



THIS SCEPTRED ISLE

Pride not prejudice
across the nations of Britain

British
Future...

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“THIS PRECIOUS STONE SET IN THE SILVER SEA”

Richard II, Act 2 scene 1

British Future is an independent, non-partisan thinktank seeking to involve people in an open conversation, which addresses people's hopes and fears about identity and integration, migration and opportunity, so that we feel confident about Britain's future.



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NOTE: Numbers throughout this document do not always add to 100% because of rounding. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2,600 adults, with 565 adults in Wales, and 556 in Scotland sampled. Fieldwork was undertaken between 30th March – 2nd April 2012. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).

Flying all our flags

What are we proud of in Britain? Can we be British as well as English, Scottish and Welsh? Since devolution have our identities across Britain changed and what do our flags mean to us today? Sunder Katwala argues that the population has a strong sense of what they are proud of, but also more needs to be done to extend our pride in our flags and the modern, inclusive Britain they represent.

Obituaries for Britain and Britishness remain premature as majorities of the population want to have two identities, happy to call themselves English, Scottish or Welsh as well as British, our polling from YouGov shows.

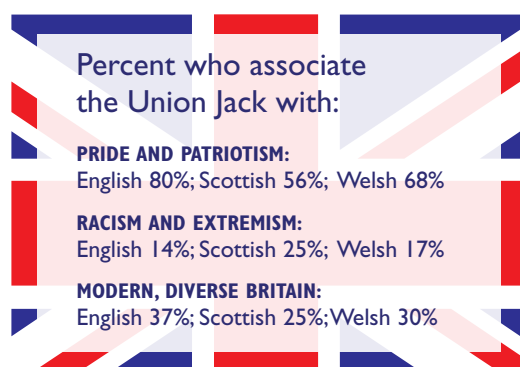
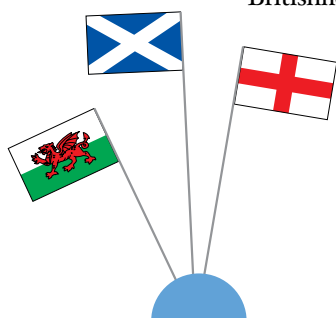
It does reflect that significant groups of people across the nations of Britain reject British identity. In Scotland 31% say that they are “Scottish, not British”, while 17% say that they are “English, not British”; and 21% say they are Welsh, not British.

But more than six out of ten in Scotland and Wales want to combine their British and national identities, while the growing interest in English identity is also combined with British identity for most people.

So the poll shows that most people across the nations of Britain do maintain a sense of British identity which, as a shared civic identity, will be sustained as long as a majority of people across the various British nations want them.

Reflecting the public’s sense of plural identities across Britain today may depend on showing that we can fly all of our flags with pride, without believing we have to choose between them.

This helps to explain why Scottish nationalism is now, counterintuitively, developing an increased interest in engaging in Britishness. Alex Salmond is now developing a



novel argument for a “social union” arguing that a newly independent Scotland would continue to reflect its British identity and history too, as well as maintaining allegiance to a shared Crown. The identity findings in this poll show the wisdom of this. There is no path to a pro-independence majority without winning support from Scots who feel British; meanwhile Unionists will need to reflect a strong sense of Scottish identity too to maintain the UK.

Even in Northern Ireland, whose long-standing divisions reflect both the most strident commitment to and the most vehement rejection of British identity in any part of the UK, the identity debate may be becoming more gradually more conciliatory. Deputy first minister Martin McGuinness of Sinn Finn, speaking over the Easter weekend, recast the vision of a united Ireland as one “open to practical ways of giving expression to the unionist sense of Britishness”. In speaking about the need for “new language and new compromises” to reflect “reconciliation between my community and the British state”, McGuinness appeared to pave the way for the conciliatory symbolism of a Sinn Fein handshake with the Queen during the Jubilee celebrations.

Sunder Katwala is director of British Future

	WHAT DO YOU ASSOCIATE WITH THE FLAG OF...		
	ENGLAND	SCOTLAND	WALES
Pride	61%	84%	86%
Racism	24%	10%	7%
Modern nation	26%	58%	58%
Empire	22%	11%	16%

***YouGov spoke with 1479 English, 556 Scottish and 565 Welsh respondents.*

Green and pleasant land

In the Jubilee year, the question of what the English think about themselves is especially relevant. 2012 has already established itself as an historic year, but one when Britain and its component parts, England, Scotland and Wales have started to debate the ties that divide and separate us.

As the nation that did not engage with the devolution debate in 1997, this has been a year for reflection for the English who have begun to question, as perhaps they have failed to need to do in the past, about what England needs from the deal. The separation of powers, if you choose to see it as such, has meant a stronger civic and modern sense of Scottish and Welsh identity, which is not drawn from an anti-English chippiness. A decade later the English are now having similar debates.

Shakespeare is also a big winner with 86% of the English feeling proud of his work

What our research showed is that the English have a strong sense of pride in their nation, the beauty of the English countryside draws on a deep vein of pride about what makes England great which resonates through English poetry from John Clare to Wordsworth, and still has clarity today.

A massive 92% of the English said they were proud of English countryside, showing this green and pleasant land which has inspired Shakespeare and the poets clearly holds an enormous place in the hearts of its people. Its those rambling byways of the Cotswolds, and the purple outcrops of the Peak District that foreigners think of when they think of England.

