



ippr poll of Prospective Parliamentary Candidates – April/May 2010

Methodology

We targeted 255 new PPCs in winnable seats:

- New candidates in safe seats
- New candidates in seats that could change hands

We used the Electoral Calculus website at www.electoralcalculus.co.uk/ as a guide to whether or not a seat was safe or likely to change hands. Sitting MPs were excluded.

We invited the PPCs to complete an online survey using the Survey Monkey website, accessible by a password we gave to them and which was not available to the general public.

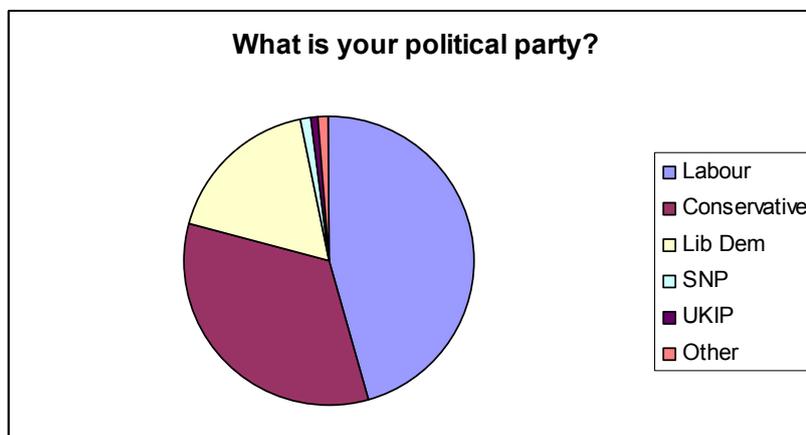
Response rate

We polled 255 PPCs who met the above criteria.

79 responded, a response rate of 31 of the population targeted.

The party breakdown of the respondents was:

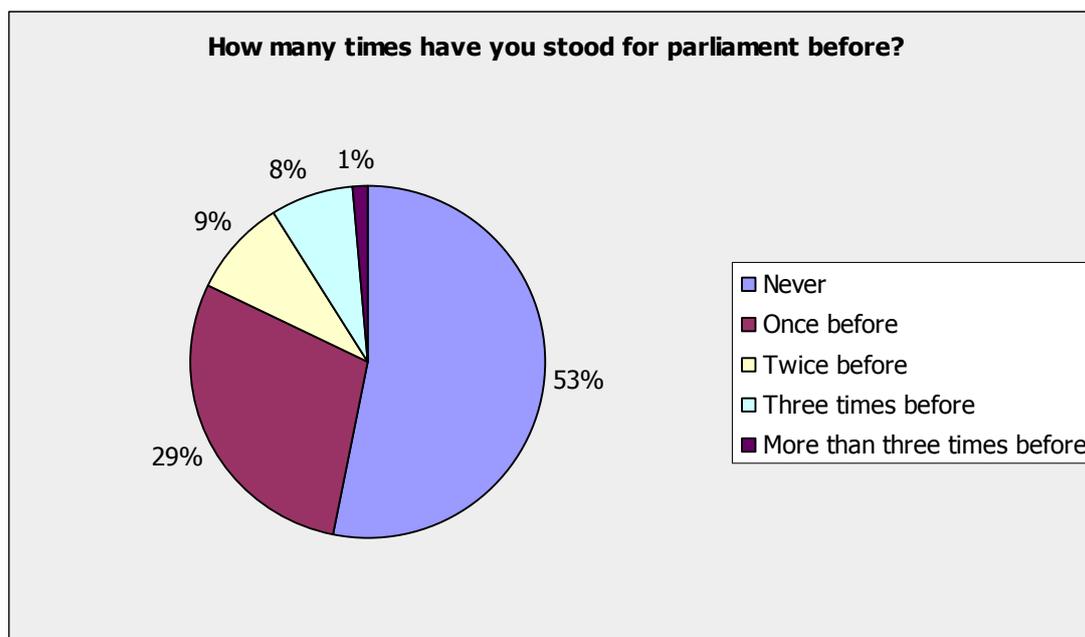
- 36 Labour (46%)
- 27 Conservative (34%)
- 14 Lib Dem (18%)
- 1 SNP (1%)
- 1 UKIP (1%)
- 1 other (1%)



