

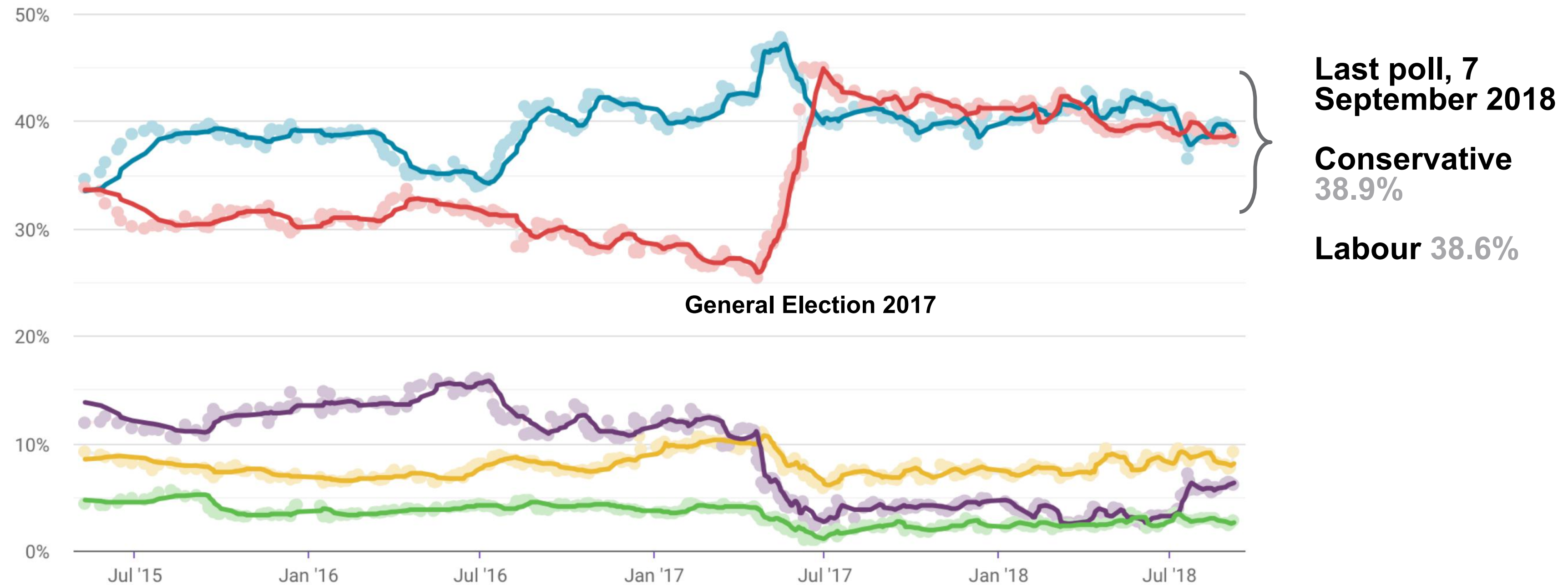
September 2018

Breaking the deadlock

What the main parties could do to move ahead in the polls

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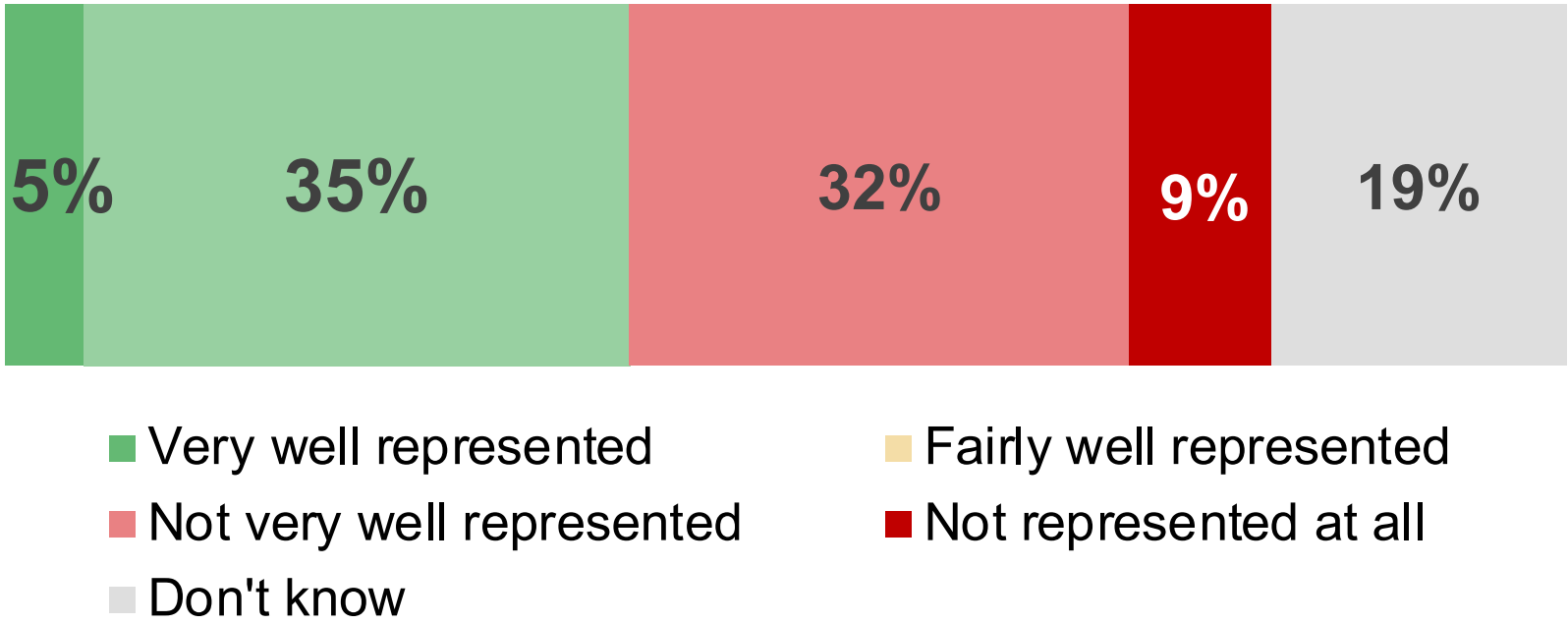
Since GE 2017 both main parties have been stuck in deadlock, with neither pulling ahead in the polls



