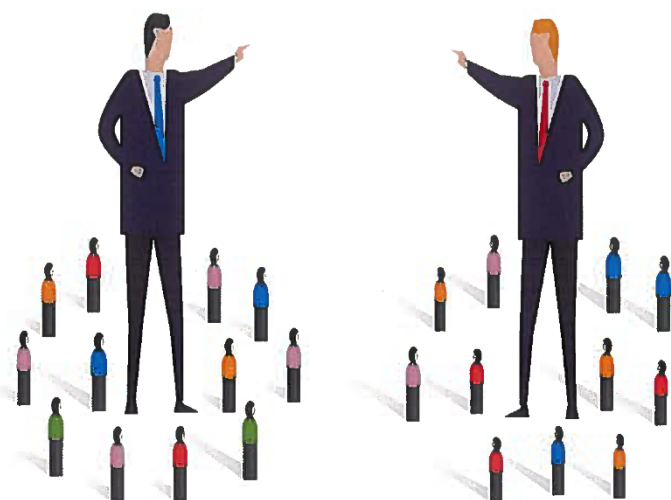


Candidate 3 evidence

All major political parties have divisions within and between them.



Word Count: 5058

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Introduction

In recent years, political division has become a much bigger issue than it has ever been before in many different countries across the world. In the news, it is clear to see that issues such as Brexit, Covid and healthcare are causing increased hostility between those who are involved in politics. This is to be expected considering that politicians views are always going to be different as they represent different parties and come from different areas and backgrounds which all contribute to these divisions. Even politicians within the same party have reason to disagree on issues as that is the nature of the field. This is the nature of politics as different politicians try to push their ideas to the forefront and gain themselves, and their party, as much power as possible. However, as the political landscape has changed in recent years, parties have become more divided than ever before as opinions differ to a new level. As well as this, parties are finding out now more than ever that even politicians within the same party having differing views on similar topics is at an all-time high. This has led to an increase in division within and between the parties that has led to a halt in political progress in some areas of the field. The modern day versions of both the Conservative and Labour party are vastly different from what they used to be with both parties moving towards the centre of the political spectrum. This has led to there being an increased split in ideology as different members of these parties believe in different things, but even though they are both moving towards the centre of the political spectrum, there has been an increase in division between Members of parliament with more arguments and controversies than ever before.

In America, there has been a similar uptake in this and it could be argued that it is even worse in the US than in the UK, with issues such as gun control and abortion, which has led to a lack of political progress in the country. Division can be beneficial as it can lead to good debate and allows for the government to be scrutinised on what they are doing. However this can lead to progress being halted as these debates can become more personal than politics related which can lead to arguments and further dissociation between the parties and their members. This dissertation will look at how the divisions within these parties picked up and how the political landscape looks now all of this division exists. This project

will analyse the extent to which division is prominent in modern day politics and how progress can be halted because of this. Chapter one will look at the internal divisions that the Conservative party face and how this has impacted them. Chapter two will examine how the Conservative party and Labour party have become increasingly divided and how this has impacted the political landscape of the UK. Finally, chapter three will look at the US and how their political landscape has changed in recent years and what has caused this, as well as, looking at the halt in political progress in the country. My overall aim is to find out the extent of division within and between major parties across world politics.

Word count - 551

Research Methods

I used a free online survey as my main source of research which I created and shared using Google Forms. I used this method as I was able to test it out with fellow pupils before it was released officially to respondents. I discussed the wording of my questions with my fellow pupils, who already have a good political knowledge, in order to make sure that the language used in it is easy to understand as some may not have as much knowledge on the topic. The survey was sent out to people of various different age demographics in order to gauge various opinions from different groups of people on the topic. As well as this, the survey was kept anonymous in order to ensure that people could answer honestly without having the worry of being judged based on their opinion. This was done to gain quantitative data that can be understood and displayed easily. However, it could be argued that, as the survey was conducted online, it may mean some of the older generation could not access it as some may not have access to the internet. The anonymous nature of the survey also means that participants could have completed the survey multiple times. As well as this, as there were only 28 responses, it could be argued that the sample size was not fully representative of the UK population.

