



**PRIVACY INTERNATIONAL**

# A NATION DIVIDED

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Views of the British public on the Government's  
proposed National Identity Card

UK public survey commissioned by Privacy International  
& conducted by YouGov

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Privacy International is registered in the UK as a private (non profit) company limited by guarantee. Registration no. 4354366  
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## About Privacy International

Privacy International (PI) is the oldest surviving privacy advocacy group in the world, and was the first organisation to campaign at an international level on privacy issues. PI is based in London, UK, and has an office in Washington DC.

In the fourteen years since its first meeting in Luxembourg in 1990, PI has adopted a broad brief; organising more than 200 conferences & award ceremonies, participating in hundreds of national & international meetings, organising campaigns, producing publications & giving expert testimony to parliamentary and government committees. PI now has active associates and networks in over 50 countries. It is registered in the UK as a non-profit private limited company (no. 4354366).

PI deals at any one time with dozens of key issues. The organisation's campaigns, media activity and projects encompass international government cooperation, data protection law, anti-terrorism developments, freedom of information, Internet censorship, identity systems, corporate governance, the appointment of regulators, cross-border data flows, data retention, judicial process, government consultation procedures, information security, national security, cybercrime & aspects of around a hundred technologies and technology applications ranging from video surveillance to DNA testing.

## Background

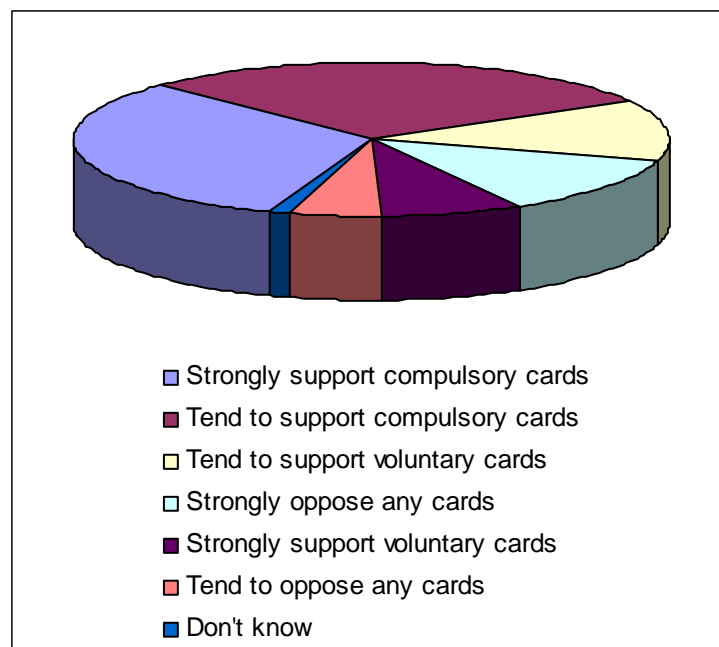
- In May 2004 Privacy International commissioned YouGov to conduct a poll of UK electors to determine views and opinion trends relating to the proposed National Identity Card.
- YouGov questioned a representative sample of 2,003 electors throughout the United Kingdom between May 11 & May 13.
- The Poll was commissioned partly in response to a MORI survey published a month earlier by IT supplier Detica. The company & the government inferred from the poll that 80 per cent of people support the government's ID card proposals, and that civil liberties arguments have failed.
- This poll tested opinion on key elements in the Government's Draft Identity Cards Bill, and also asked those opposing ID cards to indicate what measures they would take to fight the introduction of such a scheme.
- There are certain limitations on comparing polls. We have attempted to fairly represent trends and shifts between the MORI and the YouGov findings.

# Key Findings

- **The majority say they support ID cards, but not to the extent that the government claims**
  - 61% of the population support compulsory identity cards. This contrasts markedly with repeated claims by government that 80% are in favour of its proposal.
- **However, the majority of respondents oppose key elements of the Draft Identity Cards Bill.**
  - Many people object to the legal requirement to notify government of change of address (47% against; 41% in favour)
  - Most people object to the legal requirement to inform government whenever a card is lost, stolen or damaged (45% against; 44% in favour)
- **Opponents may be in the minority, but they are signalling a new Poll Tax revolt**
  - 28% of those opposing compulsory cards said they would take to the streets to participate in demonstrations. This represents approximately 4.9 million people.
  - 16% of those opposing compulsory cards said they would participate in a "campaign of civil disobedience". This represents 2.8 million people.
  - 6% of those opposing compulsory cards said they would prefer to go to prison rather than register for a card. This represents over a million people.
- **Tory voters are much more likely to oppose the ID card proposals.**
  - Nearly a quarter (24%) of Tory voters who object to compulsory ID cards said they are prepared to take part in a "campaign of civil disobedience"

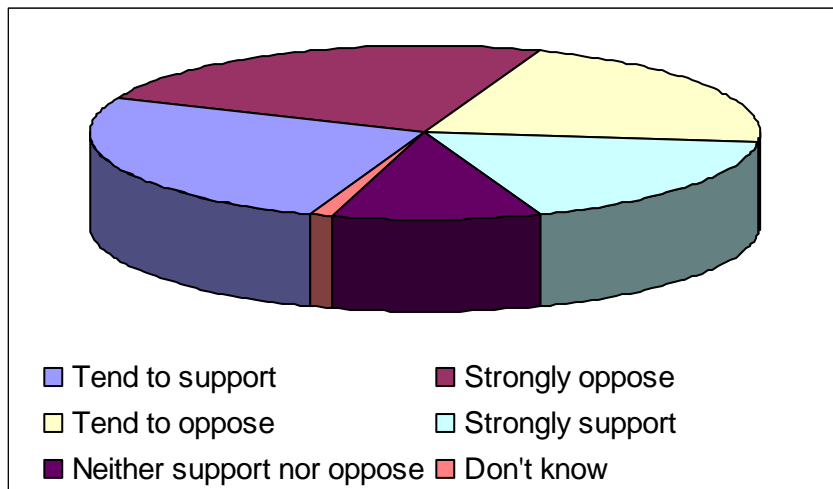
## ID Cards still have majority support, but opposition is deep & entrenched

