

PARLIAMENTARY PANEL SURVEY - MPs - FEBRUARY/MARCH 2012

Q1: Some civil liberties groups have called for reform of Section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986, which outlaws "insulting" words or behaviour, arguing that it is an unjust restriction on free speech. Section 5 was used to threaten a protester with arrest for calling Scientology a "cult" and an Oxford University student was prosecuted under Section 5 for calling a police horse "gay". Do you agree or disagree with each of these statements?

Base: All Respondents

	PARTY					COUNTRY			REGION				DATE OF BIRTH				MARGINALITY				LENGTH OF SERVICE						GENDER	
	Total	Con	Lab	Lib Dems	Other	Eng-land	Wales	Scot land & NI	Lon-don	South	Mids	North	Pre-1950	1950-1959	1960+	0.1-9.9%	10.0-19.9%	20.0-29.9%	30%+	1986 or before	1987-1991	1992-1996	1997-2000	2001-2004	2005-2009	2010+	Male	Fe-male
Unweighted Total	154	57	77	11	9	117	19	18	18	24	32	43	26	55	73	46	52	34	22	10	9	11	27	19	24	54	123	31
Weighted Total	154	73	61	14	7	126	9	18	17	33	39	37	26	51	77	42	54	33	25	11	8	9	26	17	24	59	123	31
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
I have heard of the campaign to reform Section 5																												
Agree	96	49	33	10	5	79	8	9	10	23	27	19	14	30	52	24	38	19	15	8	4	3	16	15	12	38	79	17
	62%	67%	54%	75%	69%	63%	85%	48%	60%	68%	71%	51%	54%	59%	68%	56%	71%	58%	60%	69%	53%	39%	60%	88%	52%	64%	65%	54%
Disagree	42	20	19	2	1	34	*	8	6	9	7	12	8	17	17	13	11	10	9	2	1	4	10	2	6	17	31	12
	27%	27%	31%	17%	19%	27%	4%	42%	33%	29%	19%	31%	31%	34%	22%	30%	20%	30%	36%	23%	8%	42%	38%	12%	27%	28%	25%	37%
No opinion	16	4	10	1	1	13	1	2	1	1	4	7	4	4	8	6	5	4	1	1	3	2	*	-	5	5	13	3
	10%	6%	16%	8%	12%	10%	10%	11%	7%	3%	11%	18%	15%	7%	11%	14%	10%	12%	4%	8%	38%	18%	2%	-	21%	8%	11%	9%
It is no business of the criminal law to outlaw "insults"																												
Agree	96	61	23	10	2	82	4	10	9	29	28	17	15	30	51	26	31	18	21	6	3	5	11	12	14	44	76	20
	62%	84%	37%	72%	37%	65%	42%	53%	49%	88%	72%	45%	56%	59%	67%	62%	57%	56%	83%	56%	41%	58%	43%	68%	61%	74%	62%	62%
Disagree	39	7	27	2	2	31	4	4	5	3	10	13	9	18	13	9	18	8	3	5	3	3	11	5	5	8	34	5
	25%	10%	45%	18%	25%	25%	42%	21%	29%	9%	26%	35%	33%	35%	17%	21%	34%	25%	14%	44%	37%	33%	42%	29%	20%	13%	28%	16%
No opinion	19	4	11	1	3	13	1	5	4	1	1	8	3	3	13	7	5	7	1	-	2	1	4	*	5	8	13	7
	13%	6%	18%	10%	38%	10%	16%	26%	22%	3%	2%	20%	11%	7%	17%	17%	9%	20%	3%	-	22%	9%	15%	3%	20%	13%	10%	22%
The word "insulting" should be removed from section 5 of the Public Order Act to protect freedom of speech																												
Agree	89	58	19	9	3	76	4	8	10	26	25	15	15	25	50	25	30	17	17	7	3	4	9	11	12	43	73	16
	58%	79%	31%	70%	50%	60%	47%	45%	56%	79%	65%	41%	56%	49%	64%	59%	56%	51%	69%	62%	41%	48%	32%	64%	52%	72%	60%	50%
Disagree	35	5	27	2	1	27	4	4	4	3	9	11	9	12	13	8	17	6	3	4	3	1	11	5	4	6	29	5
	22%	7%	44%	13%	13%	21%	37%	23%	22%	9%	23%	29%	34%	24%	17%	19%	32%	19%	12%	38%	37%	15%	43%	28%	18%	10%	24%	18%
No opinion	30	10	16	2	2	23	1	6	4	4	4	11	3	14	14	9	7	10	5	-	2	3	7	1	7	11	20	10
	20%	14%	26%	17%	37%	18%	16%	32%	22%	12%	11%	30%	10%	27%	18%	22%	13%	29%	19%	-	22%	37%	25%	8%	30%	18%	16%	33%
If "insulting" is removed from section 5 of the Public Order Act it will undermine the ability of the police to protect the public																												
Agree	27	5	19	2	1	21	4	2	3	3	6	9	9	8	9	5	14	5	3	3	3	2	8	2	1	7	22	4
	17%	6%	32%	13%	13%	17%	37%	11%	18%	9%	16%	24%	35%	17%	11%	12%	26%	14%	12%	29%	37%	24%	30%	13%	6%	12%	18%	14%