Results

Political background and selection as a candidate

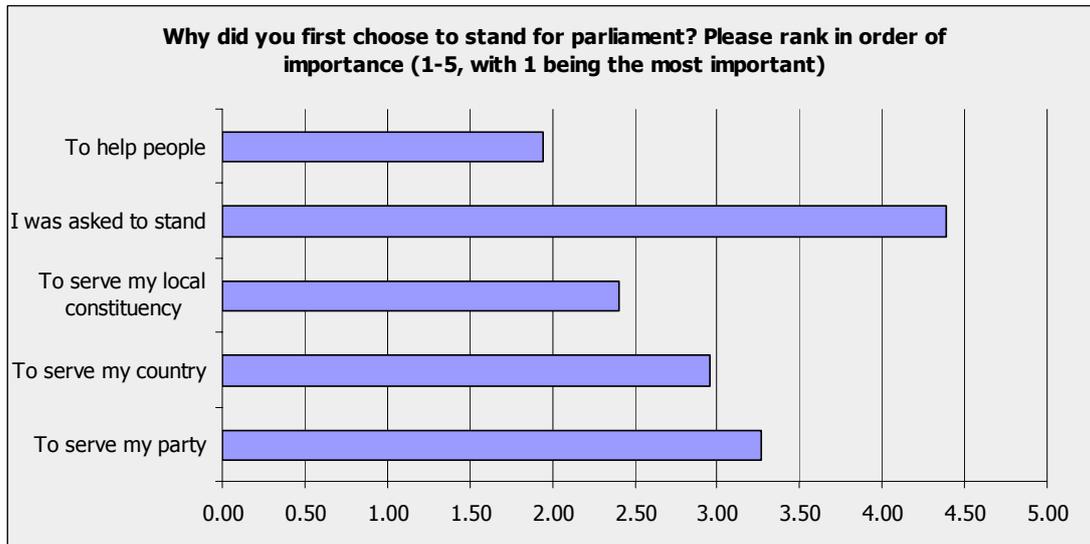
We were keen to test the hypothesis that politics has become increasingly 'professionalised' and that a relatively small number of people are involved in selecting parliamentary candidates.



Please tick if you have ever...	Response %	Response count
Held Local Party office	77.2%	61
Held Regional Party office	24.1%	19
Held National Party office	13.9%	11
Been a candidate for Local Government	53.2%	42
Been an elected Councillor	54.4%	43
Served on a local public body	48.1%	38
Served on a national public body	8.9%	7
Held office in a local pressure group	17.7%	14
Held office in a national pressure group	15.2%	12
Held office in another community group	34.2%	27
Held office in a Trade Union	22.8%	18
Are a member of a Trade Union	45.6%	36
Held office in a professional group	7.6%	6
Been employed full-time or part-time by your political party	12.7%	10
Been employed full-time or part-time by an MP	21.5%	17
Been employed full-time or part-time by a Minister	1.3%	1
Been employed full-time or part-time by a think tank	3.8%	3
answered question		79
skipped question		0

These results do not show much evidence of professionalization. 21% have worked for an MP and 13% have been employed by their political party –

while the overwhelming majority have not. Local government experience remains the most popular political route into the Commons.

