

Public Opinion Background Note 53  
(Produced 2nd September 1984)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The interviewing for our latest Gallup 'tracking' study was conducted from 22nd to 27th August. Since late June each of our weekly tracking studies has seen a change in the party leading in the polls. The latest study found a 2½% Labour lead over the Conservatives compared with a 1% Conservative lead over Labour in the previous study conducted from 15th to 20th August. These results can be compared with the findings from the last published opinion poll - MORI Evening Standard (29th August) - which found the Labour and Conservative parties 'neck and neck' MORI found both parties with 39% of the electorate claiming they would vote for them - this compares with 35½% claiming they would vote Conservative in our latest study and 38% Labour.

Details of the trend of support for the parties taken from our Gallup weekly studies are shown in the table in Section 2.

## 2. Voting Intention

The two tables below show voting intention when 'don't knows' have been excluded (the conventional way of presenting opinion research figures) and when don't knows are shown as a separate category.

### (a) Voting Intention (excluding don't knows) - all figures are percentages

	<u>Con</u>	<u>Lab</u>	<u>Lib</u>	<u>SDP</u>	<u>Others</u>	<u>Con lead</u> <u>over Labour</u>	<u>Alliance</u> <u>(SDP &amp;</u> <u>Liberal)</u>	<u>Con lead</u> <u>over Alliance</u> <u>(Liberal &amp; SDP)</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1983								
General Election 1983	42.4	27.6	13.7	11.6	4.6	+14.8	25.3	+17.1
29 June/4 July	46.5	25.5	12.0	15.0	1.0	+21.0	27.0	+19.5
7-11 July	44.0	28.5	11.0	15.0	1.5	+15.5*	26.0	+18.0
13-18 July	42.0	26.0	14.0	16.0	2.0	+16.0	30.0	+12.0
21-25 July	41.0	29.0	13.0	16.0	1.0	+12.0	29.0	+12.0
28 July/1 August	43.5	26.0	14.0	15.0	1.5	+17.5	29.0	+14.5
3-8 August	45.0	26.5	11.0	15.0	2.5	+18.5	26.0	+19.0
10-15 August	44.5	25.0	13.0	16.0	1.5	+19.5*	29.0	+15.5
17-22 August	44.5	25.0	12.0	16.5	2.0	+19.5	28.5	+16.0
24-30 August	45.0	27.5	12.0	14.0	1.5	+17.5	26.0	+19.0
31 August/5 September	44.0	27.0	11.0	16.0	2.0	+17.0	27.0	+17.0
7-12 September	45.5	24.5	10.5	18.5	1.0	+21.0*	29.0	+16.5
14-19 September	43.0	24.5	12.0	19.0	1.5	+18.5	31.0	+12.0
21-26 September	41.0	26.0	16.0	15.0	2.0	+15.0	31.0	+10.0
28 Sept - 3 Oct	46.0	24.0	12.5	16.0	1.5	+22.0	28.5	+17.5
5-10 October	42.0	36.0	10.0	12.0	2.0	+8.0	22.0	+20.0
12-18 October	43.5	40.0	6.5	9.0	1.0	+3.5	15.5	+28.0
19-24 October	42.5	35.5	9.5	10.5	2.0	+7.0*	20.0	+22.5
26-31 October	42.5	37.0	9.5	9.0	2.0	+5.5	18.5	+24.0
2-7 November	41.5	37.5	9.0	10.0	2.0	+4.0	19.0	+22.5
9-14 November	43.5	36.0	11.0	8.5	1.0	+7.5*	19.5	+24.0
16-21 November	41.0	38.0	8.0	11.0	2.0	+3.0	19.0	+22.0
23-28 November	41.0	37.0	13.0	8.0	1.0	+4.0	21.0	+20.0
30-5 December	44.0	38.0	8.0	9.0	1.0	+6.0	17.0	+27.0
7-12 December	42.5	36.5	8.0	11.5	2.0	+6.0*	19.5	+23.0

