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# UK Public Opinion Review

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Working Paper - An  
overview of public  
opinion polls since the  
Edward Snowden  
revelations in June 2013

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## 1. Introduction

This document charts public opinion of the Edward Snowden leaks and associated issues since June 2013. This includes people's opinions on surveillance, the intelligence services and personal privacy. Since the Snowden leaks there have been 38 opinion polls on these topics concerning public opinion in the UK and conducted by large polling organisations, such as YouGov, ComRes and Ipsos MORI among others.

## 2. Public Reaction and Perception of Snowden

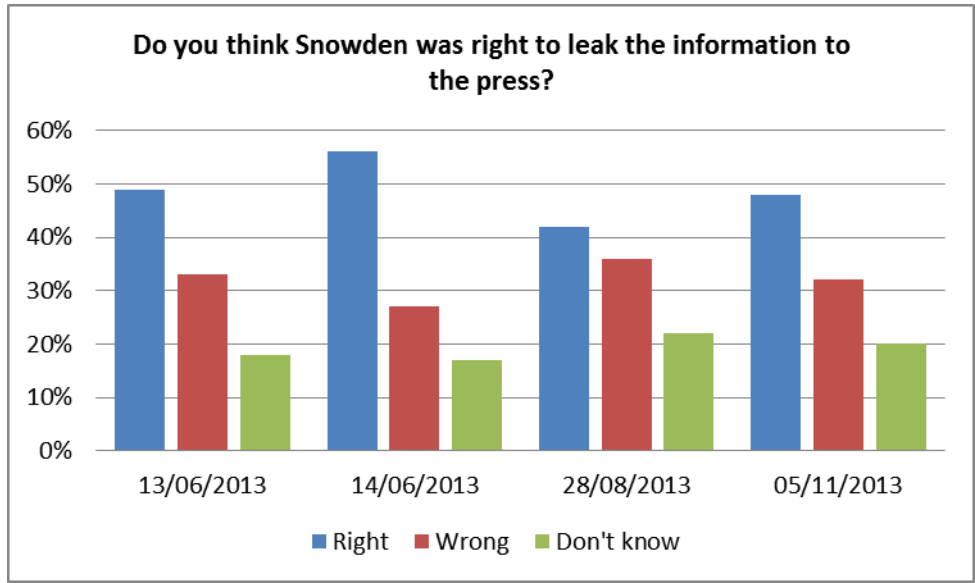
This first section relates to how the public reacted to the initial Snowden leaks and the questions that were raised around whether or not Snowden was right to leak the documents.

### 2.1. Was Snowden Right or Wrong?

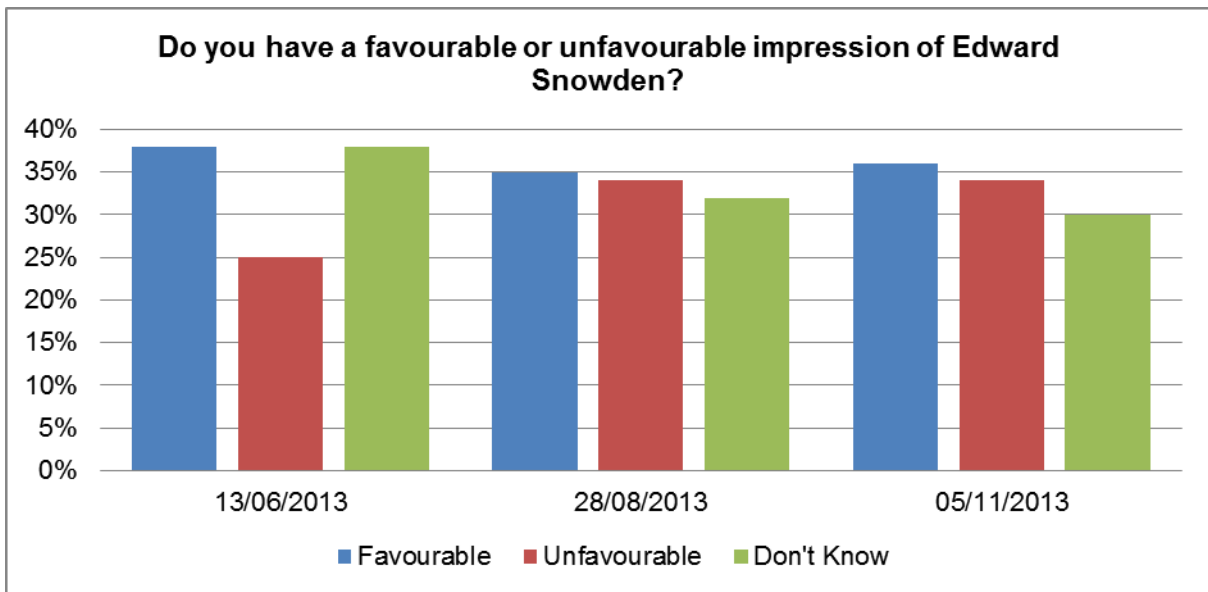
There have been four polls which have concerned the question of whether or not Snowden was right or wrong to leak the documents he had to the press. Three of the four polls asked the same fundamental question with a minor change for one of the polls:

Edward Snowden, a former technical assistant for the CIA, has leaked information to the press about how US intelligent agencies were gathering and sharing phone records and internet data, something Mr Snowden thought was wrong. Do you think Mr Snowden was right or wrong to give this information to the press?	Last week Edward Snowden, an IT contractor working for the CIA, leaked confidential documents to the press about how the United States government was monitoring telephone calls and emails. Do you think Mr Snowden was right or wrong to give this information to the press?
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The first poll to raise this question was released by YouGov for the *Sun* on 13/06/13<sup>1</sup> (49% said he was right, 33% said he was wrong, and 18% said don't know). A further poll was published the day after in the *Sunday Times* asking if Snowden should or should not be prosecuted for what he did (52% said no to prosecution, 28% said yes, 20% said don't know).<sup>2</sup> Polls conducted in the immediate months that followed were published on 28/08/2013<sup>3</sup> and 05/11/2013<sup>4</sup>. The table below compares the results of each of these polls:



What these polls show is that more of the public thought what Snowden did was right compared to wrong, although the proportion of the public who think what Snowden did was right decreased slightly in the first 5 months following the initial revelations. Three of these polls also asked the public if they had a 'favourable' or 'unfavourable' impression of Edward Snowden (from 13/06/2013<sup>5</sup>, 28/08/2013<sup>6</sup> and 05/11/2013<sup>7</sup>). The following graph demonstrates the results of these three polls side by side:



What these polls demonstrate is that over time the favourable impressions of Snowden have stayed fairly static, but unfavourable impressions have increased. However, the percentage of people who answer 'don't know' to questions is around a third of respondents. The polls from other companies asked similar questions to the YouGov polls detailed above. The

Angus Reid Global poll from 30/10/13<sup>8</sup> published by the Huffington Post takes the idea of right and wrong and changes the language to ask the public whether or not they believe Snowden was a 'hero' or a 'traitor'. The poll compares USA, Canadian and British opinion of Snowden, and the results for Britain were 60% think him a 'hero', 40% thought of him as a 'traitor'. Furthermore, a global poll from CIGI-Ipsos about online security and privacy from 24/11/14<sup>9</sup> questioned respondents on whether or not they had heard of Edward Snowden. The proportion of British people who responded 'yes' was 72%. The follow up question asked whether or not people had changed their behaviour with regards to online privacy and security since the Snowden leaks a total of 31% said that they had.

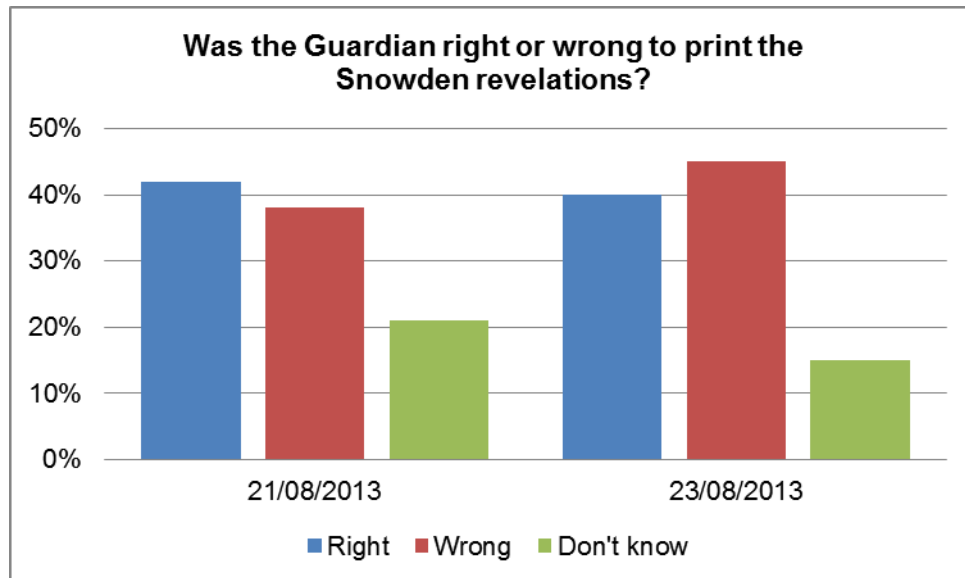
## 2.2. Should the Press Have Published the Revelations?

In addition to polling questions about Snowden's actions the public were asked whether the *Guardian* newspaper was right or wrong in publishing Snowden's revelations and their implications. This included public opinion on the government and law enforcement's reactions to the Snowden leaks, such as Prime Minister Cameron's request for the intelligence services to recover the *Guardian's* hard drives, and the detention of journalist Glenn Greenwald's partner at Heathrow Airport using terrorism legislation.

The decision to sanction the destruction of the *Guardian's* hard drive prompted a question about the Prime Minister's motivations for issuing such a request. In a YouGov poll from 21/08/13<sup>10</sup> the responses indicate that 39% of people believed it was because Cameron feared "the files contained information that might help terrorists and he wanted to prevent this information from falling into the wrong hands". This compared to 34% who thought this was government interference to prevent the press from reporting on the Snowden files. The second question in this poll asked if the Prime Minister's use of the intelligence services in this way were right or wrong, 43% believed that Cameron's motivations were right because he (the Prime Minister) is ultimately responsible for 'national security'. A total of 40% believed the action to be wrong, with 25% agreeing that politicians should not get involved in situations like this and the responsibility should lie with the intelligence services/police, and 15% who thought the action was wrong regardless of who authorised it.

This poll also contained the first question about whether the *Guardian* was right or wrong to publish the Snowden leaks. By a slight margin 42% respondents replied that the *Guardian* was right to publish the leaks because they are in the public interest, versus 38% who said publication was wrong and might help terrorists. However, a further poll published two days later in the *Sunday Times*, on 23/08/13<sup>11</sup>, said that a total a total of 40% believed the

*Guardian* was right to publish the leaks, and 45% believed the newspaper was wrong to publish. The graph below shows these two sets of results side by side, and although the polls were taken 2 days apart there is a difference in results:



This *Sunday Times* poll also asked about the *Guardian's* destruction of the hard drives and whether or not they were right to do so or if they should have handed the hard drives over to the intelligence services. In answer to this question 45% said the *Guardian* were right compared to 34% who said they were wrong. This poll takes the theme of requesting the return/destruction of the leaked information, but asks instead whether or not this request was a sensible, heavy-handed or a pointless demand. The results break down as sensible request (was = 54%, was not = 23%), heavy handed (was = 28%, was not = 46%), and pointless (was = 34%, was not = 41%).