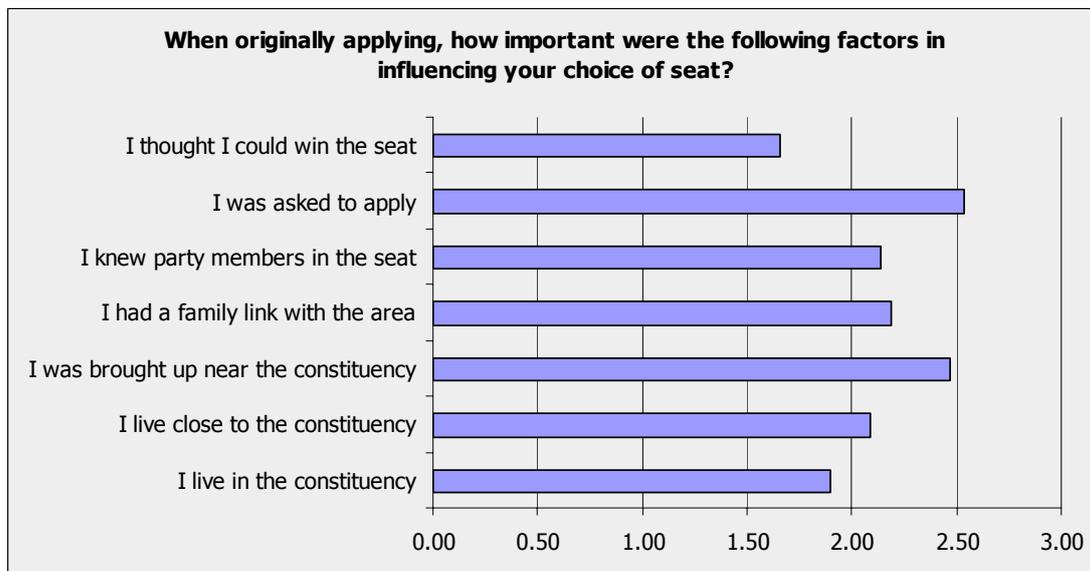


Answer options	Rating average
To serve my party	3.27
To serve my country	2.96
To serve my local constituency	2.40
I was asked to stand	4.39
To help people	1.94

Why did you first choose to stand for parliament? Please rank in order of importance (1-5, with 1 being the most important)					
What is your political party?					
Answer options	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Rating average	Response count
To serve my party					
1	2	0	2		
2	9	2	1		
3	9	4	2		
4	9	13	7		
5	4	1	0		
	3.12	3.65	3.17	3.29	65
To serve my country					
1	0	8	0		
2	9	7	2		
3	6	6	5		
4	14	0	3		
5	3	0	2		
	3.34	1.90	3.42	2.89	65
To serve my local constituency					
1	10	3	4		
2	8	5	6		
3	10	7	2		
4	3	5	0		

5	3	0	0		
	2.44	2.70	1.83	2.41	66
I was asked to stand					
1	2	0	0		
2	2	0	0		
3	4	0	0		
4	1	2	3		
5	17	12	9		
	4.12	4.86	4.75	4.46	52
To help people					
1	16	11	7		
2	5	7	4		
3	4	3	2		
4	5	0	0		
5	3	0	0		
	2.21	1.62	1.62	1.91	67
answered question					69
skipped question					8

Candidates say they are standing to serve their constituency and to help people, rather than to serve their party. The only notable inter-party difference is that Conservative candidates are much more likely to say they are standing 'to serve their country'.



Answer options	Rating average
I live in the constituency	1.90
I live close to the constituency	2.09
I was brought up near the constituency	2.47
I had a family link with the area	2.19
I knew party members in the seat	2.14
I was asked to apply	2.54
I thought I could win the seat	1.66

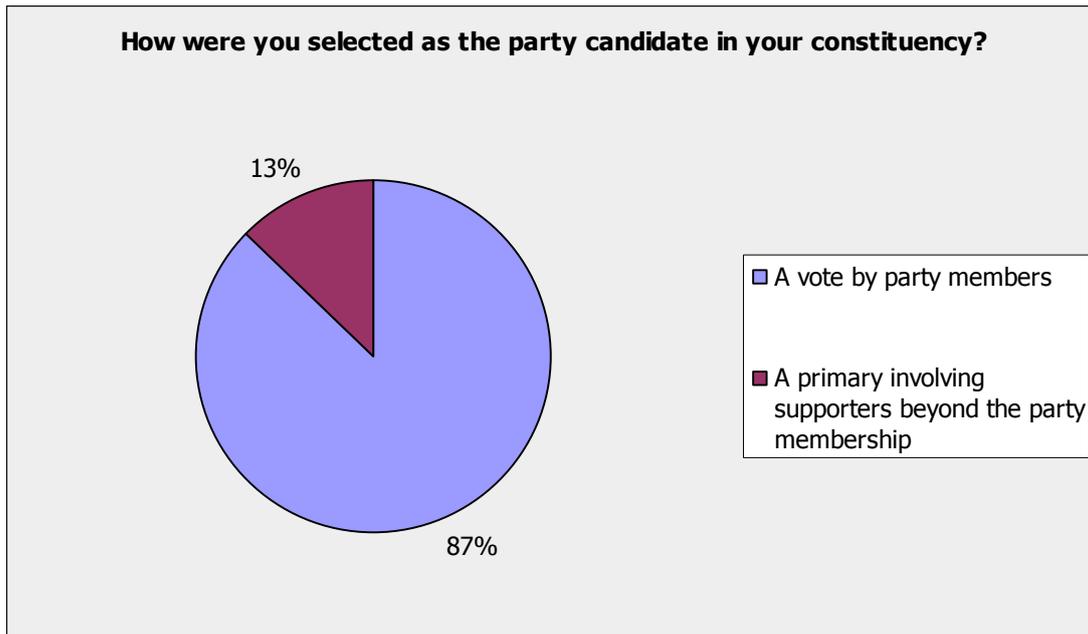
When originally applying, how important were the following factors in influencing your choice of seat?

