

# The Research Monitor

May 2009

## Political scandal and the May polls

In a month of unprecedented scandal centred around MPs' expenses and Labour Party infighting, it is unsurprising that the political polls have taken centre stage in May. Public blame over the issue of MPs' expenses seems to have been levelled at Gordon Brown and the Labour Party – though all of the main parties are preparing for a backlash in the key political poll in the next couple of weeks – the European Parliament and Local Elections.

As well as the interest centred around the MP's expenses scandal, the economy continues to feature prominently as researchers look to gain further insights into public attitudes to the current economic crisis and effects on consumer behaviour and health. May might have been all about the economy and expenses but polls on public attitudes to death, religion and immigration show an appetite and demand to understand public insights on the key issues of the day.

### Consumer

- 21/05/09 Consumers turn to eBay in current financial crisis**  
Community Development Finance Association/ComRes: One quarter (26%) of the public have sold some of their belongings on eBay or other auction sites in the last six months. [More](#)
- 20/05/09 Beer is the nation's favourite**  
Nielsen: Stella Artois, Carling and Foster's are the top three favourite alcoholic drinks in Britain, according to this survey. [More](#)
- 20/05/09 T-Mobile the best in UK for mobile broadband**  
YouGov: This survey gave high marks to the broadband provider across network coverage, billing and customer service. [More](#)
- 19/05/09 Marks & Spencer – the most trustworthy retailer on the high street**  
Limelight PR/YouGov: Two in five (22%) of the public named the retail chain as the most trustworthy, though John Lewis was not far behind (20%). One in eight (12%) would be most upset if Tesco were to disappear from the UK high street. [More](#)
- 06/05/09 Radio still the key to music discovery**  
Ipsos MORI: Survey suggests that though one in eight (12%) of the public use unofficial websites at least once a month to download or stream music, seven in ten (71%) use radio as a source of music discovery. [More](#)

### Health

- 19/05/09 UK unaware of the need for Vitamin D**  
National Osteoporosis Society/YouGov: Just over a third (35%) of UK adults are aware that Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones. [More](#)
- 13/05/09 Two in five UK men feel worried or low**  
Mind/YouGov: Top three worry issues for men include job security, work and money. Less than a quarter (23%) would see their GP if they felt low over a fortnight. [More](#)

## Welcome

The Research Monitor brings together the main polls and insights across economic, consumer, political and social research in the past month in the UK and around the globe.

This is a free service to our clients and friends. We also offer a more tailored service including in-depth analysis of what the latest research and the current state of opinion means for your organisation or campaign.

## Pick of the May polls

**Sunday Times / YouGov:** Over a quarter of the public (26%) associate the song 'Road to nowhere' with Gordon Brown. Other songs include 'Things can only get better' (16%) and 'Sorry seems to be the hardest word' (16%). Only 1% associated 'You sexy thing' with the Prime Minister.

- 25/05/09 Rise of the independent MP in light of expenses scandal**  
Ekklesia/ComRes: Just under eight in ten (78%) agree that at the next general election, independent candidates should stand against MPs who have behaved unethically. Almost two thirds (63%) agree that British democracy would be strengthened if there were more independent MPs. [More](#)
- 23/05/09 Cameron and Osborne most trusted save economy**  
BBC Daily Politics/ComRes: Over a third (35%) of the public trust David Cameron and George Osborne to steer the economy through these difficult times. Just under half (46%) of the public think David Cameron would do the best job as Prime Minister. [More](#)
- 22/05/09 European elections and the next general election**  
The Guardian/ICM: Two thirds of the public (66%) agree that, bearing in mind the scandal over MPs' expenses and the ongoing economic recession, the next General election should be this year. With 36% calling for an immediate election and 30% agreeing it should be before Christmas 2009. [More](#)
- 17/05/09 European election voting intention, EU membership and EU powers**  
UK Independence Party (UKIP)/ComRes: Eight in ten (81%) agree that the British people should have the opportunity to vote in a referendum on whether or not Britain should stay in or withdraw from the European Union. [More](#)
- 17/05/09 Public reaction to the MPs' expenses scandal**  
The Guardian/ICM: Three quarters of the public (75%) are against an increase in MP's basic salaries to accompany a restriction in expenses they are allowed to claim. [More](#)
- 17/05/09 Party Leaders handling the issue of MPs' expenses**  
Independent on Sunday/ComRes: Six in ten (61%) believe that David Cameron has dealt with the issue of MPs' expenses better than Gordon Brown. [More](#)
- 16/05/09 Switching to Green to stop the BNP**  
The Green Party/YouGov: Three in ten (31%) would seriously consider voting Green to stop the BNP gaining a seat in the upcoming European Elections. [More](#)
- 15/05/09 MPs' expenses and views on disciplining 'named and shamed' MPs**  
BBC Daily Politics Show/ComRes: Two thirds of the public agree that Gordon Brown should sack ministers who have been accused in the newspapers of making excessive claims. [More](#)
- 14/05/09 MPs' expenses and views on public sector pay**  
The Sun/YouGov: Six in ten (60%) of the public take the view that 'most MPs have been deliberately abusing the allowances system and ripping us all off' [More](#)
- 11/05/09 Political leader preference, the economy and other topical issues**  
Sunday Times/YouGov: Six in ten (61%) of the public agree that Gordon Brown has completely lost his authority following recent parliamentary defeats and other reversals. [More](#)
- 08/05/09 Voting intention, MPs' expenses and the European Union**  
The Times/Populus: Eight in ten (79%) of the public agree that even if their expense claims were allowed under the current rules, if MPs had any integrity they would never have claimed for the cost of many things that they did claim for - such as furnishings, cleaners and trivial household items. [More](#)

