

# Trust in trouble? UK and international confidence in institutions

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THE BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS TEAM



SOCIAL CHANGE INITIATIVE



# Introduction

The World Values Survey (WVS) is an international research programme devoted to the study of people’s social, political, economic, religious and cultural values around the world. Running since 1981, the WVS is the world’s largest and most widely used social survey, with over 800,000 data downloads per year. The WVS covers 120 countries represented across seven waves of data, with the most recent wave – 7 – the largest wave yet.

The questionnaire has extensive coverage of a huge range of attitudes, beliefs and values. The WVS also has a 50% overlap with the European Values Survey (EVS), opening up comparisons with another five waves of European data.

In the UK, fieldwork was completed Mar-Sept 2022 by Ipsos, among a random probability sample of **3,056 adults aged 18+**. This included respondents in England (1,645) and boost samples in Scotland (523), Wales (437) and Northern Ireland (446). This means not only can we compare the UK against other countries around the world, but also the four UK nations against each other. (See the technical details section at the end of this report for more information on the UK sample and international samples.)

## How countries were selected for inclusion in this report

This is wave 7 of WVS, which included around 90 countries and ran from 2017 to 2022. This report focuses on comparison with a cross-section of 24 countries from WVS wave 7 and EVS wave 5 (see table for fieldwork years).

Countries were initially shortlisted based on the availability of reliable and accurately weighted data and then narrowed down, focusing on global coverage (based on the [UN's standardised country coding system](#)), regional coverage and population size. This selection gives coverage of 12 of the 17 UN M49 geographic regions across 24 countries, representing almost 50% of the world's population (source: [World Bank](#)).

The latest data for the UK was collected in 2022. However, for analysis of trends over time, data is for Great Britain due to a lack of available trend data from Northern Ireland.

## Questions with 10-point scale response options

For one question in this report, on people’s feelings about leaving the EU, respondents were asked to give their answer on a numerical scale, where 1 = extremely disappointed and 10 = extremely happy, with no other labelling. For our analysis, following examination of the profile of responses and comparison with similar questions from other studies that use fully labelled semantic scales, we report these as 8–10 = “happy” and 1–3 = “disappointed”.

### Countries included and latest years for which data is available

|                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Australia (2018)       | Japan (2019)            |
| Brazil (2018)          | Mexico (2018)           |
| Canada (2020)          | Morocco (2021)          |
| China (2018)           | Nigeria (2017/2018)     |
| Egypt (2018)           | Norway (2018)*          |
| France (2018)*         | Philippines (2019)      |
| Germany (2017/2018)    | Poland (2017/2018)      |
| United Kingdom (2022)+ | Russia (2017)           |
| Greece (2017)          | South Korea (2017/2018) |
| Indonesia (2018)       | Spain (2017/2018)*      |
| Iran (2020)            | Sweden (2017/2018)*     |
| Italy (2018)*          | United States (2017)    |

\* European Values Survey (EVS) country; 50% question coverage.

+ UK used comparing WVS7 data; Great Britain used for analysis over time due to data availability.

# 1. How Britons' confidence in institutions has changed

Confidence in parliament has halved over the last three decades, while confidence in the EU is on the rise post-Brexit



# Confidence in parliament has halved since 1990, while the civil service has fared better

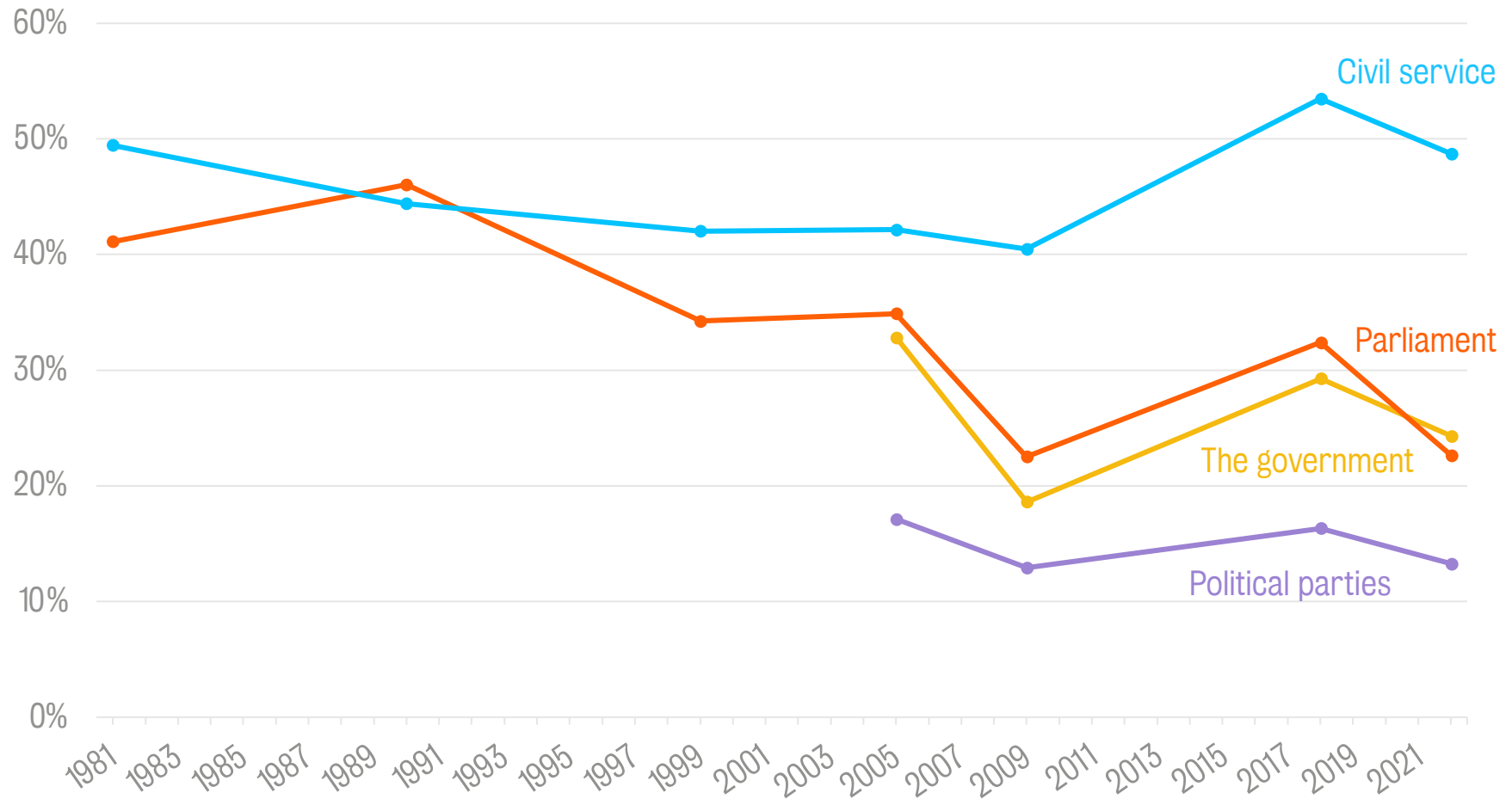
Perceptions of parliament were at their most positive in 1990, when 46% of the British public said they had confidence in it. By 2009, this had halved to 23%, before rising to 32% in 2018. But in 2022, confidence had fallen back to its historic low of 23%.

Trends for the government and political parties go back less far, but do at least show that there hasn't been a major new crisis of confidence since the mid-2000s, even if few have confidence in either.

The public's view of the civil service is far more positive: perceptions in 2022 are the same as they were in 1981 (49%), with confidence rebounding since 2009, after being in gradual decline for decades.

In 2022, Britons were around twice as likely to say they have confidence in the civil service (49%) than the government (24%) or parliament (23%).

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
(% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence in Britain)



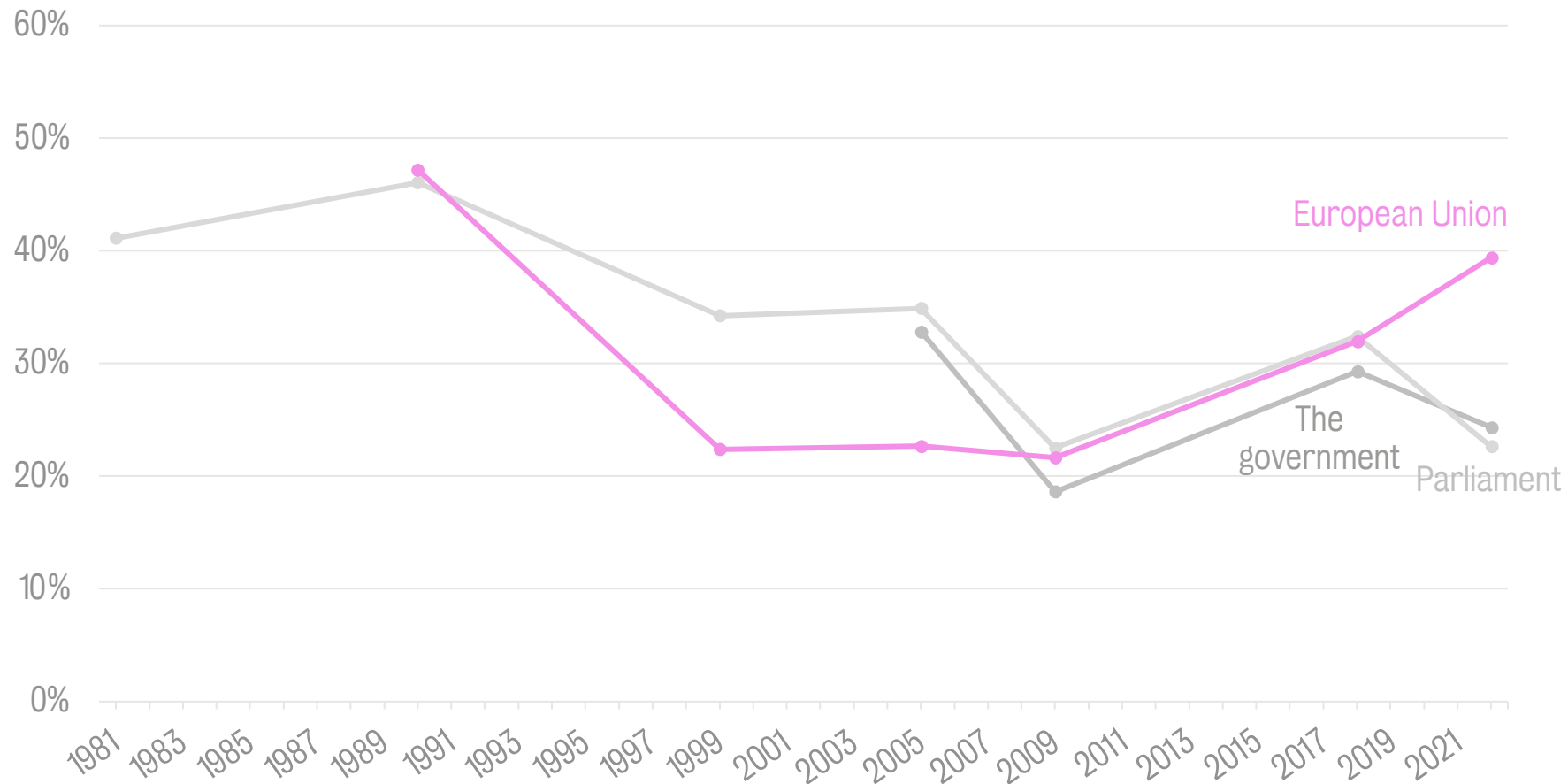
# Britons' views of the EU are increasingly positive post-Brexit – to the extent that they are now far more likely to have confidence in the EU than in parliament or the government

In 1990 around half of the British public said they had confidence in both parliament and the EU, but by 1999 confidence in the latter had more than halved, falling from 47% to 22%. Over the same period, confidence in parliament also fell, but to a lesser extent, and remained much higher until at least 2005.

By 2009, confidence in parliament had declined further, and for the next nine years was on the same trajectory as confidence in the EU.

But after 2018, a clear divide in opinion emerged, and four years on the British public were far more likely to say they had confidence in the EU (39%) than in either parliament (23%) or the government (24%).

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
(% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence in Britain)



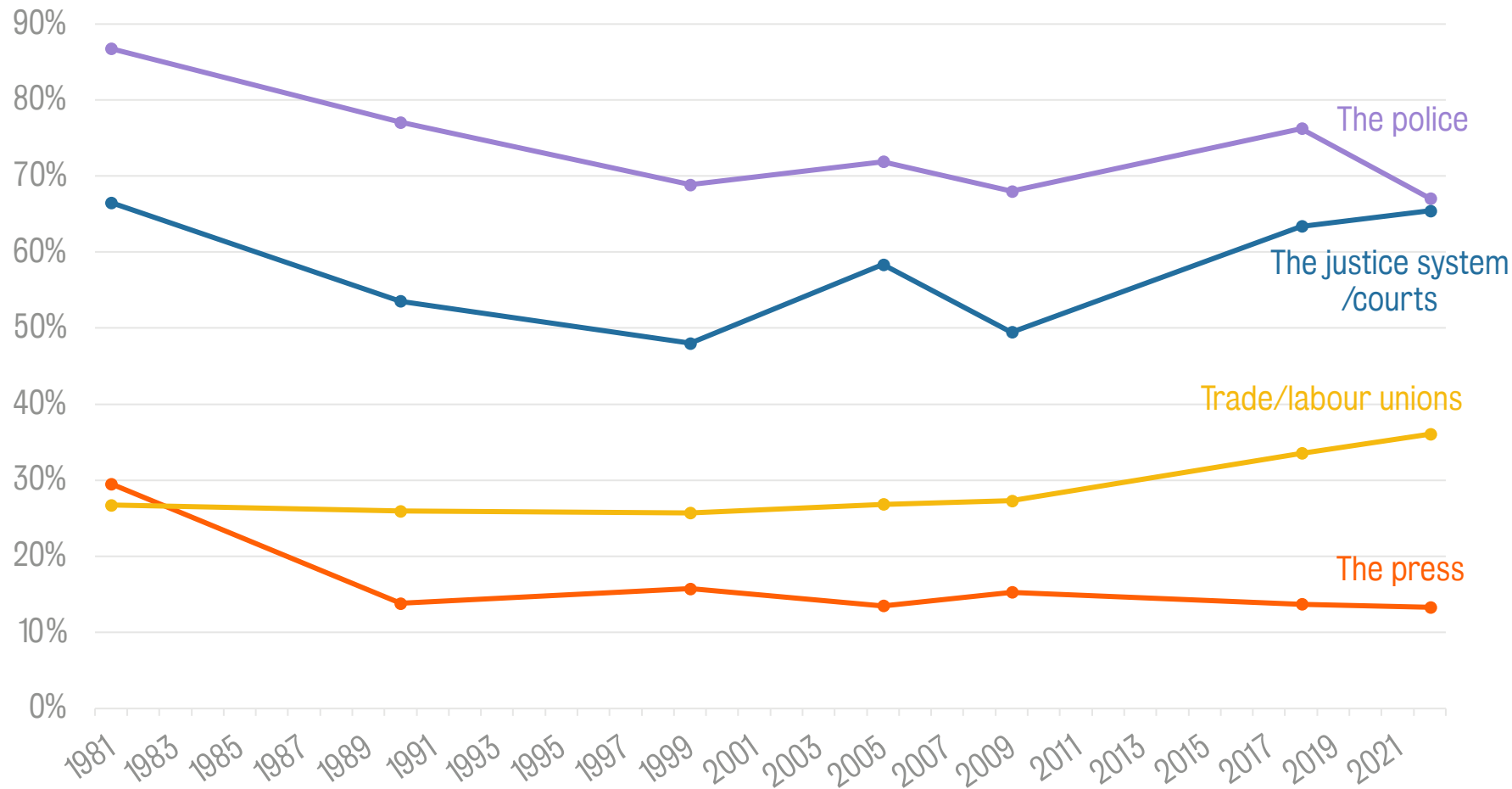
# Confidence in both the police and the press has fallen considerably since the 1980s

87% of Britons reported having confidence in the police in 1981 – but in 2022, this was down to 67%, similar to its previous low point in 2009 (68%).

Meanwhile, the share of the British public who said they had confidence in the press halved between 1981 and 1990, falling from 30% to 14%. Since then, perceptions have barely changed and remain persistently negative.

Views on trade/labour unions remained stable for decades, before rising in recent years – 36% said they have confidence in trade unions in 2022, up from 27% in 2009. Confidence in the justice system/courts has also increased from a low point in 1999, returning to the level it was at in 1981.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
(% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence in Britain)



## 2. Where the UK ranks internationally on confidence in institutions

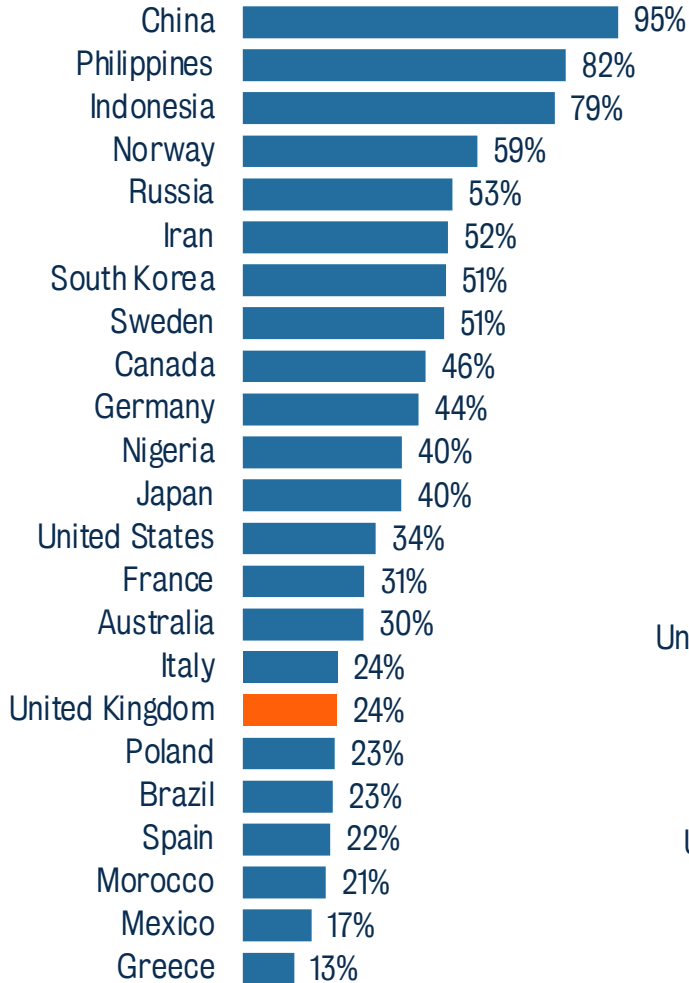
By international standards, the UK public have little confidence in their political institutions, and among the very lowest levels of confidence in the press



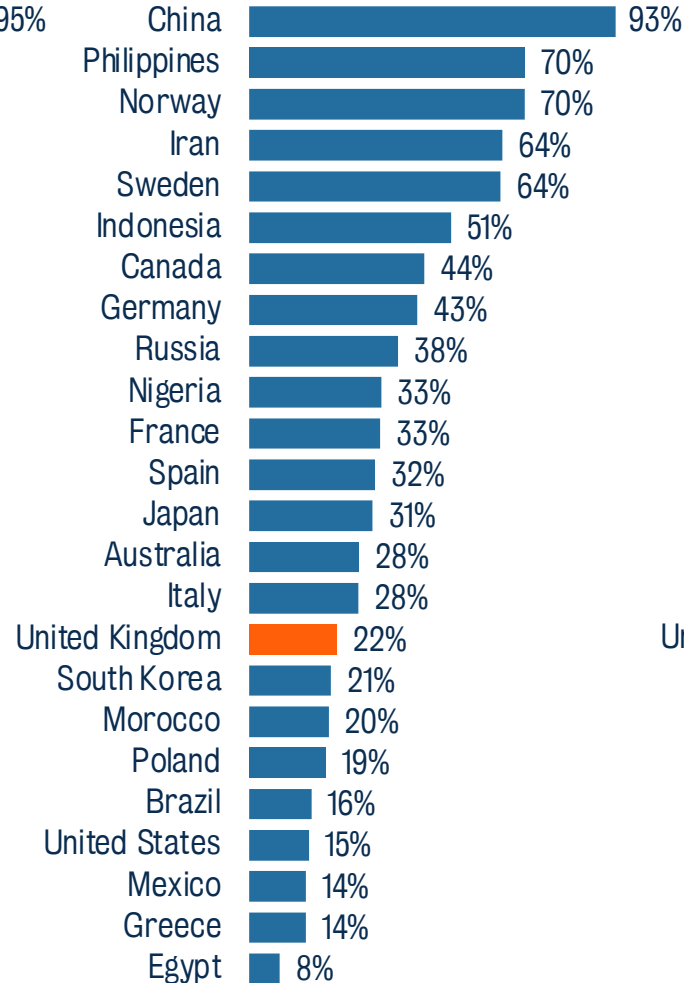
# The UK is among the least likely to have confidence in the government, parliament, political parties or the press...