Whilst both parties are polling relatively well, there is little enthusiasm for either

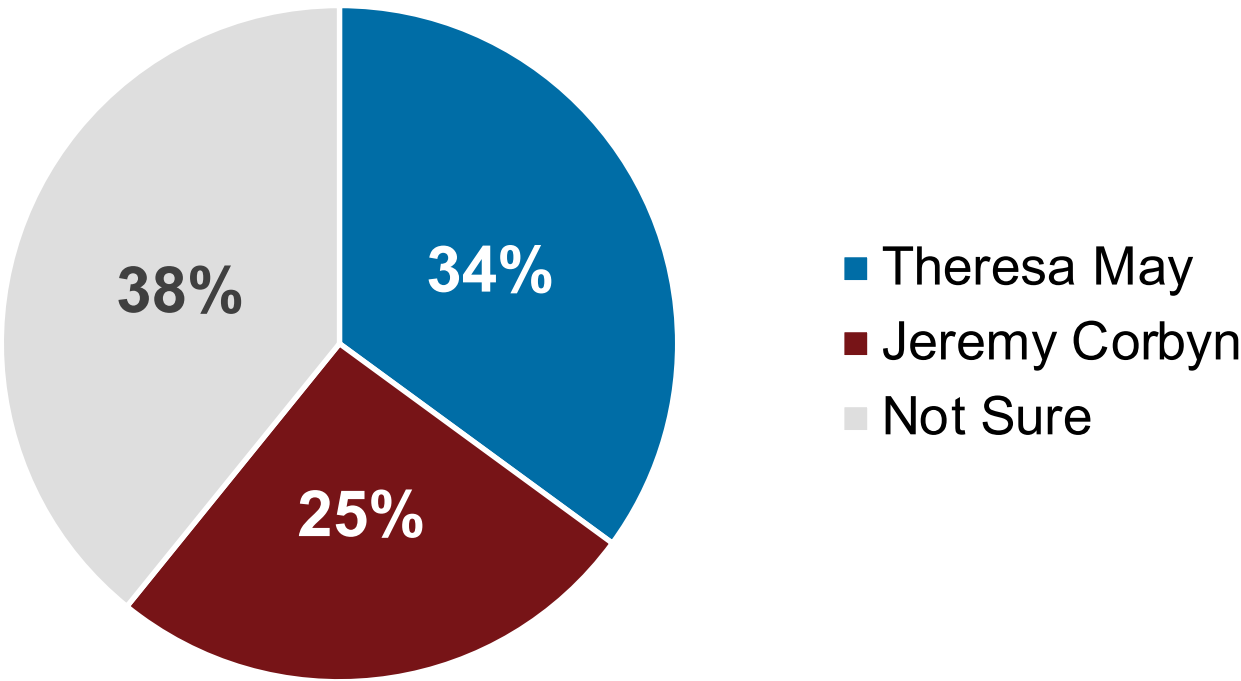
41% of voters do not feel well represented by *any* political party

How well represented people feel by the UK's political parties

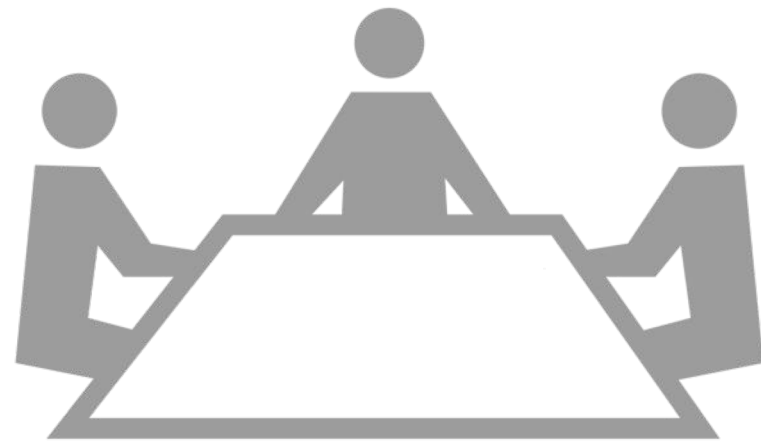


The most popular answer for 'Who would be the best Prime Minister?' is "Not sure"

Percentage selecting each as 'Best Prime Minister'



We wanted to find out what the two main parties could do to ‘break the deadlock’ and pull ahead in the polls, to do this we did...



Workshops with swing voters in swing seats

4th and 5th September 2018

- 1. Crewe Nantwich (18-44), Labour-leaning**
- 2. Thurrock (45+), Conservative-leaning**



National poll

7th – 9th September 2018

**Nationally representative sample of 2,015
GB adults aged 18+**

The most important things that we've learned...

1.

These swing voters feel they are facing an anxious and uncertain future – and neither party is rising to the challenge

2.

The Conservative brand is at least consistent – while Labour is transformed – neither is the party 'for me'

3.

Both leaders are found wanting and neither seems capable of uniting their party

4.

The Tories could most improve their vote share by spending on the NHS – even if that means putting up taxes

5.

