



green  
alliance...

The case for better resource use  
British public and Labour voter  
opinion on the circular economy

# Introduction

Recent research has emphasised Labour's need to both retain voters and win them over from multiple sources, including from Reform UK, the Lib Dems, and the Greens.

Both More in Common's Wheelbarrow politics and Persuasion UK's Reform-curious Labour voters recommend prioritising bold policies that work across Reform-leaning and progressive flanks.

Green Alliance's 2018 project with the University of Cardiff and the Centre for Industrial Energy, Materials and Products, By popular demand recorded strong majorities in favour of making better use of resources.

As the government prepares its Circular Economy Strategy, we wanted to test both how the public and these key Labour voter groups viewed these issues.

We commissioned Yonder Consulting to conduct a representative online survey of 2,043 British adults (Great Britain) between 2 and 3 July 2025.

# Defining the key Labour voter groups

Persuasion UK's Reform-curious Labour voters identified 'curious' voters leaning towards other parties with two questions to ascertain:

- How they voted in the 2024 general election, i.e. did they vote Labour.
- AND how willing they were to vote differently, by asking respondents to give parties a score from 0-10 on their willingness to vote for that party at the next election, 10 being very willing.

A 2024 Labour voter giving Reform 6 or more out of 10 was therefore defined as a 'Reform-curious Labour voter'. They found that the Reform-curious represented 11 per cent of 2024 Labour voters. By contrast, 41 per cent were Liberal Democrat-curious, and 39 per cent were Green-curious.

We used the same two questions on our omnibus survey. Among our respondents:

- 20 per cent of 2024 Labour voters were Reform-curious
- 35 per cent of 2024 Labour voters were Liberal Democrat-curious
- 35 per cent of 2024 Labour voters were Green-curious.

