

Ipsos MORI Public Spending Index
Research Conducted by Ipsos MORI
22 June 2009

- Ipsos MORI interviewed 1,004 British adults 18+
- Fieldwork conducted by telephone between 19-21 June 2009
- Data weighted to the national population profile
- An ^{**} indicates a finding of less than 0.5%, but greater than zero
- Where percentages do not add up to exactly 100% this is due to computer rounding, the exclusion of “don’t knows” or to multiple answers

Q1.a) **On balance, do you agree or disagree with the statement that in the long term, this government’s policies will improve the state of Britain’s economy?**

Base: All 18+	Sept 2008	June 2009
	%	%
Agree	29	34
Disagree	64	59
Don’t know	7	7
Net agree	-35	-25

Q1.b) **On balance, do you agree or disagree with the statement that in the long term, this government’s policies will improve the state of Britain’s public services?**

Base: All 18+	Sept 2008	June 2009
	%	%
Agree	33	32
Disagree	61	61
Don’t know	6	7
Net agree	-28	-29

Q2. **Thinking about the NHS over the next few years do you expect it to . . . ?**

Base: All 18+	Sept 2008	June 2009
	%	%
Get much better	2	1
Get better	19	16
Stay the same	41	50
Get worse	28	26
Get much worse	8	6
Don’t know	2	1
Better	21	17
Worse	36	32
Net better	-15	-15

Q3. **People have different views about whether it is more important to reduce taxes or keep up government spending. How about you? Which of these statements comes closest to your own view?**

Base: All 18+	April 1997 %	Nov 2000 %	Apr 2005 %	Jun 2009 %
Taxes should be cut, even if it means some reduction in government services, such as health, education and welfare	7	12	15	18
Government services such as health, education and welfare should be extended, even if it means some increases in taxes	76	61	56	46
Things should be left as they are	14	20	23	33
Don't know	3	7	6	2

Q4. **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 help cut government spending, without damaging services the public receive	Public services are already run efficiently, and so the only way to cut spending is to cut services provided to the public	There are many public services that are a waste of money and can be cut
<i>Base: All 18+</i>					
Strongly agree	%	18	38	5	37
Tend to agree	%	22	41	12	26
Neither agree nor disagree	%	7	6	5	6
Tend to disagree	%	22	8	31	17
Strongly disagree	%	29	5	46	10
Don't know	%	3	2	2	3
Agree	%	40	79	17	63
Disagree	%	51	13	77	27
Net agree	± %	-11	65	-60	36

Q5. **Government borrowing is now at record levels, and will need to be reduced in future. Which of these statements comes closest to your own view?**

	<i>Base: All 18+</i>	<i>%</i>
Government borrowing should be reduced, even if it means spending on key public services is cut		29
Spending on public services should be maintained, even if it means increasing the income tax I pay		38
Things should be left as they are		31
Don't know		3

Q6. **If the overall level of public spending is going to be reduced as part of the process of reducing borrowing and rebalancing the public finances, should spending on some services be protected from cuts even if that means bigger rises in taxation and/or deeper cuts in other areas of public spending, or should no services be protected from cuts?**

	<i>Base: All 18+</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes, protect some services		77
No, do not protect any services		20
Don't know		4

Q7. **Which TWO or THREE, if any, of the following main areas of public spending do you think should be protected from any cuts?**

	<i>Base: All who think some services should be protected (773)</i>	<i>%</i>
The NHS/health care		82
Schools		58
Care for the elderly		46
The Police		35
Social services		15
Defence		13
Benefit payments		8
Local authority services		6
Overseas aid		5
None of these		*
Don't know		1

Q8. **And which TWO or THREE, if any, of the following main areas of public spending do you think should be cut to restore public finances?**

	<i>Base: All who think some services should be protected (773)</i>	<i>%</i>
Overseas aid		56
Benefit payments		44
Defence		27
Local authority services		21
Social services		13
The Police		8
Schools		3
The NHS/health care		2
Care for the elderly		1
None of these		6
Don't know		2

Q9. **Do you think a Labour or Conservative Government would be most effective in getting good value for the public money it spends?**

