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What Does the UK Public Think About Digital ID?

Contents

- 3 Executive Summary
- 5 Digital ID in an Age of Distrust
- 24 Implications for the Government's Plans
- 27 Conclusion
- 28 Methodology

Executive Summary

The announcement in September 2025 of a national digital-ID scheme for the United Kingdom was greeted with a media storm and highly mobilised opposition, earning it the distinction of being the government policy with arguably the highest level of cut-through since the 2024 general election.¹ Much of the digital-ID debate since then has been shaped by the assumption that while support in the summer of 2025 may have been broad, the UK public is now almost universally opposed to the scheme. That picture is not true.

New research published here for the first time challenges the prevailing narrative that public enthusiasm for digital ID is spent. It tracks how views have changed by re-contacting those who previously responded to polling on the issue.

Our research finds that 43 per cent of respondents support the introduction of a digital-ID system in the UK, with 37 per cent opposed and 20 per cent undecided on the issue. While public support is narrower and more conditional than it was in the summer of 2025, net sentiment remains positive.

That is a recoverable position. Those who have drifted into opposition have done so against the backdrop of low trust in mainstream politics and institutions. Their views reflect a broader crisis of legitimacy for the state around its ability to deliver the scheme and use it appropriately, not ideological opposition.

Our research also shows that people's views can change when they are shown concrete benefits of a digital-ID system. The case that wins them is simple: a secure, modern system that delivers better value for money, makes public services easier to use and has clear limits on usage – a common-sense solution for everyday problems.

Even among supporters, however, there are low levels of understanding of the advantages of digital ID. When the public is presented with clear explanations of what digital ID would deliver, it responds positively, with net support increasing to between +16 per cent and +25 per cent depending on the argument.

The government's newly launched consultation on its digital-ID plans arrives at the right moment and with the right instincts.² The system it proposes is well thought through: it is voluntary, can be built on existing infrastructure and is designed so that people no longer have to prove who they are from scratch every time they deal with a different part of government. The consultation document is clear on where the economic benefits of a national digital-ID scheme would come from. It points to a British model of digital ID that, based on those design principles, can command public support.

The risk is not the policy. It is the process. Done well, the consultation can produce a settled, common-sense national view of digital ID, grounded in clear principles about what it is for and how it should never be used – thereby limiting scope for opposition. Done badly, it becomes another example of process for the sake of process or, worse, an exercise in managed delay that undermines trust and fails to persuade the undecided.

Our polling clearly shows that public appetite for the first scenario is real. Meeting it means staying focused on the three things that matter most – delivering value for money, providing better public services and setting out a clear, feasible delivery plan with enforceable limits – all of which together represent the British model of digital ID in action.

01

Digital ID in an Age of Distrust

Since the government’s announcement last year, digital ID has often been framed as a politically contentious proposal. From the tone of public and media debate, one could reasonably conclude that it now commands very limited public backing.

To test that assumption, research commissioned by the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (TBI) and conducted by market-research organisation Yonder looks beyond headline polling to examine how and why attitudes have evolved. Drawing on a longitudinal recontact study of UK adults first surveyed in March 2024 (4,008 participants) and then again in January 2026 (2,028 of the original participants), alongside omnibus polling (a shared, multi-client survey) conducted in June 2025 and January 2026, we find a picture that is considerably more nuanced than a simple support-versus-opposition divide suggests. (For full details of our polling, please see the methodology.)

The polling challenges the dominant media narrative that public support for digital ID has collapsed. It has not. While support is narrower and more conditional than before, a voluntary national digital-ID programme remains politically viable and recoverable, with a net-positive rating of +6 and much of the public undecided.

Confidence in the state’s ability to deliver it effectively and securely, however, has eroded.

The primary fault line is not ideological, but between those who retain a baseline trust in public institutions (the “Insiders” in TBI’s [Disruptive Delivery framework](#)) and those who have all but given up on the political mainstream because they feel victims of a system that fails to address their needs (the “Outsiders”). This latter group does not assess digital ID primarily on its functional merits. It has become entangled in a broader crisis of trust in the state’s ability to use it well. Winning this group back does not require shifting their ideological allegiances; it requires demonstrating competence. The challenge the government faces is rebuilding trust in its ability to deliver.

Around one-fifth of the public remains undecided but highly responsive to credible evidence. When people are presented with concrete, practical use cases – from public-service benefits to international examples – opposition softens measurably among most groups of respondents. Between one in ten and one in six of those initially opposed shift into support.

Our analysis points to three factors driving support above all else: belief that digital ID will deliver long-term value for money, a sense that it is an inevitable feature of a modern, digitalised society, and confidence that it will make everyday interactions with public services simpler and faster.

The implication is clear: opinion is not fixed. It can shift decisively when the case for digital ID is made in a concrete, economically grounded way and rooted in credible delivery.

Digital Dependence, Institutional Distrust

The debate around the case for digital ID is unfolding in a country defined by two powerful and sometimes competing realities: high digital engagement and low institutional trust.

On the one hand, the British public relies extensively on smartphones and online services. Our research found that more than 90 per cent of adults under 65 use a smartphone at least once a day. Even among those aged 65 and over, three-quarters (76 per cent) do so. Most people feel that technology has improved their lives, and there is broad recognition that it holds further potential to enhance public services, particularly in areas such as health care.³ Yet at the same time there is an undercurrent of frustration that people do not have a choice about how reliant they have become.

On the other hand, this technological reliance sits alongside a more pessimistic national mood. Two-thirds (66 per cent) believe the world is a worse place than it was 30 years ago, and trust in the performance of major public institutions remains fragile.

