British Identity: its sources and possible implications for civic attitudes and behaviour

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Executive summary

1. In the last decades of the twentieth century, there was a decline in the proportion of people in Great Britain who thought of themselves as primarily or exclusively British and a growing proportion of people who thought of themselves as Scottish, Welsh or English (or none of these) rather than British.

2. A sense of British identity nevertheless remains widespread and in all three territories the majority of British residents continue to have dual identities, as both British and Scottish, British and Welsh or British and English. A small but growing number (around 10%) of people reject all four national identities.

3. Britons tend to feel proud of being British, and levels of national pride are higher than in most other countries in the EU15. In contrast levels of attachment or sense of belonging to Britain (which may be the more relevant aspect in the context of civil society) is below the European average.

4. There is evidence of decline over the last two decades in strength of national pride (although largely from 'very strong' to 'fairly strong' sense of pride) and there may well have been a modest decline in attachment too.

5. The main driver of a feeling of attachment or belonging to Britain is age, with younger people being less strongly attached to Britain. It is likely that much of the decline in pride and attachment is generational in character, with younger generations who feel a lower sense of attachment gradually replacing older generations.

6. Controlling for age, we find no evidence that Muslims or people of Pakistani heritage were in general less attached to Britain than were other religions or ethnic groups. Ethnic minorities show clear evidence of 'dual' rather than 'exclusive' identities. However, people born overseas in a non-Commonwealth country and people who have arrived in Britain only recently tend to have a weaker sense of belonging to Britain.

7. Socio-economic marginality (lower social class or low income, or a limiting long-term illness) is associated with slightly weaker feelings of belonging.

8. Among young people born in Britain, the lack of attachment of Black Caribbeans is especially marked, reaching one third or more. This applies to the second generation as well as to the first, migrant generation.

9. A feeling of belonging or attachment to Britain appears to be associated with social trust, a sense of civic duty (at least as indicated by turnout in elections) and by increased support for the current political order. However, in international comparisons Britain does not rank especially highly on measures of social trust, social participation or sense of civic duty.

10. A sense of belonging to Britain is not associated with particularly xenophobic attitudes, nor is it associated with distinctive political positions (other than on European integration and maintenance of the union) or with many other aspects of

social participation or values. However, there is some evidence that it is associated with an 'ethnic' rather than a 'civic' conception of the nation.

11. The predominant conception of Britain is one that sees both ethnic (such as ancestry) and civic (such as respect for political institutions) criteria as important. Ethnic conceptions tend to be somewhat backward looking, taking pride in Britain's history, and tend to be exclusive. Primarily civic conceptions of the nation tend to be more inclusive, and countries that have more strongly civic conceptions also exhibit high levels of 'good citizenship'.

12. The evidence base is not yet sufficiently strong for firm policy recommendations. But policies should, perhaps, be considered which address the weak sense of belonging on the part of people born overseas in non-Commonwealth countries, of second-generation minorities (especially those of Caribbean heritage) and of the economically marginal. These policies might well include both 'direct' ones aimed at strengthening national identity and at 'indirect' ones aimed at tackling some of the root causes of lack of belonging.

13. Any reforms need to consider not only how to strengthen British identity but also what form of identity should be encouraged.

1. Introduction

The aims of this report are to describe trends in British identity and belonging or attachment to Britain, to explore which groups in society have a stronger or weaker sense of identity, and to consider the implications for what might be termed 'civic' attitudes and behaviour. Following a brief introduction, we consider the survey evidence on trends over time in British identity, British national pride and a sense of belonging or attachment to Britain in Section 2. In Section 3 we go on to consider the main drivers of a sense of belonging, focusing in particular on age groups, ethnic and religious groups, overseas birth and socio-economic deprivation. In Section 4 we then turn to the implications of a sense of belonging, or its absence, for 'civic' attitudes and behaviour. Section 5 discusses the distinction between ethnic and civic conceptions of the nation, and Section 6 concludes.

Historically, British identity is a relatively recent construct and was gradually superimposed on earlier national identities of English, Welsh, Scottish and Irish. For all of its (relatively short) history, Britain has therefore been a multi-nation state and a British identity has had to coexist with separate national identities. First Wales was formally incorporated with England by the 1536 Act of Union. Next came the 1707 Act of Union between England/Wales and Scotland, which is usually taken as the formal constitutional beginning of Great Britain, while the 1801 Act of Union created the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. In 1922 the twenty six counties of southern and western Ireland formed the Free State, leaving a United Kingdom composed of Great Britain and the six counties of the Province of Ulster that became formally known as Northern Ireland.

Many writers have suggested that national identity and more specifically British identity is now in decline. General processes of globalization and international interdependence, most strikingly through the developing institutions of the European Union, have been argued to lead to a blurring of national identities and a growth of cosmopolitanism (Dogan, 1994). In addition there are particular reasons why British national identity might be in decline. Some of the features that helped construct British identity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries - the existence of Protestant religious traditions in each of the four parts of the United Kingdom (in opposition to the Catholicism of France), distinctive traditions of British democracy (in opposition to the authoritarian rule of France), and the shared economic and political project of the British Empire that united the interests of English, Welsh, Scots and Irish - are either no longer present to the same degree or, if present, are much less distinctive (Colley, 1992).

Any decline in British identity might have important consequences for British society. While most residents of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland officially hold British citizenship and a British passport, British identity is more than an official category. It may also provide a sense of attachment to the state and may thus have a role in promoting social cohesion within the nation. In the classic formulation of national identity, Benedict Anderson conceptualised the nation as an imagined political community – imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. He went on to argue that it is imagined in the sense that "the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their members …yet in the minds of each lives the image of

their communion", and that it is a community because "regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep horizontal comradeship" (Anderson, 1983, pp. 6-7).

Developing this idea of a deep horizontal comradeship, David Miller has made a powerful ethical argument for nationality, arguing that this sense of belonging to an imagined community can be an important source of national cohesion:

> "In acknowledging a national identity, I am also acknowledging that I owe a special obligation to fellow members of my nation which I do not owe to other human beings." (Miller, 1995, p. 49)

Nationality can thus become a basis of mutual obligations and social solidarity: one may feel obligations to one's fellow nationals, for example to provide for them in their old age, that one does not feel towards members of other nations. In a related fashion Sidney Verba (1965) has argued that shared national sentiment can provide a basis for the legitimacy of the state and of its political institutions. Metaphorically speaking, we can see national identity as providing the social glue that holds a nation together (Smith and Jarkko, 1998).

Throughout this report we focus on the patterns within Great Britain and exclude Northern Ireland. There are a number of special features that apply to the situation in Northern Ireland and a separate, detailed analysis would be necessary of this important territory. (But for some analysis of national identity in Northern Ireland and a comparison with that in other parts of the UK see Heath et al, forthcoming.)