Base: All 18+	Apr 2005	Mar 2008	Jun 2009
	%	%	%
Labour Government	41	27	25
Conservative Government	30	29	40
Other	4	3	5
None	13	22	18
Don't know	12	19	13

Source: Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute

Improving British Economy – Trends

Q On balance, do you agree or disagree that “In the long term, this Government’s policies will improve the state of Britain’s economy”?		Agree	Disagree	Net agree
<i>Base: c. 1,000 – 2,000 British adults 18+</i>		%	%	%
Geoffrey Howe	EOI			
July 1980	-39	48	36	+12
May 1981	-31	40	44	-4
November 1981	-24	41	48	-7
March 1982	-4	47	46	+1
June 1983	+2	50	44	+6
Nigel Lawson				
March 1985	-22	40	52	-12
March 1986	-8	38	53	-15
March 1987	+16	49	44	+5
March 1988	+11	54	36	+18
March 1989	-14	46	43	+3
John Major				
March 1990	-42	34	55	-21
Norman Lamont				
March 1991	-1	34	53	-19
March 1992	+4	42	46	-4
March 1993	-9	28	59	-31
Kenneth Clarke				
December 1993	-6	29	58	-29
December 1994	-16	24	64	-40
November 1995	-18	23	64	-41
December 1995	-16	24	63	-39
November 1996	0	34	52	-18
December 1996	-9	31	55	-24
Gordon Brown				
June 1997	+19	55	24	+31
July 1997	+10	57	24	+33
November 1997	+6	56	27	+29
February 1998	+2	52	31	+21
March 1998	+4	54	29	+25
November 1998	-31	46	33	+13
February 1999	-15	49	31	+18
March 1999	-6	49	32	+17
November 1999	+4	47	34	+13
February 2000	-10	42	39	+3
March 2000	-5	42	39	+3
July 2000	-10	n/a	n/a	n/a
September 2000	-17	n/a	n/a	n/a
November 2000	-6	43	42	+1
March 2001	-29	48	36	+12
March 2002	-21	39	42	-3
May 2002	-22	45	40	+5
September 2002	-23	41	43	-2
December 2002	-40	38	44	-6

Improving British Economy – Trends Cont'd

Q On balance, do you agree or disagree with the statement that "In the long term, this Government's policies will improve the state of Britain's economy"?		Agree	Disagree	Net agree
Base: c. 1,000 – 2,000 British adults 18+		%	%	%
Gordon Brown (cont'd)	EOI			
March 2003	-39	36	43	-7
June 2003	-20	36	51	-15
July 2003	-22	32	53	-21
September 2003	-23	34	51	-17
December 2003	-20	37	48	-11
March 2004	-22	38	49	-11
June 2004	-22	39	48	-9
September 2004	-22	39	47	-8
November 2004	-23	40	46	-6
February 2005	-11	43	43	0
May 2005	-20	47	38	+9
September 2005	-35	39	50	-11
November 2005	-27	41	44	-3
March 2006	-28	38	48	-10
May 2006	-30	38	51	-13
September 2006	-31	40	46	-6
November 2006	-33	39	51	-12
March 2007	-39*	37	50	-13
May 2007	-31	44	41	+3
September 2007	-25	39	46	-7
November 2007	-39**	36	50	-14
Alistair Darling				
March 2008	-47***			
September 2008	-58	29	64	-35
June 2009	+11	34	59	-25

Source: Ipsos MORI

- *January 2007
- **October 2007
- ***February 2008

Improving Public Services – Trends

Q On balance, do you agree or disagree with the statement that “in the long term, this government’s policies will improve the state of Britain’s public services”?

