



The Integration Consensus

*1993–2013: How Britain changed
since Stephen Lawrence*

British
Future...

Sunder Katwala

Introduction

We should never have all heard of Stephen Lawrence. He was just a young man, looking for a bus, hoping his parents wouldn't be too worried if he got home after ten. In a few blurred seconds, everything changed. A glimpse of a small gang. A shout of "what, what nigger?" A flurry of violence. The attempt to run. The end of a young life, lost to hatred and violence. His case would come to shock Britain, eventually, though it took four years for that stabbing in the streets of south London, and the failure to convict the murderers, to become the stuff of front-page headlines, *Sunder Katwala writes*.

British Future held a workshop, moderated by BritainThinks, in Eltham in March 2013, with two groups of local people. Half were 18-year-olds and half were 38-year-olds.

Two decades on, Britain is a different country. A measure of justice for Stephen has been achieved, with two of his killers jailed. We all know Stephen Lawrence's story now – thanks to the persistent campaign led by his mother; because the high media profile of the case helped many people to empathise and to see, perhaps for the first time, issues of policing and justice through the eyes of a black family; because the way in which the political and legal establishment sought to respond, and work out how to take principles of equality before the law, justice and equal opportunity and to break down the practical barriers which can prevent them from being upheld. Two decades on, Stephen Lawrence's name is part of our social history. He remains an important reference point for how we think and talk about justice and fairness, about opportunity and hope, about fear and hatred. So this is a moment to take stock. To mark this anniversary, British Future has looked at the national picture, to find out how far we have come, and what still needs to change today. We also wanted to hear the voices of those who live in the place where it happened holding two events in Eltham. It isn't easy to be from a place made infamous by a racist murder. Eltham had a racism problem in the early 1990s, though the idea of a "wall of silence" from the local community was always untrue, a convenient alibi.

There were many local people who wanted the killers caught, giving the police the names of the suspects within days. I had lived in Eltham myself, not back in 1993, but I was there by 1999 when the inquiry reported, and have lived around the area over the fifteen years since. I wanted to see if we could try to capture the whole picture. This could certainly be a deeply divisive local issue: on the day that the public inquiry report was released, there was even white paint splashed on the memorial to Stephen, where he fell on the Well Hall Road, a few yards from my front door. In those days, talking about the Stephen Lawrence case around SE9 seemed to offer stark and polarising choices, with the risk that a local defensiveness hardened into denial, which would sweep racism under the carpet or, alternatively, that dealing with the injustice done to the Lawrences meant characterising the place where it happened as irredeemably racist. Both of these

approaches contribute to a street-level counter-narrative of grievance and backlash, even a denial that the crime was racist, and a broader resentment at the attention it came to received, well captured by Roger Hewitt in his local research on young people's attitudes in Eltham in the 1990s. If we were to face only a choice between who to stereotype – whether young black teenagers or white working-class estates – then it would be much more difficult to find the common ground from which to move on.

The national polling and our local workshop capture clear grounds for showing that Britain has changed, and that Eltham has changed too. Nobody who spent any significant amount of time in Eltham in the 1990s, and who talks to local 18-year-olds today, would doubt that there has been a significant shift in attitudes. Those conversations were carefully negotiated for some time afterwards – and there are still echoes of how people moved, sometimes uneasily, to stake out some common ground about whether or how the area had changed. What is most striking today is the lack of racial consciousness among the mixed group of 18-year-olds from the local area who took part. There are many issues that they worry about – their opportunities to get a job and get on at work, and how the police treat them in the streets – but they shared an easy, everyday confidence about Eltham, as a safe place, where people from different backgrounds get along well.

This was once the place which the BNP had seen as the frontline of its attempt to reject Britain's growing diversity – the place to hold the line between the lived diversity of south London and a whiter England, represented by Kent as the garden of England. That has been decisively rejected, and the BNP have no purchase among the next generation. It is partly that Eltham now stands out rather less from the rest of Greenwich and south London than it did in 1991, when the census showed it was 93% white. In 2011, Eltham was 69% white British. Those changes could have been a source of rising tension if communities lived separate, parallel lives. "We have learned to get along with each other", said Robert Ruki at our citizens' jury. Those changes in Eltham help to illuminate how Britain has handled its growing diversity. Many people worry, legitimately, about the scale and the pace of change. But British Future polling shows clear evidence of how, across the generations, a decisively more diverse Britain has got used to its lived diversity as an everyday norm. Questions that once caused anxiety have disappeared. Within the last half century, within the lifetime of many people, a mainstream political party candidate was elected (in 1964) campaigning on a slogan against people who "want a nigger for a neighbour". Our poll shows that anxiety about living next door to somebody of a different ethnicity has fallen to an all-time low of just 6%. Even as late as the 1980s, a majority of British people would have been worried about their child marrying across ethnic lines. Again, this has diminished to single figures.

Britain is a fairer and less racist society than it was twenty years ago. There is a broad commitment to everyday tolerance in our lived experience, and a sensible public recognition of progress, with a wariness about over-claiming about how much has changed.

The Lawrence inquiry made tackling discrimination a focus of attention for a few years, but there are legitimate fears that it may have slid down the agenda since. The scrapping of race equality duties highlight the dangers of taking too rose-tinted a view. There are reasons to be hopeful about advances for equal opportunity – most strikingly in how much results have improved in London's diverse classrooms – but also clear evidence that there is much more work to do in breaking down discrimination, in jobs, and in policing and criminal justice in particular.

“Stephen Lawrence remains an important reference point for how we think and talk about justice and fairness, about opportunity and hope, about fear and hatred”

There is a sensible recognition that hate crimes take place, and of shifting targets of prejudice too. A majority of people say there is a lot of prejudice against Muslims today, even as prejudice against blacks and Asians has fallen. The large-scale Polish immigration after 2004 probably did a great deal to help us achieve what had become overdue – separating mainstream discussion of immigration from race – but there is widespread concern about the way we can talk about eastern Europeans too. Most striking of all, British Future’s research and polling shows a very broad “integration consensus” on what living together in a liberal and free society requires in terms of common citizenship. Fully 83% of people say that those who join our society who want to learn the language, obey the law and live by the rules must count as fully and equally British, with a commitment to the equal rights and opportunities that this entails. We often fear that talking about issues of identity and integration can be divisive. If we get them wrong, they can tear our society apart. We can fail to stamp out, and even stoke, the prejudices that feed hatreds, of whatever kind. Over the last two decades, though it was sometimes painful and difficult, we have arrived at a consensus on integration. We want an inclusive British identity which can offer a united sense of pride, across different colours and creeds, with no barrier to celebrating great traditions of literature, language and music, and an appreciation too of how newer influences, from fish and chips to curry, can evolve into cherished modern tradition. And we want a shared society, not a divided one. That means being clear about the foundations – the ability to speak the English language; respect for the law and of free speech for others; and the willingness to treat everybody who plays by the rules as being fully and equally British. There is no more fundamental barrier to integration than telling those who want to contribute that they can never fully belong. We should talk about identity and integration more, not less. We would find that more unites than divide us. Modern Britain is a more diverse society than it has ever been before – but it is one where most people agree on so much more than we sometimes tell ourselves.