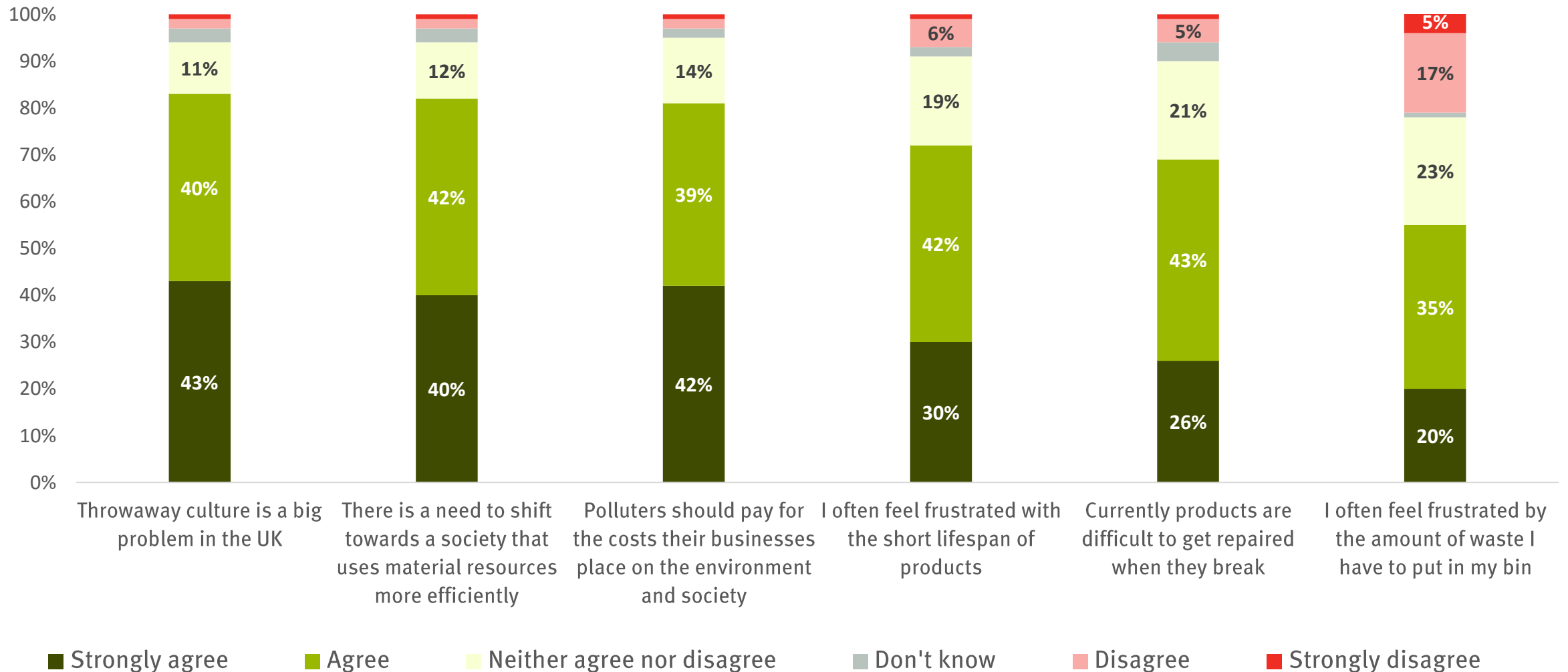
# Key findings

1. A strong majority of the British public, and on Labour's Reform, Liberal Democrat and Green facing flanks, are in favour of better resource use in the UK.
2. Two thirds also report that they are willing to change their lives to enable a shift towards a more resource-efficient society, including among Reform-curious Labour voters.
3. Support for policies that would oblige businesses to make 'circularity' easier (such as through reducing material use, reuse, remanufacturing, repair and recycling) was widespread, as was support for a long term target to bring resource use within global limits.
4. Messaging that incorporates the benefits to the environment, national resilience, jobs and consumers all tested well.
5. We recommend that the government be ambitious and vocal in its pursuit of the circular economy. Among wavering Labour voters there is a strong positive reputational impact from doing so that could play a role in uniting Labour's flanks.

# Attitudes to resource use

# There is a strong majority for better resource use

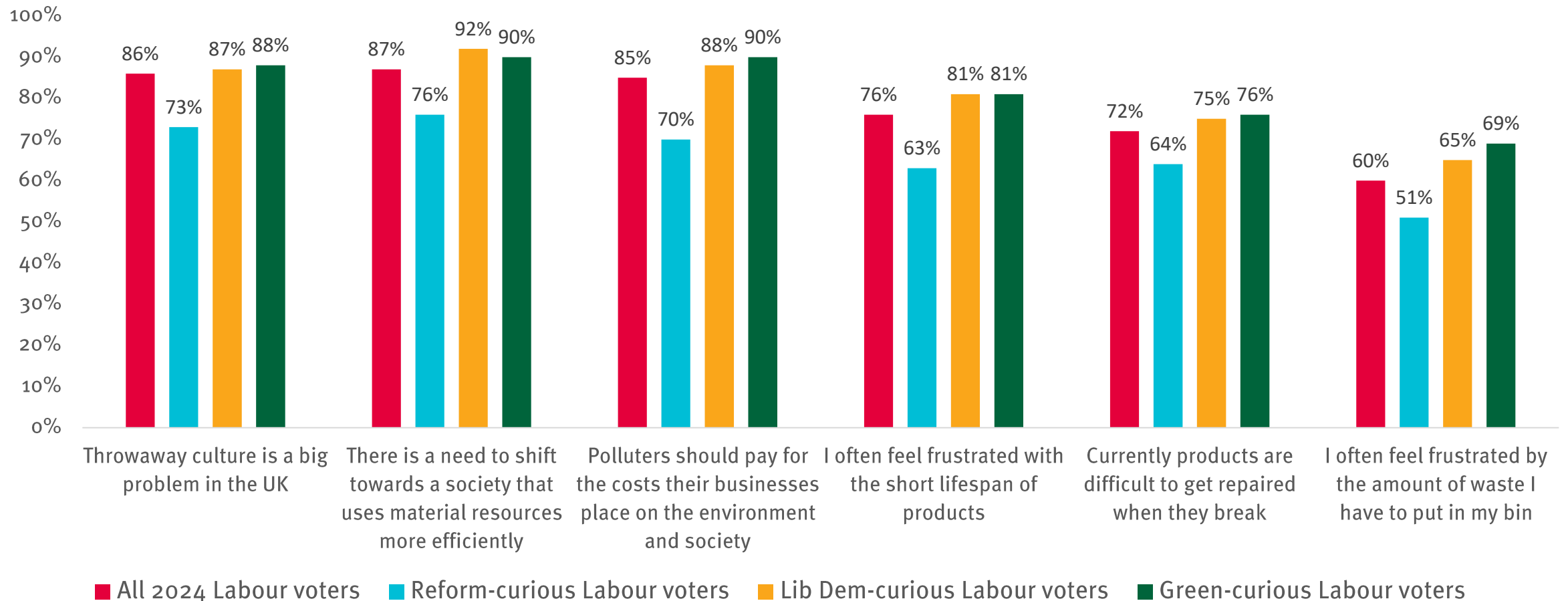
Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (British public)





