



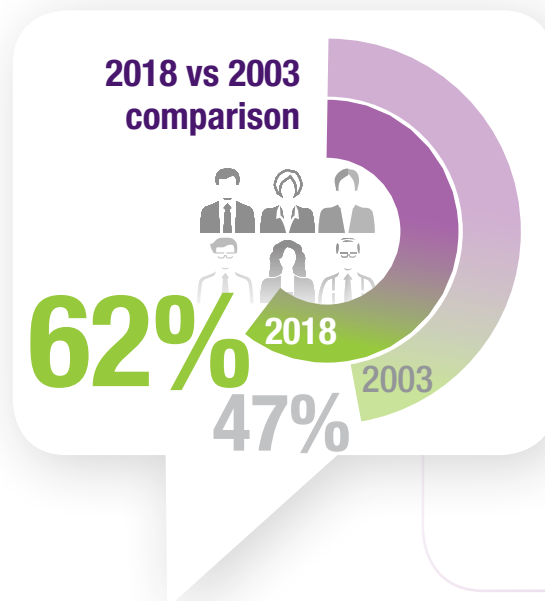
Attitudes of the British Public to Business Ethics 2018

For 15 years the Institute of Business Ethics has asked the British public about its view on how ethical British Business is. **This infographic shows how the British public's attitudes have changed over the past 15 years.**



Key Findings

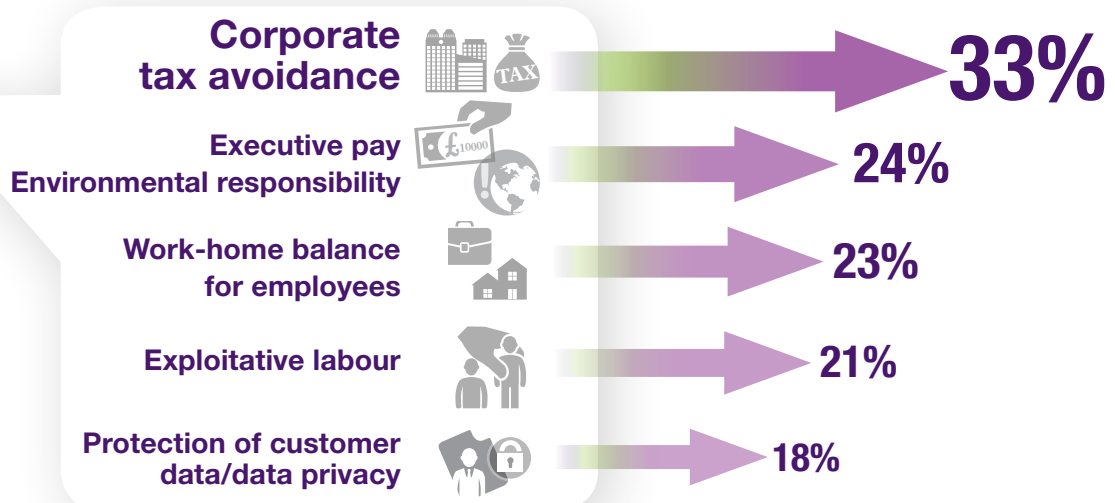
Public trust in business is at its highest since the survey began in 2003



Headline findings

- Trust in business to behave ethically has jumped 15 points
- Environmental responsibility is back as a top issue of concern after 7 years
- Millennials show the most positive change in opinion of all the age groups about business behaviour