Eltham: 1993 to 2013

“I used to carry around a metal rod in my pocket. It may not have been legal, but it could have saved my life.”

Robert, 38, certainly hadn't been confident of his own personal safety as a young black teenager in the streets of Eltham, shortly after the murder of Stephen Lawrence two decades ago. Robert is pretty clear that Eltham had a problem with racism then. “To be fair, there were a lot of decent people too, same as anywhere,” he says. He wouldn't carry anything in his pocket today. Has Eltham changed? “I think it's changing,” he says. “I think it is changing. We are all starting to get used to each other a bit more.”

British Future was in Eltham, hosting two days of discussion to explore what local people feel about the area, and how it has or hasn't changed over the last twenty years since the death of Stephen Lawrence. Our citizens' jury consisted of two dozen local men. Half were the peers of Stephen Lawrence, around 38, the age he would have been were he alive today. The others, twenty years younger, were embarking on their adult lives today, as he had expected to do in 1993.

The Eltham jurors could easily agree on how they would characterise Eltham, and the challenges it faces today. There is a good deal of warmth towards the area, perhaps encouraged by a sense that outsiders don't really know or understand it. They could find shared priorities for the future. It was the past that was more contested. Among the older jurors, it was not difficult to tune into echoes of the more sharply polarised debates of a decade or two ago.

Robert's view of what the area was like was challenged. “You would get murders like that in every borough; that is just the one that is remembered,” said Michael, 39. Contrasting views were civilly, but firmly, expressed. It became clear the area of disagreement was about the past, not the present. The character of the area back then remained something which some of the older jurors remained invested in. “I don't agree that it was racist to start with. It was one incident, and the media got hold of it and never let go. To be fair to his mum, it was her pain and anguish that fuelled the fire. She is a lovely lady and I have nothing against her. What happened was wrong, but it didn't make everyone in Eltham racist ... I was at this school and a lot of people were scared of gangs of black kids too. I am a half-Turkish myself – and I got into trouble over that from some kids. But that's not racism. They're just idiots,” says Hassan, another member of the jury.

Innocent, also in his late thirties, had moved to the area a bit later. He admitted to being apprehensive and “a bit scared” because “I had heard the story about Stephen Lawrence”. “I haven't found any problems here. I go to the pub to have a drink, and people mix, and it's fine. So I think that places change. You will probably always have a few, but people move on.”

The 18-year-old participants were having a quite different discussion. They spoke naturally about their personal experience of Eltham – as a “safe area”, as a place of “good diversity”, which is “quite calm and relaxed, where everyone gets along”. The high street had most things they wanted except, they all agreed, somewhere else to go and eat that wasn't McDonald's. (A barber confident about cutting black hair was another more niche gap

identified when they dug into the question of amenities.) This younger group had a strong sense of attachment to Eltham, but they had much less emotionally invested in challenging ideas of what it had been like in the past.

The 18-year-olds could not, of course, offer any direct personal experience of what the area had been like twenty years ago, just before they were born. Yet they were confident in asserting that Eltham had changed, because of their sense of a more recent improvement in the social atmosphere. “Now it’s calm, but five years ago, it wasn’t so much. SE9 was still known as a racist area then,” said Jack. The younger group shared a view that the area had become less tense, and more relaxed, over the time since they had first entered secondary school, seven years before.

For the older jurors, school playgrounds were more likely to have been an area where local tensions were played out. One of the striking features of the citizens’ jury discussion was how much local schools had become a source of shared confidence today, a change encapsulated by the school where the jury meetings were being held.

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School success

The old “Eltham Green” school had a ferocious reputation. It was the school to avoid; the one with the students which no other local school would take; issues of behaviour and discipline helped to keep results bumping along the bottom, while faltering turnaround efforts had consumed five would-be “superheads” in no more than five years.

It sounds more like football management than teaching; an analogy which came easily to current principal Chris Tomlinson, whose dad had been the groundsman at Aldershot football club. Tomlinson, the first expert witness to meet the jury, connected with the group by telling them the story of how he had achieved two personal ambitions: becoming a professional footballer, as well as being the first member of his family to go to university. When Aldershot went into liquidation, he was the only player in the dressing room after the final game who had a degree, an experience which reinforced his belief in the power of education, as he made a new career in teaching.

The school – reopened, rebranded as an academy, now called “Harris Academy Greenwich” – had turned things around dramatically in just two years, since being in “special measures” as a failing school in November 2010. It had never registered a better score than 31% of pupils getting five good GCSEs, and had gone as low as 19%, which would have placed it in a handful of the worst-performing schools anywhere in Britain. Yet summer 2012 had seen 73% of students get five A*-C grade GCSEs, and the aim was to be above 80% this year.

This was an exceptional story – the GCSE scores in fact marking the greatest improvement achieved by any school over a two-year period. But the positive mood about education locally was not because of the story of this one school. The late-30s jurors included parents with children at different schools, and reported a general level of satisfaction with school quality. This fits a wider picture too: the extraordinary progress of London schools in particular over the last decade. Despite the concerns about the pressures placed, particularly by increased diversity, immigration and children who begin without English as a first language, the schools most likely to face these challenges have thrived. A decade ago, London’s schools

were well below the national average; now they are at the top of the league tables.

The school's impressive story had certainly resonated with the citizens' jury. With the foundations of good teaching and discipline in place, the jury focused on how to get students more vocational skills, including information about the world of work, and the networks and confidence to secure interviews and jobs.

Some jurors cared about a symbolic issue too, the disappearance of "Eltham" from the school's new name. Calling it Harris Academy Greenwich meant, one juror said, "It feels like you're ashamed of Eltham. It's where it is." A change of name – indeed of place – had been part of the turnaround plan: the school needed a change of image. Yet Tomlinson had stressed that the results had been achieved with a similar intake, and catchment area, not by playing admissions games. He had made a powerful case that a school reflects the community: with 900 students, and 150 people working there, the morale of the school affects the morale of the area. Clearly, the turnaround was working well. Might it be time to signal that this was a local success story that belonged to Eltham?

Policing

Education was a source of confidence, policing was more contentious. All of the younger participants had experienced being stopped by the police. Across ethnic and indeed class lines, most felt unhappy about how it had been handled too. The expert session with the police may well have done as much to reinforce a mutual sense of distance and mistrust as to resolve it. Careful textbook descriptions of how policing was carried out and why didn't easily fit perceptions. For example, younger jurors were intrigued and surprised to hear that individual Stop and Search stops could often result from specific local intelligence, but were sceptical that this was the norm.