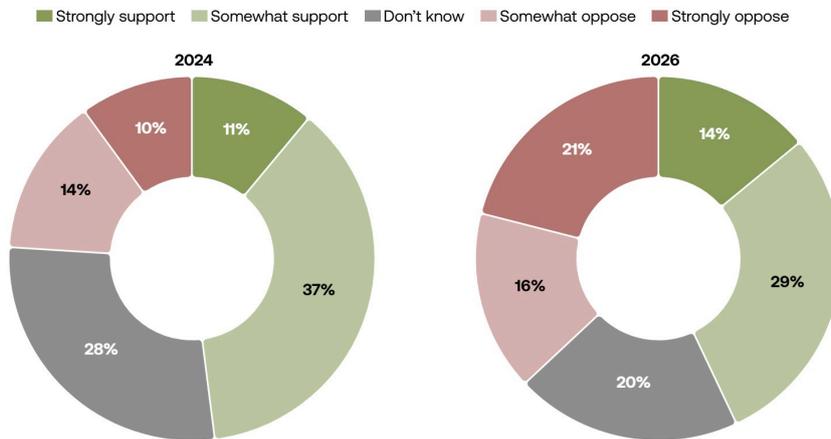
Digital ID is therefore not being assessed on its technical merits alone. It is being debated in a climate of underlying distrust, and that context inevitably shapes how every argument for or against it is heard, interpreted and judged.

Understanding the Shift

Since 2024, headline support for a digital-ID system has fallen. A concept that was once met with tentative but broad approval is now viewed more sceptically and through a more overtly political lens. However, support remains and digital ID continues to command a narrow net positive rating (+6).

FIGURE 1

Support for digital ID has fallen since 2024, but still outweighs opposition

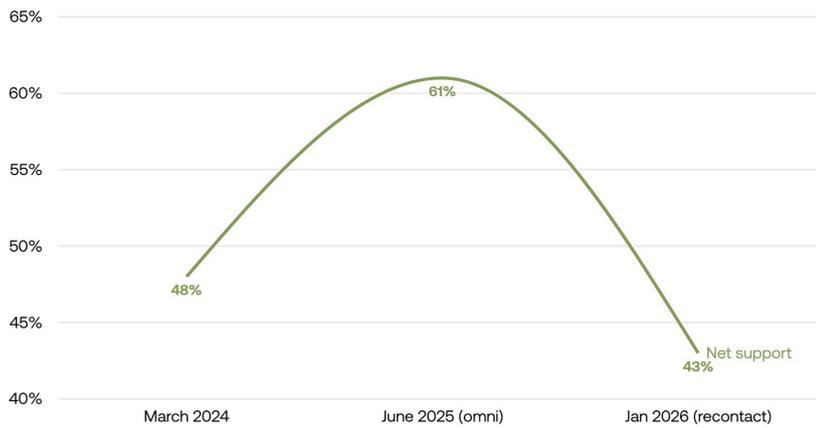


Q. Some countries use "digital-ID" systems. Digital ID is a form of identification that is stored and accessed electronically. It typically holds different types of personal information, allowing individuals to securely access various services and conduct online transactions, eliminating the need for physical documents. To what extent would you support or oppose the UK introducing a digital-ID system?

Source: Yonder for TBI

FIGURE 2

Net support has fallen slightly since 2024 from its peak in mid-2025



Q: To what extent would you support or oppose the UK introducing a digital-ID system?

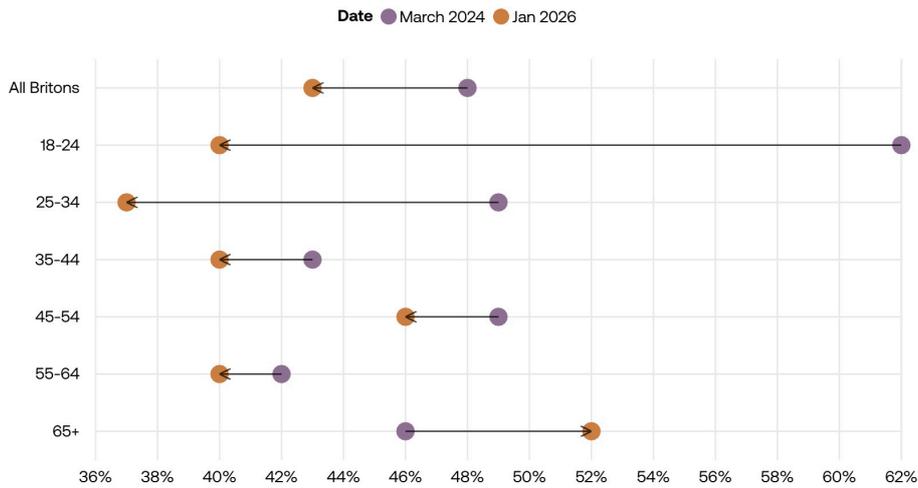
Source: Yonder for TBI

This overall shift is not confined to a narrow demographic. Support has fallen across most age groups, among both men and women, and across ethnic backgrounds. That said, distinct generational patterns are emerging.

Younger voters have recorded the sharpest change, with support dropping from 62 per cent in 2024 to 40 per cent in 2026, the largest swing of any age group. At the other end of the spectrum, those aged 65 and over stand out as the sole clear exception, with support in this cohort remaining comparatively resilient and, in fact, increasing slightly.

FIGURE 3

Support for digital ID has fallen most among young people (net support)



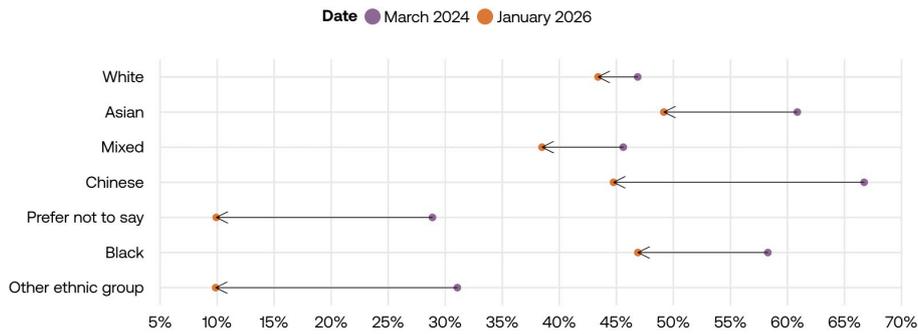
Q: To what extent would you support or oppose the UK introducing a digital-ID system?