2. Trends in British identity, pride and attachment

Unfortunately we cannot construct a long time-series for British national identity charting whether and to what extent it has declined. This is partly because a sense of British identity was largely taken for granted by early survey researchers, and it is only in recent years (particularly with the debates over devolution) that the measurement of national identity has become a matter of academic or government research. However, we can construct a time series going back to 1979 in Scotland and Wales and to 1992 in England. In Scotland for example respondents were asked:

> *Would you describe yourself as British, Scottish, English, Irish, British and Scottish, or European?*

Respondents were allowed to choose only one of these options in the first surveys. Later they were allowed to choose multiple identities but were then asked to select the one that fitted them best. We can think of this as a 'forced choice' question. The trends in the three territories of Great Britain are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Trends in 'forced choice' national identity: England, Scotland and Wales 1979 – 2006

				Column percentages				
	1979	**1992**	**1997**	**1999**	**2001**	**2003**	**2005**	**2006**
England								
English identity	n/a	32	33	44	43	39	40	47
British identity	n/a	63	56	44	45	48	48	39
Other/none	n/a	5	11	12	12	13	12	14
Base		*2424*	*2490*	*2684*	*2768*	*3708*	*3643*	*3666*
Scotland								
Scottish identity	56	72	73	77	77	72	79	78
British identity	38	25	20	17	16	20	14	14
Other/none	6	3	7	6	7	8	7	8
Base	*658*	*956*	*874*	*1481*	*1605*	*1508*	*1549*	*1594*
Wales								
Welsh identity	58	n/a	63	57	57	60	n/a	n/a
British identity	34	n/a	26	30	31	27	n/a	n/a
Other/none	8	n/a	11	13	12	13	n/a	n/a
Base	*858*		*686*	*794*	*1085*	*988*		

Sources: British Election Studies 1992-1997; British Social Attitudes Surveys 1999-2006; Scottish Election Surveys 1979-1997; Scottish Social Attitudes Surveys 1999-2006; Welsh Election Survey 1979; Welsh Referendum Survey 1997; Welsh Assembly Election Survey 1999; Welsh Life and Times Surveys 2001 and 2003.

In both England and Scotland, as Table 1 shows, there was a clear decline in the late twentieth century in British identity and a rise in the separate English and Scottish national identities. Thereafter, the proportions have tended to stabilize although there was a further rise in the level of English identity in 2006.[1] It is also very clear that in Scotland and Wales the proportion who opt for a Scottish or Welsh identity when forced to choose is much higher than the proportion who opt for a British identity, while even in England a British identity has now fallen behind an English identity. (However, in England the distinction between British and English is a very 'fuzzy' one and is not as sharp a distinction as that between, say, British and Scottish. (See Cohen, 1995; Hazelden and Jenkins, 2003.)

This forced choice question is a relatively crude measure. There is also available a more subtle question that enables us to see more precisely the distinctions between the various identities and in particular allows us to look at 'dual' identities and to distinguish them from 'exclusive' identities (Moreno, 1988). Thus in a number of surveys respondents have been asked:

"Which of these statements on this card best describes how you see yourself? Scottish not British, More Scottish than British, Equally Scottish and British, More British than Scottish, British not Scottish"

Similar questions have been asked for the contrast between British and English and between British and Welsh. Table 2 shows the patterns and trends over time.

Table 2: Exclusive and dual national identities: England, Scotland and Wales 1997-2005

Column percentages

England	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
English not British	8	17	17	17	14
More English	17	15	13	20	12
Equally	45	37	42	31	45
More British	14	11	9	13	8
British not English	9	14	11	10	10
Other/none	7	7	8	9	10
Base	*2488*	*2721*	*2786*	*1916*	*2367*

Scotland	1992	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
Scottish not British	19	23	32	36	32	32
More Scottish	40	38	34	30	33	32
Equally	33	27	23	24	22	22
More British	3	4	3	3	4	5
British not Scottish	3	4	4	3	4	5
Other/none	1	4	4	4	5	5
Base	*951*	*876*	*1481*	*1605*	*1508*	*1549*

Wales	1997	1999	2001	2003	2007
Welsh not British	13	18	24	21	24
More Welsh	29	20	23	25	20
Equally	26	35	28	30	32
More British	10	7	11	9	9
British not Welsh	15	14	11	9	9
Other/none	6	6	4	6	5
Base	*182*	*795*	*1085*	*988*	*883*

Sources: England - British Election Surveys 1997 and 2005; British Social Attitudes Surveys 1999, 2001 and 2003. Scotland - Scottish Election Studies 1992 and 1997; Scottish Social Attitudes Surveys 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005. Wales - British Elections Survey 1997, Welsh Assembly Election Survey 1999 and Welsh Life and Times Survey 2003, 2007.

We have to be cautious because of the rather small sample sizes in some of the years, and the trends are therefore rather 'bumpy'. Nevertheless, Table 2 confirms that there were quite substantial changes during the 1990s in all three territories, with a declining sense of Britishness and a rising sense of the separate national identities although these trends have not been continued in more recent years. Table 2 also confirms that, in all three territories, the majority of respondents (well over half in all three territories) have dual not exclusive identities. Finally Table 2 shows that there were relatively few respondents who gave other answers or did not think of themselves as having one of these four national identities. The largest proportion is in England where it reaches 10%. Many of these will of course be foreign nationals, although some may also be migrants or disengaged Britons. We return to this issue later.

In general, then, the results are rather reassuring: in all three territories a majority of residents have dual identities and there does not appear from these data to be a continuing decline in British identity or a continuing rise in exclusive national identities. There is however a small but growing number in all three territories, but especially in England, who do not subscribe to any of the four main national identities of Great Britain.

As well as looking at whether people adopt a British identity or not, it is also useful to explore their degree of attachment to this identity. Indeed, it could be argued that this is in many respects the more crucial issue – a sense of British identity but with a weak sense of attachment to Britain may mean that national identity is unable to perform those functions of comradeship and willingness to make sacrifices for one's fellow citizens that have been emphasized by political theorists.

From the Eurobarometer we can track two trends over time, in national pride and in strength of attachment, and we can also see how Britain compares with the rest of Europe. Respondents were asked:

> *Would you say you are very proud, fairly proud, not very proud, not at all proud to be… [Nationality]?*

The results for national pride are shown in Table 3. Here we look at the figures for Great Britain (excluding Northern Ireland) taken as a whole since the sample sizes are too small to allow us to disaggregate into the separate territories of England, Wales and Scotland with any confidence. (We combined the categories not very proud, not at all proud and don't know. We also include some results from the World Values Survey and the ISSP survey which used the same question.)

Table 3: National pride: Great Britain (excluding NI) 1981-2003

	Very proud	Fairly proud	Not proud	Base	Rank among EU15
				Row percentages	
1981	57	33	10	*1162*	
1982	54	35	11	*1110*	3rd
1986	54	35	12	*989*	5th
1990	54	35	11	*1410*	
1994	40	42	18	*1034*	4th
1997	44	42	14	*1078*	4th
2003	45	41	14	*2082*	

Sources: Eurobarometers 26, 30, 47.1, 52; WVS 1981, 1990; ISSP 2003. Weighted data

These results in some ways parallel those for the decline in British identity, with a clear decline in overall levels of national pride. However, this decline has largely taken the form of a transfer from the 'very proud' to the 'fairly proud' categories with only a modest increase in the percentages who were not proud of Britain. From the Eurobarometer we can also look at Britain's ranking within Europe and these figures are quite reassuring too: levels of national pride in Britain are relatively high, and there is little sign that Britain has shown much decline relative to other countries.[2]

Since 1991 the Eurobarometer has also regularly asked a question on attachment to one's country, and this is perhaps a better indication of the aspects of national identity relevant to the strength of the 'imagined community' than is pride. National pride tends to reflect the country's external achievements (such as military or sporting success or failure) while attachment may tell us more about how the members of the society relate to one another.[3] (One notable feature of national pride is the way in which both Germans and Japanese still exhibit low levels of pride decades after the second world war.)

On attachment respondents were asked:

> *"People may feel different degrees of attachment to their town or village, to their region, to their country or to Europe. Please tell me how attached you feel to your country …*

Table 4 gives the trends since 1991 (again covering Great Britain as a whole).

