



The Research Monitor brings together published surveys and other research and insights on consumer affairs, the economy, the media, politics and society from the past month, plus our commentary on some key research issues. This is a free service to our clients and friends. We also offer a tailored service including in-depth analysis of what the latest research and the current state of opinion means for your organisation or campaign.

Eurobarometer survey: UK displays a lack of trust



The [Eurobarometer series](#) of research projects have been commissioned by the European Commission since 1973 to track public opinion in the Member States. We have featured many of their ad hoc research projects in previous editions of the Monitor but November marks the publication of the latest wave of research of the longitudinal [Standard Eurobarometer](#) – which is conducted every spring and autumn. The Standard EB covers public opinion on topics such as: the economy, what issues are most important, knowledge of European Union institutions, attitudes towards decisions made at European-level and the image of the EU amongst the public in each of the Member States.

One of the key findings in the data from the UK is the distinct lack of trust that the British public has for both national and European institutions. The drop in trust in parliament and the national government may be indicative of the recent MPs' expenses scandal, though trust in political parties has not declined that much – probably because levels of trust were already so low. There is also a decline in the level of trust in European institutions. It means that Britons are the least trusting of all Europeans, and only have positive trust levels for the justice and legal system.

	% Tend to trust institutions					
	% UK Trust 2009	% UK Trust 2008	% EU Average Trust 2009	% EU27 Trust 2008	% Difference UK/EU 2009	Ranking (Out of EU27)
Justice and legal system	53%	49%	48%	46%	+5	9/27
European Commission	22%	27%	44%	47%	-22	27/27
European Union	22%	25%	47%	47%	-25	27/27
European Parliament	22%	27%	48%	51%	-26	27/27
The government	21%	29%	32%	34%	-11	22/27
The national parliament	17%	30%	32%	34%	-15	22/27
Political parties	12%	13%	19%	18%	-7	23/27

Source: Eurobarometer71 | Fieldwork 12th June - 8th July 2009 | 1352 UK Adults
 Source: Eurobarometer70 | Fieldwork 7th October - 2nd November 2008 | 1308 UK Adults
 Source: Eurobarometer69 | Fieldwork 25th March - 4th May 2008 | 1306 UK Adults

The latest Eurobarometer publications for this month can be found [here](#).

Economy

23/11/09

Attitudes to unemployment

St Mungo's/Ipsos MORI: The proportion of adults in Britain who are concerned about their financial situation is down from the level recorded in 2008 from 52% concerned to 38%. Concern about becoming redundant or being forced to leave home due to falling behind on payments is the same as in 2008. [More](#).

War in Afghanistan

The increase in the number of deaths of British soldiers in recent months has put the issue of Britain's involvement in the conflict back firmly on the political, public and media agenda. We feature the polls on this issue as well as pick out the key findings on page 2.

Remembrance Sunday

A number of polls conducted in November focus on public attitude to Remembrance Sunday and why it is still important to pay tribute to those who fought in World War I and World War II. See page 3 for a summary of the main findings.

Economy

- 20/11/09** **Poll on taxes and the tax system**
 Compass/YouGov: Eight in ten of the public (78%) agree that the government should change the tax system to ensure that the richest households pay at least the same percentage of tax as the poorest households. [More](#).

Politics

- November** **Voting intentions round-up**
 The Conservative Party maintained their double-digit lead over Labour in November with the average voting intentions for the Tories at 39% and Labour at 27%. An [Ipsos MORI](#) poll commissioned shortly after Labour's Glasgow North East by-election win gave the Labour Party their highest share of support since March 2009 – but the latest Angus Reid poll has the Labour Party dropping to 22%. A list of all the voting intention polls in November can be found at [UK Polling Report](#).
- 15/11/09** **Poll on leadership qualities of Brown and Cameron**
 The Guardian/ICM Research: The poll shows that the public feel Cameron has what it takes to be a good Prime Minister (48% agree Cameron vs. 32% Brown); is likely to be able to work with Cabinet colleagues (55% vs. 30%); likely to make the right decisions (46% vs. 37%); has changed the party for the better (58% vs. 25%); and is decisive (48% vs. 37%). [More](#).
- 08/11/09** **Opinion on a EU referendum**
 The Times/Populus: The public is split on the idea that there should be referendum early in the next Parliament on the general issue of Britain's relations with the EU with nearly half agreeing (46%) that there should be one, with the other half agreeing (48%) that it would be pointless. [More](#).

