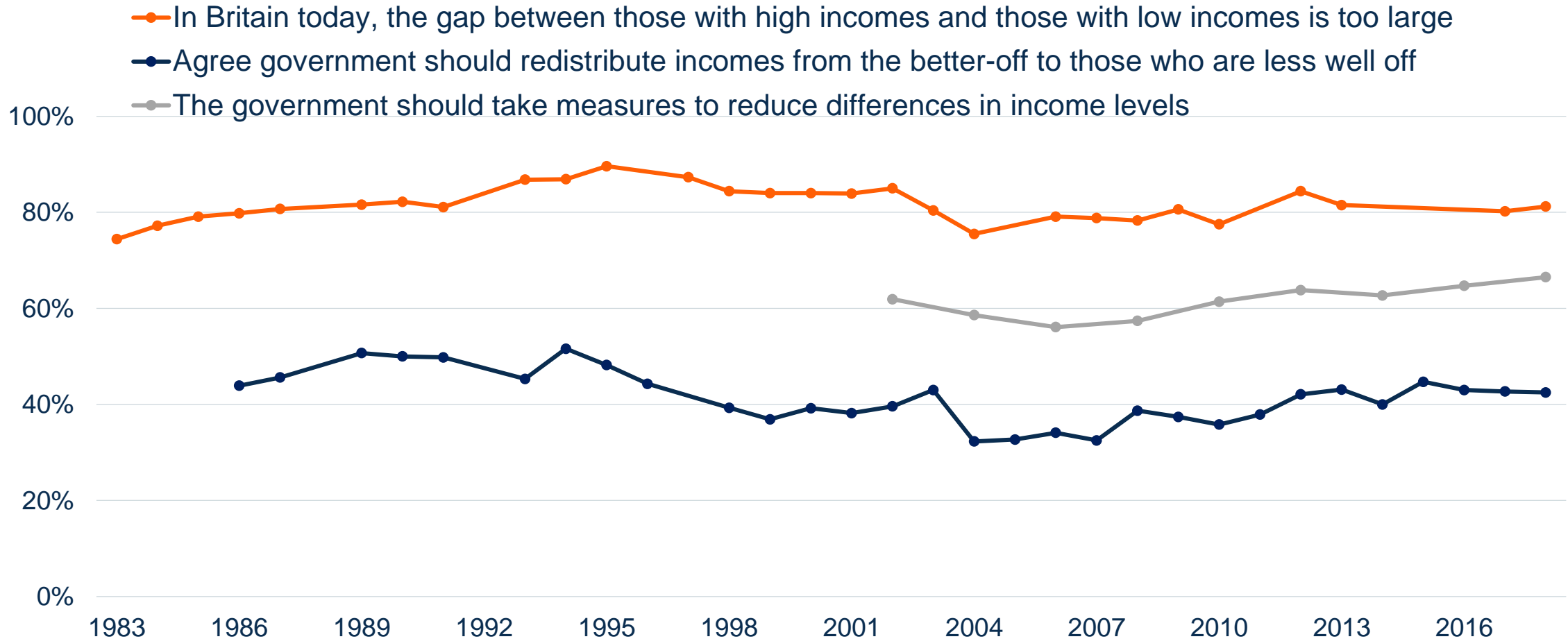


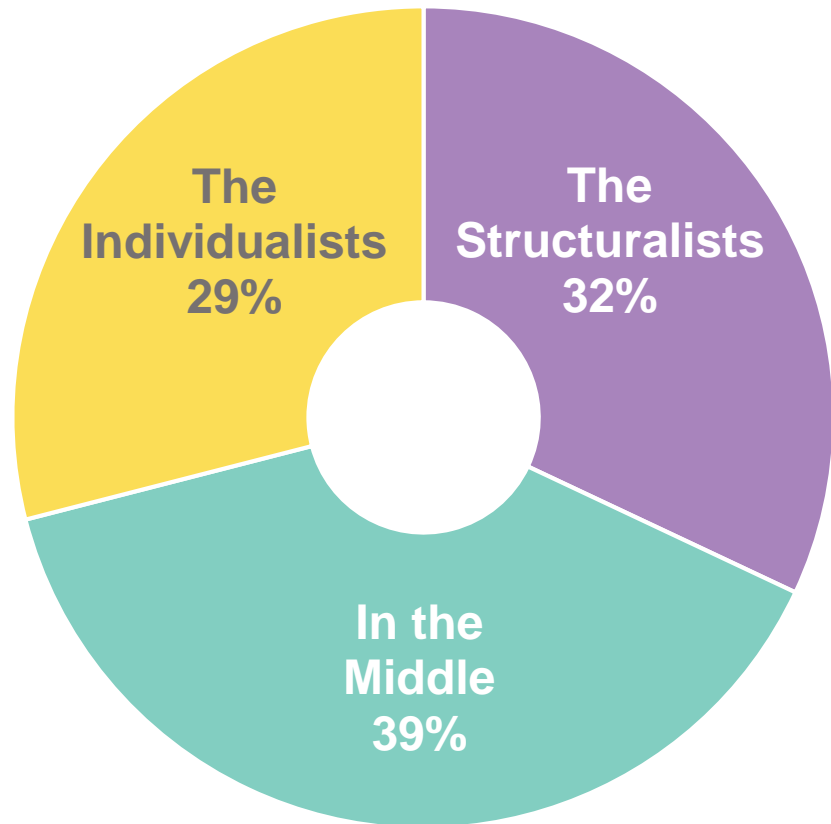
What's wrong with inequality? Attitudes to inequalities

Rebecca Benson, Bobby Duffy,
Rachel Hesketh, Kirstie Hewlett

1. Large, stable majority think income gaps too high – but fewer want government to act, particularly to “redistribute”...



2. Some of this gap is related to whether you think inequalities are structural or down to the individual...



The Structuralists (32% of UK)

... see characteristics outside the individual's control as important: cuts across demographics, but more Labour and more graduates

The Individualists (29%)

