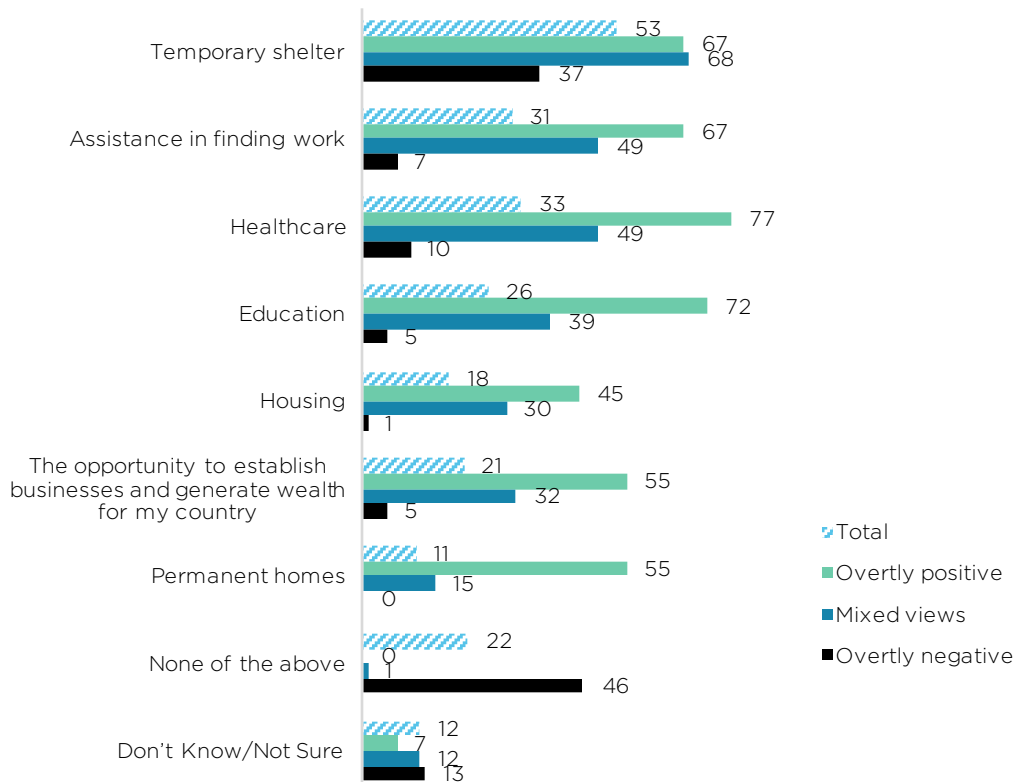
SUPPORT BY SEGMENT

Those with overtly positive views were more likely to be in favor of support, particularly for healthcare, education and permanent homes

Even amongst those with overtly negative views, 37% thought refugees should at least be offered temporary shelter.

Almost half (46%) of those with overtly negative views thought that no support should be offered.

WHAT SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE?



QUESTION(S): What level of support do you think your country, along with the wider international community, should make available to refugees? (%) BASE: 512



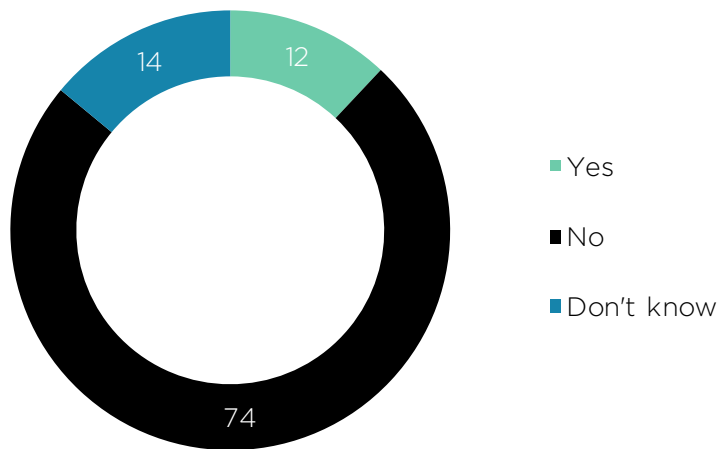
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SECTION 4
—
**EVOLVING
PERSPECTIVES**