Below is a list of organisations. For each one, please indicate how much confidence you have in them (% who say a great deal/quite a lot)

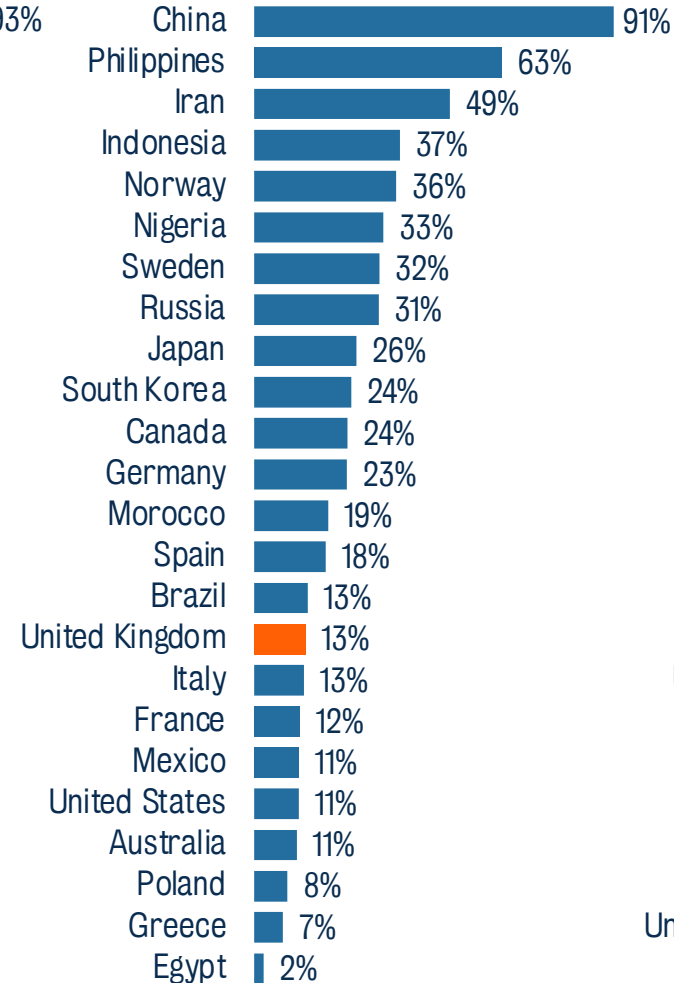
## The government



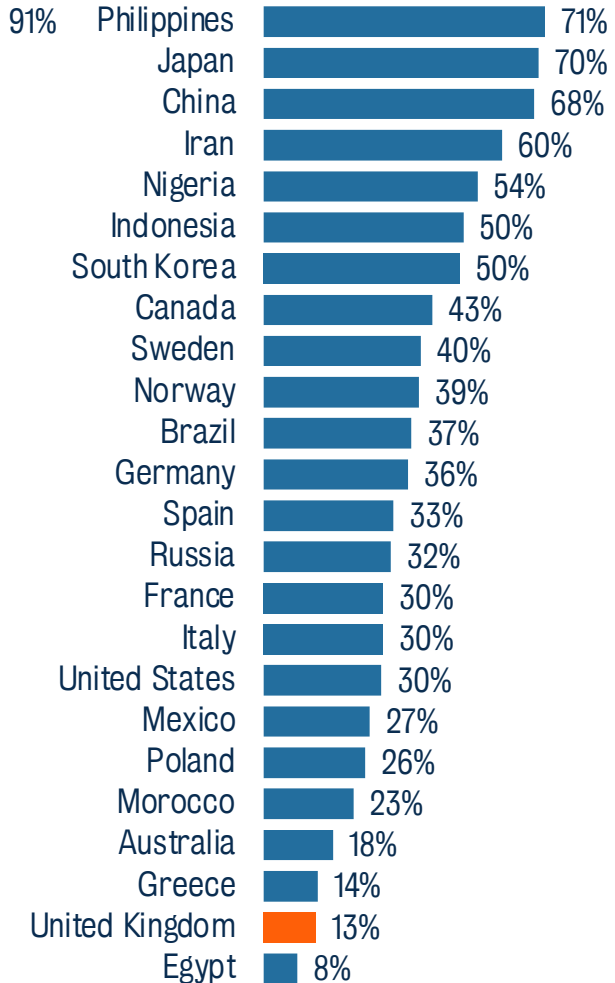
## Parliament/congress



## Political parties



## The press

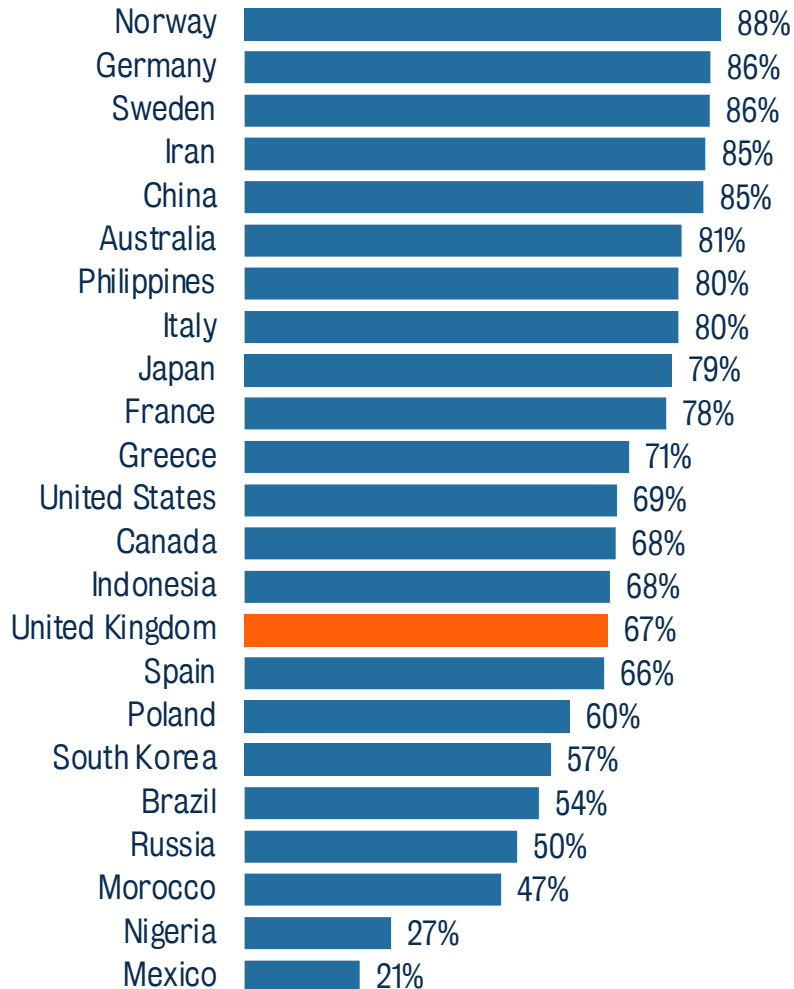




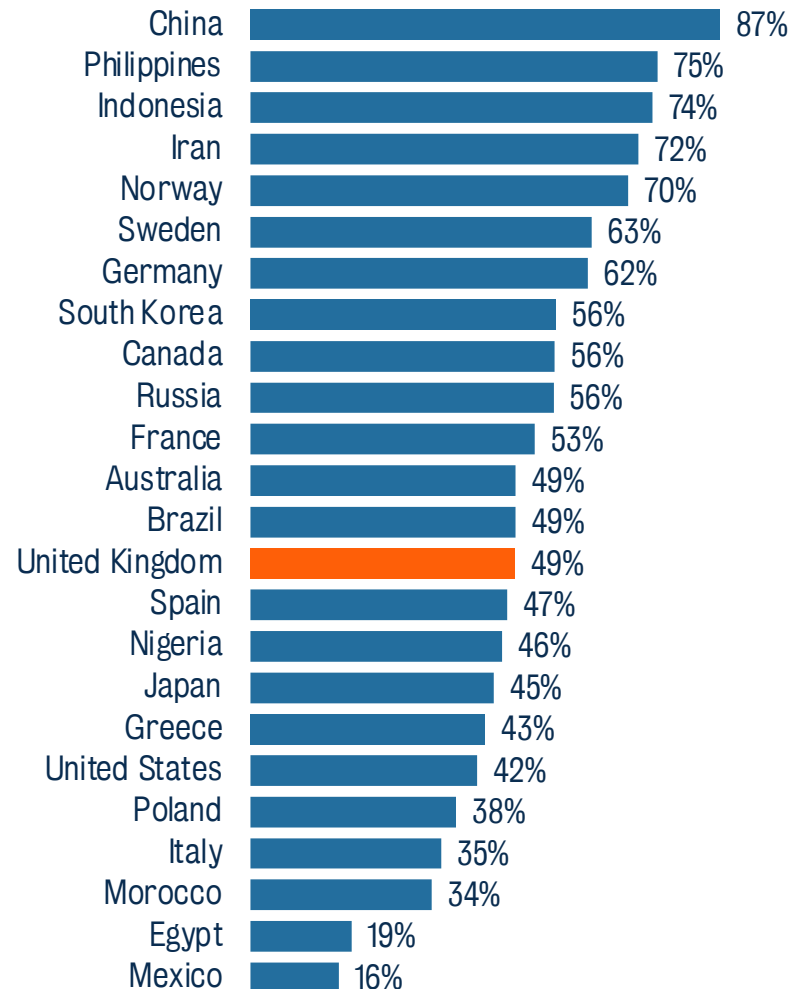
## ...and ranks among the bottom half of countries for confidence in the police and civil service, though higher on courts

Below is a list of organisations. For each one, please indicate how much confidence you have in them (% who say a great deal/quite a lot)

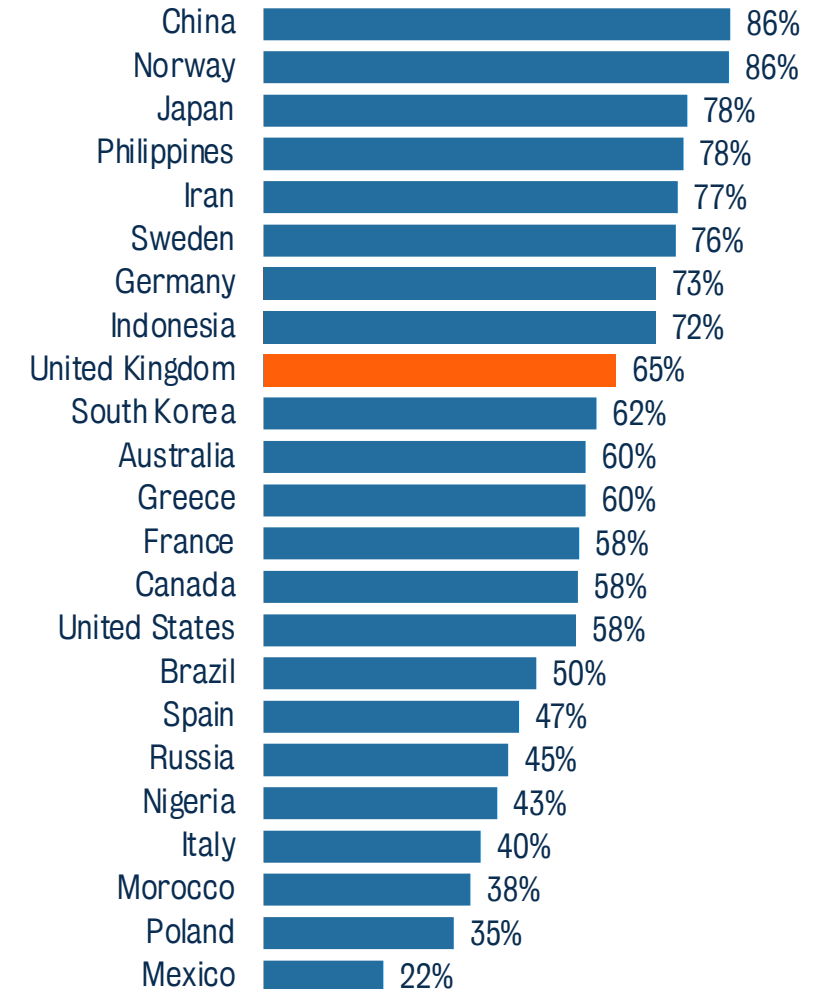
### The police



### The civil service



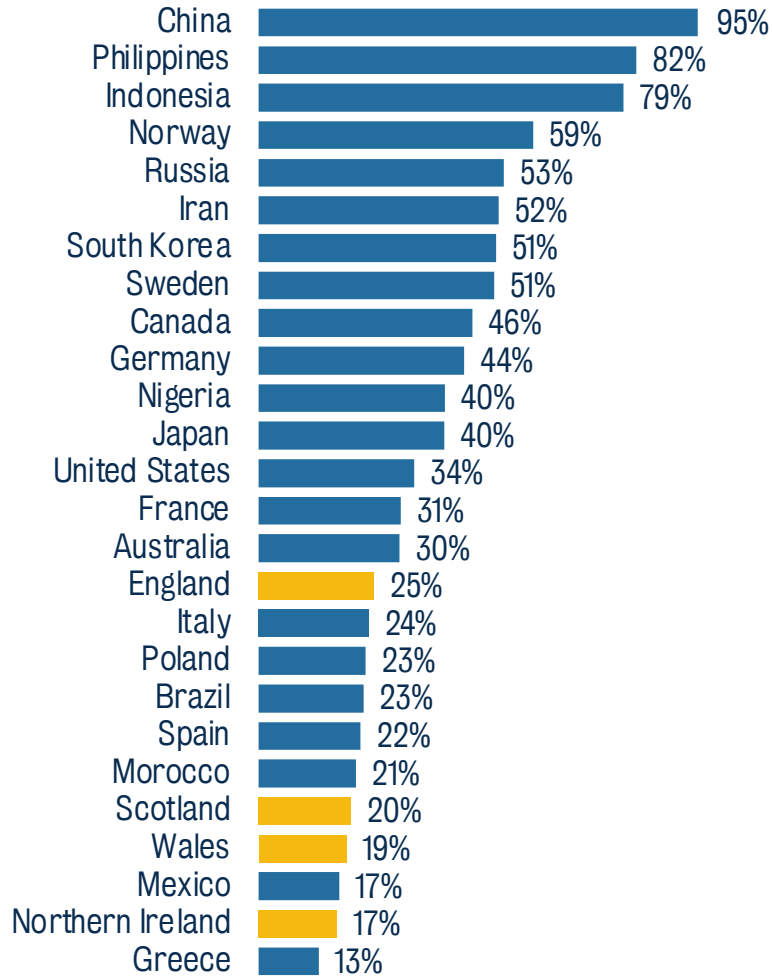
### The justice system/courts



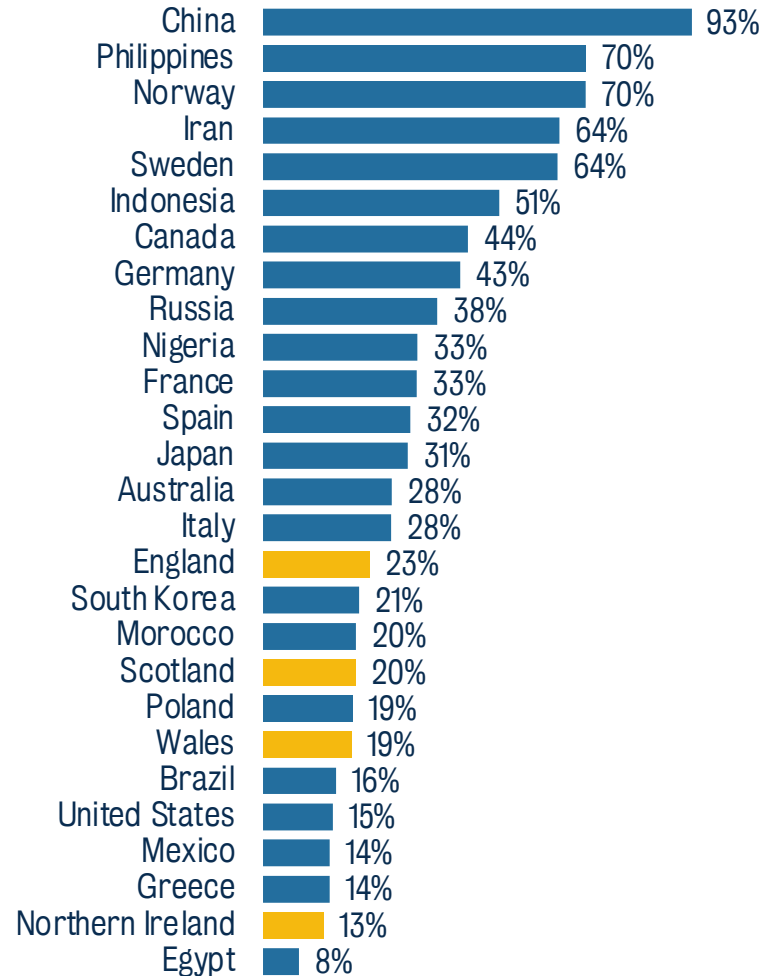
# Northern Ireland stands out among the four UK nations as having less confidence in political institutions

Below is a list of organisations. For each one, please indicate how much confidence you have in them (% who say a great deal/quite a lot)

