Ipsos MORI August Political Monitor
Fieldwork: 15-17 August 2008

RECORD CONSERVATIVE LEAD

Ipsos MORI's August Political Monitor, carried out by telephone between 15-17 August 2008 among 1,005 adults age 18 and over, shows the Conservative party on 48% and the Labour party on 24%, **a Conservative lead of 24 points**. This is the highest Conservative lead ever recorded by Ipsos MORI.

Other key findings from this month include:

- Six out of ten British adults (58%) now believe that the **Tories are ready to form the next government**, with just three in ten (29%) disagreeing

- The Conservatives are seen as the party with the **best policies on the economy**, with a lead of 15 points over Labour (38% vs. 23%). This is a real blow to Labour, who enjoyed a large lead on this measure during the 10 years of Blair's leadership, when Gordon Brown was Chancellor of the Exchequer.

- Just over three quarters (76%) of the public are dissatisfied with the way the **Government is running the country**, and one in five (20%) are satisfied.

- Seven in ten (71%) are dissatisfied with the way **Gordon Brown is doing his job as Prime Minister:**

    o Over half of Labour supporters are satisfied (53%), two in five are dissatisfied (39%).

- Half of British adults (51%) are satisfied with the way **David Cameron is doing his job as leader of the Conservative Party**, and three in ten (29%) are dissatisfied. One in five (20%) say they don't know.

    o Among Conservative supporters more than three quarters are satisfied with Cameron (77%) while 14% are dissatisfied.

    o Cameron is viewed as a better person than Brown to lead the country out of the current economic crisis (50% compared to 29%). When the same question is asked comparing Blair and Cameron, Cameron leads by 16 points (50% to 34%).

- A third (33%) are satisfied with the way **Nick Clegg is doing his job as leader of the Liberal Democrats**, and a quarter (26%) are dissatisfied. Two in five (42%) don't know.

- The issues that people say will be **very important in helping them decide which party to vote for** at the next General Election are managing the economy (35%), healthcare (22%) and education (22%). Other important issues include crime (18%), taxation (18%), asylum and immigration (14%) and the environment (10%).

- The Conservatives are seen as the party with the best policies on a range of key issues, in particular on **managing the economy** (the top issue) where the Conservatives lead Labour by 22 points <u>among those who say the issue is very important to them in deciding which party to vote for</u>. However, among this group, Labour has maintained small leads on **healthcare** and **housing**, their traditional strongholds, and the parties are even on **education** (at 32%). The Conservatives lead by large margins on **crime and anti-social behaviour**, **taxation** and **asylum and immigration**.

- Three quarters of people (72%) believe that the **general economic condition of the country will get worse over the next 12 months**.

Technical Details

Ipsos MORI interviewed a representative quota sample of 1,005 adults aged 18+ across Great Britain. Interviews were conducted by telephone 15th-17th August 2008. Data are weighted to match the profile of the population.

Where percentages do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of "don't know" categories, or multiple answers. An asterisk (*) denotes any value of less than half a per cent. Voting intention figures exclude those who say they would not vote, are undecided or refuse to name a party.

Voting intention

Voting intention polls between elections are a measurement of how a representative sample of the public think they would vote at a given point in time. Voting intentions in "peacetime" (non-election periods, such as this one) should be regarded as useful indicators of the political mood rather than predictions of a future electoral result. Voting intentions should be read in conjunction with other political indicators.

A. Voting intentions: those "absolutely certain to vote"

We regard the voting intentions of those "absolutely certain to vote" as the most useful trend indicator, since it includes only those voters whose frame of mind is nearest to those who actually vote at elections. Please note that this measure is not based on the assumption that this is the group who will vote at the next general election, as this population are not accurately identifiable at this stage of a parliament.

Please also note that the 'margin of error' on these figures is ±4% for each figure; this means that a party share figure of 30% could actually fall anywhere between 26% and 34%. This is especially important to keep in mind when calculating party lead figures.

Just over half the public, 51%, said they were 'absolutely certain to vote'.

Q1a   **How would you vote if there were a General Election tomorrow?**
      IF UNDECIDED OR REFUSED AT Q1
Q1b   **Which party are you most inclined to support?**

Base: All absolutely certain to vote (522)

	Q1/2 %
Conservative	48
Labour	24
Liberal Democrats (Lib Dem)	16
Scottish/Welsh Nationalist	3
Green Party	5
UK Independence Party	2
Other	2
Conservative lead (±%)	**+24**
Would not vote	*1*
Undecided	*4*
Refused	*3*

B. Voting intentions: all naming a party

The voting intention figures based on all those giving a voting intention is the measure with the longest pedigree; our regular trends on this basis go back to the 1970s. When turnouts were much higher than is usual today, this offered a good approximation to actual voting behaviour; in more recent years it has over-represented Labour's real electoral strength, since more supporters of Labour than of other parties fail to vote.