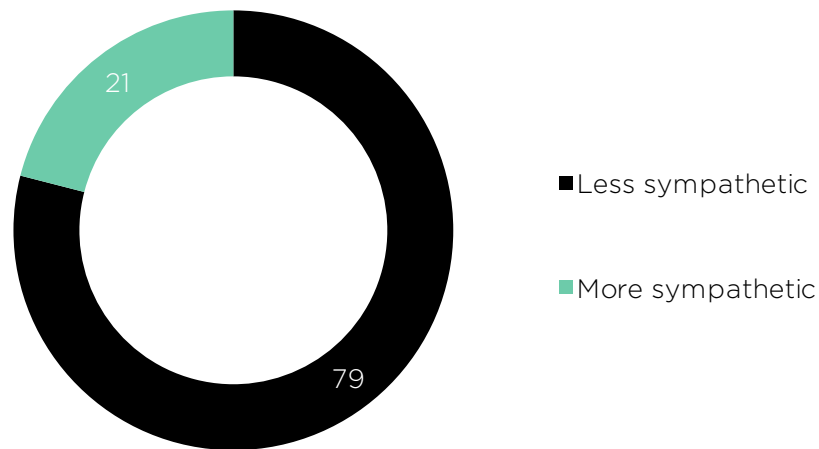
CHANGING OPINIONS



HAS YOUR OPINION ON THE REFUGEE CRISIS CHANGED IN RECENT WEEKS?



HAVE YOU BECOME MORE OR LESS SYMPATHETIC TO THE SITUATION IN WHICH REFUGEES FIND THEMSELVES?

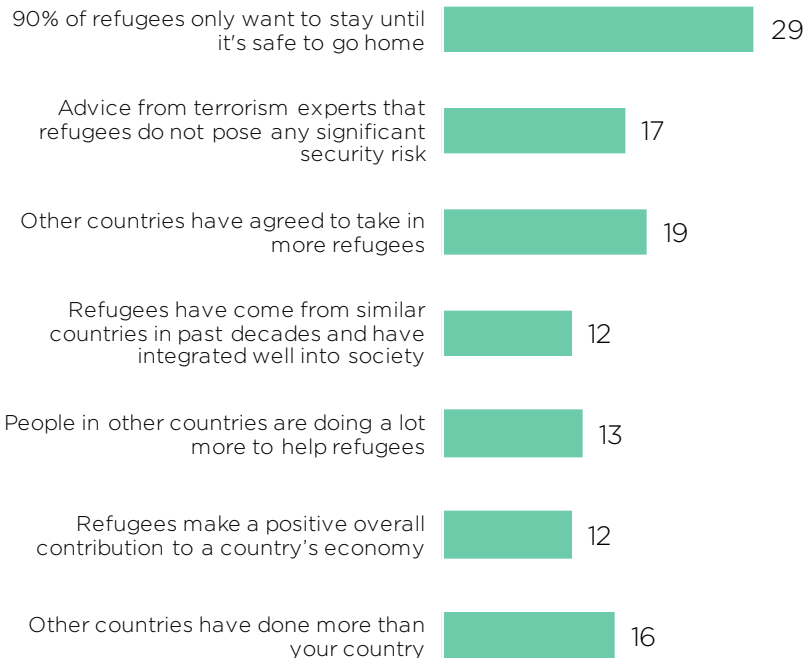


QUESTION(S): Has your opinion on the refugee crisis changed in recent weeks? (%) BASE: 512 Have you become more or less sympathetic to the situation in which the refugees find themselves? (%) BASE: 59

MESSAGING TO CHANGE MINDS



The message that 90% of refugees wanted to return to their home country was by far the most likely to change the minds of the U.K. respondents who were less sympathetic to the situation.