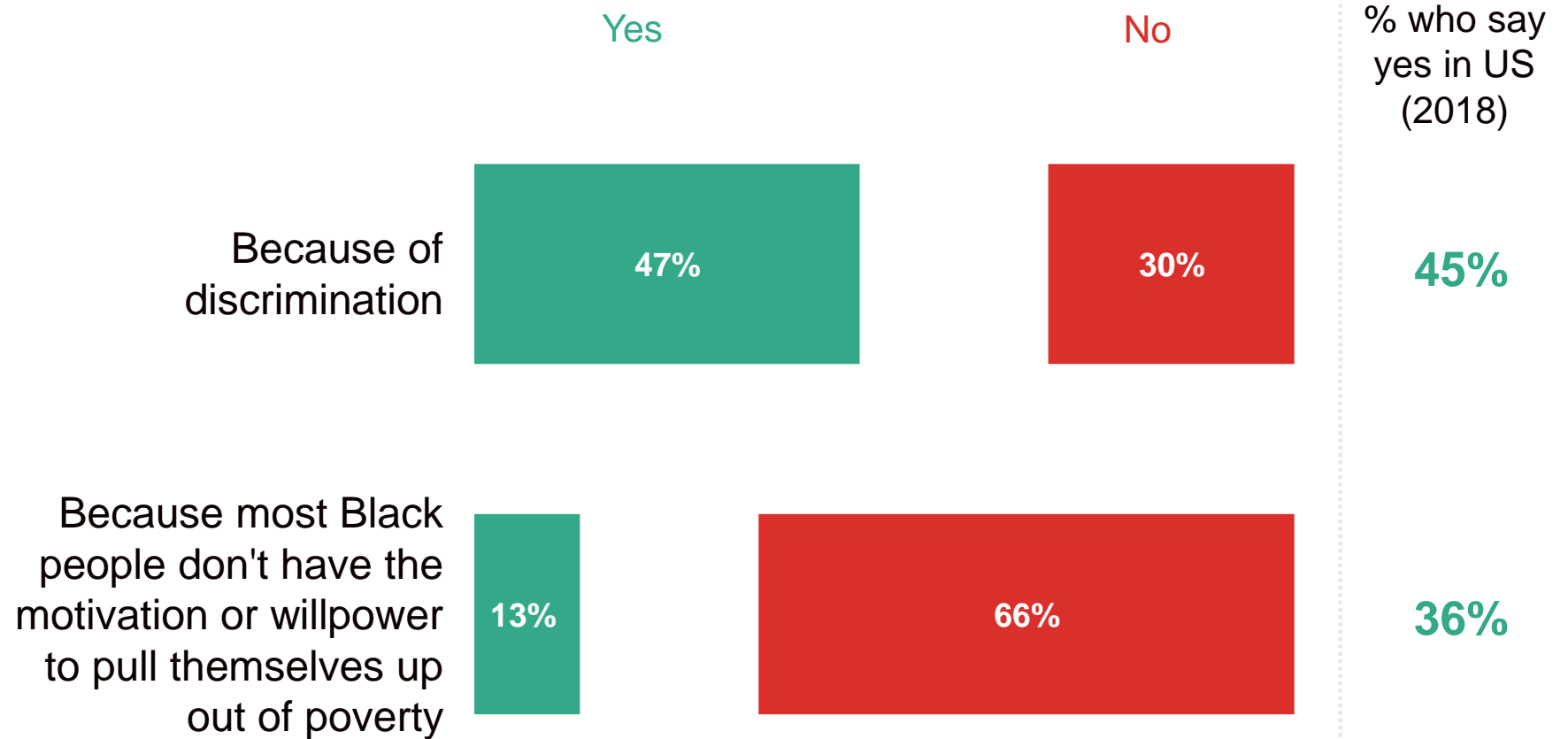
...do not consider factors beyond the individual's control to be important: cuts across again, but more Conservative, fewer graduates

In the Middle (39%)

... between the two groups, but also generally no strong opinions : closer to individualists in profile

