

# The Millennial Generation in 2009

*Evidence From the  
Pew Research Center  
Survey of Political Values*

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# Young Voters in the Election

- Young voters supported Barack Obama by a wide margin (66%-31%). The difference between younger and older voters was larger than in any election since exit polling began.
- Yet Obama would have won the election without any votes from those ages 18-29.
- Still, he (and the Democratic Party) benefited from young voters' energy and campaign help.
- Young voters liked Obama, but the election was not just about him. The young were John Kerry's best age group, and were the party's best age group in 2006.
- Why is this?

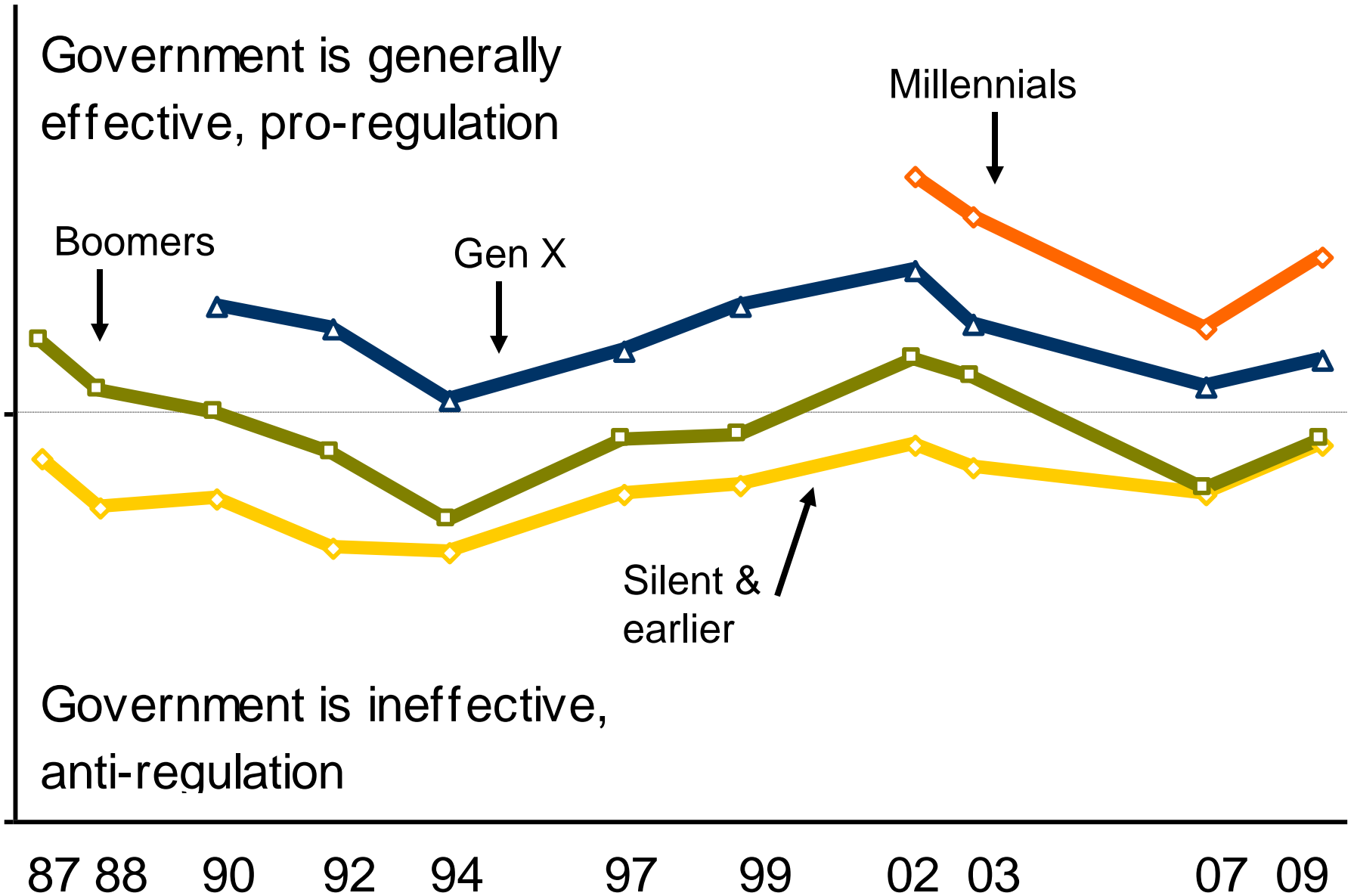
# Young Voters in the Election

- Part of the answer is demographic. Young voters are much more diverse: according to the NEP exit polls, 62% of voters ages 18-29 were white. In 2000, 74% of this age group was white.
- Second, young voters are less religious than older voters. In the NEP, 16% identified as secular, compared with 12% overall. In Pew's surveys (using a different question), nearly 25% of young people are unaffiliated.
- But much of the answer may have to do with socialization to politics: these voters came of age during the latter part of Clinton's presidency, which was generally good for the Democrats, or during Bush's presidency, which was generally bad for the Republican Party.

# Looking Forward

- What are the basic political values of young people today? For an answer, we look at the Pew Research Center's recent Survey of Political Values, conducted in March & April this year. It is the 14<sup>th</sup> in a series begun in 1987. The survey features approximately 80 questions covering core beliefs about government, business, religion and other topics.
- We have divided the respondents into four age cohorts:
  - Millennials (born after 1976)
  - Gen X (born 1965-1976)
  - Boomers (born 1946-1964)
  - Silent Generation & earlier (born before 1946)
- Questions were grouped into several indexes for presentation of the trends over time by generation or cohort.