Source: Yonder for TBI

While white respondents' views on digital ID showed a small shift between the two polls, the differences for ethnic minorities were substantially larger. Asian, Black and Chinese groups, which started with initially higher support, saw declines of 12 per cent, 11 per cent and 22 per cent respectively.

FIGURE 4

Support has particularly dropped among ethnic minorities



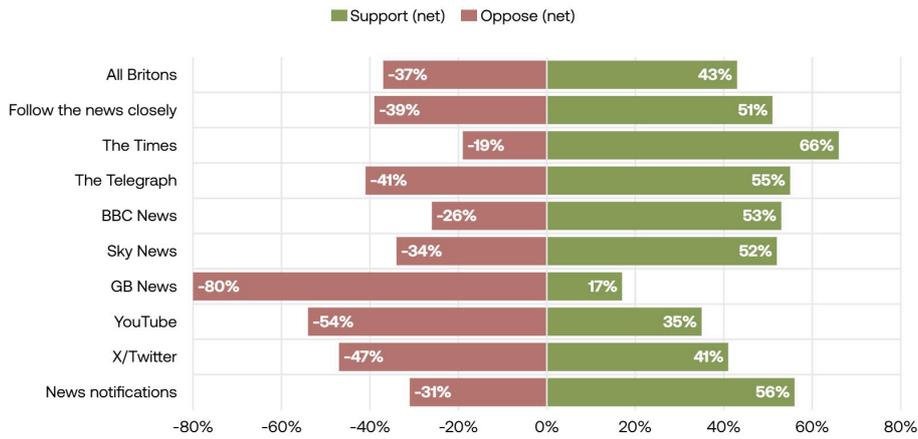
Q: To what extent would you support or oppose the UK introducing a digital-ID system?

Source: Yonder for TBI

We are also seeing the emergence of clear attitudinal and informational divides. Support is strongest among those who are digitally confident and who consume mainstream news, suggesting comfort both with technology and with institutional narratives around reform. Opposition, by contrast, is more concentrated among the digitally excluded and among audiences of outlets such as GB News.

FIGURE 5

Support is strongest among those who favour traditional news outlets



Q. Many people say they rarely read a newspaper or its website or app/watch TV news. But if you do, which one do you tend to most often? Many people say they mostly get news through their phone – through apps, social media or group chats. If this applies to you, which one source on your phone do you tend to look at the most? Note: All statistically significant differences from All Britons. (Non-significant answers not included.)

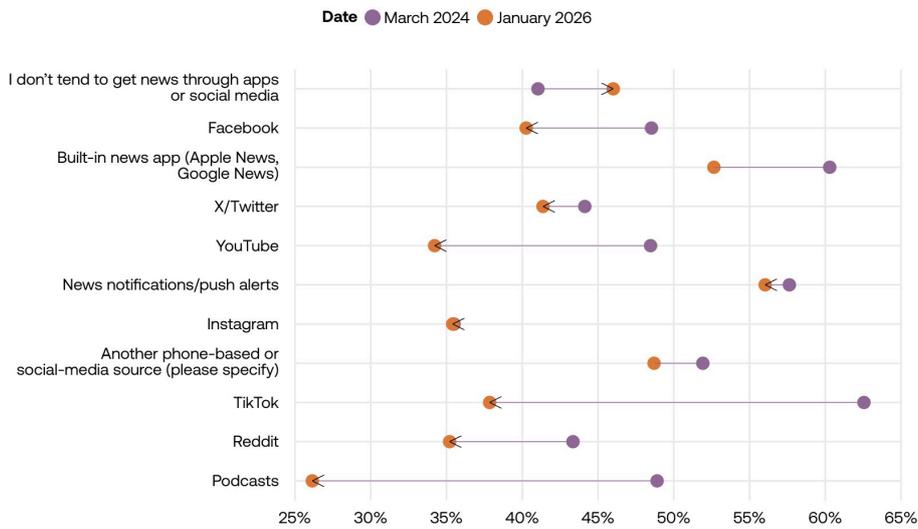
Source: Yonder for TBI

Note: Jan 26 reconnect polling

News consumption itself is also a major predictor of shifting opinions on digital ID. Support for digital ID has declined among all of those who receive their news from social media and non-traditional media (excluding Instagram, which stayed almost exactly the same). The exceptions to this are those who do not get their news through apps or social media – who saw an increase in support.

FIGURE 6

Support has fallen among people who get their news from social media or news aggregators



Q: Many people say they mostly get news through their phone – through apps, social media or group chats. If this applies to you, which one source on your phone do you tend to look at the most?

Source: Yonder for TBI

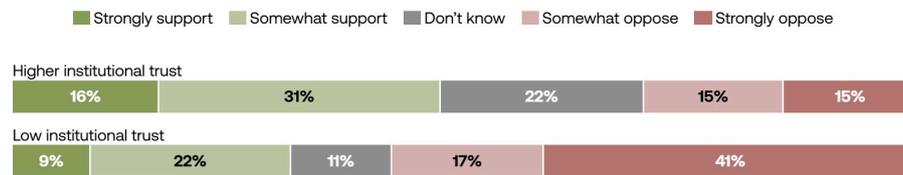
Yet crucially, this divide does not map neatly onto a conventional left-right split. Labour and Conservative supporters are similarly likely to express support for digital ID. Reform and Green voters are more sceptical, but far from uniformly opposed, while those who say they would not vote are split.