	What is your political party?				
Answer options	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Rating average	Response count
I live in the constituency					
Very important	20	5	11		
Fairly important	2	3	0		
Not very important	3	5	0		
Not at all important	4	5	2		
	1.69	2.56	1.46	1.90	60
I live close to the constituency					
Very important	11	5	4		
Fairly important	3	8	0		
Not very important	2	2	3		
Not at all important	4	3	1		
	1.95	2.17	2.13	2.07	46
I was brought up near the constituency					
Very important	11	3	4		
Fairly important	2	4	0		
Not very important	1	5	2		
Not at all important	9	4	3		
	2.35	2.63	2.44	2.46	48
I had a family link with the area					
Very important	13	5	3		
Fairly important	2	7	1		
Not very important	3	3	3		
Not at all important	7	3	1		
	2.16	2.22	2.25	2.20	51
I knew party members in the seat					
Very important	16	1	6		
Fairly important	6	5	2		
Not very important	0	7	2		
Not at all important	4	8	0		
	1.69	3.05	1.60	2.18	57
I was asked to apply					
Very important	7	1	1		
Fairly important	7	7	3		
Not very important	2	5	2		
Not at all important	7	5	3		
	2.39	2.78	2.78	2.60	50
I thought I could win the seat					
Very important	18	8	7		
Fairly important	9	8	4		
Not very important	1	3	1		
Not at all important	2	2	0		
	1.57	1.95	1.50	1.68	63
					69
<i>answered question</i>					
					8
<i>skipped question</i>					

The most popular reason for candidates choosing to stand in a seat was because they lived there. *At least* 41 of the 60 candidates (68% of those

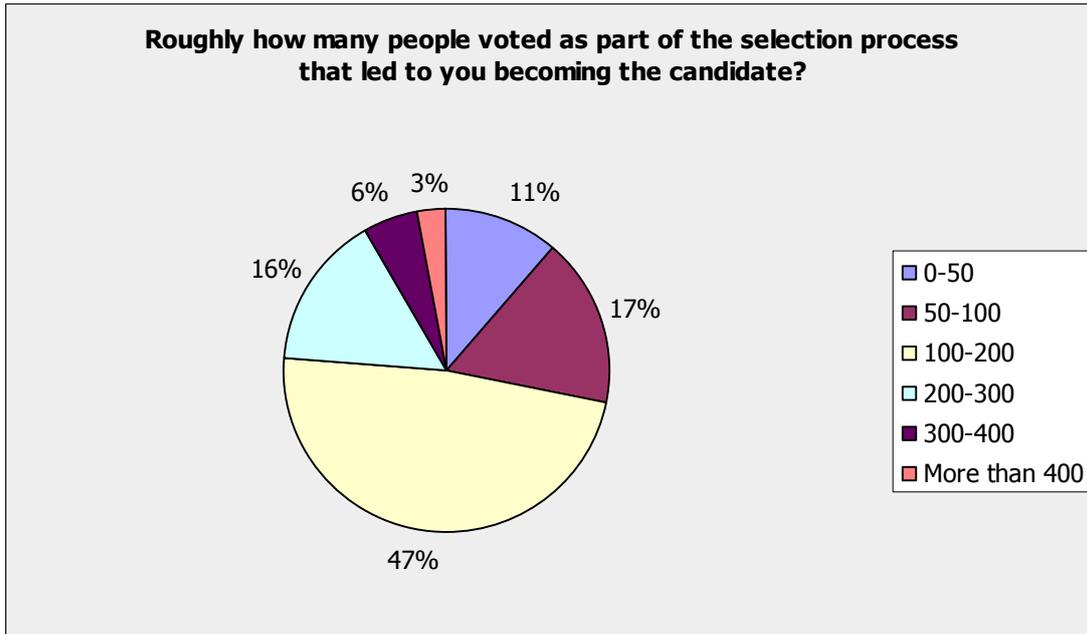
answering the question) did live in their constituencies at the time of their selection. There is therefore limited evidence here of candidates being ‘parachuted’ in to constituencies – the overwhelming majority claim to live in or have a local connection.