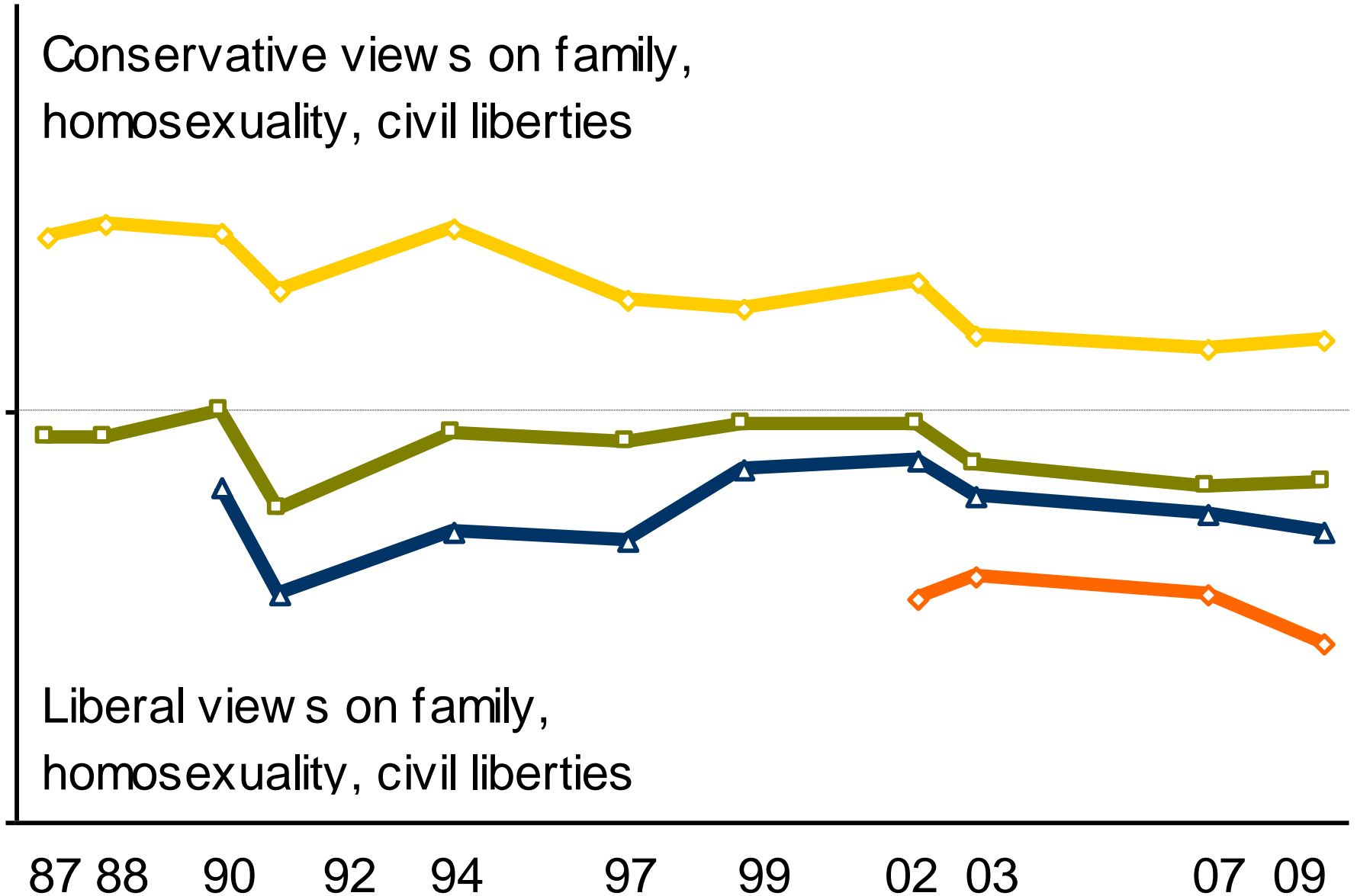
# Scope of Government Index



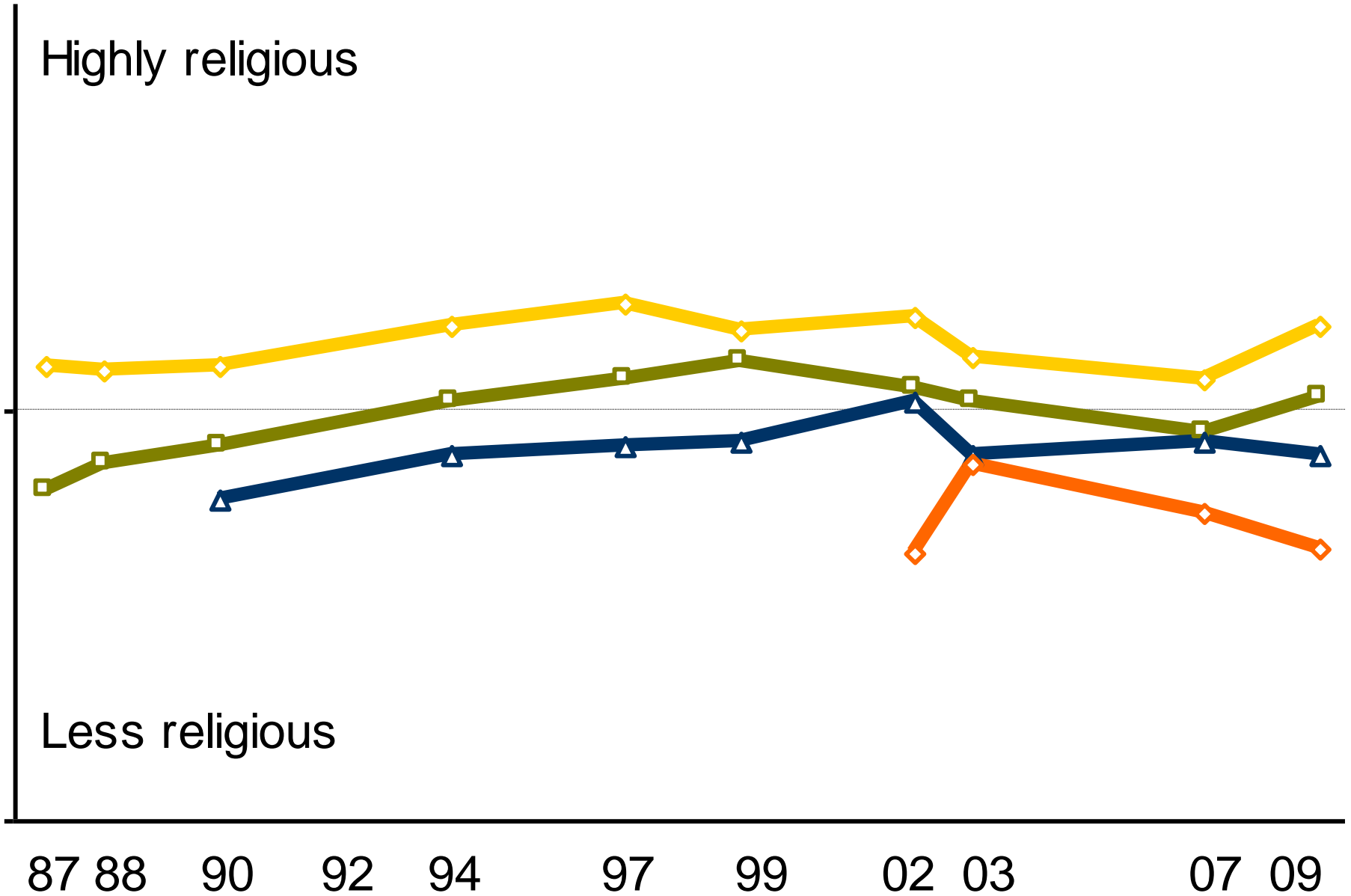
# Social Conservatism Index