The rights, wrongs and repercussions of the *Guardian* publication of the Snowden leaks continued to resonate in subsequent polls. In a YouGov/*Sunday Times* poll from 13/10/13<sup>12</sup> the respondents were asked to align themselves with a statement which best represents their opinion. The two statements were as follows:

- "Recent leaks about what surveillance powers the security services have are a good thing - it is right that the security services are held to account and that the public know that the security services could be intercepting their communications" – **35%**
- "Recent leaks about what surveillance powers the security services have are a bad thing - secrecy is important to their work and it helps Britain's enemies if they know how our security services operate and what powers they have" – **43%**

- “Neither” – 7%
- “Don’t know” – 15%

In an ICM poll for the *Guardian* published on 14/10/2013<sup>13</sup> respondents were asked if they agree with one of either two statements. The first is about the duty of the media to inform the public about the actions of the security services, and the other is about the media needing to back off from exposing too much about state surveillance because the information could help terrorists. The results were 34% thought ‘media duty’ versus 58% believed that this information ‘could help terrorists’.

Following on from this ComRes produced a poll on 20/10/13<sup>14</sup> in conjunction with Big Brother Watch, which contained a question about the debates raised by the Snowden leaks. The poll asked whether or not the debates would have arisen if the *Guardian* had not printed the stories. A total of 43% of respondents agreed that the debates would not have arisen had the *Guardian* not printed the stories, while only 15% disagreed, and a large proportion of 42% stated that they did not know. A later poll containing a specific question about the *Guardian* was published on 16/04/14<sup>15</sup> by YouGov in response to the announcement that the *Guardian* and *Washington Post* were set to receive the Pulitzer Prize for their media coverage of the Snowden revelations. When asked if respondents believed the presentation of the award to the *Guardian* was right or wrong people replied 37% right, 22% wrong, and 41% don’t know. The respondents were also asked if the reporting of the Snowden leaks were good or bad for society, 46% believed the reports were good for society versus 22% who thought the reports were bad for society. Don’t know was fairly high at 31%.

### 2.2.1. The Miranda Case

The journalist Glenn Greenwald’s involvement in the Snowden leaks and his relationship with the *Guardian* came to a head when his partner, David Miranda, was detained at Heathrow Airport under anti-terror legislation. This led to polls about the use of the Terrorism Act 2000 and whether or not it was right to use this law to detain Miranda. The first poll in reaction to Miranda’s detention came from YouGov on 21/08/13<sup>16</sup> where respondents were asked about the use of Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000 being used to detain people at airports without the need for evidence or suspicion. In total 66% supported the police’s right to have these powers and only 22% disagreed. The second question is specifically in the context of Miranda’s detention and his work on the Snowden leaks. The respondents in this case were asked if Miranda’s detention was an inappropriate or appropriate use of the law, 37% believed it appropriate in the context of Miranda possibly having information of potential

use for terrorists. However 44% of people did not think the detention was appropriate because he, Miranda, was not actively engaged in terrorism.

The poll questions that follow then centred on the information and property the police requested and confiscated from Miranda. The first question related to police requests to access Miranda’s passwords for his digital devices and threats of prison if he did not comply. A total of 38% believed this to be a reasonable course of action, with 47% saying this was an unreasonable use of the law. Other questions followed a similar theme and concerned the confiscation of his possessions. In this instance the number of people thinking that this is a reasonable use of the law dropped to 33%, while 50% thought it unreasonable. The poll then presents two statements for respondents to choose which one they agree with most. The first statement involves journalists being allowed to work without being detained or having their possessions seized which 45% of people agreed with. On the other hand, the opposing statement about whether the intelligence services and police can be trusted to act reasonably, and the balancing of the rights of a free press and fighting terrorism/crime was 39%. That said, the respondents felt that the law should be changed and only applied when there was ‘reasonable suspicion’ of involvement in terrorism (42%), compared to should not be changed (33%) and the law should be extended (12%).

The YouGov poll conducted on 23/08/13<sup>17</sup> for the *Sunday Times* contains similar questions to the *Guardian* poll published two days previously but with contrasting results. A comparison of the two questions is presented below:

YouGov/ <i>Guardian</i> 21/08/13 <sup>18</sup>	YouGov/ <i>Sunday Times</i> 23/08/13 <sup>19</sup>
<p>Glenn Greenwald, a <i>Guardian</i> journalist, has written many stories about state surveillance based on the leaks from Edward Snowden, a former US intelligence officer. Last week, Greenwald’s partner, David Miranda, who has also worked on these stories, was travelling back from Berlin to their home in Rio de Janeiro. His journey took him via London’s Heathrow airport where he was held under Schedule 7.</p>	<p>One of the <i>Guardian</i> journalists working on these stories is Glenn Greenwald. Last Sunday his partner, David Miranda, was detained and questioned at Heathrow for nine hours by British police under anti-terrorism legislation. Miranda was on his way back from Berlin to Brazil, ferrying materials between Greenwald and a documentary maker who has also been working on these stories.</p>
<p>Generally speaking, do you think this was an</p>	<p>Ministers and officials say they had grounds</p>



<p>appropriate or inappropriate use of the law?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally appropriate use of the law - Miranda might have had information useful to terrorists – <b>37%</b></li> <li>• Generally inappropriate use of the law - he wasn't engaged in terrorism – <b>44%</b></li> <li>• Don't know – <b>19%</b></li> </ul>	<p>to believe Mr Miranda was carrying information that could be damaging to national security. Mr Miranda says he was never asked about terrorism, and it was therefore wrong to detain him under a law specifically concerned were terrorism. Do you think...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The police were right to use an anti-terrorism law to detain Miranda – <b>46%</b></li> <li>• The police were wrong to use this law to detain Mr Miranda – <b>36%</b></li> <li>• Don't know – <b>19%</b></li> </ul>
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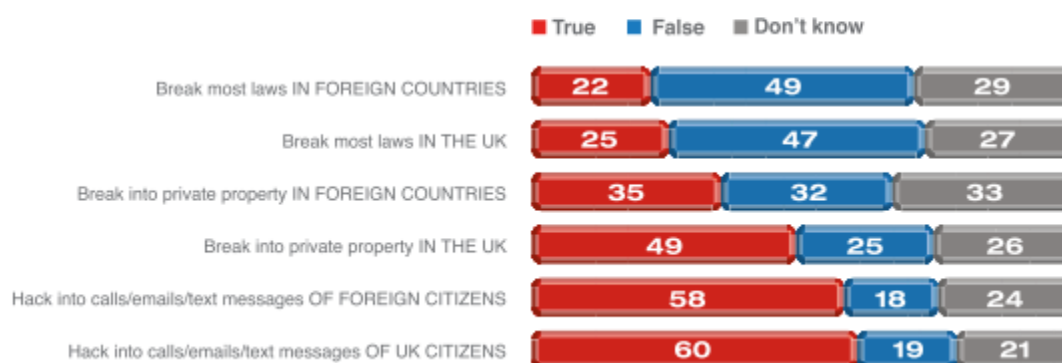
What this shows is that the previous poll gave the context that Miranda had been helping to report on Snowden, and this poll mentions that ministers and officials had grounds to believe that Miranda was carrying information which could damage national security. This difference in wording produced contrasting results, because 46% thought it was right for the police to detain Miranda compared to 36% of respondents who said it was wrong. The question about the confiscation of Miranda's possessions is repeated but in this instance is framed as 'misuse' of power to interfere with journalism versus a sensible use of power in order to protect national security. Again, the results mirror what was asked before with 34% of people believing that using the law in this way was a misuse of power and 49% responded that it is a sensible approach. The final question on this poll related to police powers used to detain people in possession of sensitive intelligence information, but not when these people are suspected of breaking the law. The opinion of respondents was 50% thought that the police should treat everyone the same and have the right to seize this information, 25% believed the police should not have the right to seize this information 25%, and 7% thought that a distinction should be made between journalists and non-journalists.

### 3. Attitudes to Surveillance and the Intelligence Services

The next set of polls relates to what the public believes the intelligence services had access to, what they were allowed to do, and under what circumstances the types of intelligence operations exposed by Snowden are acceptable.

### 3.1. Public Knowledge and Assumption

The first poll to concern one of these topics comes from a YouGov/*Sunday Times* poll from 14/06/13<sup>20</sup> in the aftermath of the initial Snowden revelations. It asked the public how much information they think the intelligence services had access to. The answers show a high level of assumption that the intelligence services had access to some (44%) if not all of the public's personal data (39%). Very few people thought that the security services had access to 'that much' (5%), or 'hardly any' (2%). On 12/09/13<sup>21</sup> YouGov's Cambridge Programme released 'Public Opinion and the Evolving State' for which respondents were asked about what the intelligence services were allowed to do 'no questions asked'. The results were as follows:



A later poll which asked about peoples' perception of government surveillance was published by the BBC on 01/04/14<sup>22</sup> looking at attitudes globally. In answer to a question about perceptions about freedom from government surveillance 61% of the UK respondents said that they were free, compared to 38% who said they were not free.

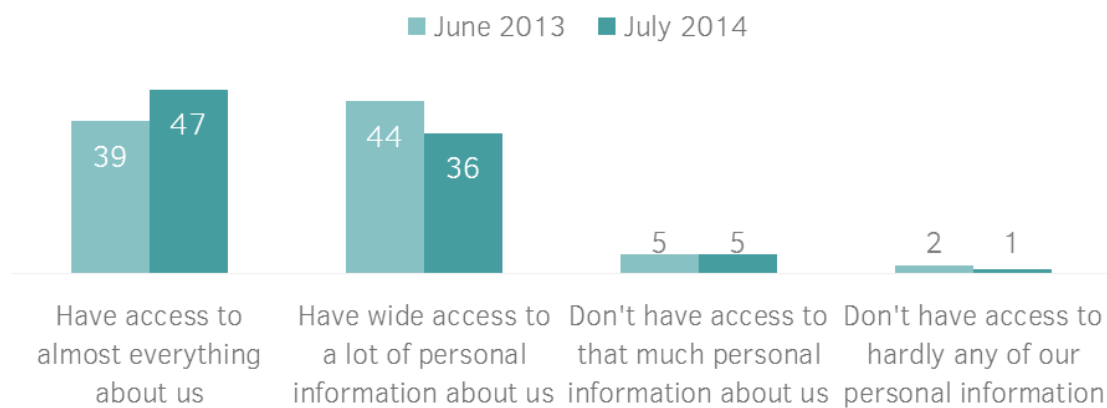
### 3.2. Acceptability of Surveillance

The balance between what people find acceptable/unacceptable in terms of what surveillance powers the intelligence services have and use is fairly evenly split. For instance, in the initial reaction poll from YouGov/*Sunday Times* on 14/06/13<sup>23</sup> the question is asked about a proposal for the law to be changed to give the intelligence services and police access to mobile phones and internet records held by communications companies. The results broke down as 43% saying these powers went too far, with 38% saying they found this a good idea, and a small percentage of 9% thinking the proposal did not go far enough. One of the follow-up questions concerned what the security services should be allowed to have access to without a court order, and this provides more of a spread of opinion. The

proportion of people who thought the security services should have access to 'almost everything' was 20%, 'a lot' of information 35%, 'shouldn't have access to that much' 24%, and 9% chose 'hardly any'. A similar question was asked on 12/07/14<sup>24</sup>, but this time the poll concerned people's thoughts on how much they suspected the intelligence services had access to:

