

**Ipsos MORI March Political Monitor**  
**Fieldwork: 19-22 March 2010**  
**CON 35 (-2); LAB 30 (-2); LIB DEM 21 (+2)**

Technical Details

Ipsos MORI interviewed a representative sample of 1,503 adults aged 18+ across Great Britain. Interviews were conducted by telephone 19-22 March 2010. 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 and in the headline figures, those who are not absolutely certain to vote. Data are based on all adults unless otherwise stated.

**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.

**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.

Half of the public, 53%, say they are ‘absolutely certain to vote’ in an immediate General Election.

**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?**

<i>Base: All absolutely certain to vote (833)</i>		Q1a/b %
Conservative		35
Labour		30
Liberal Democrats (Lib Dem)		21
Scottish/Welsh Nationalist		2
Green Party		3
UK Independence Party		6
British National Party		2
Other		1
<b>Conservative lead (±%)</b>		<b>+5</b>
<i>Would not vote</i>		*
<i>Undecided</i>		3
<i>Refused</i>		2

**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: British adults 18+

	%
Conservative	32
Labour	33
Liberal Democrats (Lib Dem)	22
Scottish/Welsh Nationalist	3
Green Party	3
UK Independence Party	4
British National Party	2
Other	2
<b>Conservative lead (+%)</b>	<b>-1</b>
<i>Would not vote</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Undecided</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Refused</i>	<i>3</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: British adults 18+

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

## Satisfaction Ratings

### 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: British adults 18+

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Don't know	Index
	%	%	%	±
Government (Q3)	25	68	7	<b>-43</b>
Brown (Q4)	34	60	6	<b>-26</b>
Cameron (Q5)	42	42	17	<b>0</b>
Clegg (Q6)	45	25	30	<b>+20</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

		Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Don't know	Index
	Base	%	%	%	±
Government (Q3)	(389)	56	37	8	<b>+19</b>
Brown (Q4)	(389)	71	26	4	<b>+45</b>
Cameron (Q5)	(397)	76	14	10	<b>+62</b>
Clegg (Q6)	(273)	79	10	11	<b>+69</b>

### 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: British adults 18+

	%
Improve	36
Stay the same	32
Get worse	29
Don't know	3
<b>Ipsos MORI Economic Optimism Index (EOI)</b>	<b>+7</b>

**Next general election**

**Q8 How important is it to you personally who wins the next general election?**

*Base: British adults 18+*

	Nov 2009 %	Dec 2009 %	Jan 2010 %	Feb 2010 %	Mar 2010 %
Very important	35	37	40	32	36
Fairly important	33	32	30	37	34
Not very important	21	19	18	20	20
Not at all important	8	9	9	8	7
No opinion	3	3	3	3	4
<b>Very/fairly important</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Not very/at all important</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Net important</b>	<b>+39</b>	<b>+41</b>	<b>+43</b>	<b>+41</b>	<b>+43</b>

**Important issues for voting**

**Q9 And looking ahead to the next General Election, which, if any, issues do you think will be very important to you in helping you decide which party to vote for?**

*Base: British adults 18+*

%

Managing the economy	32
Healthcare	26
Education	23
Asylum and immigration	14
Taxation	12
Unemployment	11
Crime and anti-social behaviour	8
Benefits	7
Care for older and disabled people	7
Pensions	6
Protecting the natural environment	5
Afghanistan	5
Defence	3
Housing	3
Iraq	3
Public Transport/roads	3
Other	4
Don't Know	15

**Change of government**

Q10 I am now going to read out a series of statements about issues around a change of government. Can you tell me whether or not you agree or disagree with each one. PROBE Is that strongly/ tend to agree/ disagree?