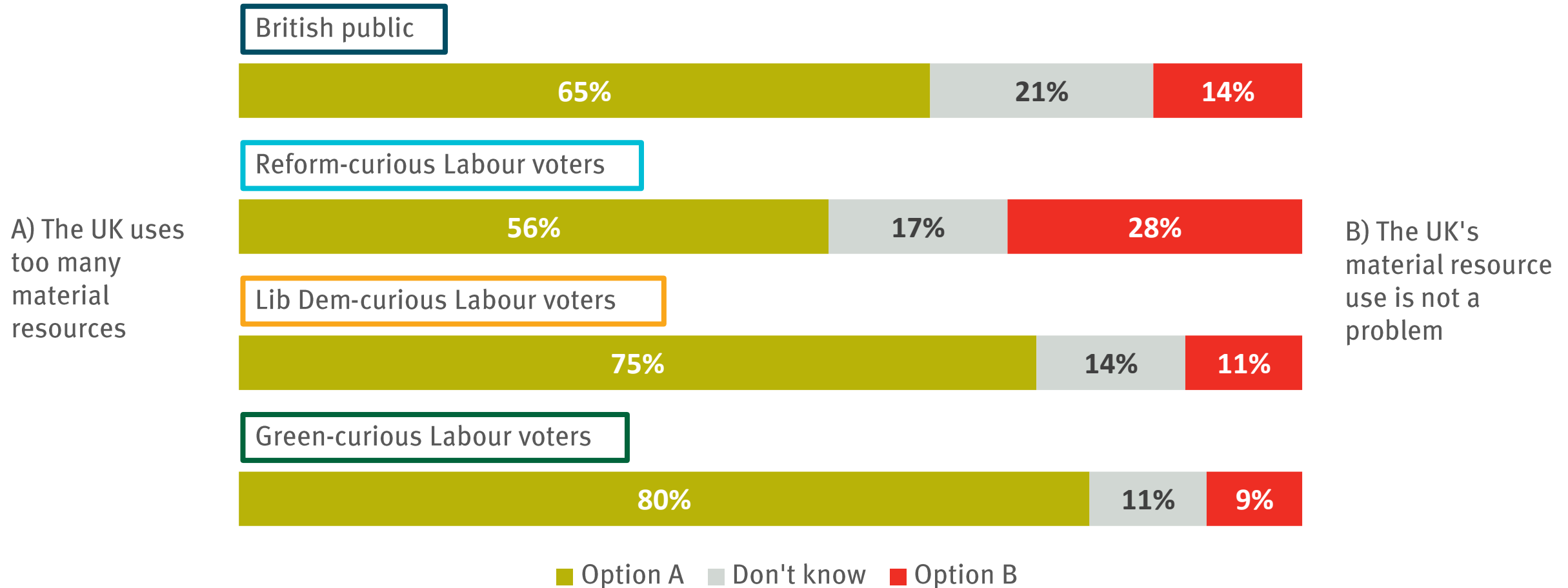
# Reform-curious majorities are only slightly smaller

Total % agreeing with each statement



# Two thirds think the UK uses too many resources

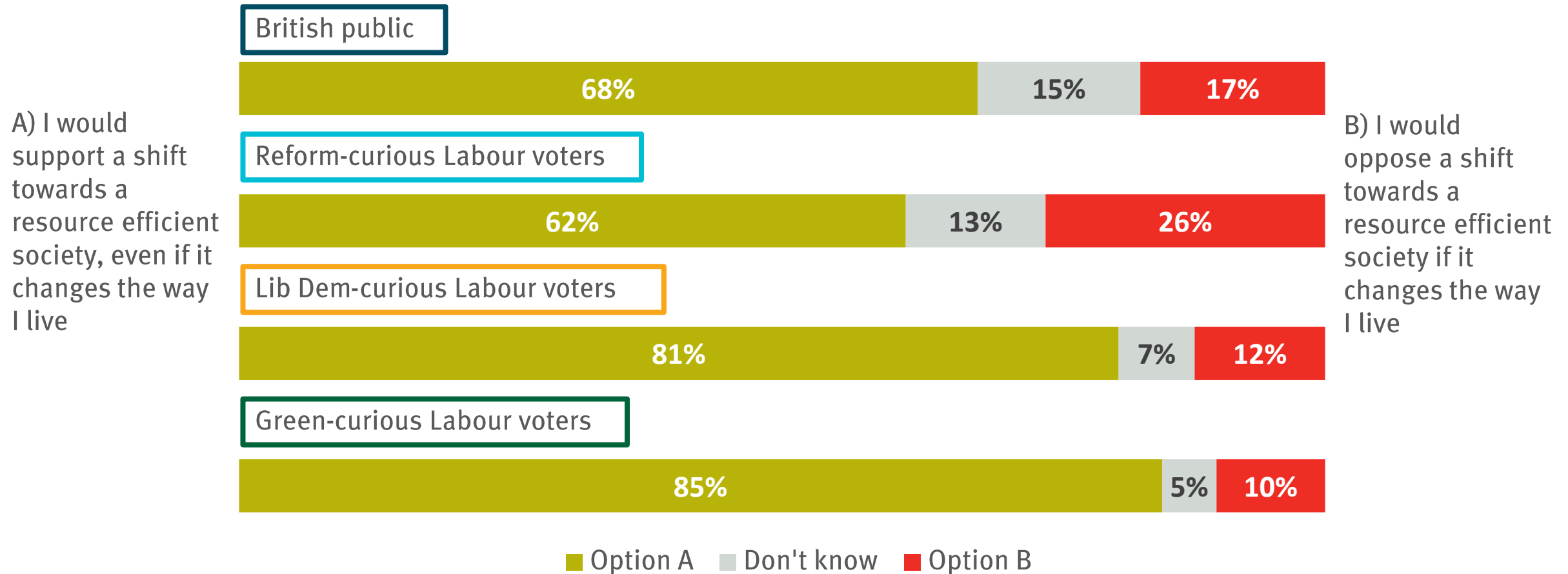
Q. Choose which of the statements most closely matches your own view.





