

Public Opinion Background Note 97  
(produced 22nd July 1985)

1. Introduction

The results from our latest 'tracking' study are the same as those of the Gallup study published in the Daily Telegraph on 18th July, 1985. This study conducted from 10th to 15th July found 38% claiming they would vote Labour (36.5% in previous study conducted 3rd-8th July), 32.5% for one of the so-called 'Alliance' parties (31% in previous study). It is of course too early to predict whether this upward trend in both 'Alliance' and Labour support will be continued over the summer - the latest survey was conducted before the announcement on top salary reviews.

The results from this study can be compared with the findings from the latest Marplan survey, conducted from 4th to 8th July and published in the Guardian on 18th July. This found 34% claiming they would vote Labour, 33% Alliance and 31% Conservative.

Full details of the trend of support for the main parties since January 1985 showing voting intentions when those respondents not giving details of voting intention are excluded and when they were included as a separate group are shown in the tables in section 2 below:

2. Voting Intention

(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 Over Labour</u> %	<u>SDP &amp; Liberal</u> %	<u>Con lead over Allian Liberal &amp; S</u> %
<u>1985</u>								
3-8 Jan	35.0	35.0	11.0	17.0	2.0	0.0	28.0	+7.0
9-14 Jan	39.0	33.0	9.5	16.0	2.5	+6.0	25.5	+13.5*
16-21 Jan	39.0	34.0	10.0	16.0	1.0	+5.0	26.0	+13.0
23-28 Jan	36.0	32.0	11.0	20.0	1.0	+4.0	31.0	+5.0
30 Jan-4 Feb	34.0	37.0	10.0	17.5	1.5	-3.0	27.5	+6.5
6-11 Feb	35.0	32.0	10.5	21.0	1.5	+3.0	31.5	+3.5*
13-18 Feb	38.0	33.0	10.0	16.5	2.5	+5.0	26.5	+11.5
20-25 Feb	33.5	38.0	10.0	17.0	1.5	-4.5	27.0	+6.5
27 Feb-4 March	35.0	35.0	10.0	18.0	2.0	0.0	28.0	+7.0
6-11 March	37.0	34.0	10.5	17.0	1.5	+3.0	27.5	+10.5
13-18 March	35.0	34.0	12.0	16.0	3.0	+1.0	28.0	+7.0
21-25 March	33.0	39.5	10.0	16.0	1.5	-6.5	26.0	+6.0
27 March - 1 April	38.0	33.0	13.0	15.0	1.0	+5.0	28.0	+10.0
3 - 9 April	37.0	40.0	7.5	13.5	2.0	-3.0	21.0	+16.0
10 - 15 April	36.5	35.5	13.0	13.0	2.0	+1.0	26.0	+11.5
17-22 April	34.0	37.5	12.0	14.0	2.0	-3.5	26.5	+7.5*
24-29 April	33.5	38.0	10.0	16.5	2.0	-4.5	26.5	+7.0
1 - 6 May	31.5	36.0	11.5	18.5	2.5	-4.5	30.0	+1.5
6-13 May	30.5	34.0	11.5	22.0	2.0	-3.5	33.5	-3.0*
15-20 May	31.0	36.5	10.0	21.0	1.5	-5.5	31.0	0.0
23-28 May	29.0	35.0	12.0	21.0	3.0	-6.0	33.0	-4.0
29 May - 3 June	31.0	37.0	13.0	17.0	2.0	-6.0	30.0	+1.0
5-10 June	28.0	36.0	12.0	21.5	2.5	-8.0	33.5	-5.5
12-17 June	34.5	34.5	12.0	18.0	1.0	0.0	30.0	+4.5*
19-24 June	31.0	35.0	13.0	19.0	2.0	-4.0	32.0	-1.0
26 June-1 July	35.0	34.0	12.0	17.0	2.0	+1.0	29.0	+6.0
3-8 July	30.5	36.5	12.0	19.0	2.0	-6.0	31.0	+0.5
10-15 July	27.5	38.0	12.5	20.0	2.0	-10.5	32.5	-5.0