## The intelligence services and personal information

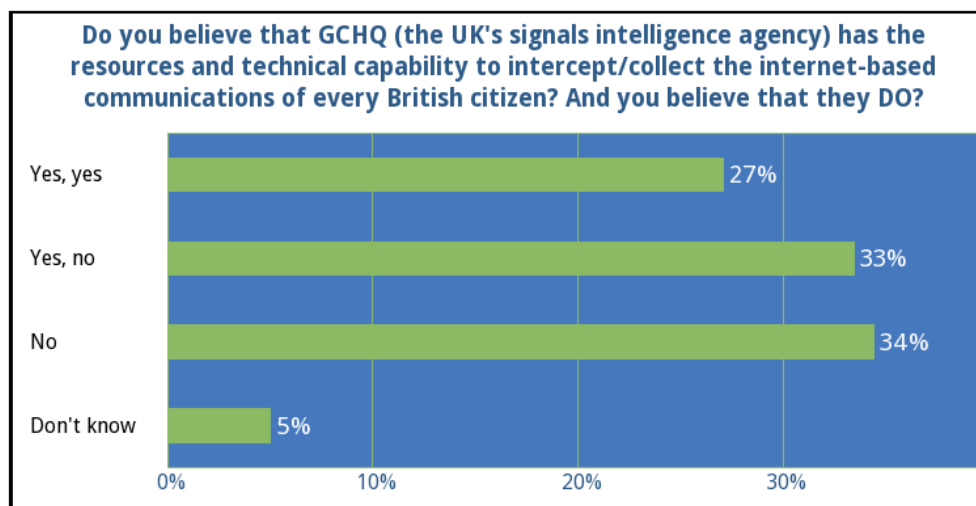
*In practice, the intelligence services probably...*



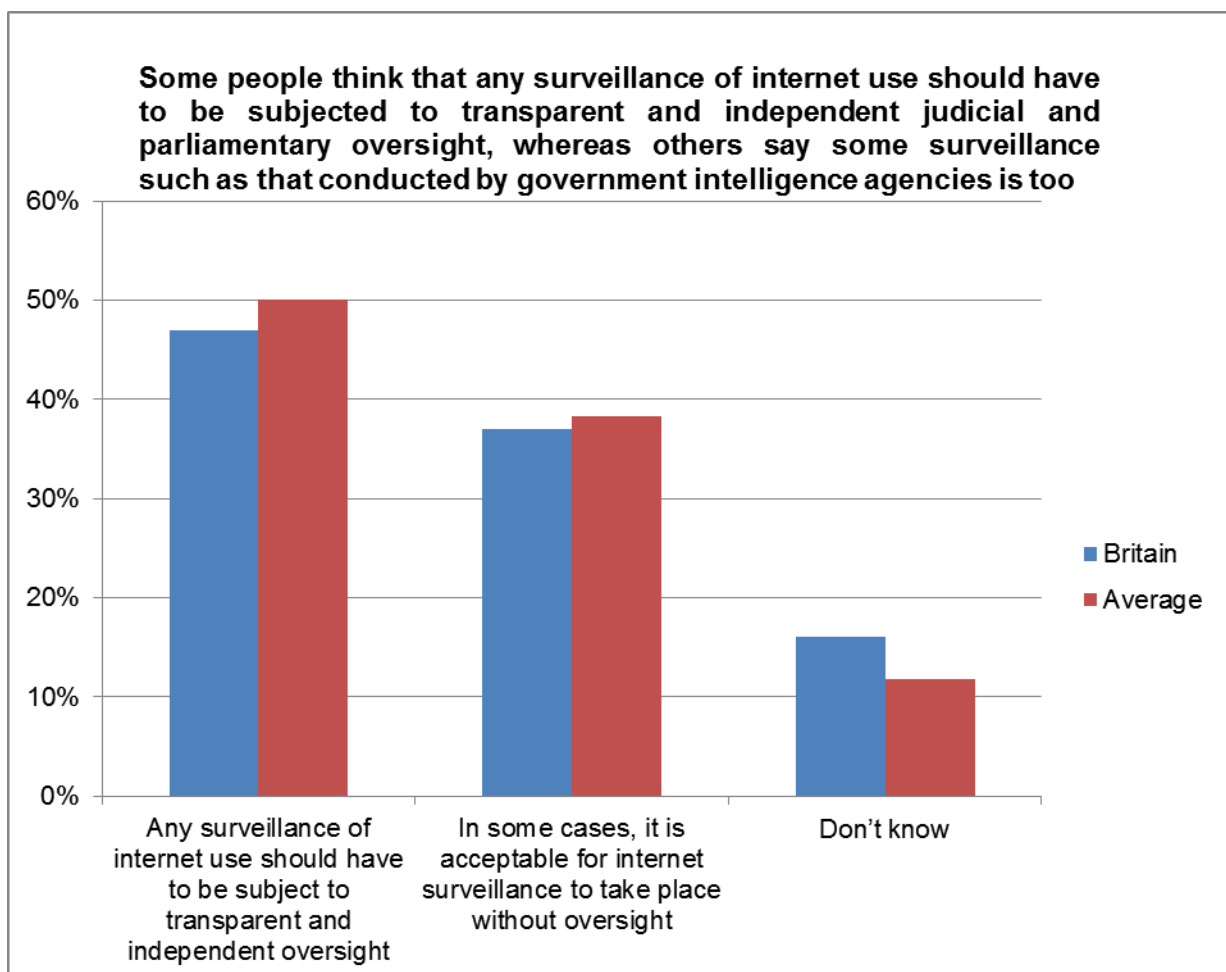
YouGov | yougov.com

July 2014

Similarly on 13/03/15<sup>25</sup> a YouGov Daily polls asked the public if they believed GCHQ had the resources and capacity to collect digital communications, and followed this up with a question about whether or not they did. The results in the graph below demonstrate that a majority of people believe that GCHQ does have the capacity to collect this data. But on the other hand a majority indicated that they thought the intelligence services do not capture these communications:



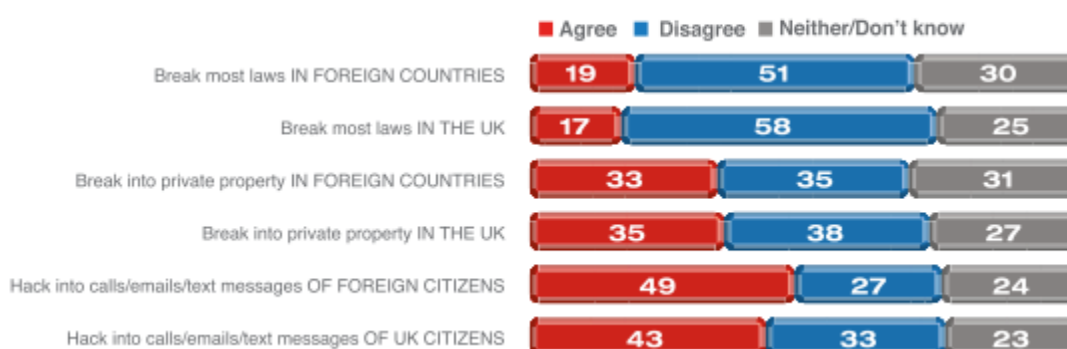
As already mentioned this even distribution of what is and isn't acceptable surveillance has often been repeated in polls. For example, a YouGov/*Sunday Times* poll from 23/08/13<sup>26</sup> asked if GCHQ's tapping of fibre optic cables regardless of any suspicion of wrong doing is right or wrong. The percentage of people who thought that it was right for the intelligence services to have access to this information to "protect the nation" was 41%, whereas 45% believed that it was wrong and that the secret service should not have access to "innocent people's private affairs". In a YouGov poll from the 18/03/15<sup>27</sup> for Amnesty International covered 13 nations around the world, which included Britain, the poll asked about judicial oversight. The results indicated that 50% of people agreed that the intelligences services should be more transparent and subjected to independent oversight. However 38% agreed with the statement that it was acceptable, in some cases, for digital surveillance to occur without any oversight.



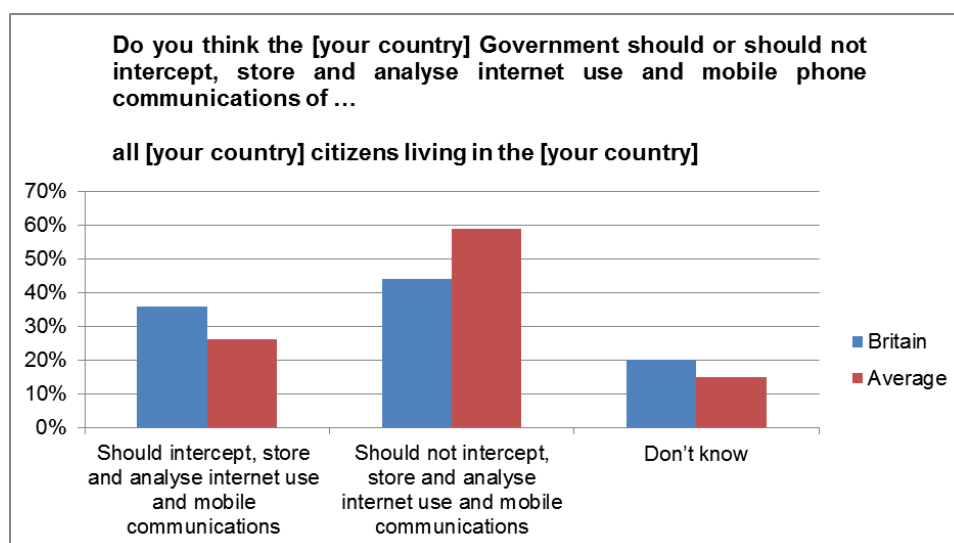
Previously, in an ITV/Comres poll from 26/08/13<sup>28</sup> framed around Islamic State people were asked to agree or disagree with the following statement:

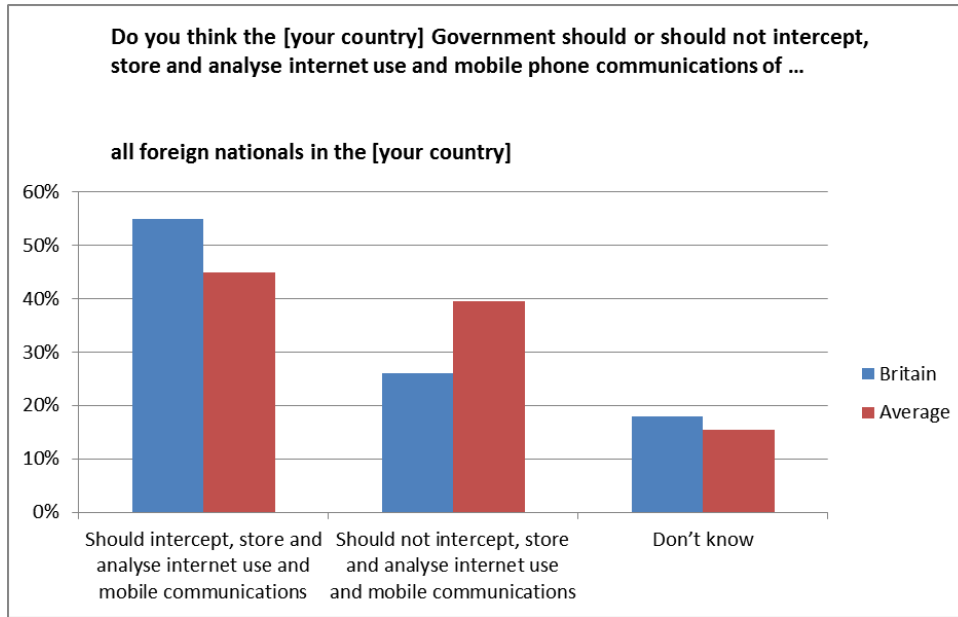
The revelations of internet spying by Edward Snowden last year shows that governments should not have access to private information on the web, whatever the website is being used for.