	<u>Con</u> %	<u>Lab</u> %	<u>Lib</u> %	<u>SDP</u> %	<u>Others</u> %	<u>Con lead</u> <u>Over Labour</u> %	<u>SDP &amp;</u> <u>Liberal</u> %	<u>Con lead</u> <u>over Alliance</u> <u>Liberal &amp; SDP</u> %
1984								
6-9 January	41.0	38.0	10.5	10.0	1.0	+3.0	20.0	+21.0
11-16 January	41.5	38.0	9.5	10.0	1.0	+3.5*	19.5	+22.0
18-23 January	40.0	39.5	10.0	8½	2.0	+0.5	18.5	+21.5
25-30 January	41.5	39.0	10.0	9	0.5	+2.5	19.0	+22.5
1-6 February	44.0	39.0	8.0	8	1.0	+5.0	16.0	+28.0
8-13 February	43.0	33.5	11.5	10.0	2.0	+9.5*	21.5	+21.5
15-20 February	39.5	39.5	10.0	10.0	1.0	0.0	20.0	+19.5
22-27 February	38.0	43.0	9.0	10.0	0.0	-5.0	19.0	+19.0
29 Feb - 5 March	39.0	41.0	8.0	10.0	2.0	-2.0	18.0	+21.0
7-12 March	36.0	42.0	11.0	9.0	2.0	-6.0	20.0	+16.0
15-19 March	41.0	38.5	11.0	8.5	1.0	+2.5*	19.5	+19.5
21-26 March	37.0	40.0	11.5	10.5	1.0	-3.0	22.0	+15.0
28 Mar - 2nd April	37.0	40.0	10.5	11.0	1.5	-3.0	21.5	+15.5
4-9 April	37.0	40.5	11.0	10.0	1.5	-3.5	21.0	+16.0
11-16 April	41.0	36.5	10.0	10.5	2.0	+4.5*	20.5	+20.0
18-23 April	38.5	41.0	9.0	9.0	2.5	-2.5	18.0	+20.5
25-30 April	40.0	36.0	11.0	11.0	2.0	+4.0	22.0	+18.0
2-7 May	38.0	37.0	11.5	12.0	1.5	+1.0	23.5	+14.5
10-14 May	38.5	36.5	9.0	14.0	2.0	+2.0*	23.0	+15.5
16-21 May	38.0	38.5	11.0	12.0	0.5	-0.5	23.0	+15.0
23-28 May	38.5	37.0	9.0	13.5	2.0	+1.5	22.5	+16.0
30 May-4 June	35.0	40.0	8.0	15.0	2.0	-5.0	23.0	+13.0
6-11 June	37.5	38.0	7.5	15.5	1.5	-0.5*	23.0	+14.5
13-18 June	38.0	34.0	9.0	16.0	3.0	+4.0	25.0	+13.0
20-25 June	36.0	35.5	10.0	17.0	1.5	+0.5	27.0	+9.0
27 June-2 July	40.0	36.0	8.0	14.0	2.0	+4.0	22.0	+18.0
4-9 July	39.0	35.0	9.0	14.0	3.0	+4.0	23.0	+16.0
11-16 July	37.5	38.5	7.5	14.5	1.5	-1.0*	22.0	+15.5
18-23 July	38.5	38.5	9.5	12.0	1.5	0.0	21.5	+17.0
25-30 July	35.5	41.5	7.5	13.0	2.5	-6.0	20.5	+15.0
1-6 August	38.0	36.5	9.0	14.0	2.5	+1.5	23.0	+15.0
8-13 August	36.0	39.0	9.5	13.0	2.5	-3.0*	22.5	+13.5
15-20 August	38.5	37.5	9.5	12.0	2.5	+1.0	21.0	+17.5
22-27 August	35.5	38.0	11.0	14.0	1.5	-2.5	25.0	+11.5

\* Published in the Daily Telegraph

(b) Voting Intention (including don't knows)

	<u>Conservative</u> %	<u>Labour</u> %	<u>Liberal</u> %	<u>SDP</u> %	<u>Others</u> %	<u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u> %	<u>Conservative</u> <u>lead over Labour</u> %
1983							
29 June/4 July	43.0	24.0	11.0	14.0	1.0	6.0	+19.0
7-11 July	41.0	27.0	10.0	14.0	1.0	6.0	+14.0
13-18 July	39.0	24.0	13.0	15.0	2.0	7.0	+15.0
21-25 July	39.0	27.0	12.0	16.0	1.0	5.0	+12.0
28 July/1 August	41.0	24.0	13.0	14.0	1.0	7.0	+17.0
3-8 August	43.0	25.0	11.0	15.0	2.0	5.0	+18.0
10-15 August	42.0	23.0	12.0	15.0	2.0	6.0	+19.0
17-22 August	41.0	23.0	11.0	15.0	2.0	7.0	+18.0
24-30 August	41.0	25.0	11.0	13.0	1.0	9.0	+16.0
31 Aug-5 Sept	41.0	25.0	10.0	15.0	1.0	7.0	+16.0
7-12 September	41.0	21.0	9.0	16.0	2.0	12.0	+20.0
14-19 September	40.0	23.0	11.0	18.0	1.0	7.0	+17.0
21-26 September	39.0	25.0	15.0	15.0	2.0	5.0	+14.0
28 Sept- 3 Oct	43.0	23.0	12.0	14.0	1.0	7.0	+20.0
5-10 October	38.0	33.0	9.0	10.0	1.0	8.0	+5.0