There was a clear division across age groups, with the older jurors being fairly sympathetic towards the police doing a difficult job, and the younger group sceptical about the lack of respect they felt was shown by while it was done. (The age-gap was dramatised by a younger juror quizzing the police about the point of trying to enforce drugs laws against cannabis; and an older juror immediately asking about the lack of any apparent action when he had tried to report a neighbour who was growing cannabis for sale.)

The need for the police to be visible was a popular theme. "It's hard to talk to the police," said one of the younger participants. Jurors in both generations thought the police could both listen more, and communicate better. The suggestion that "the police should take a bit more banter" might have been pushing the boundaries.

The jurors felt that the constructive way forward was to find ways for young people and the police to seek to stand in each other's shoes more often.

Taking some young people out on patrols might help them to understand the police's perspective. The jury's proposals were for young people and the police to work together on a code of conduct about stop and search. Perhaps the process of dialogue and engagement could be as useful as the code itself. Youth engagement in policing can be done badly. The ill-fated Kent PCC experiment with a youth ambassador has shown that. Paying one young person a significant sum of money was bound to make them unrepresentative of their peers. But doing youth engagement badly should not undermine constructive efforts to do it well. The Eltham

jury discussion suggested that it is important to address the mistrust between young people and the police, and that many people would respond constructively to an offer of engagement that was felt to be genuine.

The make-up of the police mattered too. Tottenham MP David Lammy warmly endorsed the jury's sense that the Met would be more effective if they recruited more Londoners. David Lammy MP said, at a British Future debate: "There's a serious problem I think opening up in London with where the police come from, we need police officers who are young Londoners, white or black." The idea that London's police needed to try to represent modern London was seen as a common sense matter of good policing. This did also, noted one juror, require ethnic minorities to step up and want to join, as well as for the police to demonstrate they were open to change.

In a subsequent Britain Thinks poll about the jury proposals, 62% of the public chose ensuring the police are visible and reflect local areas as a priority for improving local areas.

Community

The issues of race and community brought the jury back to the Stephen Lawrence case. Harcourt Alleyne, a witness at the Macpherson inquiry, who was shortly to retire as deputy council chief executive, talked about how the council had sought to navigate through the polarized debates about racism in Eltham. It was important to acknowledge that this had been a racist murder, which had happened in an area with a history of racist attacks. Defensiveness about the issue should not harden into denial, which could let racism fester unchallenged. It was also important to challenge caricatures of the area, such as claims that it was the "racist capital of Europe". The borough had had one of the worse records for racial attacks in the 1990s, but was now usually below the London average. This also reflected the closing down of the BNP bookshop and headquarters, which had been a significant source of local tension, and the far right's failure to recruit support after the 1990s. But it had always been a caricature to claim that there was a "wall of silence" from the local community about those who had committed the murder. Doreen Lawrence had spoken about how many people in the local area wanted the killers caught, and gave information to the police within days of the killing. The idea of a "wall of silence" became a convenient alibi for the failure of the police investigation.

Harcourt Alleyne acknowledged that the national media stereotyping of the area had led to a defensiveness and a reluctance to talk about the issue openly, and the risk of a backlash. "If you don't talk about it, then you don't know what the differing perceptions are, and how to do something about it." He managed to steer a course which spoke to where the jurors were too: acknowledging the wrong of the racist killing and the failure of the police investigation, while challenging the idea that addressing racial violence and hate crimes required a cartoon caricature of white estates. That was a shared account which most people could accept, and a foundation for the area to move on.

Brian Cathcart, a journalist who wrote a major book on the Lawrence case in 1999, spoke about the national importance of the case, while also acknowledging the local frustrations at being in the national spotlight: "It's how the press works. It has the Lawrences good; Eltham bad. It's like cowboys and Indians."

Judy Smith MBE, a long-time local community activist, talked about how the area had become more mixed, though it had more recently been East European immigration as much as ethnic diversity which had changed the population.

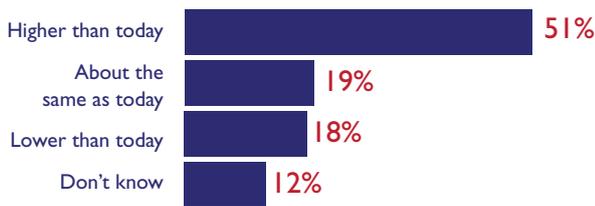
None of the jurors, from different ethnic backgrounds, identified issues of racial polarisation as a significant question facing the area today, though some were clear that would have been a priority issue for them a decade ago. There was, generally, a fair amount of shared local pride, though combined with a concern about things for young people to do, and a sense of local community. “Eltham has gone downhill in some respects. All of your new technology, facebook and all of that has made young people internalise more. Youth clubs and army cadets all seem to be on the way down,” Patrick, one of the older jurors, said. The jury’s focus was on practical ways to bring people together: making it easier for local community groups to use public spaces like schools out of hours; encouraging an occasional local Eltham market, as has been successful in other areas nearby.

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Polling

Graphs showing results of a national poll of a representative sample of 2,032 adults

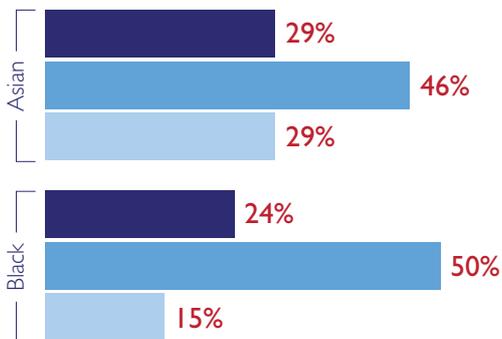
Thinking about general levels of racial prejudice in Britain, how do you think these are changing? Twenty years ago (in 1993) levels of racial prejudice were ...



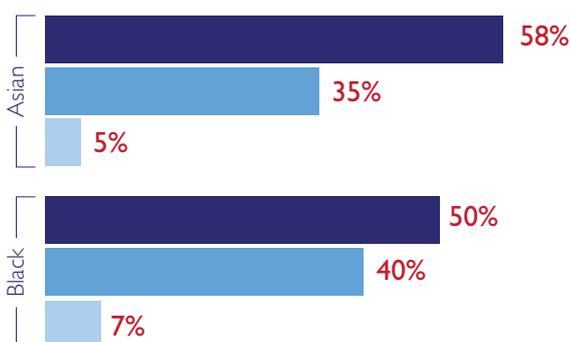
How much prejudice do you think there is against Asian/black people? 1991–2013 compared

■ A lot ■ A little ■ Hardly any

2013 data – based on 2013 Britain Thinks polling



1991 data – based on BSA data



April 2013 marks the 20-year anniversary of the death of Stephen Lawrence, who was murdered in a racist attack in south London in April, 1993. After the initial investigation, five suspects were arrested but none were convicted. A public inquiry held in 1998 concluded that the Met's failure reflected "institutional racism" in the force. In 2012, 19 years after the murder, two men were found guilty and imprisoned after new DNA evidence was discovered.