A secondary source that I used was the BBC, who are a well-respected news organisation meaning that the information taken from them will be reliable. Due to its legal broadcasting responsibilities, the BBC is forced to remain unbiased in its reporting and means that the articles that I took information from will be reliable. The articles that I used for my dissertation were written by qualified and experienced journalists in the field. Despite this, as the information was other researchers' data, and not my own, there could be doubt over whether or not the information was collected ethically. The articles that were included in this research were created by various columnists I was unaware if the information had been altered in a way that would have benefitted the journalist's argument. However, the BBC is a trusted and reliable organisation so it is relatively safe to assume that this was not the case and that the articles were accurate and trustworthy.

Overall, I feel that I took advantage of both primary and secondary sources to gain valuable information that massively benefitted my dissertation as I was able to include relevant and

up to date information. However, due to the nature of some sources and the limitations these bring, there are still some areas for improvement such as getting more responses on my online survey in order to gain a better insight into public opinion. Even though there were issues with my online survey, as well as the general disadvantages of using secondary information sources, I was successful in gaining a variety of information while researching my dissertation which came from reliable and trustworthy sources that benefitted my dissertation.

If I was to conduct this research again, I would utilise both quantitative and qualitative research methods to allow me to delve deeper into responses provided. Semi- structured interviews could have been used in order to gain further insight into the politician's views on these topics and therefore more analysis could have been done.

Word count - 562

Chapter One - To what extent are there divisions within the conservative party and how do they impact the progress of the party?

There has been no bigger cause of division within the conservative party in recent years than Brexit. This had been set out from the start as Theresa May was in favour of the remain campaign during Cameron's tenure as prime minister. This is in stark contrast with other party important party members such as Michael Gove and, former Prime Minister, Boris Johnson (Trott, 2018). It could also be argued that the rise of UKIP in Britain during the time of the Brexit vote contributed to the result of it. In the European parliament election, UKIP won 27% of the total vote which marked the first time in 100 years that neither the Tories nor the Labour party won a nationwide election (Rathi, 2017). As UKIP were on one of the best parties at not being absorbed by the Conservatives, the rise and temporary popularity of the party was another big reason why the Brexit deal was passed, as people with slightly different views had a reason to support the policy. This combined with the declining in popularity Labour party under Ed Miliband also brought on some working class UKIP voters (Lynch, 2014). As well as, this David Cameron himself actually believed that Britain would have been better off in Europe and has even quoted as saying, "As the person who called the referendum and lost the campaign, I'm not sure that I should be active in current politics. But I am deeply depressed by what's happening." As Cameron was the one to put the referendum in place and since the majority voted to leave the EU, which was not what he wanted, Cameron felt like he could not be the man to take the UK out of Europe and so stepped down as Prime Minister (Michael Martin, 2019). Overall, Theresa May had a disaster of a tenure as Prime Minister: failing to get Brexit done, having her own party turn against her and the whole time having a reputation as someone who was going to struggle to run the country, never mind take the UK out of Europe.

The initial doubts people had about May, accompanied by a resurging Labour now under Jeremy Corbyn, were brought to light when she called for a snap election in early 2017 in hopes of securing a larger majority. However, this backfired significantly as in the snap election May lost her slight majority with 13 key seats being lost for the Conservatives. In this same election Labour also managed to gain 30 seats which also was a cause for concern for the Conservative party. Despite this, May was able to stay in power but only thanks to the alliance that was formed with Northern Ireland's DUP where their key votes were counted

together, meaning that the Tories stayed in power (Hardinges, 2019). This struggle to stay in power was consistent throughout her campaign as Prime Minister with 18 resignations by the end of 2018, including the Brexit minister David Davis and the foreign secretary Boris Johnson, all being down ultimately to the way that Brexit was being rolled out by Theresa May. By the time early 2019 came around, May had lost three “significant” votes in parliament and by the middle of the year she had resigned as Prime Minister. This came at a time where public opinion of her was at a new low point with the British public and even other Conservative party members were unsure what was going to happen with Brexit.