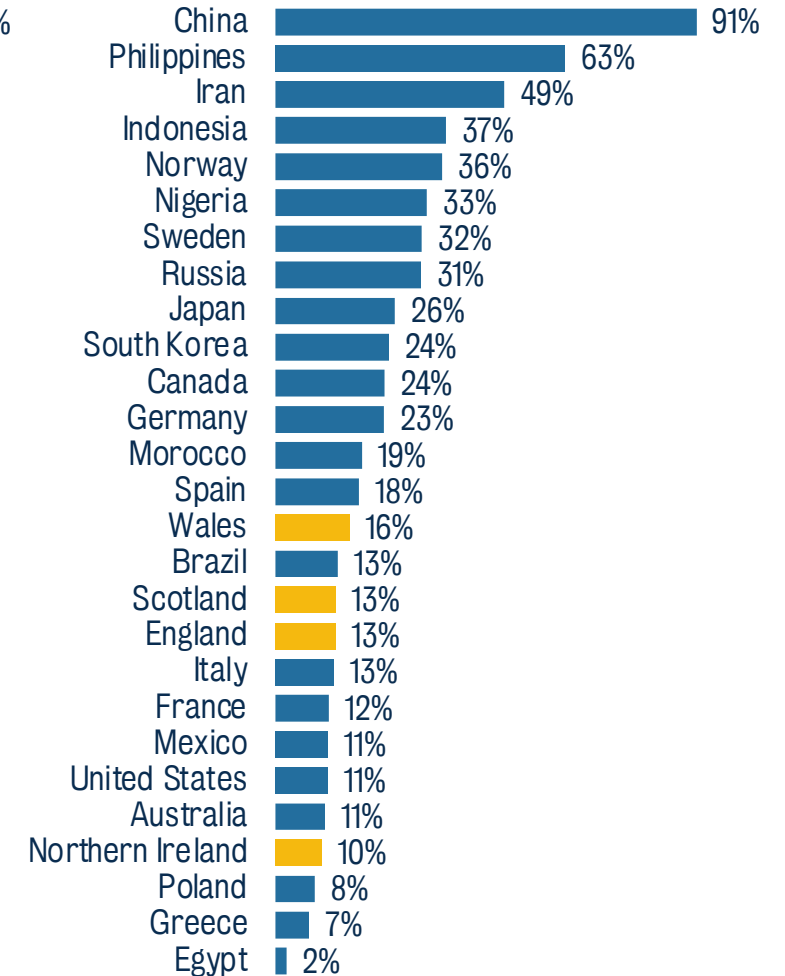
## The government



## Parliament/congress



## Political parties



### 3. Parliament

One in five people in the UK have confidence in parliament – lower than in many comparable nations – and confidence has declined the most among younger generations

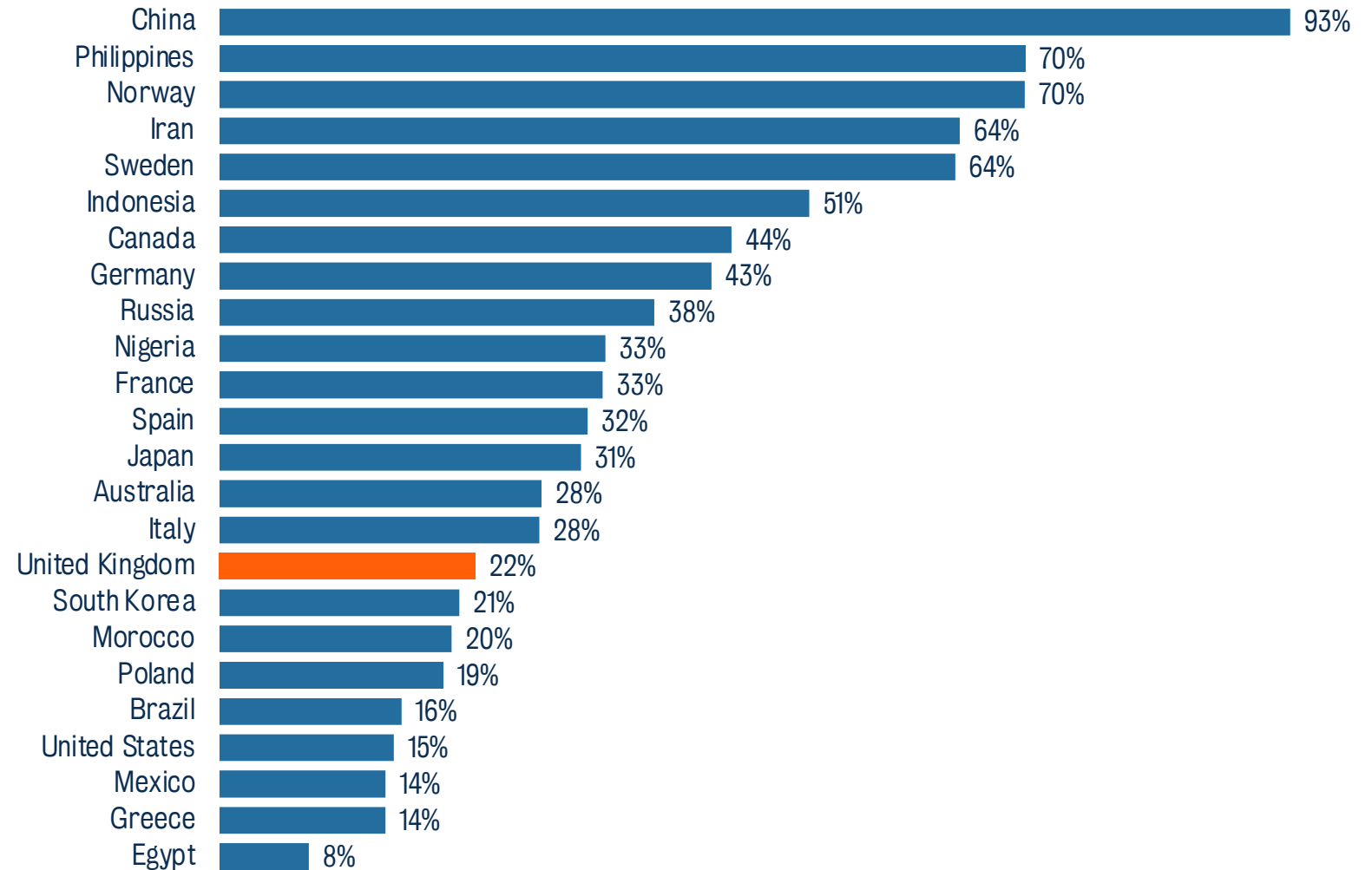


# The UK ranks below many other western democratic nations for public confidence in parliament

The UK (22%) ranks among the bottom half of countries for confidence in parliament, behind many of its European neighbours, including Germany (43%), France (33%) and Spain (32%), and even further behind Scandinavian countries such as Norway (70%) and Sweden (64%).

In Europe, only Greece (14%) of the countries included in our analysis has lower confidence in its parliament than the UK, while the US also fares worse than the UK, with just 15% having confidence in congress.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
**Parliament/congress** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence)



# Britain's declining confidence in parliament tallies with trends in the US and Australia

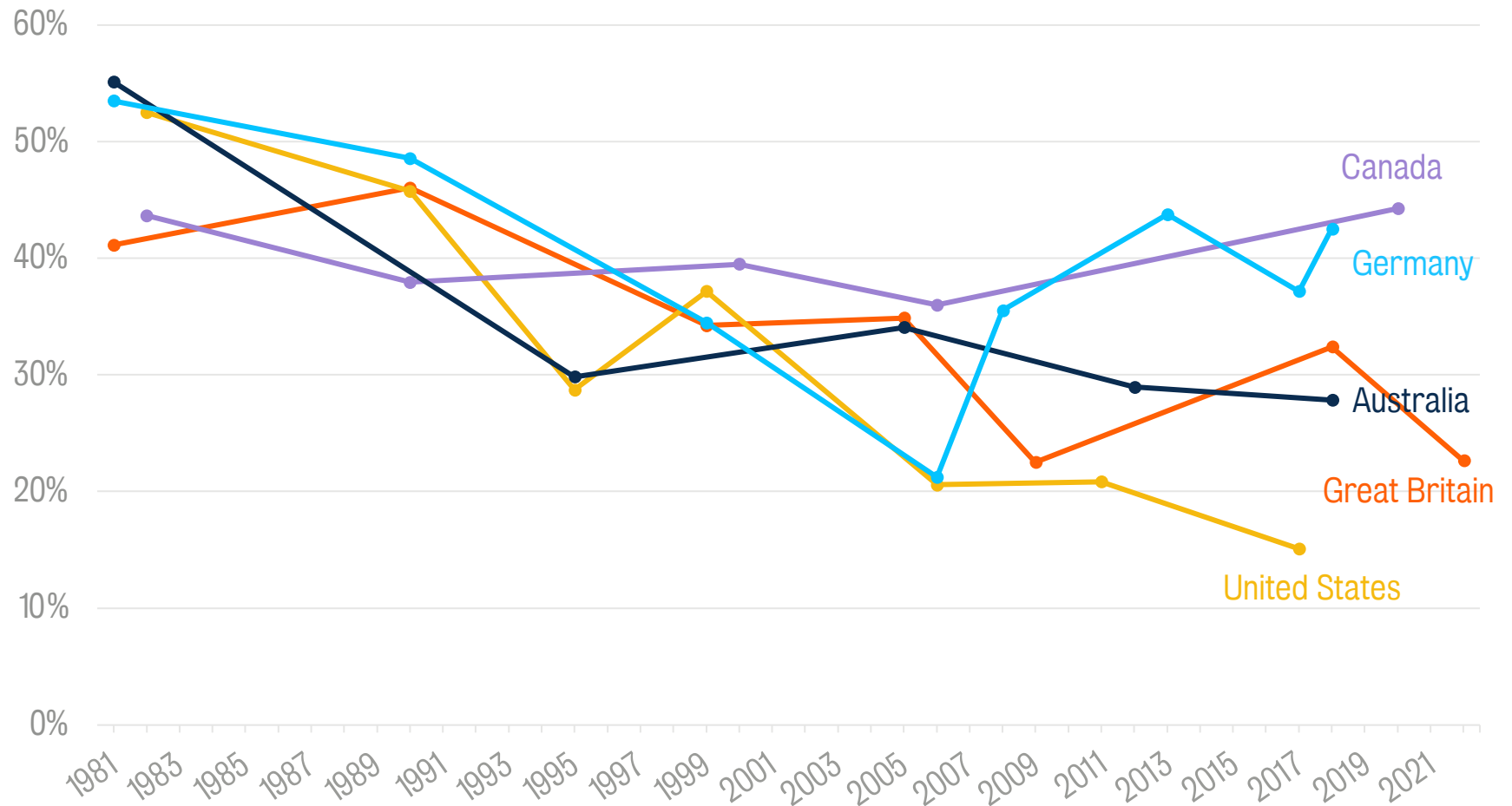
Trends in both the US and Australia mirror those in Britain, with confidence in parliament/congress declining – albeit to an even greater extent in the US and Australia.

In the US, confidence in congress fell from 53% in 1982 to 15% in 2017. And in Australia, confidence in parliament declined from 55% in 1981 to 28% in 2018.

For decades, Germany was on a similar trajectory, but views began to rebound after 2006, when 21% of the public said they had confidence in parliament. Since then, this has more than doubled, with 43% feeling this way in 2018.

Views in Canada, on the other hand, have remained relatively stable for decades, and in 2020 were at the same level they were in 1982 (44%).

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
**Parliament/congress** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence)



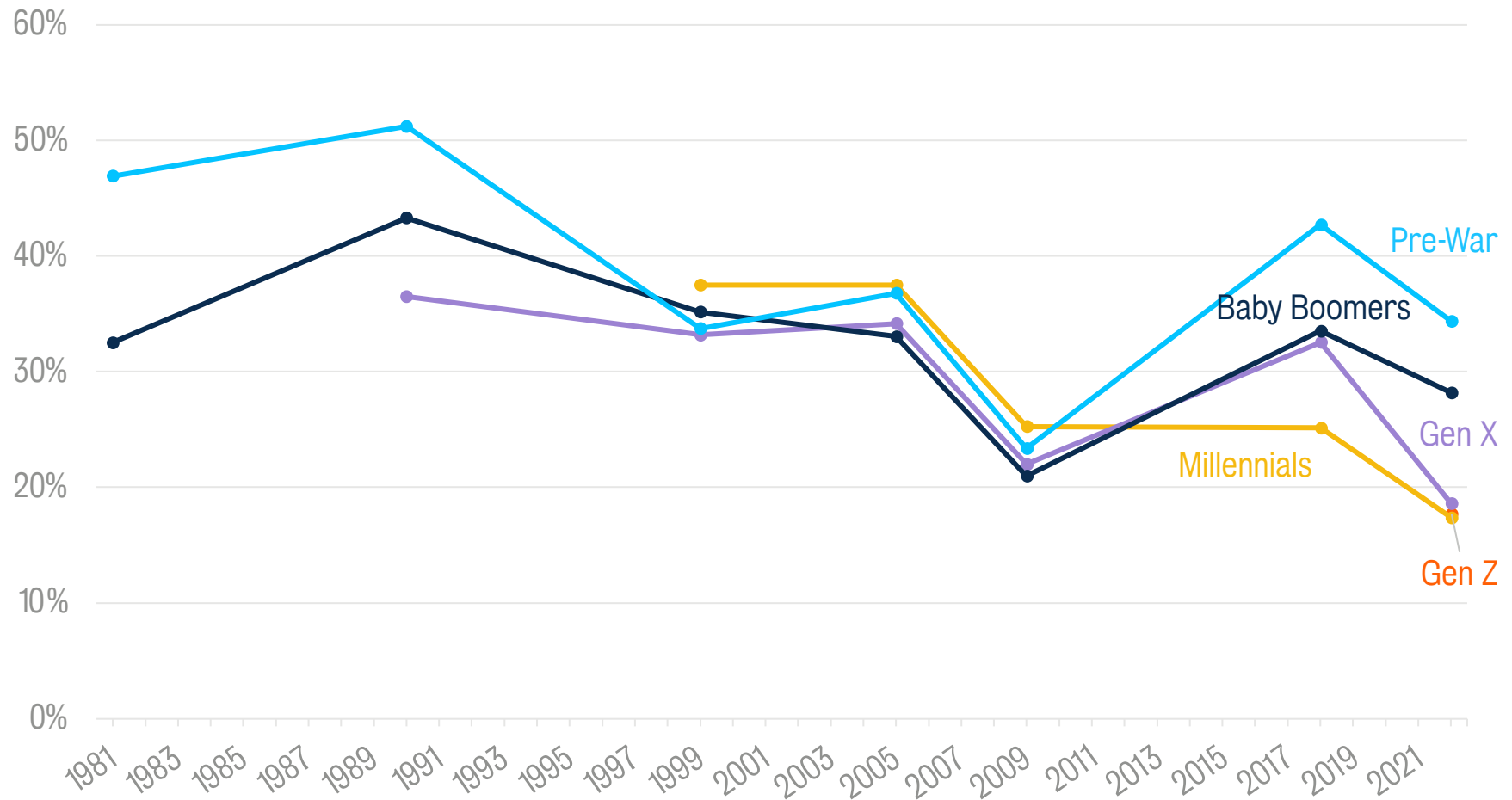
# A generational divide has emerged in confidence in parliament

From 1999 to 2009, all generations in Britain followed the same trend, with a very similar share of each cohort saying they had confidence in parliament.

But by 2018, this had changed, as a generational divide opened up. Four years on, in 2022, there is a clear split in views, with the Pre-War generation (34%) and Baby Boomers (28%) more likely to have confidence in parliament, and Millennials (17%) and Gen X (19%) less likely to.

But while Millennials and Gen X only reached this level after their confidence declined from a much higher starting point, the youngest generation, Gen Z (18%), are *entering* the data with very little confidence in parliament.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
**Parliament** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence by generation in Britain)



## 4. The government

The UK ranks low internationally for confidence in the government, with Millennials experiencing the biggest decline in confidence since trends began in 2005



# By international standards, people in the UK have relatively little confidence in the government

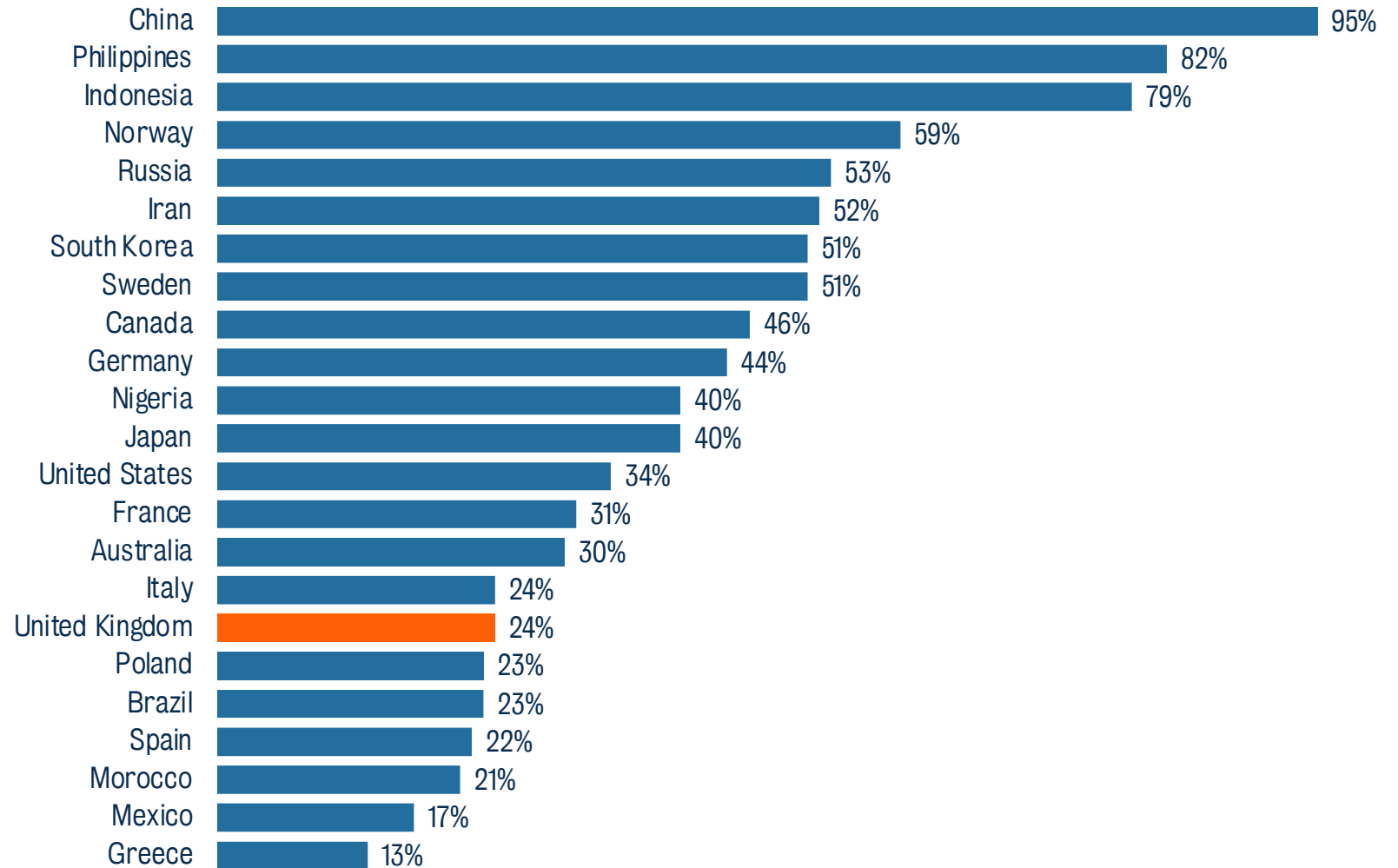
A quarter (24%) of the UK public say they have a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in the government, meaning the country ranks among the bottom third of nations on this issue.