# Two thirds are willing to change their lives for more resource efficiency

Q. Choose which of statements A or B most closely matches your own view.

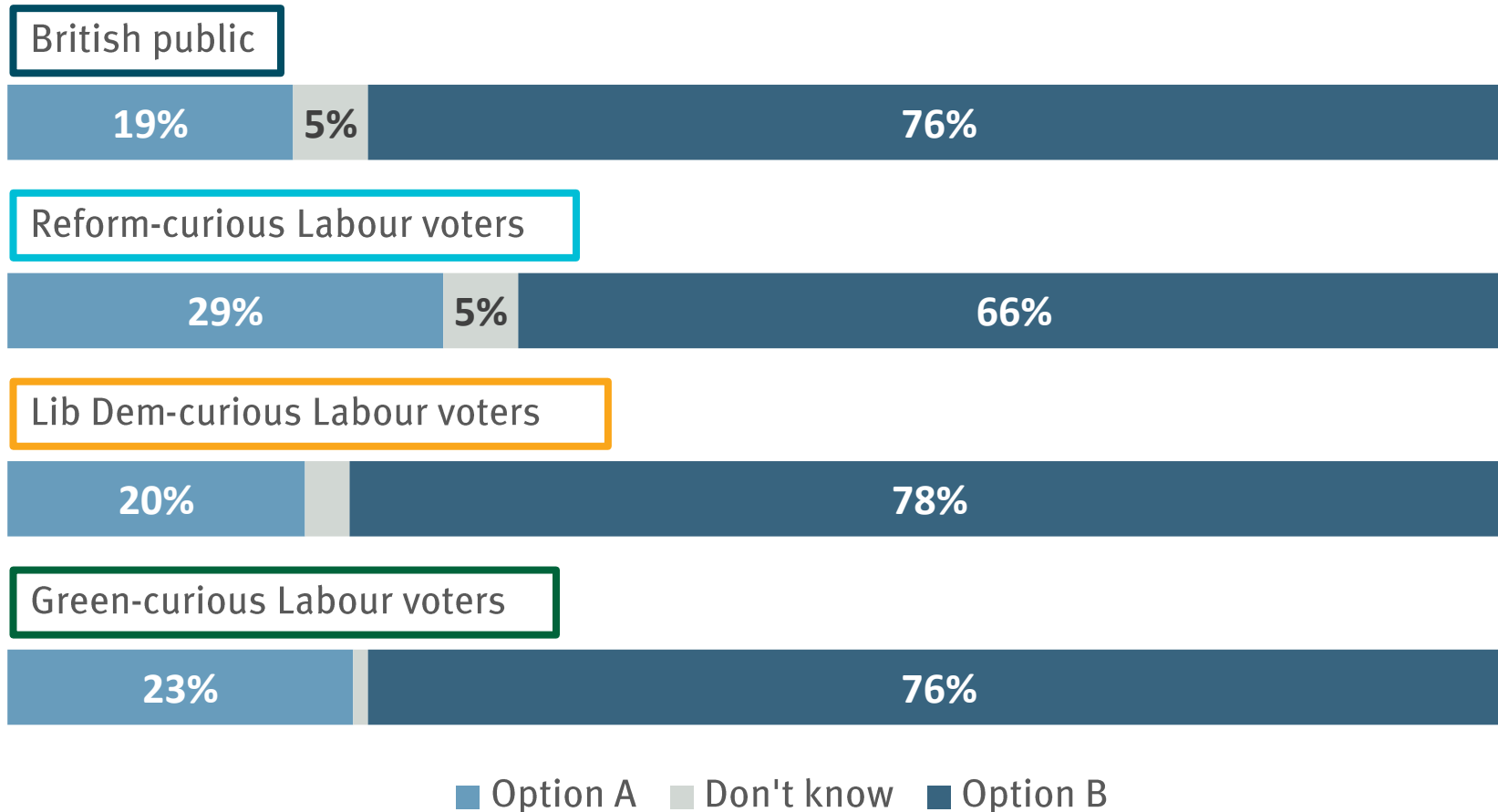


# Most want responsibility for waste to be