Table 4: Attachment to Britain: Great Britain (excluding NI) 1991-2007

	Very attached	Fairly attached	Not very/ not at all attached	*Base*	Rank among EU 15
		Row percentages			
1991	58	31	10	*1061*	8th
1995	53	35	13	*1093*	10th
1999	58	35	10	*1040*	8th
2000	50	41	10	*1053*	10th
2002a	50	36	15	*981*	11th
2002b	48	40	12	*1014*	11th
2003	48	41	12	*1055*	12th
2004	56	35	8	*1011*	10th
2005	48	40	11	*1044*	12th
2006	54	34	11	*1002*	9th
2007	49	40	12	*1014*	12th

Sources: Eurobarometers 36, 43.1bis, 51, 54.1, 56.3, 58.1, 60.1, 62, 63.4, 65.2, 67.2.
Weighted data.

The most striking finding from Table 4 is that Britain does not rank nearly so highly on levels of attachment as it does on levels of national pride. Whereas in the case of national pride Britain was clearly above the European average, and indeed quite close to the top, it is clearly below average with respect to attachment. To be sure, around half the population do feel very attached to Britain, and it is only about 10% who feel little attachment, but it may also be worth noting that Whiteley (2008) has reported cross-national findings suggesting that Britain does not compare especially well with other West European countries on various aspects of 'good citizenship'. We turn to the wider implications of lack of attachment in Section 4 below.

With respect to the trends over time, once again we have to be cautious as the trends are rather 'bumpy', reflecting the small sample sizes. There are however hints that Britain may be slipping relative to the other members of the EU15. Up until 2000 the percentage who felt 'very attached' was consistently 50 or more, and Britain's rank among the EU 15 was tenth or higher. However, since 2002 the percentage 'very attached' has more often been below 50% and Britain's ranking has fallen as low as twelfth. However we must emphasize that these are very modest changes in magnitude.

The overall picture from these first four tables, then, is that
- There was some shift in the late twentieth century away from a British identity towards separate Scottish or English (and perhaps Welsh) identities
- The great majority of the population continues to subscribe to one of the four national identities of Great Britain and most have 'dual' identities

- The great majority of the population continues to feel either very or fairly proud of Britain and to feel very or fairly attached to Britain although there has been some decline over time
- There is a small but growing minority who do not subscribe to any of the four national identities of Great Britain.

3. The sources of British identity and attachment to Britain

In this section we consider what sorts of people feel more or less attached to Britain. In particular, we ask about the small but growing minority who do not feel themselves to be British or who have weak attachment to Britain. The key issue is whether some groups of individuals, particular ethnic or religious groups for example or people who are socially excluded, feel weak attachment to Britain and might on that account be less inclined to feel a sense of civic duty, might be more vulnerable to dissident movements of various kinds or perhaps might simply be disengaged from civil society. Our interest in this section therefore is not simply whether people feel British or not but on the strength of their attachment to Britain. We are also particularly interested in identifying any groups with an unusually low degree of attachment.

The main source which we are able to use for this purpose is the government's Citizenship Survey (formerly known as the Home Office Citizenship Survey or HOCS) which has large ethnic minority sub-samples, making it ideal for investigating patterns among ethnic minorities. There are also sources such as the British Social Attitudes Survey which, although not adequate for investigating ethnic minorities, are nonetheless valuable for looking generally at individuals who are socially excluded. (See Appendix 4 for technical details of these surveys.)

In the 2003 and 2005 Citizenship Surveys we can use a question on 'belonging' to Britain, which is analogous to the Eurobarometer question on attachment used in Section 2. Respondents to the Citizenship Survey were asked:

> *I would like you to tell me how strongly you feel you belong to each of the following areas, using the answers on this card.*
> > *First, your immediate neighbourhood?*
> > *And now your local area. By this I mean the area within a 15-20 minute walk from your home.*
> > *Britain?*

The response codes were 'very strongly', 'fairly strongly', 'not very strongly', 'not at all strongly'. (Since there are generally small numbers in the latter two categories we merge them together, along with the few people who responded don't know.) We use the data from the 2003 and 2005 Citizenship Surveys and focus on the item 'belonging to Britain'. We must remember that there is likely to be some non-response bias and that people with very low attachment might well not agree to take part in the survey.

We explored the following factors as sources of 'belonging':
- Age/generation, since there are grounds for expecting younger generations to be less attached to Britain
- Overseas birth, since those born abroad may be foreign nationals, or have had less time to become attached to Britain, or lack fluency in the English language and thus be excluded from some aspects of British life;
- Ethnicity, since ethnicity may be a powerful identity in its own right which might take precedence over a British identity

- Socio-economic disadvantage (the unemployed, those on low incomes or in low-paid work, those with low qualifications and poor job prospects) who may feel excluded and perhaps alienated or disengaged
- Community deprivation (which research for the DCLG has shown to be a major driver of a sense of community cohesion).

We focus here on what might be termed 'objective' characteristics of the respondents. There will also be many attitudinal measures that are correlated with attachment to Britain, but the nature of the causal relationships with this kind of variable will be much less clear.

The strongest single driver of 'belonging to Britain' proves to be age. Table 5 shows that there is little difference between our three youngest age groups, in each of which only 40% or so feel that they belong very strongly to Britain. However the older age groups exhibit steadily increasing levels of belonging, reaching over 70% among respondents age 75 or over.

Table 5: Belonging to Britain: variations by age group in England

| | Row percentages | | | |
	Belong very strongly	**Belong fairly strongly**	**Do not belong strongly**	*Base*
16-24	40	43	17	*643*
20-24	42	41	17	*748*
25-34	40	41	19	*1605*
35-49	46	38	16	*2622*
50-64	54	32	14	*2132*
65-74	64	26	11	*1008*
75+	73	20	7	*922*
All	50	35	15	*9680*

Source: HOCS 2005, weighted by 'core' weight wtcind;, respondents in England only.

Given this strong relationship with age, it is important to control for age when analysing other variables. In particular this will be important when considering ethnic minorities, who tend to have a much younger age profile than the white British. In the following tables therefore, as well as giving the overall figures, we also look at respondents aged 35-49 whom we can think of as 'mature adults of prime working age'.

Table 6: Belonging to Britain: variations by place of birth, ethnicity and religion in England

Row percentages

	Belong very strongly	Belong fairly strongly	Do not belong strongly	*Base*
Born in UK	52 (47)	34 (37)	15 (16)	*12568*
Born in C'wealth or Pakistan	44 (46)	46 (46)	11 (8)	*916*
Born elsewhere	37 (34)	42 (44)	21 (22)	*578*
Christian	53 (47)	33 (36)	14 (16)	*10882*
Muslim	43 (42)	42 (48)	14 (10)	*356*
Other	41 (32)	42 (52)	16 (17)	*679*
No religion	43 (43)	39 (42)	18 (16)	*2116*
White	51 (46)	34 (38)	15 (16)	*13057*
Indian	43 (48)	47 (44)	10 (8)	*283*
Pakistani/Bangladeshi	47 (50)	43 (43)	10 (7)	*199*
Black Caribbean/Black Other	42 (41)	37 (41)	21 (18)	*128*
Black African	43 (48)	39 (37)	19 (15)	*129*
Mixed or other	38 (42)	41 (39)	21 (20)	*269*
All	50 (46)	35 (38)	15 (16)	*14065*

Source: HOCS 2005, weighted by the 'full' weight, wtfinds, which does not down-weight ethnic minorities to their population proportions; respondents in England.
Note: figures in brackets give the percentages for respondents aged 35-49.

The differences shown in Table 6 are much smaller than those found for age group. Few of the differences reach statistical significance, particularly after controlling for age. However, there are a few notable findings.