Beatrix Potter's Lake District drew another emotional response, with 85% of English people saying they were proud of its mountains. Much of this countryside has inspired our greatest literature, and plays, so perhaps it is no wonder that the English people think so highly of their language with

89% being proud of it. Language resonates as a source of pride for 76% of the Welsh and 65% of the Scots.

Shakespeare, perhaps England's most famous export, is also a big winner with 86% of the English feeling proud of the bard's work.

What this adds up to is an England that knows it can, and is, taking pride in its heritage, institutions, and is more at ease with itself than others might guess.

The English were not the only Britons whose deep love of their landscape shone through, with 84% of the Welsh showing pride in the famous Valleys, and 96% of Scots believing their iconic Highlands was a source of pride.

And while some might see Britain divided by the urban and the rural, there was strong support for our capital cities too, with 73% of English adults registering pride in London 86% of Scottish adults taking pride in Edinburgh and 75% of Welsh adults taking pride in Cardiff.

While Londoners themselves were particularly proud of their city (90%), across England, the different regions showed their support with the north registering 63%, the Midlands 69% and the rest of the south showing 78% pride in their capital. In Wales, majority pride in Cardiff was found across the Welsh regions, particularly high in the south east Wales (91%), mid and west Wales (81%), while Cardiff residents who were polled indicated a pride rating of 91%*.

Rachael Jolley is editorial director of British Future.

**The poll included responses from 74 Welsh adults who live in Cardiff.*

English pride:

73%

proud of London

85%

proud of Lake District

A massive 92% of the English said they were proud of English countryside, that green and pleasant land which has inspired Shakespeare and the poets clearly holds an enormous place in the hearts of its people. Its those rambling byways of the Cotswolds, and the purple outcrops of the Peak District that foreigners think of when they think of England.

Welsh are most proud of own flag

What makes you proud to be Welsh?

84%

Welsh valleys

86%

Snowdon

70%

Caernavon Castle

78%

the Eisteddfod

The Welsh are the nation most proud of their own flag across Britain, with 86% of those polled associating the Red Dragon with pride and patriotism. This is more than the English, where 61% are proud of the St George flag, and narrowly beats the 84% of Scots proud of the St. Andrew's Cross.

Wales' grand slam victory in the Six Nations may have boosted the strong Welsh pride in their sporting teams, with 90% of those polled feeling proud of their national sports figures compared with 65% of the Scottish and 68% of the English.

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Only 7% of the Welsh identify the Red Dragon with racism and extremism, 3% less than the Scottish and 17% less than the number of English who associate racism and extremism with St. George's Cross.

Those aged 18–24 are the least proud of the Red Dragon out of all the age groups polled, with a still substantial 75% associating it with pride and patriotism. An equal amount of Welsh 18–24 year olds (75%) are just as proud of the Union Jack as they are of their own flag, significantly more than Scottish 18–24 year olds (43%), and even more than the English (72%). This is perhaps surprising, as overall the English (80%) are more proud of the Union Jack than the Welsh (68%).

Overall, more Welsh people associate their flag with pride than both the Scottish and the English



86%



84%



61%



- Only 7% associate the Welsh flag with racism
- Pride in Welsh language 78%
- Pride in Cardiff 75%

There is a divide between those planning to vote for the Conservative party and those who are not when it comes to pride in the Welsh language. Only 68% of those intending to vote Conservative in Wales are proud of the Welsh language, less than the 81% of those intending to vote Labour. It is also considerably lower than the 92% of those planning to vote for the Liberal Democrats and the 95% of those intending to vote for the Plaid Cymru.

Asked if the Queen makes them proud to be Welsh, 57% of those intending to vote Conservative at the next election say yes. In contrast to this, 75% of those intending to vote for the Liberal Democrats and 78% of those planning to vote for the Plaid Cymru are not proud of her. There is a strong pride in Welsh valleys (84%) and Snowdon (86%).

Richard Miranda

Is Scottish civic identity weaker than it thinks?

“It is not important where we have come from; it’s where we are going together, as a nation’. That was the simple definition of a civic and inclusive national identity given by Bashir Ahmed, the Scottish nationalist politician who was born in Amritsar, in British-ruled India in 1940, who emigrated to Scotland at the age of 21, and who became the first MSP of Asian-Scottish heritage when elected to represent Glasgow for the SNP in 2007. Scottish first minister Alex Salmond called Ahmed “probably the most patriotic Scot that I have ever met” as warm tributes for the widely admired politician poured in from across the political spectrum after his death in 2011.

To be regarded as Scottish, 52% of Scots believe it is important your parents were born in Scotland, and 13% believe it important to be white

Scottish civic society, across the political spectrum and beyond it, has placed a great deal of emphasis on promoting a civic, and not ethnic, definition. Our YouGov poll shows that this has made an important difference, but that the transition from an ethnic to a civically defined Scottish identity remains work in progress, and can not yet be said to be fully complete.

Having its own parliament has given modern Scotland a confident sense of itself. Most Scots do strongly associate their Saltire flag with patriotism and pride (84%) and with modern, diverse Scotland (58%), while 85% reject the idea it has any strong association with racism or extremism. More Scots worry about an extremist meaning of the Union flag (25%) than their own national flag (10%), while the English perceptions are reversed. Only 13% think it is important to be white to be Scottish, while 83% don’t think it matters much (20%) or at all (63%).