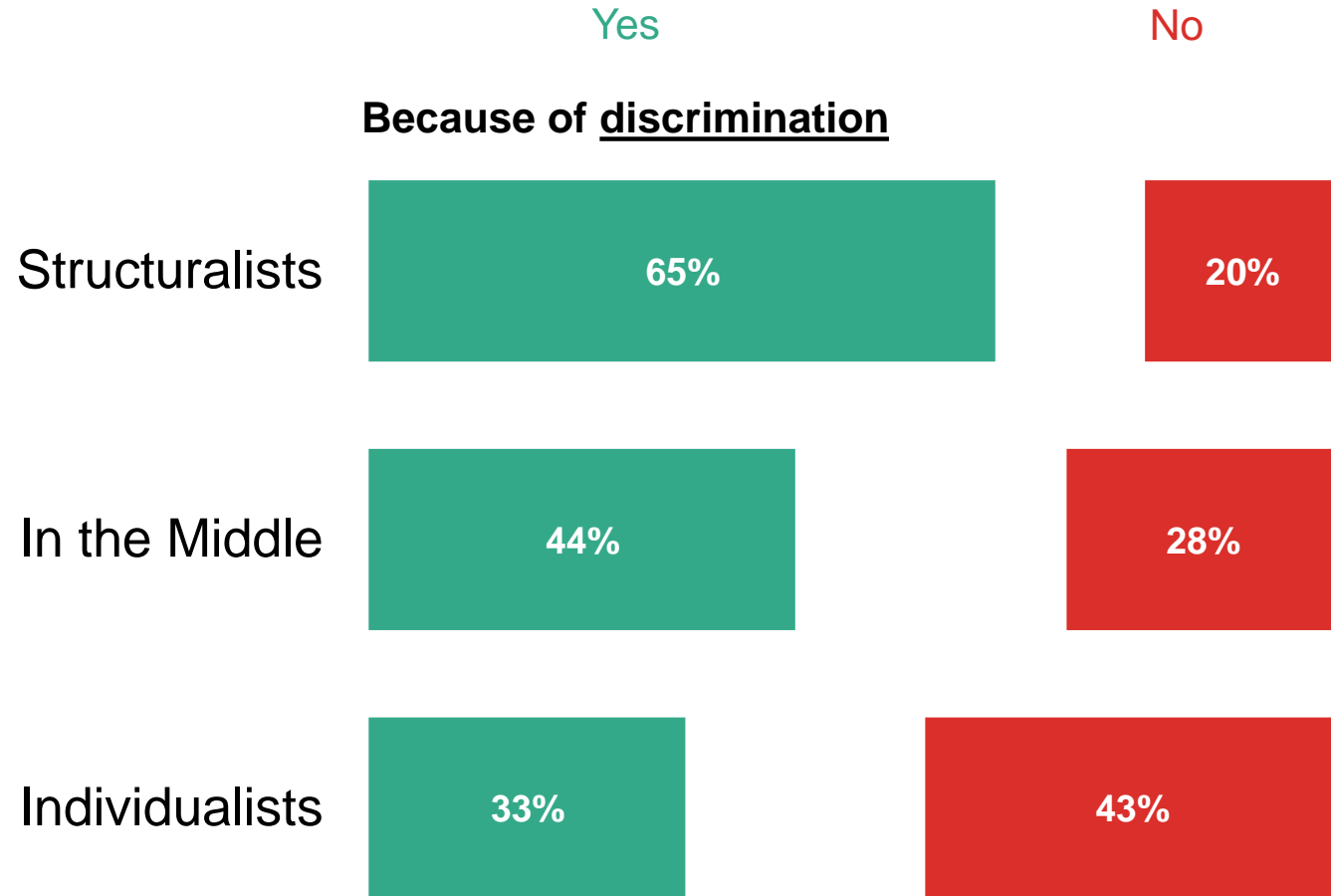
Discrimination is mostly likely to be seen as reason for worse outcomes for Black people in Britain – though not all agree...

On average Black people in Britain have lower earnings and are more likely to be unemployed than white people. Do you think these differences are...