First, it is of considerable interest that the picture for respondents born abroad is quite diverse; those born in the Commonwealth (including Pakistan) appear to have quite a strong sense of belonging to Britain, but those born elsewhere do seem to be more weakly attached to Britain. Over one fifth of this latter group do not feel strongly attached to Britain – one of the highest proportions that we encounter. This will in part be because of the recent arrival in Britain of many members of this group. Detailed analysis (not shown here) demonstrates that a sense of belonging is strongly associated with length of stay in Britain.[4]

Second, in the case of religion, we find that Christians tend to have a stronger sense of belonging, while Muslims and members of other religions are less likely to feel very strongly that they belong to Britain. At the same time, however, it is important to recognize that rather few Muslims feel that they do not belong to Britain at all. It is also important to note that people who belong to no religion (who tend to be white British rather than members of minority groups) also show lower attachment to Britain.

We see a similar pattern among the main ethnic minorities: Black Caribbeans and Black Africans in particular are less likely to feel very strongly that they belong and around one fifth have a relatively weak sense of belonging. Other survey data confirm that ethnic minorities tend to feel a strong sense of belonging to their own ethnic groups, but this does not appear to exclude a sense of dual identity as both, say, Indian and British, analogous to the dual identity noted in Section 2 as British and Scottish or British and Welsh. Indeed Table A1 in the appendix shows that 'exclusive' ethnic minority identities are actually less common than exclusive Scottish or Welsh identities.

We next turn to socio-economic factors. Table 7 shows the results for selected categories of socio-economic disadvantage.

Table 7: Belonging to Britain: variations by level of socio-economic deprivation in England

	Row percentages			
	Belong very strongly	**Belong fairly strongly**	**Do not belong strongly**	*Base*
Low skilled work	52 (44)	33 (39)	15 (18)	*2783*
Unemployed	48 (51)	38 (34)	15 (15)	*259*
No qualifications	51 (44)	32 (37)	17 (18)	*1600*
Lowest quintile of family income	47 (36)	36 (44)	17 (20)	*1200*
Most disadvantaged quintile of neighbourhoods	50 (45)	34 (37)	16 (18)	*1626*
Limiting long-term illness	57 (45)	29 (35)	14 (21)	*1930*
Rented accommodation	48 (43)	36 (38)	16 (19)	*2355*
Never married	42 (39)	41 (43)	17 (18)	*2926*
No access to motor transport	52 (41)	32 (39)	16 (20)	*1718*
All	50 (45)	35 (38)	15 (16)	*9680*

Source: HOCS 2005, weighted by wtcinds; respondents in England.
Note: Figures in brackets are for respondents aged 35-49.

The differences in Table 7 between the various disadvantaged categories and the overall figures for Britain as a whole are fairly small, but there are hints that socio-economic exclusion may have some minor role to play. Thus respondents in the lowest quintile of family income, those with a limiting long-term illness (if aged 35-49), those in rented accommodation or with no access to a car or motor transport tend to be over-represented among those who have a weaker sense of belonging to Britain. We should remember that these groups also tend to be non-respondents to surveys, and it is therefore possible that Table 7 underestimates the magnitude of the effect of marginality and socio-economic exclusion. Somewhat surprisingly, however, we fail to find any effect of neighbourhood deprivation.

We have checked these results for the full sample using multiple regression, focussing on the drivers of a weak sense of belonging. This analysis confirms the dominance of age as the key predictor and the significant roles for overseas birth and socio-economic marginality. (See Table A2 in the Appendix.) Overall then we find from this analysis that the major drivers of a weak sense of belonging are:

- age (younger people being less likely to feel strongly that they belong)
- birth overseas in a non-commonwealth country
- length of stay in Britain
- socio-economic marginality (lower social class, limiting long-term illness, non home-owners).

After controlling for these factors, we find no significant differences by ethnicity or for Muslim religion.

At this stage we cannot be sure what interpretation to give to the strong association with age. It may reflect life-cycle processes, with people developing a stronger sense of belonging as they get older. Or it may reflect generational differences: people socialized in earlier periods, for example around the time of the second world war, may feel a stronger sense of identification with Britain whereas those socialized in more recent periods, for example after Britain's accession to the European Union, may feel a weaker sense of attachment. There are technical reasons which make it virtually impossible to decide unambiguously which interpretation is correct, although work on national pride has strongly suggested that the generational interpretation is to be preferred to the life cycle one (Tilley and Heath, 2007). In Appendix 3 we explore whether a life cycle or generational interpretation is appropriate for belonging as well as for pride, and we conclude that, as with national pride, the age differences largely reflect generational change.

Given the importance of age in the analyses, it is useful to 'drill down' and to focus on young people. Young people are a relatively vulnerable group, especially given their very high unemployment rates and their greater propensities towards protest and resistance. Moreover, if the correct interpretation of the age differences found above is a generational one, then lack of attachment among young people may have lasting implications for British society. In Table 8 therefore we repeat the analysis but restrict it to young people aged 16-24.

Table 8: Belonging to Britain: young people aged 16-24 in England

	Belong very strongly	Belong fairly strongly	Do not belong strongly	*Base*
		Row percentages		
Born in UK	44	40	16	*1067*
Born in C'wealth or Pakistan	31	49	20	*153*
Born elsewhere	37	36	27	*173*
Christian	43	41	16	*684*
Muslim	38	45	17	*253*
Other	34	52	15	*158*
No religion	45	37	18	*294*
White	44 (44)	40 (40)	16 (16)	*672*
Indian	36 (38)	48 (45)	16 (17)	*156*
Pakistani or Bangladeshi	37 (38)	46 (44)	17 (18)	*153*
Black Caribbean/Black Other	35 (38)	25 (25)	40 (38)	*83*
Black African	37 (40)	48 (40)	15 (20)	*100*
Other	31 (34)	47 (45)	23 (21)	*230*
All	43 (44)	40 (40)	17 (16)	*1394*

Source: HOCS 2005, unweighted data; respondents in England aged 16-24
Note: figures in brackets give the percentages for ethnic minorities born in Britain

Table 8 shows some important differences among young people from the comparable table for the population as a whole. As expected we find lower levels of belonging to Britain among young people generally (43% reporting that they belong very strongly to Britain compared with the figure of 50% for the sample as a whole). And we also find lower levels of belonging among people born overseas. Less expectedly, we find that a weak feeling of belonging characterizes young people born in the Commonwealth as well as those born elsewhere.

We also find very high percentages of young Black Caribbeans with only a weak sense of belonging to Britain. Whereas among young people as a whole 17% feel a weak sense of belonging, the figure for young Caribbeans reaches around 40%. This is a much more extreme picture than the one we saw in Table 6 for the sample as a whole, where Black Caribbeans were not so seriously over-represented in this category. Moreover, further analysis shows that this is not solely a consequence of overseas birth: if we restrict the analysis to young people born in Britain, we find that the pattern still holds for the Black Caribbeans. This result also persists when we carry out a regression analysis controlling for the other demographic variables. (See Table A2 in the appendix.)

We must be cautious given the small sample sizes involved. However we have replicated the analysis using the 2003 Citizenship Survey and the results are almost identical. We must also remember that non-response bias may well mean that our results underestimate the scale of the problem. In concluding this section, therefore, we feel it would be wise, as a working basis, to assume both that young people born abroad and that young black people born in Britain feel low levels of belonging to Britain.