The UK is on a par with the likes of Poland (23%), Brazil (23%) and Italy (23%), but far behind many peer nations such as Norway (59%), Canada (46%) and Germany (44%).

However, it's important to recognise that many respondents' answers are likely to represent a short-term appraisal of the *current government's* performance, rather than their views of government as an institution or system.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?

**The government** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence)



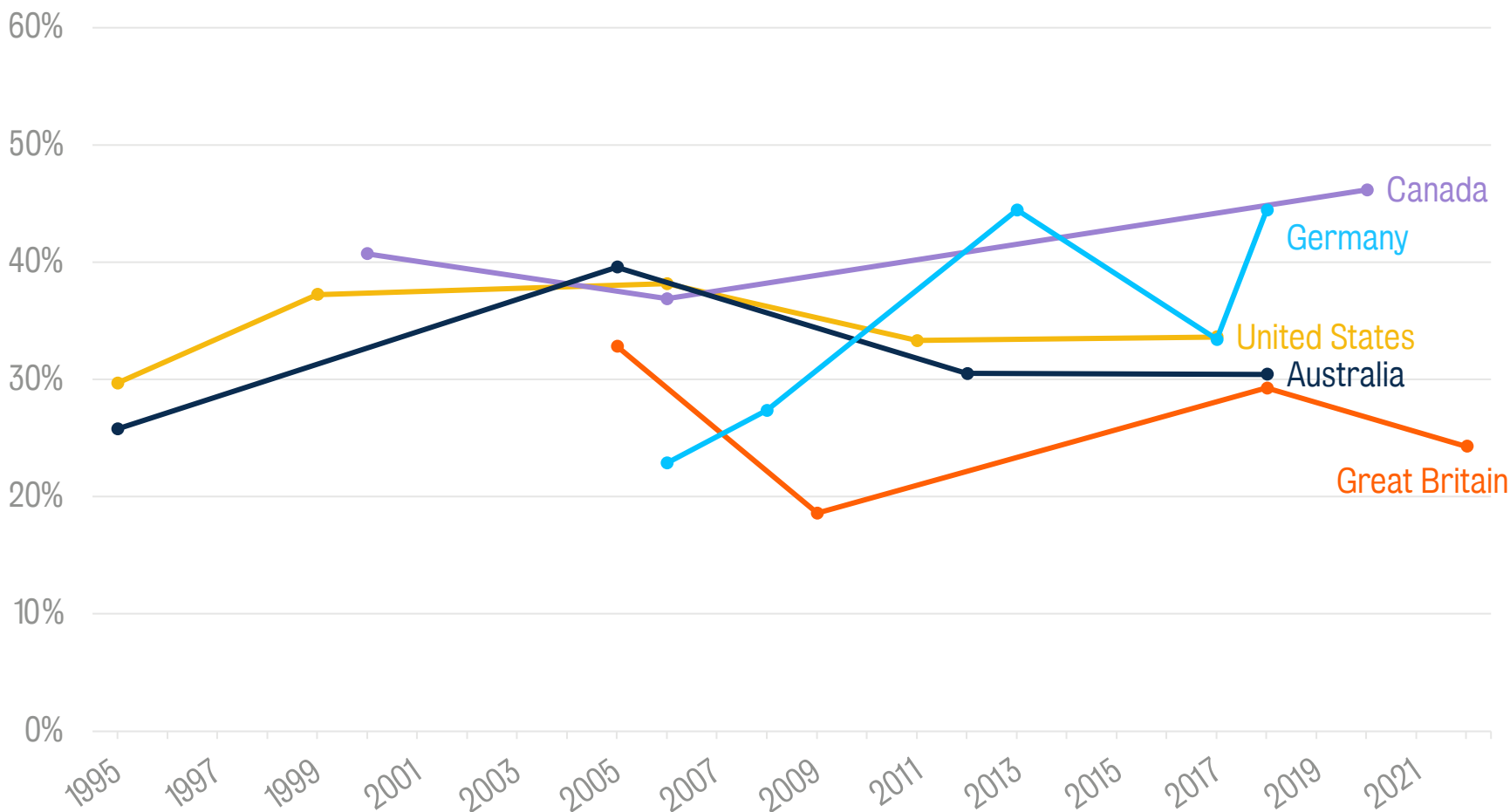


# Confidence in the government has increased in Germany, while trends elsewhere have been relatively stable

Between 2006 and 2018, confidence in the government in Germany rose from 23% to 44%. But other western nations have experienced much smaller shifts. Canada, the US and Australia have seen slight rises in confidence, at least comparing most recent data with when trends began – yet the general pattern has been of relative stability, with only small changes in public perceptions.

Trends in Britain have fluctuated more than in some of these nations. Latest figures show 24% of the British public say they have confidence in the government – down from 33% when trends began in 2005, but up on the low point of 2009, when 19% said the same.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
**The government** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence)



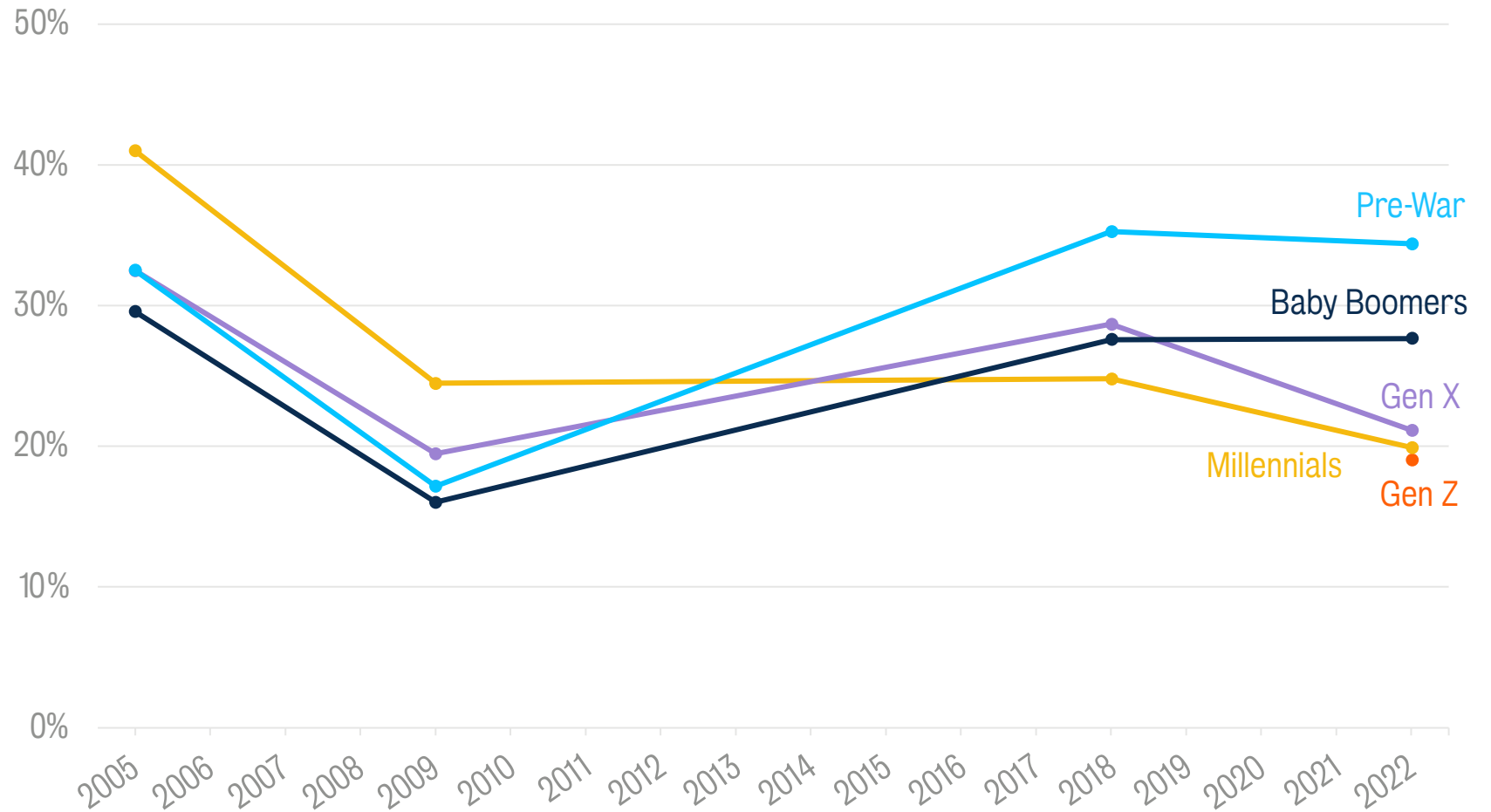
# Confidence in the government among Millennials has halved since 2005 in Britain

One in five (20%) Millennials said they have confidence in the government in 2022 – down from two in five (41%) in 2005.

At the start of this trend, Millennials were more likely than the Pre-War generation and Baby Boomers to report such confidence. But whereas confidence among those older cohorts rebounded after falling between 2005 and 2009, Millennials' confidence has carried on declining – although this is to some extent likely to be a reflection of normal party preferences, given the change from a Labour to Conservative government in 2010.

Gen X have followed a similar path as Millennials, with one in five of both generations now saying they have confidence in the government. Gen Z are beginning their trend at the same low level.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
**The government** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence by generation in Britain)



## 5. The EU

Confidence in the EU has risen considerably in recent years, and views have become more favourable even among older generations. Meanwhile, the public in all four UK nations are far more likely to say they're disappointed rather than happy to have left the EU



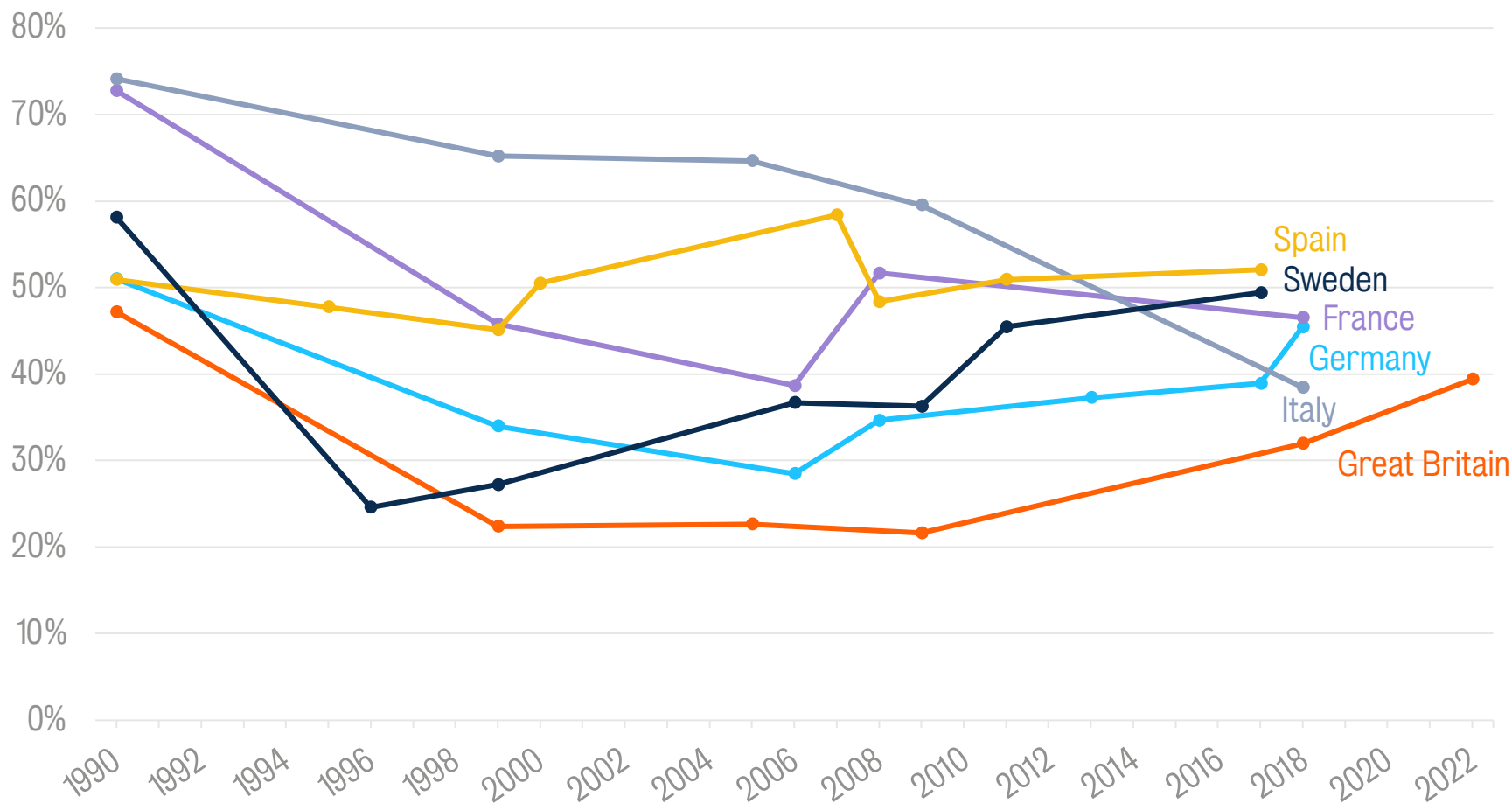
# Britain's rebounding confidence in the EU mirrors trends in Germany and Sweden, while Italy's steep decline shows no sign of improving

Confidence in the EU declined considerably throughout much of the 1990s in Germany and Sweden, before beginning to rise again at different stages – similar to the trend in Britain.

France, too, has seen confidence in the EU rebound somewhat before then stabilising, following a large fall from 73% in 1990 to 39% in 2006.

Views in Spain have changed relatively little compared with other nations, while confidence in the EU among people in Italy has been on a clear downward trajectory, declining from 74% in 1990 to 38% in 2018, with no signs yet of it rebounding.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
**The European Union\*** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence)



\*In previous waves, the question referred to the European Community or European Economic Community  
 Base: minimum of 1,000 people aged 18+ surveyed per country per year. See [WVSA website](#) for sample information

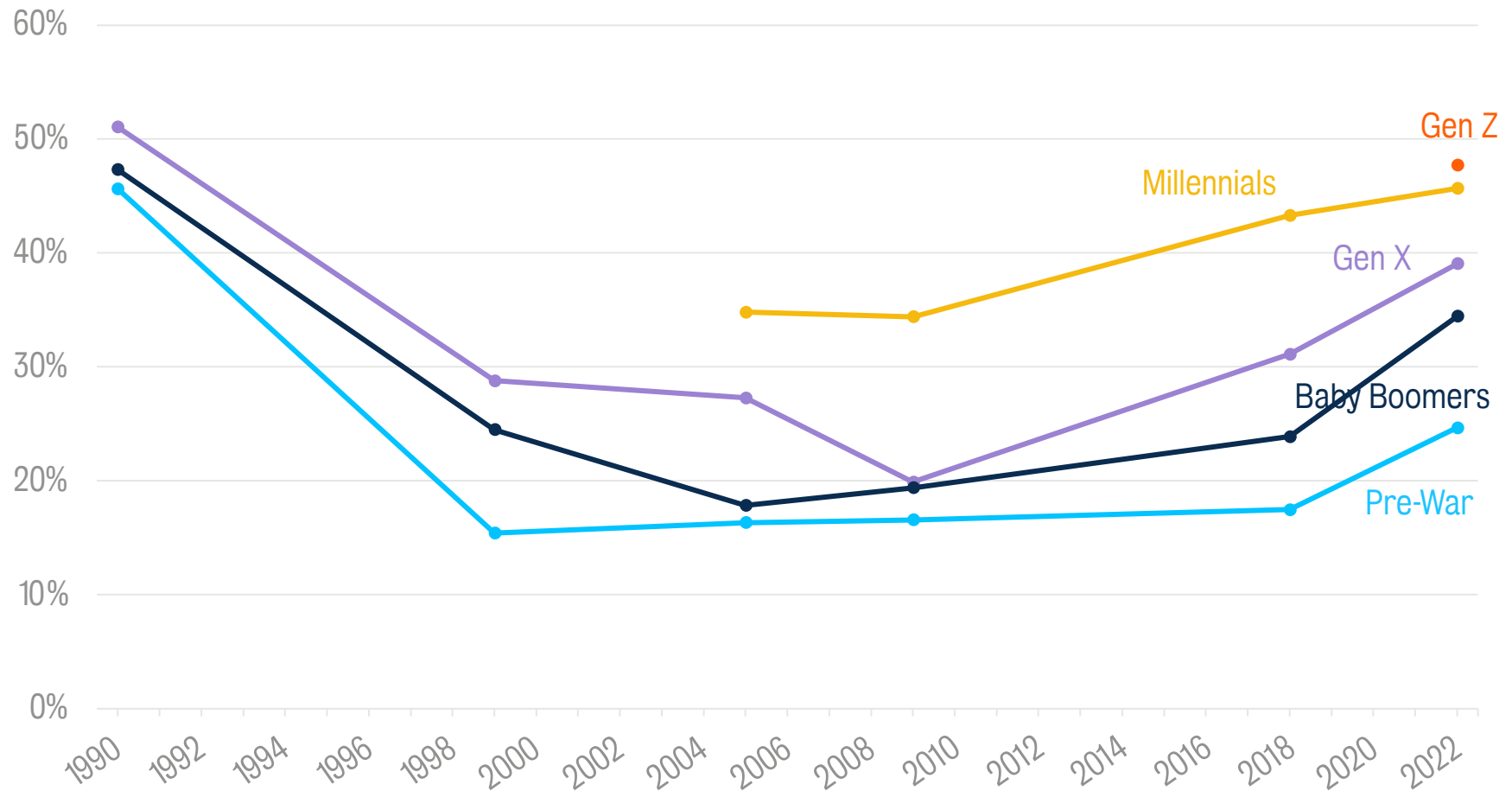
# Confidence in the EU has risen among all generations in Britain, even if younger cohorts are more likely to have a positive view

The Pre-War generation in Britain have consistently had the least confidence in the EU, followed by Baby Boomers and then Gen X – although at times the difference in views has been relatively small.

However, the divide between these three cohorts has reopened in recent years, and a clear gradient in attitudes has now emerged.