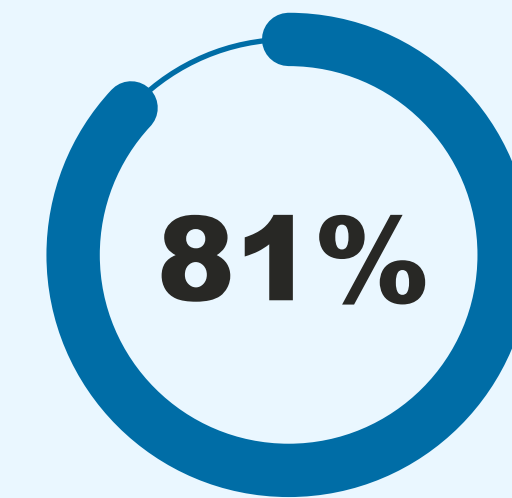
And a leadership change benefits both – especially Labour – though Labour's Brexit 'fudge' seems vindicated

6.

Our survey suggests that the Tories will be judged on results – delivery on key issues – while Labour's more deep-rooted identity problems may be less of a quick fix

01 Where is the public starting from?

In both locations there was a strong sense of uncertainty and concern about the direction of the country



Agree that the British public is currently feeling anxious about the future

Q. What 3 words sum up the last year in politics?

Front-of-mind concerns centred on the state of public services



The NHS

“The NHS – It’s always been a big thing for me, as I work there. It seems that there’s never been a relevant strategy across governments...It seems that all problems come [from No. 10].”
(18-44, Crewe)



Policing

“In this country you want somebody who is strong, nothing is being done about stabbing.”
(45+, Thurrock)



Education

“I went to University of East London free, the only thing I had was the loan from student finance, school fees were free. All this money we are wasting on aid to foreign countries, it’s not good enough.”
(45+, Thurrock)

And, of course, Brexit...

- Participants felt it is vital that the Government respects the result of the referendum and the reasons people voted to leave
- However, most did not have strong views on the specific 'type' of Brexit the Government should pursue
 - With media coverage important in helping to shape their views of whether the deal is good or bad

*"They need to respect the vote.
At the moment they are trying to
weasel their way out of it."
(45+, Thurrock)*

*"They're doing all they can to
not do it and keep us in."
(45+, Thurrock)*

02 Where do the two main parties fit in?

Neither is hitting the spot...

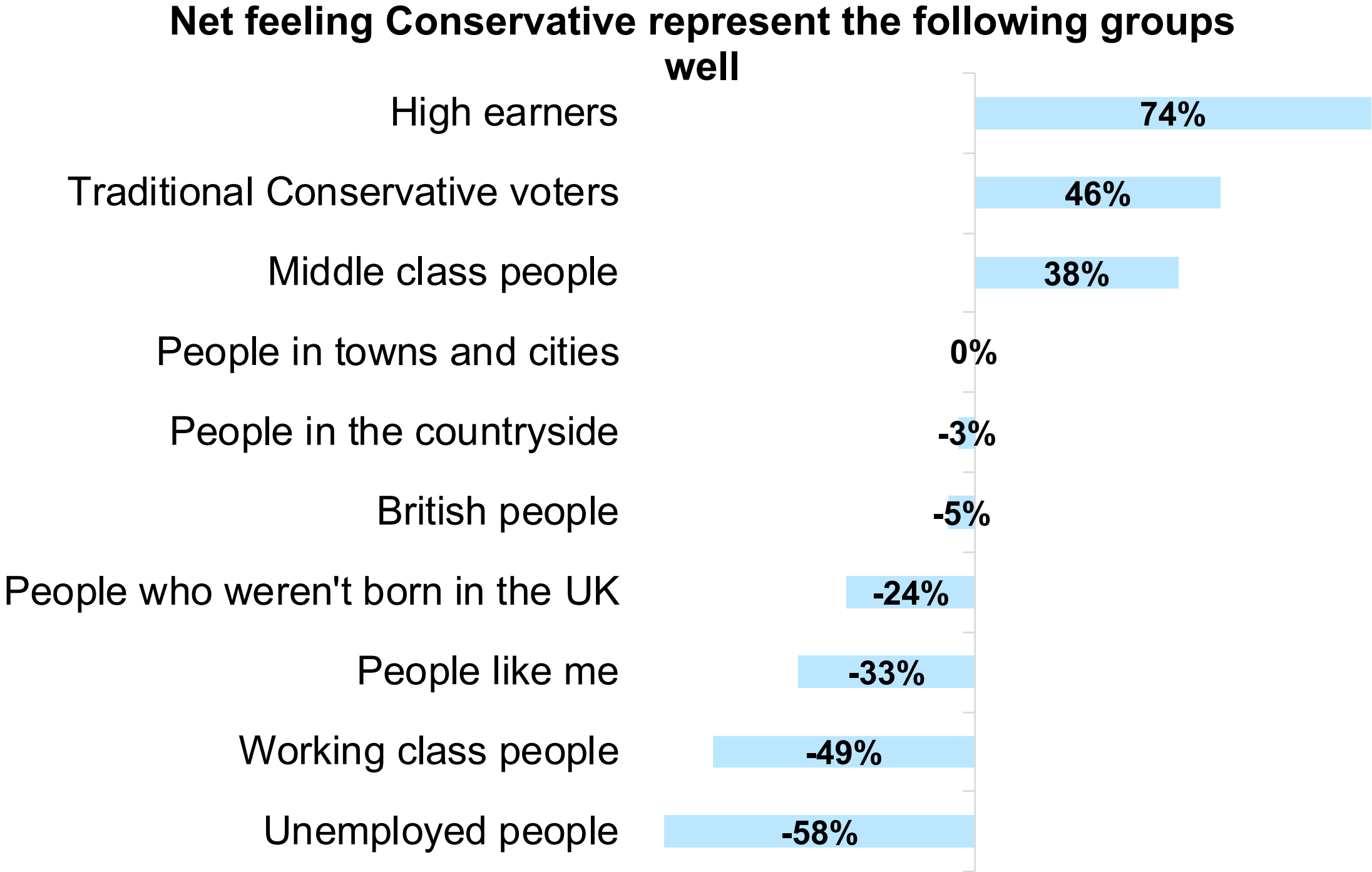
"I feel like the whole country is divided, neither party has come up with a good suggestion for everybody."
(45+, Thurrock)