For each of the following statements, please say how far you agree or disagree

■ % agreeing with each statement

The campaign of the Lawrence family and others in the case showed that ordinary people who are determined can achieve real change and win justice



The role of the media in keeping the Stephen Lawrence case in the spotlight showed that campaigning journalism can act as a force for good in Britain



In 1993, there was a genuine problem of deep-seated and widespread racial discrimination in the police



If a similar murder happened today, the response of the police would be quicker, fairer and less racist



Racially motivated crimes happen less often now than they did twenty years ago

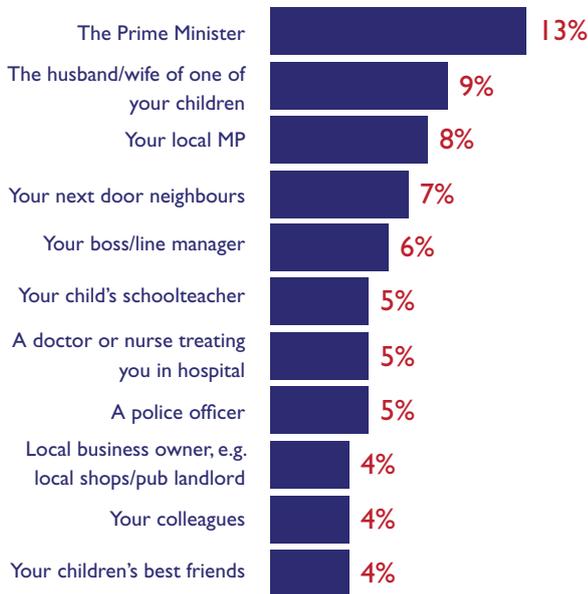


The Stephen Lawrence case has had more attention than it merited because of politically correct attitudes



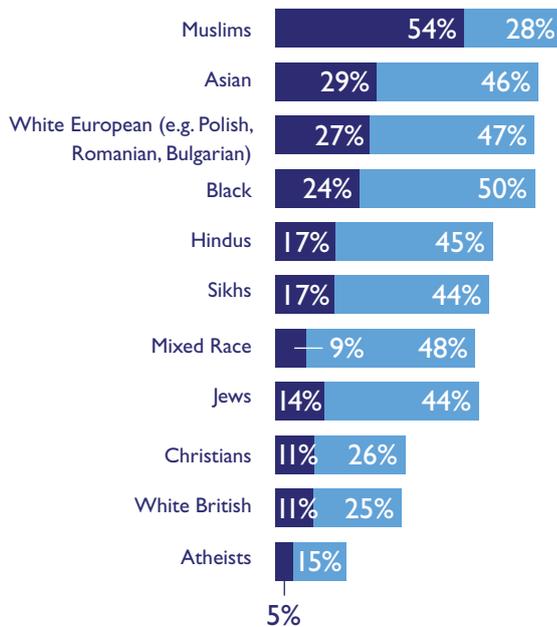
Please say how you would feel if each of the following were a position filled by someone of a different race to you

% saying they are "quite uncomfortable" or "very uncomfortable – I wouldn't want this to happen"



For each of the ethnic and religious groups listed below, please say how much prejudice you think there is against them?

■ A lot ■ A little



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For each of the following statements, please say how far you agree or disagree:

■ White ■ BME

% agreeing with each statement

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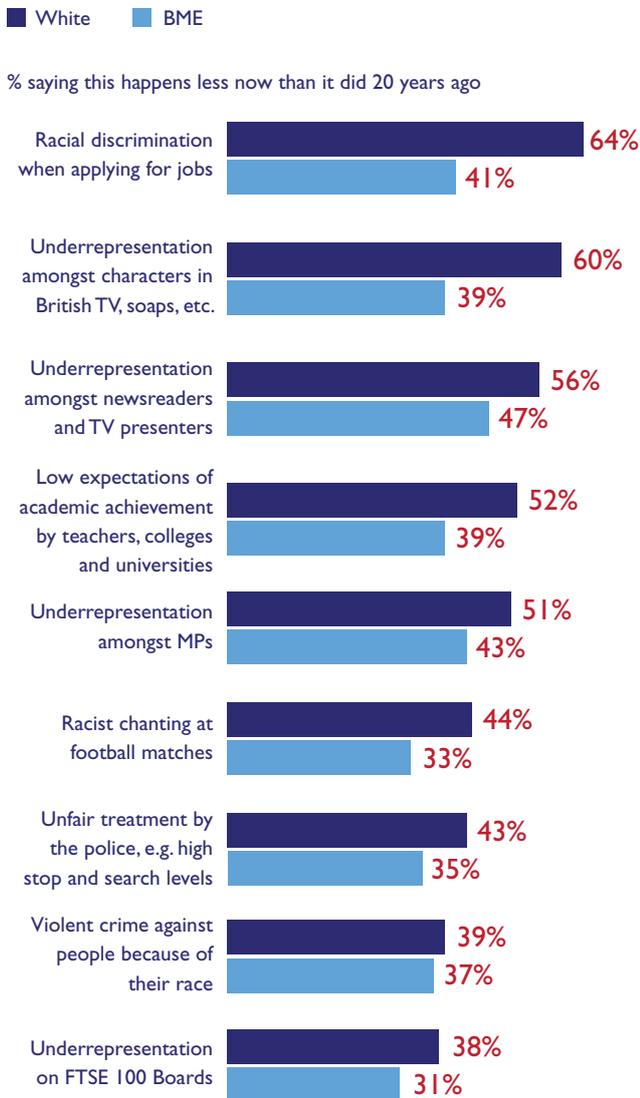
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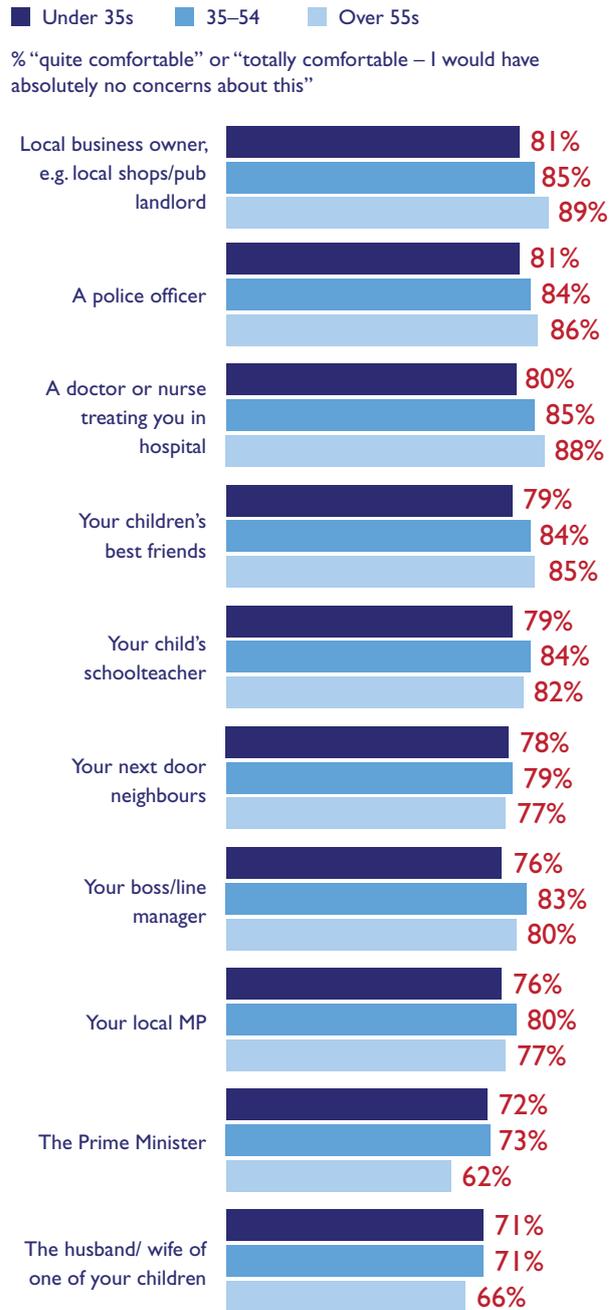
The Stephen Lawrence case has had more attention than it merited because of politically correct attitudes