shared

Q. Choose which of the statements most closely matches your own view.

A) Tackling waste should be the responsibility of companies

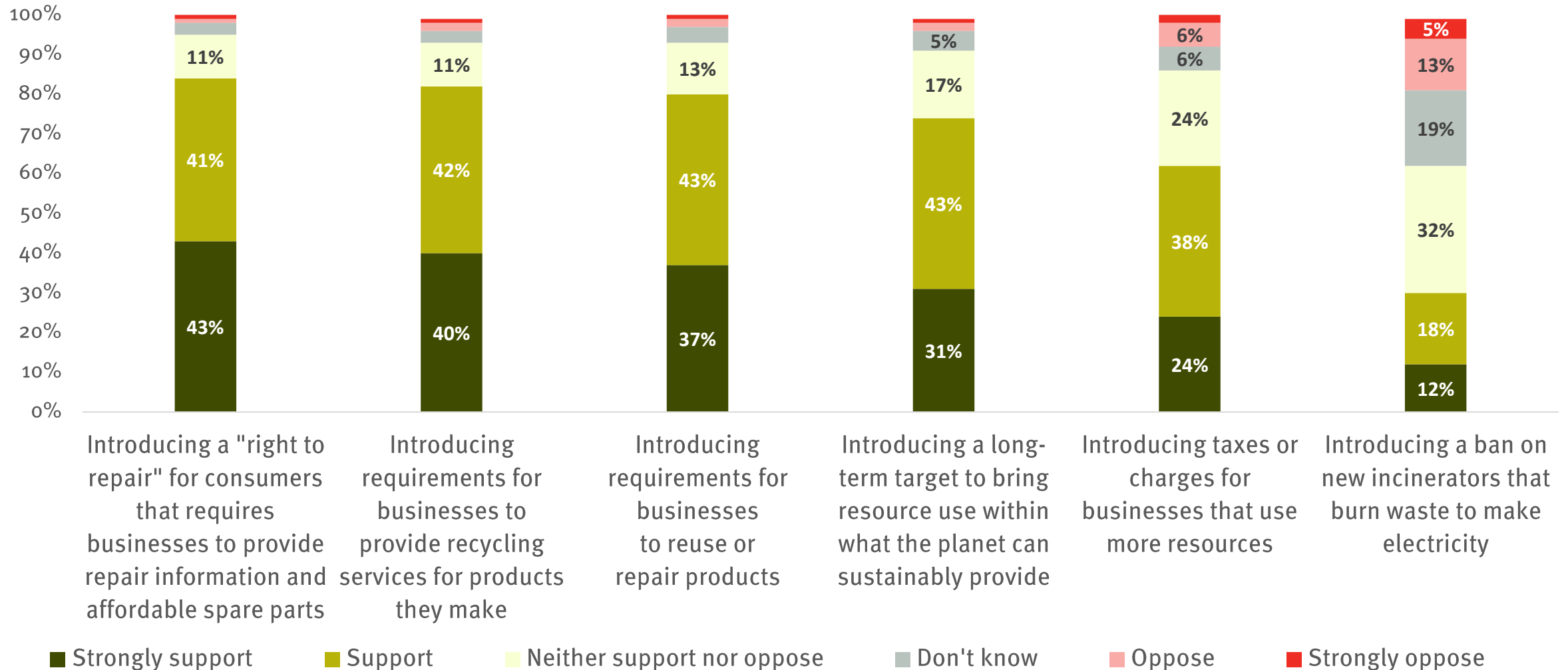
B) Tackling waste should be everyone's responsibility



