

Saga / Populus Panel

October 2015

Populus interviewed 9,986 Saga respondents, all aged 50+, online between 20 and 26 October 2015. Populus is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules; for more information see www.populus.co.uk.

EU referendum

- If an EU referendum were held tomorrow, 45% of Saga respondents would vote for the UK to remain a member of the European Union. 40% would vote to leave. 15% of respondents did not know how they would vote.
- There was little change in EU referendum voting intention among Saga respondents since August, when 46% of Saga respondents said they would vote to remain against 39% who said they would vote to leave.
- Among those who knew how they would vote, 53% would vote to remain against 47% who would vote to leave. Those in Scotland were most likely to want to stay in the European Union (69% vs. 53% overall).

Energy

- Half of Saga respondents (51%) were worried about the cost of fuel against only a quarter (25%) who were not.
- Only one-in-five (19%), however, thought they would struggle with bills more this year than last year, against (54%) who disagreed. Those in lower social grades were far more likely to say that this year would be a greater struggle with bills than last year. 41% of those in social grade DE agreed that they would struggle more this year as opposed to only 14% in social grade AB.
- 60% said they would not have to cut back on other spending to afford heating this winter, whereas 16% said that they would. Similarly, 61% didn't think they would have any problems with the cost of heating this winter, while 21% said that they would.
- When thinking about heating their house this winter, the most popular methods of keeping the price of energy bills down were wearing extra layers of clothing (61%) and only putting the heating on at certain times of the day (60%), followed by not heating as many rooms in the house (30%). One-in-five (22%) would not use any method because they were not concerned about the price of heating their home this winter.

Populus Summary

Christmas

- The most common method to pass on festive greetings among Saga respondents this year was to give a present as well as a card (69%). 56% would give a Christmas card only and 53% would personally deliver a card.
- Digital methods of passing on festive greetings were less popular among Saga respondents. One-in-three (31%) would send an email or an e-card and only 12% would use social media.
- Saga respondents sent an average of 36 Christmas cards by post last year. The number of Christmas cards increased with age: those aged 50-59 sent 26 and those aged 80-89 sent 47.
- A majority of respondents (86%) said that they had someone on their Christmas card list for whom sending a card would be their only correspondence this year.
- More than two-in-three (69%) said that they would remove people from their Christmas card list if they didn't receive a card from them, though most (62%) would only do so after two or more Christmases without a card.

Health

- The average height of male respondents was 5ft 10 and the average height of female respondents was 5ft 4.
- The average weight among all respondents was 12 stone. The average weight of male respondents was 13 stone and the average weight of females was 11 stone.
- There was significant variation in the frequency with which respondents weighed themselves. 9% weighed themselves every day, 13% 2-3 times a week, 22% once a week, 7% once a fortnight, 20% once a month, and 13% once every six months. There was little difference in the frequency with which men and women weighed themselves.
- Only 20% of respondents said they didn't gain any weight over Christmas at all. 18% of Saga respondents said they gained 1lb-2lb, 15% said they gained 2lb-3lb, and 8% said they gained 3lb-4lb.
- The principal reasons for gaining weight over the Christmas period were eating too much Christmas cake or too many mince pies (48%), followed by too much Christmas dinner (41%) and too many snacks (40%), chocolates (36%), and alcoholic drinks (36%).
- A third of female respondents (32%) and a fifth (19%) of male respondents usually went on diets after the Christmas period.
- Most diets (88%) lasted for two weeks or more. 30% lasted for one month and 37% lasted for longer than one month.

Sink holes

- When forced to choose, over half (54%) said that sink holes were naturally occurring phenomena and 23% thought that they came about because of human activity. 23% didn't know.

Populus Summary

- However, when given the choice to identify sink holes as both man made and naturally occurring, a majority of 80% chose this option.
- Nearly half (46%) believed that home insurance would cover sink hole damages. 18% thought that home insurance wouldn't cover sink hole damages, and over a third (36%) did not know.

Volkswagen Scandal

- A majority of respondents (58%) owned petrol cars and a third (33%) owned diesel cars.
- Of those who owned a diesel car, 11% owned a Ford, 10% owned a Volkswagen, and 8% owned a Citroen.
- Among all respondents, 39% said that the Volkswagen scandal had put them off buying a Volkswagen in the future, though one quarter (25%) disagreed.
- 59% agreed that the scandal had made them more suspicious of car companies in general.
- 64% of all respondents thought that Volkswagen should pay compensation to those customers affected by the scandal.
- Among those who already owned a diesel Volkswagen, 17% were put off from buying a Volkswagen in the future (compared to 39% of all respondents).
- Diesel Volkswagen owners were slightly more likely to think that the scandal had been hyped up by the media (63%) than Saga respondents as a whole (57%).
- Diesel Volkswagen owners were slightly less likely to be concerned about the environmental impact of diesel cars (46% vs. 55% overall).

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