	<u>Con</u> %	<u>Lab</u> %	<u>Lib</u> %	<u>SDP</u> %	<u>Others</u> %	<u>Don't Know</u> %	<u>Con lead over Labour</u> %
19-24 October	40.0	34.0	9.0	10.0	2.0	6.0	+6.0
26-31 October	40.0	35.0	9.0	9.0	1.0	7.0	+5.0
2-7 November	38.0	35.0	8.0	9.0	1.0	8.0	+3.0
9-14 November	41.0	33.0	10.0	8.0	1.0	7.0	+8.0
16-21 November	39.0	36.0	8.0	11.0	1.0	6.0	+3.0
23-28 November	38.0	34.0	12.0	8.0	1.0	8.0	+4.0
30 Nov-5 Dec	41.0	35.0	7.0	9.0	1.0	7.0	+6.0
7-12 Dec	40.0	33.0	8.0	11.0	2.0	7.0	+7.0
<u>1984</u>							
6-9 January	39.0	36.0	9.0	10.0	1.0	6.0	+3.0
11-16 January	39.0	35.0	9.0	9.0	0.0	7.0	+4.0
18-23 January	37.0	37.0	9.0	8.0	2.0	7.0	0.0
25-30 January	38.0	36.0	9.0	8.0	1.0	7.0	+2.0
1-6 February	41.0	36.0	7.0	7.0	2.0	6.0	+5.0
8-13 February	41.0	32.0	11.0	9.0	2.0	6.0	+9.0
15-20 February	36.0	36.0	9.0	9.0	1.0	8.0	0.0
22-27 February	35.0	39.0	8.0	9.0	0.0	8.0	-4.0
29 Feb-5 March	36.0	39.0	8.0	10.0	2.0	6.0	-3.0
7-12 March	33.0	38.0	10.0	9.0	1.0	9.0	-5.0
15-19 March	38.0	36.0	10.0	8.0	1.0	8.0	+2.0
21-26 March	34.5	37.0	10.5	9.5	1.0	7.5	-2.5
28 Mar - 2 April	35.0	38.0	10.0	10.0	1.0	6.0	-3.0
4-9 April	35.0	38.0	10.0	10.0	1.0	6.0	-3.0
11-16 April	38.0	34.0	10.0	9.0	2.0	7.0	+4.0
18-23 April	36.0	38.0	9.0	9.0	2.0	7.0	+2.0
25-30 April	37.0	33.0	10.0	10.0	2.0	8.0	+4.0
2-7 May	35.0	34.0	11.0	12.0	2.0	7.0	+1.0
10-14 May	36.0	35.0	8.0	14.0	2.0	6.0	+1.0
16-21 May	35.0	36.0	10.0	11.0	2.0	6.0	-1.0
23-28 May	36.0	34.0	9.0	13.0	2.0	6.0	+2.0
30 May-4 June	32.0	37.0	7.0	14.0	2.0	8.0	-5.0
6-11 June	35.0	35.0	7.0	11.0	1.0	8.0	0.0
13-18 June	36.0	33.0	8.0	15.0	2.0	5.0	+3.0
20-25 June	34.0	33.0	9.0	16.0	1.0	6.0	+1.0
27 June-2 July	37.0	34.0	7.0	14.0	2.0	7.0	+3.0
4-9 July	36.0	33.0	8.0	13.0	3.0	8.0	+3.0
11-16 July	35.0	36.0	7.0	14.0	2.0	7.0	-1.0
18-23 July	36.0	36.0	9.0	10.0	1.0	7.0	0.0
25-30 July	33.0	39.0	7.0	13.0	2.0	7.0	-6.0
1-6 August	34.5	33.5	8.0	12.0	2.0	10.0	+1.0
8-13 August	33.0	36.0	9.0	12.0	2.0	8.0	-3.0
15-20 August	35.0	34.0	9.0	11.0	2.0	10.0	+1.0
22-27 August	33.0	36.0	10.0	13.0	2.0	6.0	-3.0

### 3. Government Record

The latest study found no change in the popularity of the Government - 36% of the electorate claimed to approve of our record to date, the same as in the previous study.