Living locally or having a connection with the area was slightly less important for Conservative candidates than for the other two main parties. This might reflect David Cameron’s use of an ‘A List’ to increase the diversity of Conservative candidates.



How were you selected as the party candidate in your constituency?					
What is your political party?					
Answer options	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Response %	Response count
A vote by party members	34	13	13	87.0%	60
A primary	0	9	0	13.0%	9
answered question					69
skipped question					8

A sizeable minority of the Conservative candidates polled had been selected in a primary contest – whereas none of the Labour or Lib Dem candidates had been.



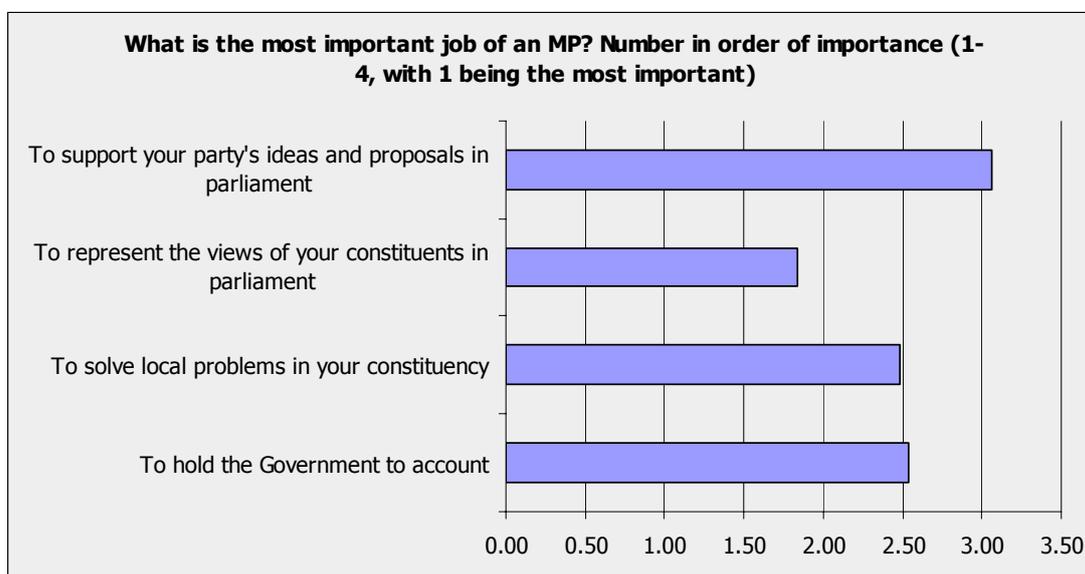
Roughly how many people voted as part of the selection process that led to you becoming the candidate?

Answer options	What is your political party?			Response %	Response count
	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat		
0-50	3	3	2	11.6%	8
50-100	1	8	1	14.5%	10
100-200	24	5	5	49.3%	34
200-300	5	3	3	15.9%	11
300-400	0	2	2	5.8%	4
More than 400	1	1	0	2.9%	2
answered question					69
skipped question					8

28% of the candidates were chosen by less than 100 party members and 75% by fewer than 200 members. This does support the case of those who argue that too small a number of people are involved in the selection process for prospective MPs. In safe seats (which made up a significant proportion of those in our sample) this means that effectively a very small number of people are choosing the local MP.

The role of an MP

These questions were asked to find out what kind of MP these candidates wanted to be.