Issues needing addressing



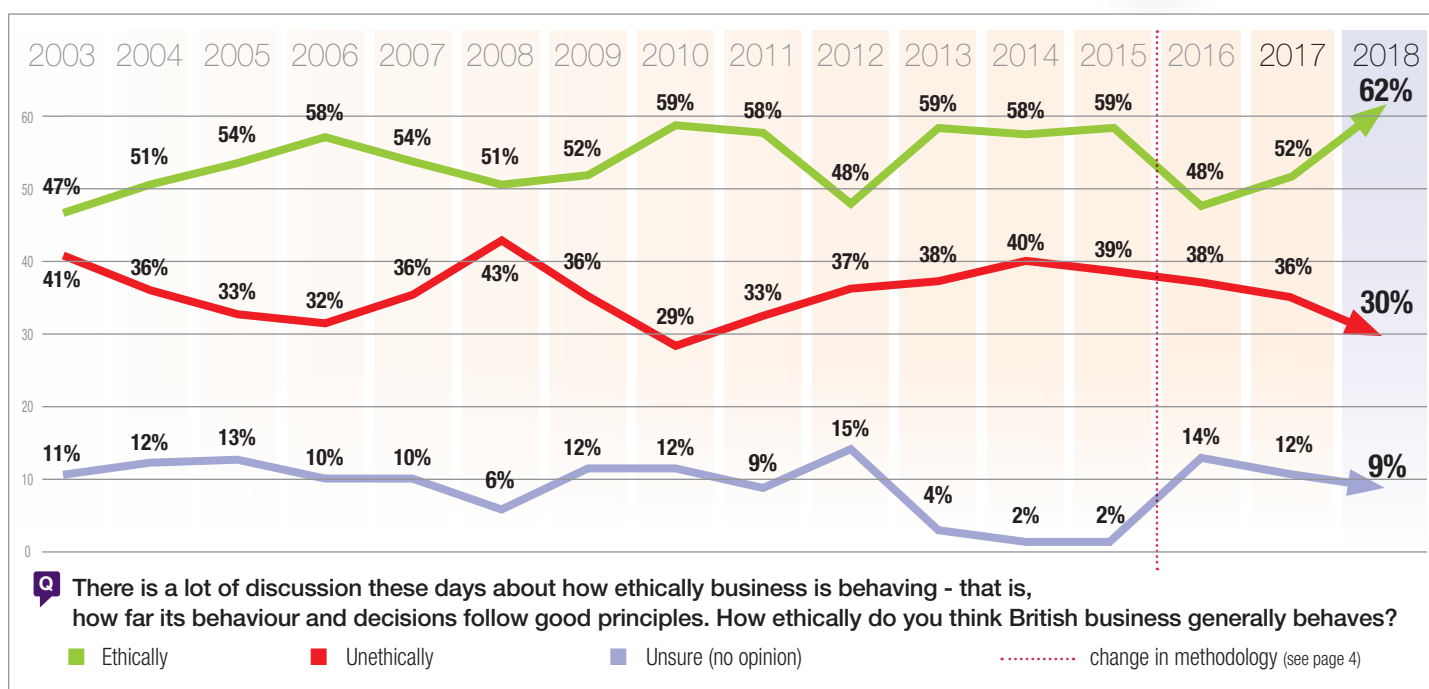
For an explanation of the research methodology and respondent profile see page 4.

Current business behaviour

Q How ethically do you think British business generally behaves?

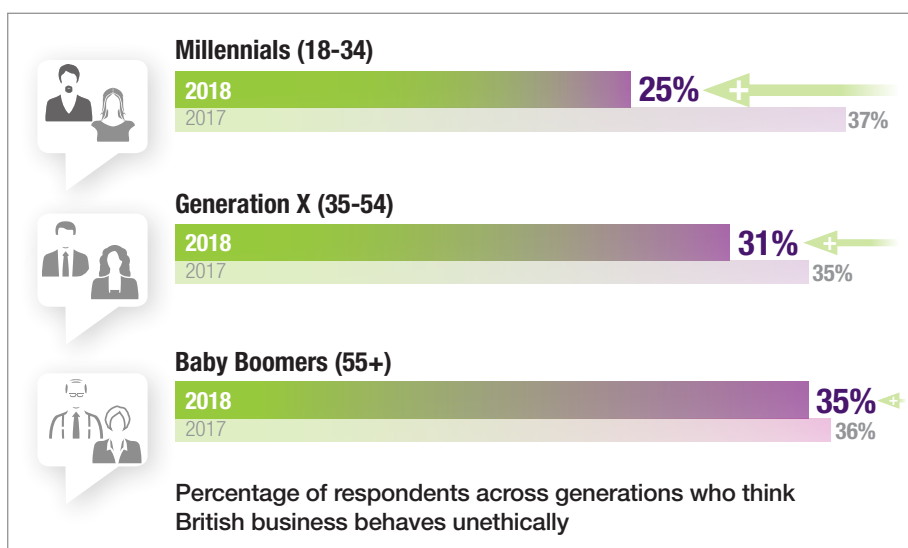
- **Twice as many British people now believe business acts ethically rather than unethically**

This significant increase might be the result of an increased perception of uncertainty with regards to the current political situation, particularly influenced by Brexit negotiations. Now a greater proportion of the British public have confidence in British businesses to act in an ethical manner than ever before.



Millennials show the most positive change in opinion of all the age groups

While 36% of Baby Boomers (55+) think British Business is behaving unethically, only 32% of Generation X-ers (35-54) and 24% of Millennials (18 – 34) feel the same way. In 2017, the picture was different for Millennials as 36% then thought British Business was behaving unethically. (Generation X and Baby Boomers saw no real change over the year).