- 61% of the population support compulsory identity cards. This contrasts markedly with repeated claims by government that 80% are in favour of its proposal.
- It appears that the number of people who **strongly** support ID cards has fallen from 50% (in the April 2004 MORI poll) to 40%
- Those **strongly** opposed has doubled from 6% to 12% in the four weeks since the MORI poll.
- The MORI poll concluded that only one in five people are prepared to pay for the government's ID card.



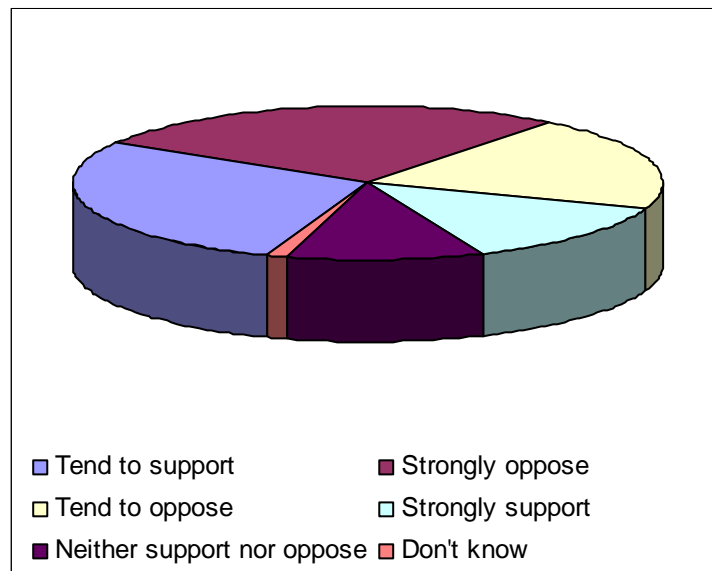
## People do not want their address connected to the ID card

- The government has lost the argument over forcing people to reveal their change of address to a future ID card authority. 47% oppose such a provision, compared with 41% that support it.
- Opposition is entrenched, with nearly a quarter of the population (24%) strongly opposing the requirement to disclose address.



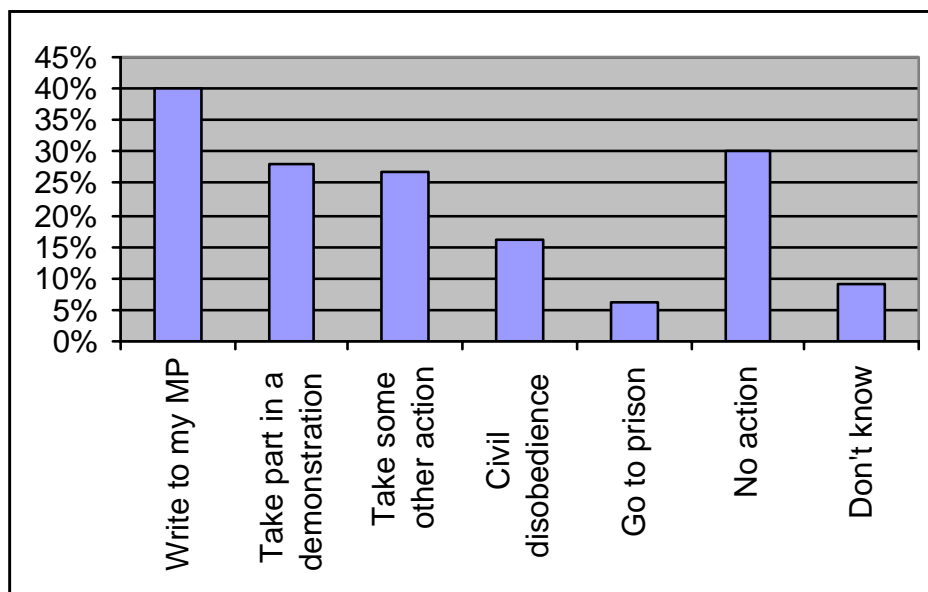
## Financial penalties are deeply opposed

- Many people object to the proposed legal requirement to inform government whenever their card is lost, stolen or damaged card (45% against; 44% in favour)
- Opposition to the provision in the Draft Identity Card Bill for a fine or imprisonment will meet stiff resistance, with 27% of people strongly opposed & 61% of people under 30 opposed.
- More than a third (34%) of people under 30 are strongly opposed.



## People are prepared to go to prison over the ID card

- 28% of those opposing compulsory cards said they would take to the streets to participate in demonstrations. This represents approximately 4.9 million people.
- 16% of those opposing compulsory cards said they would participate in a "campaign of civil disobedience". This represents 2.8 million people.
- 6% of those opposing compulsory cards said they would prefer to go to prison rather than register for a card. This represents over a million people.



## A conundrum for the Tories

- The most vehement opposition to the ID card proposals is from people who voted Conservative at the last election. Almost consistently across all questions and in all categories, Tory voters opposed the ID card proposals considerably more than Labour voters.
- Nearly a quarter (24%) of Tory voters who object to compulsory ID cards said they are prepared to take part in a “campaign of civil disobedience”
- 1 in 30 Tory voters say they are prepared to go to prison rather than register for an ID card.
- More than a third (34%) of Tory voters say they will take part in a demonstration against the card proposals.