After this Boris Johnson stepped in as the new Prime Minister with unresolved issues to deal with due to Mays failures (Sandford, 2020). Johnson’s message was simple, “get Brexit done”, and this was his main focus from the beginning of his campaign with him eventually gaining an 80 seat majority and in doing so got a large number of votes in area that usually the Conservatives usually don’t do well in (Staunton, 2019). After this, Johnson was able to secure a Brexit deal and successfully take Britain out of EU, but the state of the Conservative Party after these events was a peak point of division within the party (Booth, 2022) Despite this however, Johnson still had a decent reputation after finally being able to take Britain out of the EU, which would continue on through the beginning of the Covid 19 pandemics which Johnson was tasked with dealing with. His reputation would last somewhat until December 2021 where the UK found out “partygate” which would, within a few weeks, almost shatter Johnson’s reputation entirely (France, 2022). It had come out that not only had there been multiple parties held by the Conservatives throughout 2020, including three in one day at one point, they were also exposed for having as many as 100 people in the back garden of 10 Downing street. This was exposed by a tweet from Paul Brand of ITV which showed an email from Martin Reynolds, the former principal private secretary to Johnson, inviting other Conservative Party members to the number 10 back garden to “make the most of the lovely weather” as well as telling the invitees to “bring their own booze”. Johnson admitted to attending this specific party, but only said he was there for 25 minutes and also said he thought it was a “work event” to thank staff for what they had done during the pandemic (ITVX, 2023). After all of this came out it Johnson faced much criticism from all different people. Andrew Brigden, who was massively in favour of Brexit, was the fifth Tory MP to call for Johnson to quit because of the Partygate scandal and was quoted as saying “As more and

more revelations have been published, and I fear more are yet to come out, it is clear that not only were rules broken in Downing Street but that the initial response was to stretch the truth about them being broken too" (Wright, 2022).

This also came around at a similar time to the Matt Hancock scandal, who was seen on CCTV not only cheating on his now ex-wife but also breaking Covid regulations that were in place at the time. Hancock was caught on camera being intimate with Gina Coladangelo in his office, during a time where his restrictions were in place on the British public where there was supposed to be social distancing in place (Pattinson, 2021). As all of these events took place, the party grew more and more divided and today is in a state that is almost incomparable to any other event in the history of British politics. After Johnson's resignation in late 2022, the party saw a new Prime Minister in Liz Truss taking control for just 49 days, the shortest ever campaign as PM, with her disastrous mini budget and a massive lack of connection with the British public being key reasons for her resignation. After this Rishi Sunak was appointed as PM and remains there as things stand but he faces a lot of criticism based on his actions, for example his differing opinions on taxation from more traditional Conservatives such as Michael Gove (Damski, 2023). This has not only led to constant change in high ranking positions within the party, but it has also led to the Conservatives falling out of favour with the British public with a general opinion forming that the party is becoming outdated and needing to be replaced in power. Losing key seats that were considered strongholds for the party and a difficulty appealing to young people as society adapts and the party does not which has caused them problems really ever since Brexit was voted for (Casalicchio, 2023). It is agreed by the majority of current Conservative members that the previous two PMs, along with Sunak, have caused a distrust in the party by supporters and as members bicker and they continue to make a lack of progress it is clear to see the impact that political division can have on a party as members continue to argue about key fundamentals, scandals continue to loom in the background and the party continues to make a lack of progress which will most likely see them massively fall out of favour in the next election.

Word count – 1373

Chapter Two - To what extent are there divisions between the Conservative party and the Labour party and how does this impact governance?

