

# Are we heading for a hung parliament?

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People have little more than a week left to make up their minds in this election. If they are voting by post, it is somewhat less.

The good news is patterns are emerging. The increase in Tory support has flattened as the Brexit Party ceases to play any effective role.

The LibDems look to be heading for their proverbial 'party in the back of a taxicab' status.

The SNP are expected to make gains.

And Labour support is rising.

In summary, we're now in hung parliament territory.

In practice, I'm told that as far as the Tories are concerned a majority of anything less than 12 is unworkable and we'd be heading for the polls again if they got the chance to do so. That could be by February, if necessary. And that's not least because they are aware that not a single vote from another party could now be relied upon to assist them, and the ERG 'bastards' have not gone anywhere.

And if by chance, they did not secure a majority, even if (as seems overwhelmingly likely) they are the largest party, what then? That is the interesting scenario.

Could Labour deliver the seemingly impossible in that situation? Could it, at the very least, secure another EU deal and a second referendum, given that resolving Brexit would have, regrettably given the many other pressing issues that exist, to be its priority?

My gut reaction is that it could. The EU does want a closer deal with the UK. The DUP might accept a second vote as a way out of this mess. I have little doubt the SNP and LibDems would too. And would some Tories break ranks? The answer has to be that the chance is high. A binding referendum to close down parliamentary paralysis would

appeal to some.

In other words, although it might be short lived, and never form a coalition, a Labour minority government might resolve Brexit.

And if it did it might then do well in a subsequent election, as people like Labour policies, overall.

This election is not over yet, in other words. And there remain reasons for hope. My sense is that the country knows this. Just as in 2017, the idea that the Tories have won this, prevalent at the start of the campaign, has faded. Boris Johnson may at best get an unworkable majority. And he might still lose. Saying which, the boundaries of statistical error also suggest he might get a thumping majority. But I am beginning to doubt that, at least enough to say so.