The more meaningful fault line runs elsewhere: between those who retain a baseline level of trust in institutions and those who do not. For voters who already feel the system is failing, digital ID can come to symbolise not administrative modernisation, but an expansion of state power in a system whose legitimacy they question. It is no longer interpreted as a neutral reform, but as part of a wider story about trust, governance and the direction of the country.

To determine voters’ levels of institutional trust, we asked them how much they trusted various government bodies to safeguard their data. Those who did not trust at least three of the six institutions were classified as having “low institutional trust”.

FIGURE 7

People with low institutional trust are far more likely to oppose digital ID



Q. To what extent would you support or oppose the UK introducing a digital-ID system?
 Question to determine low levels of institutional trust: To what extent, if at all, do you think the following bodies/organisations can be trusted to hold and use personal data safely and securely? A. The Home Office. B. My local council. C. The police. D. The NHS. E. Department for Education. F. HMRC.
 Those who answered not very much, not at all to at least three of the six groups.

Source: Yonder for TBI

Note: Jan 26 reconnect polling. Due to rounding of the data, the data visualisations may not add up to exactly 100 per cent.

This dynamic echoes the argument we set out in [Disruptive Delivery: Meeting the Unmet Demand in Politics](#). The central cleavage in contemporary politics is less left versus right than “Insider” versus “Outsider”. Outsiders, who have all but given up on the political mainstream as they feel they are victims of the political system, are predisposed to see new state capabilities through a lens of suspicion. Insiders, while often critical of government performance, are more inclined to accept the case for evidence-based reform within a complex system. Digital ID has therefore become entangled in a broader legitimacy crisis: a debate not just about technology, but about whether the state can be trusted to use it well.

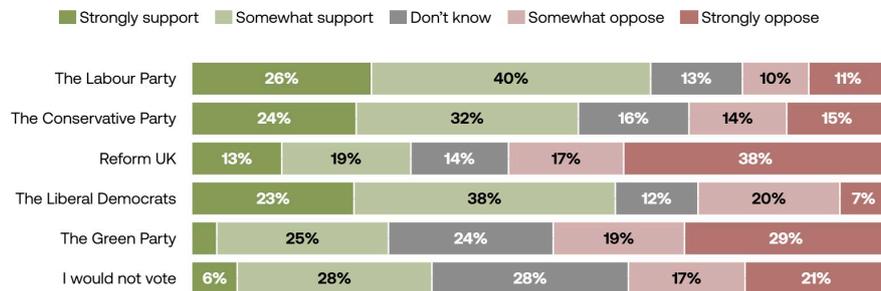
The longitudinal design of our research also allowed us to compare individual-level responses over time, and identify who had changed their views and by how much. In doing this, three distinct groups emerge:

- Opinion Constants (41 per cent): those whose views have remained broadly stable.
- Support Movers (25 per cent): those who have become more favourable since 2024.
- Support Decliners (35 per cent): those who have become less favourable.

What we discover is that decline in support is not evenly distributed. It appears to be concentrated among Reform and Green voters, younger cohorts and those who get more of their news from social media.

FIGURE 8

Opposition to digital ID is higher among Reform and Green voters



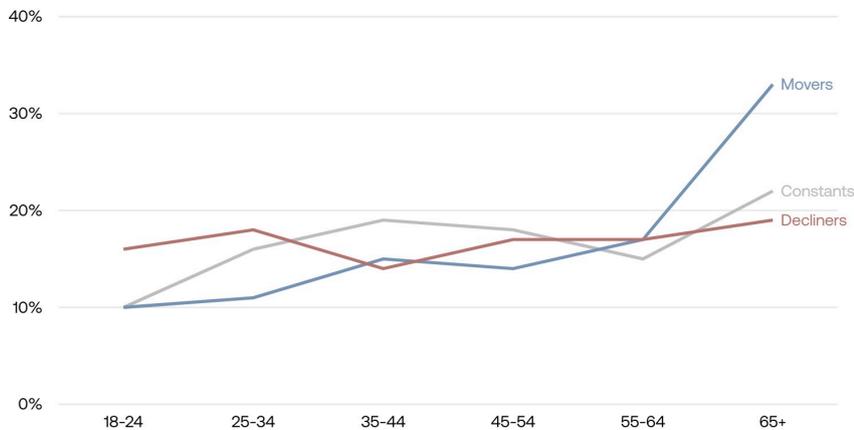
Q: To what extent would you support or oppose the UK introducing a digital-ID system?

Source: TBI for Yonder

Note: Jan 26 omnibus polling. Due to rounding of the data, the data visualisations may not add up to exactly 100 per cent.

FIGURE 9

Support Decliners are more concentrated among young people, while Support Movers are more likely to be over 55