The Conservative party and the Labour party have been divided for as long as they have been around and such is the nature of politics. These are two parties with different ideologies whose purpose it is to outwit the other in order to have control of the country. In recent times, the parties have only grown further divided as after everything that went on with Brexit, Boris Johnson and Liz Truss and their failures (Difference between, 2012). This can clearly be seen especially from 2019 onwards ever since Johnson's election win, in which the Tories had their best election result in recent years winning almost 50 new seats. During the weeks on the run up to the election the two parties made multiple attempts to sabotage the campaign of the other. This was done through various different methods such as parody websites, fake newspapers and doctored videos (Skopeliti, 2019). An example of this in action was through the Conservative party's press account when they changed their name to seem as if they were a fact checker website. The operators of this account then tweeted multiple "fact checks" on Labour party policies in order to scrutinise them. For someone who was casually scrolling through twitter it could have been very easy for them to believe that these tweets were from a real fact checker website (Gold, 2019).

After Johnson was elected, the country was struck by the Covid-19 pandemic with Johnson announcing lockdown on the 23rd of March 2020 with the measures legally coming into force on the 26th (Institute for Government, 2022). However, Johnson's most senior advisor Dominic Cummings was found to have travelled 260 miles from London to Durham around two months after the legislation was put in place (BBC, 2020). This came at a time where Cummings was supposed to be self-isolating, but was instead caught breaking his own rules. After being questioned and criticised about this, Cummings said that he had only been in contact with number 10. However, by this point it was almost undeniable that Cummings had broken restrictions and was now lying about it as he was seen multiple times by members of the public, and even had a complaint to the police about his actions. This resulted in mass criticism and calls to resign from members of opposition parties and even his own party (Weaver, 2020). At the time it was almost unbelievable to see this high ranking member of the Conservative party break a regulation that his own party had put in place within such a short period of time. As the news was spreading about what he had

done, the Labour Party were quick to criticise Cummings for his actions and Johnson for defending him. Rachel Reeves, who is the member of the Labour shadow cabinet, can be quoted as saying “The British people have made important and painful sacrifices to support the national effort, including being away from family in times of need. It is therefore vital that the Government can reassure the public that its most senior figures have been adhering to the same rules as everyone else” (Devlin, 2020). As Cummings actions were talked about so negatively by so many important figures in politics it birthed what was called the “Cummings effect”. This was a study done by the University College London found that, in England mostly, people became less willing to adhere to the Covid restrictions because of the actions of Cummings actions. This followed by Johnson’s unwillingness to remove him from his post led to a rapid decline in public faith in the government’s response to the virus (Bland, 2020). Labour leader Keir Starmer can be quoted as saying that Johnson had “undermined the very public health advice that is necessary to keep us all safe, just to keep one powerful aide in his job”, showing that Starmer was quick to criticise Johnson and Cummings for their actions and their unwillingness to either apologies and own up or resign. This makes it clear that the Labour party’s plan was to criticise Cummings in the media so that public confidence in him, and Johnson, would decrease (Cruise, 2020). Starmer saying that if he had been Prime Minister he would have sacked Cummings and there would have been an investigation shows that Starmer was trying to swing public opinion in order to favour him and his party, capitalising on a massive slip up from a top Conservative party member (Matharu, 2020).

In recent years, voters from each party have become almost disgusted by people who vote the other way. This increases pressure on parties to play into what their supporters want to see. In doing so, the two main British parties have become more divided than ever before with various controversies and a shift in ideology causing an increased feeling of hatred within British politics. Professor Michael Bruter can be quoted as saying “The levels of contempt and disgust expressed by citizens towards those who vote differently from them are terrifying. It shows that across the political spectrum the toxicity of electoral politics now affects the relationship between citizens themselves, and the way they interact on a daily basis.” People in the UK are becoming increasingly divided when it comes to politics which is having an impact on the parties themselves by encouraging them to adopt this