On these questions, a clear majority of Scots endorse a civic definition, and see considering yourself Scottish (83%) and contributing to Scottish society (83%) to be what matters most.

Yet, at the same time, 73% think it is fairly or very important to be Scottish-born, and only 9% say that is not at all important. That would have disappointed Bashir Ahmed. That a slim majority (52%) think it is important, at least, to have Scottish-born parents, with 45% disagreeing would seem to inadvertently endorse an almost all-white definition of the Scots after all, suggesting those images of Asian Scots in kilts have not yet fully won the argument.

73%
of Scots say paying your tax is important in being regarded as Scottish

Sunder Katwala

The Scottish Highlands evoke almost unanimous pride among Scots (96%). That the capital city (86%), the Edinburgh festival (84%) and Robert Burns (84%) are some way ahead of Ben Nevis (75%), haggis (68%), the Gaelic language (67%) and Balmoral (49%) suggests a Scottish identity which mixes pride in its traditional roots with an increasing emphasis on its contemporary expression.

Edinburgh and the Highlands made people feel very proud to be Scottish but the Queen less so.



Can Shakespeare's nation find its modern voice?

It would be strange, yet it seems to be true, that it should be England, the land of Shakespeare, which today seems uncertain about how to find its modern voice.

Perhaps, for most of the last three hundred years, not talking much about England made sense. An understated Englishness, habitually conflated with being British, helped make the United Kingdom and build a shared Empire, which Alex Salmond forgets was once a source of much Scottish pride, while it lasted.

The existential threats to England faced Britain as a whole. "Speak for England" cried Tory backbencher Leo Amery across the floor of the Commons to Labour's Clement Attlee in May 1940, their alliance paving the way for Winston Churchill.

For a long time after victory and peace in 1945, the English took pride primarily in British institutions, from the Army and the Monarchy to the NHS and the BBC.

Devolution to Scotland and Wales would change how the English think of themselves too. The English now say they are more English than British – when the opposite was true even five years ago, in earlier British Social Attitudes surveys – yet the English question remained unanswered, and seldom asked. Conservative politicians often joined New Labour in ducking it, from a traditional pro-Union fear shared across governing parties that a further rise in national sentiment within these islands could mark a slippery slope towards breaking-up Britain.

But ignoring England now presents a greater threat to the future of the Union. There is an increasingly voiced unfairness in giving the smaller Celtic nations their own voice but denying that chance to the English majority.

Still, only a fifth say that they consider themselves English and not British. The most popular answer remains "equally English and British", for 43%. This means that six out of ten people still feel at least as British as English, and that eight out of ten think their English identity is at least as important. Most people do not want to be forced to

make a choice, but do want both identities recognised.

Perhaps an inclusive pride in being both English and British should not be so difficult. Yet only a slim majority, six out of ten, of the English associate the St George's Cross with pride and patriotism, which is surely the main point of a national flag. More than eight out of ten in Scotland and Wales can say that of their flags, while 80% of the English do see the Union flag as patriotic too.

The English are prouder of the English language than Wales is of the Welsh tongue

But one in three of the under 40s think of racism and extremism when they see England's national flag. Conservatives are three times as likely to see extremism in the English flag (17%) as the Union Jack (6%). The extreme street hooligans of the English Defence League have toxified our national flag, but should share the blame with the democratic politicians who have failed to speak up for the inclusive patriotism of the English majority. Civic leadership in Scotland and Wales have done rather more to counter rejectionist or exclusive versions of national identity.

We risk the search for a modern English patriotism going backwards. I remember feeling much more positive about the flag of St George during that happy, heady summer of Euro 1996, when Terry Venables' England football team played the Dutch off the Wembley pitch. The Union flag seemed to melt away overnight to be replaced by a red and white sea of celebratory St George's crosses.

It did not endure. England remained a "90 minute nation", with barely any public recognition at all outside sport. We could celebrate English triumphs over Australia in a Rugby World Cup final and, unbelievably enough, in Ashes cricket too, but that sport can hardly sustain a national identity on their own.



Anxiety over the English flag disguises a bedrock of confidence about English pride

Anxiety over the English flag disguises a bedrock of confidence about English pride. Large majorities of the English take pride in just about everything about England, from the Lake District to Shakespeare, Buckingham palace to our pubs and sporting teams and – most popular of all – the English countryside, a source of pride for 92%. The English are prouder of the English language than Wales is of the Welsh tongue.

Region and class, party, age or ethnicity make rather less difference than many might imagine to these shared symbols of English pride. Two-thirds of northerners say that London makes them proud to be English, along with 70% across England, while two-thirds in the capital find national pride in Yorkshire pudding.

How can this England of everyday pride now gain a stronger public voice? The public do want a fair deal on an English voice, and tax and spending across the UK, as the IPPR's recent research has shown, though are unlikely to have a great appetite for examining the wonkish intricacies of the West Lothian question or the Barnett formula for public spending. Addressing those issues, in a reshaped United Kingdom if and when Scotland votes to stay, will take time.

It would best to begin quickly with important symbolic steps to show that the English voice will count too. More public recognition of St George's Day later this month would help. 2012 is a good year to remember that the date marks Shakespeare's birthday too.

And isn't it now time for the Six Nations rugby anthems of Land of My Fathers or Flower of Scotland to be answered by the English anthem, Jerusalem?