Base: British adults 18+

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Agree	Disagree	Net agree
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	±
<b>Britain needs a fresh team of leaders</b>	55	21	4	12	6	1	<b>76</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>+58</b>
<b>The Conservatives are ready to form the next government</b>	19	30	8	20	21	3	<b>49</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>+8</b>
<b>The Conservatives do not have the knowledge needed to run the economy properly</b>	16	21	9	28	22	4	<b>37</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>-13</b>

**Chancellor of the Exchequer**

Q11 **Can you tell me whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the way Alistair Darling is doing his job as Chancellor of the Exchequer?**

Base: British adults 18+

	Mar 2008 %	Mar 2010 %
Satisfied	28	36
Dissatisfied	44	51
Don't know	28	13
<b>Net satisfied</b>	<b>-16</b>	<b>-15</b>

Q12 **Who do you think would make the most capable Chancellor, Labour's Alistair Darling or the Conservatives' George Osborne?**

Base: British adults 18+ SPLIT %  
SAMPLE (768)

Alistair Darling	30
George Osborne	34
Neither	18
Don't know	18

Q13 **Who do you think would make the most capable Chancellor, Labour's Alistair Darling, the Conservatives' George Osborne or the Liberal Democrats' Vince Cable?**

Base: British adults 18+ SPLIT %  
SAMPLE (735)

Alistair Darling	23
George Osborne	21
Vince Cable	32
None of these	7
Don't know	18

**Public spending and services**

Q14 **Do you think a Labour or Conservative Government would be most effective in getting good value for the public money it spends?**

Base: British adults 18+

	Apr 2005 %	Mar 2008 %	Jun 2009 %	Nov 2009 %	Mar 2010 %
Labour Government	41	27	25	32	31
Conservative Government	30	29	40	39	42
Other	4	3	5	4	4
None	13	22	18	13	11
Don't know	12	19	13	11	12
<b>Conservative lead</b>	<b>-11</b>	<b>+2</b>	<b>+15</b>	<b>+7</b>	<b>+11</b>

Q15. Please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with each of these arguments about public services and public spending IF AGREE/DISAGREE: Is that strongly or tend to agree/disagree?

		There is a real need to cut spending on public services in order to pay off the very high national debt we now have		Making public services more efficient can save enough money to pay off the very high national debt we now have, without damaging services the public receive	
		Nov 2009	Mar 2010	Nov 2009	Mar 2010
		%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	%	17	24	26	35
Tend to agree	%	26	25	36	29
Neither agree nor disagree	%	10	5	9	6
Tend to disagree	%	23	23	17	14
Strongly disagree	%	21	22	9	13
Don't know	%	2	2	2	4
<b>Agree</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Net agree</b>	<b>±</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>+4</b>	<b>+36</b>	<b>+37</b>

Q16 The Conservatives say that the national debt is the greatest threat to the economy and the deficit needs to be cut quickly, starting this year. Labour say that it should not be cut so soon as reducing public spending may stop the economic recovery. Which of these do you think is right?

	%
The Conservative view that national debt is the greatest threat to the economy and the deficit needs to be cut quickly, starting this year	32
The Labour view that the national debt should not be cut so soon as reducing spending may stop recovery	56
Neither	6
Don't know	7

Q17 Some economists say that the national debt is the greatest threat to the economy and the deficit needs to be cut quickly, starting this year. Other economists say that it should not be cut so soon as reducing public spending may stop the economic recovery. Which of these do you think is right?

	%
The view that national debt is the greatest threat to the economy and the deficit needs to be cut quickly, starting this year	28
The view that the national debt should not be cut so soon as reducing spending may stop recovery	57
Neither	4
Don't know	11

## The next election

Q18 **As you probably know, the general election may result in a clear majority for one party that can make decisions without consulting, or it may result in a Hung Parliament where no party has an overall majority so parties must compromise and reach agreement to make decisions.**

**Thinking ahead to the next general election, which of the following outcomes do you think is most likely?**

<i>Base: British adults 18+</i>	<i>%</i>
A Conservative majority government	24
A Labour majority government	10
A hung parliament with the Conservatives as the biggest party	37
A hung parliament with Labour as the biggest party	22
A Liberal Democrat majority government	*
A hung parliament with the Liberal Democrats as the biggest party	*
Other	1
Don't know	6
<b>Hung Parliament</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Conservatives largest party</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Labour largest party</b>	<b>32</b>

Q19 **And which of these alternatives do you think would be best for the UK economy?**

<i>Base: British adults 18+</i>	<i>%</i>
A Conservative majority government	29
A Labour majority government	19
A hung parliament with the Conservatives as the biggest party	18
A hung parliament with Labour as the biggest party	19
A Liberal Democrat majority government	1
A hung parliament with the Liberal Democrats as the biggest party	1
Other	2
Don't know	11
<b>Hung Parliament</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Conservatives largest party</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Labour largest party</b>	<b>38</b>