#### GOVERNMENT RECORD

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
<u>1984</u>			
6-9 January (%)	40	48	12
11-16 January (%)	42	46	12
18-23 January (%)	37	52	12
25-30 January (%)	39	48	13
1-6 February (%)	40	49	11

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
8-13 February (%)	41	45	14
15-20 February (%)	39	48	13
22-27 February (%)	34	52	14
29 Feb - 5 March (%)	35	54	11
7-12 March (%)	33	53	14
15-19 March (%)	41	49	10
21-26 March (%)	36	51	13
28 Mar - 2 April (%)	36	52	12
4-9 April (%)	35	54	11
11-16 April (%)	42	45	13
18-23 April (%)	35	54	11
25-30 April (%)	37	49	14
2-7 May (%)	39	49	12
10-14 May (%)	37	51	11
16-21 May (%)	35	53	12
23-28 May (%)	38	49	13
30 May-4 June (%)	32	55	13
6-11 June (%)	36	53	11
13-18 June (%)	37	51	12
20-25 June (%)	36	55	9
27 June-2 July (%)	37	49	14
4-9 July (%)	35	51	13
11-16 July (%)	36	54	10
18-23 July (%)	34	53	13
25-30 July (%)	33	54	13
1-6 August (%)	33	52	15
8-13 August (%)	34	54	13
15-20 August (%)	36	50	14
22-27 August (%)	36	54	10

#### 4. Popularity of Political Leaders

Our 22-27th August survey found almost no change in Mrs. Thatcher's popularity and a marginal improvement in Mr. Kinnock's popularity. Details are shown in the table below:-

	<u>Mrs Thatcher</u>			<u>Mr. Kinnock</u>		
	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Is Good Leader</u>	<u>Is Not Good Leader</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>1984</u>						
6-9 January (%)	47	49	5	46	22	31
11-16 January (%)	49	46	5	43	23	34
18-23 January (%)	44	52	4	45	21	34
25-30 January (%)	45	49	6	43	24	33
1-5 February (%)	46	49	4	48	24	28
8-13 February (%)	48	48	5	45	24	30
15-20 February (%)	40	49	5	41	28	31
22-27 February (%)	41	54	5	45	28	27
29 Feb - 5 March (%)	41	55	4	50	26	24
7-12 March (%)	41	54	5	48	24	28
15-19 March (%)	46	52	2	47	27	26
21-26 March (%)	42	52	6	48	25	27
28 Mar - 2 Apr (%)	42	54	5	45	29	26
4-9 April (%)	40	55	5	47	30	24
11-16 April (%)	46	50	5	42	34	24
18-23 April (%)	40	55	5	43	32	25
25-30 April (%)	43	51	6	42	33	24

Mrs Thatcher

Mr. Kinnock

	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Is Good Leader</u>	<u>Is Not Good Leader</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>1984</u>						
2-7 May (%)	44	50	6	43	36	20
10-14 May (%)	41	54	5	42	32	24
16-21 May (%)	42	54	4	45	30	25
23-28 May (%)	43	51	5	42	36	21
30 May - 4 June (%)	41	55	4	41	36	21
6-11 June (%)	41	54	5	43	36	21
13-18 June (%)	41	54	5	42	40	19
20-25 June (%)	39	58	3	40	40	20
27 June- 2 July (%)	42	52	6	37	41	22
4-9 July (%)	42	54	5	41	40	19
11-16 July (%)	41	55	5	43	37	20
18-23 July (%)	39	55	6	38	41	20
25-30th July (%)	39	55	5	42	38	19
1-6 August (%)	39	57	4	34	42	24
8-13 August (%)	39	56	5	37	44	19
15-20 August (%)	41	54	5	35	45	20
22-27 August (%)	40	55	5	38	42	19