4. The implications of belonging and attachment to Britain

In this section we explore whether a sense of attachment to Britain is associated with the kinds of attitudes or behaviours that might be thought of as representing a civic orientation and whether it acts as a source of political legitimacy. We also consider some of the possible downsides of attachment, such as xenophobia or political nationalism.

The Eurobarometer, from which we derived the trends in Tables 3 and 4 above, unfortunately does not include any measures of relevant outcomes (almost exclusively concentrating on issues connected with European integration and EU policies and institutions). However, there is some relevant evidence in the Citizenship Survey and in the British Social Attitudes surveys.

We first checked whether a sense of belonging strongly to Britain is associated with behaviours or attitudes that might be regarded as civic, or indicative of that broader sense of comradeship that scholars have suggested is a product of national identity. We explored the full range of items included in the Citizenship Survey. What we found was a modest association between a strong sense of belonging to Britain and social trust and a rather stronger association with turnout in elections. The former is often thought to be an important foundation of a cohesive society (although direct evidence on its causal role is lacking), while the latter can be thought of as one important aspect of civic duty. (A question explicitly on the duty to vote was included in the British Social Attitudes Survey and this question shows a very similar relationship with strength of attachment to Britain.) Table 9 shows the results.

Table 9: Strength of belonging to Britain, turnout and social trust in England

Cell percentages

Belong to Britain …	Voted in last general and/or local election	Not eligible to vote	Agree people in neighbourhood can be trusted	*Base*
Very strongly	76 (76)	4 (4)	52 (52)	*4401 (3980)*
Fairly strongly	67 (69)	7 (6)	45 (47)	*3168 (2757)*
Not strongly	57 (64)	13 (8)	37 (39)	*1387 (1123)*
All	70 (72)	6 (5)	47 (49)	*8956 (7860)*

Source: Citizenship Survey 2003, weighted data; England. Figures in brackets are for people born in the UK, excluding those born elsewhere.

As we can see, 76% of people who felt that they belonged very strongly to Britain reported that they had voted either at the last general or local election, with the figure falling to 57% among people who felt a weak sense of belonging. It is also interesting to see that people who felt that they did not belong strongly to Britain had relatively high levels of ineligibility. Some of this might be because they were foreign citizens

(though EU citizens are eligible to vote in local elections). Or it could be because they had failed to register despite being eligible to do so. Unfortunately the Citizenship Survey does not have an actual question on citizenship, but we can exclude people who were not born in Britain. When we do so, we find that the differences are reduced in magnitude but are still present.

It is important to recognize that these differences might be explained in part by the fact that, as we saw in Section 3 above, people who reported belonging to Britain very strongly also tend to be somewhat older and less marginalized socio-economically. Since these factors are also associated with turnout (and with trust), we need to control for them statistically. When we do so, we find that these demographic differences do indeed explain some of the apparent association between a sense of belonging and turnout, but that a significant 'effect' of strength of belonging persists among people of similar demographic characteristics.

Surprisingly however, we failed to find any significant differences with respect to the other 'civic' activities covered in the Citizenship Survey, such as formal or informal volunteering or participation in voluntary associations. Detailed analysis suggested that this may be because there is a great diversity of forms of civic participation and that the decision to participate in a particular form may be due to rather specific interests and concerns. For example, participation in a parent-teacher association will be specific to parents with children of the relevant age while participation in sports clubs may attract different sets of individuals. These cross-cutting influences prove to be more important than any general sense of belonging to Britain.

We have replicated these patterns using a somewhat similar question in the British Social Attitudes survey 2005. The BSA confirms higher turnout among those who have a stronger attachment to Britain, as well as higher trust. But once again the differences are relatively modest.

The 2003 BSA survey includes a range of questions that might be thought of as tapping the extent to which people accord legitimacy to the political system or are critical of it. It also includes a question on attachment to Britain that is a functional equivalent of the HOCS question on belonging. Table 10 shows the patterns of association between attachment and attitudes to government.

Table 10: Strength of attachment to Britain and political legitimacy in Great Britain

Cell percentages

Attachment to Britain…	Always/ most of time trusts government	Thinks system of governing GB works well	Agrees very important that the monarchy continues	Believes top priority is maintaining order in the nation	Believes top priority is giving people more say	*Base*
Very closely attached	24	39	70	48	27	*369*
Fairly closely	23	39	60	40	32	*526*
Not attached closely	11	27	41	31	41	*238*
All	21	37	59	41	33	*1133*

Source: BSA 2003, weighted data

20

Table 10 suggests that people who feel only weakly attached to Britain also show weaker support for the current political system, with relatively low percentages who feel that the current system of governing Britain works well. The biggest differences are in levels of support for the monarchy, which is to be sure one of the key British symbols. We also find some interesting differences on the items that make up Inglehart's index of post-materialism: people who do not feel closely attached to Britain are much more likely to say that the top priority for the country ought to be 'giving people more say in government decisions' (a post-materialist response) whereas those who feel very closely attached are more likely to give 'maintaining order in the nation' (a materialist response) as their top priority. Overall this suggests that greater attachment to Britain is associated with greater support for the existing political order whereas those who are weakly attached are more critical of the political system.

Again, we need to check whether these associations are due to the differing demographic characteristics of people who feel strongly or weakly attached to Britain. When we control for age and other key demographic characteristics, we find as with the analysis of the Citizenship Survey that the magnitude of the association between strength of attachment and the outcomes of interest is reduced but remains statistically significant.

It is also important to check whether attachment to Britain has a downside. In particular xenophobia has often been associated with nationalism, although it is by no means evident that our measure of attachment should be equated with nationalism in its narrow, xenophobic sense. Thus many theorists have made a distinction between (ethically undesirable) nationalism and (ethically desirable) patriotism. Table 11 explores these issues.

Table 11: Strength of attachment to Britain and xenophobia in Great Britain

% agreeing that

Attached to Britain …	Would worry if GB broke up	Britain should leave EU or reduce its powers	Number of immigrants should be reduced	Self-rated prejudice	One needs to have British ancestry to be truly British	*Base*
Very closely attached	60	55	75	29	57	*369*
Fairly closely	48	46	68	31	43	*526*
Not attached closely	31	39	75	32	37	*238*
All	48	47	71	30	47	*1133*

Source: BSA 2003, weighted data.

Table 11 suggests that, on the measures available in the BSA survey, strength of attachment is largely unrelated to overt xenophobia or self-rated prejudice. On the other hand, our measure does appear to be related to a desire to maintain the union and to resist the encroachment of the EU. In that sense, the measure of attachment to Britain does appear to be associated with a particular view of the nature of Britain as a nation, and with a sense of where the boundary lies, without being overtly xenophobic or racist. We also see that people who are closely attached to Britain are more likely to have an 'exclusive' sense of British identity and are likely to feel that British ancestry is necessary for being truly British. This is a key component of an 'ethnic' conception of the nation, to which we turn in Section 5 below.

We also checked the associations between attachment to Britain and a wide range of attitudes to social and political issues in the BSA. In general we found few and relatively small differences. While attachment to Britain is associated with distinctive attitudes towards European integration, it is not strongly associated with other major political divisions, such as those constituting the left-right spectrum. (This is consistent with other research that has been carried out. See Heath et al, 1999 and Bechhofer and McCrone 2008.) We did find that people who were strongly attached to Britain were notably proud of the welfare state, but strength of attachment was unrelated to attitudes towards more specific policy proposals or priorities. Again, this may be because (as with forms of civic participation), these attitudes derive from other more specific (and cross-cutting) interests and concerns.