Conservative views on family,  
homosexuality, civil liberties

Liberal views on family,  
homosexuality, civil liberties

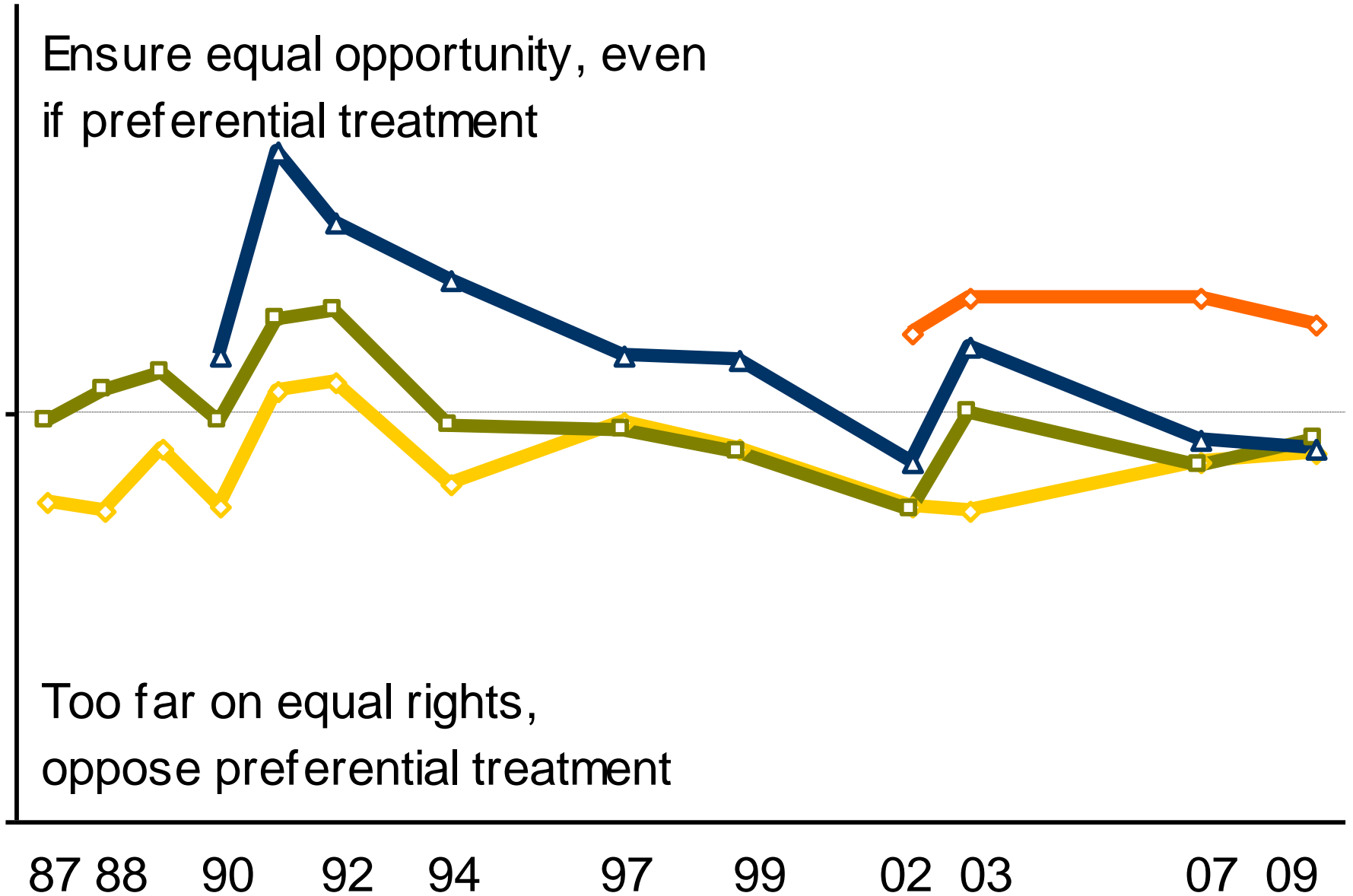


# Religiosity Index



# Equal Opportunity Index

Ensure equal opportunity, even if preferential treatment

