



October 2010

www.woodnewtonassociates.co.uk

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.

SPENDING REVIEW: OUR THOUGHTS

This month most pollsters have had their go at understanding public reaction to the spending review. Necessity and fairness are the two main themes: are the cuts really needed, and how is the pain being shared out?

An [Ipsos MORI poll](#) shows a steady increase in acceptance that cuts are needed: 59% agree, and 32% disagree, giving a net agreement score of +27 (up from +20 in September). However, the same poll shows a decline in public confidence that cuts will help the economy (48% think the cuts will help, compared with 57% in September and 61% in June).

On fairness, a [ComRes poll for the Independent](#) found that 59% agreed that "The cuts announced by the Chancellor are unfair because they will hit the poorest people", with 36% disagreeing and 6% don't know. There was a significant class difference: 68% of DEs agreed, compared to 50% of ABs. This was mirrored in an [ICM poll for the Guardian](#), with 50% of AB voters agreeing with the scale of cuts or thinking they should go even further, but 54% of DE voters opposed to the scale of the cuts.

Overall, it looks as if a majority of the public thinks the cuts are needed but are being implemented with significant unfairness; and a sizable minority think they aren't needed at all or will threaten economic recovery.

It also looks as if the pollsters and their media clients intend to track some of these views over the coming months: we'd expect significant shifts as the detail of the cuts becomes clearer and start to bite.

Research Monitor: October Edition

The October Monitor features a range of opinion polling following Chancellor George Osborne's Comprehensive Spending Review, as well as polling on specific policy changes such as increasing university tuition fees.

Also included are a number of international surveys, from responses to the death of British aid worker Linda Norgrove in Afghanistan to attitudes of EU citizens to mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Consumer

29/10/10

Consumer confidence in economic situation on the increase

GfK NOP: Levels of consumer confidence in personal finances and the state of the "general economy" over the last 12 months have increased, but optimism regarding the progress of Britain's financial situation over the next year has dropped since September. [More](#)

08/10/10

Organic food shopping a luxury many consumers can't afford

YouGov Sixth Sense: Three in five UK consumers (58%) who avoid buying organic products do so because of high prices. Four in ten (42%) would buy organic more often if they could afford it. [More](#)



36% of the public say they eat chocolate to satisfy a craving, and 13% admit to keeping an "emergency stash". [More](#)



Business and the Economy

- 19/10/10 Strategic Defence Review – public reaction**
 YouGov/The Sun: Although half of Britons (51%) think the cuts made to the defence budget are either "just right" or "too shallow", when asked about specific spending reductions far more people criticise the government's decisions than support them. For example, six in ten (60%) say scrapping the Harrier Jump Jet until new jets arrive in 2020 is unacceptable. [More](#)

Health

- 27/10/10 Public concerned about current abortion legislation**
 ComRes/Christian Concern: Six in ten (62%) say the rate of abortions which have taken place in Britain in the last year is too high, at just over 200,000 (according to Government figures). Suggestions of ways to reduce it include a compulsory cooling off period between diagnosis of pregnancy and abortion, to ensure the mother is sure about her decision (78% support) and a legal duty on doctors to provide information on alternatives such as adoption (82% support). [More](#)
- 06/10/10 Stronger implementation called for over booze ban**
 YouGov: Eight in ten (79%) of Britons agree that legislation making it illegal for pubs and bars to sell alcohol to customers who are already drunk should be more strictly enforced. [More](#)

Media and Technology

- 15/10/10 Social networking – the new conversation?**
 YouGov: One in eleven (9%) of Facebook users prefer to speak to their friends via the social networking site than see them in person. [More](#)
- 08/09/10 Film reviews**
 YouGov: When deciding on which films to watch, more people trust their own judgement (28%) than that of friends (17%) immediate family (15%), or online film review sites such as the Internet Movie Database (3%) and Rotten Tomatoes (1%). [More](#)