Despite this, confidence among all generations – including older cohorts – has grown, with a notable uptick between 2018 and 2022. For example, during this period, the share of Baby Boomers saying they had confidence in the EU rose from 24% to 34%.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
**The European Union\*** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence by generation in Britain)\*



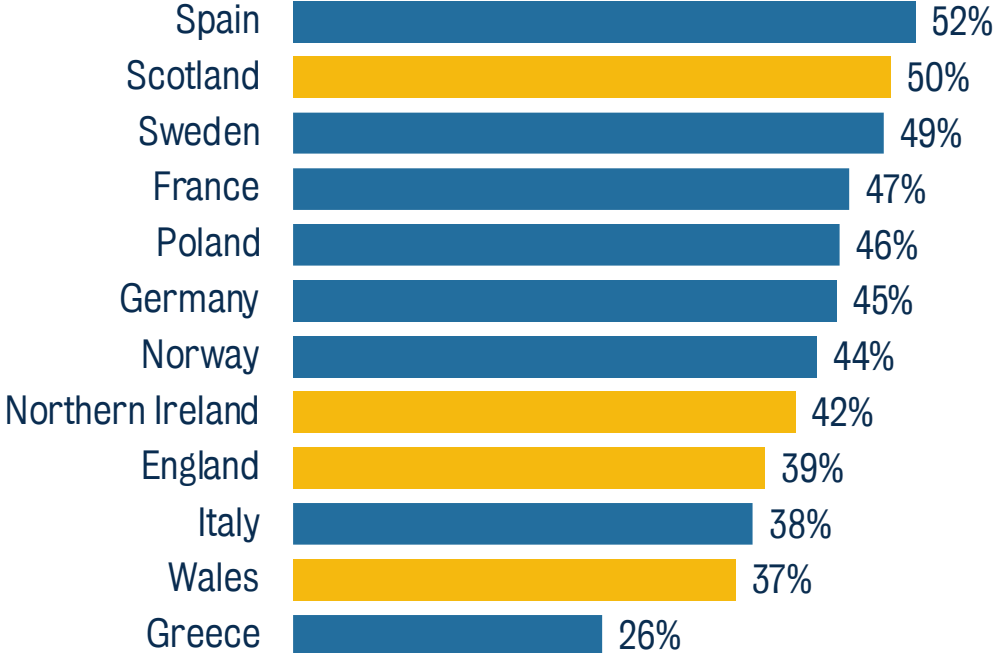
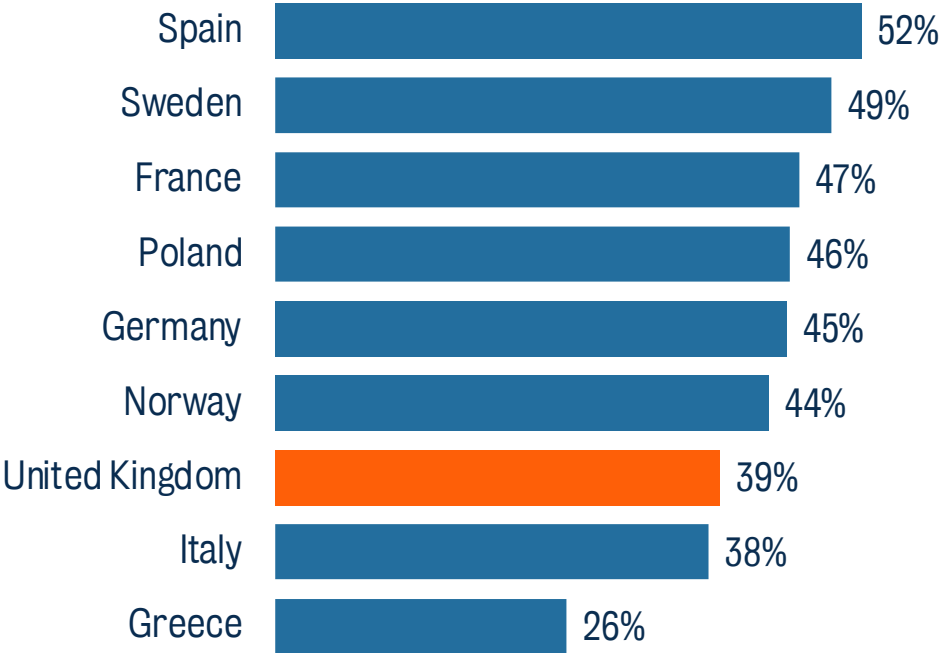
\*In previous waves, the question referred to the European Community or European Economic Community  
 Base: minimum of 130 people surveyed per generation per year

# Despite UK confidence in the EU rebounding, it is still lower than in some other European nations – although Scotland is among the most positive countries

Among countries surveyed on this issue, the UK (39%) is still one of the least likely to say it has confidence in the EU – even if the gap between the UK and some of these other nations, such as Norway (44%), Germany (45%) and Poland (46%), is relatively small.

And there are important differences in views among the four nations that make up the UK, with Scotland (50%) notably having the most confidence in the EU, and Wales (37%) having the least.

Below is a list of organisations. For each one, please indicate how much confidence you have in them. **The European Union\*** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot)



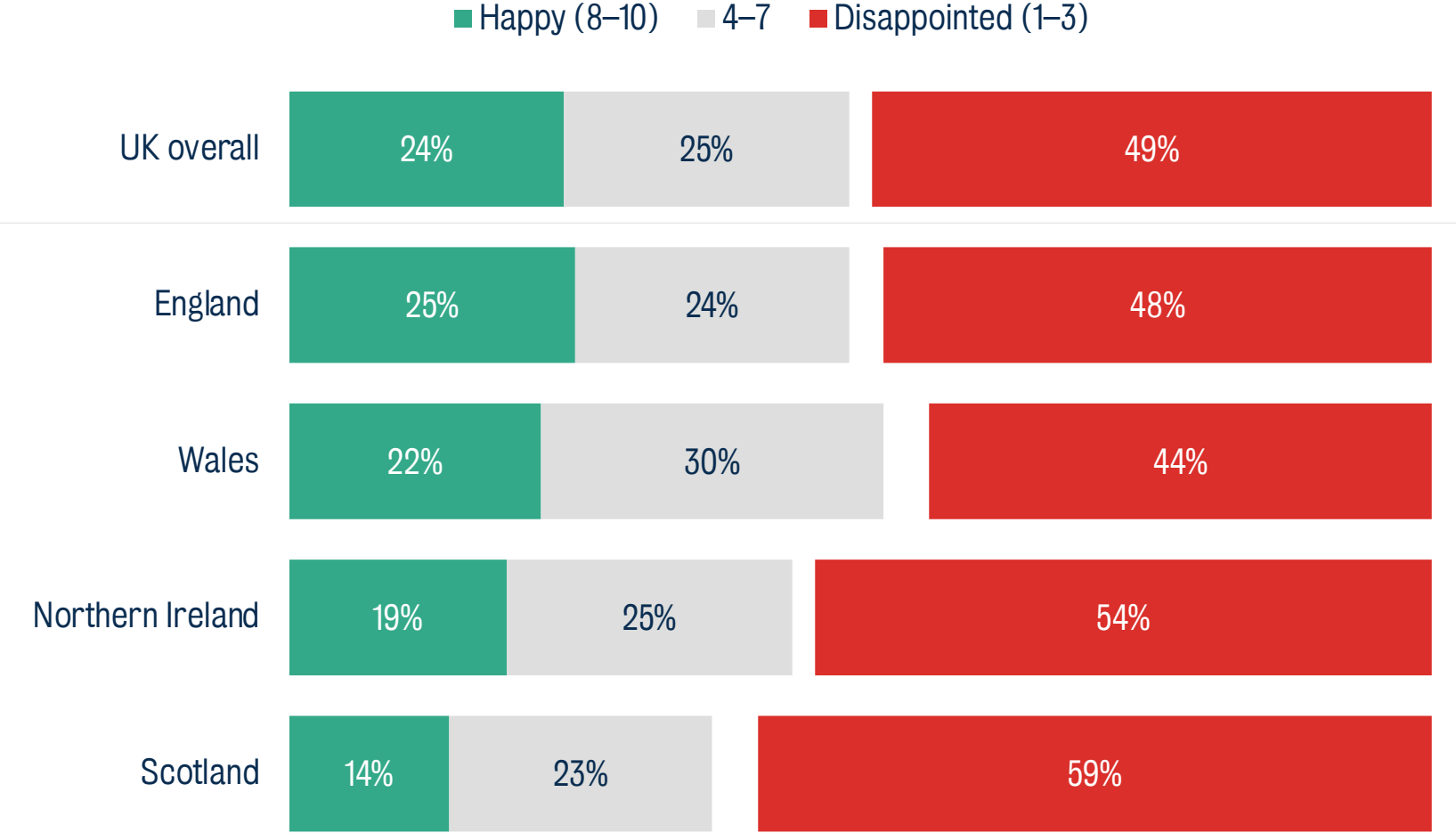
\*In previous waves, the question referred to the European Community or European Economic Community  
 UK base: 3,056 people in the UK aged 18+, surveyed 1 Mar–9 Sept 2022. Other countries all surveyed in wave 7 of WVS at various points between 2017 and 2022. See [WVSA website](#) for sample information

# All four UK nations are far more likely to say they're disappointed rather than happy that the UK voted to leave the EU

The UK public are twice as likely to say they're disappointed (49%) rather than happy (24%) that the UK voted to leave the EU, with disappointment the most common response across all four UK nations.

And this is felt most keenly in Scotland (59%) and Northern Ireland (54%), where majorities of the population say they are disappointed to have left.

How happy or how disappointed are you that the UK voted to leave the European Union? Using the scale below, which number best describes your feelings where "1" means extremely disappointed and "10" means "extremely happy"?



## 6. Political parties

Just 13% of the UK public say they have confidence in political parties, with confidence low across all generations





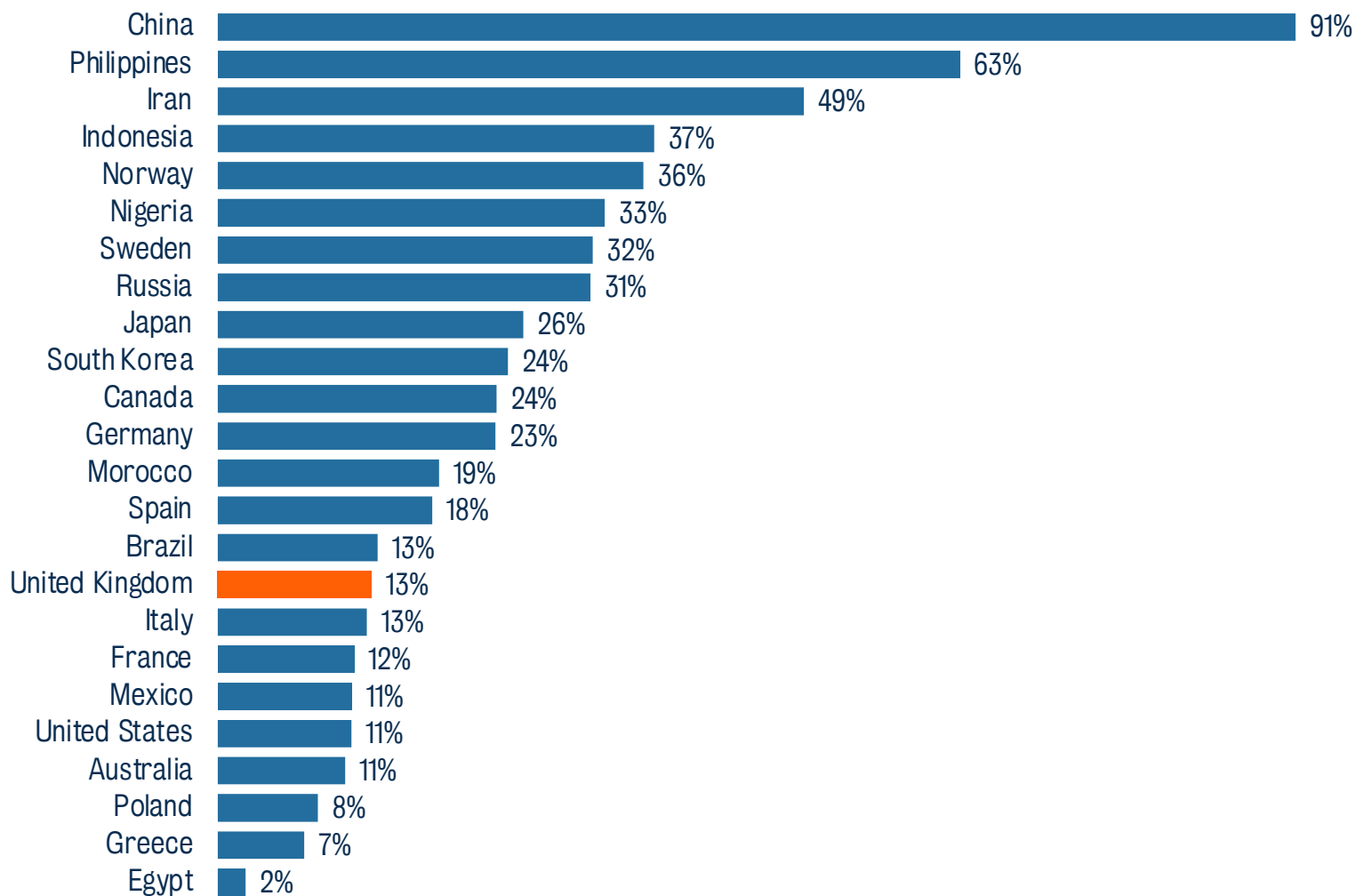
# Confidence in political parties is low across all higher-income nations – but the UK has among the least

In no higher-income democratic nation do a majority of the public say they have confidence in political parties, yet some fare much better than the UK (13%), such as Norway (36%), Sweden (32%), Canada (24%) and Germany (23%).

But the one in eight people in the UK who do have confidence in political parties is either the same as or similar to some other peer nations including Italy (13%), France (12%) and the US (11%).

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?

**Political parties** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence)

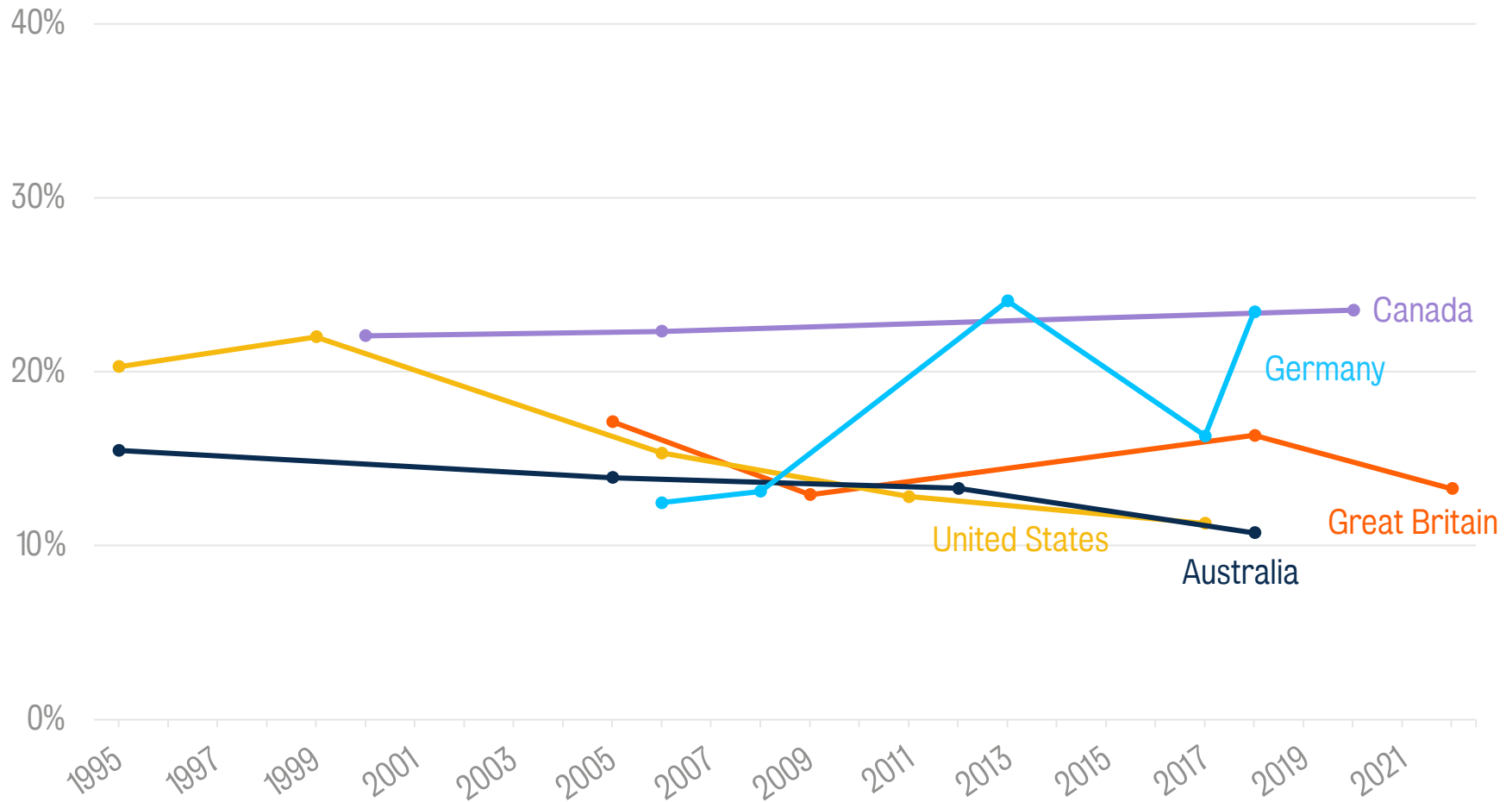


# Confidence in political parties in Britain has remained at around the same low level since 2005

Perceptions of political parties in Britain changed little between 2005 and 2022, with the share of the public saying they have confidence in them falling only slightly, from 17% to 13%.

Trends in Australia and Canada have been similarly stable, in contrast to Germany, which has seen greater fluctuations in attitudes, while by 2017 confidence in political parties in the US had halved from its high point of 22% in 1999.