same disdain that the voters of each party have (Bruter, 2019). In the online survey I conducted, 35% of people believed that the election of Boris Johnson was unfair. As well as this, 28% of people said they were extremely offended by the Dominic Cummings scandal and 25% of people saying they were extremely offended by the Matt Hancock scandal (see Appendix 4, 5 and 7). This clearly demonstrates that in the UK the actions of political parties have led to a massive increase in disdain and division between not only the supporters of the party but the MPs of the parties. Currently Rishi Sunak is losing control of British politics, with various different Tory MPs saying that he needs to have more control of the operation at Downing Street rather than focusing on trying to hurt Labours image. This has led to a level of division between the parties like we have never seen before, with politicians from both parties clearly feeling increased levels of hatred towards members of the other parties and expressing this through their politics. The supporters of both parties feeling increasingly hateful towards those who vote the other way and this is undoubtedly due to the actions of the politicians who represent these different views.

Word count – 1099

Chapter Three - To what extent are there divisions between the Democrats and the Republicans and how does this impact governance?

In the US the problem of divisions between parties is just as, if not more, influential than those in the UK. There are many issues that impact this such as gun control, abortion and taxation. As well as this there are obvious differences in how different social classes vote and how the different parties try to play into that. In recent years it can be argued that these divisions have become greater and that the focus of both parties has shifted. The election of Donald Trump as president could be argued as the beginning for a different style of division between the parties, with Trump's somewhat controversial opinions being heavily criticised by Democrats around the country (Fiorina, 2017). At the time of his election in 2016 many people believed that, even though Trump did have his cult-like following, he would not win the election and Clinton was going to be the next president. Of course Trump was already a well-known celebrity and some people around him saw his campaign of more of a way to build his status and ultimately make him even more money. This led to a large amount of spending on his campaign which drew lots of attention and encouraged some of the American public to begin to support his campaign (Clemons, 2021). As well as this before the election it was revealed that Clinton had been "extremely careless" with classified emails after an investigation from the at the time head of the FBI James Comey. It became public knowledge that Clinton and the people working around her handled their classified emails in a way that people who were outside her campaign would have been able to access them (Montanaro, 2016).

The issue of gun control in America is a key source of division within US politics. The two main parties have differing opinions on the way that gun laws should be in the US. This is clearly shown in many studies with an example of this being that 54% of republicans believe that assault-style weapons should be banned whereas 80% of Democrats believe this same thing. This helps to show the divisions on this topic are obvious and long standing with the issue dividing the parties and causing divisions between them (Pew Research Centre, 2017). As a part of the US constitution, gun control is protected but it is argued by some people, especially democrats, that in the modern day this is no longer applicable as the US has the highest homicide by firearm rate among developed countries. Texas senator Ted Cruz has received more money from gun groups since 2012 than any other politician for his

endorsement of their causes. This has led to Joaquin Castro, a Texas democrat saying that "Ted Cruz is just a slave to the gun lobby" (Lutz, 2022). As of May 2022, Cruz had received over \$420,000 in donations to his campaign from gun rights groups and even though his state has one of the highest rates of gun related death Cruz still campaigns firmly in favour of the use of firearms in the US. Democrat Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez has been quoted as saying "Aren't you slated to headline a speaking gig for the NRA in three days - in Houston, no less? You can do more than pray. Faith without works is dead." This is in reference to a 2022 school shooting in Texas to which all Cruz could do in response was offer his condolences to the family, while many believe that he should have taken much firmer action from him in order to stop things like this from happening (Falconer, 2022). Cruz stands firmly against changing gun laws in the US saying that there are more effective ways to stop these horrible shootings from taking place, such as putting armed security in schools. He also claims that guns should not be taken away from law abiding citizens as they haven't committed any crimes to warrant them being taken away. However it is argued this argument is invalid as there are still so many incidents that happen throughout the US, even in Cruz's own state, but there is still so little done to stop this from happening (Neukam, 2022). The division this causes is among the most extreme within American politics. Opinions differ so vastly between the two parties on the topic that it causes heated arguments between politicians that is on a level above politics and becomes personal as for some Americans the issue can be close to home and there is such an outcry for the laws to be changed that people are becoming angry about it (Parker, Horowitz, Igielnik, Oliphant, & Brown, 2017).