"I feel quite angry, we've got all these problems and they're just playing politics."
(18-44, Crewe)

"Nobody knows what they are doing, the politicians just come up and say something."
(45+, Thurrock)

"Weak, that's both sides."
(18-44, Crewe)

The Conservative Party continue to be seen as the party of the rich and middle classes and do a good job with ‘traditional’ Tories



Participants were unanimous that the Conservatives would ‘always’ represent the upper classes, high earners and middle class people

“It is a class thing and that never changes.”
(45+, Thurrock)

“They’d live in a country house and play polo.”
(45+, Thurrock)

And this is reflected in views of the Conservative Party brand, which continues to be seen as ‘posh’ and professional

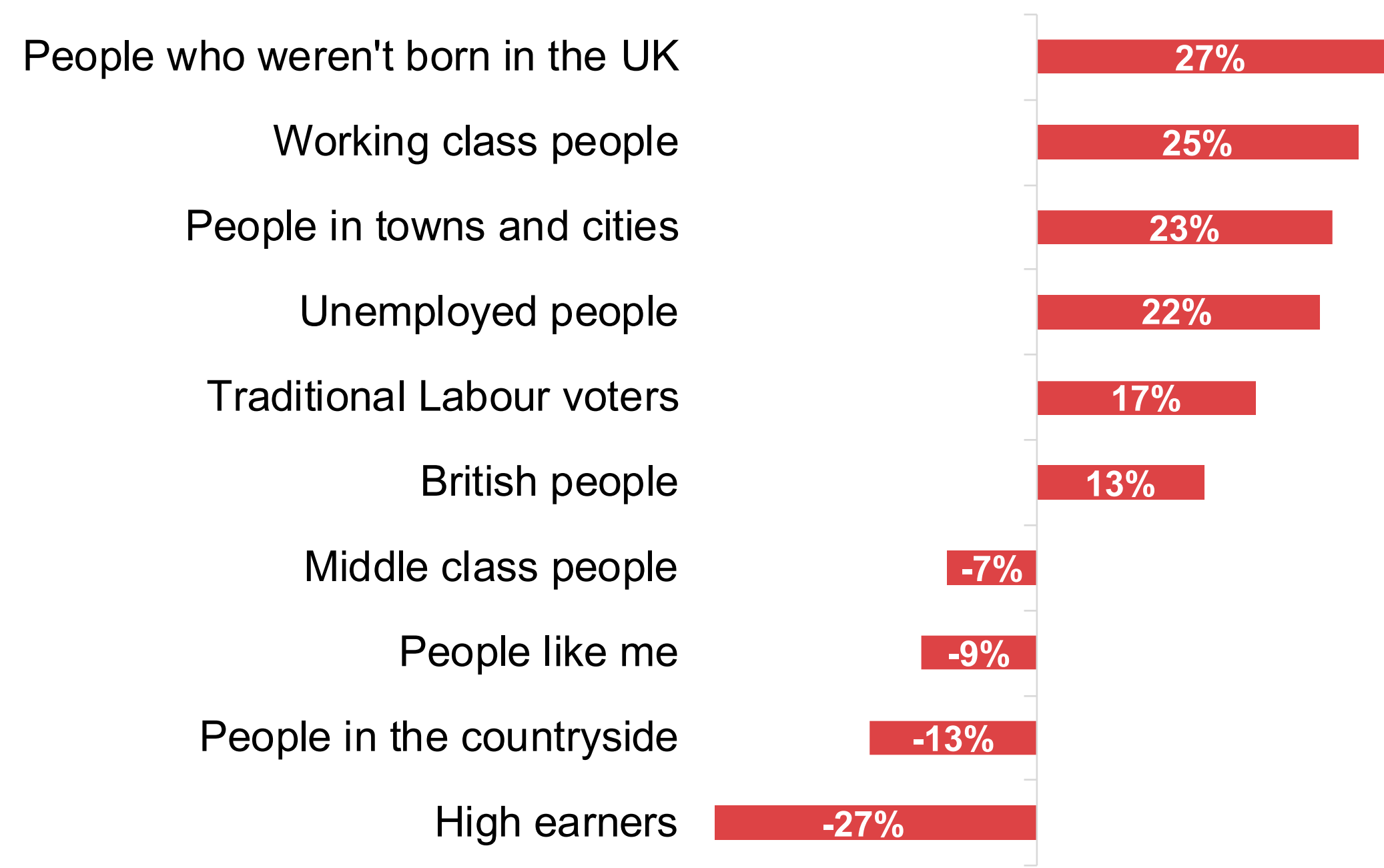


“They’d make pheasant and quail for dinner.”
(45+, Thurrock)

“They’re lawyers, doctors, accountants.”
(18-44, Crewe)

While Labour’s best score is ‘people who weren’t born in the UK’ – and they do a less good job with traditional Labour voters...

Net feeling Labour represent the following groups well



Many participants strongly felt that under Corbyn, Labour had abandoned what they considered to be ‘real’ Labour values

With many feeling that Labour was more concerned about representing those who are out-of-work than working (British) people

“I don’t think Labour now stands for the kinds of values that it stood for when I was a child. I don’t think they represent me as a working class person.”

(18-44, Crewe)

Labour's identity is transformed...

