# Political views now outweigh looks in UK dating apps, study finds



The interplay between romantic relationships and political affiliations has taken a striking turn, particularly in the UK. A recent study reveals that for millions of Britons, political preference is now a significant factor in dating, often outweighing even physical appearance. This shift indicates a broader cultural trend where political alignment has become as important as fundamental aspects such as education or personal values in choosing a partner.

Co-authored by renowned behavioural scientist Professor Paul Dolan, the study highlights that individuals are twice as likely to swipe left on dates based on politics compared to educational background. Dolan, who is celebrated for his insights into happiness and decision-making, presents this research in his new book, *Beliefism: How to Stop Hating the People we Disagree With*. The findings are striking: Labour supporters exhibit a notably cautious approach to dating, shunning potential partners from opposing political camps at nearly double the rate of Conservative voters. This pattern suggests a deeply entrenched tribalism where individual beliefs heavily influence not only social interactions but also intimate relationships.

The study further reveals intriguing nuances in dating preferences. While Conservative supporters display a surprising openness towards Labour voters who defy common left-wing stereotypes, Labour individuals show a strong aversion to those who stray from traditional Tory characteristics. For example, a vegetarian Conservative may face greater scrutiny than their conventional counterparts. This profound ideological divide demonstrates how entrenched political identities can dictate personal connections, echoing the growing polarisation witnessed in the UK since the Brexit referendum.

The implications of this research extend beyond mere dating preferences; they paint a grim picture of societal fragmentation. Professor Dolan warns that the willingness to engage with opposing views is waning. He notes, “This is more than a dating problem. It reflects how people are increasingly unwilling to engage with opposing views in all areas of life. Dating apps are just the canary in the coal mine.” This sentiment is echoed by a range of polls and studies, one of which reveals that 42% of Britons consider political views essential when choosing a partner, a figure that rises significantly among younger individuals and Remain voters.

However, contrasting perspectives emerge when examining the general significance of political views in dating. A survey by EliteSingles found that while only a quarter of singles ranked political opinions as a major factor in choosing a partner, discussions about political beliefs remain prevalent on initial dates. Approximately 65% of respondents felt comfortable broaching political topics when getting to know someone. This suggests that while political alignment is becoming prominent in dating dynamics, it is not yet deemed the most crucial aspect for everyone.

In light of the shifting landscape of romantic pursuits in the UK, particularly through digital platforms, a considerable segment of the population remains committed to finding compatibility across political boundaries. Poll data shows that about one-third of young singles would end a relationship with someone disengaged from political affairs, illustrating a strong desire for partners who share their engagement with civic matters. Yet, this preference can result in significant political snobbery, where profiles declaring outright bans on specific party supporters frequently populate dating apps. This may, paradoxically, reduce overall chances of making a meaningful connection.

In essence, political affiliation is shaping romantic inclinations in increasingly complex ways. The societal repercussions of this trend could be far-reaching, fostering an environment where political identities dictate not only social interactions but also love lives. As the study illuminates, the risks of alienating potential partners based on political allegiance might deepen existing societal fractures, urging individuals to reconsider how they forge connections, both romantically and socially.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2060398/party-rivalry-passion-killer-britons), [[2]](https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/love-across-political-divide-not-so-easy-say-britons)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2060398/party-rivalry-passion-killer-britons), [[4]](https://stylus.com/consumer-attitudes/swiping-for-political-compatibility-dating-apps-in-a-polarised-landscape)
* Paragraph 3 – [[5]](https://www.gbnews.com/politics/politics-romance-britons-reform-supporter), [[6]](https://www.globaldatinginsights.com/featured/tinder-reveals-influence-of-politics-on-uk-daters-ahead-of-general-election/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[3]](https://www.elitesingles.co.uk/em/from-single-to-couple/love-and-politics), [[7]](https://metro.co.uk/2024/07/03/im-a-tory-politician-dating-often-feels-like-a-battleground-21066743/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2060398/party-rivalry-passion-killer-britons> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/love-across-political-divide-not-so-easy-say-britons> - An Ipsos UK poll conducted in February 2025 reveals that 42% of Britons consider a potential partner's political views important. This figure rises to 50% among individuals under 35, 53% among Remain voters, and 55% among graduates. The survey also indicates that 37% of Britons would find it easy to be in a relationship with a Labour supporter, while 35% would find it difficult to date a Reform UK supporter. The data suggests that political compatibility plays a significant role in romantic relationships across various demographics.
3. <https://www.elitesingles.co.uk/em/from-single-to-couple/love-and-politics> - A survey by EliteSingles reveals that only 25% of British singles consider political opinions as particularly important when choosing a partner, ranking it sixth out of eight factors. Despite this, 65% of respondents are comfortable discussing politics on a first date, with 27% specifically interested in their partner's political views at this stage. The study highlights that while politics is not the most crucial factor, it remains a relevant topic in early dating conversations.
4. <https://stylus.com/consumer-attitudes/swiping-for-political-compatibility-dating-apps-in-a-polarised-landscape> - Research indicates that political compatibility is increasingly influencing dating preferences. In the UK, 50% of Labour voters would not date someone who votes Conservative, compared to 24% of Conservative voters who would avoid dating a Labour supporter. Additionally, 50% of Remain voters from the 2016 Brexit referendum would prefer not to date a Leave voter. This trend reflects a broader societal shift towards prioritising political alignment in romantic relationships.
5. <https://www.gbnews.com/politics/politics-romance-britons-reform-supporter> - Polling by Ipsos suggests that 35% of Britons would find it difficult to be in a relationship with a Reform UK supporter. The survey also indicates that 37% would find it easy to date a Labour supporter, and 36% would find it easy to date a Green Party supporter. These findings highlight the varying levels of political compatibility among different party supporters in the UK.
6. <https://www.globaldatinginsights.com/featured/tinder-reveals-influence-of-politics-on-uk-daters-ahead-of-general-election/> - Tinder UK research reveals that a third of young UK singles believe it's important that their dating partner is registered to vote. Additionally, 21% have ended or would end a relationship if their partner was not politically engaged. The study also shows that 60% of young singles feel strongly that their partner should respect their political opinions, with this figure rising to 65% among young women.
7. <https://metro.co.uk/2024/07/03/im-a-tory-politician-dating-often-feels-like-a-battleground-21066743/> - An article in Metro News discusses the challenges faced by a Conservative politician in the dating scene, highlighting how political beliefs can influence romantic relationships. The piece references research from Tinder, which found that a third of young UK singles consider it important that their partner is registered to vote, and 21% have ended or would end a relationship if their partner was not politically engaged. The article underscores the complexities of dating across political divides.