Below are a number of forms of prejudice that people of ethnic minorities can face. For each, please say whether you think it happens in the UK now less than it did 20 years ago, more than 20 years ago or about the same



Please say how you would feel if each of the following were a position filled by someone of a different race to you



Then and now

It isn't easy being an area made infamous by a racist killing.

Some residents would prefer not to hear about Eltham, Stephen Lawrence and racism ever again. Local politicians are naturally anxious about the dangers of reinforcing an unfair and out-of-date reputation, or perhaps reawakening grievances from a more divided time. Campaigners against racism will worry that defensiveness can become denial, or feed a complacency which could allow racism to fester unchallenged. Each of these perspectives captures legitimate concerns. They are premised on competing perceptions about what the area is like today, which add to the case for trying to dig into the truth. The topic cannot be wished away. The Stephen Lawrence case has rightly become an important moment in our modern social history; the lens through which we re-examined what we thought we knew about important aspects of life in Britain, about equal opportunity and race, about policing and justice. If the twentieth anniversary of that murder becomes an important moment to ask how far Britain changed, it is bound to be a moment when people ask whether Eltham changed too. And we found a local desire to have the area as it is today recognized.

Hate crimes can, and do, happen anywhere. But where Stephen Lawrence was killed was not purely coincidental. The April 1993 murder was the third racist killing in the Greenwich borough. Eltham and Greenwich did have an unenviable history of racist violence in the early 1990s, stirred partly by the efforts of the nearby Welling headquarters of the BNP to ratchet up tensions, as well as by the strutting of the now infamous Acorts and their racist gang.

That was part of the truth about Eltham, but it was not the only truth. My Eltham offered a different, everyday story of suburban south London. I had lived in and around the area myself over the last twenty years. I had not been there in 1993, when the killing took place. I was living on Eltham's Well Hall Road in 1999, when the Macpherson inquiry reported, just a few steps from the memorial plaque which marks the place where Stephen fell and died, and which was disfigured by white paint when the report appeared. For me, Eltham was about the routine of the daily commute, yet also the bewildering contrast between that blur of hatred which had killed Stephen in a few frenzied seconds, and the mundane normality of that busy road, with its local Co-op supermarket and competitive selection of local curry houses, kebab shops and newsagents, as well as the once grand and fading old-style Coronet cinema on the roundabout. Every day, at Eltham station, I could pick up a newspaper to read intrepid investigations about fear, loathing and racism, just around the corner on the Progress Estate. It was important – as a matter of social justice, and personal safety – to see racism dealt with properly. But anybody listening in 2013 to this mixed group of 18-year-olds, as well as their older peers, would have to have found the argument that Eltham had changed persuasive.

MPs David Lammy and Gavin Barwell reflected on how familiar the perspectives on education and opportunity, policing and young people seeking a sense of community were. Growing diversity can often be characterized as unsettling change. Eltham had changed too, but it had

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become more like the rest of Greenwich and south London. The jurors made a convincing argument that it had changed for the better.

There had been a polarized, sometimes toxic, discussion in the late 1990s, but that belonged to a different era now. The Stephen Lawrence case had been an important national moment, but threatened to be a story which divided Eltham. It was certainly not easy. Yet, as time unfolded, there turned out to be many parts of this story – the ability to catch a bus without facing hatred and violence; the expectation of a family to see justice done; the need to address racism without creating new crude stereotypes – on which people, across Britain, and in Eltham too, could agree.

It's clear that Eltham has changed in the past 20 years, and London and Britain have changed too. Those people we spoke to felt that. They had shared concerns about the future which were also concerns of people in Doncaster and Dudley, Cardiff and Carlisle. Those hopes were about education, crime and housing. In those ways, Eltham is no different from any other part of the country.

The Integration Consensus

There is a very strong public consensus on what integration in British society should mean.

Indeed, there is such broad public support underpinning what a fair integration ‘deal’ should ask both from new citizens and the society that they join that the mystery may be how we ever manage to talk ourselves into heated and polarized debates on a topic where it seems that almost everyone agrees on the substance. To explore how people think about identity, what they believe integration means, and how they think it works in practice, British Future asked the research group Britain Thinks to run several public workshops, holding groups in Leeds, Yorkshire and in Farnham, Surrey. We later conducted nationwide opinion polling to see how attitudes generally matched those studied in the group research. People believe that our diverse society needs a sense of what we share in common. To unite us, that needs to be constructed on terms that everybody could agree are ‘fair’. There are three key parts of the integration ‘deal’ which most people are confident would achieve these goals. Firstly, there is close to universal agreement about the essential foundations of integration – on both what is required and what is not. Respect for the law, the ability to speak English, and the desire to contribute positively to society as seen as pretty self-evident common sense foundations. Secondly, these foundations unlock a broadly held commitment to fair treatment: that naturalized citizens who join the club and play by the rules deserve to be treated as full and equal members of it, and not as second-class British citizens. There is a broad rejection of exclusive approaches to citizenship or identity, such as that it is necessary to be white or to be Christian to be British, which clash with commitments to equal treatment, or freedom of conscience and speech. What the group discussions captured is a delicate dance around how mutual respect works. The etiquette of sequencing matters. It is a commitment to ‘here’ which, by demonstrating a respect for the traditions and values of Britain, should unlock a mutual respect for the cultural diversity which newcomers bring too. Food and music are easily identified, spontaneously, as the areas where there has been a positive contribution, over time, to changing what we think of as British. This also entails a substantive commitment to freedom of religion and belief and, especially, respect for the free speech and views of others, and a commitment to equal opportunity, including rooting out unfair discrimination or prejudice.