The worst response to anxiety about English identity would be to hope that it goes away, leaving England with little public imagery between Sunday night nostalgia for Downton Abbey or the angry, snarling face of the EDL. The failure to engage constructively with English identity leaves a larger minority (though still only one in five) saying it is important to be white to be English; almost twice the proportion of Scots and Welsh who see their national identities as ethnically defined. Over the last two generations, the question of whether it was possible to be black and British was decisively resolved. Indeed, it now seems hard to recall why the question seemed so difficult. It perhaps helped that British identity had always been plural. It was, properly understood, not a national identity as such, but the shared civic identity of a multiethnic state. As English, Welsh and Scottish identities increase in public salience, it becomes just as important to show that each can be defined civically, not ethnically, too. So who will speak up for England today, for the inclusive majority, whose patriotism is of pride, not prejudice? For Harry, England and St George – and indeed for Britain too – it must be time to hear that English voice.

Sunder Katwala

PHOTO:
*Views of Causey Pike,
Sail Fell, Grizedale
Pike in the English
Lake District*

A Song for England?

Giving England its separate anthem is an essential rite of passage to being a confident part of a modern Britain, says Alex Massie. While David Goodhart thinks that it is absurd that English sports teams still sing the British national anthem at international sporting events.

Rugby internationals at Murrayfield tend to be fraught affairs. Especially for Scots. These days, however, at least embarrassment is restricted to the game itself, not the build-up to kick-off.

It was different in the 1980s. Back then, the playing of the national anthem – that is, God Save the Queen – was guaranteed to produce a cacophony of booing. If this was bad enough when it followed Land of My Fathers (Wales) or the Marseillaise (France) it was worse still when Scotland played England and both countries were represented by God Save the Queen. Only one set of supporters embraced the anthem,

however, and they were dressed in white, not navy blue.

The booing and hissing was especially embarrassing since Princess Anne was, and remains, patron of the Scottish Rugby Union. Nevertheless, it stemmed from a frustration that Scotland did not have its own, distinct, anthem. Accordingly, and after much deliberation, Flower of Scotland was adopted in 1990.

Viewed from north of the Tweed, the apparent increase in English national identity is neither troubling nor unwelcome

England needs a new song, literally. It is absurd that English sports teams still sing the British national anthem at international events, and it is particularly absurd that they do so when playing Wales or Scotland.

What could be more perfectly designed to pitch Welsh or Scottish feeling against British feeling; this should be a matter of great anxiety for the monarch, and those who advise her. It is hard for a Conservative led government to take the initiative here as the Tories will be accused of pandering to Englishness, so the initiative should come from the monarch – we must become more English in order to better preserve what is valuable in Britishness. And what should we sing instead? There is a beautiful hymn perfectly designed for this task, a hymn which celebrates the specialness but not the superiority of the English people and appeals to our better selves to build together the good society – it is, of course, Blake's Jerusalem.

Britishness could in future become a more formal identity for state occasions, Englishness might then become rather more like Scottishness is now to most Scots – their “real” national identity combining both political and ethnic aspects and grounded in a common life and lived experience. Being Scottish is often described as having a Scottish accent, and why should not the same be said of Englishness? What clearer proof is there of being grounded in a common life?

David Goodhart

It is perhaps paradoxical that, at least in the matter of God Save the Queen, the Murrayfield crowd, quick as Scots tend to be to sense an even inadvertent slight, shared the sense that God Save the Queen had become an inappropriate anthem. It was British but also, perhaps, English even though, on other occasions, (many) Scots would bridle at the suggestion it was the property of one part of the United Kingdom.

Flower of Scotland is just as much a dirge as God Save the Queen but it satisfies the first principle required of any anthem: it is a song of our own. What, then, of England? In one sense, it seems foolish that the English be prodded towards reconsidering their own bifurcated identity. If the other parts of the UK wish to abandon British “emblems” that is their concern; why should the English be cajoled into doing likewise when they show little desire to adopt a different anthem?

“National identity is an important thing and the English have constantly been made to feel like a minority in their own country. The readoption of the flag of St George has been a positive thing for English identity and the next step is for England to have its own anthem, just like Wales and Scotland”

— IAIN DALE



Nevertheless, though the UK may be an asymmetrical Union it remains a state of Unions, not a unitary state. That being so, the symbols matter.

Viewed from north of the Tweed, the apparent increase in English national identity is neither troubling nor unwelcome. Indeed, it is helpful in as much as it demonstrates an increased awareness that England and Britain are different entities. The routine conflation of English with British is both ignorant and aggravating; the Union flag and the national anthem are supra-national emblems, not the property of one part of the United Kingdom.

No Scotsman can be any more troubled by the sight of the flag of St George than any Englishman should be concerned by St Andrew's Cross. Only the chippiest Scot objects to the English flag flying from Downing Street during the (football) World Cup; only the dreariest Englishman could complain if the Saltire also flew from the Prime Ministerial flagpole in the happy event of Scotland ever qualifying for the tournament again.

That is as it should be. A renewed awareness of the layered, complex identities

on this sodden island is overdue. English and Scots, Welsh and Irish are distinct and overlapping identities. That is part of a British identity that is as inescapable as it is capacious. Even so: the symbols of flag and anthem might, perhaps, be best restricted to those occasions in which supra-national Britishness is most appropriate.