QUESTION(S): Would your opinion change if you were told that...? | BASE: 69 (All who are less sympathetic to the situation)

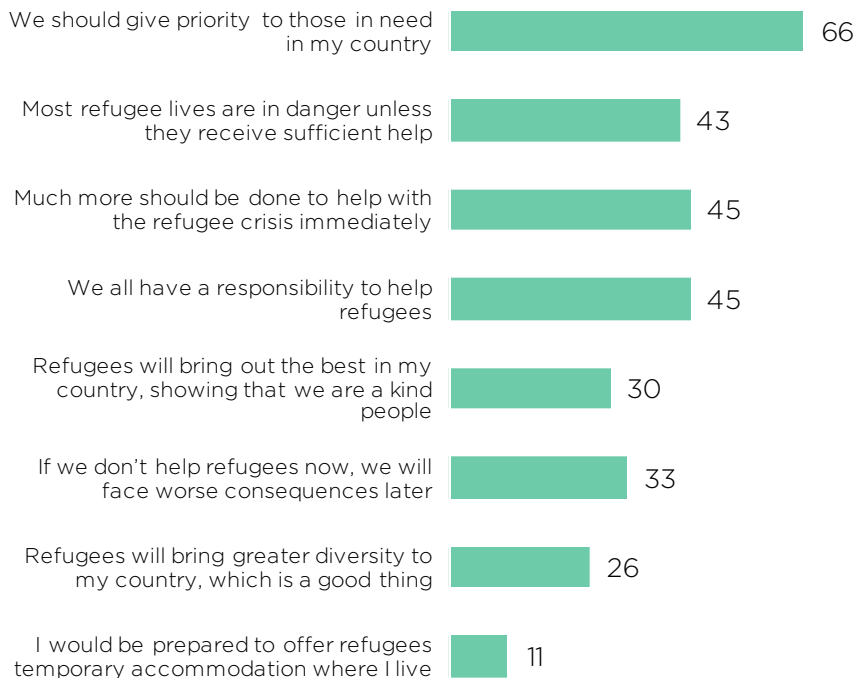
MESSAGING TO CHANGE MINDS



In line with the international average, two thirds of U.K. respondents agreed that priority should be given to “those in need in my country”.

Less than half (43%) recognized that most refugee lives would be in danger if they did not receive sufficient help.

1 in 10 said that they would be prepared to offer refugees temporary accommodation.





BUILDING A POSITIVE MESSAGE

Those who have moved in a more negative direction in their perspective on refugees have done so mainly out of security and economic concerns.

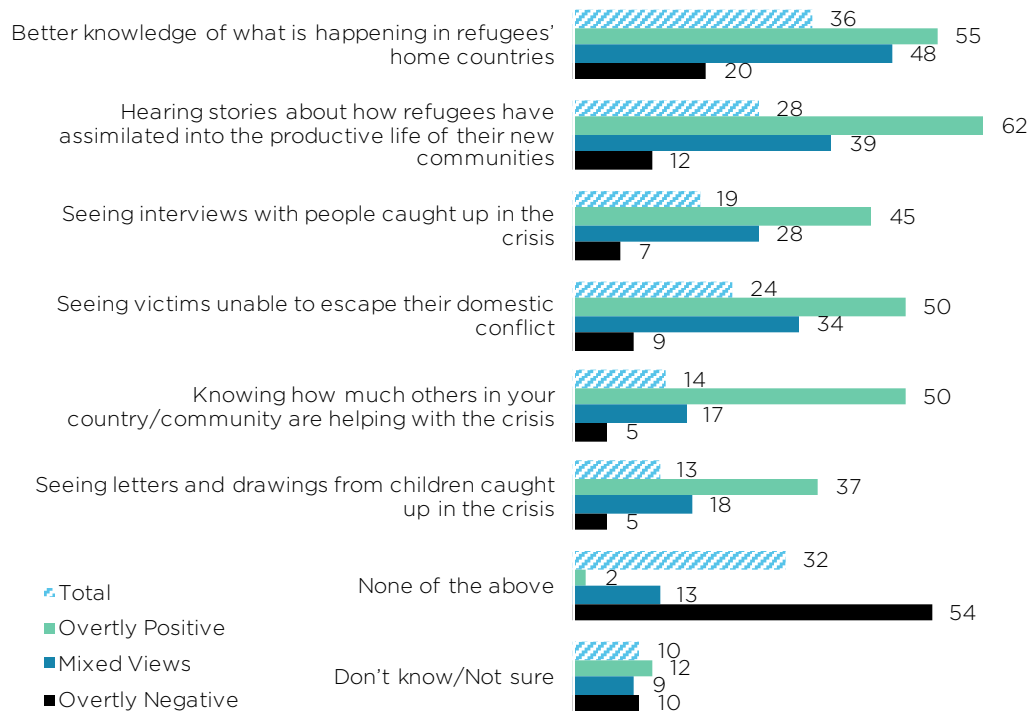
Meanwhile, there is a strong visual element to those who have become more open and sympathetic. Photographic evidence and human interest news reports appear to bring heightened empathy with the plight of the refugees.