Using the rules of our democracy, to change the rules – as with campaigning for anti-discrimination measures – has to be admitted too, and can win widespread support beyond whichever minority group this protects when seen to uphold a shared commitment to fairness. Equally, there is concern about ‘carve out’ demands which seem less about fairness, but more about trying to create a separate section of British society. The issue of Sharia law, for example, has a striking degree of public salience, perhaps accelerated by former Archbishop Rowan Williams’ public statements on the issue, because what this is understood to mean would call into question the idea of a shared set of rules that apply, equally, to all citizens. The third level of integration is about emotional attachment to British identity. This is a proof of full integration, yet it had a lower priority,

partly through a pragmatic understanding that this takes time (and would be artificial if there was a claim to fully embrace it on day one). Group participants were keen to note that we differ, in a democracy, about the value of the monarchy, or whether to wear a poppy. New Britons who are fully integrated must have the same personal freedom of choice to join in, or not, as everyone else. Whether people cheer for England or not at football or cricket is not a loyalty test that most people think matters. Participating in society, at a local or national level, would matter more.

As the deliberative research had suggested some strong common ground about how identity and integration work in modern Britain, British Future sought to capture the essential points of this integration ‘deal’, putting these to a nationally representative opinion poll, also conducted by Britain Thinks, to find out how broadly these views are held. We asked people to respond to statements about identity and integration:

- **Identity:** *“Let’s make sure we’re all proud to be British again, bringing every colour and creed together, winning back our confidence to compete with the best in the world, like we did during the Olympics.”*
- **Integration:** *“To belong to our shared society, everyone must speak our language, obey our laws and pay their taxes – so that everyone who plays by the rules counts as equally British, and should be able to reach their potential.”*

The identity message was strongly supported, with 54% approval and 13% disagreement, while the integration message was overwhelmingly supported, with 83% approval, and just 3% opposition.

The identity finding demonstrates a broad “mainstream liberal” majority for a civic and not ethnically defined British identity. This approach to identity resonated particularly strongly with liberal audiences: it was favoured by 77% to 6% among Liberal Democrat supporters, with solid majorities of 57-12% among Conservatives and 58-11% among Labour voters. It had a weaker appeal to those who support UKIP, though still winning twice as much approval as disapproval (42-21). This approach to an inclusive pride in multi-ethnic Britain also resonated a little more strongly with non-white respondents (64-2%) than white respondents, who favoured it too, by a margin of 54-14%, reflecting the minority group who do find the emphasis on a multi-ethnic identity difficult. The integration finding demonstrates an extremely broad “integration consensus” in Britain. This approach was most popular of all with groups most likely to be worried and unsettled by cultural diversity, though it was just as popular with liberal audiences as the identity message was (for example, again securing 78% of Liberal Democrats, though 10% rejected it, and a 79-2% margin among Labour supporters). But it was even more resonant for Conservatives, being supported by 92% with 2% opposed, and a striking 93% of UKIP supporters, with 3% opposed. Non-white audiences responded strongly, supporting this approach by 70% to 2%, while white respondents were this time keener, by 84% to 3%. This is a message which resonates very strongly with some of those who are most anxious about identity today, but on terms which liberals endorse enthusiastically too.

“Whether people cheer for England or not at football or cricket is not a loyalty test that most people think matters”

What should we do with the integration consensus?

The integration consensus findings suggest that there is more common ground about identity and integration than many of our heated, and often

polarized, public debates about identity reflect. Firstly, this demonstrates that those who argue that we should celebrate cultural diversity and those who are deeply unsettled by it should be able to also find common ground over our responsibility to make our shared society work. Any democracy should have important debates, and arguments, over issues of the responsibility of citizenship, what choices to make about immigration, and how to make integration work. These findings show there is a settled understanding that the foundations of a multi-ethnic Britain and the common citizenship we should have within it are no longer at stake. Secondly, the findings suggest that the long-running debate about the value or dangers of multiculturalism may sometimes reflect arguments about the meaning of a word, rather than the substantive issues at stake. The word multiculturalism means different things to different people, and often conflates the use of “multicultural” to describe the social fact of a multi-ethnic society, and the full acceptance of those of different ethnic backgrounds as British (a meaning which is more likely to be held by Britons from minority backgrounds), while others think of “multiculturalism” as an active policy of recognizing and incentivizing difference, with the risks of promoting segregation, rather than integration. When politicians, such as the Prime Minister, criticise multiculturalism, they could therefore be heard by one audience as saying something perfectly mainstream and reasonable (promote what brings us together), and by other audiences as saying something much tougher, which could reinforce long-held anxieties. What is ironic is that almost all mainstream voices, whether they think of multiculturalism as a “hurrah!” (inclusion) or “boo!” (segregation) word, are in substantial agreement over real “how we live together” issues. The abstract argument over the term multiculturalism risks missing these substantive areas of common ground. There are therefore important opportunities to articulate this common ground.

Thirdly, the integration consensus could provide the basis to find some common ground even within the fiercely contested issue of immigration. As David Goodhart has written in his new migration-sceptic book “The British Dream”, “immigration and integration are intimately linked – get the second right and there is more room for the first”. That insight does not settle the policy arguments about what the link should mean: for some, it is an important reason to slow immigration down, to create more time and space for integration to work support for the “integration deal” also calls into question approaches which favour temporary migration, but put a moratorium on settlement and citizenship, which means that the pressures of managing migration do not get turned into the longer-term benefits of integration.

What are sometimes called the “benefits of immigration” are perhaps really better understood as the “benefits of integration”. Migration itself is often good for migrants – who work hard to earn, save and perhaps take money back – but it is integration which brings important benefits to Britain too, with entrepreneurs who create jobs, doctors and nurses who help to keep the NHS going, and even the occasional gold-medal winning superstar such as Mo Farah, who made us all proud to be British.

Sunder Katwala is director of British Future

How has Britain Changed since 1993?

What should the biggest priority for change be today?

Hate crime ...

The murder of Stephen Lawrence, the campaign by his parents for justice, and the Macpherson report represent one of a very small number of major seachanges in postwar attitudes to race. The establishment of the concept of institutional racism – and the predictable backlash against it by sections of the press – was the culmination of years of patient campaigning by anti-racist groups. Richard Norton Taylor's dramatisation of the Macpherson Inquiry, at the Tricycle Theatre and on television, brought home how institutional racism was expressed in the failures of individual policemen to treat people equally.