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(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 Know</u>	<u>Conservative lead over Labour</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1985							
3-8 Jan	33.0	32.0	10.0	16.0	2.0	7.0	+1.0
9-14 Jan	36.0	30.0	9.0	15.0	3.0	8.0	+6.0
16-21 Jan	35.0	31.0	9.0	14.0	1.0	9.0	+4.0
23-28 Jan	33.0	29.0	10.0	18.0	1.0	8.0	+4.0
30 Jan - 4 Feb	31.0	33.0	9.0	16.0	1.0	11.0	-2.0
6-11 Feb	32.0	29.0	9.0	19.0	1.0	9.0	+3.0
13-18 Feb	35.0	30.0	9.0	15.0	2.0	8.0	+5.0
20-25 Feb	31.0	35.0	9.0	15.0	1.0	9.0	-4.0
27 Feb-4 March	32.0	32.0	9.0	16.0	2.0	9.0	0.0
6 - 11 March	34.0	31.0	10.0	15.0	1.0	9.0	+3.0
13-18 March	33.0	32.0	11.0	15.0	3.0	7.0	+1.0
21-25 March	30.0	36.0	9.0	14.0	2.0	8.0	-6.0
27 March-1 April	35.0	30.0	13.0	12.0	1.0	8.0	+5.0
3 - 9 April	34.0	37.0	7.0	12.0	2.0	8.0	-3.0
10 - 15 April	33.0	32.0	12.0	12.0	3.0	9.0	+1.0
17-22 April	31.0	34.0	12.0	13.0	2.0	9.0	-3.0
24-29 April	31.0	35.0	9.0	15.0	2.0	8.0	-4.0
1 - 6 May	29.0	33.0	11.0	17.0	2.0	9.0	-4.0
6-13 May	28.0	31.0	11.0	20.0	2.0	8.0	-3.0
15-20 May	28.0	34.0	9.0	19.0	2.0	8.0	-6.0
23-28 May	27.0	33.0	12.0	19.0	2.0	7.0	-6.0
29 May-3rd June	28.0	33.0	11.0	15.0	2.0	11.0	-5.0
5 - 10 June	26.0	33.0	11.0	20.0	2.0	8.0	-7.0
12 - 17 June	32.0	32.0	11.0	17.0	1.0	7.0	0.0
19-24 June	29.0	32.0	12.0	17.0	3.0	7.0	-3.0
26 June-1 July	32.0	31.0	11.0	16.0	1.0	8.0	+1.0
3-8 July	28.0	33.0	11.0	17.0	1.0	9.0	-5.0
10-15 July	26.0	35.0	12.0	19.0	2.0	6.0	-9.0

3. Government Record

Gallup found a slight further fall in the popularity of the Government - it currently remains just above the low point of the year to date - reached in early June. Details are shown in the table below:-

1985	<u>GOVERNMENT RECORD</u>		
	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
3-8 Jan(%)	32	53	14
9-14Jan(%)	33	54	13
16-21 Jan(%)	35	48	16
23-28 Jan(%)	33	54	12
30 Jan-4 Feb(%)	29	59	12
6-11Feb (%)	31	55	13
13-18 Feb(%)	33	55	12
20-25 Feb(%)	29	58	13
27 Feb - 4 March(%)	34	53	13
6-11 March(%)	32	55	13
13-18 March(%)	31	56	13
21-25 March(%)	30	58	12
27 March - 1 April(%)	34	55	11
3 - 9 April (%)	32	57	11
10-15 April (%)	32	54	14
17-22 April (%)	32	57	11

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	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
24-29 April (%)	31	55	14
1 - 6 May (%)	31	56	13
6-13 May (%)	28	58	14
15-20 May (%)	27	60	13
23-28 May (%)	28	60	12
29 May-3 June (%)	27	59	14
5 - 10 June (%)	26	61	13
12-17 June (%)	31	59	9
19-24 June (%)	28	60	12
26 June-1 July (%)	30	57	12
3-8 July (%)	29	58	12
10-15 July (%)	28	59	13

#### 4. Popularity of Political Leaders

Gallup found a further fall in Mrs. Thatcher's popularity - currently 34% claim to be satisfied with Mrs. Thatcher as Prime Minister, 60% dissatisfied and 5% with no view. Mr. Kinnock's popularity improved marginally but is only just ahead of the Prime Minister's. The popularity of both Mr. Steel and Dr. Owen improved slightly in the latest study.