It is inarguable that there is not a level of division in the US and even though the two parties have some overlap on some beliefs. For example, around four in ten republicans believe there should be a ban of high capacity ammunition magazines with around the same number also supporting the ban of assault style weapons. However, even though this overlap does exist there should not be too much made of it as the two parties different goals are dividing them further and further (Kleinfield, 2023). Around 60% of both Republicans and Democrats now would be unhappy if their child was to marry a supporter of an opposing party. As well as this, 9 out of ten supporters of both Biden and Trump believed that a win for their opponent would cause lasting damage to the US (Mounk,

2022). Roughly 8 in 10 Americans believe that the Republicans and Democrats are more focused on fighting each other than on solving problems. As well as this around 78% say that there is too little focus on the issues facing the country. The level of division in the US runs deeper than just two opposing parties and, particularly in recent years, has become almost too much of a focus for political leaders and they now spend more time trying to poke fun at the opposition party when there should be more work done to actually benefit the nation (Pew Research Centre , 2023).

Word count -1019

Conclusion

Politics depends on divisions to function properly. Without it, the nature of the debate would not be what it is and this is what politics is all about. Politicians having different opinions allows for the best opinions to come forward and be supported by the public, while the more controversial ones are shut down. If there was no division in politics, frankly, it would not be anywhere near as relevant and there would most likely be a lack of interest in it. However, division only has a positive impact when it remains strictly politically related. When division turns into something more personal, it leads to unnecessary arguments and dissociation, between and within the parties. This level of disdain will always lead to a lack of political progress as parties are more focused on making their opponents look bad than pushing their own ideology. It is clear to see this in recent years, in the UK after Brexit, there has been increased dissociation between the parties with each other as well as with the public as people began to have increased distrust in the government. Division between political parties creates healthy debate but has become more argumentative with politicians taking it to a level above politics, which leads to a lack of political progress as time is wasted with politicians bickering rather than focusing on solving the important issues plaguing the country. From my chapter one, I can conclude that the Conservative party has become increasingly divided in recent years due to internal political scandals which has meant that they have fallen out of favour with voters. Speculation surrounding the party also indicates that they are unlikely to have electoral success in the upcoming 2024 General Election. From chapter two, I can conclude that due to political scandals and an increasing feeling of personal disdain between politicians of opposition parties influencing debate, there has been a lack of political progress made in the UK. As well as a decrease in public trust in the political parties within the country. Similarly, in the US, political parties have become increasingly divided in recent years. As the two main parties in the country are so vastly different this has led to increased hatred and disdain between the members of these parties as well as the supporters of both of the separate parties being more divided than ever. An increasing number of the public also go as far as saying their opposition party's policy has the potential to harm the wellbeing of the country (Pew Research Centre, 2014). Overall, it is clear to see that divisions exist within and between the biggest parties in the largest

countries in the world, making clear that political division is more present than ever in world politics.

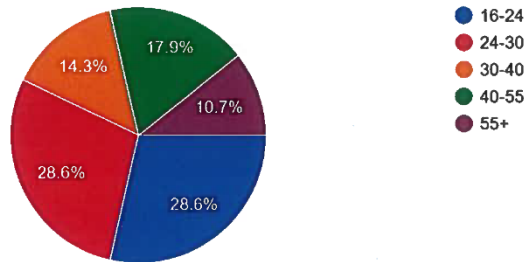
Word count- 458

Appendix

Appendix 1 –

What age category do you fall into?