There are dangers – particularly after the August 2011 riots and their aftermath – of a law and order upsurge that will push things backwards. Increasing hostility to immigrants is expressed in rising numbers of racist attacks. There have been 96 racist murders since Stephen Lawrence's, all but four from minority communities. The principles of Macpherson need to be defended and renewed.

—David Edgar, playwright

Twenty years on, it's important to remember that those who killed Stephen didn't represent Britain then, and racists in 2013 don't represent Britain now. The country is a better place, but we shouldn't pretend that the issue has gone away. It hasn't. My priority now is to foster an encounter culture – real integration between people of different faiths, races and backgrounds. The hatred that led to Stephen's death festered in the absence of meaningful contact. Encounter culture is the antidote to racism.

—David Lammy, Labour MP for Tottenham

Attitudes ...

There has been a dramatic shift towards more socially liberal attitudes on race, gender, and sexuality: Britons today are much less likely to judge others based on these criteria. Many of the old, brutal forms of prejudice which blighted lives are rapidly passing away, which holds out the opportunity for a genuinely inclusive, equal opportunities society, though much work remains to be done.

I would highlight two things as priorities for change now.

Firstly, attitudes to Muslims stand out as an area where old fashioned prejudices and bigotry abound.

This needs to be tackled.

Secondly, there has been the re-emergence of class based prejudices and an erosion of the ideas of solidarity and social support. Beliefs that the poor are to blame for their poverty – through irresponsibility or “fecklessness” – and that the welfare system benefits fraudulent “scroungers” at the expense of the honest hard workers are very widespread now, despite little basis in fact. The campaigns for fair and equal treatment which have made much progress for women, gay and lesbian people and ethnic minorities now need to extend themselves to the poor and those dependent on help from the state. Baroness Warsi has (rightly) attacked prejudice against Muslims as “passing the dinner table test”. I fear prejudice against the poor, and benefit claimants, has similarly passed into middle class and mainstream acceptability, and needs to be challenged.

—Rob Ford, University of Manchester

Employment discrimination ...

Racial discrimination in employment was outlawed by the 1968 Race Relations Act. But more than 30 years later, a Cabinet Office report found that the gap in employment rates between whites and ethnic minorities was still 17 percentage points – implying that white people were more than a quarter more likely to have a job. And while some of that gap was down to other demographic characteristics, much of it could still be attributed to discrimination.

Ten years on, things are somewhat better. In contrast to previous recessions, non-whites have not suffered disproportionately this time round. The employment gap, while still too high, is down to 12 percentage points.

But the evidence suggests that there is still significant discrimination in recruitment. Research for DWP found that otherwise identical CVs were much less likely to get a positive response if they had “non-white” names attached; interestingly, this is true for all the non-white ethnic groups tested. Bluntly, you're considerably less likely to get a job interview if you've got an African (or Indian, or Chinese) name. Other similar, albeit less rigorous, studies have found much the same thing. The UK labour market is still far from a level playing field.

—Jonathan Portes, director, National Institute of Economic and Social Research

Appendix

British Future Stephen Lawrence Polling

Prepared by BritainThinks

BritainThinks surveyed a representative sample of 2,032 adults aged 18 and over across Great Britain. Interviews were conducted online on the 16th and 17th March, 2013. Data is weighted to match the profile of the population.

NB Due to weighting and rounding, percentages do not always add up.

Q.1 Below is a set of ideas developed by a group of citizens, thinking about how best to improve communities. Please choose the top three which you think would be the strongest priorities for improving life in your community.

	FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE	NET: FIRST–THIRD CHOICE
Unweighted base	2059	2059	2059	2059
Weighted base	2059	2059	2059	2059
Increase vocational skills in schools	491 24%	413 20%	369 18%	1273 62%
Improving parental engagement with their children's education	315 15%	317 15%	342 17%	974 47%
Improve relationships between police and young people	197 10%	302 15%	320 16%	820 40%
Ensure police are visible and represent local communities	523 25%	415 20%	314 15%	1252 61%
Give people input into how council money is spent	305 15%	312 15%	329 16%	946 46%
Creating community spaces and activities	229 11%	299 14%	384 19%	912 44%

Online fieldwork: 3rd–5th April 2013

Base: All respondents

Q.2 For each of the ethnic and religious groups listed below, please say how much prejudice you think there is against them?

	ASIAN	BLACK	MIXED RACE	WHITE EUROPEAN (E.G. POLISH, ROMANIAN, BULGARIAN)	WHITE BRITISH
A lot	29%	24%	9%	27%	11%
A little	46%	50%	48%	47%	25%
Hardly any	13%	15%	29%	14%	53%
Don't know	12%	11%	13%	11%	11%

	CHRISTIANS	MUSLIMS	HINDUS	SIKHS	JEWS	ATHEISTS
A lot	11%	54%	17%	17%	14%	5%
A little	26%	28%	45%	44%	44%	15%
Hardly any	50%	7%	23%	23%	28%	60%
Don't know	12%	11%	15%	15%	15%	19%

- The highest perceived levels of prejudice are directed at Muslims, almost double the rate of the next highest group, Asians.
- White Europeans are perceived to be subject to more prejudice than black people.

Q.3 Thinking about general levels of racial prejudice in Britain, how do you think these are changing?

Italics indicate results for this question from BSA 1991

	IN FIVE YEARS' TIME (IN 2018), LEVELS OF RACIAL PREJUDICE WILL BE...	FIVE YEARS AGO (IN 2008) LEVELS OF RACIAL PREJUDICE WERE...	TWENTY YEARS AGO (IN 1993) LEVELS OF RACIAL PREJUDICE WERE...
Higher than today	24% (22%)	20% (24%)	51%
About the same as today	44% (49%)	52% (49%)	19%
Lower than today	20% (25%)	16% (25%)	18%
Don't know	12% (3%)	11% (1%)	12%

- In 1991, around half thought that general levels of racial prejudice were static over the five years either side of 1991.
- Although this remains the same today, with half seeing no change since 2008, or predicting change in 2018, looking at a longer time frame, half think there is less prejudice today than there was in 1993.

Q.4 Below are a number of forms of prejudice that people of ethnic minorities can face. For each, please say whether you think it happens in the UK now less than it did 20 years ago, more than 20 years ago or about the same.