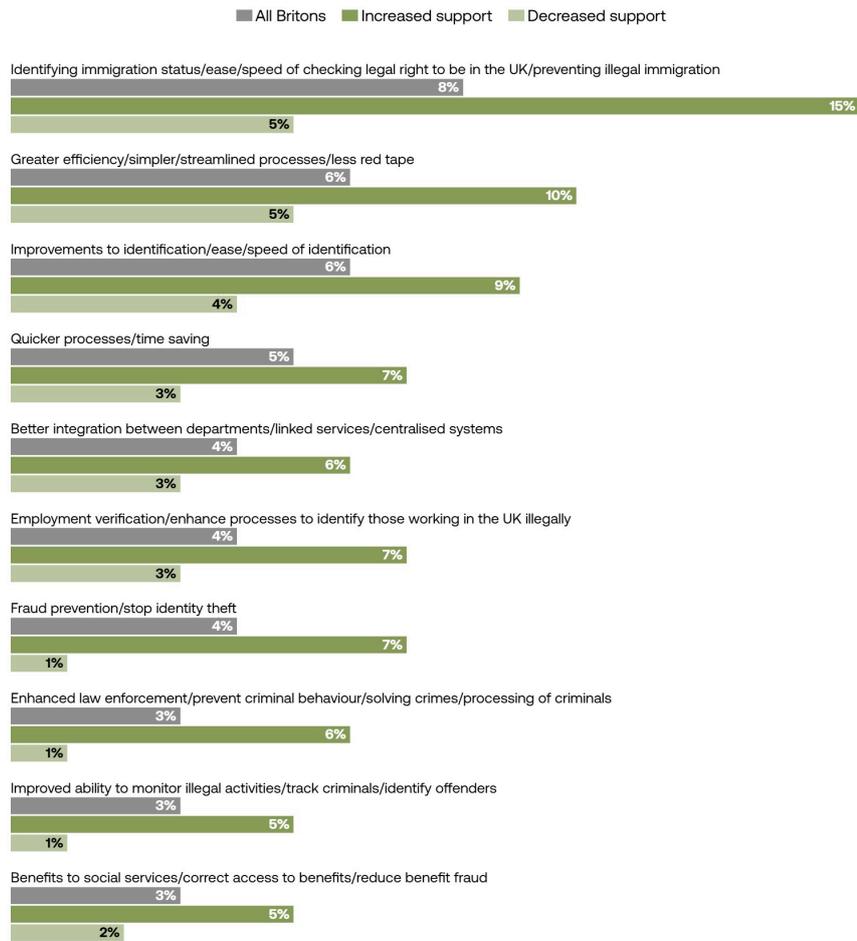
Source: Yonder for TBI

While security concerns, particularly about hacking and data breaches, are universal, distrust of government overreach, misuse of data and “scope creep” is more concentrated among Support Decliners.

In this environment, perceptions of risk take precedence. When asked without being given a list of options, many people struggle to identify clear benefits of digital ID.

FIGURE 10

Awareness of the full range of digital-ID benefits remains limited



Q: What benefits, if any, do you think the introduction of a digital-ID system in the UK would bring? [Open-ended question]

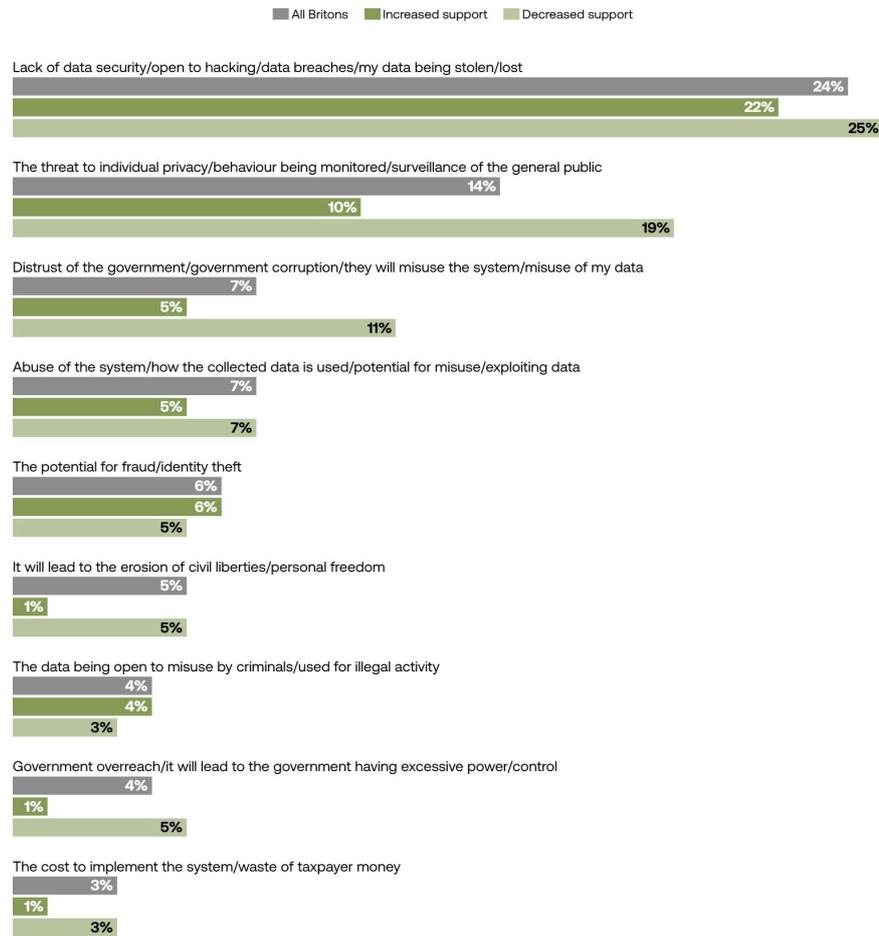
Source: Yonder for TBI

Note: Jan 26 reconnect polling

By contrast, concerns about hacking, privacy, data misuse or state overreach are vivid, immediate and easily articulated.

FIGURE 11

People are better able to express concerns, particularly around data security and privacy



Q: What concerns, if any, might you have about the introduction of a digital-ID system in the UK? [Open ended question]

Source: Yonder for TBI

Note: Jan 26 reconnect polling

The policy does not lack potential advantages. Rather, its benefits can feel abstract and distant, in part because they have not yet been clearly or convincingly communicated, while its risks feel personal, tangible and immediate.

The Key Drivers of Public Opinion

Perhaps the most important insight from the research is what does – and does not – meaningfully shape public attitudes when it comes to digital ID.

Given the framing of the government’s original announcement, it is unsurprising that immigration control and tackling illegal working emerge as the most frequently cited benefits when people are asked, unprompted, what digital ID might achieve. However, deeper statistical modelling points to a different story.

Yonder’s analysis of key drivers identifies three principal levers currently shaping overall support.

