

YouGov Survey Results

Identity Cards

Prepared for The Daily Telegraph

Sample Size: 2312

Fieldwork: 2nd - 4th September 2003

	%
Are you in favour of, or opposed to, the introduction of a system of national identity cards in Britain?	
In favour	78
Opposed	15
Don't know	7
If identity cards are introduced, which of these options would you favour?	
It should be compulsory to own one and for everyone to have the card with them at all times	39
It should be compulsory to own one, but people should be able to leave it at home when they go out	42
People should have the right to decide whether to have an identity card or not	18
Don't know	2
A number of purposes have been suggested for identity cards. Do you think identity cards would or would not help to achieve the following objectives?	
Cut down on 'health tourism' – that is, reduce the number of people who come to Britain just to have free treatment on the NHS...	
Yes, would	78
No, would not	14
Don't know	9
Cut down on benefit fraud, by making it more difficult for people to claim state benefits that they are not entitled to...	
Yes, would	82
No, would not	13
Don't know	5
Make it easier for the police to catch criminals...	
Yes, would	60
No, would not	26
Don't know	14
Make it easier for the police and other officials to catch bogus asylum-seekers and people attempting to avoid deportation...	
Yes, would	80
No, would not	14
Don't know	6
There is some suggestion that the cards, if introduced, would officially be known as 'entitlement cards'. If they were given that name, do you think people would call them that, or would they become commonly known as identity or ID cards?	
Would be called entitlement cards	3
Would be known as identity or ID cards	94
Don't know	4
There is also a suggestion that everyone will have to pay around £40 for their identity card. Do you think that...?	
Roughly £40 is a reasonable charge	1
There should be a charge but £40 is too high	13
There should not be any charge	86
Don't know	1

Some people say that the cards could be made so sophisticated that they would be virtually impossible to forge. Do you believe they could be made almost impossible to forge, or would criminals fairly quickly find ways of forging them?

Could be made impossible to forge	25
Criminals would find ways to forge them	66
Don't know	9

The government has said that if it does introduce identity cards, people will be required to own one. If the government does go ahead, do you think that...?

The cards SHOULD contain only enough information to establish a person's identity	65
Or should the cards also contain other personal details such as people's health record, social security details, DNA profile and home address	30
Don't know	5

Do you think that...

The cards WILL contain only enough information to establish a person's identity	37
Or will the cards also contain other personal details such as people's health record, social security details, DNA profile and home address	44
Don't know	19

Do you think that the personal details SHOULD remain confidential to the government department concerned, and not passed from one department to another?

Should	72
Should not	21
Don't know	8

Do you think that the personal details WILL remain confidential to the government department concerned, and not passed from one department to another?

Will	13
Will not	66
Don't know	21

Do you think people SHOULD be free to leave their card at home, or should they be required to carry it with them at all times?

Free to leave card at home	59
Required to carry it at all times	39
Don't know	3

Do you think people WILL feel free to leave their card at home, or will they feel they must carry it with them at all times?

Free to leave card at home	40
Feel they must carry it at all times	48
Don't know	12

Do you think that personal details SHOULD remain confidential to the government and not passed to unauthorised persons outside the Government?

Should	91
Should not	6
Don't know	3

Do you think that personal details WILL remain confidential to the government and will not be passed to unauthorised persons outside the Government?

Will remain confidential	28
Will not remain confidential	49
Don't know	23

In general, do you think a system of identity cards would be used strictly in accordance with its stated purposes, or do you think the system would be likely to be abused?

Would be used only for its stated purposes	28
Would be likely to be abused	60
Don't know	13

Do you think that if the government sets out to introduce identity cards, it can do so smoothly and efficiently, or would the introduction cause a lot of disruption and inconvenience?

Would be introduced smoothly and efficiently	20
Would probably be disruption and inconvenience	74
Don't know	6

It has been estimated that the total cost of introducing a system of national identity cards would be between £2 billion and £5 billion. Do you believe that this amount of money should, or should not, be spent on introducing identity cards?

Should	50
Should not	37
Don't know	13

If you personally owned an identity card, how likely is it that you would lose it from time to time?

Very likely	7
Fairly likely	23
Not very likely	49
Not at all likely	19
Don't know	2

If there were a system of identity cards, which, if any, of the following groups do you think the police and other public authorities SHOULD target? (Please tick all that apply)

Known and suspected criminals	82
People alleged to be falsely claiming state welfare benefits	82
Asylum-seekers	75
Football hooligans	68
Racial and other minority groups	13
Young people	7
Foreign-looking people	6
None of these	7
Don't know	3

And which do you think the police and other public authorities WOULD target in practice? (Please tick all that apply)

Known and suspected criminals	79
People alleged to be falsely claiming state welfare benefits	64
Asylum-seekers	69
Football hooligans	73
Racial and other minority groups	48
Young people	46
Foreign-looking people	37
None of these	2
Don't know	9

If compulsory identity cards are introduced, will you, or will you not, feel that your personal freedom has been reduced?

Yes, will	26
No, will not	70
Don't know	5

Which of these statements comes closest to your view?

‘Identity cards would reduce my personal freedom to an unacceptable degree’	14
‘Identity cards would reduce my personal freedom, but the benefits outweigh the disadvantages’	24
‘Identity cards would not reduce my personal freedom at all’	58
Don’t know	5

People sometimes speak of ‘Big Brother’ – the idea that the government of whichever party, is keeping a constant eye on both you and everything you do. How worried are you that the introduction of ID cards would bring ‘Big Brother’ closer?

Very worried	10
Fairly worried	16
Not very worried	40
Not at all worried	32
Don’t know	2

Taking everything into account, which of the following statements comes closest to your view?

‘I would greatly welcome the introduction of identity cards’	34
‘I would not mind the introduction of identity cards’	45
‘I would object to the introduction of identity cards but would reluctantly go along with them’	13
‘I would strongly object to their being introduced and would absolutely refuse to acquire one’	7
Don’t know	2

If there were widespread protests against the introduction of cards and a lot of people refused to acquire them, do you think you would...?

Disapprove of the protests and refuse to take part	53
Sympathise with the protesters but not take part yourself	30
Sympathise with the protesters and consider joining the protests	11
Don’t know	6

How much do you care one way or the other whether or not identity cards are introduced?

Care a lot	38
Care a little	36
Do not care very much	21
Do not care at all	4
Don’t know	2