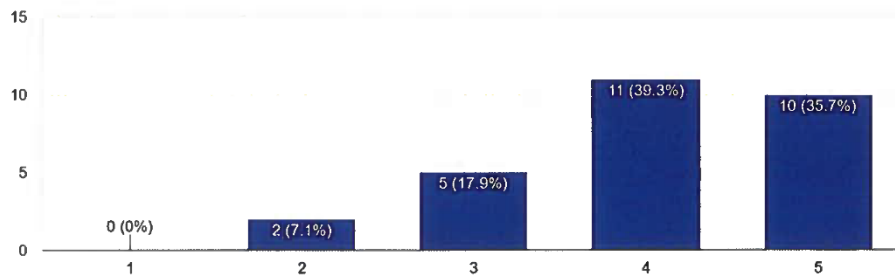
28 responses



Appendix 2 –

To what extent do you believe that the UK is a politically divided country?

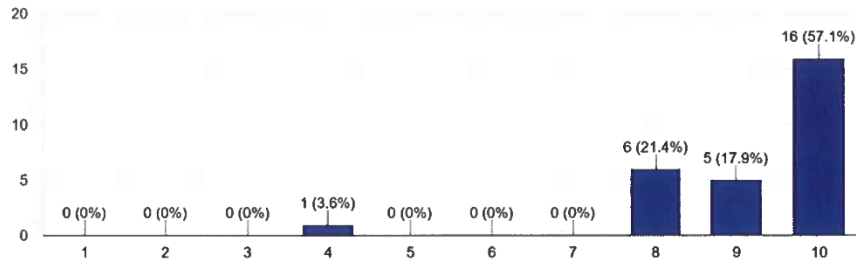
28 responses



Appendix 3 –

To what extent do you think America is a politically divided country?

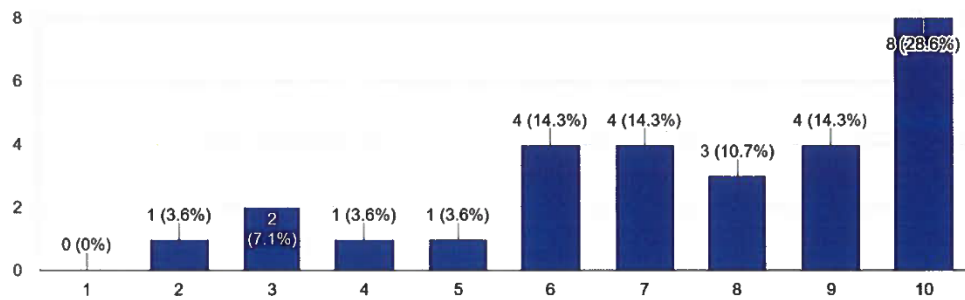
28 responses



Appendix 4 –

In early 2020, Dominic Cummings was found to have travelled across England, even though his party had just placed Covid related restrictions o...tent did the Dominic Cummings scandal offend you?

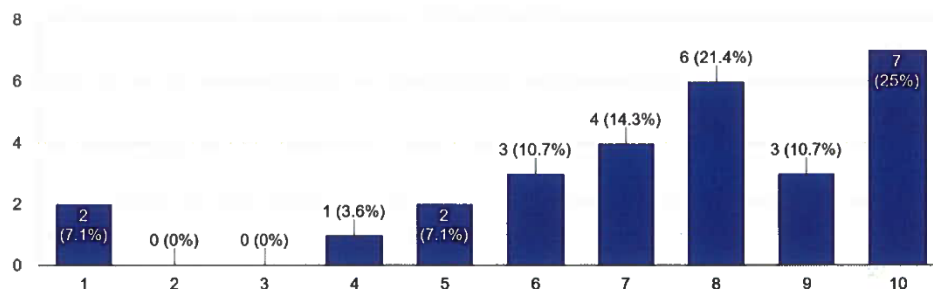
28 responses



Appendix 5 –

In 2021, Matt Hancock was found to be having an affair with his colleague in his office during a time where Covid restrictions were in place. To what extent did the Matt Hancock scandal offend you?