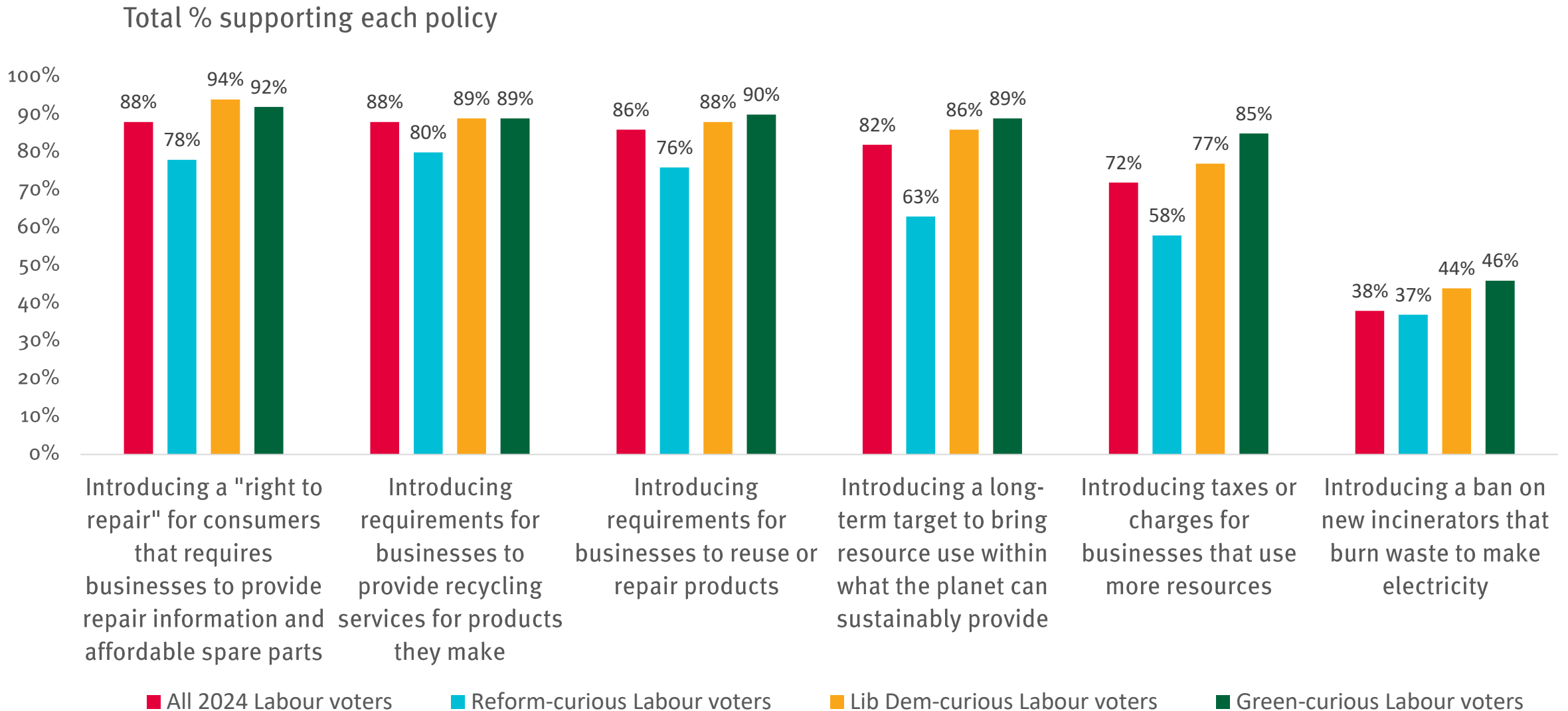
# Responses to policy proposals

# Most policies tested have very broad support

Q. To what extent would you support, or oppose, each of these policies? (British public)



# Support is also high with the Reform-curious



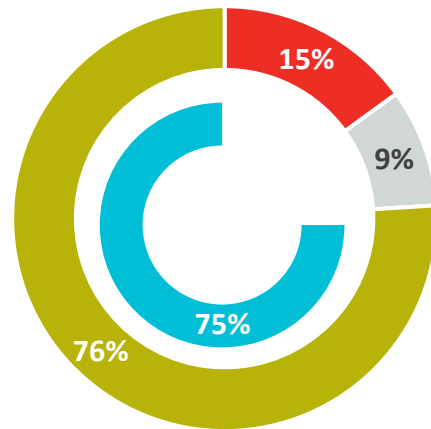
# Message testing

# Resilience, jobs and environment all resonated

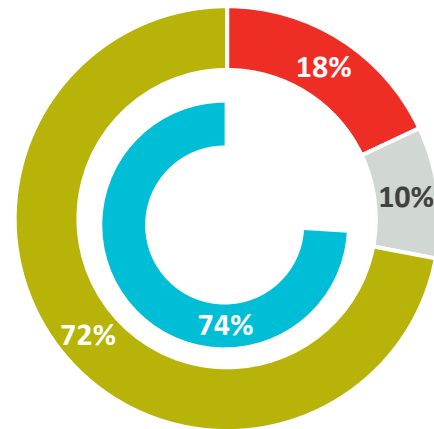
Q. For each, please indicate whether or not you think this is a convincing reason.

Keeping the resources we have in use for longer...

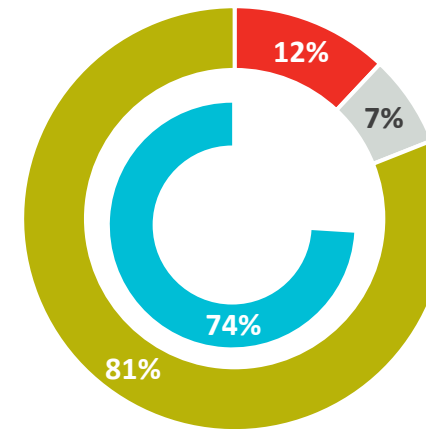
...will reduce the UK's reliance on imports from other countries and make us more secure as a nation



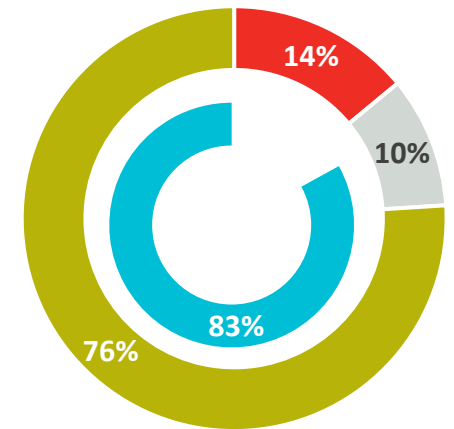
...will create jobs in repair and remanufacturing in the UK and benefit disadvantaged places