In summary then, we have found a **positive association** between attachment or belonging to Britain and
- Some aspects of civic duty and behaviour, especially turnout in elections
- Feelings of political legitimacy, trust and support for existing political arrangements and support for the monarchy
- Support for maintaining the union between England, Wales and Scotland and opposition to further EU integration
- Support for prioritising the maintenance of social order rather than giving people more say in government decisions
- An 'ethnic' conception of the nation.

But we found **no,** or very modest, relationship with
- Volunteering or other forms of political participation
- Beliefs that the government should be responsible for providing for the sick, unemployed or the retired
- Attitudes towards 'left' or 'right' wing political positions (other than European integration)
- Racial prejudice or xenophobia.

It is not immediately obvious whether or not this is a ringing endorsement for the views of the political theorists such as Miller or Verba who have argued for the positive benefits of a sense of national identity as a source of civic duty or political legitimacy. But equally it is not a ringing endorsement of the views of critics who associate national identity with racism or xenophobia. The current situation in Britain is more complex.

In particular, we may need to take account of the specific historical construction of a British identity. While table 11 indicates that a strong attachment to a British identity is associated with support for maintaining the union and opposition to closer integration in Europe, this is not an inevitable feature of national identity per se but is likely to reflect the way in which British identity has been constructed and developed over time. In Scotland, for example, a Scottish national identity tends to be associated with rather favourable attitudes towards Europe and a preference for greater devolution or outright independence from Britain. But at the same time, a strong Scottish identity may still act as a form of 'social glue' holding the nation together, providing a source of civic duty and support for fellow-Scots. In short, there may be a variety of different forms of national identity, all of which may be able to serve the functions of promoting social cohesion. The crucial question therefore may not be whether or not to promote national identity but what form of national identity to promote.

5. Ethnic and civic conceptions of the nation

Theorists have distinguished two broad types of conception of national identity, often termed ethnic and civic (or cultural and political) conceptions. These can be thought of as involving different sets of criteria for defining membership in the nation. Ethnic conceptions of the nation tend to place greater emphasis on ancestry and ascribed characteristics that are more or less fixed at birth. In contrast, civic conceptions place greater importance on achieved or acquired characteristics, such as respect for political institutions, possessing national citizenship and speaking the national language. Ethnic conceptions thus tend to be more exclusive while civic conceptions are more inclusive.

What we find in Britain is that many people believe that both ethnic and civic characteristics are important for being truly British and assign the two different sets of criteria more or less equal priority. We can term this the 'both ethnic and civic' cluster. There is then a second somewhat smaller group who prioritise civic rather than ethnic features, and a third much smaller group who believe that neither ethnic nor civic features are important. (Only a tiny minority prioritize ethnic criteria at the expense of civic ones and we therefore have to exclude them from the analysis because of the small numbers involved.) The 'both ethnic and civic' group tends to exhibit a stronger sense of national pride and sense of attachment to Britain, although their sense of national pride is a somewhat backward-looking one emphasizing pride in Britain's history and military achievements. In contrast, the 'primarily civic' group tends to have somewhat lower sense of pride and primarily feel pride in Britain's welfare state and political institutions rather than its history. Finally the 'neither ethnic nor civic' group tends to have a rather low sense of attachment and pride generally. (For more details see Tilley et al 2004.)

Table 12 shows how these conceptions of the nation relate to some of the attitudes that we covered in the two previous tables. (Unfortunately we cannot look at the full range of attitudes covered in tables 10 and 11 because some were asked in a different version of the BSA questionnaire.)

Table 12: Ethnic and civic conceptions of the nation in Great Britain

	% agreeing that					
Conception of the nation	System of governing GB works well	Very important that the monarchy continues	Britain should leave EU or reduce its powers	Number of immigrants should be reduced	Citizenship should be given to people born in Britain	Base
Both ethnic and civic	36	66	53	85	51	425
Civic rather than ethnic	40	50	47	58	76	322
Neither ethnic nor civic	38	41	36	66	68	76
All	38	58	49	72	62	848

Source: BSA 2003 self-completion supplement, weighted data

Table 12 suggests that the primarily civic conception of the nation tends to be much more inclusive than are the other conceptions, tends to be at least as supportive of the current political system, is somewhat less opposed to EU integration, but is much less traditional with respect to the monarchy.

As before we need to recognize that some of these differences may reflect demographic differences between our three types of conception of the nation. For example, members of the 'civic rather than ethnic' group tend to be younger and better educated than the 'both ethnic and civic' group, and this may account for their lower level of support for the monarchy. However, after controlling for age, we find that the pattern of findings shown in table 12 is quite robust.

We can think therefore of the 'both ethnic and civic' group as having a 'thicker' but more backward-looking and exclusive sense of British identity whereas the 'civic rather than ethnic' group has a 'thinner' but also perhaps a more inclusive and forward-looking sense of British identity. This suggests, therefore, that it is not simply a matter of strengthening a sense of British identity and attachment to Britain but of deciding what sort of British identity we wish to encourage. In this context it may be relevant that cross-national research indicates that countries which are more 'civic' in their conceptions (countries such as the Scandinavian ones) also tend to exhibit higher levels of participation in voluntary organizations, higher proportions of their citizens who subscribe to the duty to vote, and higher levels of interpersonal trust. To be sure, we must not infer causal relationships from these patterns of association, and there are likely to be other factors such as level of economic development and modernization that account for these associations. Nonetheless, it is notable that Britain does not rank especially highly on measures of social trust, 'good citizenship' or on measures of a civic conception of the nation. (For the detailed rankings see Delhey and Newton 2005, Whiteley 2008, Tilley, Heath and Ford, in preparation.)

6. Conclusions and policy implications

In many ways our results are reassuring ones. The majority of people in Britain accept a British identity, feel proud of Britain and feel strongly attached to Britain. While there appears to have been some decline over time, the rate of change is rather slow. Attachment to Britain also appears to fulfil some of the functions suggested by political theorists, such as acceptance of civic obligations (e.g. turnout in elections), and contributes to political legitimacy. Nor is it associated with marked racism or xenophobia (although it is associated with some degree of resistance to EU integration).

On the other hand, there is a minority, perhaps a growing minority, who do not feel strongly attached to Britain. Lack of attachment is especially marked among younger people, specifically those aged 16-34, among young people born overseas, and among young people of Caribbean heritage, and among the economically marginalized. We must not exaggerate the magnitude of the differences, but it may be a cause for concern that a third or more of young people of Caribbean heritage born in Britain do not feel closely attached to the country.

It is also perhaps disturbing that the predominant conception of national identity in Britain today is one that emphasizes ethnic as well as civic criteria. While such 'ethnic and civic' conceptions are associated with stronger feelings of national pride, they also tend to be rather exclusive and backward-looking.

Policy recommendations require a firm evidence base not only establishing the descriptive patterns but also establishing the causal mechanisms involved. For example, if the causal processes involved in the association between age and strength of belonging are essentially life-cycle ones, any problem will tend to correct itself of its own accord and policy interventions may not be needed. On the other hand, if the generational interpretation is correct (which we think it is), and if young people feel a lack of belonging because they feel socially excluded, then policies to increase social inclusion may be required. We do not have a strong enough evidence base at present, and so perhaps the first recommendation should be that the evidence base be strengthened.

However, we can suggest some possible causal mechanisms, and their possible policy implications, which might in theory lie behind the findings that we have reported.

Lack of attachment on the part of people born overseas in non-Commonwealth countries could well be due to recent arrival, lack of citizenship and/or no desire to remain long-term in Britain, or to lack of fluency in the English language (which might tend to exclude people from many aspects of British life). Provision of language teaching meets a number of other objectives (such as economic integration) and might be regarded as a sensible policy to implement.