Mr. Steel

Dr. Owen

	<u>Is Good Leader</u>	<u>Is Not Good Leader</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Is Good Leader</u>	<u>Is Not Good Leader</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>1984</u>						
6-9 January (%)	62	22	16	48	24	28
11-16 January (%)	59	23	18	45	25	30
18-23 January (%)	63	19	18	49	22	29
25-30 January (%)	60	21	18	44	25	31
1-6 February (%)	57	25	19	43	29	27
8-13 February (%)	61	22	17	45	24	30
15-20 February (%)	63	21	17	45	26	29
22-27 February (%)	65	20	15	46	23	30
29 Feb-5 March (%)	57	24	19	44	27	29
7-12 March (%)	61	21	18	43	27	31
15-19 March (%)	67	18	15	48	23	29
21-26 March (%)	67	19	14	45	25	30
28 Mar-2 April (%)	61	20	19	48	24	28
4-9 April (%)	63	20	17	43	26	31
11-16 April (%)	61	22	17	48	25	27
18-23 April (%)	59	22	19	44	24	32
25-30 April (%)	63	19	19	48	21	30
2-7 May (%)	62	21	17	50	23	27
10-14 May (%)	67	19	15	51	25	24
16-21 May (%)	63	19	18	50	22	28
23-28 May (%)	63	22	15	48	24	28
30 May-4 June (%)	64	20	16	49	25	26
6-11 June (%)	63	23	15	52	22	26
13-18 June (%)	61	23	16	51	24	25
20-25 June (%)	62	21	17	53	25	22
27 June-2 July (%)	61	19	20	50	24	26
4-9 July (%)	57	24	18	50	25	25
11-16 July (%)	61	22	17	52	23	25
18-23 July (%)	58	25	17	52	22	26
25-30 July (%)	56	26	18	49	23	28
1-6 August (%)	57	26	17	48	24	28
8-13 August (%)	55	23	21	50	23	28
15-20 August (%)	59	24	17	46	26	27
22-27 August (%)	59	24	18	51	24	25

## 5. Published Polls

### (a) MORI (Evening Standard 29th August 1984)

The Evening Standard on 29th August included the results of a MORI survey conducted from 16th to 20th August. This study found 39% claimed they would vote Conservative, 39% Labour, 21% Alliance and 1% for 'other' parties.

### (b) Gallup (Sunday Telegraph 2nd September 1984)

The Sunday Telegraph on 2nd September included details of a Gallup survey conducted from 22nd to 27th August on public attitudes to the coal dispute and to the reform of trade union law.

Gallup found a massive majority (85%) of the electorate and of trade unionists (80%) disapproving of the methods being used by the miners. When Gallup asked who they sympathised with in the dispute - 43% said the employers, 32% the miners, 18% with neither side and 6% were undecided. There is little change since the last Gallup survey conducted two months' ago which found 40% supported the employers and 33% the miners. The current survey found even among trade unionists as many sympathised with the Coal Board (39%) as with the miners (39%). Gallup asked 'Do you approve or disapprove of the Government's plans to reform trade union law?' - 40% approved, 37% disapproved and 23% had no view.

A majority of the electorate (56%) take the view that the Government's plans to reform trade union law are harming industrial relations. 63% accept the idea that the Conservative Government is hostile to the trade unions and 47% think that in the future relations between the Government and the unions will get worse.

Gallup also found 76% of the electorate (76% of union members) taking the view that strikes for political reasons are not justified.

### (c) NOP (Mail on Sunday 2nd September 1984)

The Mail on Sunday included details of an NOP survey on attitudes to the mining dispute conducted among trade unionists.

NOP found only 26% of trade unionists claimed they would personally be prepared to take part in industrial action to support the miners, 69% they would not and 5% did not have a view. On the question of crossing miners' picket lines - 24% claimed they would refuse to cross, 71% they would cross them and 5% did not have a view. When asked whether their union should contribute funds to help the miners - 36% thought they should help, 60% they should not help and 4% did not have a view.

On the question of police conduct during the strike - 18% approved strongly, 36% approved, 17% neither approved or disapproved, 16% disapproved, 10% disapproved strongly and 3% did not have a view.

Only 25% thought Mr. Scargill totally reflected the views of the average miner - 66% thought he does not and 9% did not have a view.

### (d) MORI (Sunday Times 2nd September 1984)

The Sunday Times on 2nd September 1984 included details of a MORI poll conducted on 28-29 August on attitudes to the mining dispute.

Among trade unionists in the MORI sample 50% thought their union should not support the miners' strike, 13% did not have a view and 37% favoured one or more of the options presented to them by MORI.

Among this 37%, 17% selected their union giving money to the NUM, 14% support for a 'day of action', 7% industrial action by their union, 2% an extended national strike.

When MORI asked respondents who they thought is chiefly to blame for the strike violence, 67% of the public blamed the miners or the NUM's leaders. On the question of the main 'stumbling block' for a settlement - 52% blamed the NUM, 29% the Government and 13% the Coal Board.

Only 14% thought Mr. Scargill has handled the dispute well. 37% thought Ian MacGregor has handled the dispute well (47% badly). These figures show a slight improvement for Mr. MacGregor from June's 49% - 35% rating and a further fall for Mr. Scargill from his 76% - 17% rating.

Public support for the strike is falling. The previous MORI survey on attitudes to the strike conducted in early June found 41% supported the Coal Board, 35% the striking miners and 24% undecided. The latest study found 46% backing the Coal Board, and 30% the miners. Even among trade unionist, only 39% backed the miners compared with 37% the Coal Board.