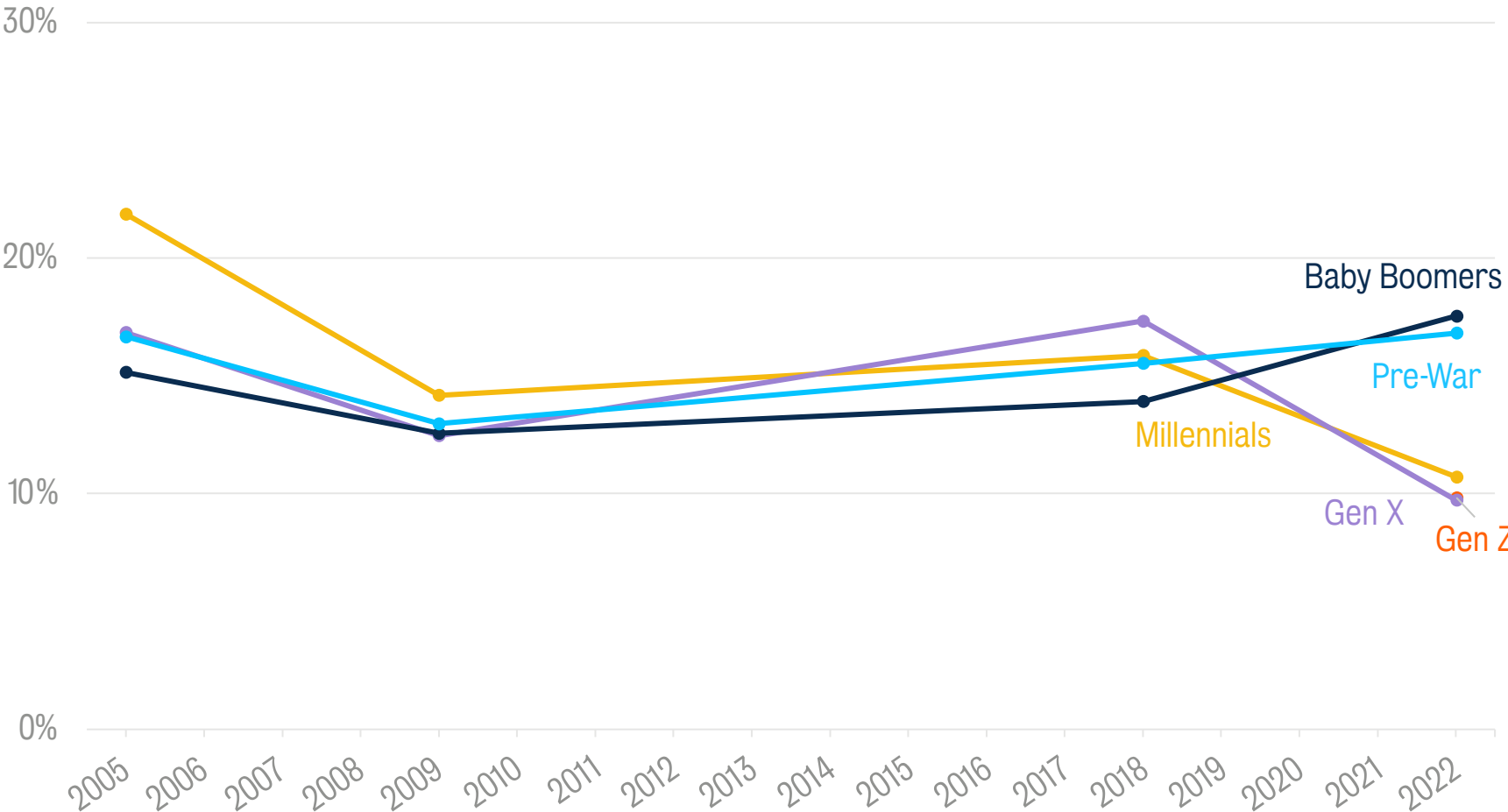
I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
**Political parties** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence)



# Confidence in political parties has been consistently low across generations, with only a small gap now emerging

The Pre-War generation, Baby Boomers, Gen X and Millennials have all had very similar low levels of confidence in political parties since the mid-2000s, but the two oldest generations are now slightly more likely than other cohorts to have confidence in them.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
**Political parties** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence by generation in Britain)



## 7. The press

The UK has among the least confidence in the press internationally, and younger generations have a particularly unfavourable view – just 5% of Gen Z say they have confidence in it



# Only Egypt has less confidence in the press than the UK

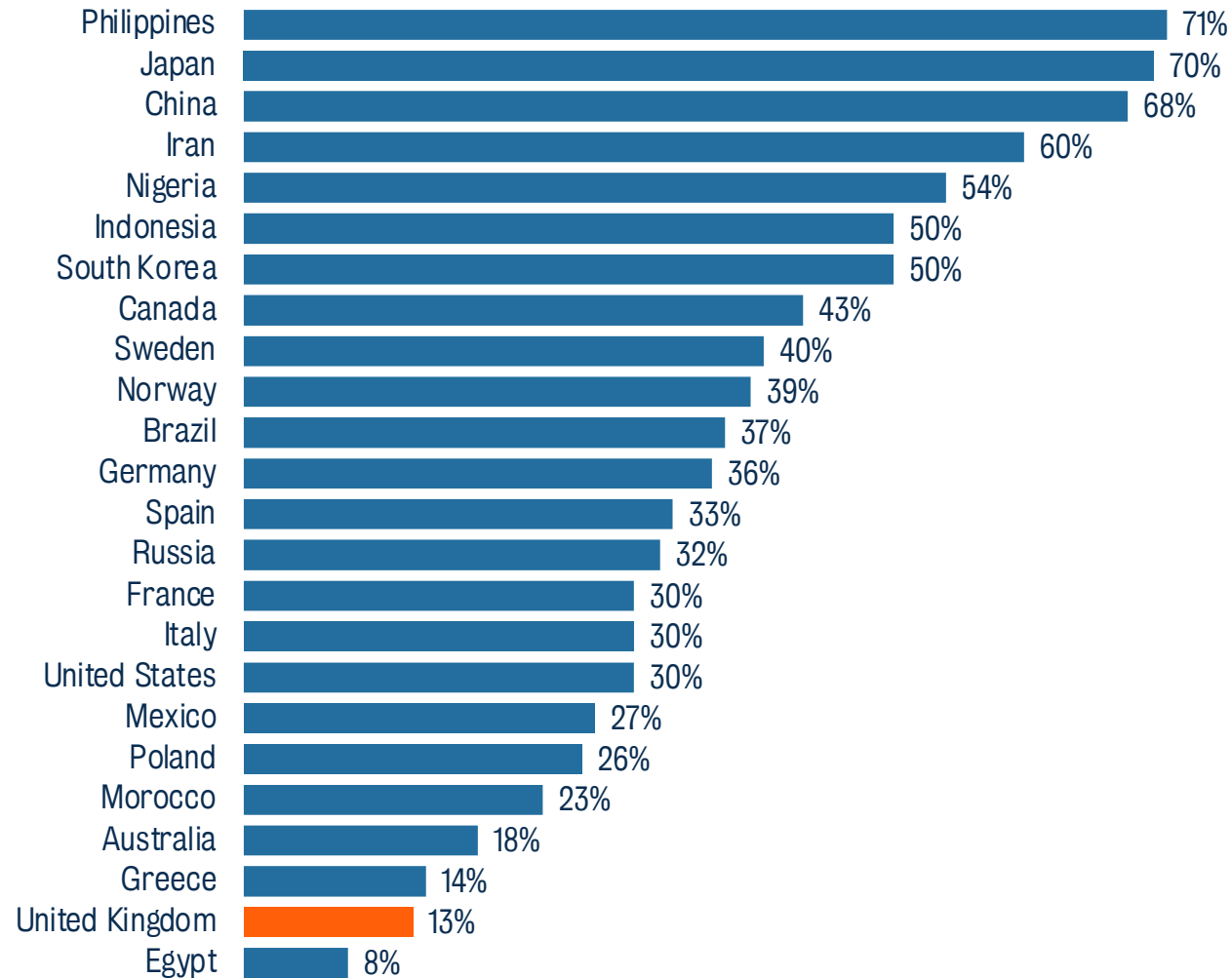
13% of the UK public say they have confidence in the press – ahead of only Egypt, where 8% say the same, but on a par with Greece (14%). The UK therefore ranks among the very lowest on this measure.

Compared with the UK, confidence in the press is three times as high in Germany (36%) and more than twice as high in France, Spain and the US (30%). And the gap between the UK and Japan (70%) – which ranks top among higher-income democratic nations – is 57 percentage points.

And this is part of a broader perception problem for the media in the UK. 25% say they have confidence in television, which while higher than confidence in the press, is again lower than some peer nations such as Germany (32%) or Canada (36%).

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?

## The press (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence)

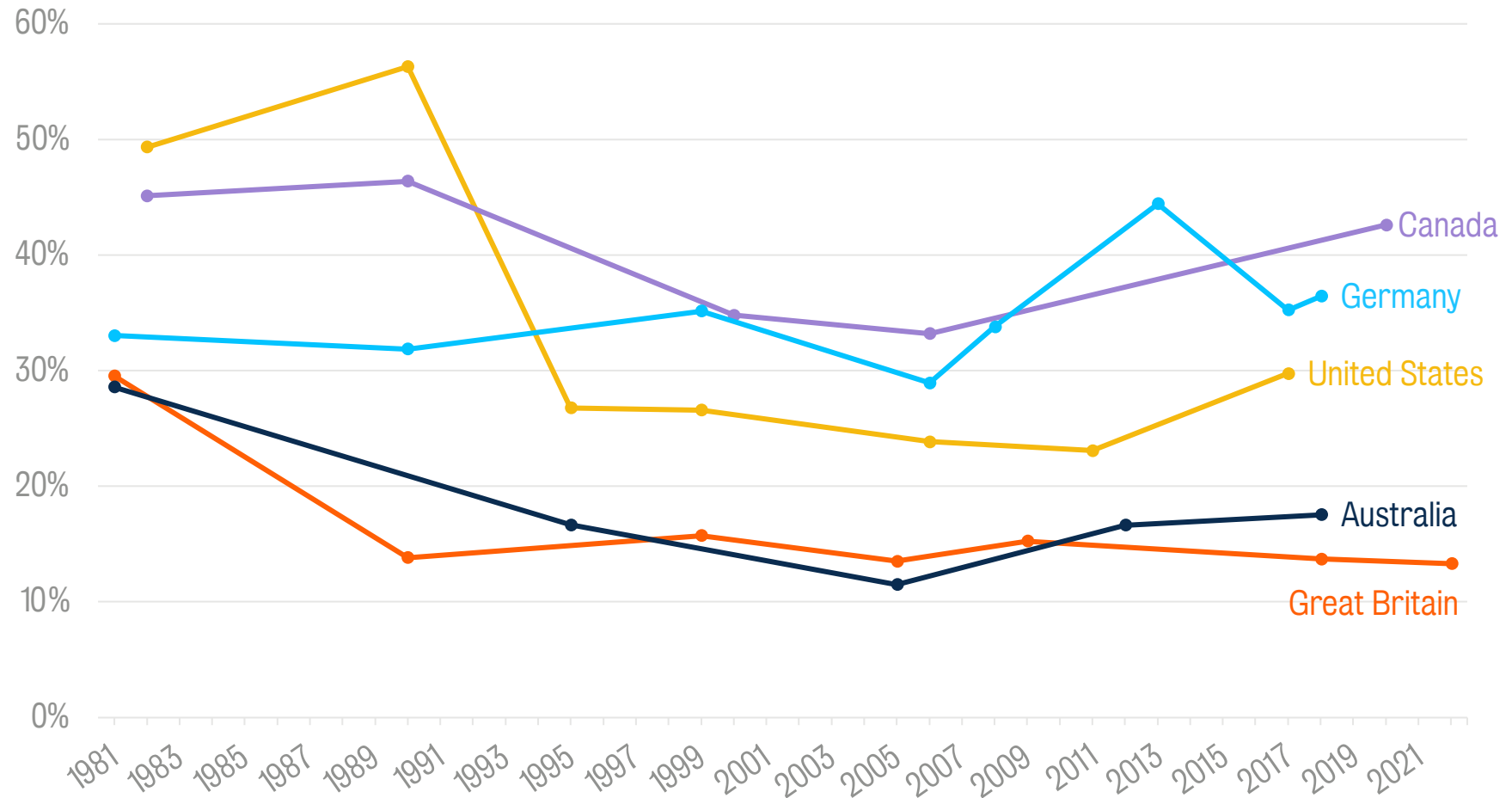


# Across many countries, confidence in the press dropped steeply in the 80s or 90s and has remained low since

In keeping with the trend in Britain, confidence in the press in a number of nations has remained low following big declines towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Australia most closely tracks the evolution of British public opinion, while the US saw confidence in the press halve in the short period between 1990 (56%) and 1995 (27%). It has failed to rebound to anywhere near previous levels, even if confidence is still higher than in Britain according to the latest available data.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
**The press** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence)

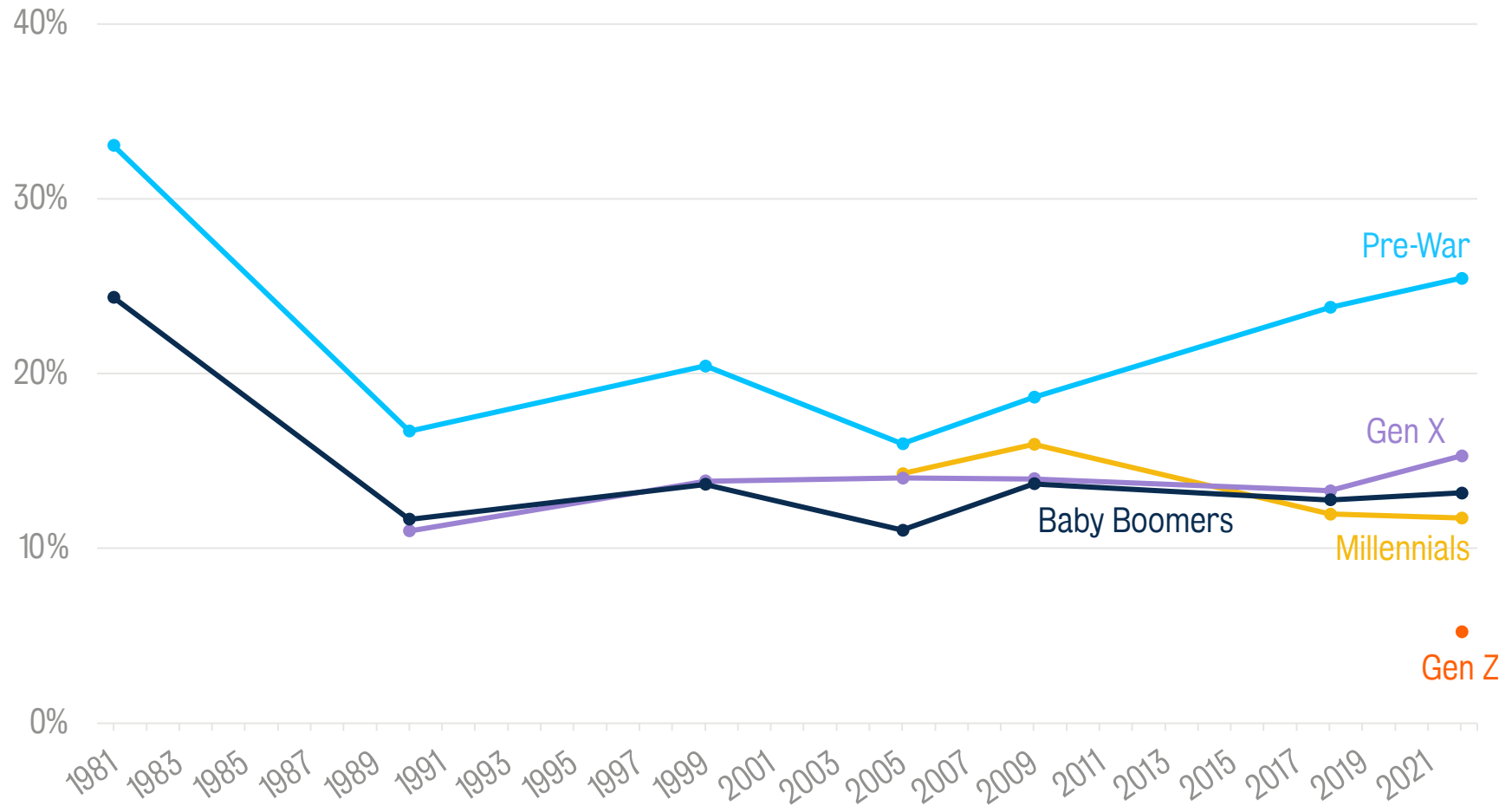


# The Pre-War generation in Britain stand out with the most confidence in the press, and Gen Z with the least

In 2005, all generations had roughly the same likelihood of reporting confidence in the press – but views then began to diverge, with confidence among the Pre-War generation increasing while other cohorts' views remained largely unchanged. There is now a 10-percentage-point gap between the Pre-War generation (25%) and Gen X (15%), the next most likely to have confidence in the press.

And while perceptions are largely negative among all cohorts, Gen Z have taken this to a new level, with just 5% saying they have confidence in the press in 2022.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
**The press** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence by generation in Britain)



## 8. The police

The UK now ranks below many peer nations for confidence in the police, following worsening perceptions – and even older generations' views have become more negative



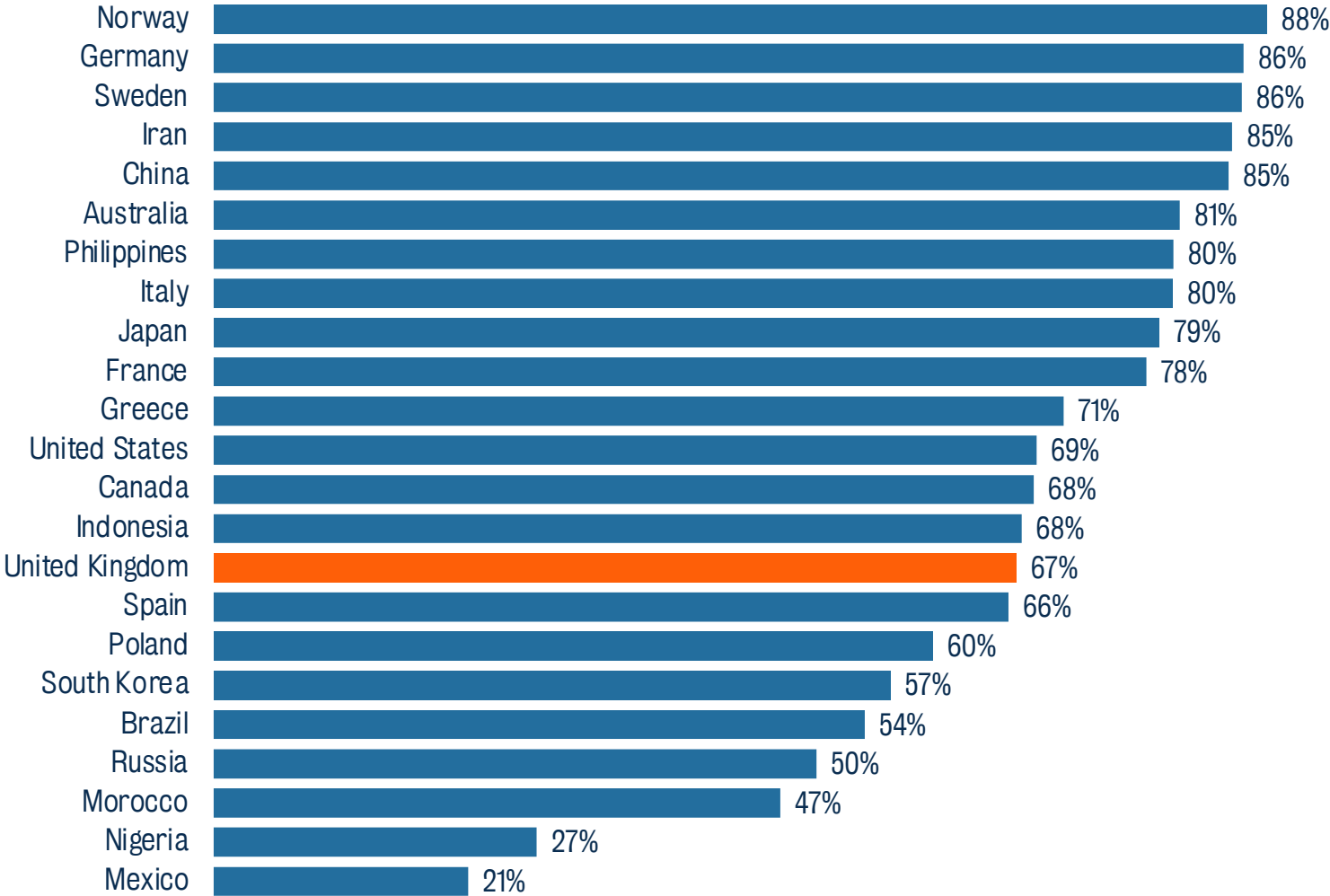


# Confidence in the police is relatively low in the UK compared with other peer nations

67% of people in the UK say they have confidence in the police – very similar to Spain (66%) and the US (69%) but notably lower than other higher-income countries such as Norway (88%), Germany (86%), Sweden (86%), Iran (85%), China (85%), Australia (81%), Philippines (80%), Italy (80%), Japan (79%), France (78%), Greece (71%), United States (69%), Canada (68%), Indonesia (68%), United Kingdom (67%), Spain (66%), Poland (60%), South Korea (57%), Brazil (54%), Russia (50%), Morocco (47%), Nigeria (27%), Mexico (21%).