I suspect Scots are less irritated by the conflation of English with British than we used to be; in part this may be because the English themselves do increasingly recognise the self-imposed limitations imposed by that conflation and confusion. Let England be England? Why ever not? Britain is a different idea but one that can survive the divergent, sometimes irritable, local or hyphenated identities that, collectively, contribute to the British notion.

Alex Massie is a journalist based in Scotland.

PHOTO:
Crowd prior to the start of a World Cup soccer match between England and Paraguay June 10, 2006 in Frankfurt, Germany

Read our letter calling for an English anthem and add your support on our website: www.britishfuture.org

For God, Harry and St George



The English are more proud of the NHS than Scots and Welsh, with scores of 78%, 69% and 59% respectively

Can St George's Day ever become for the English what St Patrick's Day is for the Irish? My first response to this question was one of mild scepticism. We English dislike the idea of compulsory fun. Our nationalism is for most of the time an understated thing. That does not mean it is weak. But we feel inhibited about making a song and dance about it.

Yet as soon as these faintly disobliging thoughts had occurred to me, I remembered the annual street party which we have enjoyed every summer since moving to our present house in north-west London in 2002. All the cars are removed from the street, which gives a delightful feeling of space. For one day in the year, children can run about without any danger of being run over. Bunting is erected and games are played: the most popular is the one where you try over a greater and greater distance to throw an egg to your partner without the egg breaking. There is a tea for the children, and later a supper to which everyone brings a dish, followed by music and uncompulsory dancing.

This street party, which has enabled us to get to know and even enjoy the company of neighbours whom we might otherwise never have met, has nothing to do with St George's Day. But at least this festivity shows, in a modest sort of way, that we English have some capacity for communal celebration. In this case, the original impulse came from the monarchy: our party began as a one-off event

to celebrate the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977, and because it was successful it has been running ever since.

Englishness is a very deep though usually dormant emotion. Once roused, we can become ferocious: a point often discovered too late by our enemies

If we are to invent a tradition of celebrating St George's Day, then the celebrations should probably be of as unofficial a character as possible. Let St George be a pretext for things we might like to do anyhow. The English summer is rich in events where the ostensible purpose – horse-racing, say – becomes an excuse for drinking and dressing up. But these things cannot be coerced, and people who want to opt out must be left in peace.

The danger of doing nothing to celebrate St George is that he will be commandeered by extremists who purport to be the last English patriots. Let St George's flag fly from church towers and town halls. Let roses be worn in buttonholes. But please do not make this into an occasion to compete against St Patrick, St Andrew and St David.

For there has been a kind of wisdom, as well as laziness, in our reluctance to make much of St George. Those of us who value the United Kingdom do not wish to undermine it by asserting our Englishness in a way that becomes anti-Scottish, anti-Welsh or anti-Irish. Englishness is a very deep though usually dormant emotion. Once roused, we can become ferocious: a point often discovered too late by our enemies. We should not worry if St Patrick is celebrated more boisterously than St George. A village fete can be quite enjoyable.

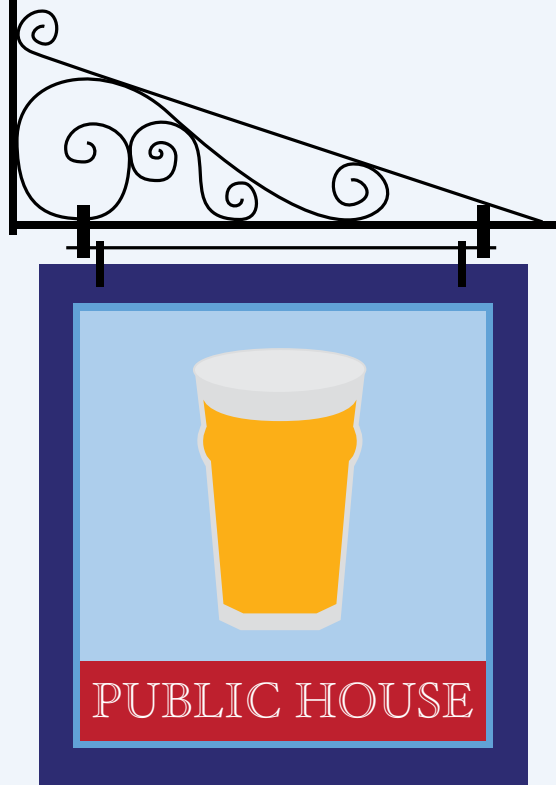
Andrew Gimson is the author of "Boris – The Rise of Boris Johnson", just published in an updated edition by Simon & Schuster.

English pride

In the Jubilee year, perhaps it is not surprising that the Queen attracts a 80% pride rating from across England, and her royal residence, Buckingham Palace, receives a wave of pride at 77%. Londoners were the most proud of the Queen (83%), and Midlanders were most proud of Buckingham Palace (80%).

There was a strong sense of pride among the English for that most quintessential of English dishes Yorkshire pudding, with 67% feeling proud of this national dish, while 68% of Scots were proud of haggis, and only 42% of the Welsh were proud of laver bread. Yorkshire pudding attracted a lot of attention across England, with 72% of Midlanders saying the dish made them proud to be English, compared to 70% of northerners.