The results showed that 25% agreed with this statement and 36% disagreed. The YouGov Cambridge Programme poll from 12/09/13<sup>29</sup> also contained a question about what the security services should be allowed to do, and whether or not their spending must/should be shown to Parliament. The statistics below shows that the surveillance of data and phone calls is more acceptable than breaking laws and the invasion of property:



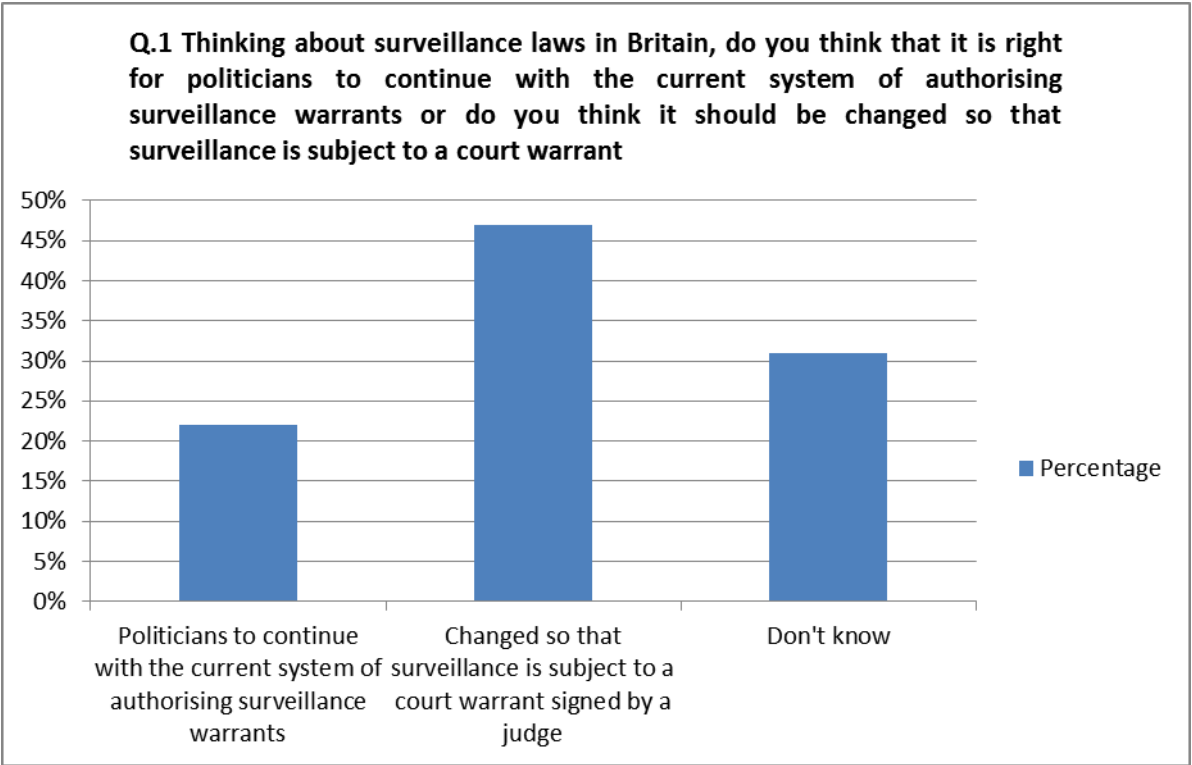
These types of questions were repeated in the YouGov/Amnesty International poll from 18/03/15<sup>30</sup>. Respondents were asked about whether or not the government should gather data on its own citizens, and foreign nationals living in the UK. The opinions expressed demonstrated a shift in attitudes when the target of surveillance changes from British citizens to foreign nationals and are shown in the graphs below:





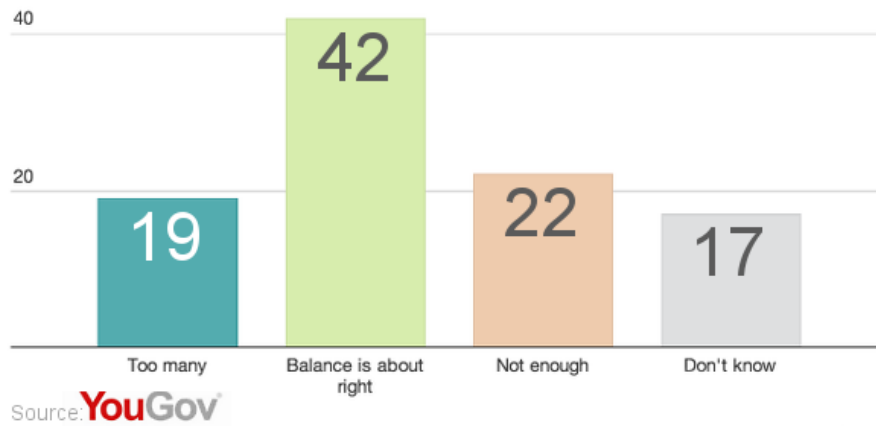
The importance of mass surveillance to the public as an issue, according to an Angus Reid Online poll from 31/10/13<sup>31</sup>, is relatively large. Respondents were asked ‘Overall, how important do you yourself consider this whole issue of government surveillance of the public’s internet communications to be?’ 31% of people thought the issue was very important, 51% quite important, 12% not that important, and 5% not important at all. One of the follow-up questions asked the public if the mass monitoring of data is acceptable or unacceptable with 48% of people saying mass monitoring was very or moderately acceptable, and 52% who responded that it was moderately or very unacceptable.

The questions around government oversight, openness and transparency around the security services were occasionally raised in polls. In a ComRes poll for Big Brother Watch published on 20/10/13<sup>32</sup> respondents were asked if the current system of authorising surveillance warrants by politicians should be changed or subject to a court order by a judge: The table below shows how the public’s opinion was distributed:



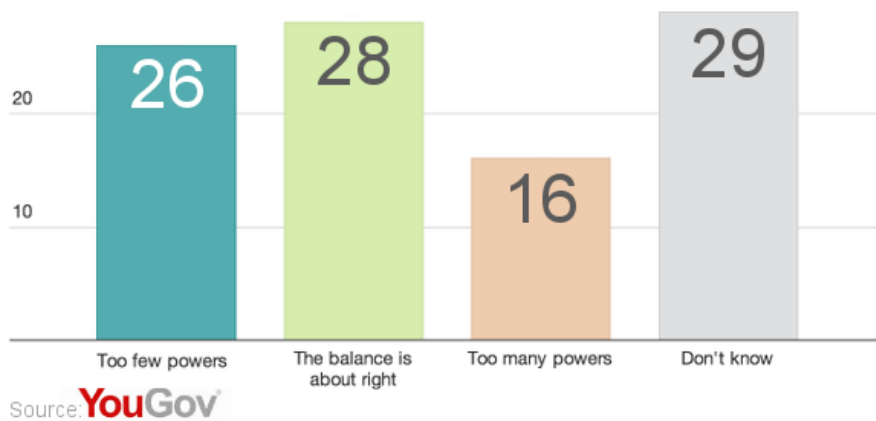
The follow-up question in the same poll asked if it is in the public interest to have a debate about terror laws because they were written before the advent of social media. In response to this question a majority of the public agreed (71%) that there should be a debate and only 7% disagreed. In a similar vein the YouGov poll for the *Sunday Times* on 23/08/13<sup>33</sup> asked respondents if the intelligence services should be more open with the government about their operations, 47% of the public agreed that they should be, 34% of respondents agreed with the statement that the intelligence services “can protect us better if they are allowed to keep such things secret”. In terms of government oversight a question in a poll from YouGov on 13/10/13<sup>34</sup> respondents were asked if the intelligence agencies had too many powers to carry out surveillance on the general population. 42% of the public responded that the balance of powers was ‘about right’:

Do you think the British security services (such as MI5) have too many powers to carry out surveillance on ordinary people in Britain, to few powers to carry out surveillance, or is the balance about right? %



This question was followed by the topic of the government's ability to scrutinise the activities of the security services. The balance of public opinion was as follows:

Do you think Members of Parliament have too few powers to scrutinise the activities of the security services, too many powers to scrutinise their activities, or is the balance about right? %



#### 4. Privacy

The polls that followed the Snowden leaks questioned the public on their views related to privacy and human rights in the context of combating crime and terrorism. This next section will present an overview of poll questions relating to this topic.



## 4.1. Terrorism vs Human Rights

The first question of this type appeared in the YouGov/Sun poll from 13/06/13<sup>35</sup> where respondents were asked which of the statement best reflected their views on the following question - “Thinking about the way the government balances fighting terrorism, and protecting the privacy and human rights of ordinary people. Which of these best reflects your view?”:

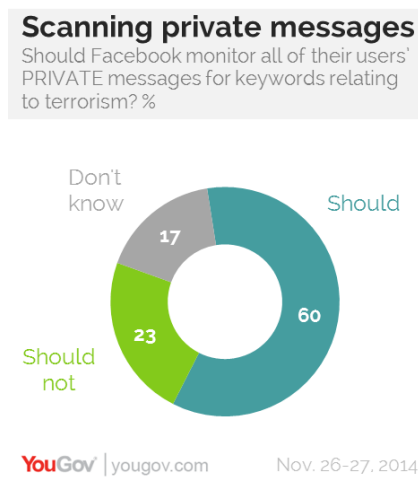
- “More should be done to protect the privacy and human rights of ordinary people, even if this puts some limits on what the security forces can do when combatting terrorism” – **19%**
- “The security forces should be given more investigative powers to combat terrorism, even if this means the privacy or human rights of ordinary people suffers” – **42%**
- “The current balance between combatting terrorism and protecting the privacy and human rights of ordinary people is about right” – **29%**

This proportion of responses to questions of this kind was repeated in subsequent polls. The poll from YouGov on 31/08/13<sup>36</sup> showed a similar distribution of results. The statistics are as follows, more should be done to protect privacy and human rights (22%), the security services should be given more powers (31%), and the current balance is about right (30%).

