



Bar Council Poll

METHODOLOGY NOTE

ComRes interviewed 2,033 British adults online from 10th to 12th May 2013. Data were weighted to be demographically representative of all GB adults aged 18+. ComRes is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules.

All press releases or other publications must be checked with ComRes before use. ComRes requires 48 hours to check a press release unless otherwise agreed.

Bar Council Poll

ONLINE Fieldwork : 10th-12th May 2013

Absolutes/col percents

Table 1

Q.1 If you are charged with a crime, the Government will currently pay for your defence by a local lawyer of your choice through legal aid. The Government now wants this work to be done by the lowest bidder, regardless of their level of experience of the courts system. The Government says such changes are necessary to reduce the cost of running the courts system. Thinking about the justice system in the UK, do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Base: All respondents

	Gender			Age						Social Grade				Employment Sector	
	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Public	Private
Unweighted base	2033	937	1096	265	367	339	362	317	383	576	602	351	504	284	837
Weighted base	2033	996	1037	242	342	342	362	302	443	543	564	443	483	304	834
<u>People accused of a crime should be treated as innocent until proven guilty</u>															
Agree	1689	856	833	167	245	278	323	272	404	465	463	371	390	239	678
	83%	86%	80%	69%	72%	81%	89%	90%	91%	85%	82%	84%	81%	79%	81%
Disagree	115	57	58	16	44	14	13	11	17	37	29	24	26	26	56
	6%	6%	6%	7%	13%	4%	3%	4%	4%	7%	5%	5%	5%	9%	7%
Don't know	229	83	146	59	54	50	26	19	22	42	72	48	67	39	101
	11%	8%	14%	24%	16%	15%	7%	6%	5%	8%	13%	11%	14%	13%	12%
<u>If the state decides to prosecute a UK taxpayer, then the state should be prepared to pay the full cost of that person's defence</u>															
Agree	967	513	454	119	174	161	168	137	208	269	254	215	228	145	418
	48%	52%	44%	49%	51%	47%	46%	45%	47%	49%	45%	49%	47%	48%	50%
Disagree	574	291	283	48	88	96	104	98	140	170	156	124	125	90	219
	28%	29%	27%	20%	26%	28%	29%	33%	32%	31%	28%	28%	26%	30%	26%
Don't know	492	192	300	75	81	84	90	67	94	105	154	103	130	69	198
	24%	19%	29%	31%	24%	25%	25%	22%	21%	19%	27%	23%	27%	23%	24%
<u>I am worried that innocent people could be convicted of crimes they did not commit if they are forced to use the cheapest defence lawyer available</u>															
Agree	1443	679	764	169	253	233	259	223	307	383	385	324	351	222	578
	71%	68%	74%	70%	74%	68%	71%	74%	69%	70%	68%	73%	73%	73%	69%
Disagree	299	173	126	25	37	55	56	48	79	96	81	61	61	40	128
	15%	17%	12%	10%	11%	16%	15%	16%	18%	18%	14%	14%	13%	13%	15%
Don't know	290	144	146	48	53	54	48	31	57	65	97	57	71	42	128
	14%	14%	14%	20%	15%	16%	13%	10%	13%	12%	17%	13%	15%	14%	15%

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Q.1 If you are charged with a crime, the Government will currently pay for your defence by a local lawyer of your choice through legal aid. The Government now wants this work to be done by the lowest bidder, regardless of their level of experience of the courts system. The Government says such changes are necessary to reduce the cost of running the courts system. Thinking about the justice system in the UK, do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Base: All respondents

	Gender			Age						Social Grade				Employment Sector	
	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Public	Private
Weighted base	2033	996	1037	242	342	342	362	302	443	543	564	443	483	304	834
<u>I believe legal aid is a price worth paying to ensure we have a fair society, regardless of its cost</u>															
Agree	1356 67%	651 65%	704 68%	146 60%	215 63%	241 71%	241 67%	218 72%	294 67%	358 66%	368 65%	285 64%	344 71%	197 65%	538 65%
Disagree	311 15%	182 18%	129 12%	28 12%	64 19%	36 11%	55 15%	39 13%	88 20%	107 20%	73 13%	78 18%	53 11%	49 16%	138 17%
Don't know	366 18%	163 16%	203 20%	68 28%	63 18%	65 19%	66 18%	45 15%	60 14%	78 14%	122 22%	79 18%	86 18%	58 19%	158 19%
<u>If I was accused of a crime, I would expect the same lawyer to handle all parts of a criminal trial</u>															
Agree	1574 77%	761 76%	813 78%	164 68%	255 74%	259 76%	290 80%	239 79%	367 83%	411 76%	431 76%	354 80%	378 78%	229 75%	624 75%
Disagree	153 8%	87 9%	66 6%	18 7%	39 11%	23 7%	19 5%	26 9%	29 7%	53 10%	47 8%	30 7%	23 5%	26 9%	74 9%
Don't know	306 15%	149 15%	158 15%	60 25%	49 14%	60 18%	54 15%	37 12%	47 11%	79 15%	86 15%	60 13%	82 17%	48 16%	136 16%
<u>Our justice system is respected by people around the world because of the quality of our barristers</u>															
Agree	1074 53%	558 56%	516 50%	102 42%	147 43%	155 45%	207 57%	169 56%	293 66%	339 62%	281 50%	206 46%	248 51%	153 50%	425 51%
Disagree	398 20%	198 20%	200 19%	57 24%	78 23%	77 22%	77 21%	62 20%	47 11%	90 16%	109 19%	92 21%	107 22%	69 23%	179 21%
Don't know	561 28%	241 24%	320 31%	83 34%	117 34%	110 32%	78 22%	71 23%	102 23%	115 21%	173 31%	145 33%	128 27%	82 27%	231 28%