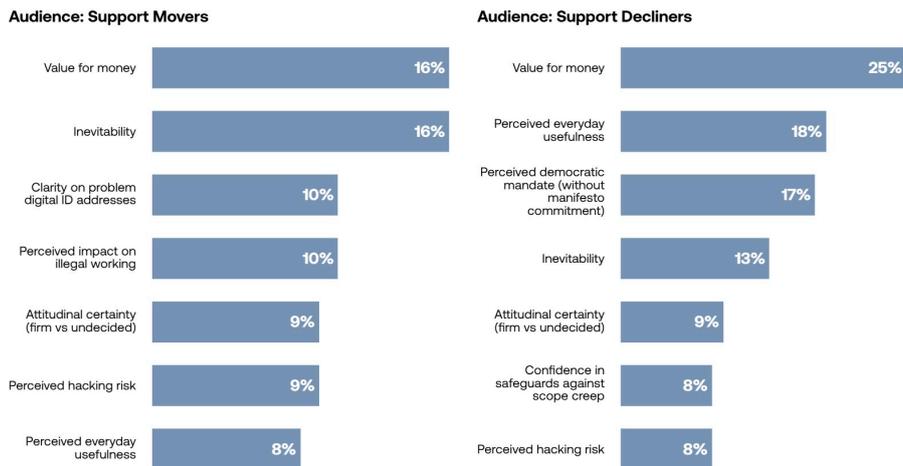
First, perceptions of long-term value for money are the most powerful lens through which people judge digital ID. Those who believe it will reduce costs and improve efficiency are significantly more likely to support it; those who associate it with waste or unnecessary expenditure are markedly more sceptical. Previous modelling by TBI found that a voluntary national digital-ID scheme is likely to pay for itself through reductions in tax and benefit fraud and error, as well as better targeting of public services, improving the government’s fiscal position by around £2 billion per year.⁴

Second, a sense of inevitability plays a critical role. When digital ID is understood as an unavoidable feature of a modern, digitalised society, support increases. When it is seen as optional or unnecessary, backing declines.

Finally, everyday utility matters. The more people believe digital ID will make daily tasks simpler, faster or more convenient, the more inclined they are to view it positively. TBI has previously described a wide range of potential uses for digital ID in improving access to and experience of public services in the UK.⁵

FIGURE 12

Value for money shapes both rising and falling support, alongside perceptions of usefulness and inevitability



Source: Yonder for TBI

Note: Jan 26 reconnect polling

Conditional Openness

Immigration enforcement and illegal working may be salient in open-ended responses, but they are not the primary drivers of overall support. Framing digital ID primarily as an enforcement tool risks narrowing its coalition rather than broadening it.

That pragmatism is reflected in the tone of public opinion, which is cautious rather than absolutist. A majority (68 per cent) believe that, if introduced, digital ID should be rolled out gradually and carefully to ensure it is secure and well designed. More favour making it optional than mandatory, and many assume it will be costly unless clearly persuaded otherwise.

Different groups, however, apply different tests. Younger voters tend to assess digital ID through a lens of practicality: does it make everyday life easier and integrate seamlessly with systems they already use? Middle-aged voters are more attuned to questions of inevitability and governance, seeking reassurance that digital ID represents a mainstream, well-established reform rather than a radical departure. Older voters anchor their judgement in fiscal prudence and democratic legitimacy. For them, value for money is paramount.

Across all age groups, there is a consistent expectation of robust safeguards. Hacking and monitoring remain significant concerns, necessitating transparent measures to mitigate risks. These responses underscore the need for robust data-security and user-control mechanisms to neutralise concerns.

There is also a broader political sensitivity: digital ID must not deepen technological inequalities. People are not all equally digitally confident, and reform that appears to privilege those who are already fluent risks undermining its own legitimacy.

The public instinct is not anti-modernisation. It is wary of expansion without restraint.

The Importance of Persuasion

While few people can spontaneously articulate clear benefits of digital ID without prompting, attitudes shift when they are presented with specific, concrete examples. Opinion is therefore soft, conditional and highly responsive to framing.

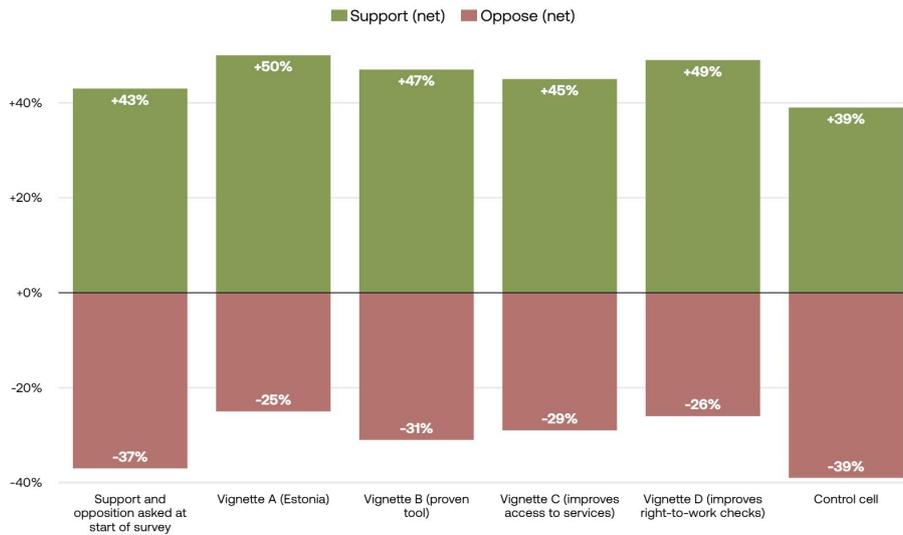
Experimental evidence reinforces this point. Exposure to credible, system-focused narratives reduces opposition and increases net support relative to a control group. Testing different case-study “vignettes” shows a consistent pattern: when digital ID is illustrated through tangible, real-world examples, resistance softens.