	RACIST CHANTING AT FOOTBALL MATCHES	RACIAL DISCRIMINATION WHEN APPLYING FOR JOBS	VIOLENT CRIME AGAINST PEOPLE BECAUSE OF THEIR RACE	UNFAIR TREATMENT BY THE POLICE, E.G. HIGH STOP AND SEARCH LEVELS	LOW EXPECTATIONS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT BY TEACHERS, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
Less than it did 20 years ago	43%	62%	39%	42%	51%
About the same	32%	26%	33%	36%	32%
More than 20 years ago	25%	12%	28%	21%	18%

	UNDER-REPRESENTATION ON FTSE 100 BOARDS	UNDER-REPRESENTATION AMONGST MPS	UNDER-REPRESENTATION AMONGST NEWSREADERS AND TV PRESENTERS	UNDER-REPRESENTATION AMONGST CHARACTERS IN BRITISH TV, SOAPS, ETC.
Less than it did 20 years ago	37%	50%	55%	58%
About the same	50%	35%	32%	27%
More than 20 years ago	13%	15%	13%	14%

- When presented with 9 different manifestations of racism, most thought each have decreased over the past twenty years, with the exception of under-representation on FTSE 100 boards, with half saying this has stayed about the same.
- The area where respondents see the biggest improvement is in racial discriminations in the job market, with 62% saying this happens less than it did 20 years ago, followed by under-representation of ethnic minorities on British TV.
- At the other end of the spectrum, only 39% think racially motivated violent crime happens less than it did 20 years ago.
- Whereas the pessimism around representation on FTSE 100 boards focuses on the lack of improvement (50% saying this has stayed the same), 28% think racially motivated violent crime has actually increased.
- Similarly, one in five believe unfair police treatment has increased since 1993, and one in four think there is now more racist chanting at football matches.

Q.5 Please say how you would feel if each of the following were a position filled by someone of a different race to you.

	YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOLTEACHER	THE HUSBAND/WIFE OF ONE OF YOUR CHILDREN	YOUR BOSS/LINE MANAGER	LOCAL BUSINESS OWNER, E.G. LOCAL SHOPS/PUB LANDLORD	A DOCTOR OR NURSE TREATING YOU IN HOSPITAL
NET: Comfortable	81%	69%	80%	85%	85%
Totally comfortable - I would have absolutely no concerns about this	57%	48%	55%	60%	59%
Fairly comfortable	25%	21%	25%	25%	25%
I'm not sure how I'd feel	13%	22%	14%	11%	10%
Quite uncomfortable	3%	5%	3%	3%	3%
Very uncomfortable – I wouldn't want this to happen	2%	4%	2%	2%	2%
NET: Uncomfortable	5%	9%	6%	4%	5%

	YOUR NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOURS	YOUR CHILDREN'S BEST FRIENDS	YOUR LOCAL MP	YOUR COLLEAGUES	A POLICE OFFICER	THE PRIME MINISTER
NET: Comfortable	78%	83%	78%	85%	84%	68%
Totally comfortable – I would have absolutely no concerns about this	54%	57%	54%	59%	58%	47%
Fairly comfortable	24%	26%	24%	25%	26%	21%
I'm not sure how I'd feel	15%	13%	15%	11%	11%	18%
Quite uncomfortable	4%	2%	4%	3%	3%	6%
Very uncomfortable – I wouldn't want this to happen	3%	2%	3%	1%	2%	7%
NET: Uncomfortable	7%	4%	8%	4%	5%	13%

- For the majority of the positions presented, there was a consistent majority of around 50%–60% percent who said they'd be totally comfortable, with a further 25% or so saying they'd be fairly comfortable.
- The majority of the rest said they were not sure how they'd feel; with very few prepared to say they'd feel uncomfortable. Less than half would be totally comfortable with a PM from a different ethnic background.
- Of all of these positions, the one which fewest were comfortable with and most uncomfortable was the Prime Minister – though the husband/wife of a child was a close second.
- In 1991, 85% said they “would not mind” having an Asian or black boss, in line with the findings from this poll. There seems to be more movement on attitudes to mixed marriage, with only 50% happy with their children marrying someone who was Asian/black in 1991, compared to 69% comfortable with this now.

Q.6 April 2013 marks the 20-year anniversary of the death of Stephen Lawrence, who was murdered in a racist attack in south London in April, 1993.

After the initial investigation, five suspects were arrested but none were convicted. A public inquiry held in 1998 concluded that the Met’s failure reflected “institutional racism” in the force. In 2012, 19 years after the murder, two men were found guilty and imprisoned after new DNA evidence was discovered. For each of the following statements, please say how far you agree or disagree.

	IN 1993, THERE WAS A GENUINE PROBLEM OF DEEP-SEATED AND WIDESPREAD RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN THE POLICE	THE CAMPAIGN OF THE LAWRENCE FAMILY AND OTHERS IN THE CASE SHOWED THAT ORDINARY PEOPLE WHO ARE DETERMINED CAN ACHIEVE REAL CHANGE AND WIN JUSTICE	THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN KEEPING THE STEPHEN LAWRENCE CASE IN THE SPOTLIGHT SHOWED THAT CAMPAIGNING JOURNALISM CAN ACT AS A FORCE FOR GOOD IN BRITAIN	THE STEPHEN LAWRENCE CASE HAS HAD MORE ATTENTION THAN IT MERITED BECAUSE OF POLITICALLY CORRECT ATTITUDES	IF A SIMILAR MURDER HAPPENED TODAY, THE RESPONSE OF THE POLICE WOULD BE QUICKER, FAIRER AND LESS RACIST	RACIALLY MOTIVATED CRIMES HAPPEN LESS OFTEN NOW THAN THEY DID TWENTY YEARS AGO
NET: Agree	59%	74%	67%	36%	57%	37%
Strongly agree (+2)	20%	31%	23%	12%	15%	8%
Tend to agree (+1)	39%	42%	44%	24%	42%	29%
Neither agree nor (0) disagree	34%	22%	28%	34%	34%	39%
Tend to disagree (-1)	5%	3%	4%	20%	7%	21%
Strongly disagree (-2)	2%	1%	2%	10%	2%	4%
NET: Disagree	7%	4%	6%	30%	9%	24%

- This question reveals mixed opinions on whether Britain has made progress since 1993. Whilst over half agree that a police response now to a similar crime would be “quicker, fairer and less racist”, only 15% strongly agree, and almost one in ten disagree.
- Similarly, only 37% agree that racially motivated crimes happen less often than they did twenty years ago, with 24% disagreeing.
- However there is some optimism around the case itself, with 74% agreeing that the campaign of the Lawrence family and others demonstrates that ordinary people can win justice, and 67% agreeing that it also demonstrated the positive role that the media can play.
- Respondents were fairly evenly split on whether “politically correct attitudes” inflated the attention which the case received, with 36% agreeing with this statement, 30% disagreeing and the remainder not sure.

Here are some things people have said about immigration and Britishness. Please state how far you agree.

Net scores: all agreeing (7–10) minus all disagreeing (0–3)
Online poll 1st–4th February 2013
[Base: Total population [n = 1025]]

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Let's make sure we're all proud to be British again, bringing every colour and creed together, winning back our confidence to compete with the best in the world, like we did during the Olympics



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