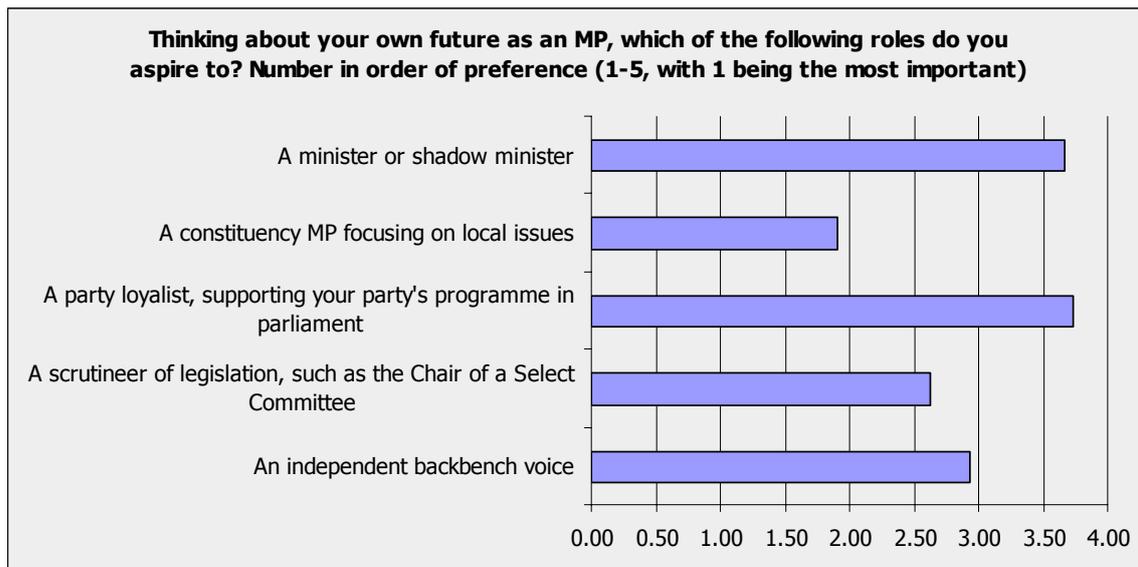
Answer options	Rating average
To hold the Government to account	2.54
To solve local problems in your constituency	2.48
To represent the views of your constituents in parliament	1.84
To support your party's ideas and proposals in parliament	3.06

What is the most important job of an MP? Number in order of importance (1-4, with 1 being the most important)

Answer options	What is your political party?			Rating average	Response count
	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat		
To hold the Government to account					
1	9	7	2	2.52	65
2	5	4	1		
3	8	8	6		
4	10	3	2		
	2.59	2.32	2.73		
To solve local problems in your constituency					
1	1	4	2	2.53	64
2	18	7	5		
3	8	5	0		
4	5	5	4		
	2.53	2.52	2.55		
To represent the views of your constituents in parliament					
1	18	10	6	2.53	64
2	5	7	4		

3	5	3	2		
4	5	1	0		
	1.91	1.76	1.67	1.82	66
To support your party's ideas and proposals in parliament					
1	5	1	2		
2	4	3	3		
3	11	5	3		
4	12	12	5		
	2.94	3.33	2.85	3.05	66
answered question					68
skipped question					9

The candidates overwhelmingly claim that they see the role of the MP to be to represent their constituents' views in parliament. This supersedes their role as a party representative. Critics might argue 'they would say that, wouldn't they' – and of course we all know that MPs in our system inevitably follow the party whip most of the time. It is interesting to note that they see their role primarily as a local representative in parliament, and only after that as a problem solver in their constituencies – the so-called 'social worker' role than some commentators have talked about. They still see that role as important, however.



Answer options

An independent backbench voice
A scrutineer of legislation, such as the Chair of a Select Committee
A party loyalist, supporting your party's programme in parliament
A constituency MP focusing on local issues
A minister or shadow minister

