

Ipsos MORI January Political Monitor:

Fieldwork: 16-18 January 2009

CON 44%(+5) LAB 30%(-5) LIB DEM 17%(+2)

Ipsos MORI's January 2009 Political Monitor (carried out by telephone between 16-18 January 2009 among 1,005 adults aged 18 and over) shows that among those absolutely certain to vote, the Conservative Party voting intention share has increased by five points to 44% since December 2008, and the Labour Party share has fallen (also by five points) to 30%. Public satisfaction with Prime Minister Gordon Brown has decreased from last month as well (see below), although his satisfaction ratings remain higher than his lowest point in July 2008.

Other key findings from this month's Monitor include:

- Around half (49%) of full-time workers are concerned about the **possibility of being made redundant or becoming unemployed over the next 12 months**, which is up from 43% being concerned in October 2008.
- In terms of **which party is seen to have the best policies for managing the economy**, the Conservatives (30%) and Labour (29%) are now virtually neck-and-neck – this compares with a 15 percentage point lead that the Conservative Party enjoyed in August of 2008.
- **Public optimism about the economy** continues to increase, and is now at its highest level since October 2007 – although those who think the economy will get worse over the next 12 months still far outnumber those who think it will improve. The proportion of those who feel the economic condition of the country will improve in the next twelve months is at 20%, compared with 18% last month. Six in ten (60%) think the economy will get worse, down from 66% last month. The Economic Optimism Index (those who think it will get better minus those who think it will get worse) is now at -40, compared with -48 last month.
- Prime Minister **Gordon Brown's** personal ratings have fallen since last month: three in five (59%) are now dissatisfied with the job he is doing, and a third (33%) are satisfied, giving a net score (the percentage satisfied minus the percentage dissatisfied) of -26. This compares to a 'net' score of -16 last month, and -9 in November last year.
- Overall satisfaction with the **Government** is about the same as last month. Just over a quarter (27% compared to 28% last month) are satisfied, and two-thirds are dissatisfied (65% compared to 64% last month).
- The public's opinion of how **David Cameron** is doing his job as leader of the Conservative Party has also shown little change since December: satisfaction is up one point to 44%, and dissatisfaction remains at 38%.
- Over a third (34%) of the public are satisfied with the way **Nick Clegg** is doing his job as leader of the Liberal Democrats, and a quarter (25%) are dissatisfied. However, the proportion of people still saying that they 'don't know' has increased since December, up four points to 41%.

Technical Details

Ipsos MORI interviewed a representative quota sample of 1,005 adults aged 18+ across Great Britain. Interviews were conducted by telephone 16th-18th January 2009. 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 c.±4% for each figure; this means that a party share figure of 30% could actually fall anywhere between 26% and 34%, though it is far more likely to fall at 30% than at the extreme ends of this range. This is especially important to keep in mind when calculating party lead figures.

Just over half the public, 53%, say they are ‘absolutely certain to vote’.

Q1a **How would you vote if there were a General Election tomorrow?**

IF UNDECIDED OR REFUSED AT Q1a

Q1b **Which party are you most inclined to support?**

Base: All absolutely certain to vote (531) Q1a/b

	Q1a/b %
Conservative	44
Labour	30
Liberal Democrats (Lib Dem)	17
Scottish/Welsh Nationalist	4
Green Party	2
UK Independence Party	1
British National Party	1
Other	1
Conservative lead (±-%)	+14
<i>Would not vote</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Undecided</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Refused</i>	<i>4</i>

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 Q1a

Q1b Which party are you most inclined to support?

Base: 1,005 British adults 18+		%
	Conservative	40
	Labour	34
	Liberal Democrats (Lib Dem)	17
	Scottish/Welsh Nationalist	4
	Green Party	2
	UK Independence Party	1
	British National Party	1
	Other	1
Conservative lead (+%)		+6
	<i>Would not vote</i>	<i>10</i>
	<i>Undecided</i>	<i>9</i>
	<i>Refused</i>	<i>2</i>

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	53
	9	6
	8	10
	7	6
	6	3
	5	8
	4	1
	3	3
	2	2
	1 – absolutely certain not to vote	8
	Don't Know	*
	Refused	*

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: 1,000 British adults 18+

	Satisfied %	Dissatisfied %	Don't know %	Index %
Government (Q3)	27	65	8	-38
Brown (Q4)	33	59	8	-26
Cameron (Q5)	44	38	18	+6
Clegg (Q6)	34	25	41	+9

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)	269	56	36	8	+20
Brown (Q4)	269	62	33	5	+29
Cameron (Q5)	290	74	16	10	+58
Clegg (Q6)	142	68	19	13	+49

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	20
	Stay the same	18
	Get worse	60
	Don't know	2
Ipsos MORI Economic Optimism Index (EOI)		-40

Q8 How concerned if at all would you say you are about the possibility of being made redundant or becoming unemployed over the next twelve months?

	17-19 October 2008 (452 British adults in full-time work) %	16-18 January 2009 (461 British adults in full-time work) %
Very concerned	23	22
Fairly concerned	20	27
Not very concerned	27	21
Not at all concerned	28	29
Don't know	*	1
Total concerned	43	49
Total not concerned	55	50

Q9 Which party do you think has the best policies on managing the economy, the Conservatives, Labour, Liberal Democrats or some other party?

Base: 1,005 British adults 18+

	Labour %	Conservatives %	Lib Dems %	Other %	Don't know %	<i>Conservative lead %</i>
August 2008	23	38	7	5	27	+15
January 2009	29	30	9	8	25	+1