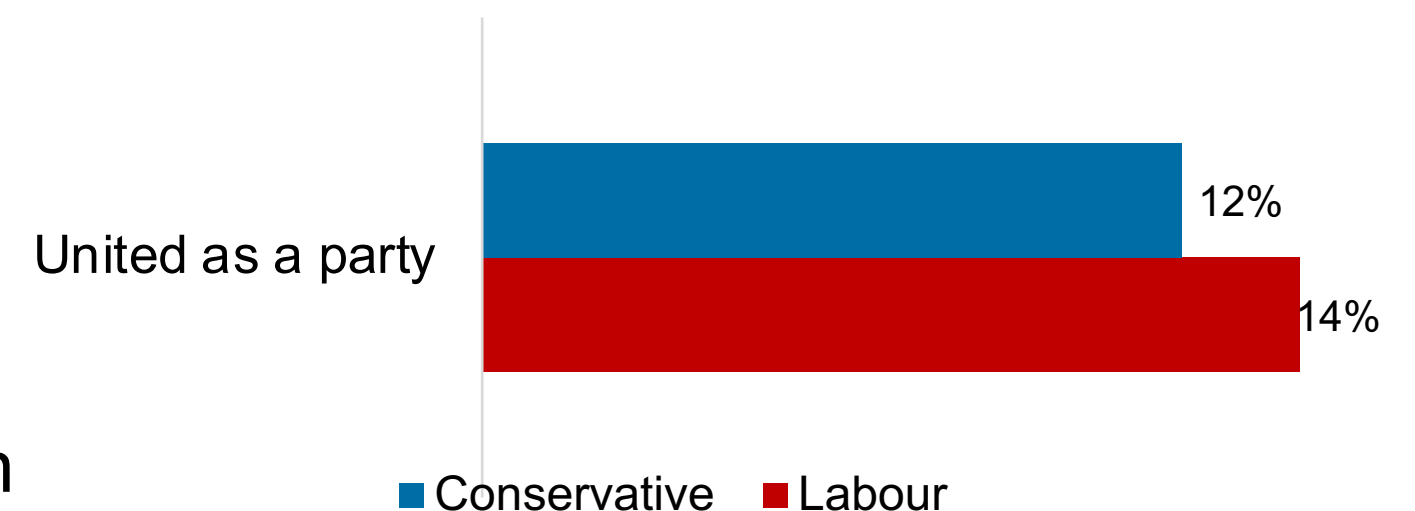


"They used to be a casserole and now they are quinoa."
(18-44, Crewe)

"Now they'd live in a hippie commune."
(18-44, Crewe)

Neither leader seems able to unite their party

- Participants were consistently critical of Theresa May and Jeremy Corbyn across both workshops
- And felt they were therefore unable to unite and lead their parties effectively
 - High profile resignations from the Conservative Front Bench were seen as indicative of May's lack of authority
 - And the Anti-Semitism scandal was seen as evidence of Corbyn's inability to control his party and problematic past



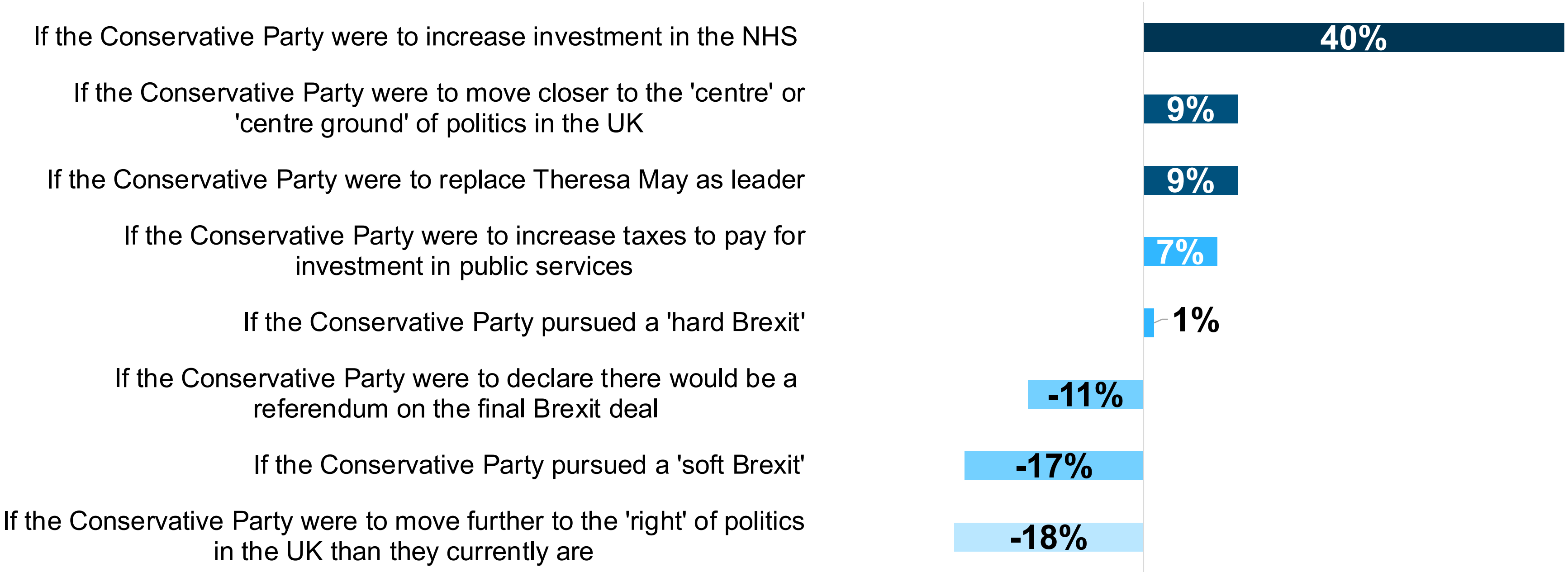
*"They've not been this divided for years."
(18-44, Crewe)*