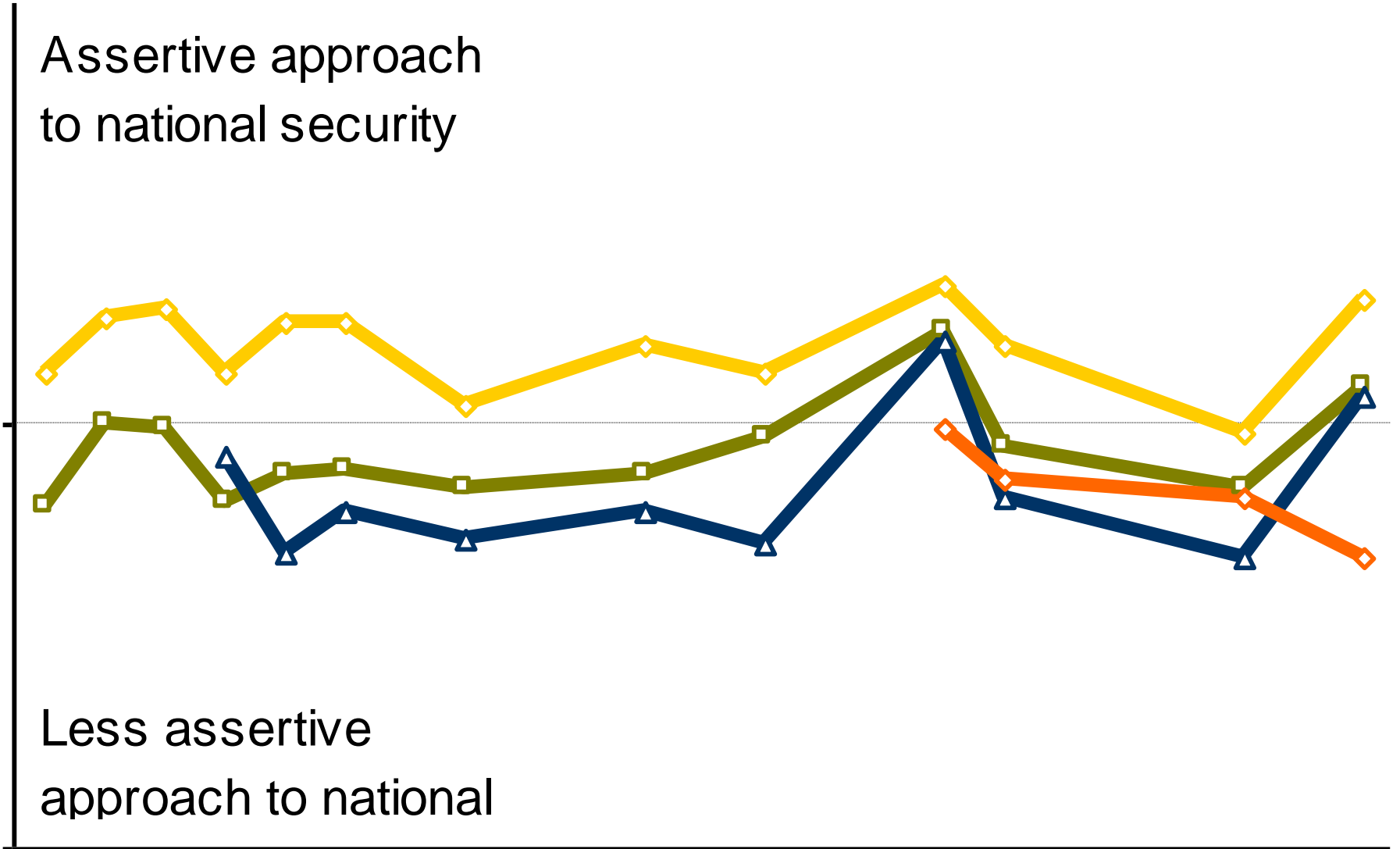


# National Security Index

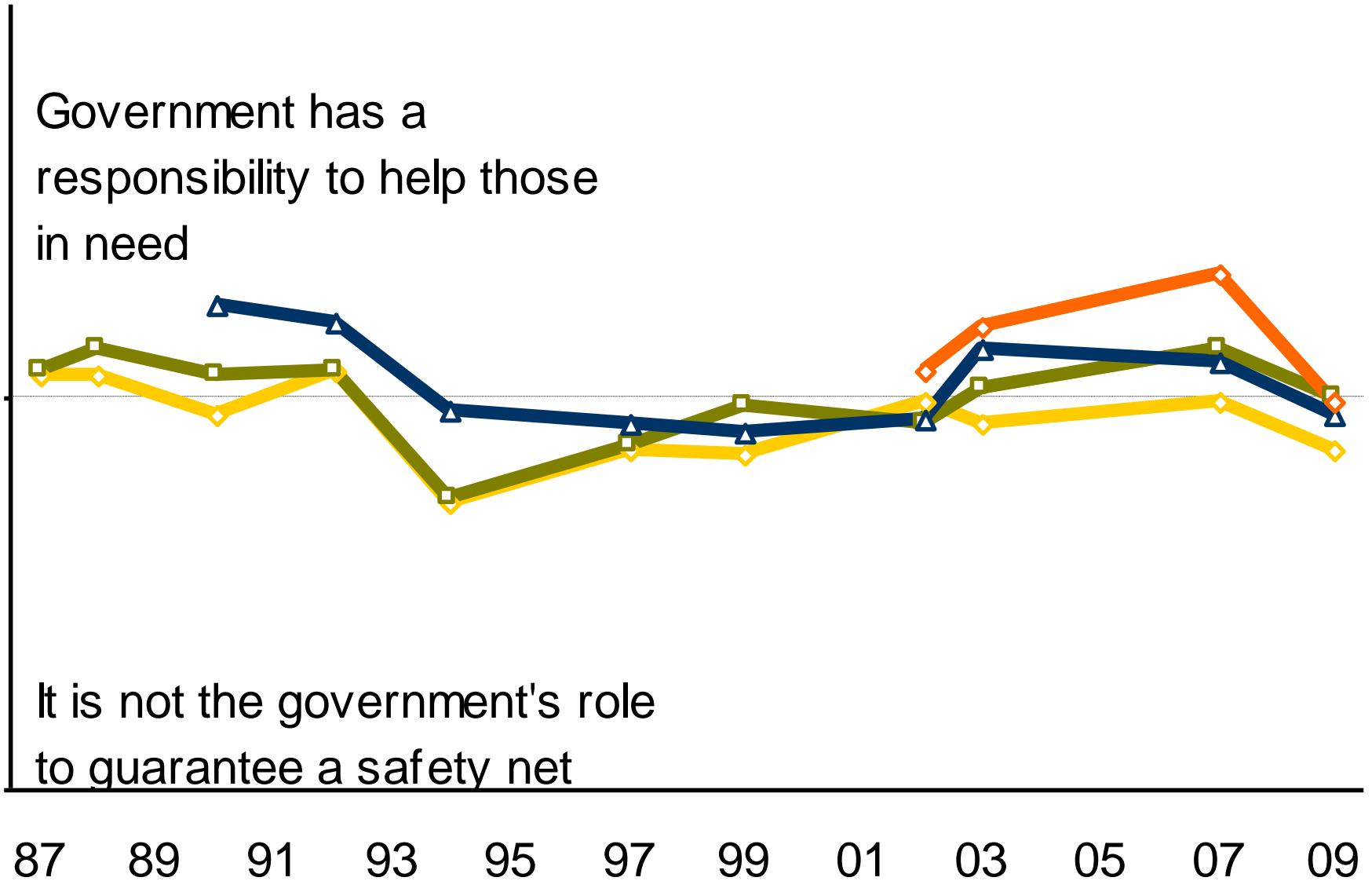
Assertive approach  
to national security