Similarly, the Angus Reid Global poll from 31/10/13<sup>37</sup> asked “What, for you, is the MOST important consideration in thinking about this whole issue of governments monitoring people’s personal information from the internet?” The two options to choose from included infringing on civil liberties to fight terror which 60% of people agreed with, or concerns about terrorism does not justify a weakening of civil liberties that 40% of people chose. The type of question posed in the Angus Reid Global poll is repeated in a TNS poll on 03/02/14<sup>38</sup>. This poll asked which statement was closest to the respondents own point of view, 71% agreed that the government should reduce the threat posed by terrorists and serious criminals even if it threatens personal privacy. On the other hand 29% agreed that the government should prioritise peoples’ right to privacy even if it limits “efforts to track down terrorists and serious criminals”. A poll from YouGov on 05/11/14<sup>39</sup> contained a question of this type but referred specifically to the British intelligence agency GCHQ. It asks “are you willing to have GCHQ monitor all your communications if it helps prevent terrorism?” 51% responded yes, and 41% said no. Following the government report into the death of Lee Rigby and the revelation that the killers communicated over Facebook a YouGov poll on 29/11/14<sup>40</sup> asked ‘should

Facebook monitor all of their users' PRIVATE messages for keywords relating to terrorism?'

The breakdown of responses to this question was as follows:



#### 4.1.1 Post-Charlie Hebdo Attacks in Paris

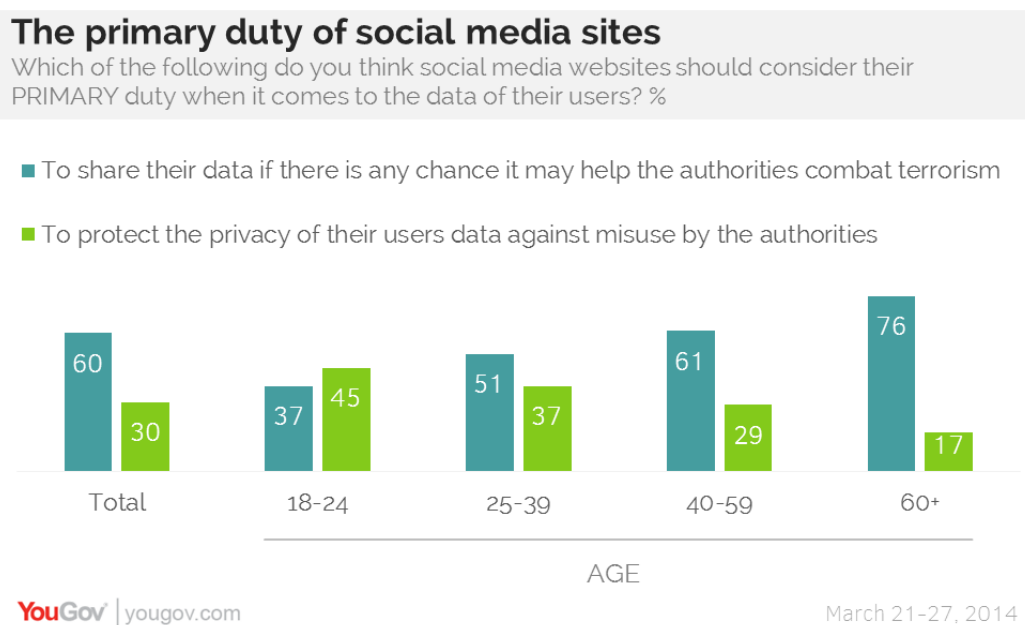
This line of questioning was repeated in the wake of the attacks on Charlie Hebdo in Paris. Published on 18/01/15<sup>41</sup> by YouGov/*Sunday Times* the respondents were asked a series of questions relating to terrorism, the role of internet companies, and access to personal data. The public were asked how they thought internet companies had responded to “the threat of Islamist terrorism”. The result of this question was as follows:

- “Most of the large internet companies are doing all they reasonably can to work with countries' security services and help combat terrorism” (20% agreed with this statement)
- “Most of the large internet companies could be doing a lot more than they currently are to work with countries' security services and help combat terrorism” (53% agree with this statement)
- 26% responded ‘don't know’.

The question then asked by the poll is if respondents thought the security services should or should not have more access to people's data. The results showed that 52% said the security services should have more access, 31% said the security services do not need more access, and 17% did not know. This led to a question about where people thought the responsibility should lie for the collection and retention of personal data. When asked if internet companies should retain data for 12 months, and if the security services should have access to this data 53% support this proposition, with 31% opposing, and 16% not

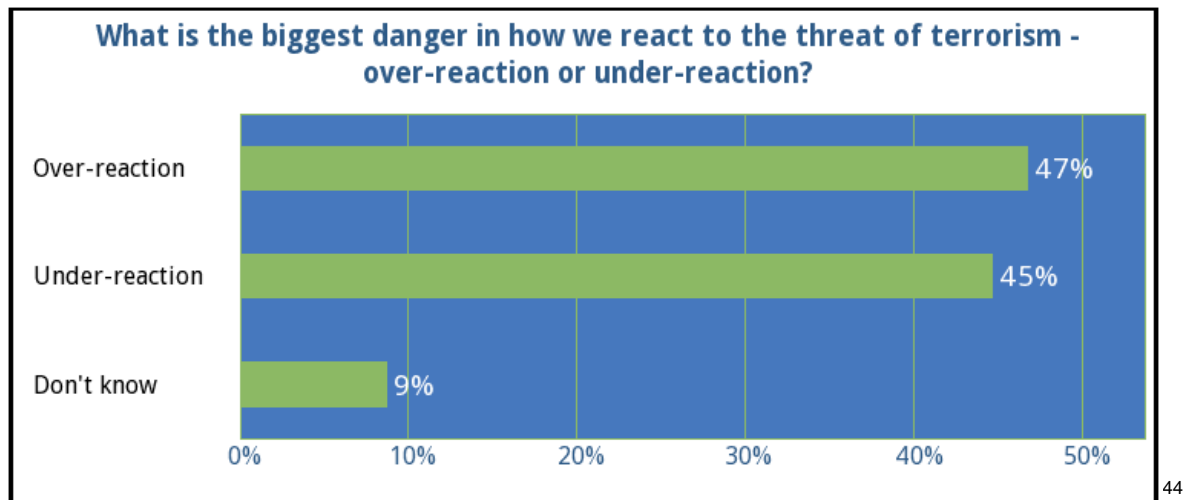
knowing. The survey takes these debates and asked about Prime Minister David Cameron’s proposal to ban data encryption. The respondents came out in opposition to a ban on encryption (43%), but almost a third (28%) did not know what opinion to take. This is 1% less than those who support a ban on encryption (29%).

In this survey respondents were asked what they thought the primary duty of social media sites with respects to personal data should be. Across the ages, as the graph below shows, the 18-24 were the only group who responded in the majority to say that social media sites primary objective should be to protect the privacy of their users’ data against authority misuse, and not data sharing in order to combat terrorism.



A question in a YouGov/*Sunday Times* 18/01/15<sup>42</sup> related to phone and internet companies retaining personal data for 12 months and allowing the security services access to it. The younger demographic of 18-24 were the only age group to majority ‘oppose’ giving the security services these powers 45%, versus 38% support, and 16% who do not know. The public knowledge of what they thought was done with the data collected was included as part of the Angus Reid Global poll from 31/10/13<sup>43</sup>. The respondents were asked what they thought the government did with this data. A total of 19% said the data was used strictly for national security/anti-terrorism, when the option included the investigation of serious criminal matters 30% of people agreed, and when the option included data use for other purposes like investigating tax evasion 8% agreed. The largest proportion of respondents, 44%, to this question chose ‘any purposes the government chooses’. When a YouGov Daily poll asked

people whether or not they thought there was a danger of overreacting to terrorism public opinion splits nearly down the middle:

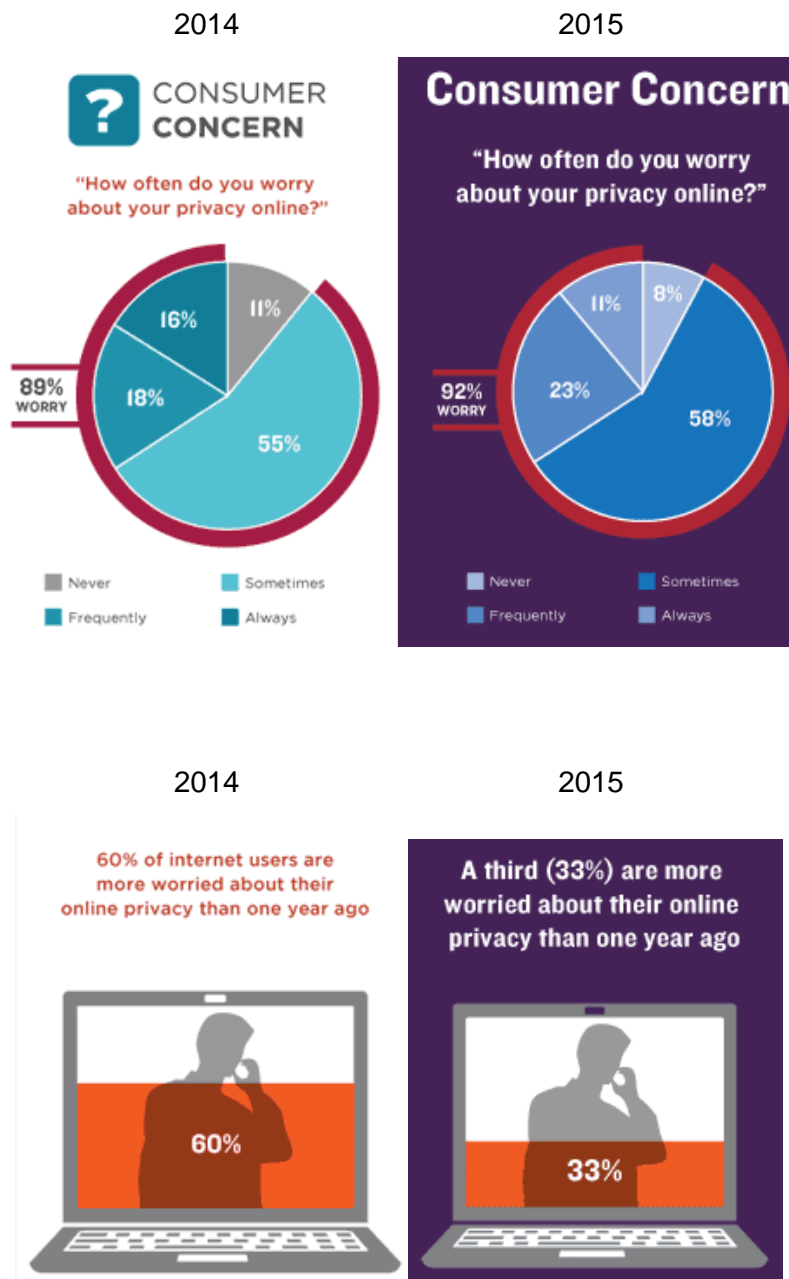


#### 4.2. Public Concern Over Privacy

The results presented in this report so far are especially pertinent when the public's concern around the online privacy of their data was considered. The public opinion around privacy is covered in many polls since the Snowden leaks, and the general trend is that the majority of people are concerned about their privacy across a range of different contexts. The first poll regarding personal privacy following the Snowden leaks was produced by ComRes in their 'Global Attitudes to Privacy' poll 24/06/13<sup>45</sup>. The privacy concerns in the UK broke down as 68% were concerned about their privacy and 29% were not concerned. Ipsos MORI released a similar poll entitled the 'GB Consumer Confidence Privacy Index' 28/01/14<sup>46</sup> which asked about people's online privacy concerns. A selection of the results was as follows:

- Proportion who worry about privacy online – never 11%, sometimes 55%, frequently 18%, always 16%
- More concerned about online privacy than 1 year ago – strongly agree 16%, tend to agree 44%, tend to disagree 32%, strongly disagree 5%
- What contributed to these concerns? – private companies sharing my data 60%, private companies tracking my behaviour 54%, and the reporting of government surveillance programmes 20%

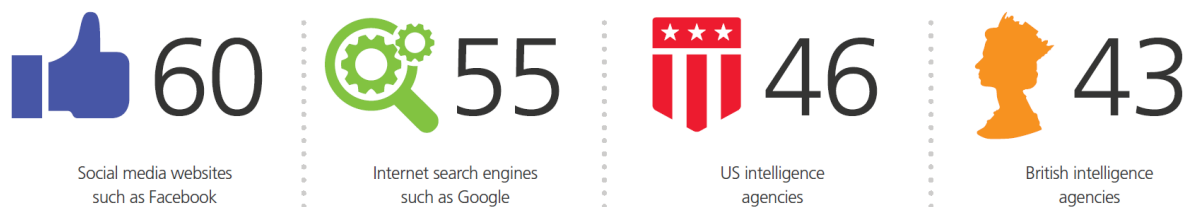
The Ipsos MORI survey is carried out every year and in the 2015 edition<sup>47</sup> the proportion of people who sometimes (58%) and frequently worry about online privacy (23%) rose, but the percentage of respondents who always worries about their online privacy had fallen to 11%. Similarly, on 33% either strongly agreed or agreed that they worry more about their online privacy than the year before (compared to 60% who strongly agreed or agreed with this in the 2014 poll).



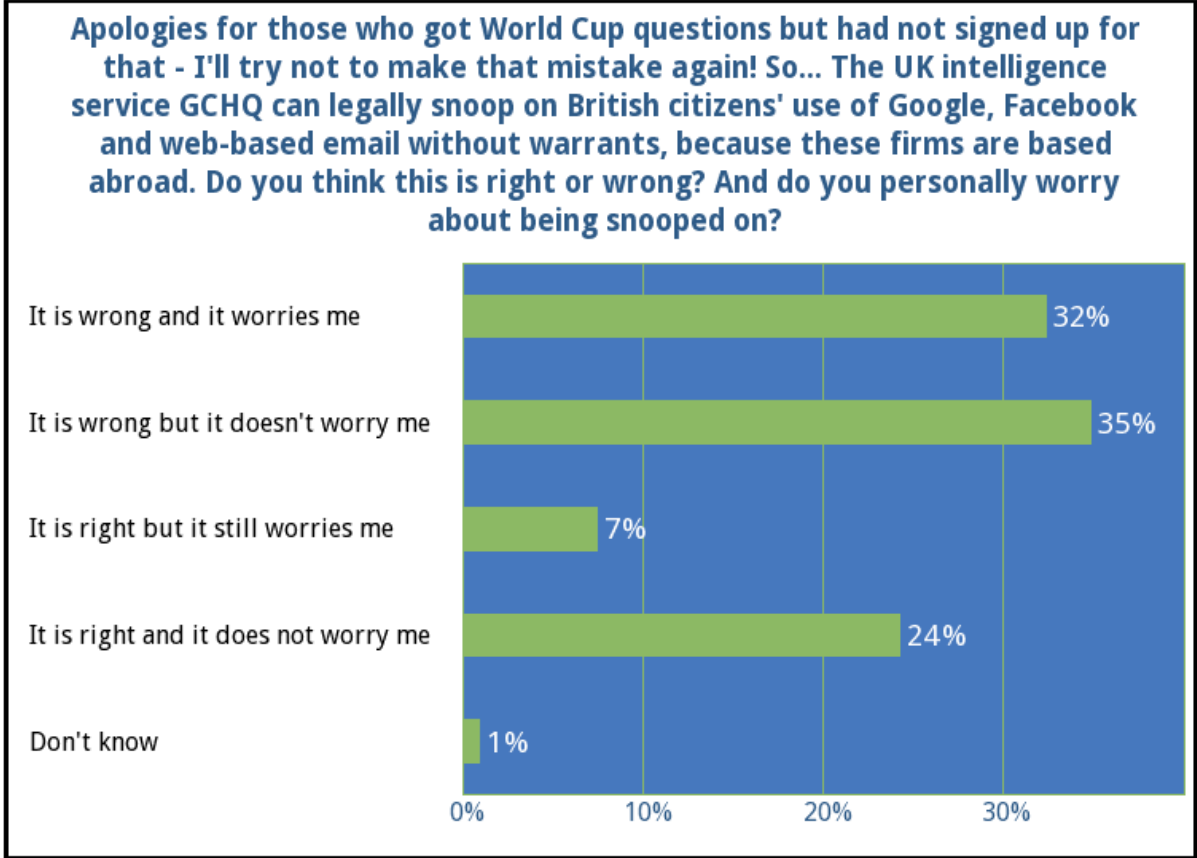
The public's main concerns over online privacy is the same and related to the corporate collecting and sharing of personal data online (48% of respondents), and 25% were

concerned about the tracking of their online behaviour. This compares to just 21% who were concerned about government surveillance.

The Ipsos MORI data is complimented by polls which asked specifically about people's concerns around online privacy, and who the public thought was collecting their data. The TNS poll from 03/02/14<sup>48</sup> asked the public whether or not they were very/fairly concerned with different organisations or bodies collecting information on their online behaviour. The results are shown in the infographic below, and show that the public were more concerned with the data collection activities of social media companies and search engines compared to the intelligence services of the US/UK:



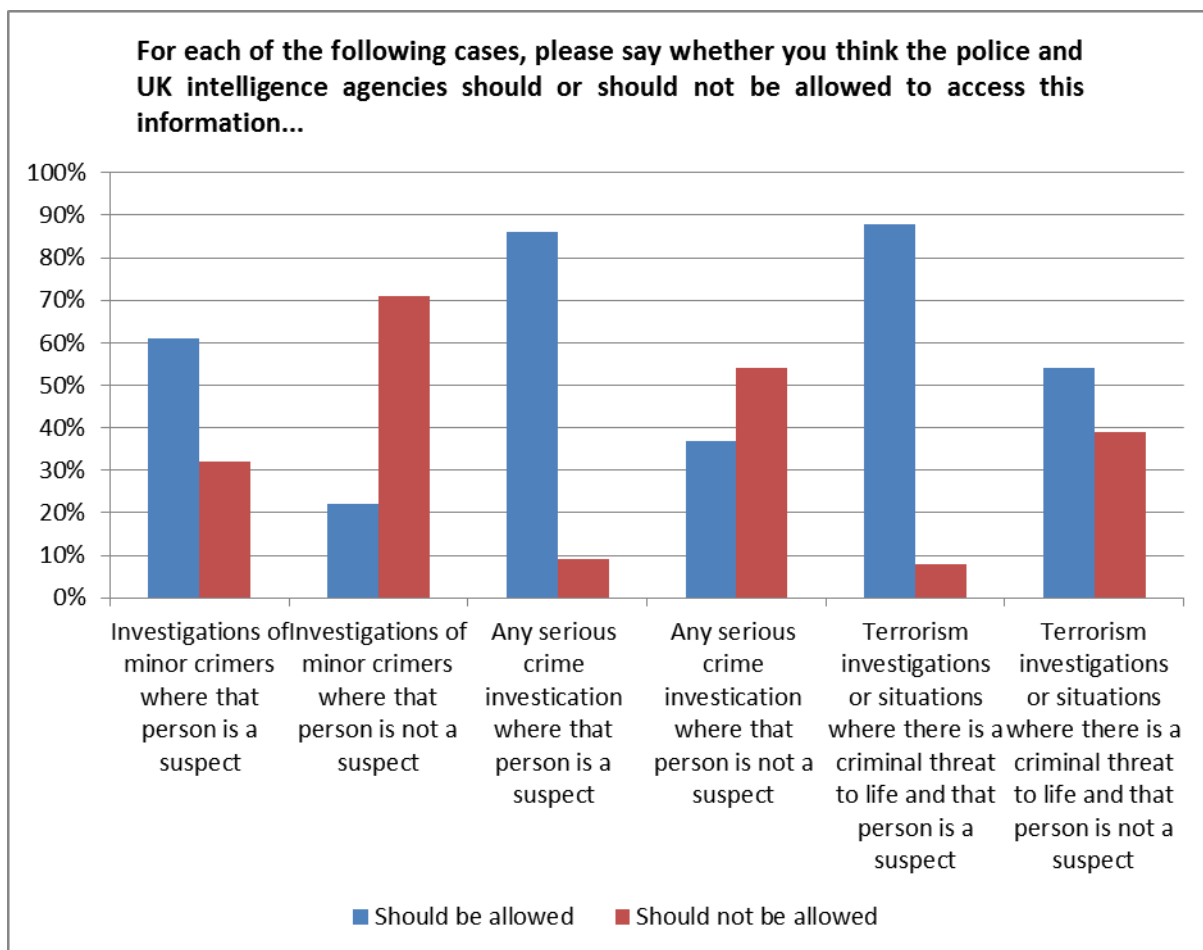
The Ipsos MORI poll entitled the 'Internet of Things Privacy Index'<sup>49</sup> asked what people knew about data collection, and what they wanted from data collection. 47% of respondents said that they knew their digital devices are collecting data about them, and 35% disagreed that their devices were collecting data about them. In another question 83% wanted to understand more about what information was going to be collected about them before using a digital smart device and only 4% disagreed. This poll also revealed that 84% people were concerned with the idea of smart devices gathering information on them, compared with 13% who were not concerned. When the public was asked specifically about GCHQ and their monitoring of online behaviour in a YouGov Daily poll from 20/06/14<sup>50</sup> 35% of people felt that this was wrong, but this type of monitoring did not worry them. This was closely followed by 32% of people who said snooping was both wrong and worrisome.



