

Ipsos MORI October Political Monitor

Fieldwork: 16-18 October 2009

CON 43% (+7); LAB 26% (+2); LIB DEM 19% (-6)

Ipsos MORI's October Political Monitor (carried out by telephone between 16-18 October among 996 British adults aged 18 and over) shows that **voting intentions have returned to the parties' positions before the conference season**, with both David Cameron's and Gordon Brown's personal ratings also up.

The Liberal Democrats have lost support to both the Conservative and Labour party since last month. Among those absolutely certain to vote, 43% intend to vote Conservative (up from 36% in September), 26% intend to vote Labour (from 24%) and 19% the Liberal Democrats (down from 25%). Last month's interviewing was completed just after the Lib Dem party conference (and before the Labour and Conservative conferences), so the drop in Lib Dem support may be attributable to the relatively high press coverage they received around this time, while the Conservatives may have benefitted in turn from the coverage they received during their conference. The voting figures are a return to levels seen earlier this year prior to conference season, with Labour and the Conservatives both back to the levels of support they received in August.

Gordon Brown and David Cameron's ratings have also improved since September. A third (32%) are satisfied with the way Gordon Brown is doing his job as Prime Minister and three-fifths (62%) are dissatisfied, giving a net satisfaction score (the percentage satisfied minus the percentage dissatisfied) of -30, a six point improvement on last month. Half (49%) are satisfied and one in three (34%) are dissatisfied with David Cameron's performance, a nine point increase in his net satisfaction (+15 now compared to +6 last month).

On the other hand, **satisfaction with the Liberal Democrat leader has suffered slightly.** Over two in five (44%) are now satisfied with the way Nick Clegg is doing his job as leader of the Liberal Democrats, and 27% are dissatisfied, giving him a net satisfaction score of +17, a four point decrease from September.

Satisfaction with the Government has fallen since last month. A quarter (23%) are satisfied with the way the Government is running the country and seven in ten are dissatisfied (72%, compared to 69% last month). The net rating puts the Government on -49, which is a six percentage point drop from September.

Economic optimism for the next year, though, continues to improve. Over two in five (44%) now think that the economy will improve over the next 12 months, and 23% think it will get worse. Ipsos MORI's Economic Optimism Index therefore stands at +21, the highest standing since May 1997.

Technical Details

Ipsos MORI interviewed a representative sample of 996 adults aged 18+ across Great Britain. Interviews were conducted by telephone 16th-18th Oct 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 and in the headline figures, those who are not absolutely certain to vote.

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, 50%, 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?**

Base: All absolutely certain to vote (528) Q1a/b

	Q1a/b %
Conservative	43
Labour	26
Liberal Democrats (Lib Dem)	19
Scottish/Welsh Nationalist	4
Green Party	2
UK Independence Party	2
British National Party	1
Other	2

Conservative lead (±%) +17

<i>Would not vote</i>	1
<i>Undecided</i>	6
<i>Refused</i>	4

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: 996 British adults 18+

	%
Conservative	40
Labour	31
Liberal Democrats (Lib Dem)	18
Scottish/Welsh Nationalist	4
Green Party	3
UK Independence Party	2
British National Party	1
Other	1

Conservative lead (+%) +9

<i>Would not vote</i>	11
<i>Undecided</i>	9
<i>Refused</i>	3

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: 996 British adults 18+

	%
10 – absolutely certain to vote	50
9	6
8	9
7	5
6	4
5	9
4	2
3	3
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: 996 British adults 18+

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Don't know	Index
	%	%	%	%
Government (Q3)	23	72	5	-49
Brown (Q4)	32	62	6	-30
Cameron (Q5)	49	34	17	+15
Clegg (Q6)	44	27	29	+17

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)	243	47	46	7	+1
Brown (Q4)	243	63	30	7	+33
Cameron (Q5)	302	80	10	10	+70
Clegg (Q6)	144	77	12	11	+65

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: 996 British adults 18+

	%
Improve	44
Stay the same	31
Get worse	23
Don't know	2
Ipsos MORI Economic Optimism Index (EOI)	+21