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	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Public	Private
Weighted base	2033	996	1037	242	342	342	362	302	443	543	564	443	483	304	834
<u>If the Government makes cuts to legal aid it will be the poorest members of society that will be most affected</u>															
Agree	1533 75%	718 72%	815 79%	167 69%	239 70%	258 75%	287 79%	232 77%	350 79%	394 73%	431 76%	326 74%	382 79%	230 76%	591 71%
Disagree	254 12%	167 17%	87 8%	18 7%	43 13%	45 13%	40 11%	45 15%	63 14%	94 17%	58 10%	66 15%	35 7%	40 13%	124 15%
Don't know	246 12%	111 11%	135 13%	57 24%	60 17%	40 12%	34 10%	25 8%	30 7%	55 10%	75 13%	51 11%	66 14%	34 11%	119 14%
<u>At less than 0.5% of annual Government spending, legal aid is a worthwhile investment in our basic freedoms</u>															
Agree	1377 68%	677 68%	700 67%	143 59%	215 63%	226 66%	247 68%	224 74%	323 73%	376 69%	370 66%	282 64%	349 72%	211 69%	533 64%
Disagree	217 11%	144 14%	72 7%	24 10%	37 11%	35 10%	33 9%	31 10%	57 13%	76 14%	55 10%	48 11%	38 8%	28 9%	107 13%
Don't know	439 22%	174 18%	265 26%	75 31%	91 27%	81 24%	82 23%	47 16%	62 14%	91 17%	139 25%	113 25%	96 20%	65 21%	194 23%

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Base: All respondents

	Region											
	Total	Scotland	North East	North West	Yorkshire & Humberside	West Midlands	East Midlands	Wales	Eastern	London	South East	South West
Unweighted base	2033	163	88	240	162	166	139	112	192	286	303	182
Weighted base	2033	183	81	224	183	183	142	102	203	264	285	183
<u>People accused of a crime should be treated as innocent until proven guilty</u>												
Agree	1689 83%	150 82%	63 77%	202 90%	157 86%	156 85%	117 82%	88 87%	179 88%	202 76%	224 79%	149 82%
Disagree	115 6%	12 6%	9 11%	9 4%	11 6%	6 4%	5 4%	3 3%	7 4%	22 8%	17 6%	14 7%
Don't know	229 11%	21 11%	9 11%	12 6%	15 8%	20 11%	20 14%	10 10%	17 8%	41 15%	43 15%	20 11%
<u>If the state decides to prosecute a UK taxpayer, then the state should be prepared to pay the full cost of that person's defence</u>												
Agree	967 48%	87 48%	35 43%	112 50%	76 42%	87 48%	61 43%	41 40%	106 52%	149 56%	127 44%	86 47%
Disagree	574 28%	49 27%	27 33%	52 23%	60 33%	55 30%	45 32%	37 36%	63 31%	54 20%	87 31%	45 24%
Don't know	492 24%	46 25%	20 24%	60 27%	47 26%	41 22%	36 25%	24 24%	34 17%	61 23%	71 25%	52 29%
<u>I am worried that innocent people could be convicted of crimes they did not commit if they are forced to use the cheapest defence lawyer available</u>												
Agree	1443 71%	133 73%	54 67%	171 76%	140 77%	131 72%	97 68%	71 70%	140 69%	186 70%	196 69%	123 67%
Disagree	299 15%	27 15%	15 18%	26 12%	24 13%	29 16%	24 17%	17 17%	40 20%	35 13%	36 13%	28 15%
Don't know	290 14%	23 13%	12 15%	27 12%	18 10%	23 13%	21 15%	14 14%	23 11%	44 17%	52 18%	32 18%

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I believe legal aid is a price worth paying to ensure we have a fair society, regardless of its cost												
Agree	1356 67%	116 63%	58 72%	155 69%	133 72%	127 69%	88 62%	70 69%	126 62%	178 67%	178 63%	128 70%
Disagree	311 15%	26 14%	10 12%	40 18%	21 11%	26 14%	22 16%	14 14%	38 19%	42 16%	43 15%	29 16%
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If I was accused of a crime, I would expect the same lawyer to handle all parts of a criminal trial												
Agree	1574 77%	140 77%	64 78%	183 82%	143 78%	145 79%	108 76%	87 85%	159 78%	189 72%	213 75%	143 78%
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Don't know	306 15%	32 18%	13 15%	25 11%	26 14%	22 12%	25 18%	9 9%	30 15%	44 17%	50 18%	30 16%
Our justice system is respected by people around the world because of the quality of our barristers												
Agree	1074 53%	69 38%	47 58%	124 55%	100 55%	95 52%	70 49%	54 53%	127 62%	161 61%	133 47%	94 52%
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Don't know	561 28%	59 33%	19 23%	62 28%	39 22%	56 31%	42 30%	25 25%	45 22%	61 23%	87 31%	65 35%

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Don't know	439 22%	28 15%	16 20%	40 18%	37 20%	35 19%	36 25%	21 21%	42 21%	62 24%	81 28%	41 23%