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?

**The police** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence)



UK base: 3,056 people in the UK aged 18+, surveyed 1 Mar–9 Sept 2022. Other countries all surveyed in wave 7 of WVS at various points between 2017 and 2022. See [WVSA website](#) for sample information

# While confidence in the police has declined in Britain, it has remained stable or even risen in other countries

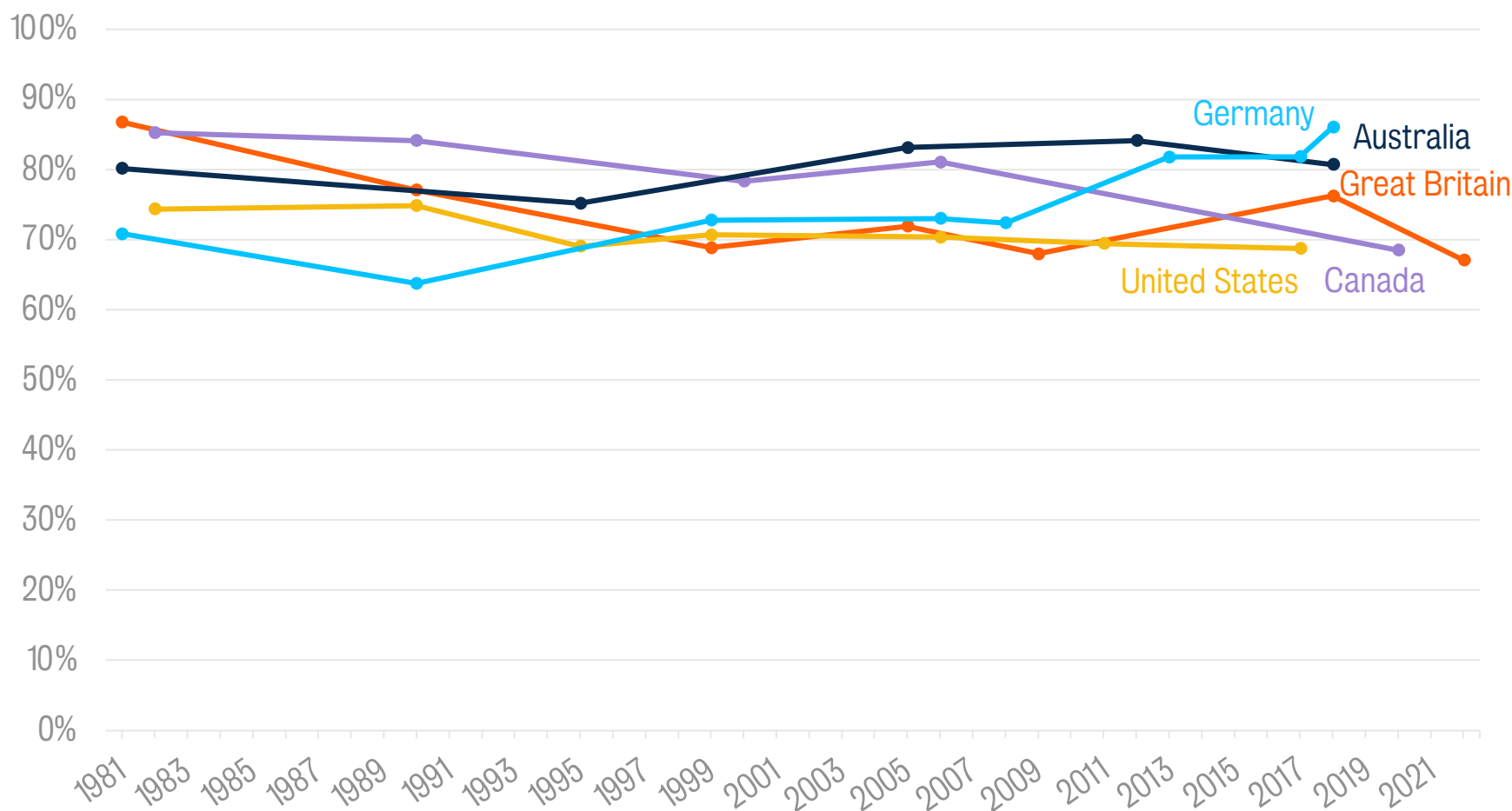
Confidence in the police in Canada has followed a similar path to that in Britain, falling from 85% in 1982 to 68% in 2020.

The US has seen a much smaller decline in confidence, although the latest available data only goes up to 2017, before Black Lives Matter and other movements sparked huge debate about police conduct in the country.

Meanwhile, views in Australia are virtually unchanged from what they were in 1981, and Germany stands out as one nation where confidence in the police has actually risen in recent decades, increasing from 71% in 1981 to 86% in 2018.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?

**The police** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence)

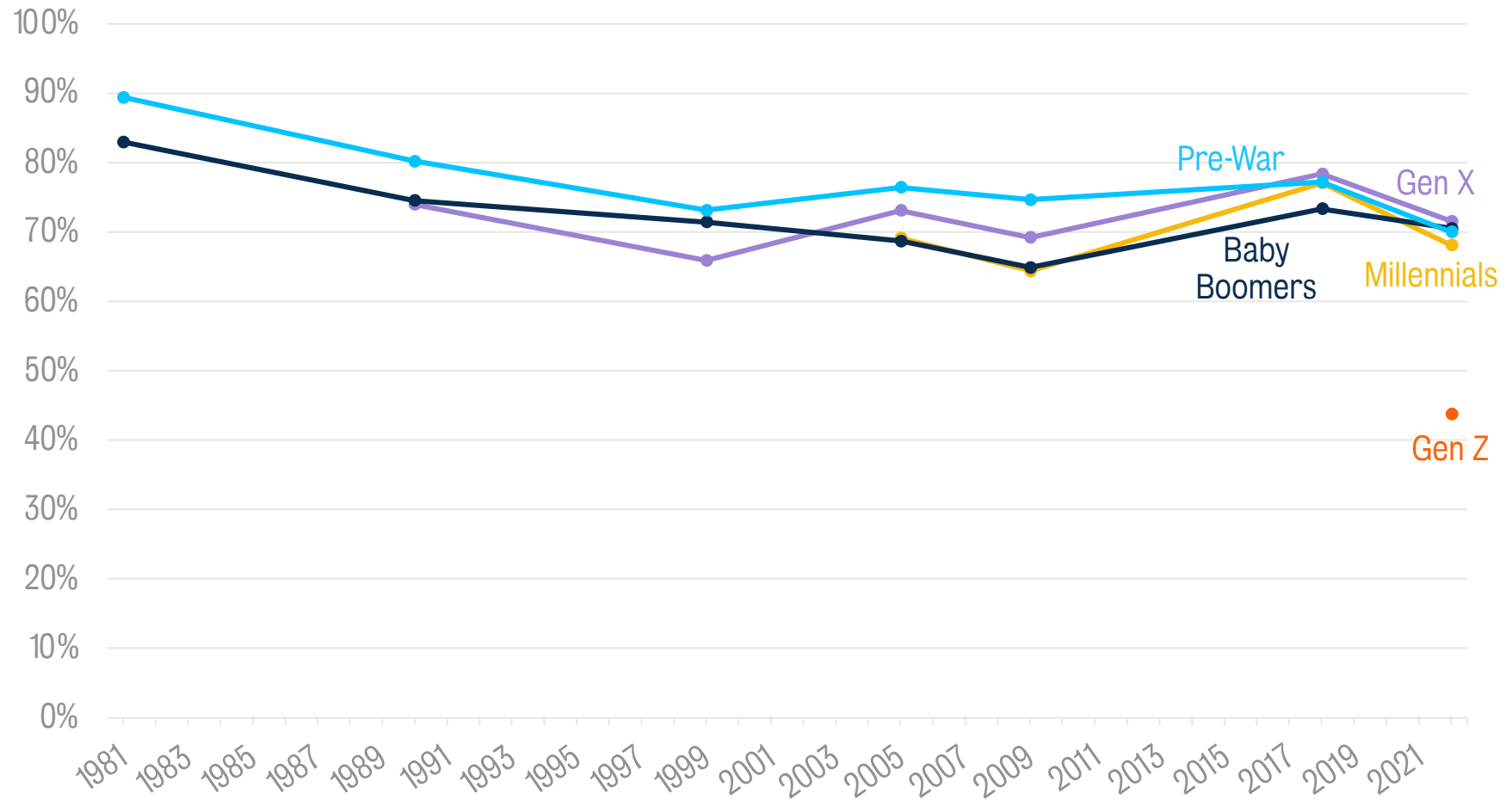


# Gen Z have the least confidence in the police – but older generations' views have become much more negative

Gen Z (44%) are the only generation in Britain where less than half report having confidence in the police – far below other cohorts, around seven in 10 of whom all said the same in 2022.

But older generations have nonetheless become more negative. In 1981, 89% of the Pre-War generation said they had confidence in the police, compared with 70% in 2022. And over the same period, confidence among Baby Boomers fell from 83% to 71%.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
**The police** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence by generation in Britain)



# Confidence in the police among London residents fell sharply between 2018 and 2022

Reliable data for London residents is only available going back to 2009 and should be treated with caution given the small sample sizes (between 105 and 216 interviews in each year) – but the trend suggests that confidence in the police among those living in the capital dropped sharply between 2018 and 2022, when it fell from 73% to 55%.

Correspondingly, the share of London residents who said they had little or no confidence at all in the police rose from 27% to 44% during this time.

These shifts coincide with a period in which the conduct of the Metropolitan Police was increasingly under scrutiny following its handling of various high-profile cases. They indicate that over this four-year period confidence among Londoners declined to a greater extent than among the British public overall.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?

## The police



## 9. The civil service

The UK public are much more likely to say they have confidence in the civil service than in other political institutions, but other countries still have a much more favourable view of their civil service



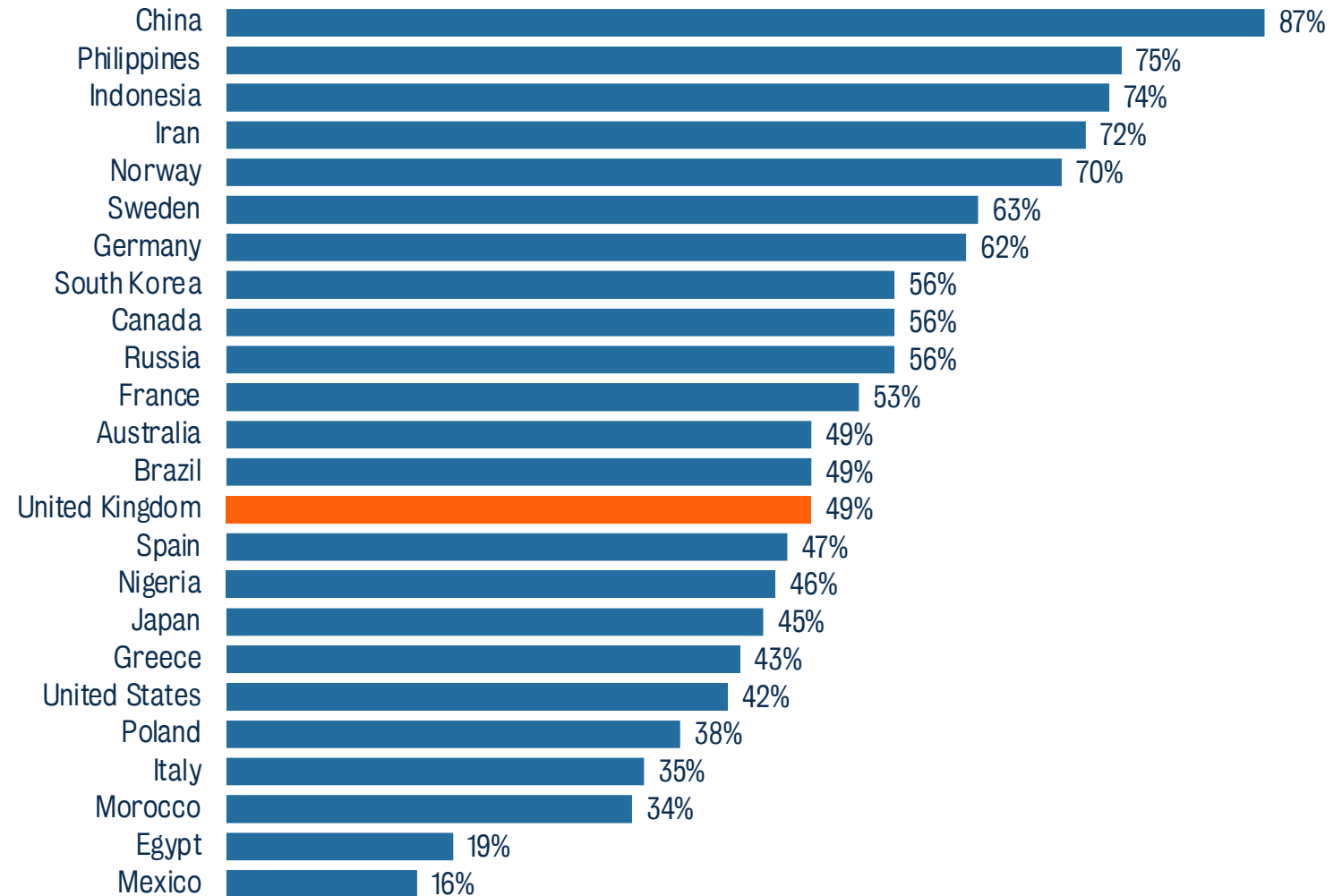
# The UK ranks among the bottom half of countries for confidence in the civil service

Around half (49%) of the UK public say they have confidence in the civil service – comparable to other similar nations such as France (53%), Australia (49%) and Spain (47%), with the UK overall ranking among the bottom half of countries on this measure.

But again, Norway (70%), Sweden (63%) and Germany (62%) lead the pack among higher-income nations.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?

**The civil service** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence)



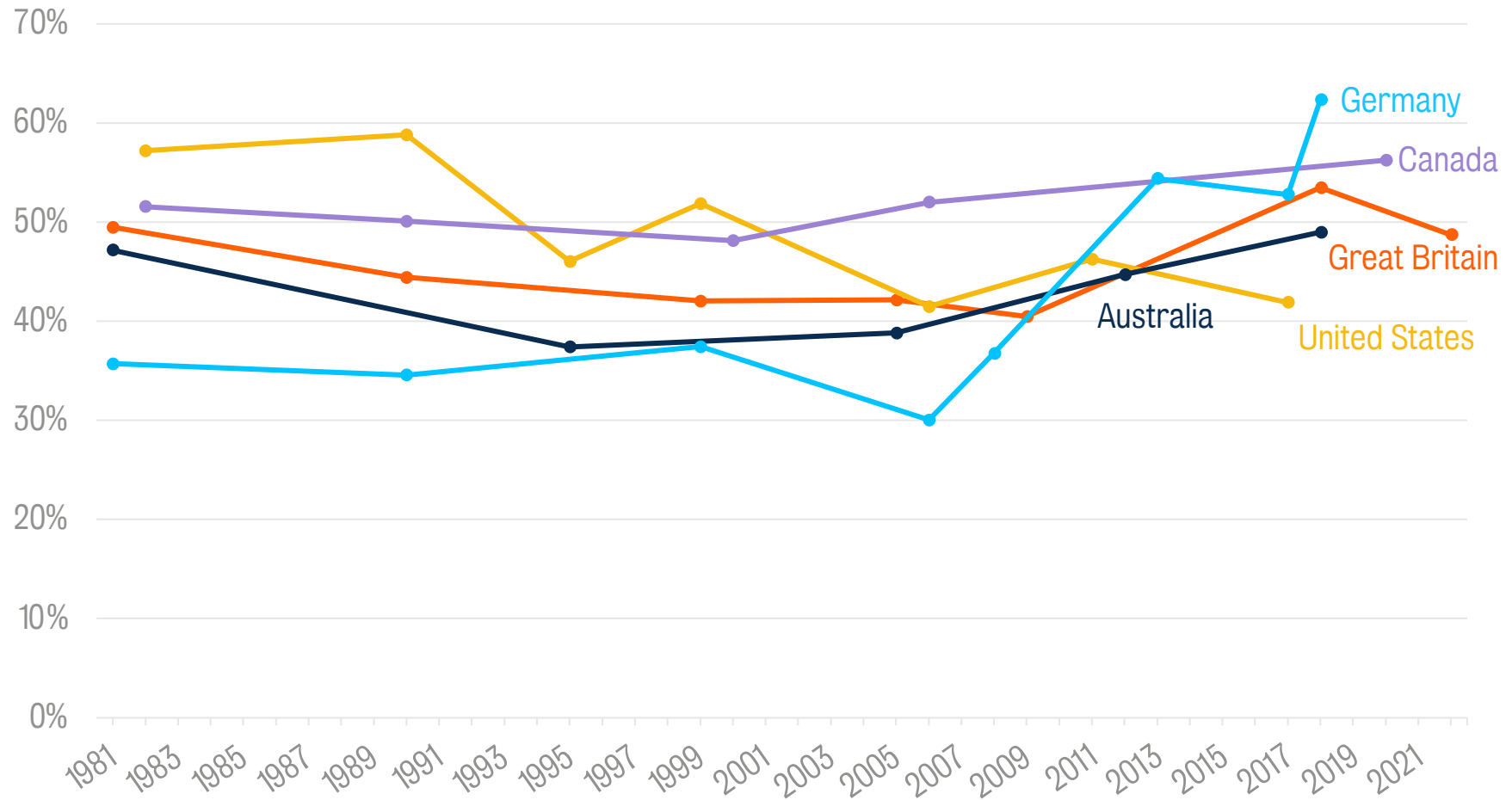
# Confidence in the civil service has shifted considerably in the US and Germany, but less so elsewhere

Trends in confidence in the civil service have been relatively stable in Britain going back to 1981 – but there was an uptick between 2009 and 2018, when confidence rose from 40% to 53%.

Australia and Canada have followed similar paths to Britain, while the US has seen a more gradual, sustained decline: its civil service had the confidence of 57% of the public in 1982, compared with 42% by 2017.