The most effective frames draw on international examples of long-term digital transformation and clear demonstrations of improved public services. The vignettes, which can be found in full in the methodology, can be summarised as follows:

- Vignette A: Estonia uses digital ID to make services faster, more transparent and more efficient.
- Vignette B: International examples demonstrate that digital ID is a proven tool that unlocks efficiency gains.
- Vignette C: Digital ID can improve access to public services, making it easier to receive support.
- Vignette D: Digital ID can improve right-to-work checks and reduce online fraud.

FIGURE 13

Providing credible, proven use cases for digital ID increases public support



Q: Thinking about the statement you have just read, to what extent would you now support or oppose the UK introducing a digital-ID system?

Source: Yonder for TBI

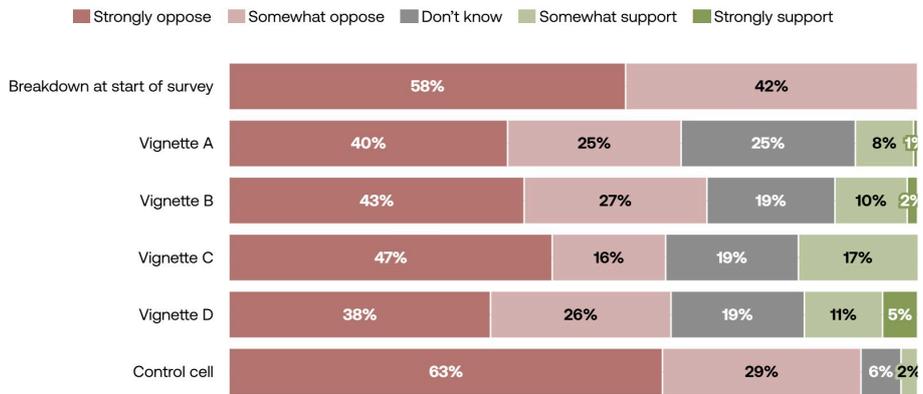
Note: Jan 26 reconnect polling

These findings align with our previous segmentation work, where we found that broad, societal benefits such as improved public services and data security resonate more strongly with the public than individual conveniences. Notably, the NHS emerges as the key focal point for support.⁶

The arguments presented in vignettes were even effective at shifting the opinions of those initially opposed to digital ID. Figure 14 focuses on those who initially responded that they strongly or somewhat opposed its introduction. Between one in ten and one in six shift into support after exposure to credible examples. In other words, scepticism hardens in the absence of clear communication, but credible explanations can drive a change in opinion. When digital ID is seen as practical, proven and competently delivered, opposition diminishes.

FIGURE 14

Credible use cases can shift opinions even among those initially opposed to digital ID



Q: To what extent would you support or oppose the UK introducing a digital-ID system?

Source: Yonder for TBI

Note: Jan 26 reconnect polling. Due to rounding of the data, the data visualisations may not add up to exactly 100 per cent.

02

Implications for the Government's Plans

The government's recently launched consultation on digital ID comes at a moment of genuine political opportunity. The debate is not settled. Opinion is still being formed, and support remains conditional but recoverable if the government uses this consultation period to focus relentlessly on value for money, service speed and trust, alongside early proof of competence on delivery.

The consultation document shows that the policy is already heading in the right direction – and in ways that map closely onto what our polling says the public actually cares about. It centres the reform on practical service improvement: the idea that people should no longer have to prove who they are from scratch every time they deal with a different part of government, making everyday interactions with the state faster and less burdensome. It sets out the potential economic benefits – from reducing fraud to cutting the bureaucratic costs that fall on households and businesses – and maps the main cost categories against them, laying the groundwork for a credible value-for-money case, with a full impact assessment to follow once the key design decisions are settled.

On core questions of security, inclusion and mandatory or voluntary participation, the document is also reassuring: there will be no legal obligation to have or present digital ID, non-digital routes will be retained and the system will be built within existing legal safeguards. With people sharing only what is necessary for a given interaction, rather than handing over more personal information than the situation requires, digital ID should provide more privacy protections than existing systems.

It is clear that a significant amount of work, reflecting best international practice alongside the specific circumstances in which the UK finds itself, has gone into the document. It is unusually thorough and substantive, going far beyond high-level questions to properly grapple with design choices that would support the chosen strategic direction of digital ID as core public-

service-reform infrastructure, reducing friction for citizens and modernising the state's front door. This is the right trajectory, and the government should be commended for it.

An open engagement process is now underway for people to share their views, and the government has committed to putting those views to a representative panel of between 100 and 120 people from across the UK through a citizen's assembly.

How this process is structured and what outcomes the government wants it to deliver matters. Broadly, it can go three ways.

The biggest risk is that the consultation becomes bogged down in process for the sake of process, and only serves to further delay and disrupt practical delivery so that months or years pass with no progress. This would only confirm the fears of those who do not trust state institutions to deliver tangible improvements to their lives and further undermine their confidence in mainstream politics.

In a second scenario, the consultation becomes a form of engagement theatre: the public tells the government what it already knows, the government says it has listened and the process ends having added minimal value. This would do little to persuade the sizeable proportion of the public undecided on digital ID that it is useful, deliverable or represents good value for money.

The best-case scenario is that the next two months produce a national consensus on what could be termed a "British model" of digital ID as a common-sense solution for everyday problems. The delivery plans within the consultation model appear to align well with what our research tells us the public would expect, setting up a scheme that is:

- Universal and voluntary, not mandatory, delivering sufficient benefits to drive organic uptake.
- Built over time on infrastructure the UK already has.

- Able to deliver tangible public-service improvements through faster, more personalised interactions.
- Decentralised by design so that no single body holds a complete picture of any individual's interactions with the state, putting people in control of what they share, with who and for what purpose.