			Agree	Disagree	Net agree
Base: c. 1,000 British adults 18+			%	%	%
21-26 June 2001	MORI/Times	1,082	54	32	+22
18-24 October 2001	MORI/Times	1,016	45	42	+3
29 November 2001	MORI/GMB	600	46	40	+6
15-17 March 2002	MORI	962	36	54	-18
24-26 May 2002	MORI	962	38	50	-12
5-8 September 2002	MORI	603	38	52	-14
13-16 December 2002	MORI	969	35	52	-17
28-31 March 2003	MORI	969	36	50	-14
20-22 June 2003	MORI	973	31	59	-28
7-8 July 2003	MORI/Sun	1,003	28	62	-34
19-21 September 2003	MORI	961	31	57	-26
12-14 December 2003	MORI	970	30	57	-27
19-23 March 2004	MORI	831	37	55	-18
18-20 June 2004	MORI	966	39	52	-13
17-20 September 2004	MORI	964	35	54	-19
26-30 November 2004	MORI	965	36	54	-18
25-27 February 2005	MORI	963	39	52	-13
13-15 May 2005	Deloitte/MORI	975	43	45	-2
16-18 September 2005	Deloitte/MORI	971	34	55	-21
25-27 November 2005	Deloitte/Ipsos MORI	985	35	53	-18
10-12 March 2006	Deloitte/Ipsos MORI	977	32	55	-23
5-7 May 2006	Deloitte/Ipsos MORI	976	33	57	-24
8-10 September 2006	Ipsos MORI	957	31	59	-28
17-18 November 2006	Ipsos MORI	980	33	57	-24
9-11 March 2007	Ipsos MORI	980	29	57	-28
11-13 May 2007	Ipsos MORI	961	38	51	-13
29 August-2 Sept 2007	Ipsos MORI	952	33	55	-22
23-26 November 2007	Ipsos MORI	964	34	54	-20
7-9 March 2008	Ipsos MORI	1,012	33	55	-22
12-14 September 2008	Ipsos MORI	1,017	33	61	-28
19-21 June 2009	Ipsos MORI	1,004	32	61	-29
Change September '08 – June '09 ±			-1	n/c	-1

Q	Thinking about the NHS over the next few years do you expect it to...? CONT'D													
	15-17 Mar 2002	24-26 May 2002	5-8 Sept 2002	13-16 Dec 2002	28-31 Mar 2003	20-22 Jun 2003	19-21 Sept 2003	12-14 Dec 2003	19-23 Mar 2004	18-20 Jun 2004	17-20 Sept 2004	26-30 Nov 2004	25-28 Feb 2005	
Get much better	%	4	5	3	3	3	3	2	2	4	5	4	3	4
Get better	%	29	37	33	30	26	25	25	27	29	27	28	26	28
Stay the same	%	28	28	33	30	31	32	32	34	30	34	31	35	32
Get worse	%	27	22	22	25	28	29	31	27	27	23	26	26	26
Get much worse	%	8	6	6	7	8	9	8	7	8	8	9	7	8
Don't know	%	4	2	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	2
Better	%	33	42	36	33	29	28	27	29	33	32	32	29	32
Worse	%	35	28	28	32	36	38	39	34	35	31	35	33	34
Net better		-2	+14	+8	+1	-7	-10	-12	-5	-2	+1	-3	-4	-2

Q	Thinking about the NHS over the next few years do you expect it to...?														Chg Sept '08- Jun '09
	13-15 May 2005	16-18 Sept 2005	25-27 Nov 2005	10-12 Mar 2006	5-7 May 2006	8-10 Sept 2006	17-18 Nov 2006	9-11 Mar 2007	11-13 May 2007	31 Aug 2007	23-26 Nov 2007	7-9 Mar 2008	12-14 Sept '08	19-21 June 2009	
Get much better	%	4	3	4	2	2	2	1	3	3	3	2	4	2	-1
Get better	%	33	23	21	20	20	16	18	16	21	20	21	22	19	16
Stay the same	%	33	34	31	31	30	29	32	29	37	33	37	35	41	50
Get worse	%	21	25	32	32	33	37	33	33	29	31	28	25	28	26
Get much worse	%	7	12	9	12	12	13	13	16	9	11	11	12	8	6
Don't know	%	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	1	2	3	2	-1
Better	%	37	26	25	22	22	18	19	19	24	23	23	26	21	17
Worse	%	28	37	41	44	45	50	46	49	38	42	39	37	36	32
Net better		+9	-11	-16	-22	-23	-32	-27	-30	-14	-19	-16	-11	-15	0