Less assertive  
approach to national

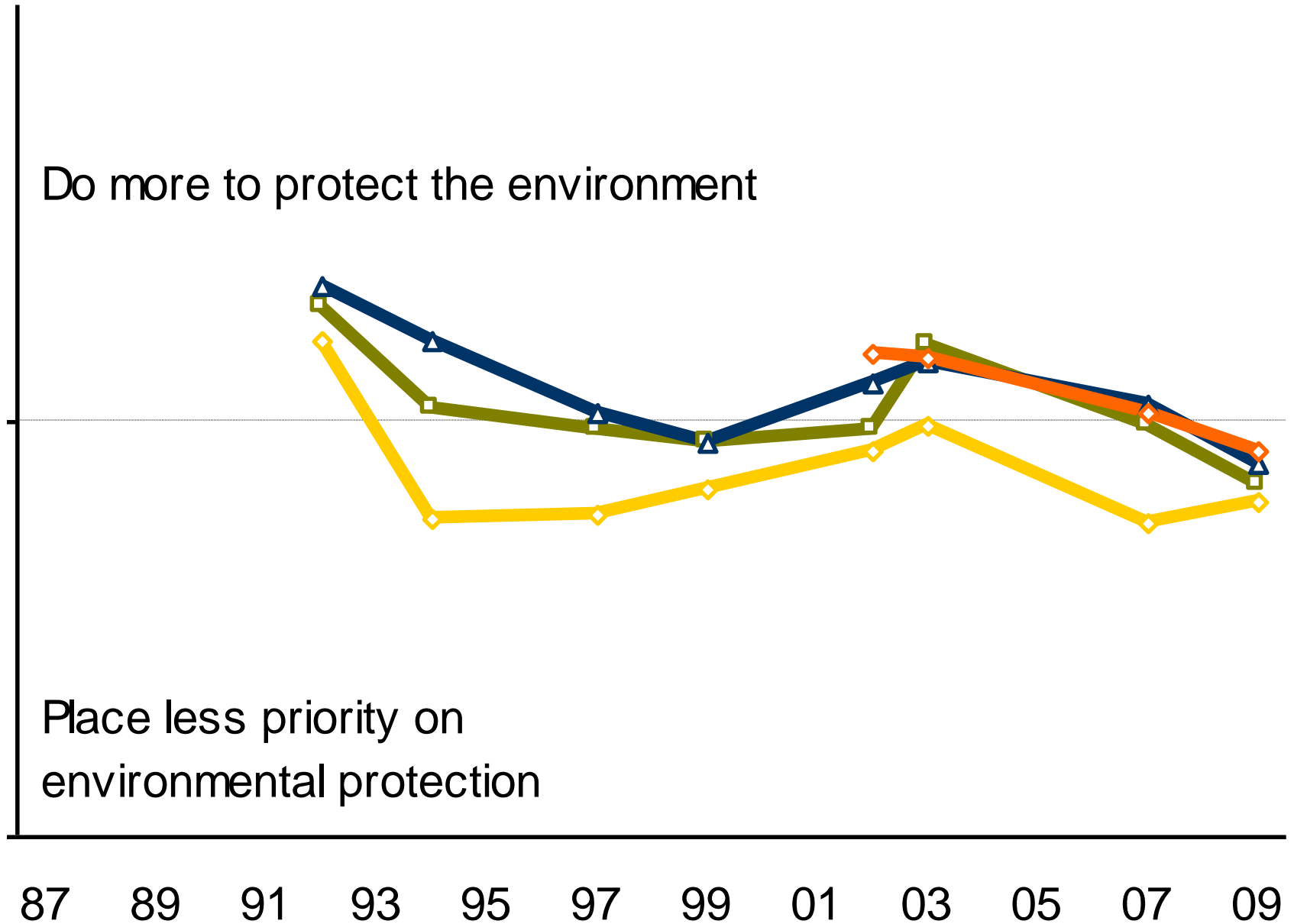
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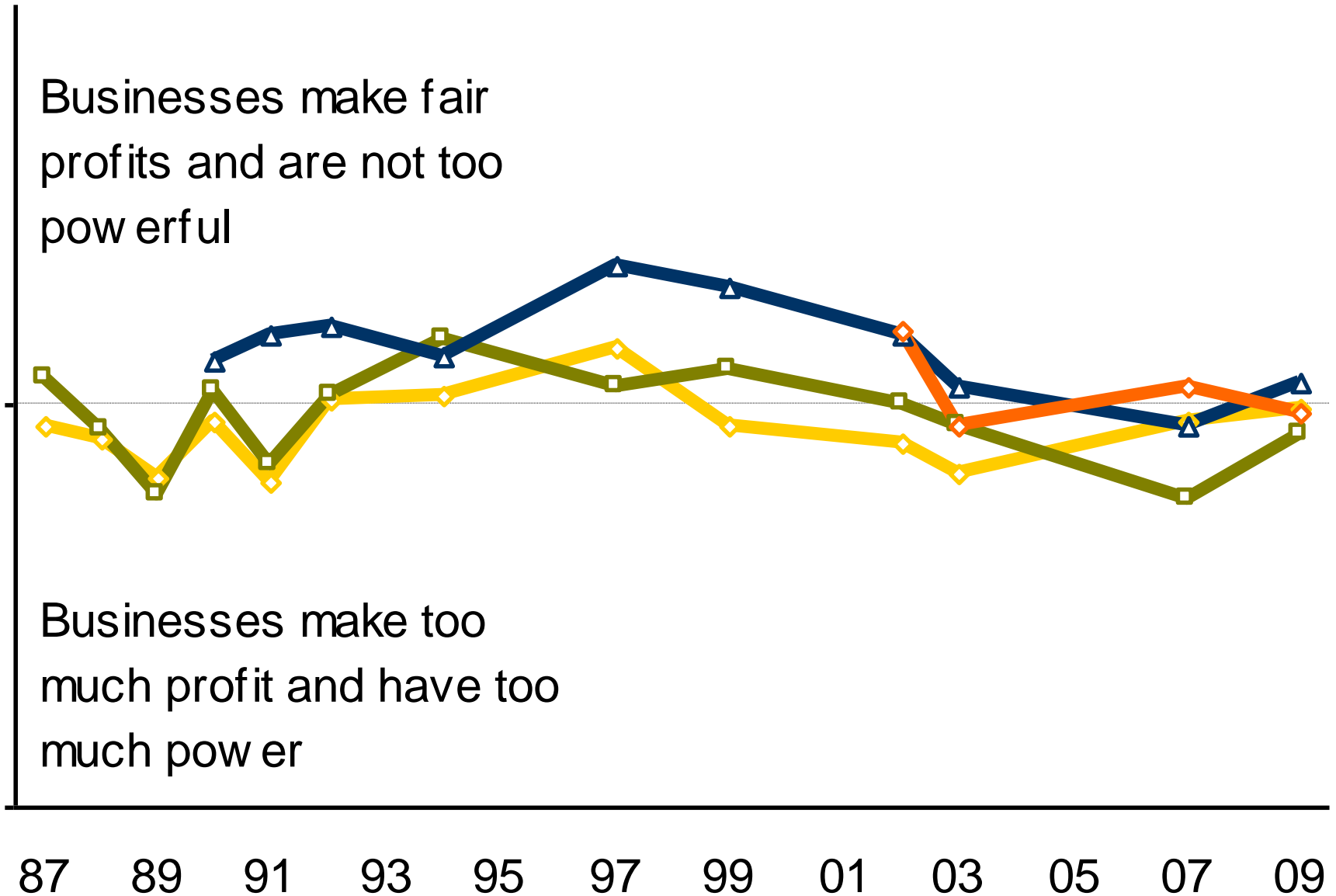
# Social Safety Net Index