...it depends on your worldview

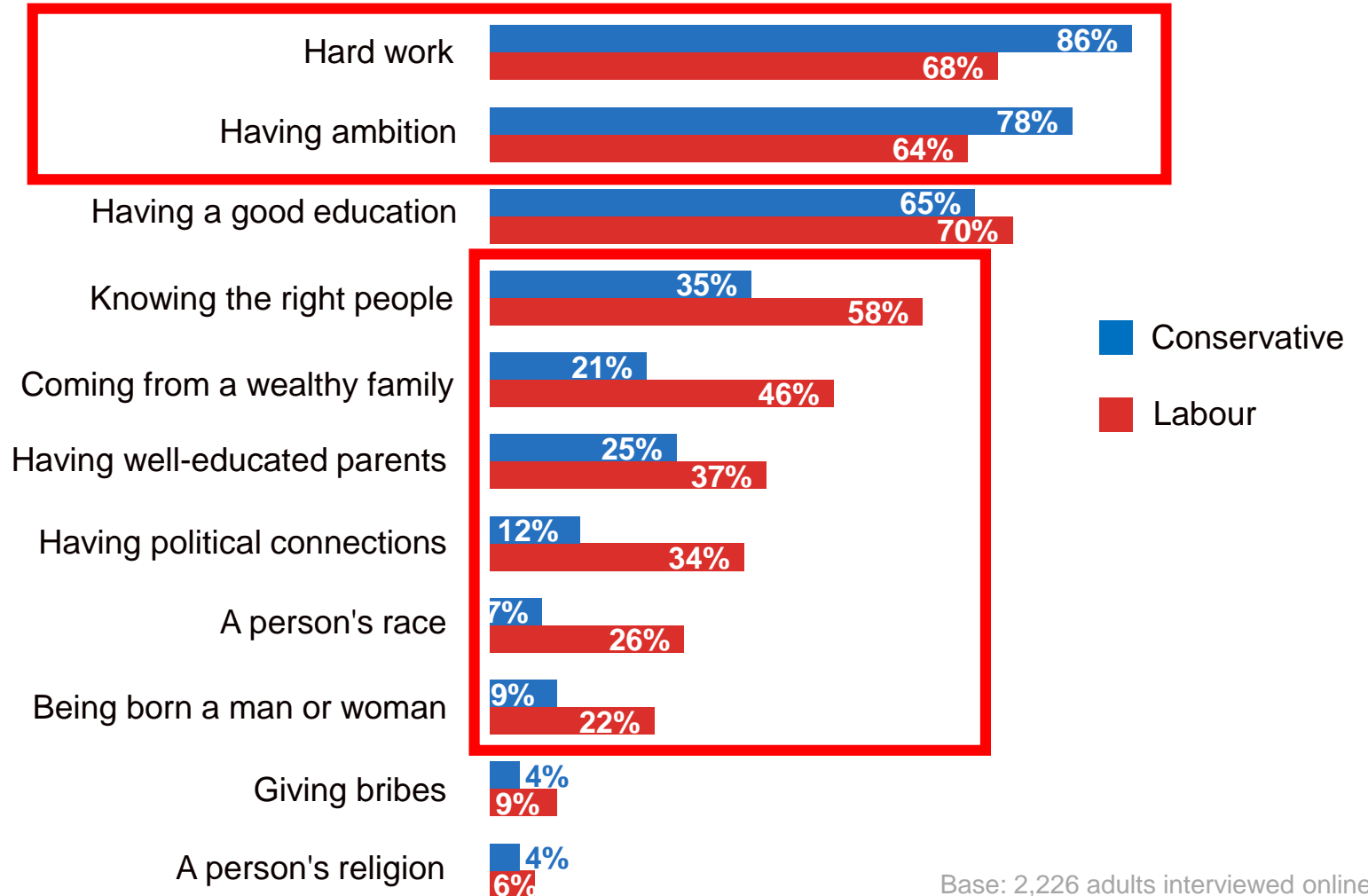
On average Black people in Britain have lower earnings and are more likely to be unemployed than white people. Do you think these differences are...



3. There is a general belief in the importance of individual effort and meritocracy...

Please tick one box for each of these to show how important you think it is for getting ahead in life. How important is...

% saying **essential** or **very important**

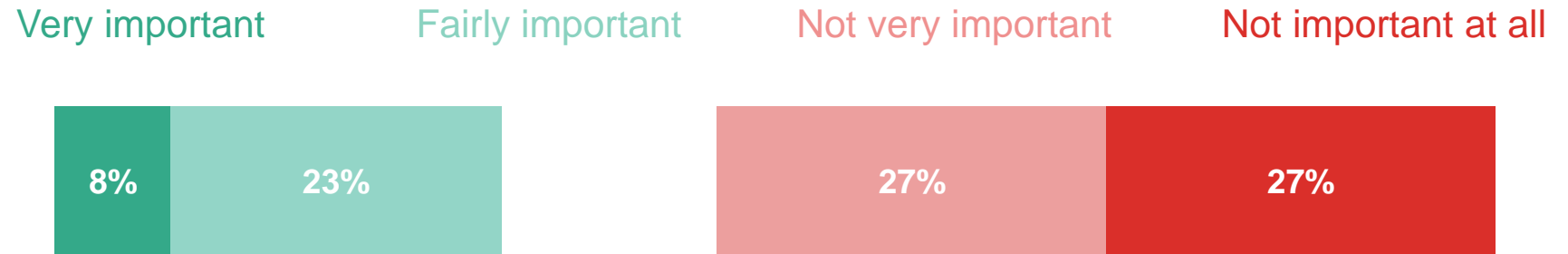


Base: 2,226 adults interviewed online by YouGov, 11–12 November 2020.