Politics

- 19/10/10 Statistics poll**
 Ipsos MORI/Royal Statistical Society: More than half the public (55%) think the government interferes with official figures, and only 25% think government officials are honest in their use of statistics when talking about policies. Two thirds (65%) agree with the statement (commonly attributed to former Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli) that "There are lies, damn lies, and statistics". [More](#)
- 15/10/10 Liberal Democrats have little perceived impact on policy decisions**
 Angus Reid Strategies: Half of Britons think the Liberal Democrats have been unsuccessful in implementing their policies since being in government (25%) or have had no effect on the Coalition (24%). [More](#)
- 13/10/10 Tuition fees proposal meets public opposition**
 YouGov/The Sunday Times: More than half of Britons (54%) think universities should be prevented from increasing their tuition fees from the current annual level of £3,290, and 50% predict such a move would make people less likely to go to university. [More](#)
- 11/10/10 Majority of Britons want a fully-elected House of Lords**
 Angus Reid Strategies: Two thirds of the public (66%) would support a referendum to decide the future of the House of Lords, and four in ten (39%) expect to be able to elect members of the House within the next 2 to 5 years. [More](#)
- Oct 2010 Ed Miliband's Labour party no more "red" than under Blair and Brown**
 ICM Research/The Guardian: Contrary to media labelling of new party leader Ed Miliband as "Red Ed", only three in ten Britons (28%) think Labour is now more left-wing than under Tony Blair's leadership. Instead, nearly half the public (41%) predict the party will stay in much the same position over the next few years. [More](#)

53% support government plans to cut child benefit for households where one person earns at least £44,000 from 2013.

[More](#)

10% of adult internet-users in the UK have been victims of online fraud in the last 12 months. [More](#)

71% think Ed Miliband was right to criticise mistakes made by the last Labour government during the party conference last month.

[More](#)



Society

- 19/10/10 Boris' bikes met with approval from a majority of Londoners**
YouGov: Although only 3% of Londoners say they have registered for the Barclays Cycle Hire Scheme, nearly three quarters (70%) think the scheme is a good idea. While 73% say using the bikes is a convenient way to get around London, almost the same number (66%) say wearing a cycle helmet should be made compulsory for people who hire the bikes. [More](#)
- 11/10/10 Met Police "internships" scheme deemed classist**
YouGov: Almost six in ten (57%) oppose Metropolitan Police Authority proposals to require two thirds of new police recruits to spend 18 months volunteering part-time before being appointed to full-time, paid posts. It is estimated that this scheme would save the Metropolitan Police up to £2m per year, but opponents say it is classist and limits applications to only those who can afford to volunteer for such an extended period. [More](#)
- 05/10/10 Gender equality in the workplace**
Angus Reid Strategies: Although 71% say they are generally satisfied with the way women are treated in society today, over half (53%) believe women in Britain do not have equal job opportunities with men, and 76% would support Coalition proposals to follow up on Labour's pledge to require certain companies to publish information about how much their male and female employees are paid. [More](#)
- 06/10/10 Catholic Church should do more to protect victims of abuse**
Angus Reid Strategies: Eight in ten of the public (80%) and seven in ten British Catholics (68%) think the Catholic Church has done too little to support victims of sexual abuse at the hands of Catholic clergy. Almost nine in ten (85% of the public, 86% of British Catholics) think the Church should provide a list of all priests accused of committing sexual abuse to the appropriate authorities so they can be prosecuted. [More](#)

More than half the public (55%) have never heard of David Cameron's pledge to create a "Big Society" in Britain.