...will reduce our impact on the planet and cut pollution in our rivers and seas



...will give people access to longer-lasting, higher quality products



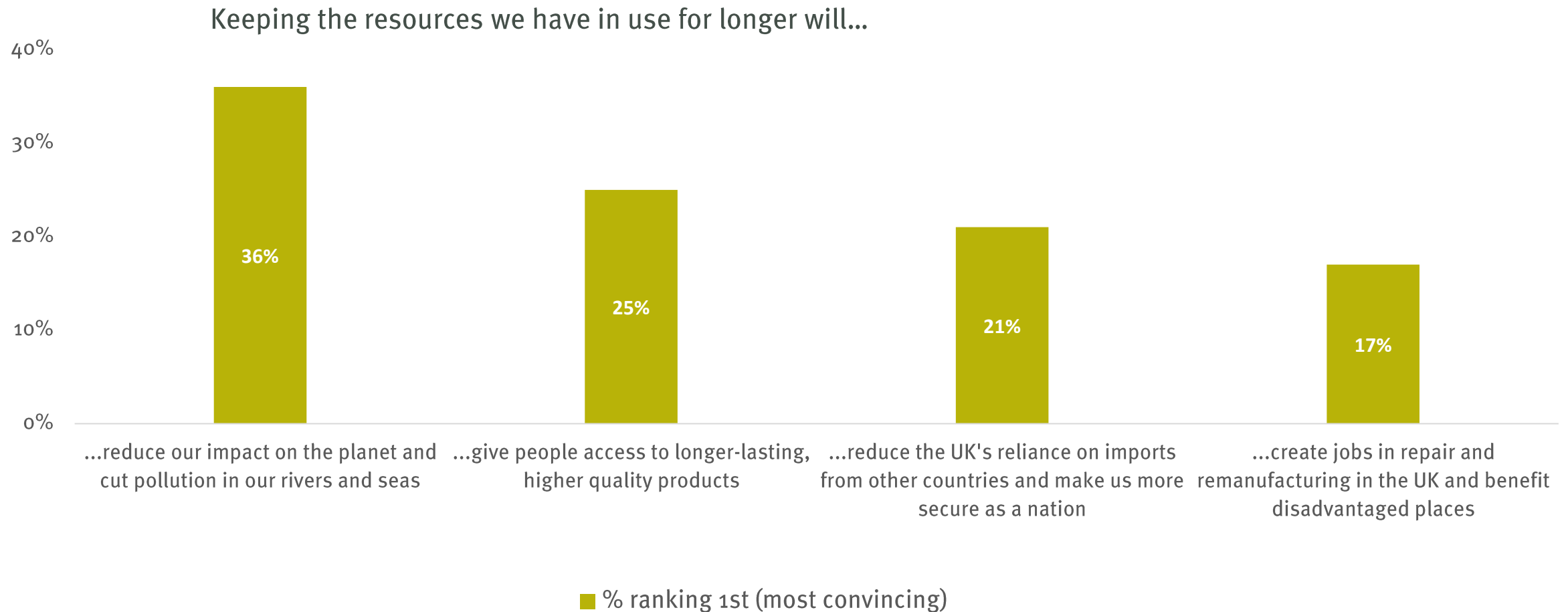
British public: ■ Total % convincing ■ Don't know ■ Total % not convincing

Reform-curious Labour voters: ■ Total % convincing



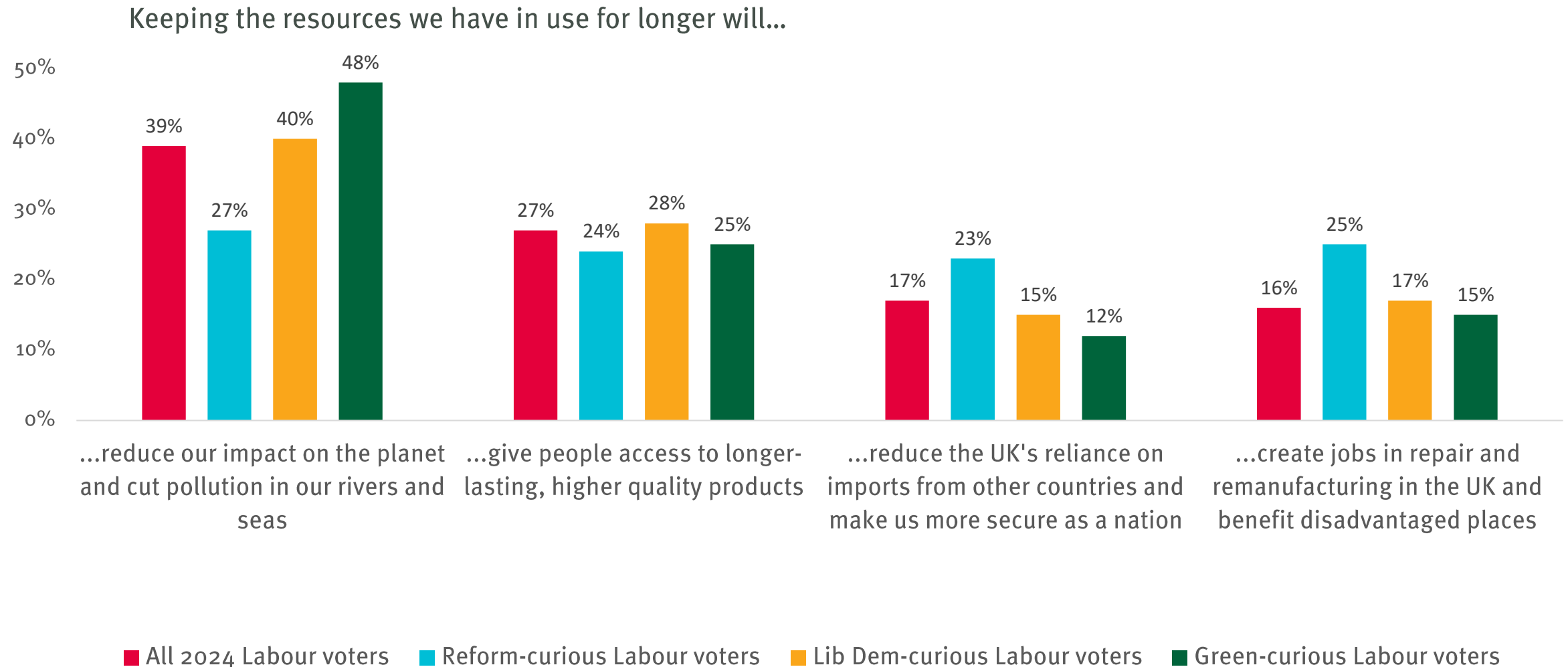
# The environmental message ranked highest