# Environmentalism Index



# Business Attitudes Index

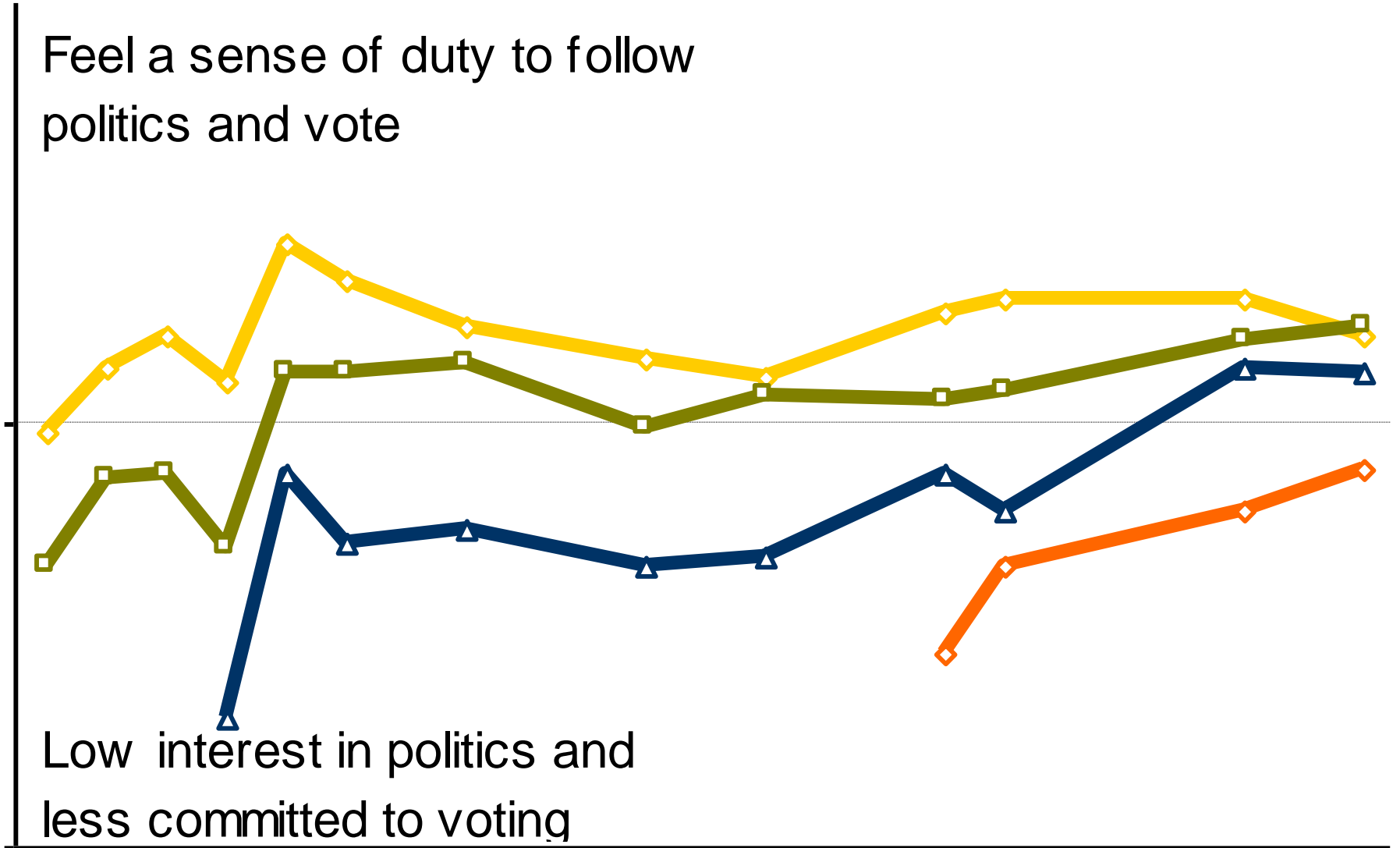


# Political Engagement Index

Feel a sense of duty to follow politics and vote

Low interest in politics and less committed to voting

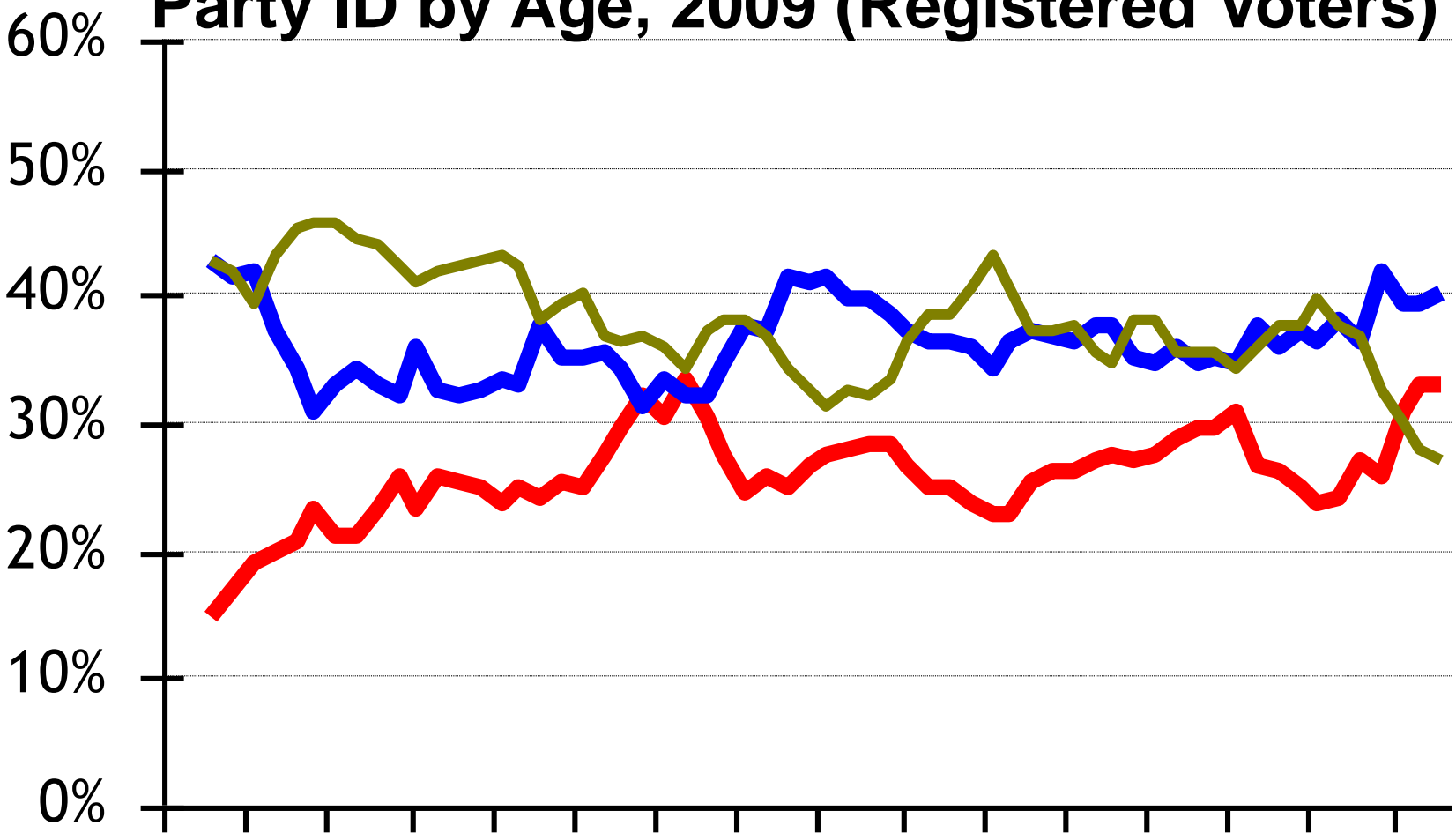
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# Summary and Conclusion