**Belief in merit clear
– a harsh view of
job losses during
an indiscriminate
global pandemic?**

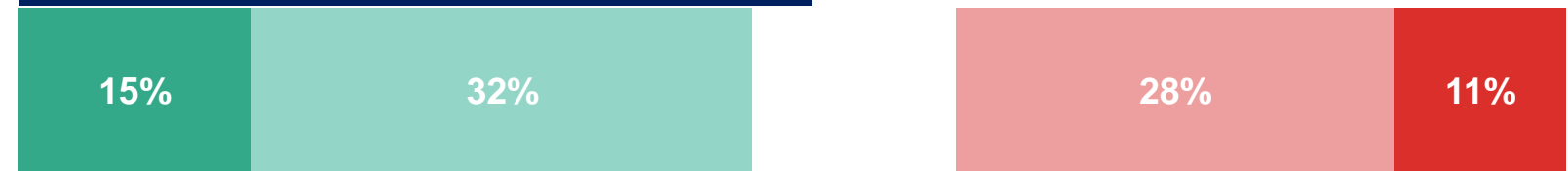
During the pandemic...

**How important do you think luck is in determining
whether people lose their jobs?**



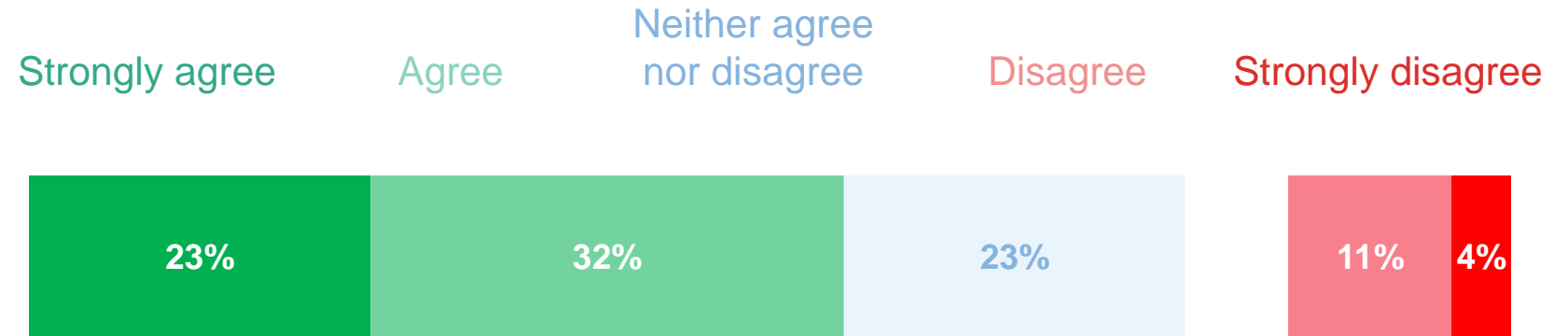
**And how important do you think performance at work is in
determining whether people lose their jobs?**

Including 40% of “Structuralists”



5. BUT pandemic has opened *some* space for discussing government's role in tackling inequality...

To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statement:
The coronavirus crisis means there is more need for the government to take measures to reduce differences in income levels