*"With Anti-Semitism – he's like a
backbencher disagreeing with his party."
(45+, Thurrock)*

03 Breaking the deadlock

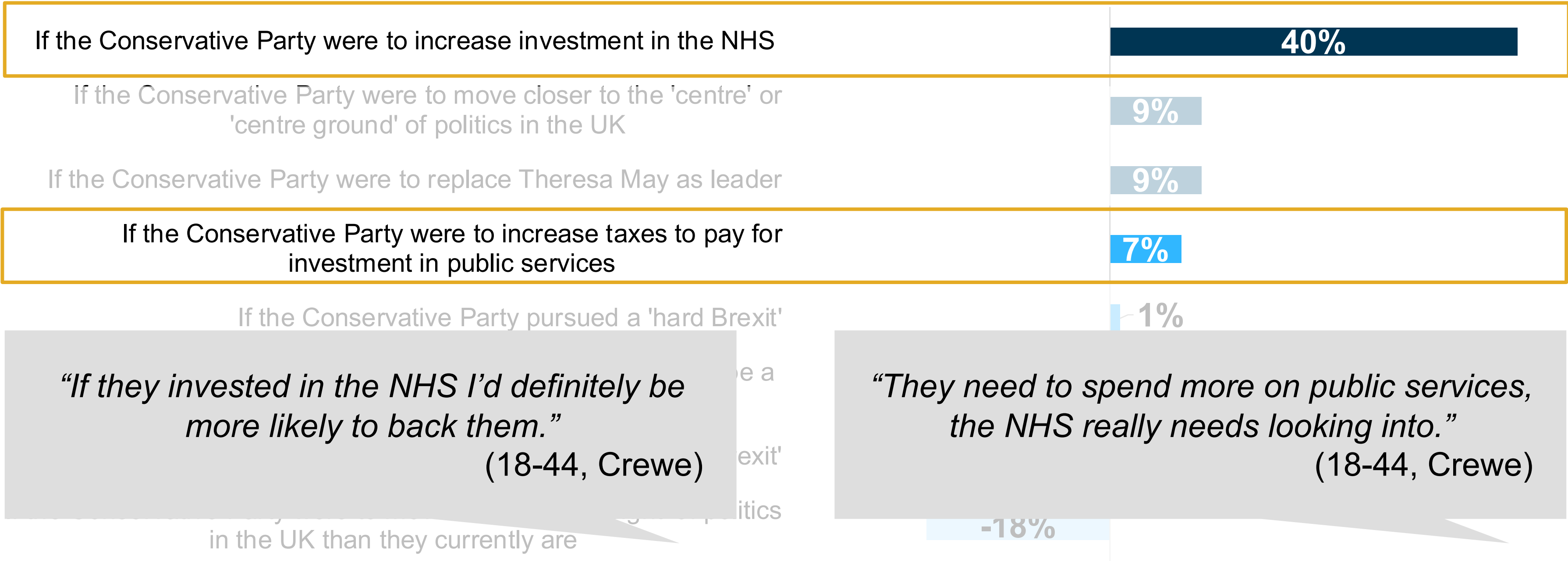
We tested a variety of things that the Conservatives could do to ‘break the deadlock’

Net change in likelihood to vote for the Conservatives



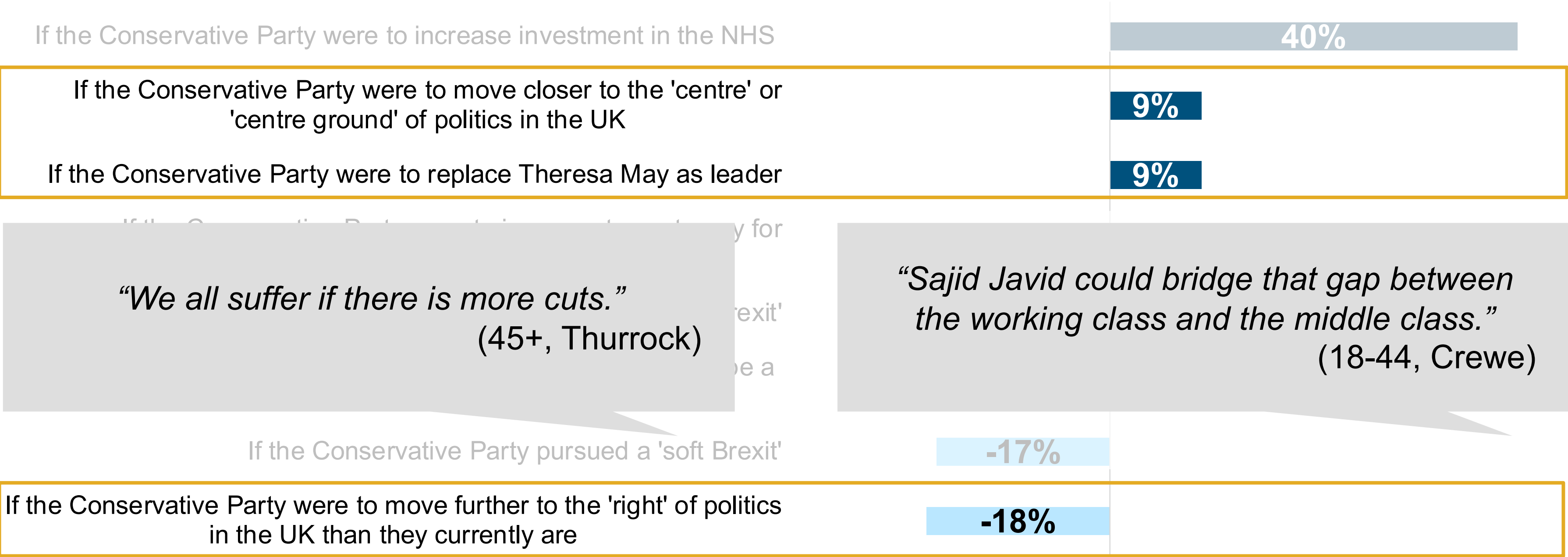
More spending, even with higher taxation would be the most popular thing the Conservatives could do