The YouGov/*Sunday Times* (13/10/13<sup>51</sup>) asked if the security services should or should not be allowed to store the details, but not the content of digital communications. In response 38% of people said the security services should be allowed to store this type of information and 46% said this should not be allowed. The Ipsos MORI poll for the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust published on 24/06/14<sup>52</sup> asked how important people felt maintaining the privacy of various sources of digital data was. The results for some of the selected sources of data were as follows:

- Internet browsing records – 85% essential/important, not important 12%
- Content of emails – 91% essential/important, not important 6%
- Mobile phone location – 79% essential/important, not important 18%

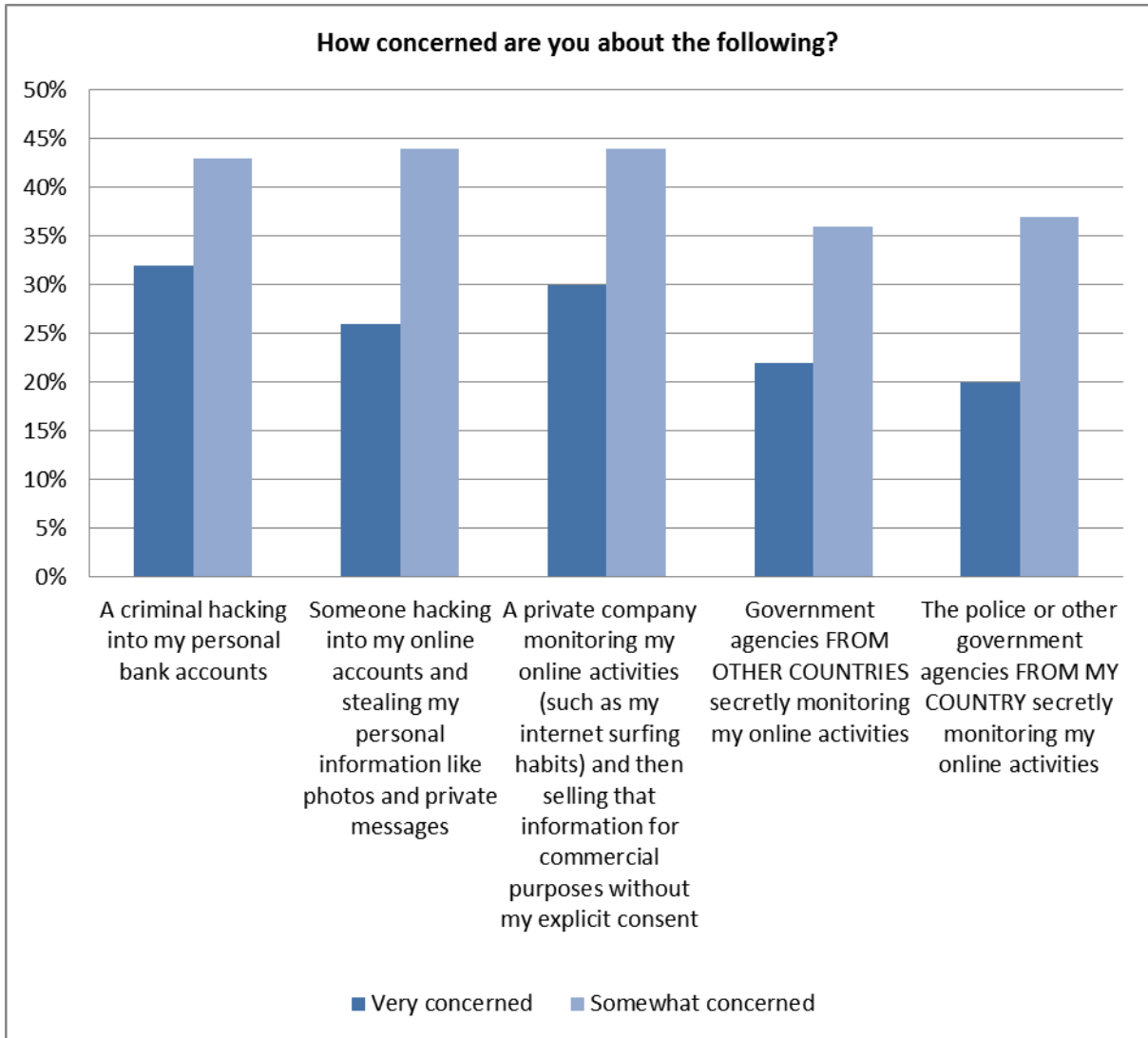
The respondents in this poll were asked about where the balance lay between more security and people’s privacy. The proportion for each answer broke down as 40% thought the balance between security and privacy was about right, 25% felt there was too much security, 8% thought there was much privacy, and 8% believed we should have both. The respondents were then presented with a series of scenarios of when data should/should not be collected by the police and intelligence agencies illustrated by the following graph:



The YouGov poll from 12/07/14<sup>53</sup> contained an access to data question which asked what people thought about a proposal to allow the police/security services to access people’s data held by internet service providers and mobile phone companies. The answers were 41% said that this proposal went too far, 37% thought the proposal was a good idea, and 10% thought the proposal didn’t go far enough.

The CIGI-Ipsos poll from 24/11/14<sup>54</sup> asked the public whether or not their level of concern about online privacy had changed compared to a year ago; 53% of respondents said they were more concerned (much more 17%, somewhat 36%). These results correspond well with other results in the poll where only 28% thought that their online data was secure. Although 47% thought the government does a very good job of making the internet safe and secure. The public’s concerns are broken down into different areas of monitoring and online crime. The results of which are illustrated by the following graph:



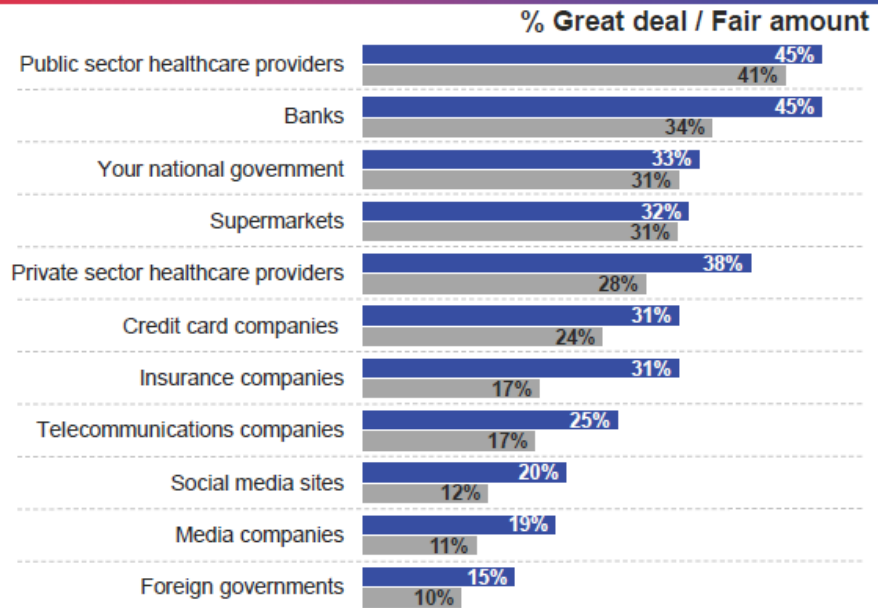
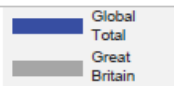


#### 4.2.1. Trust and Data

There were two polls in the timeframe where the polls in this document were taken from that concerned who the public trusted to use their data. Both of these polls came from Ipsos MORI. The first was published on 11/02/14<sup>55</sup> and was entitled ‘Personalisation vs. Privacy’ for King’s College London. Respondents were questioned about the organisations they would trust to use their data ‘in the right way’. The results broke down as follows:

**Q:** To what extent, if at all, do you personally trust the following to use the information they have about you in the right way?

Key



Base: 16,167 adults across 20 countries (1,000 GB), online, 1-15 October 2013, data is weighted.

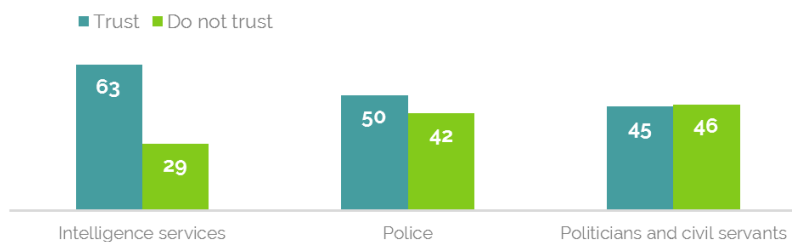
Source: Ipsos Global Trends Survey

© Ipsos MORI / King's College London

The second Ipsos MORI poll for The Royal Statistics Society 23/07/14<sup>56</sup> was about the public's attitudes to the use and sharing of their data. The public were asked to rank who they trust on a 1-10 scale. The three highest trusted institutions to share personal data were GPs (41%), NHS (36%) and police (28%). On the other hand The three organisations/entities least trusted by the public were communications companies (54%), ISPs, search engines and social media (54%), and the organisation deemed least trustworthy was the media/press (68%). The YouGov/*Sunday Times* poll from 18/01/15 repeated the question of who the public trusts with their data, and as the following graph demonstrates the intelligence services come out favourably<sup>57</sup>:

### Limited trust in surveillance institutions' behaviour

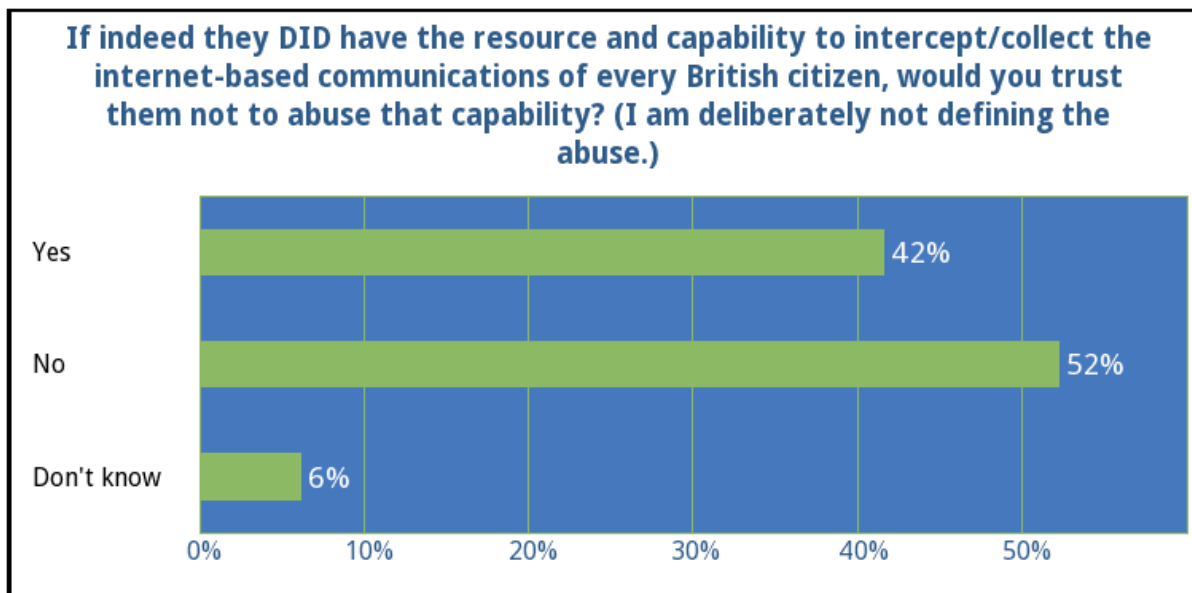
To what extent, if at all, would you trust the following to behave responsibly with information obtained using new surveillance powers? %