	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Mrs Thatcher</u> <u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Is Good</u> <u>Leader</u>	<u>Mr. Kinnock</u> <u>Is Not Good</u> <u>Leader</u>	<u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u>
<u>1985</u>						
3-8 Jan (%)	39	57	5	33	48	19
9-14 Jan (%)	40	54	6	36	49	15
16-21 Jan (%)	43	51	6	31	51	18
23-28 Jan (%)	40	56	5	33	52	15
30 Jan to 4 Feb (%)	38	56	6	36	49	15
6-11 Feb (%)	37	57	6	31	54	15
13-18 Feb (%)	40	55	5	31	57	12
20-25 Feb (%)	38	58	4	34	52	14
27 Feb-4 March (%)	40	54	5	31	53	16
6 - 11 March (%)	41	55	4	34	51	15
13-18 March (%)	40	55	5	32	52	16
21-25 March (%)	37	58	5	37	47	6
27 March - 1 April (%)	39	56	5	33	50	16
3-9 April (%)	37	59	4	43	44	13
10-15 April (%)	38	57	6	35	47	18
17-22 April (%)	38	57	5	36	48	16
24-29 April (%)	37	57	6	35	48	16
1 - 6 May (%)	37	58	5	36	49	16
6 - 13 May (%)	36	59	5	38	45	17
15-20 May (%)	32	63	5	36	47	18
23-28 May (%)	35	60	5	35	49	16
29 May-3 June (%)	34	61	5	34	50	16
5 - 10 June (%)	34	61	6	33	49	17
12-17 June (%)	38	56	8	37	51	12
19-24 June (%)	36	59	5	34	51	15
26 June-1 July (%)	40	56	5	37	46	17
3-8 July (%)	36	58	6	37	48	16
10-15 July (%)	34	60	5	38	47	15

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	<u>Is Good</u>	<u>Mr Steel</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Is Good</u>	<u>Dr Owen</u>	<u>Don't</u>
	<u>Leader</u>	<u>Is Not Good</u>		<u>Leader</u>	<u>Leader</u>	
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>1985</u>						
3-8 Jan (%)	56	24	20	50	25	25
9-14 Jan (%)	57	26	17	52	27	21
16-21 Jan (%)	60	24	16	52	22	26
23-28 Jan (%)	57	25	18	55	21	24
30 Jan - 4 Feb (%)	55	28	18	51	25	23
6-11 Feb (%)	57	24	18	55	21	24
13-18 Feb (%)	59	24	17	57	24	20
20-25 Feb (%)	61	23	16	57	22	21
27 Feb-4 March (%)	57	25	19	52	23	25
6 - 11 March (%)	56	27	17	52	25	23
13-18 March (%)	57	27	17	53	23	24
21-25 March (%)	60	23	17	53	21	25
27 March-1 April (%)	64	21	15	54	24	22
3 - 9 April (%)	58	25	17	52	26	22
10-15 April (%)	58	24	18	49	26	25
17-22 April (%)	60	24	17	52	26	22
24-29 April (%)	60	22	18	51	24	25
1 - 6 May (%)	65	20	15	54	22	24
6 - 13 May (%)	64	19	16	56	21	23
15-20 May (%)	60	24	16	51	23	25
23-28 May (%)	65	20	15	52	26	21
29 May-3 June (%)	61	22	17	49	27	24
5 - 10 June (%)	62	22	16	53	25	22
12-17 June (%)	63	22	15	56	23	21
19-24 June (%)	63	21	16	51	25	23
26-June-1 July (%)	62	20	18	52	24	25
3-8 July (%)	64	20	16	50	25	25
10-15 July (%)	65	20	15	54	24	22

5. Published Polls

(a) Daily Telegraph (18th July 1985)

In addition to the standard 'tracking' questions, Gallup also asked a number of other questions:-

The lead Mrs. Thatcher used to enjoy as the public's choice as the best Prime Minister has declined.

	<u>Today</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>April</u>
	%	%	%	%
Thatcher	27	34	32	34
Kinnock	24	22	22	23
Steel	21	21	18	15
Owen	19	15	18	19
Don't Know	9	8	11	9

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This decline is reflected in the replies to two further questions on which party has the best policies and which has the best leaders. On both matters, the Conservatives have fallen to second place, with comfort for each opposition party in turn.

	<u>Today</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>April</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>Best Policies:</u>				
Conservative	27	32	30	32
Labour	31	28	27	30
Lib/SDP	23	23	27	20
Other	1	0	1	1
Don't Know	19	15	16	18
<u>Best Leaders:</u>				
Conservative	32	41	39	44
Labour	22	22	19	23
Lib/SDP	33	25	28	30
Other	0	0	1	0
Don't Know	13	12	13	12

Three in four (75%) of the public think that at the next General Election votes for the Alliance will go up compared with 1983, and 65% think that the number of Alliance MPs will increase.

But when asked which party would win the next election, the public still recognise the Conservatives' capacity to come back, with 37% putting the Conservatives as the likely winners, 27% thinking Labour would win, and 14% for the Alliance.