Asked what makes them proud to be English, 67% say the most quintessential of English dishes Yorkshire pudding, while 68% of Scots were proud of haggis, and only 42% of the Welsh were proud of laver bread. Yorkshire pudding attracted a lot of attention across England, with 72% of Midlanders saying the dish made them proud to be English, compared to 70% of northerners.



Far more English people were proud of pubs, than Scots and Welsh with the English scoring

74%



The English language and Shakespeare make the English proud, with Londoners the most proud of the bard at 92%

63% of northerners say their makes them proud to be English and 78% in the south (outside London). London attracts a lot of national pride, with an overall score of 73%.



How much does being white still matter?

Peter Kellner asks how important ethnicity and parentage when it comes to regarding someone as Scottish, Welsh or English.

Were he alive today, Doctor Johnson surely would be delighted. If he applied his dictum about patriotism to YouGov's survey for British Future, he would have to conclude that only a minority of the English are scoundrels. Whereas most Scottish and Welsh people are plainly proud of their countries in clear-cut ways, the English tend to be vaguer and more uncertain about their own country – not least because they tend not to draw a firm distinction between being English and being British.

There was a large difference between the young and old when it came to the importance of having Welsh parents, with only 49% of those aged 18–24 believing it important to being regarded as Welsh compared with 70% of those aged 60+

There is no clear agreement on what it means to be English. We asked people to consider which qualities were considered important for someone to be regarded as English, (or, in Scotland and Wales, to be regarded as Scottish or Welsh). Big majorities – well over 80% – agree that to be counted as English, people need to pay their taxes here, 'contribute to society' and consider themselves English. The equivalent figures for Scotland and Wales are similar. Around three in four think that an important factor is whether they were born in England.

However, the English are more divided on whether to include in their ranks non-whites and the children of immigrants. 56% say it is very or fairly important that their parents

were born in England, while 41% regard it as not very, or not at all, important.

The figures for ethnicity are rather different. Just 22% say it is very or fairly important that someone is white if they are to be regarded as truly English. Yet there are three reasons why opponents of racial definitions of Englishness should treat this apparently encouraging figure with caution.

It is substantially higher than the figures for Scotland (13%) and Wales (15%).

A further 25% say it is 'not very important'; this brings the total considering that race plays some role in determining Englishness to 47%. The proportion giving a fully non-racist response and saying that being white is 'not at all important' is 49%. Thus the English are evenly divided on whether ethnicity matters to some extent or not at all; in contrast, Scottish and Welsh people divide by almost two-to-one in saying that race does not matter at all.

There is considerable variation among different English groups. These are the figures for people saying that being white matters a little or a lot, compared with those who say it does not matter at all:

- Over 60s: important to some degree 64%; not important at all 35%
- Readers of red-top tabloids: 56%, 41%
- Working class voters: 55%, 41%
- Conservative supporters: 55%, 43%
- Labour supporters: 46%, 51%
- Middle class voters: 42%, 53%
- Under 40s: 39%, 56%
- Readers of upmarket papers: 39%, 61%
- Liberal Democrat supporters: 32%, 67%

In as far as the challenge is to devise an English patriotism that is inclusive and reflects today's diversity, rather than one that is rooted in a racially exclusive tradition, the first task is perhaps to win the debate about who qualifies to be English in the first place.

Peter Kellner is president of YouGov.

British Future / YouGov polling data in detail

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2,600 adults, with 565 adults in Wales, and 556 in Scotland sampled. Fieldwork was undertaken between 30th March – 2nd April 2012. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+). Polling data will be found on the YouGov website, www.yougov.co.uk

* Not all differences between sub-groups in this report are statistically significant but indicate differences between the relevant groups

Would you say you see yourself as...?

	TOTAL	ENGLAND	SCOTLAND	WALES
English	78	88	11	25
Scottish	9	2	77	1
Welsh	4	1	1	64
None of these	7	7	10	9
Don't know	1	1	1	1

And which, if any, of the following best describes how you see yourself?
[All those who see themselves as [Country] or None n=2327]

	TOTAL	ENGLAND	SCOTLAND	WALES
[Country], not British	20	19	31	21
More [Country] than British	19	18	26	22
Equally [Country] and British	42	43	29	37
More British than [Country]	8	8	5	9
British, not [Country]	6	6	6	6
Other description	3	3	3	4
Don't know	2	2	0	1

To what extent, if at all, do you associate each of the following things with the Union Jack?

	TOTAL	ENGLAND	SCOTLAND	WALES
Pride and patriotism				
Associate a great deal	50	52	32	42
Associate a fair amount	28	28	24	26
Total associate	78	80	56	68
Associate a little	12	11	20	17
Do not associate at all	7	5	19	12
Total associate a little / not at all	19	16	39	29
Don't know	3	3	5	3