YouGov | yougov.com

Jan. 15-16, 2014

This level of trust changes depending on the question. For instance, when the public was asked if GCHQ had the resources to intercept/collect digital communications were the public able to trust them to not abuse this information<sup>58</sup>. The graph below shows that by a 10% margin people believed that GCHQ could not be trusted:

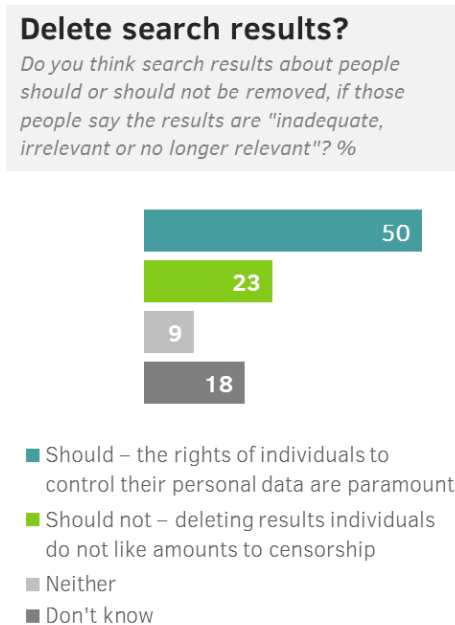


#### 4.2.2. The Law

Following the Snowden leaks a number of poll questions asked about various laws, their application, and government requests for data from companies. The first was soon after the initial leaks from a company called Opinium for the *Times* on 14/06/13<sup>59</sup>. The poll question was specifically about whether or not people supported the implementation of the Communications Data Bill aka the ‘snooper’s charter’. The results were that 37% of respondents supported the bill compared with 34% who opposed it. The follow-up question asked about the public perception of the bill and whether or not it would make people feel safer or the bill would be an invasion of privacy. The respondents answered as follows; 35% said that they think it would make the public feel safer, compared to 51% of people who thought the bill was an invasion of privacy.

The same poll contained a question about data requests from police/security services and government to companies like BT, Sky, Google and Facebook, and how transparent these companies should be about such requests. There was a clear response to this question from the public where 70% of people agreed that these companies should be transparent about these requests, and only 8% disagreed. There were other polls that concerned the law that

are not directly associated with Snowden, but are about privacy and surveillance. The first poll from YouGov on 15/05/14<sup>60</sup> regards the laws around the 'right to be forgotten' on the internet. As the following chart shows most people support the rights of the individual to control their own data:



Another example of a poll along these lines concerns an Ipsos MORI from 21/10/2014<sup>61</sup>. This poll asked people about their opinions of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA), and the powers granted to the police to access the phone records of journalists. There were 20% of people who thought the police should be allowed to do this if they thought it was necessary, 67% of people thought the police should only be allowed to do this at the say so of a judge, and 11% thought that the police should never be allowed to access the phone records of journalists.

#### 4.2.3. Digital Behaviour

In closing, the final poll to highlight is related to people's online behaviour, and in particular the use of social media. The poll from YouGov on 05/06/14<sup>62</sup> asked why people were stopping using social media platforms. The top result was losing interest (55% of people), the next most popular was concerns over privacy (26% of people), with advertising and marketing next (21% of people), and third parties having access to personal content came next (17% of people).

## 5. Endnotes – Web Links to Each Poll

- <sup>1</sup> [https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\\_uploads/document/lvsq1fe9sl/Sun-Results-130611-Edward-Snowden.pdf](https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/lvsq1fe9sl/Sun-Results-130611-Edward-Snowden.pdf)
- <sup>2</sup> [https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\\_uploads/document/xnzsm6ut1l/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-140613.pdf](https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/xnzsm6ut1l/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-140613.pdf)
- <sup>3</sup> [https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\\_uploads/document/gsuxbb3zi3/GB%20attitudes%20to%20Snowden%20&%20surveillance,%20Aug%202013.pdf](https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/gsuxbb3zi3/GB%20attitudes%20to%20Snowden%20&%20surveillance,%20Aug%202013.pdf)
- <sup>4</sup> [http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus\\_uploads/document/2axmwd13tc/YG-Archive-131104-Edward-Snowden.pdf](http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus_uploads/document/2axmwd13tc/YG-Archive-131104-Edward-Snowden.pdf)
- <sup>5</sup> [https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\\_uploads/document/lvsq1fe9sl/Sun-Results-130611-Edward-Snowden.pdf](https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/lvsq1fe9sl/Sun-Results-130611-Edward-Snowden.pdf)
- <sup>6</sup> [https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\\_uploads/document/gsuxbb3zi3/GB%20attitudes%20to%20Snowden%20&%20surveillance,%20Aug%202013.pdf](https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/gsuxbb3zi3/GB%20attitudes%20to%20Snowden%20&%20surveillance,%20Aug%202013.pdf)
- <sup>7</sup> [http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus\\_uploads/document/2axmwd13tc/YG-Archive-131104-Edward-Snowden.pdf](http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus_uploads/document/2axmwd13tc/YG-Archive-131104-Edward-Snowden.pdf)
- <sup>8</sup> <http://www.angusreidglobal.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Snowden-Survey-October-20131.pdf>
- <sup>9</sup> <https://www.cigionline.org/internet-survey>
- <sup>10</sup> [https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\\_uploads/document/a1cqlo3dw0/YG-Archive-David-Miranda-extra-results-210813.pdf](https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/a1cqlo3dw0/YG-Archive-David-Miranda-extra-results-210813.pdf)
- <sup>11</sup> [https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\\_uploads/document/9ytf2ekflo/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-230813.pdf](https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/9ytf2ekflo/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-230813.pdf)
- <sup>12</sup> [http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus\\_uploads/document/cfkj0aoeml/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-11-131013.pdf](http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus_uploads/document/cfkj0aoeml/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-11-131013.pdf)
- <sup>13</sup> [http://www.icmunlimited.com/data/media/pdf/2013\\_oct\\_guardian\\_poll.pdf](http://www.icmunlimited.com/data/media/pdf/2013_oct_guardian_poll.pdf)
- <sup>14</sup> <http://www.comres.co.uk/polls/itv-news-index-iraq-poll/>
- <sup>15</sup> [http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus\\_uploads/document/hy8mpku1lj/YG-Archive-140409-Edward-Snowden.pdf](http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus_uploads/document/hy8mpku1lj/YG-Archive-140409-Edward-Snowden.pdf)
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- <sup>17</sup> [https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\\_uploads/document/9ytf2ekflo/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-230813.pdf](https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/9ytf2ekflo/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-230813.pdf)
- <sup>18</sup> [https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\\_uploads/document/f07e9dzq7d/YG-Archive-David-Miranda-results-210813-Schedule-7-Terrorism-Act.pdf](https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/f07e9dzq7d/YG-Archive-David-Miranda-results-210813-Schedule-7-Terrorism-Act.pdf)
- <sup>19</sup> [https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\\_uploads/document/9ytf2ekflo/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-230813.pdf](https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/9ytf2ekflo/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-230813.pdf)
- <sup>20</sup> [https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\\_uploads/document/xnzsm6ut1l/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-140613.pdf](https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/xnzsm6ut1l/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-140613.pdf)
- <sup>21</sup> [http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus\\_uploads/document/aw7tbwnya9/YouGov-Cambridge\\_2013\\_Report.pdf](http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus_uploads/document/aw7tbwnya9/YouGov-Cambridge_2013_Report.pdf)
- <sup>22</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-26824802>
- <sup>23</sup> [https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\\_uploads/document/xnzsm6ut1l/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-140613.pdf](https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/xnzsm6ut1l/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-140613.pdf)
- <sup>24</sup> <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2014/07/12/47-think-security-services-have-access-almost-ever/>
- <sup>25</sup> <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2015/03/13/gchq-resource-and-capability-intercept-invasion-pr/>
- <sup>26</sup> [https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\\_uploads/document/9ytf2ekflo/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-230813.pdf](https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/9ytf2ekflo/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-230813.pdf)
- <sup>27</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org/en/articles/news/2015/03/global-opposition-to-usa-big-brother-mass-surveillance/>
- <sup>28</sup> [http://www.comres.co.uk/polls/ITV\\_News\\_Index\\_26th\\_August\\_2014.pdf](http://www.comres.co.uk/polls/ITV_News_Index_26th_August_2014.pdf)
- <sup>29</sup> [http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus\\_uploads/document/aw7tbwnya9/YouGov-Cambridge\\_2013\\_Report.pdf](http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus_uploads/document/aw7tbwnya9/YouGov-Cambridge_2013_Report.pdf)
- <sup>30</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org/en/articles/news/2015/03/global-opposition-to-usa-big-brother-mass-surveillance/>
- <sup>31</sup> <http://www.angusreidglobal.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Snowden-Survey-October-20131.pdf>
- <sup>32</sup> [http://www.comres.co.uk/wp-content/themes/comres/poll/Big\\_Brother\\_Watch\\_Surveillance\\_Laws\\_October\\_2013.pdf](http://www.comres.co.uk/wp-content/themes/comres/poll/Big_Brother_Watch_Surveillance_Laws_October_2013.pdf)

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33 [https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\\_uploads/document/9ytf2ekflo/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-230813.pdf](https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/9ytf2ekflo/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-230813.pdf)

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35 [https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\\_uploads/document/lvsq1fe9sl/Sun-Results-130611-Edward-Snowden.pdf](https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/lvsq1fe9sl/Sun-Results-130611-Edward-Snowden.pdf)

36 [https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\\_uploads/document/gsuxbb3zi3/GB%20attitudes%20to%20Snowden%20&%20surveillance.%20Aug%202013.pdf](https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/gsuxbb3zi3/GB%20attitudes%20to%20Snowden%20&%20surveillance.%20Aug%202013.pdf)

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39 <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2014/11/05/cool-cities-gchq-guessing-game/>

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51 [http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus\\_uploads/document/cfkj0aoeml/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-11-131013.pdf](http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus_uploads/document/cfkj0aoeml/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-11-131013.pdf)

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55 <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/researcharchive/3342/Three-in-four-Britons-are-worried-about-companies-collecting-information-about-them.aspx>

56 <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/researcharchive/3422/New-research-finds-data-trust-deficit-with-lessons-for-policymakers.aspx>

57 <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2015/01/18/more-surveillance-please-were-british/>

58 <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2015/03/13/gchq-resource-and-capability-intercept-invasion-pr/>

59 <http://ourinsight.opinium.co.uk/survey-results/public-narrowly-back-snoopers-charter>

60 <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2014/05/15/public-support-right-be-forgotten/>

61 <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/researcharchive/3462/Two-thirds-of-Britons-say-police-can-access-phone-records-of-journalists-but-only-if-approved-by-a-judge.aspx>

62 <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2014/06/05/facebook-and-twitter-experience-year-declining-pop/>