[01/06/09 Daily Telegraph:](#)

Conservatives (39%)  
Labour (22%)  
Liberal Democrats (18%)

[31/05/09 Sunday Telegraph / ICM:](#)

Conservatives (40%)  
Labour (22%)  
Liberal Democrats (25%)

[28/05/09 The Times / Populus](#)

Conservatives (41%)  
Labour (21%)  
Liberal Democrats (15%)

[20/05/09 ITV News / Populus:](#)

Conservatives (39%)  
Labour (27%)  
Liberal Democrats (17%)

[17/05/09 The Guardian / ICM:](#)

Conservatives (39%)  
Labour (28%)  
Liberal Democrats (20%)

[17/05/09 Independent on Sunday / ComRes:](#)

Conservatives (40%)  
Labour (21%)  
Liberal Democrats (18%)

[14/05/09 The Sun / YouGov:](#)

Conservatives (41%)  
Labour (22%)  
Liberal Democrats (19%)

[10/05/09 Sunday Times / YouGov:](#)

Conservatives (43%)  
Labour (27%)  
Liberal Democrats (18%)

[08/05/09 The Times / Populus:](#)

Conservatives (39%)  
Labour (26%)  
Liberal Democrats (22%)

## Political cont'd

- 03/05/09 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Scottish devolution**  
The Times/Populus: Seven in ten (70%) of the public agree that devolution has overall been good for Scotland. [More](#)
- 01/05/09 Post-budget poll**  
Edelman/Populus: The week after the budget, four in ten (42%) of the public think David Cameron and George Osborne are most able to manage the economy properly – just over a quarter (26%) thought the same for Gordon Brown and George Osborne. [More](#)

## Social

- 20/05/09 'One in, one out' immigration policy**  
Migration Watch/YouGov: Two in five (39%) of the public think it would be best for Britain to have a 'one in, one out' immigration policy for foreign immigrants looking to settle in Britain. [More](#)
- 20/05/09 Strong country identification amongst British Muslims**  
Gallup: Almost eight in ten (77%) of British Muslims identify strongly with their country, much more than the British public as a whole (50%). [More](#)
- 19/05/09 Attitudes to swearing on television**  
Mediawatch/ComRes: According to a recent poll, three quarters of the public (73%) find some swearing on television offensive. [More](#)
- 19/05/09 Survey of UK Christians and attitudes to abortion and sex**  
Catholic Herald/ComRes: Almost two thirds (65%) of UK Christians agree that adverts in the broadcast media providing information about how to have an abortion would dramatically increase the number of abortions in this country. [More](#)
- 18/05/09 Six in ten of the public agree that euthanasia should be legal**  
Theos/ComRes: Survey on attitudes to death shows that three in ten (30%) of the British public fear the way they will die but not death itself. Just over half (52%) believe that organ donation in the event of a person's death should be compulsory unless they opt out. [More](#)
- 12/05/09 Scottish attitudes to crime**  
Scottish Conservative Party/YouGov: Almost all (84%) of Scottish adults agree that family breakdown is a significant contributor to crime. [More](#)

## Europe

- 01/05/09 London business attitudes to European Union enlargement**  
Business for New Europe/ComRes: Two thirds (66%) of London businesses think that, during the current economic crisis, countries would be worse off if they were not members of the European Union. [More](#)
- 05/09 European attitudes to the economic crisis**  
Standard Eurobarometer: Almost two thirds of the European public (61%) agree that Europeans would be better protected if the Member States adopted a coordinated approach to fight the economic crisis. [More](#)
- 05/09 Survey on European Union enlargement**  
Flash Eurobarometer/Gallup: In a survey of European views on European Union enlargement, eight in ten (79%) Europeans agree that 'the fall of the Iron Curtain' in 1989 has brought more freedom to everyone in Europe. [More](#)

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