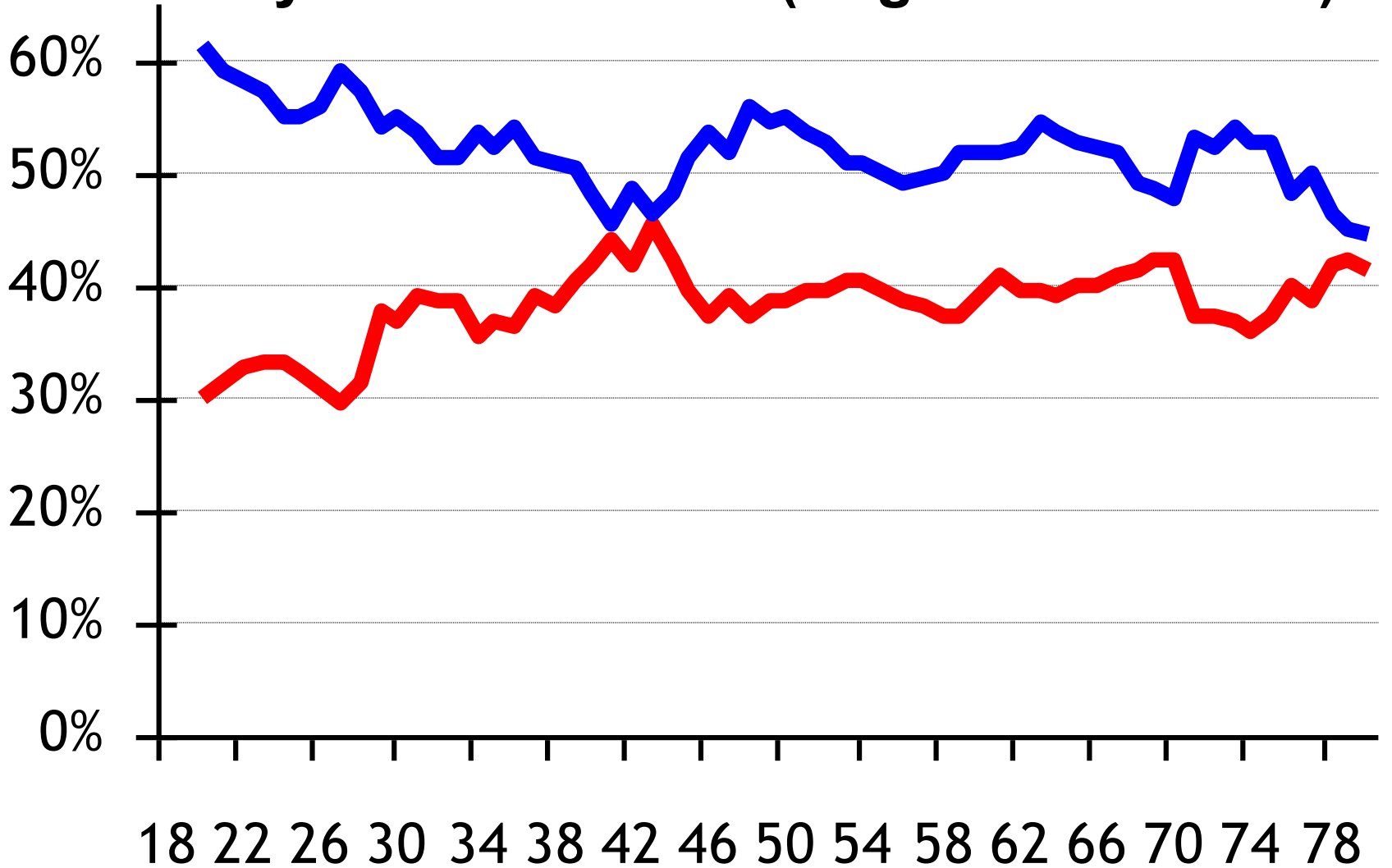
- Young voters (the Millennial generation) are more liberal than other generations on questions about the appropriate scope of government, on questions about equal rights, and on traditional social values
- Currently, these values, along with their impressions of the parties based on their socialization to politics, have given the Democratic Party a big advantage in identification among young people.
- They are not particularly different on other key dimensions, including attitudes about business, environmental protection, or the social safety net

# Party ID by Age, 2009 (Registered Voters)



Rep Dem Ind/Othr/DK

# Party with "Leaners" (Registered Voters)



— Rep/Lean Rep

— Dem/Lean Dem

For More Information

[www.people-press.org](http://www.people-press.org)

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