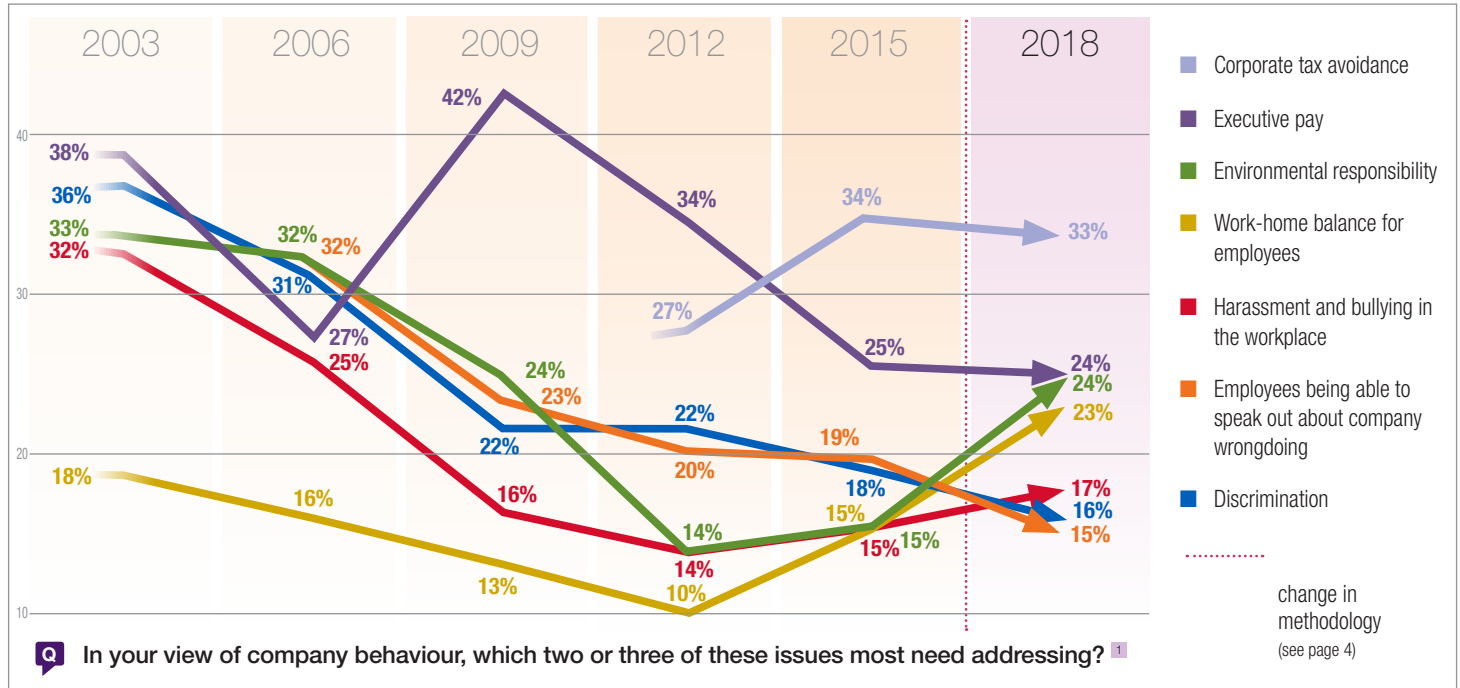


For an explanation of the research methodology and respondent profile see page 4.

Issues needing addressing

Q In your view of company behaviour, which two or three issues most need addressing?

15 year trends



• Executive pay

The executive pay issue has seen significant movements over the last five years, and is now at its lowest level since the survey was launched 15 years ago. Executive pay is a complex issue. According to IBE's research, there have not been as many media headlines on this issue in 2018 compared to 2017, but when something is perceived to be unfair, public reactions remain strong.



• Work-home balance for employees

This issue has slightly increased in prominence since 2017. Many organisations are actively trying to recruit and retain talent by offering employees flexible working arrangements. However, the prominence of this suggests that members of the public may not yet be experiencing the benefits of this trend.



• Environmental responsibility

Environmental responsibility has significantly regained focus as an issue for the British public after falling sharply since 2008. The level recorded in this year's survey equals the level last seen in 2009, before this issue gradually fell as the British public prioritised other issues. The increased media attention given to extreme weather and other consequences of pollution may help partly explain this trend (e.g. Blue Planet Effect). This trend may also be the result of a greater awareness of environmental challenges that in other countries in Europe has increasingly led voters to turn to green or environmentally conscious parties.



• Employees being able to speak out about company wrongdoing

This issue has now fallen to eighth position in terms of what concerns the British public the most, despite the media attention brought to this issue by initiatives such as the #MeToo Movement (which focused on sexual harassment). Viewed in light of the findings of the IBE 2018 Ethics at Work survey that a third of UK employees who were aware of misconduct at work did not speak up about it, this change raises some serious concerns.²

For an explanation of the research methodology and respondent profile see page 4.