Racism and extremism				
Associate a great deal	7	6	14	8
Associate a fair amount	8	8	11	9
Total associate	15	14	25	17
Associate a little	20	20	19	19
Do not associate at all	59	60	48	57
Total associate a little / not at all	79	80	67	76
Don't know	6	6	8	7
The empire				
Associate a great deal	37	38	37	35
Associate a fair amount	26	26	23	25
Total associate	63	64	60	60
Associate a little	17	17	19	19
Do not associate at all	15	15	17	15
Total associate a little / not at all	32	32	36	34
Don't know	4	4	4	6
Modern, diverse Britain				
Associate a great deal	14	14	9	13
Associate a fair amount	22	23	16	17
Total associate	36	37	25	30
Associate a little	26	26	25	26
Do not associate at all	32	31	44	39
Total associate a little / not at all	58	57	69	65
Don't know	6	6	7	6
British pop music				
Associate a great deal	13	13	10	13
Associate a fair amount	22	23	14	18
Total associate	35	36	24	31
Associate a little	25	25	24	22
Do not associate at all	36	35	45	43
Total associate a little / not at all	61	60	69	65
Don't know	5	5	7	4
The armed forces				
Associate a great deal	54	55	44	46
Associate a fair amount	25	25	26	31
Total associate	79	80	70	77
Associate a little	13	12	18	13
Do not associate at all	6	5	8	7
Total associate a little / not at all	19	17	26	20
Don't know	2	2	4	3
The monarchy				
Associate a great deal	59	60	56	56
Associate a fair amount	24	24	24	26
Total associate	83	84	80	82
Associate a little	10	10	10	11
Do not associate at all	5	4	6	5
Total associate a little / not at all	15	14	16	16
Don't know	3	3	3	3
Democracy and tolerance				
Associate a great deal	25	26	17	21

Associate a fair amount	28	28	24	26
Total associate	53	54	41	47
Associate a little	23	23	22	21
Do not associate at all	18	17	31	24
Total associate a little / not at all	41	40	53	45
Don't know	6	6	5	7
Sacrifice in the world wars				
Associate a great deal	42	43	35	37
Associate a fair amount	24	25	20	26
Total associate	66	68	55	63
Associate a little	16	15	20	17
Do not associate at all	13	12	18	15
Total associate a little / not at all	29	27	38	32
Don't know	5	5	7	5
Team GB at the Olympics				
Associate a great deal	46	47	36	39
Associate a fair amount	28	28	29	32
Total associate	74	75	65	71
Associate a little	15	15	21	14
Do not associate at all	8	8	10	12
Total associate a little / not at all	23	23	31	26
Don't know	3	2	4	4

And to what extent, if at all, do you associate each of the following things with the [Country flag]?

	ENGLAND	SCOTLAND	WALES
Pride and patriotism			
Associate a great deal	34	61	70
Associate a fair amount	27	23	16
Total associate	61	84	86
Associate a little	19	9	6
Do not associate at all	15	6	6
Total associate a little / not at all	34	15	12
Don't know	5	2	2
Racism and extremism			
Associate a great deal	9	6	1
Associate a fair amount	15	4	6
Total associate	24	10	7
Associate a little	18	15	13
Do not associate at all	51	70	75
Total associate a little / not at all	69	85	88
Don't know	7	5	4
The empire			
Associate a great deal	9	5	9
Associate a fair amount	13	6	7
Total associate	22	11	16
Associate a little	22	16	12
Do not associate at all	49	67	68
Total associate a little / not at all	71	83	80
Don't know	6	6	5

Modern, diverse [Country]			
Associate a great deal	10	31	34
Associate a fair amount	16	27	24
Total associate	26	58	58
Associate a little	23	21	19
Do not associate at all	44	18	20
Total associate a little / not at all	67	39	39
Don't know	7	4	4
[Country] music			
Associate a great deal	7	24	53
Associate a fair amount	13	23	22
Total associate	20	47	75
Associate a little	21	25	14
Do not associate at all	50	25	9
Total associate a little / not at all	71	50	23
Don't know	8	2	2
The armed forces			
Associate a great deal	15	16	18
Associate a fair amount	18	20	21
Total associate	33	36	39
Associate a little	22	26	23
Do not associate at all	39	36	34
Total associate a little / not at all	61	62	57
Don't know	6	3	4
The monarchy			
Associate a great deal	14	8	8
Associate a fair amount	15	7	8
Total associate	29	15	16
Associate a little	25	19	15
Do not associate at all	40	63	66
Total associate a little / not at all	65	82	81
Don't know	6	4	3
Democracy and tolerance			
Associate a great deal	13	22	21
Associate a fair amount	20	26	25
Total associate	33	48	46
Associate a little	23	24	25
Do not associate at all	35	23	23
Total associate a little / not at all	58	47	48
Don't know	8	5	6
Sacrifice in the world wars			
Associate a great deal	18	23	24
Associate a fair amount	17	19	16
Total associate	35	42	40
Associate a little	21	20	21
Do not associate at all	37	33	34
Total associate a little / not at all	58	53	55
Don't know	7	5	5

And would you say each of the following do or do not make you feel proud to be [Country]?
 [All those who consider themselves [Country] n=2073]

