

Before buyer's regret creeps in

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This is worth sharing, sent to me by Ipsos Mori this morning, and maybe useful as a benchmark for use at the time when buyer's regret creeps in sometime in the not too distant future:

Labour lead on economy and public services as Conservative share falls to record low

- * ***Dissatisfaction with Rishi Sunak as Prime Minister reaches his worst score.***
- * ***Though Keir Starmer's satisfaction ratings also drop, and most think he is indecisive.***

London, UK. The latest Ipsos Political Monitor, taken 21st to 28th February 2024, explores public attitudes to the various parties and their leaders in the run up to the next General Election, including which party is best on key issues that will decide their vote. This month's results also explore attitudes to the economy, public services and spending ahead of the budget, including public satisfaction with Chancellor Jeremy Hunt and whether Hunt or Labour's Rachel Reeves would make the most capable Chancellor.

Voting intention

- * Labour 47% (-2 pts), Conservatives 20% (-7), Liberal Democrats 9% (+2), Green 8% (+1), Reform UK 8% (+4), Other 7% (+2). Making Labour's lead 27 points, up from 22 in January.
- * The Conservatives' share of 20% is the lowest ever recorded by Ipsos in our regular Political Monitor series, which has run since 1978. Previous Conservative low points were 22% under John Major in December 1994 and May 1995, 23% in July 1997, shortly

after Labour's landslide win and 23 per cent in December 2022.

- * Half (50%) of those with a voting intention say they have definitely decided who to vote for – but 45% may change their mind. There are also signs of a growing enthusiasm gap, with only 62% of Conservatives saying they certain to vote, vs 76% of Labour voters (which feeds through into the headline voting figure) – last month the gap was just 4 points.

Leader satisfaction ratings

- * 83% are dissatisfied with the way the government is running the country (+5 pts from January). 10% are satisfied (-3 pt).
- * 19% are satisfied with the job Rishi Sunak is doing as Prime Minister (-1 from January) and 73% say they are dissatisfied (+7). His net rating of -54 is a record low for Mr Sunak.
- * 54% of current Conservative voters are satisfied with the job Sunak is doing (-1 point) and 37% are dissatisfied (+2).
- * Keir Starmer's ratings have also fallen since January. 29% are satisfied with his performance as Labour leader (-1) and 55% are dissatisfied (+7). His net score of -26 is only slightly above his lowest finding of -29 in May 2021.

Most important issues

- * When asked which issues are likely to be the most important when deciding how to vote, the top issues for the public are the NHS (30%), inflation / rising prices (22%), the economy (22%) and asylum/immigration (15%).
- * For Labour voters the top issue is the NHS but for Conservatives the top issues are immigration and the economy.

Best party on key issues

- * Labour are seen as having the best policies on ***managing the economy*** by a margin of 31% to the Conservative score of 23%. In October the parties were neck and neck.
- * On ***taxation***, Labour are seen as having the best policies over the Conservatives by a margin of 32% to 19%.
- * 40% think Labour have the best policies for ***people in work***, 15% think the Conservatives have the best policies.
- * 43% think Labour have the best policies for ***public services in general***, 11% think the Conservatives have the best policies.

- * 35% think Labour have the best policies for **the level of public spending**, 16% think the Conservatives have the best policies.
- * 29% think the Conservatives have the best policies for **Britain's businesses**, 25% think Labour have the best policies. In September 2021 the Conservatives lead on this by 41% to 17%.
- * 30% think the Conservatives have the best policies for **Britain's financial services sector, also known as the City**, 22% think Labour have the best policies.

Keir Starmer

- * 37% think Keir Starmer has changed Labour for the better (down 11 points from February 2021), 13% for the worse (+9) and 39% say he has made no difference (+4). 11% say they don't know (-2).
- * 29% say Labour led by Keir Starmer has done a good job setting out a clear alternative to the current government to voters (+11 from a similar question asked in July 2021*) and 47% say he has done a bad job (-12).
- * Meanwhile 32% think Keir Starmer has done a good job giving people a reason to vote Labour (-3 from February 2021) and 45% think it has done a bad job (+8).
- * 29% consider Keir Starmer decisive and 55% say he is indecisive. In February 2021 scores were the other way round, with 46% saying he was decisive and 28% indecisive.
- * 50% agree it is unclear what Keir Starmer stands for. 30% disagree. 46% agree it is unclear what Rishi Sunak stands for and 36% disagree. Scores are largely unchanged from June last year.

Economy: Satisfaction with Chancellor and Hunt vs. Reeves.

- * 22% are satisfied with the job Jeremy Hunt is doing as Chancellor and 56% are dissatisfied, his worst scores as Chancellor. In February last year 26% were satisfied and 52% dissatisfied.
- * The British public think Labour's Rachel Reeves would make the most capable Chancellor by a margin of 39% to 24%, slightly up from a 12 point lead in October and June last year.

Gideon Skinner, Head of Political Research at Ipsos, said: "The historical comparisons continue to look ominous for Rishi Sunak and the Conservatives. The Ipsos Political Monitor series started in the late 70s and has never recorded a Conservative vote share this low - and the job satisfaction trends for the Prime Minister and his government since he took office are also heading downwards. Combined with Labour taking leads on issues of

economic credibility to go with their traditional strengths in public services, this means the Conservatives face big challenges across a number of fronts if they are to turn the situation around."

Notes to Editors

* Ipsos interviewed a representative sample of 1,004 adults aged 18+ across Great Britain. Interviews were conducted by telephone between the 21st to 28th February 2024. Data are weighted to match the profile of the population. All polls are subject to a wide range of potential sources of error.

* *in July 2021 for this question the neither/don't know categories were combined, this month they have been separated out.