[More](#)

Environment & Third Sector

- 11/10/10 Altruism high priority for majority of Britons**
ComRes/CAFOD/Tearfund/Theos: The most important factor for achieving happiness is spending time with friends and family (97%), according to this survey. Far more people (75%) think helping people in the UK is important (75%) than those who rate helping people overseas (54%) as an important factor for achieving happiness. [More](#)
- 08/10/10 Charitable giving**
Special Eurobarometer: When donating to charity, Britons would prefer that their money goes to organisations working for the advancement of health or the saving of lives (44%) or the relief of those in need, whether through age, disability, ill-health or financial hardship (32%). There is also an overwhelming preference for charities working within the UK (80%) rather than those whose funds are directed to projects overseas (3%). [More](#)
- 06/10/10 Charity shop donations**
YouGov Sixth Sense: Nine in ten (90%) have donated to charity shops at some time, and 68% have done so in the last six months. The most popular items to buy from a charity shop are books (24%), clothes (18%) and household goods, DVDs and collectables (each 5%). [More](#)
- 02/10/10 Human Rights in Britain**
ComRes/Liberty: A decade after the Human Rights Act came into full force in the UK, 96% of the public think it is important for us to have laws that protect our rights and freedoms. Despite this, 91% of the public say they do not remember ever having seen any information about human rights from the government. [More](#)

84% approve of CCTV being used on high streets, but only 48% feel the same way about speed cameras on Britain's roads. [More](#)

51% would support the construction of new nuclear power stations in the UK.

[More](#)

International

- 25/10/10 Civil justice**
Special Eurobarometer: This survey investigates European citizens' experiences and attitudes to cross-border civil justice within the EU, following on from a similar survey conducted by Eurobarometer in late 2007. The survey finds that fewer people now believe it is easy to access civil justice in another EU Member States (14%) than in 2007 (17%), and a majority of EU citizens (84% of EU citizens, 85% of Britons) want additional measures to be taken to simplify the enforcement of court decisions between Member States. [More](#)



Oct 2010 European citizenship and electoral rights

Flash Eurobarometer: These two surveys assess EU citizens' familiarity with their citizenship status and awareness of electoral rights. The surveys find that while a majority of EU citizens are familiar with the term "citizenship of the European Union" (79% EU, 77% UK citizens), a smaller number say they know its meaning (43% EU, 43% UK). Almost seven in ten EU citizens (67%) are aware that a citizen of the EU has the right to vote or stand as a candidate in the European Parliament elections (70% UK). [Citizenship / Rights](#)

18/10/10 European awareness of EU regional policy

Flash Eurobarometer: In this survey, more than three quarters of EU citizens (76% EU, 70% of UK citizens) said they feel support of the EU has had a positive impact on their city or region. Citizens are most likely to find out about EU co-financed projects from TV (53% EU, 32% UK) and local or regional newspapers (32% EU, 32% UK). [More](#)

14/10/10 Rights of the child

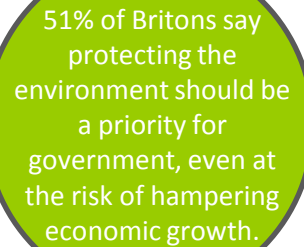
Eurobarometer Qualitative Studies: Discussion groups of children aged 15-17 across the 27 EU Member States revealed that most children living in the EU appreciate fun and freedom from responsibility, recognise the support of social networks, feel liberated by technology and welcome the provision of health and education services. Perceived disadvantages to being a child in Europe today include lack of respect from adults, peer pressure and violence and pressure to succeed. [More](#)

13/10/10 British aid worker failed rescue attempt in Afghanistan

YouGov/The Sun: Despite revelations that British aid worker Linda Norgrove was killed accidentally by a US special forces grenade during attempts to rescue her from Taliban kidnappers, six in ten (60%) blame the hostage-takers for her death, and 69% still think David Cameron was right to authorise the rescue attempt. [More](#)

11/10/10 Mental health

Special Eurobarometer: As mental health disorders are experienced by around 10% of citizens of the 27 EU Member States, this survey addresses questions such as levels of citizens' happiness, levels of comfort at work, care and treatment for mental health conditions, and perceptions of those with mental illness. Six in ten EU citizens (61%) and 70% of Britons say they have felt happy "mostly" or "all the time" in the past 4 weeks. [More](#)



51% of Britons say protecting the environment should be a priority for government, even at the risk of hampering economic growth.

[More](#)