It is important not to focus solely on the situation of recent migrants but to have regard for that of second-generation ethnic minorities, many of whom suffer substantial 'ethnic penalties' in the labour market (see for example Heath and Cheung 2007). French experience and research (and indeed the Northern Ireland experience)

suggests that, when ethnic minorities believe that they are denied the equality of opportunity that a liberal state professes, disillusionment and resentment may follow with implications for social order. Such resentment may well be even stronger in the second (and later) generations than among the migrants themselves (who may have frames of reference oriented more to their countries of origins.) Policies such as those in the recent report of the Business Commission on Race Equality in the Workplace would seem to provide a good starting point (NEP 2007). We suspect, however, that the distinctively low sense of belonging on the part of second-generation Black Caribbean youth may also be connected to their experience of policing and the criminal justice system.

While the impact of socio-economic marginalization on a sense of belonging is not especially large, we should perhaps be concerned at Britain's gradual move towards an 'hour glass' social structure with an increasing proportion of poorly-qualified people on the margins of the economy alongside growing affluence among the well-qualified in secure employment. While British research has cast serious doubt on the applicability of American concepts such as the underclass, the development of the 'hour glass' economy may also pose threats to Britain's sense of cohesion. Policies aimed at increasing the skills and opportunities of marginalized individuals surely need to be developed. These should perhaps focus on lifelong learning on the Danish model as well as on improvements in the provisions for younger people.

As well as policies geared directly towards encouraging a sense of British identity, therefore, we recommend consideration of policies which might be thought of as being indirect ones, but geared to some of the root social and economic causes of low attachment.

Finally, it is important to consider what conception of British identity one wishes to promote. The predominant form in Britain at present is a somewhat backward-looking conception with strong 'ethnic' and exclusive aspects. While this is undoubtedly associated with national pride, it may not be the best basis for a modern diverse society. The experience of, for example, the Scandinavian countries suggests that the development of a more civic conception of the nation can be associated with (even if it may not directly cause) many of the civic benefits (such as social trust and sense of civic duty) that normative political theorists espouse.

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Appendix 1 Ethnic identities

Table A1: Ethnic and British identities

	Indian	Pakistani	Black Caribbean	Black African
		Column percentages		
[Ethnic group] not British	6 (9)	8	6 (3)	22
More [ethnic group]	17 (18)	7	19 (31)	28
Equally	55 (48)	57	61 (56)	38
More British	19 (18)	16	6 (3)	2
British not [ethnic group]	1 (4)	10	1 (0)	2
Other answers, none, DK	1 (4)	2	6 (7)	9
Base	*228 (56)*	*122*	*142 (61)*	*101*

Source: British Election Study 1997, ethnic minority sample. Figures in brackets are for respondents born in Britain. There were too few Pakistanis and Black Africans born in Britain for the figures to be reliable and they are therefore not reported.

Appendix 2 Regression analysis of 'belonging to Britain'

Table A2: Binary logistic regression of 'belonging to Britain' (belong fairly or very strongly vs do not belong strongly)

	Parameter estimates (s.e.)		
	Weighted	**Un-weighted**	**Respondents aged 16-24**
constant	2.05 (.25)	2.09 (.21)	1.58 (.69)
Male (reference female)	-0.06 (.06)	-0.07 (.06)	-0.11 (.15)
Age group (ref 65-69)			
16-19	**-0.46 (.22)**	**-0.46 (.19)**	
20-24	**-0.57 (.20)**	**-0.71 (.17)**	
25-34	**-0.71 (.18)**	**-0.65 (.15)**	
35-49	**-0.57 (.16)**	**-0.51 (.14)**	
50-64	-0.31 (.16)	-0.20 (.14)	
Ethnicity (ref white)			
Indian	0.15 (.27)	**0.56 (.15)**	0.26 (.39)
Pakistani/Bangladeshi	0.53 (.37)	**0.69 (.19)**	0.17 (.41)
Black Caribbean/Black Other	-0.17 (.27)	-0.20 (.11)	**-0.98 (.28)**
Black African	-0.01 (.31)	0.02 (.13)	0.18 (.34)
Mixed and other	-0.03 (.16)	0.06 (.10)	-0.02 (.24)
Religion (ref Christian)			
Muslim	-0.24 (.25)	-0.00 (.14)	-0.09 (.32)
Other religion	-0.28 (.16)	-0.18 (.11)	-0.27 (.36)
None	**-0.22 (.08)**	**-0.20 (.08)**	-0.22 (.19)
Place of birth (ref UK)			
Commonwealth	**0.65 (.22)**	0.17 (.10)	-0.20 (.27)
Elsewhere	**-0.33 (.12)**	**-0.22 (.09)**	**-0.73 (.25)**
Occupational class (ref salariat)			
Intermediate	-0.12 (.09)	-0.06 (.08)	**-0.73 (.29)**
Routine and semi-routine	-0.14 (.10)	-0.13 (.08)	-0.44 (.30)
Never had a job	-0.28 (.16)	-0.28 (.12)	-0.36 (.39)
Employment (ref in work)			
Unemployed (ILO definition)	-0.14 (.10)	**-0.20 (.08)**	-0.17 (.29)
Inactive	0.20 (.20)	0.01 (.15)	0.40 (.35)
Highest qualification (ref degree)			
Other qualifications	0.09 (.09)	**0.15 (.07)**	**0.56 (.23)**
Foreign qualifications	-0.04 (.22)	0.04 (.15)	-0.21 (.48)
No qualifications	-0.03 (.12)	0.09 (.09)	**0.75 (.30)**
Marital status (ref married)			
Never married	0.10 (.09)	0.03 (.08)	-0.11 (.33)
Widowed, divorced, separated	-0.06 (.10)	-0.05 (.08)	-0.70 (.65)
Housing tenure (ref owner)			
Renting	0.09 (.09)	-0.05 (.07)	0.23 (.18)
Other tenure	**-0.51 (.23)**	-0.13 (.20)	-0.43 (.40)
Limiting long-term illness (ref no illness)	**-0.19 (.09)**	-0.12 (.08)	-0.14 (.32)
Without motor transport (ref with)	0.17 (.10)	**0.15 (.07)**	0.09 (.18)
Family income (quintiles)	**0.09 (.03)**	**0.07 (.03)**	0.17 (.09)
Family income missing	-0.17 (.12)	-0.15 (.10)	**-0.69 (.30)**
Model improvement (df)	118.5 (32)	219.6 (32)	58.2 (27)
Base	*7608*	*11487*	*1339*

Source: HOCS 2005, respondents in England aged less than 70
Note: figures emboldened are significant at the .05 level

In column 1 of table A2 we report the results of a logistic regression in which strength of belonging (coded as a binary variable distinguishing stronger from a weaker sense of belonging) is regressed on the social characteristics covered in tables 5 to 7. We exclude the neighbourhood deprivation variable because of the large amount of missing data and the fact that, when included, it is not significant. We also limit the analysis to those aged less than 70 because education data were not collected on older respondents.

In a second analysis (shown in column 2) we re-ran the model but with unweighted data. The weighting to a large extent acts to down-weight the ethnic minority respondents, who were over-sampled, and thus gives appropriate population estimates. However, when controlling for ethnicity in the regression, it could be argued that weighting is unnecessary and that we should take advantage of the greater precision afforded by the ethnic minority oversample. As we can see, results for the unweighted analysis are broadly similar to the weighted ones, although the parameter estimate for commonwealth birth is sharply reduced while those for the Indian and Pakistani/Bangladeshi groups are increased and become significant.