	ENGLAND	SCOTLAND	WALES
Lake District / Ben Nevis / Snowdon			
Yes, very proud	45	29	45
Yes, fairly proud	40	46	41
Total proud	85	75	86
No, not very proud	8	15	9
No, not at all proud	3	5	2
Total not proud	11	20	11
Don't know	5	5	3
Language			
Yes, very proud	57	24	49
Yes, fairly proud	32	43	29
Total proud	89	67	78
No, not very proud	7	21	13
No, not at all proud	2	8	6
Total not proud	9	29	19
Don't know	3	4	3
Shakespeare / Robert Burns / Dylan Thomas			
Yes, very proud	44	42	33
Yes, fairly proud	42	42	42
Total proud	86	84	75
No, not very proud	8	11	13
No, not at all proud	3	3	5
Total not proud	11	14	18
Don't know	3	2	7
London, Edinburgh, Cardiff			
Yes, very proud	32	40	35
Yes, fairly proud	41	46	40
Total proud	73	86	75
No, not very proud	17	10	14
No, not at all proud	7	3	7
Total not proud	24	13	21
Don't know	3	2	3
English countryside, Highlands, Valleys			
Yes, very proud	61	66	48
Yes, fairly proud	31	30	36
Total proud	92	96	84
No, not very proud	3	3	9
No, not at all proud	2	1	2
Total not proud	5	4	11
Don't know	2	1	5
[Country]'s sporting teams			
Yes, very proud	25	26	64
Yes, fairly proud	43	39	26
Total proud	68	65	90
No, not very proud	20	25	4
No, not at all proud	8	9	2
Total not proud	28	34	6

Don't know	4	2	4
The Queen			
Yes, very proud	50	15	14
Yes, fairly proud	30	26	21
Total proud	80	41	35
No, not very proud	10	24	22
No, not at all proud	7	31	34
Total not proud	17	55	56
Don't know	3	5	8
Buckingham Palace, Balmoral, Caernavon			
Yes, very proud	38	18	26
Yes, fairly proud	39	31	44
Total proud	77	49	70
No, not very proud	12	27	17
No, not at all proud	7	19	6
Total not proud	19	46	23
Don't know	3	5	6
The NHS			
Yes, very proud	38	31	27
Yes, fairly proud	40	38	32
Total proud	78	69	59
No, not very proud	14	19	26
No, not at all proud	4	8	9
Total not proud	18	27	35
Don't know	3	4	6
[Country] Pubs			
Yes, very proud	31	16	23
Yes, fairly proud	43	35	36
Total proud	74	51	59
No, not very proud	15	31	22
No, not at all proud	6	12	11
Total not proud	21	43	33
Don't know	4	5	8
John Cleese, Billy Connolly, Rob Brydon			
Yes, very proud	9	23	18
Yes, fairly proud	33	35	39
Total proud	42	58	57
No, not very proud	30	23	22
No, not at all proud	18	15	10
Total not proud	48	38	32
Don't know	10	4	11
Glastonbury, Edinburgh, Eisteddfod			
Yes, very proud	13	47	41
Yes, fairly proud	38	37	37
Total proud	51	84	78
No, not very proud	29	10	12
No, not at all proud	14	3	5
Total not proud	43	13	17
Don't know	7	2	4

Yorkshire pudding, Haggis, Laver Bread			
Yes, very proud	24	29	16
Yes, fairly proud	43	39	26
Total proud	67	68	42
No, not very proud	19	19	31
No, not at all proud	7	8	16
Total not proud	26	27	47
Don't know	6	5	11

How important, if at all, would you say each of the following qualities are for someone to be regarded as English / Scottish / Welsh?

	TOTAL	ENGLAND	SCOTLAND	WALES
<i>Their parents were born in [Country]</i>				
Very important	28	29	24	26
Fairly important	28	27	28	33
Total important	56	56	52	59
Not very important	25	25	28	24
Not at all important	16	16	17	14
Total not important	41	41	45	38
Don't know	3	3	3	3
<i>They were born in [Country]</i>				
Very important	48	48	48	50
Fairly important	28	29	25	28
Total important	76	77	73	78
Not very important	13	13	16	13
Not at all important	8	8	9	6
Total not important	21	21	25	19
Don't know	3	3	3	2
<i>They pay their taxes in [Country]</i>				
Very important	58	62	42	32
Fairly important	25	24	31	29
Total important	83	86	73	61
Not very important	9	7	17	21
Not at all important	4	4	7	14
Total not important	13	11	24	35
Don't know	3	3	3	5
<i>They contribute to [Country] society</i>				
Very important	60	61	52	41
Fairly important	29	28	31	38
Total important	89	89	83	79
Not very important	6	5	9	13
Not at all important	3	2	5	5
Total not important	9	7	14	18
Don't know	3	3	3	3
<i>They consider themselves English, Welsh or Scottish</i>				
Very important	58	58	56	59
Fairly important	27	27	27	29
Total important	85	85	83	88

Not very important	8	8	8	5
Not at all important	4	4	5	4
Total not important	12	12	13	9
Don't know	3	3	3	3
<i>They are white</i>				
Very important	11	12	6	8
Fairly important	10	10	7	7
Total important	21	22	13	15
Not very important	25	25	20	21
Not at all important	51	49	63	60
Total not important	76	74	83	81
Don't know	3	3	4	3

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In this new report, published on St George's Day, British Future investigates modern British identity – and how we feel about our English, Scottish and Welsh identities in Britain today.

Do the Union Jack, St George's Flag, Saltire and Welsh Dragon represent modern pride – or are we anxious that they could do more to divide than unite us? Could we choose to fly all of our flags, or will we have to choose between them? And what, from our past and present, makes us most proud of the countries we live in?

It reports new findings about what the public thinks makes most difference to being regarded as English, Scottish or Welsh. How far are our identities defined by ethnicity, parentage and birthplace – or how far do people have a civic understanding, where it is your sense of identity and contribution to society which matter most?

This Sceptred Isle aims to open up public debate about how we could do more to create a shared and inclusive pride across the nations of Britain.



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