Afghanistan

- November** **The war in Afghanistan**
 A poll for Channel 4 by [YouGov](#) this month shows that only 5% of the British public feel that British troops are winning the war with the Taliban, with six in ten (57%) agreeing that British troops should not be there ([Sky News/YouGov poll](#)).
- Seven in ten favour a phased withdrawal of British forces within a year and just under half (47%) feel that the threat of terrorism on British soil is increased by troops remaining in Afghanistan ([Independent on Sunday/ComRes poll](#)).
- Six in ten of the public (60%) feel the Sun newspaper was unfair to Gordon Brown over his handwritten letter to the mother of Private Jamie Janes.

Society

- 19/11/09** **Poll on drug-driving**
 Concateno/YouGov: Nine in ten of the public (92%) say it is as socially unacceptable to drive under the influence of illegal drugs than drink-driving. While very few people admit they have driven under the influence of illegal drugs (3%), around one in five (18%) state they have driven under the influence of alcohol. [More](#).
- 17/11/09** **Equal pay survey**
 Fawcett Society/Ipsos MORI: Almost all of the public (94%) agree that it is important to eliminate the pay gap between men and women. 85% are also in favour of introducing a legal requirement for employers to conduct pay checks to ensure that men and women are getting paid the same for jobs of equal worth. [More](#).
- 13/11/09** **Perceptions of Britain and being British**
 Sunday People/YouGov: Four in ten (38%) think that the Union Jack is the most appropriate symbol of Britain today – one in seven (12%) say a cup of tea. Six in ten people would be willing to sign up to fight in a war voluntarily if Britain was invaded. [More](#).

Four in ten of the public agree that Twitter is a service that 'dumbs down' the way we communicate.

[More](#)

Two thirds of the public agree (66%) that Britain presently has too many immigrants.

[More](#)

The public associate David Cameron with being opportunistic, forward thinking and realistic.

[More](#)

Society

13/11/09 Poll on facial disfigurement

Five News/YouGov: Half the public (49%) would feel comfortable seeing someone with a facial disfigurement presenting a TV show, one in five (21%) would feel uncomfortable. This follows the news that Channel 5 will have a person with a facial disfigurement reading the news for one week in November. [More](#).

The top 3 concerns for the public if they were to receive hospital treatment on the NHS are: having to wait too long for treatment; MRSA; and hygiene.

[More](#)

Remembrance Sunday

November An [Ipsos MORI poll](#) for the Royal British Legion shows 94% of the public agree it is still important that we continue to observe the Two Minute Silence every year.

An [ComRes/Ekklesia poll](#) shows that most of the public (93%) agree that Remembrance Sunday should be about paying tribute to all people who have died in war, including civilians; and a further 87% agree that Remembrance Sunday is not just about the British soldiers that died, but about soldiers on all sides.

International

06/11/09 Survey on attitude to the fall of Communism

Angus Reid Strategies: The British public think that credit for the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe should be given to Mikhail Gorbachev (57% a lot/some credit); Polish union leader Lech Walesa (56%) and the then British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (45%). [More](#).

BBC World Service commissioned a poll of the public in 27 countries which covers the disintegration of the Soviet Union and views of market capitalism. In the United Kingdom, the public is supportive of the idea that the government should do more to distribute wealth more evenly (67% agree) and three quarters of the public (76%) agree that disintegration of the Soviet Union was a good thing. More than half of the public in Russia, Ukraine and Egypt view disintegration of the Union as a bad thing. [More](#).

Only four in ten offices will have a work Christmas party this year.

[More](#)

04/11/09 Obama more popular in the public in Europe than in the US

Financial Times/Harris Interactive: This poll, which also covers public attitudes to the war in Afghanistan, shows that the public in Great Britain, France, Italy, Spain and Germany rate Obama's overall job performance as either excellent or pretty good at a higher level than those in the United States. [More](#).

November UK is third most desirable destination country for migrants

Gallup: A huge poll of c.250,000 people in 135 countries, conducted over the past two years and published this month, on the issues relating to migration reveals that the three most desired regions for people to relocate permanently is the United States of America, Canada and the United Kingdom. [More](#).

One in five people think that Sir Richard Branson is the greatest living Briton. Four in ten think Winston Churchill is the greatest Briton from history.

[More](#)