The results of these first two analyses reported in Table A2 broadly confirm the picture from the cross-tabulations: the major driver of a lack of belonging is age (younger people being less likely to feel that they belong), birth overseas in a non-commonwealth country, and socio-economic marginality (lower income, limiting long-term illness, other tenure). (There are some differences of detail between the weighted and unweighted analyses, but the overall picture emphasizing the role of age-group, overseas birth and socio-economic marginality remain in both analyses.)

In the third analysis we restrict the data to respondents aged 16-24. The major new findings here are the lack of belonging on the part of Black Caribbean (combined with Black other) young people, the increased magnitude of the negative effects of overseas non-Commonwealth birth, and the negative effect of lack of qualifications.

Appendix 3 Analysing the association of age and attachment

The standard way in which scholars have attempted to decide whether associations with age represent life-cycle or generational change is to track a given generation (defined as a birth cohort) across time in order to see whether the relevant characteristic, in our case attachment or belonging to Britain, remains constant (which is what would be expected under a generational interpretation) or changes as people grow older (the life cycle interpretation). Ideally one would use a panel study in which the same individuals were re-interviewed as they grow older, but this is rarely available (and is not available for the measurement of belonging to Britain). Instead therefore we have to use the method of 'synthetic cohorts' in which we use repeated cross-section surveys to trace the experience of samples from a particular birth cohort as they age. Note that in this case we do not measure the same individuals but only samples of the same birth cohort.

One problem with this method is that there may be differential attrition as individuals die, emigrate or are not present in the samples for other reasons. A second problem is

the 'identification problem'. That is to say, we cannot independently estimate the effects of age (i.e. life cycle), cohort (i.e. generation) and period. Once we know the values for two of these variables, we can logically derive the third. Thus if we know the period and age of a respondent, we can immediately calculate his or her birth year.

There have been many attempts to solve this identification problem, but ultimately they all depend on importing some additional assumptions into the analysis. What we can do, however, is to analyse the data and judge which interpretation is most plausible (while recognizing that other interpretations may be logically possible though less plausible). Table A3 shows the relevant data taken from the Eurobarometer. (These are the same surveys as used in Table 4 above.) We score strength of attachment as follows: very attached=4, fairly attached=3, not very attached=2, not at all attached / DK=1

Table A3: 'Attached to country' scores by year or survey and birth cohort

Birth cohort	1991	1995	1999	2000	2002	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	All
1910-	3.73	3.82	3.90	3.81								3.82
1920-	3.75	3.60	3.71	3.72	3.62							3.68
1930-	3.70	3.57	3.66	3.48	3.51	3.69	3.36	3.77	3.57	3.64	3.57	3.59
1940-	3.46	3.50	3.51	3.47	3.48	3.47	3.51	3.68	3.57	3.46	3.42	3.50
1950-	3.31	3.32	3.48	3.33	3.40	3.26	3.23	3.50	3.40	3.39	3.39	3.36
1960-	3.28	3.19	3.37	3.25	3.36	3.16	3.29	3.40	3.25	3.39	3.22	3.29
1970-	3.10	3.14	3.24	3.20	3.10	3.17	3.22	3.22	3.28	3.38	3.28	3.21
1980-			3.20	3.17	3.10	3.20	3.25	3.16	2.91	3.17	3.13	3.14
1990-99											3.31	3.31
All	3.45	3.37	3.46	3.36	3.33	3.30	3.30	3.42	3.31	3.39	3.32	

Source: Eurobarometer

What Table A3 clearly suggests is that levels of attachment remain constant across the life cycle for nearly all birth cohorts. While there is considerable variability (reflecting sampling variation and measurement error) from year to year, we can see that, for example, the mean scores of the1930-39 birth cohort remain around their average level of 3.59 in all periods. There is no apparent trend towards greater attachment as this birth cohort ages. The same applies to the 1940-49, 1950-59 and 1960-69 birth cohorts.

However, there are some suggestions that members of the 1970-79 birth cohort do increase their scores slightly. Their scores begin at 3.10 in 1991 – rather below their overall average – and then rise to 3.28 in 2007 – rather above their overall average. However, we do not see this rising trend in the 1980-89 birth cohort. We should not therefore completely discount a life-cycle interpretation, but the major process does appear to be a generational one with earlier birth cohorts showing greater strength of attachment than more recent cohorts, and with strength of attachment remaining fairly constant through middle and older ages.

Appendix 4 The HOCS and BSA surveys

The 2003 **Citizenship Survey** was conducted by the Office for National Statistics on behalf of the Home Office, while the 2005 Citizenship Survey was conducted by the National Centre for Social Research on behalf of the Department for Communities and Local Government.

The Citizenship survey is designed to yield a core, nationally-representative sample of adults aged 16 or over resident in England and Wales together with an ethnic minority boost sample. The sampling frame for the survey is the Postcode Address File (PAF). The sampling method involves a multi-stage stratified random design. The ethnic minority boost sample is achieved through direct screening and focused enumeration.

The survey is conducted face to face by computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI). The overall response rate for the 2003 core sample was 64%, yielding 9486 productive interviews. The response rate for the ethnic boost sample was somewhat lower and yielded 4571 respondents. For technical details of the 2003 survey see www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/citizenshipsurvey.html. The response rate for the 2005 core sample was 65% yielding 9691 productive interviews.

The **British Social Attitudes** (BSA) survey is designed and conducted by the National Centre for Social Research. It receives core funding from the Gatsby Charitable Foundation (one of the Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts) and a range of other funders including government departments and the ESRC.

The BSA survey is designed to yield a representative sample of adults aged 18 or over resident in Great Britain south of the Caledonian canal. The sampling frame for the survey is the Postcode Address File (PAF), a list of addresses (or postal delivery points) compiled by the Post Office. For practical reasons the sample is confined to those living in private households. People living in institutions are excluded. The sampling method involves a multi-stage, stratified random design. (Full details of the sampling methods are given in the technical reports published in the Annual Reports of the BSA. See for example Park et al, 2008, Appendix 1.)

The survey is conducted face to face by computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI). The overall response rate for the 2003 survey was 59%, yielding 4432 productive interviews. The survey was divided into four different (randomized) versions and some of the questions that we use were not present in all versions. There was also a self-completion supplement, in which the questions on ethnic and civic conceptions of national identity were included, and this supplement has a lower response rate.

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[1] We have also checked these results using the General Household Survey, which has a much larger sample size. The GHS question on national identity is slightly different, and only goes back to 2001. However, the GHS does confirm that levels of British identity are much higher in England than in Wales or Scotland and that there has been little change since 2001. Bechhofer and McCrone (2008) also discuss and report essentially the same table, and we have taken the 2006 figures from their table.

There are some slight differences in the percentages reported in their table, possibly because of weighting or rounding, but the story is essentially the same.

[2] The national pride question has also been asked in more recent Eurobarometers, although unfortunately with a wording change that makes it difficult to compare the absolute levels of national pride over time. However, we find that even with the new wording Britain has remained in around 4th or 5th place. For more detailed discussion of national pride and the trends separately in Scotland and Wales seeTilley and Heath (2007) .

[3] In practice we find that pride and attachment are highly correlated and they tend to have similar patterns of association with the other variables included in the Eurobarometer. We should not therefore exaggerate the distinction between the two concepts.

[4] Since we do not have a panel study, we must be careful of our interpretation of the correlation between length of stay in Britain and level of belonging. Some people may come for relatively short durations and then return to their countries of origin. The correlation could therefore be due to selective return migration rather than to strength of belonging increasing with duration of the stay. However, it is likely that in fact both processes will be at work.