ACCEPTING REFUGEES SEGMENT

A more informed public is the greatest asset to positive messaging around helping refugees. 48% of those with mixed views thought that better knowledge of what is happening in refugees' home countries would make them more positive about accepting refugees. This points to a strong role for the media in the U.K.

After public education, factors that drive empathy emerge as hugely significant. Those with overtly negative views were least likely to think anything would make them change their mind, where those with overtly positive and mixed views were more open to change.

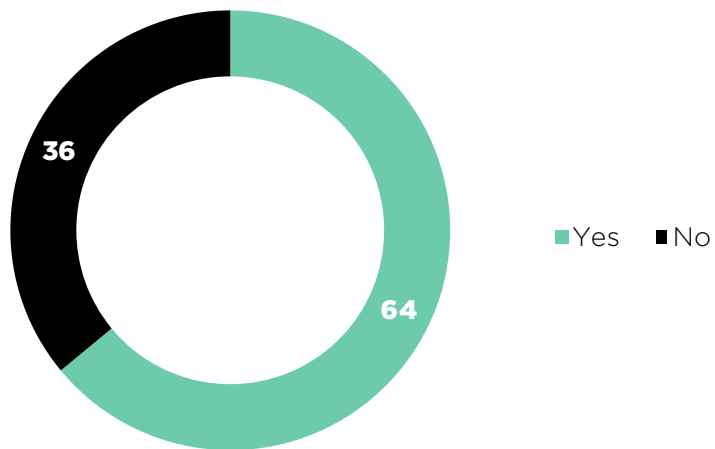
WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU PERSONALLY MORE OPTIMISTIC OR POSITIVE?



ASSISTING REFUGEES

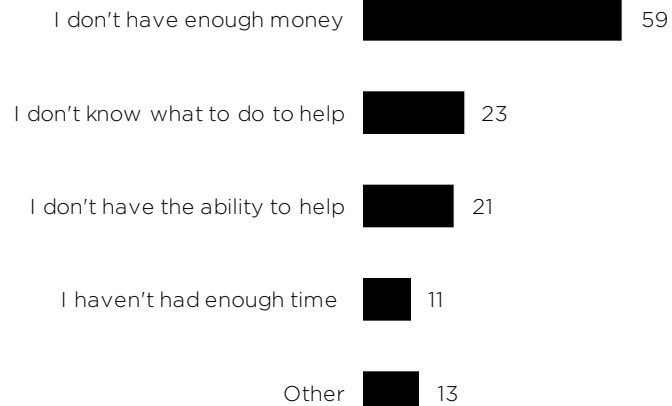


DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU HAVE BEEN ABLE TO
CONTRIBUTE AS MUCH AS YOU WOULD LIKE?



QUESTION(S): As shown above (%) BASE: 512

IF NOT, WHY?



What do you think would help enable you to do more?



BETTER INFORMATION / COORDINATION / MORE TIME & MONEY / REASSURANCE



“More information on what practical help is required. I am not prepared to give to the big charities as one can never be sure where the proceeds go but I'd be happy to do something locally.”

“Knowing what is happening in their countries and why they are leaving as I have not heard this information and what is available is very sparse making you interpret the situation rather than knowing it.”

“Government initiatives that gather volunteers, organise what they want you to do and outline what you do to help. I'm not likely to know how to help by myself; I'd like more guidance.”



“More publicity about how people can help in a non-monetary way.”

“I would be willing to accept children who need adopting only as we have many families that want to adopt and can not and there are lots of children from the refugees who have no-one.”

“If I personally owned my house I would let a refugee live here for a while, however I currently rent.”

“Confidence that they are genuine and not part of a terrorist organisation trying to infiltrate into this country to cause damage and inflict their laws on us.”



“If refugees were only admitted to this country for the duration of conflict in their own countries and would have to return when conflict is over. If it could be guaranteed that all refugees were genuine cases of need and not infiltrate with Isis member.”

“If I knew they brought or had some means of supporting themselves I would perhaps help in some way.”



TENT