Q1a   **How would you vote if there were a General Election tomorrow?**
        IF UNDECIDED OR REFUSED AT Q1
Q1b   **Which party are you most inclined to support?**
        Base: 1,005 British adults 18+   %

Conservative	42
Labour	28
Liberal Democrats (Lib Dem)	17
Scottish/Welsh Nationalist	4
Green Party	4
UK Independence Party	2
Other	3

Conservative lead (±%)	**+14**

Would not vote	*11*
Undecided	*7*
Refused	*2*

Certainty of voting

Q2   **And how likely would you be to vote in an immediate General Election, on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 means you would be absolutely certain to vote, and 1 means that you would be absolutely certain not to vote?**
        Base: 1,005 British adults 18+   %

10 – absolutely certain to vote	51
9	6
8	10
7	5
6	4
5	8
4	2
3	4
2	2
1 – absolutely certain not to vote	8
Don't know	1

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Satisfaction Ratings

A. Satisfaction among general public age 18+

Q3 **Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way the Government is running the country?**

Q4 **Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way Gordon Brown is doing his job as Prime Minister?**

Q5 **Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way David Cameron is doing his job as leader of the Conservative Party?**

Q6 **Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way Nick Clegg is doing his job as leader of the Liberal Democrats?**

Base: 1,005 British adults 18+

	Satisfied %	Dissatisfied %	Don't know %	Index %
Government (Q3)	20	76	4	-56
Brown (Q4)	24	71	6	-47
Cameron (Q5)	51	29	20	+22
Clegg (Q6)	33	26	42	+7

B. Satisfaction among party supporters

BASE: PARTY SUPPORTERS ONLY

Q3 **Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way the Government is running the country?**

Q4 **Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way Gordon Brown is doing his job as Prime Minister?**

Q5 **Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way David Cameron is doing his job as leader of the Conservative Party?**

Q6 **Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way Nick Clegg is doing his job as leader of the Liberal Democrats?**

Base: All party supporters

	Base	Satisfied %	Dissatisfied %	Don't know %	Index %
Government (Q3)	230	48	43	8	+5
Brown (Q4)	230	53	39	7	+14
Cameron (Q5)	348	77	14	9	+63
Clegg (Q6)	135	67	17	16	+50

Economic optimism in Britain

Q7 **Do you think that the general economic condition of the country will improve, stay the same, or get worse over the next 12 months?**

Base: 1,005 British adults 18+

	%
Improve	13
Stay the same	14
Get worse	72
Don't know	1
Ipsos MORI Economic Optimism Index (EOI)	**-59**

Additional Questions in August 2008

Q8 **I want you to think about what it is that most attracted you to the [INSERT PARTY]. Some people are attracted mainly by the policies of the party, some by the leaders of the party and some because they identify with the party as a whole. If you had a total of ten points to allocate according to how important each of these was to you, how many points would you allocate to the leaders of the party you intend voting for, how many to its policies, and how many to the party as a whole?**

Base: All giving a voting intention (814)

	Mean
Leaders	3.89
Policies	4.02
Party	2.11

Q9 **Looking ahead to the next General Election, which, if any, issues do you think will be <u>very</u> important to helping you decide which party to vote for? (OPEN ENDED)**

Base: 1,005 British adults 18+

	%
Managing the economy	35
Healthcare	22
Education	22
Crime and anti-social behaviour	18
Taxation	18
Asylum and immigration	14
Protecting the natural environment	10
Pensions	9
Housing	9
Iraq	6
Unemployment	5
Fuel/ energy costs	5
Defence	4
Public transport	4
Social security/ benefits issues	3
Europe	3
Cost of living/ inflation	3
Other mentions of financial issues	3
Foreign policy	3
Care of the elderly	2
Family issues	2
Constitution/ Devolution	1
Animal welfare	1
Improving poverty	*
None	*
Other	9
Don't know	12

Q10-18. **Which party do you think has the best policies on…. the Conservatives, Labour, Liberal Democrats or some other party?**
Base: 1,005 British adults 18+

	Labour %	Conservatives %	Lib Dems %	Other %	Don't know %	Conservative lead %
Asylum and Immigration	14	35	10	8	34	*+21*
Crime and anti-social behaviour	19	38	8	5	30	*+19*
Education	29	30	11	4	27	*+1*
Environment	16	19	19	19	28	*+3*
Healthcare	31	28	9	5	26	*-3*
Housing	23	26	9	5	37	*+3*
Managing the economy	23	38	7	5	27	*+15*
Pensions	22	25	6	5	42	*+3*
Taxation	16	38	11	4	31	*+22*

Q10-18. **Which party do you think has the best policies on…. the Conservatives, Labour, Liberal Democrats or some other party?**
Base: All naming each issue as 'very important' in helping them decide which party to vote for

(base in brackets)	Labour %	Conservatives %	Lib Dems %	Other %	Don't know %	Conservative lead %
Asylum and Immigration (129)	5	46	13	13	23	*+41*
Crime and anti-social behaviour (170)	17	39	7	9	28	*+22*
Education (218)	32	32	13	4	20	*0*
Environment (97)	12	13	21	36	17	*+1*
Healthcare (229)	41	33	6	3	17	*-8*
Housing (84)	27	20	3	2	48	*-7*
Managing the economy (350)	21	43	9	5	22	*+22*
Pensions (101)	22	35	8	5	29	*+13*
Taxation (172)	6	47	9	7	30	*+41*

Q19. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Conservatives are ready to form the next Government?**

Base: 1,005 British adults 18+

	%
Strongly agree	21
Tend to agree	37
Neither agree nor disagree	10
Tend to disagree	14
Strongly disagree	15
Don't know	3
Total agree	**58**
Total disagree	**29**

Q20. **Who do you think would be the best person to lead the country out of the current economic crisis, Gordon Brown or David Cameron?**

Base: 1,005 British adults 18+

	%
Gordon Brown	29
David Cameron	50
Neither of these	14
Don't know	6

Q21. **Who do you think would be the best person to lead the country out of the current economic crisis, Tony Blair or David Cameron?**

Base: 1,005 British adults 18+

	%
Tony Blair	34
David Cameron	50
Neither of these	11
Don't know	6