Net change in likelihood to vote for the Conservatives



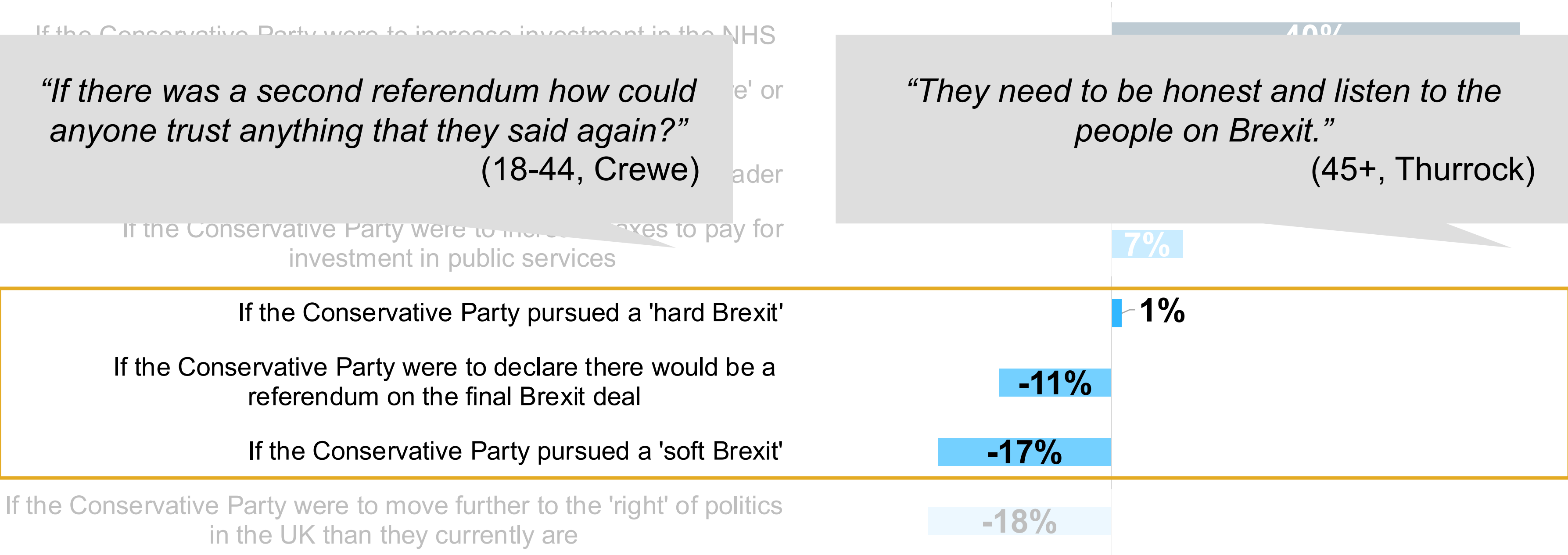
Moving to the centre, not to the right and potentially replacing Theresa May would be helpful for the Tories

Net change in likelihood to vote for the Conservatives



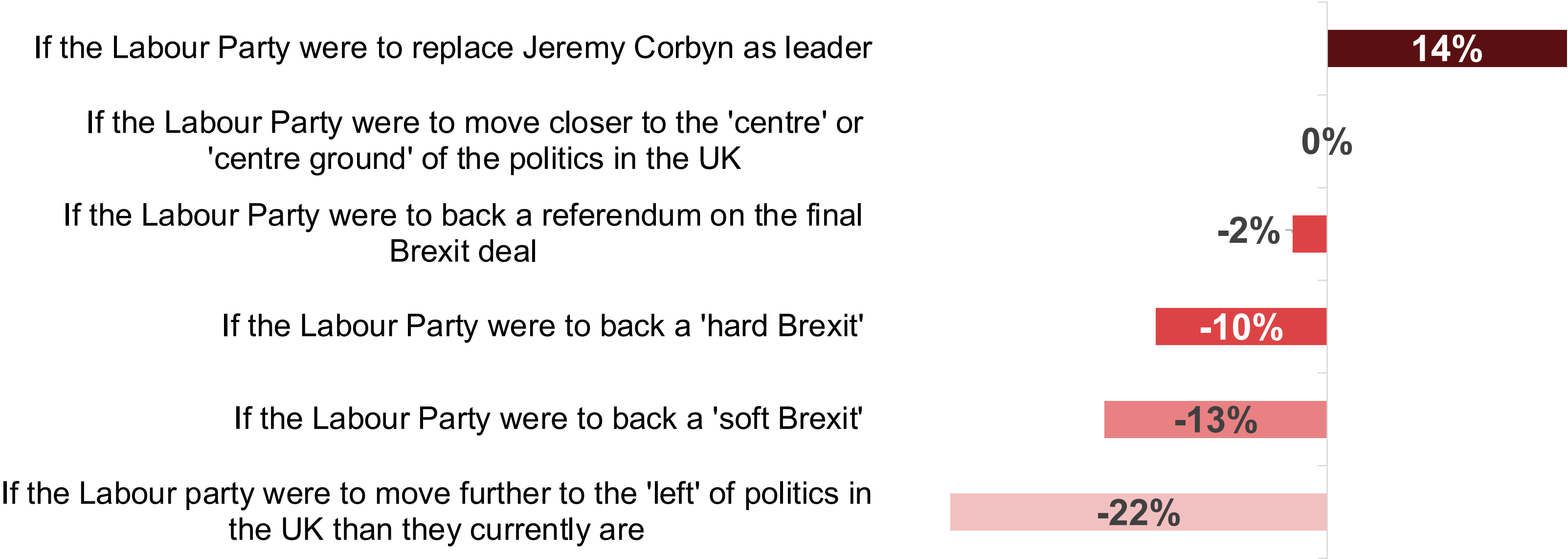
And firm Brexit seems to be the right place for the Tories