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	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Disagree	97	60	24	10	2	83	4	10	10	28	28	17	15	31	51	26	33	20	18	8	3	4	13	14	15	40	79	18
	63%	83%	39%	77%	37%	66%	47%	53%	56%	85%	74%	45%	58%	61%	66%	61%	61%	61%	74%	71%	41%	48%	51%	80%	64%	67%	64%	59%
No opinion	30	8	18	1	3	22	1	7	5	2	4	12	2	11	17	12	7	8	4	-	2	2	5	1	7	13	22	9
	20%	11%	29%	10%	50%	18%	16%	37%	27%	6%	10%	31%	7%	22%	22%	28%	13%	25%	14%	-	22%	28%	19%	8%	30%	22%	18%	28%
If "insulting" is removed from section 5 of the Public Order Act it will put minority groups at risk of being victimised																												
Agree	32	5	26	1	1	24	4	4	5	3	5	11	7	15	11	10	13	8	1	2	2	4	11	2	5	5	25	7
	21%	7%	42%	8%	13%	19%	42%	23%	27%	9%	13%	31%	27%	29%	14%	23%	25%	25%	5%	20%	28%	42%	43%	13%	23%	9%	20%	24%
Disagree	97	60	23	11	3	85	4	8	10	28	31	17	18	28	51	24	34	19	20	9	5	4	12	14	14	40	82	16
	63%	82%	38%	83%	50%	67%	42%	45%	56%	85%	80%	44%	69%	55%	66%	56%	63%	58%	81%	80%	58%	48%	45%	80%	59%	68%	66%	50%
No opinion	24	8	13	1	2	17	1	6	3	2	3	9	1	8	15	9	6	6	4	-	1	1	3	1	4	14	16	8
	16%	11%	21%	10%	37%	14%	16%	32%	18%	6%	7%	25%	4%	16%	20%	20%	12%	18%	14%	-	14%	9%	12%	8%	18%	23%	13%	27%
The Government should remove the word "insulting" from section 5 of the Public Order Act if it can be established that there is widespread public support to do so																												
Agree	76	48	18	8	2	67	2	7	7	23	23	14	15	19	43	20	25	18	14	6	4	3	7	8	11	36	61	15
	49%	66%	29%	57%	32%	53%	20%	40%	43%	68%	58%	38%	55%	37%	55%	47%	46%	53%	56%	56%	50%	39%	27%	46%	49%	61%	50%	47%
Disagree	37	9	24	3	1	30	4	3	4	5	11	10	9	13	14	9	18	7	4	4	3	3	8	6	4	9	29	7
	24%	12%	39%	21%	13%	24%	37%	17%	24%	15%	28%	27%	34%	26%	19%	20%	33%	21%	14%	38%	37%	32%	31%	37%	15%	15%	24%	23%
No opinion	42	16	19	3	4	30	4	8	6	6	5	13	3	19	20	14	12	8	7	1	1	2	11	3	9	15	32	10
	27%	21%	32%	23%	56%	24%	42%	43%	33%	17%	14%	35%	10%	37%	26%	33%	22%	26%	30%	7%	14%	29%	42%	17%	36%	25%	26%	31%