Over a similar period, Germany went in the opposite direction to the US, with confidence in the civil service rising considerably, from 36% in 1982 to 62% in 2018.

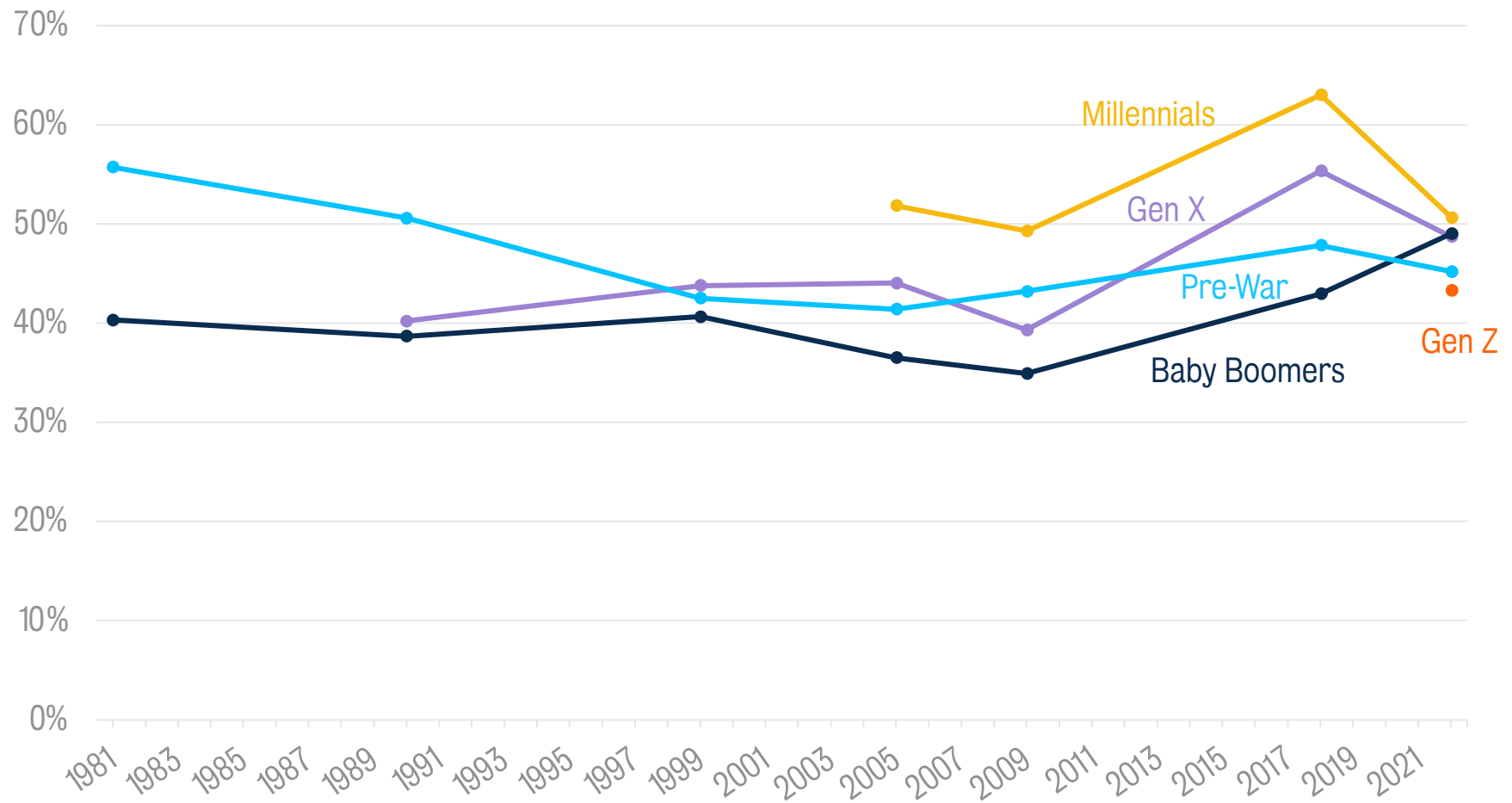
I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
**The civil service** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence)



# Generational divides in confidence in the civil service have narrowed considerably in Britain

Today all generations in Britain have roughly similar levels of confidence in the civil service, with differences across cohorts decreasing a great deal in recent years. For example, in 2018, there was a 20-percentage-point gap in confidence between Millennials (63%) and Baby Boomers (43%), but by 2022 this had shrunk to just two points.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
**The civil service** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence by generation in Britain)





## 10. The justice system/courts

The UK fares better internationally on confidence in the courts, ranking among the top half of nations on this measure

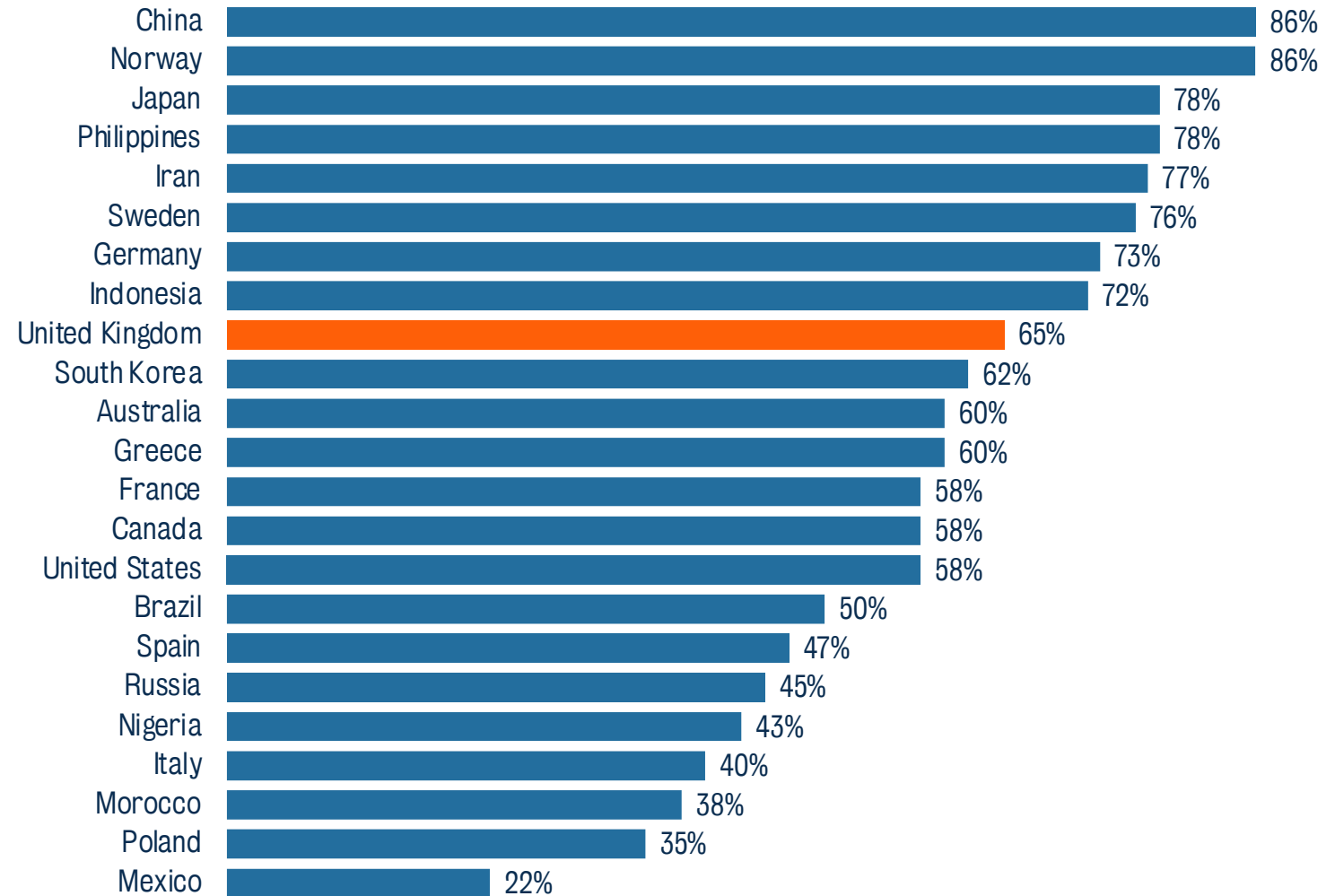


# The UK ranks higher for confidence in the court system

The UK ranks among the top half of countries for its level of confidence in the court system. A clear majority of two-thirds (65%) of the UK public say they have confidence in the courts – behind only Norway (86%), Japan (78%), Sweden (76%) and Germany (73%) among higher-income nations.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?

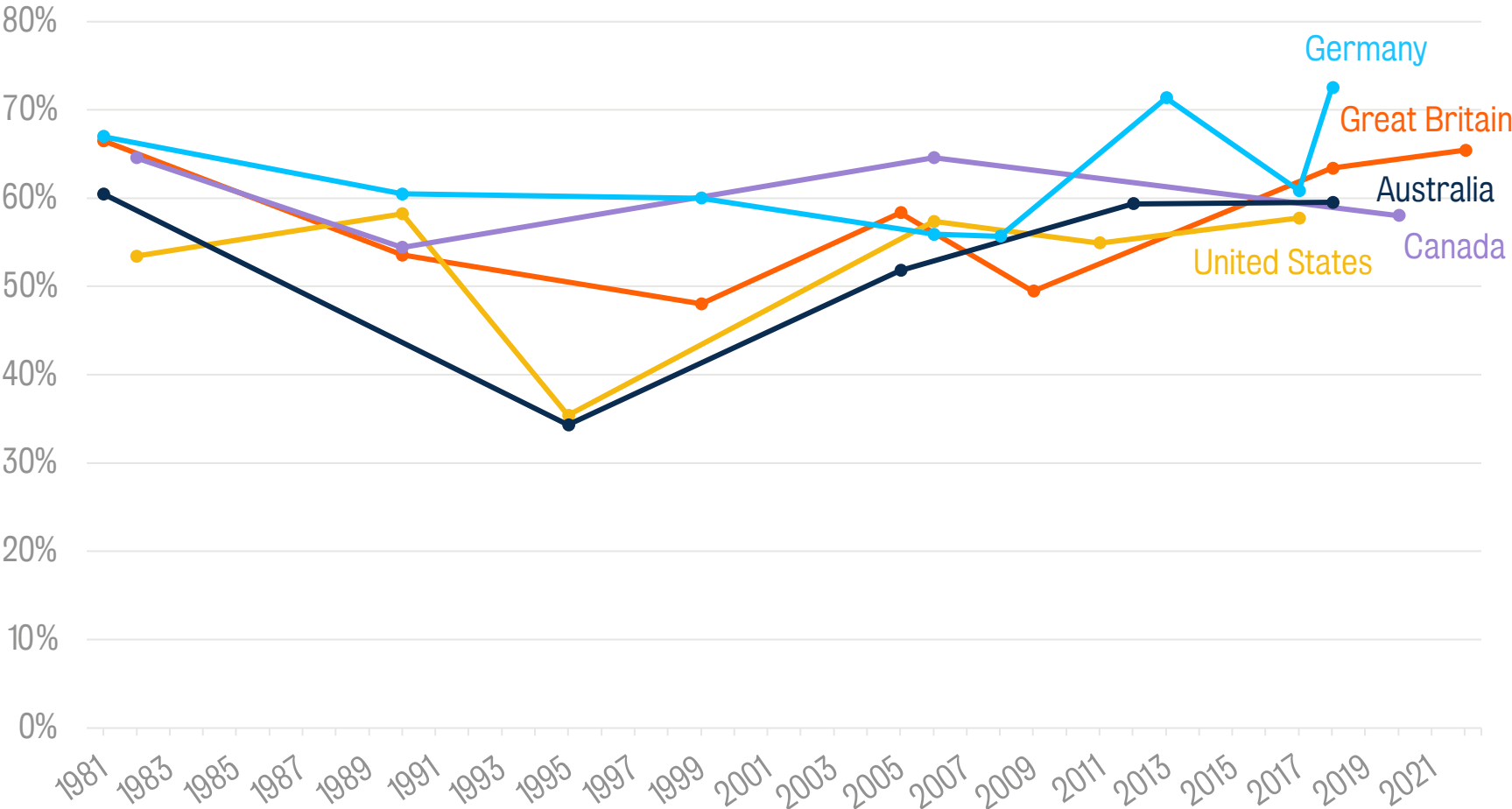
**The justice system/courts** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence)



# In several countries, confidence in the courts dipped in the 1990s before later rebounding

Australia and the US both saw sizeable declines in confidence in the justice system/courts between the early 1980s and mid-1990s, but by around the mid-2000s perceptions had become more positive again. Around the same period, Canada, Germany and Britain experienced smaller falls in public confidence, which later rebounded.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
**The justice system/courts** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence)

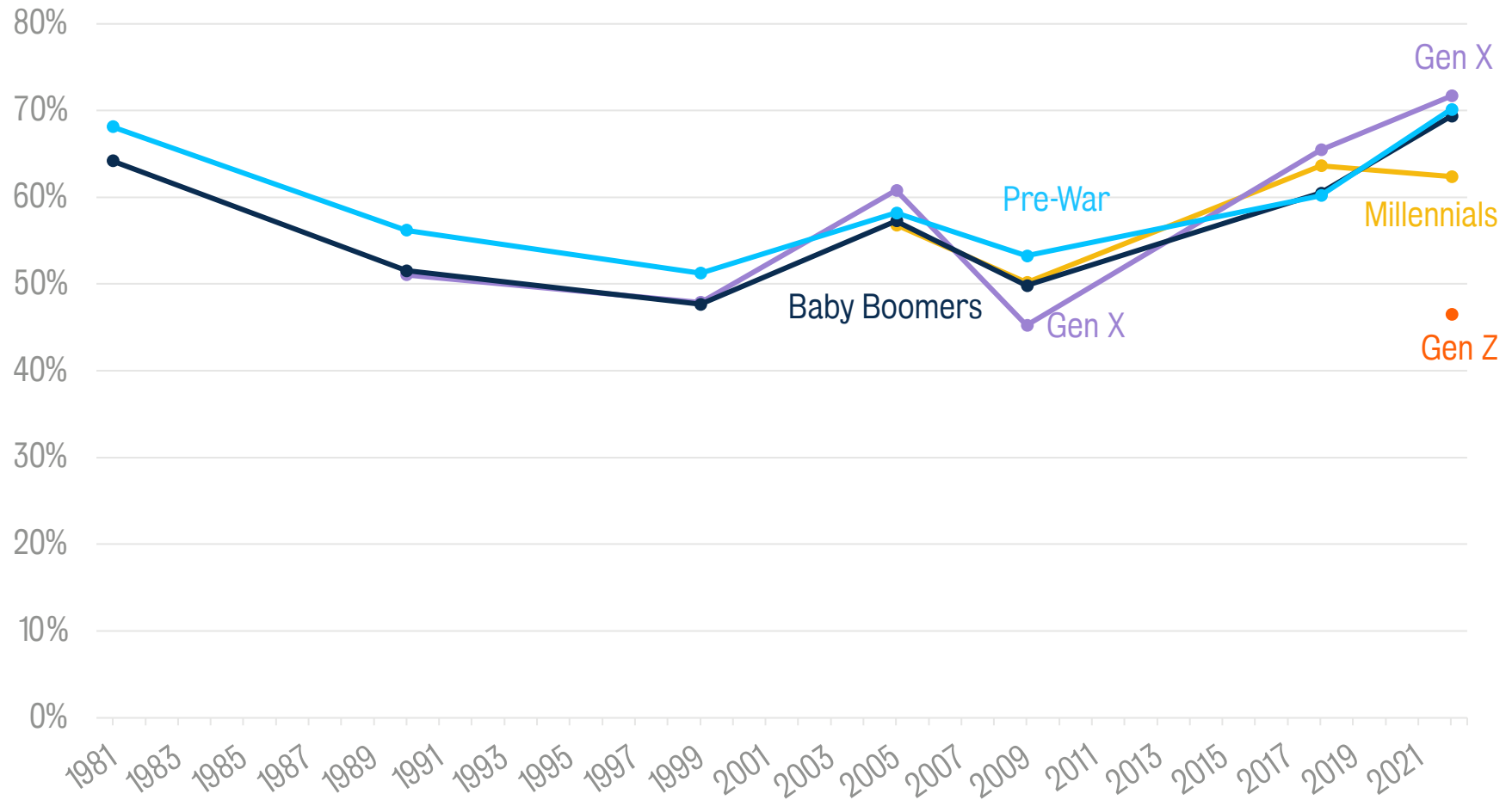


# Gen Z in Britain have less confidence in the justice system/courts than do other generations

Confidence in the courts has followed a very similar pattern for all generations for which there are trends, and in 2022 attitudes among the Pre-War generation, Baby Boomers, Gen X and Millennials were all within a 10-percentage-point range.

But Gen Z are different, with 47% of this cohort saying they have confidence in the courts, some way behind Millennials (62%), the next-most likely to have confidence in them.

I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?  
**The justice system/courts** (% who say a great deal/quite a lot of confidence by generation in Britain)



# 11. Technical details



# Technical details

Ipsos interviewed a random probability sample of 3,056 adults aged 18+ across the UK. This included respondents in England (1,645) and boost samples in Scotland (523), Wales (437) and Northern Ireland (446). Data has been weighted by region, education and age interlocked with gender to be nationally representative. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic respondents were able to complete the survey either through a face-to-face survey (1,509 completes), an interviewer-led video interview through MS Teams (86), or through either a self-completion paper survey (592) or an online push-to-web follow-up (869). Fieldwork ran from 1 March to 9 September 2022. Ipsos is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules.

Further information on the sampling methodology for other countries included in this report is available via the [World Values Survey Association website](#).

## Unweighted sample sizes for UK nations

|                  |              |
|------------------|--------------|
| England          | 1,645        |
| Northern Ireland | 446          |
| Scotland         | 523          |
| Wales            | 437          |
| Region unknown   | 5            |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>3,056</b> |

# The **UK** *in the* **WORLD** **VALUES** **SURVEY**

For more information, contact:

**Bobby Duffy**

WVS Principal Investigator,  
Professor of Public Policy and  
Director of the Policy Institute,  
King's College London

[bobby.duffy@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:bobby.duffy@kcl.ac.uk)

[@bobbyduffyking](https://twitter.com/bobbyduffyking)

[@policyatking](https://twitter.com/policyatking)

[kcl.ac.uk/policy-institute](http://kcl.ac.uk/policy-institute)

[@WVS\\_Survey](https://twitter.com/WVS_Survey)

[worldvaluessurvey.org](http://worldvaluessurvey.org)

WVS team at the Policy Institute,  
King's College London:

**Suzanne Hall**

Director of Engagement

**Kirstie Hewlett**

Research Fellow

**George May**

Head of Communications

**Zara Regan**

Research Assistant

**Becca Shepard**

Digital Communications Officer

**Paul Stoneman**

Research Fellow

**James Wright**

Quantitative Research Assistant

Co-investigators:

**David Halpern**

Chief Executive of the Behavioural  
Insights Team

**Roger Mortimore**

Professor of Public Opinion and  
Political Analysis at King's College  
London

**Antonio Silva**

Head of Social Cohesion at the  
behavioural Insights Team

**David Voas**

Professor of Social Science at the  
UCL Social Research Institute