Net change in likelihood to vote for the Conservatives



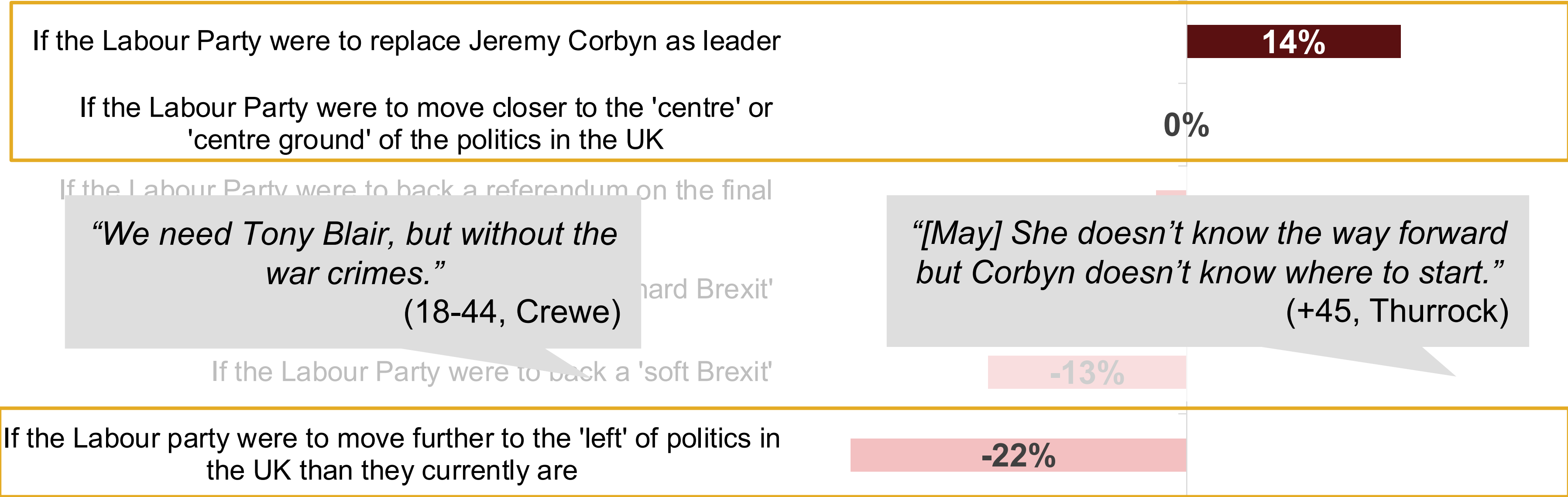
We also tested a variety of things that the Labour Party could do to ‘break the deadlock’

Net change in likelihood to vote for Labour



The most popular thing Labour could do would be replacing Jeremy Corbyn - and definitely not moving further to the left

Net change in likelihood to vote for Labour

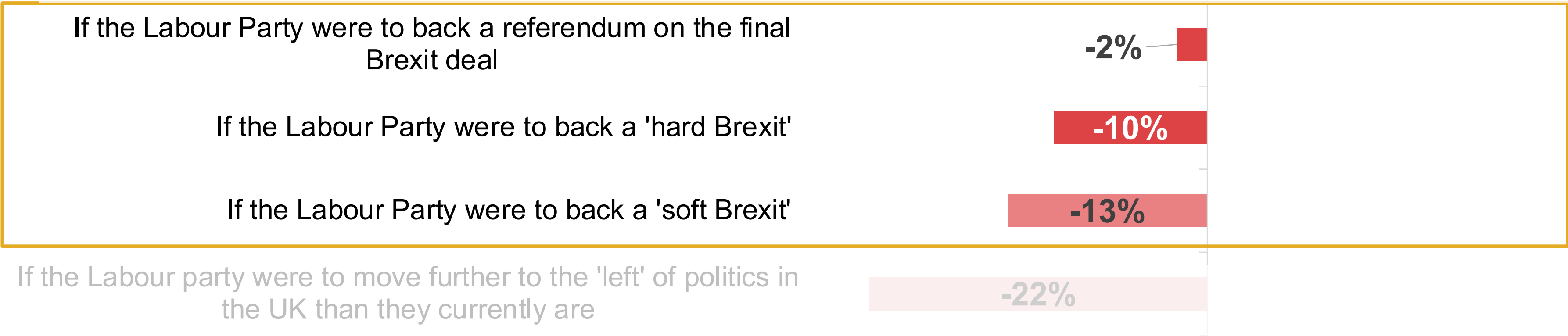


Labour’s current stance on Brexit seems to be about right...

Net change in likelihood to vote for Labour

“It’s about being able to get things done, it’s about being strong enough to make a decision and move along with that.”
(45+, Thurrock)

“I feel like one party’s stance is just the opposite of the first party.”
(18-44, Crewe)



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Thank you

For more information:

Deborah Mattinson
+44 (0)207 8455880
dmattinson@britainthinks.com

Max Templer
+44 (0)207 8455880
mtempler@britainthinks.com

Camilla Devereux
+44 (0)207 8455880
cdevereux@britainthinks.com

BritainThinks
Somerset House
Strand
London
WC2R 1LA

britainthinks.com