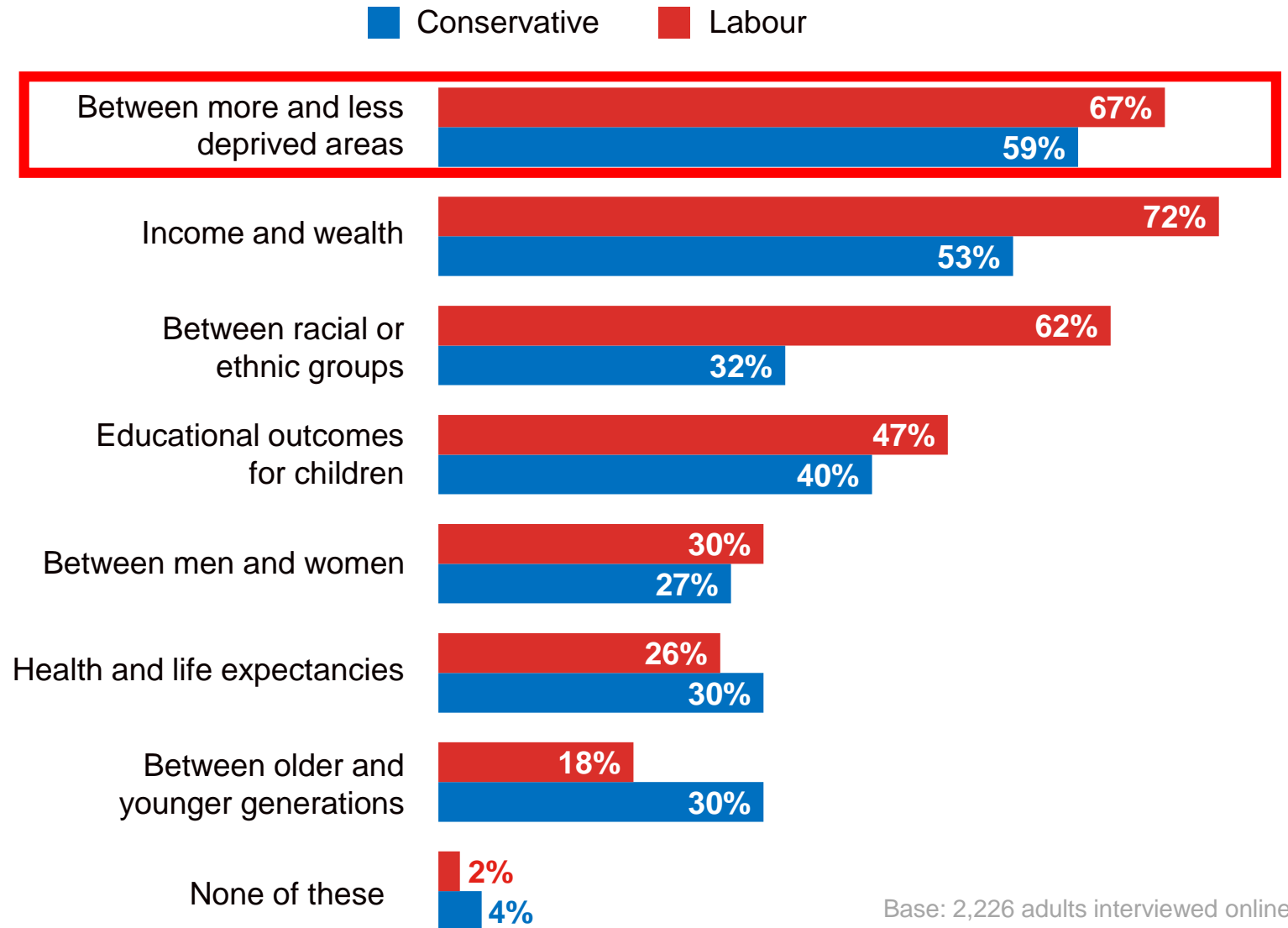
Including 4 in 10 Conservatives...

...but only 2 in 10 “Individualists”

...and at least one unifying theme:

... UK's high concern about area-based inequality runs across groups...

Which three or four of the following types of inequality, if any, do you think are most serious in Britain?



Base: 2,226 adults interviewed online by YouGov, 11–12 November 2020.

Reflections...

- Whether you worry about inequalities depends on how fair or unfair you see them
- ...which in turn depends on your view of causes
- ...which is related to deeply held values and worldview, so relatively unshifting
- More movement in some attitudes: belief that benefits too low and cause hardship has been rising in long wave
- And some common ground around area-based inequalities...
- ...need to interpret that carefully to deliver on public perception of “levelling-up”
- Open door for discussion – but only if understand wide variety of starting points