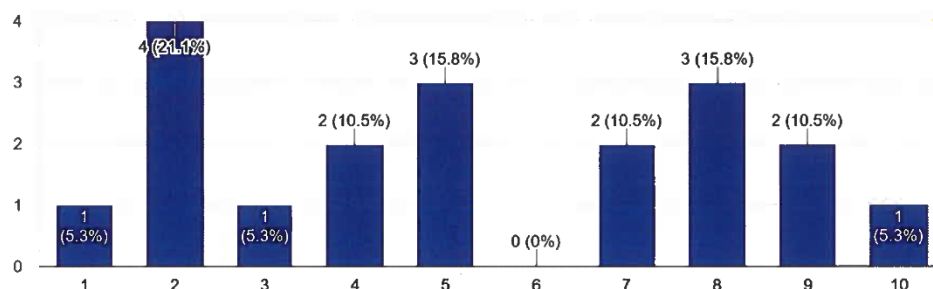
28 responses



Appendix 6 –

To what extent, if any, did the Covid-19 pandemic effect the way you vote? If it did not effect the way you vote, please feel free to skip this question.

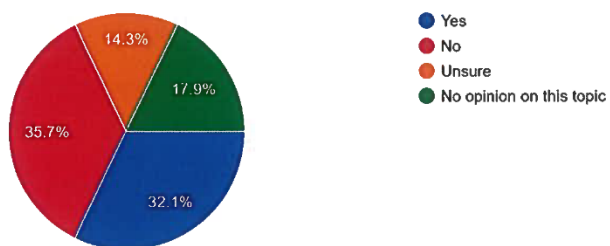
19 responses



Appendix 7 -

Did you feel the election of Boris Johnson (2019-2022) was fair?

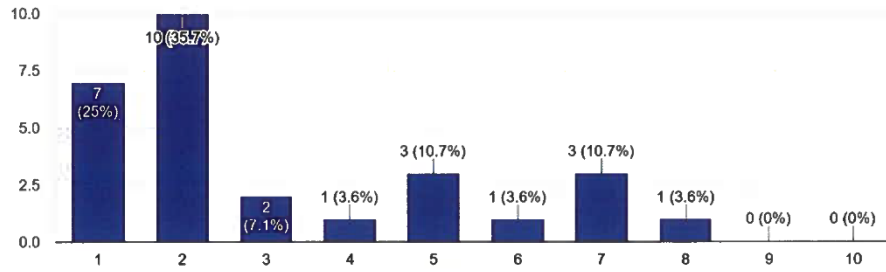
28 responses



Appendix 8 -

To what extent do you believe that the choices made during Donald Trumps presidency (2016-2020) benefitted America?

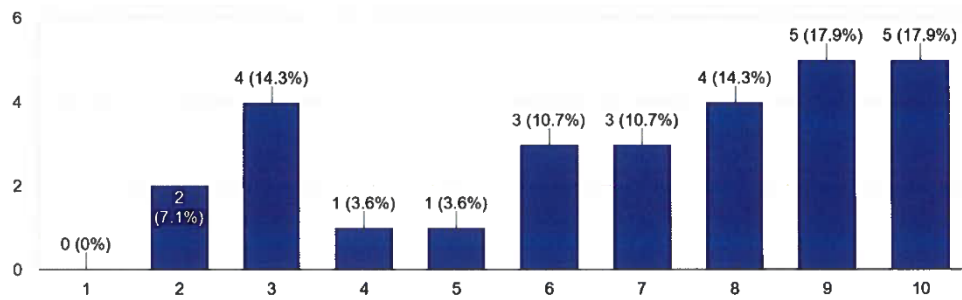
28 responses



Appendix 9 –

To what extent do you believe that political division halts political progress?

28 responses



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