Q. Please now rank them from 1 to 4, with 1 being the most convincing reason and 4 being the least convincing reason (British public)



# The Reform-curious didn't have a clear favourite

Q. Showing % ranking each message 1<sup>st</sup> (most convincing)



# Impact on perceptions of government

# Labour's commitments on waste and resources have a net positive effect...

Q. The Labour Environment Secretary Steve Reed MP has committed to “end the throwaway society” in the UK and "get better use out of our materials and eradicate waste”

Overall, does this give you a positive or negative opinion of:

The Labour government



Environment Secretary Steve Reed



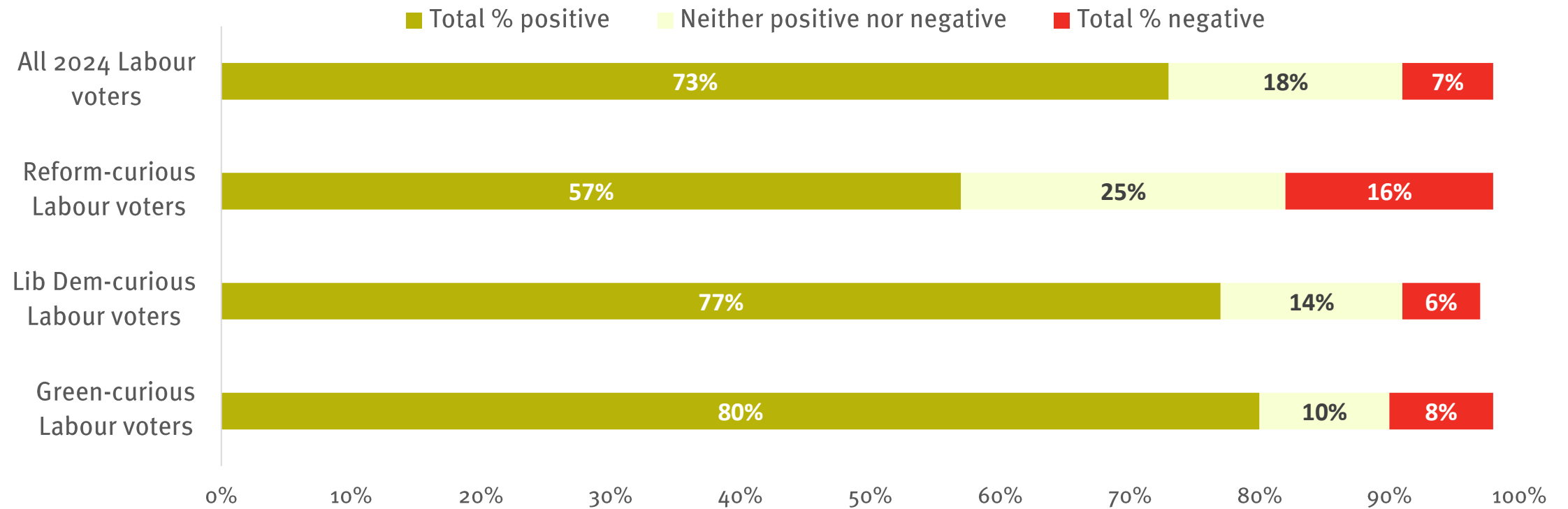
British public:

- Very positive
- Positive
- Neither positive nor negative
- Don't know
- Negative
- Very negative

# ...and it's more pronounced among Labour voters

Q. The Labour Environment Secretary Steve Reed MP has committed to “end the throwaway society” in the UK and “get better use out of our materials and eradicate waste”

Overall, does this give you a positive or negative opinion of: the Labour government





Thank you

## **The case for better resource use: British public and Labour voter opinion on the circular economy**

By Charles Long, Libby Peake, Emily Carr and Heather Plumptre

### **The polling**

These results were from an omnibus survey of 2,043 Great British adults (18+), commissioned by Green Alliance and conducted by Yonder between 2 and 3 July 2025.

The unweighted base numbers of the Labour voter groups reported on were:

- All Labour voters n=645
- Reform-curious Labour voters n=123
- Lib Dem-curious Labour voters n=225
- Green-curious Labour voters n=232

For full data tables please see our website.

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### **Green Alliance**

Green Alliance is an independent think tank and charity focused on ambitious leadership for the environment. Since 1979, we have been working with the most influential leaders in business, NGOs and politics to accelerate political action and create transformative policy for a green and prosperous UK.

The Green Alliance Trust

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