Most importantly, it should be based on a shared set of principles to govern digital ID in the national interest, with clear enforceable norms around what it will and will not be allowed to do. This should inform an overarching statutory framework, address fears of future overreach, combatting conspiracy theories and disinformation around the purpose of a digital ID, and help to ground delivery in a common-sense consensus of modern convenience, better services and value for money.

This research shows there is a genuine opportunity for that best-case scenario. The public is not implacably opposed; it is waiting to be persuaded.

Our recommendation is that the consultation should therefore focus on producing a concrete, durable answer to the three questions that matter most: how digital ID will deliver value for money, how it will make services more convenient and the conditions under which it will – and will never – be used. This would add genuine value to the delivery process, and ensure that a British model of digital ID can be designed and delivered with real public legitimacy.

03

Conclusion

Digital ID is being debated in a political climate defined less by ideology than by trust in government. The key fault line does not run cleanly between left and right, but between those who retain confidence that institutions can deliver reform competently and those who see new state capabilities through a lens of suspicion. In that environment, risks are vivid and immediate, while benefits can feel abstract and distant.

Yet the evidence from this research is clear: when digital ID is presented as gradual, secure, optional and focused on improving everyday public services, and when examples are concrete and credible, opposition diminishes and net support increases. The public instinct is not anti-modernisation. It is pragmatic. If digital ID is shown to deliver value, protect privacy and improve services in ways people can see and understand, a stronger coalition for reform remains there to be built.

04

Methodology

This analysis draws on a longitudinal recontact survey designed to track how public attitudes towards digital ID in the UK have evolved over time. Yonder Consulting recontacted 2,028 UK adults who previously participated in a 2024 study, allowing us to compare individual-level responses across waves, and identify how and why opinions have shifted. Respondents were grouped into three categories: those whose views remained stable (“Opinion Constants”), those who became more supportive (“Support Movers”) and those who became less supportive (“Support Decliners”). Fieldwork was conducted online between 12 and 25 January 2026, with results weighted to be nationally representative by age, gender, region and social grade.

The survey explored attitudes towards digital ID, including perceived benefits and risks, trust in institutions, and broader views on technology and public services. To identify the factors most strongly associated with support and opposition, we conducted a Key Driver Analysis (KDA), isolating the relative importance of different considerations such as value for money, perceived usefulness, inevitability and democratic legitimacy. Importantly, this analysis focused on those whose views had changed over time, enabling a clearer understanding of what drives shifts in opinion rather than simply reflecting static attitudes. These findings were complemented by additional omnibus polling conducted by Yonder in January 2026 to track headline trends following the government’s announcement.

The full data set [can be found here](#).

Full text of the vignettes referenced in figure 13:

Vignette A: Estonia has spent more than two decades building a truly digital society, with its secure national digital ID underpinning almost all public and many private services. Estimates from Estonia’s own e-Governance system suggest that digital signatures alone save the average citizen around five working days each year, by removing the need for paper documents, in-person visits and manual processing. Because digital ID is a standard part of

everyday life, most people in the population have chosen to have one. Every single service the state provides is now available online. Through their digital identity, people can securely view their health records, communicate with clinicians and order prescriptions via the national patient portal. Estonia's experience shows how a widely adopted digital ID can make services faster, more transparent and significantly more efficient for citizens.

Vignette B: Thirty-seven of the world's top 50 economies have already implemented a digital ID system, and the UK is missing out and falling behind. Other countries have found that digital ID is becoming the new global standard for secure, convenient identity management. In countries across the world, these systems are put to widely varied uses. For example, India's Aadhaar provides a secure, biometric ID to more than 1.3 billion people, focused on promoting financial inclusion and streamlining the delivery of government benefits. In countries like Denmark and Singapore, digital ID is the secure, go-to tool for everything from filing taxes and applying for housing to managing personal health records. These international examples demonstrate that a digital ID is a highly flexible, proven tool that can be built around user convenience and security to unlock significant efficiency gains across both the public and private sectors.

Vignette C: Digital ID could improve access to public services by bringing essential information together in one secure place. For families, this could start from the moment a child is born. When a birth is registered, parents' digital IDs could be updated automatically with the child's details, including their NHS number. If the family qualifies for child benefit, the digital ID app could notify them immediately that they are pre-approved and ask for their consent to begin payments, instead of filling in a form for a separate claim and waiting for weeks for it to be decided. As circumstances change, such as income or marital status, the system could update in real time and adjust entitlements automatically. By reducing paperwork, removing administrative delays and ensuring that information is accurate from the start, a digital ID could help families receive the support they are entitled to quickly, simply and reliably.

Vignette D: Secure digital ID could close many of the loopholes that currently make right-to-work checks fragmented, error-prone and easy to evade. Today these checks often rely on paper documents and can be circumvented through forged or borrowed identities, particularly in high-churn sectors where oversight is limited. With a digital ID, employers could confirm someone's right to work instantly and securely, using records that cannot be altered or faked. This reduces the ambiguity that fuels non-compliance and removes the gaps that trafficking gangs and illegal labour markets rely on. The same secure system also prevents online impersonation, making it much harder for fraudsters to use stolen identities to open accounts or access services. Overall, digital ID would make checks clearer and more reliable, reducing the scope for illegal working and online fraud while strengthening protection against exploitation.

Endnotes

- 1 <https://www.newbritain.org.uk/cananybodyhearme>
- 2 <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/making-public-services-work-for-you-with-your-digital-identity>
- 3 <https://institute.global/insights/politics-and-governance/time-for-digital-id-a-new-consensus-for-a-state-that-works>
- 4 <https://institute.global/insights/economic-prosperity/the-economic-case-for-a-uk-digital-id>
- 5 <https://institute.global/insights/politics-and-governance/time-for-digital-id-a-new-consensus-for-a-state-that-works>
- 6 <https://institute.global/insights/politics-and-governance/time-for-digital-id-a-new-consensus-for-a-state-that-works>

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