¹ This question was prompted: Corporate tax avoidance, executive pay, environmental responsibility, work-home balance for employees, exploitative labour, protection of customer data/data privacy, harassment and bullying in the workplace, discrimination, employees being able to speak out about company wrongdoing, human rights, fair and open pricing of products and services, safety and security in the workplace, bribery and corruption, openness with information, treatment of suppliers, advertising and marketing practices, artificial intelligence.

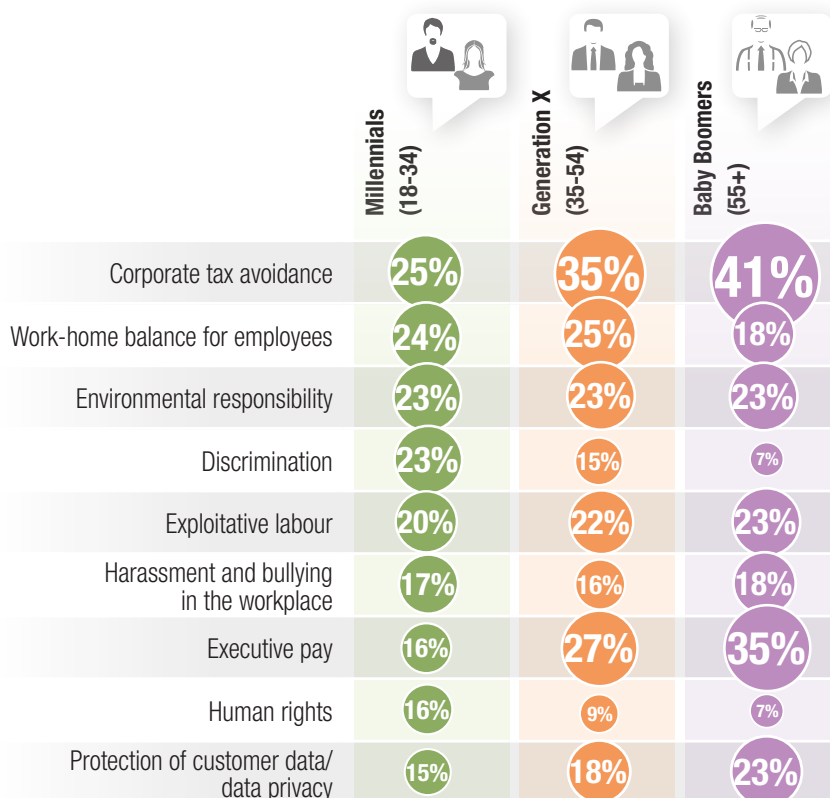
² IBE (2018) Ethics at Work: survey of employees – UK

Interesting findings

Q In your view of company behaviour, which two or three issues most need addressing?

Business ethics across generations ³

- A greater proportion of Millennials (18-34s) are concerned about **work-home balance** than Baby Boomers: it ranks second in the list of issues that concern them the most, whilst it ranks lower for Generation X-ers (35 – 54) and Baby Boomers (55+).
- Discrimination** is also an issue of concern for more Millennials (23%) than Generation X-ers (15%) and Baby Boomers (7%).
- Millennials (18-34s) are less concerned about **executive pay** placing it sixth (16%) while the other two age groups place it second in order of concern (27% of Generation X-ers and 35% of Baby Boomers). They are also less concerned about **protection of customer data/data privacy** (15% compared to 18% of Generation X-ers and 23% of Baby Boomers).



Research Methodology

The research is conducted on behalf of the IBE by Ipsos MORI. This year, 2000 GB adults aged 18+ completed an online survey between 04-25 October 2018. Data has been weighted to reflect the adult population (18-65) in GB in terms of age, gender, region, class, ethnicity, housing tenure and occupational status.

Change in Methodology

In 2016 the study moved from face-to-face interviewing to online surveying. It is widely acknowledged that online surveys elicit more 'don't know' responses compared to face-to-face surveys, as respondents are considered to be more comfortable in saying that they are unsure about something when not responding face-to-face.

Respondent Profile	TOTAL	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	ABC1	C2DE	Working	Graduate
	2,000	50%	50%	37%	44%	20%	55%	45%	65%	47%

³ IBE (2015) Business Ethics across Generations

The Institute of Business Ethics

The Institute of Business Ethics, whose purpose is to promote high standards of business behaviour based on ethical values, is an important partner to any business wanting to preserve its long-term reputation by doing business in the right way.

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