Rating average

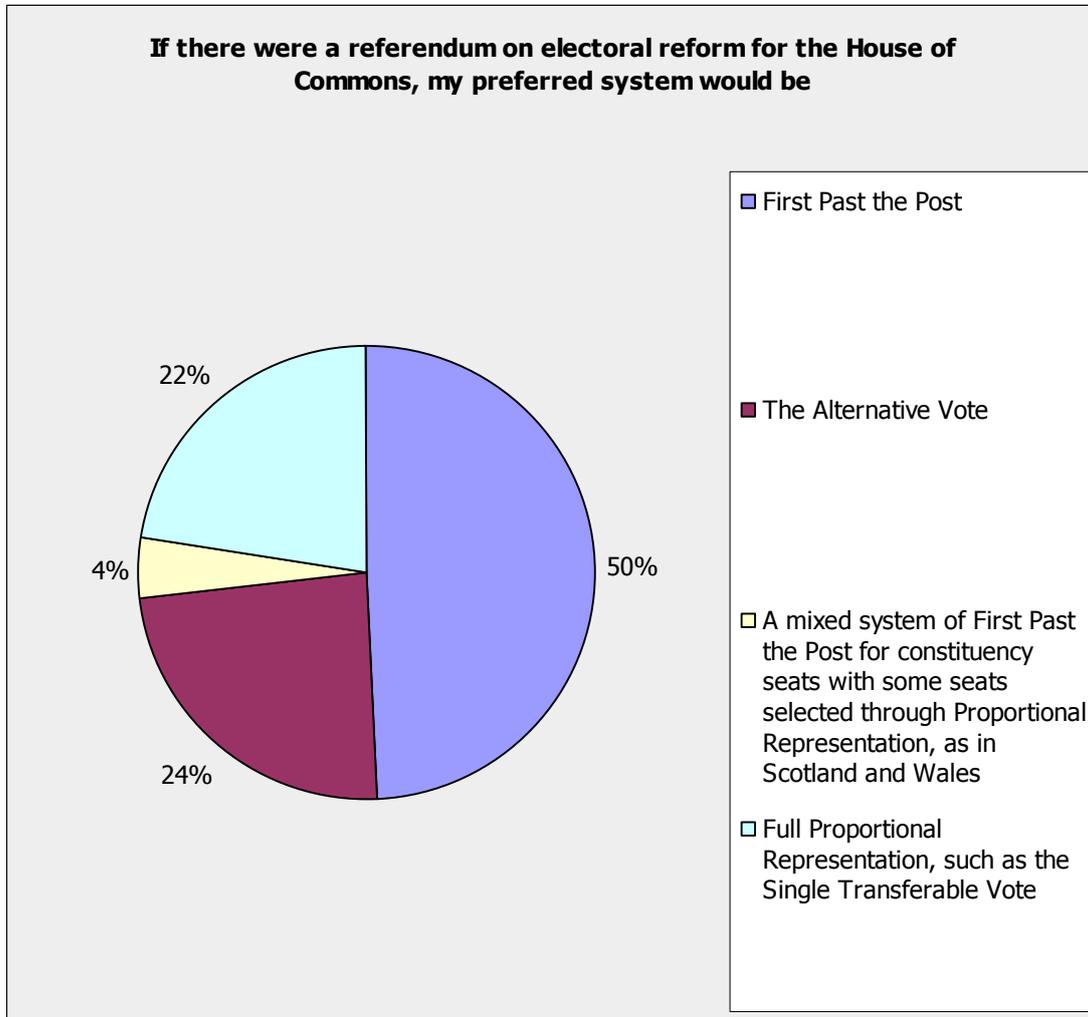
2.93
2.62
3.73
1.91
3.67

Thinking about your own future as an MP, which of the following roles do you aspire to? Number in order of preference (1-5, with 1 being the most important)						
	What is your political party?					
Answer options	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Rating average	Response count	
An independent backbench voice						
1	5	4	4			
2	5	3	3			
3	6	4	1			
4	8	3	2			
5	5	5	1			
	3.10	3.11	2.36	2.97	59	
A scrutineer of legislation, such as the Chair of a Select Committee						
1	3	6	0			
2	13	9	2			
3	6	6	2			
4	6	0	3			
5	2	1	2			
	2.70	2.14	3.56	2.62	61	
A party loyalist, supporting your party's programme in parliament						
1	0	0	0			
2	5	1	0			
3	11	2	5			
4	7	14	2			
5	6	4	3			
	3.48	4.00	3.80	3.72	60	
A constituency MP focusing on local issues						
1	19	9	8			
2	5	5	4			
3	1	5	0			
4	5	1	0			
5	2	1	1			
	1.94	2.05	1.62	1.91	66	
A minister or shadow minister						
1	4	3	1			
2	1	3	1			
3	7	4	2			
4	4	3	4			
5	14	8	3			
	3.77	3.48	3.64	3.65	62	
					answered question	68
					skipped question	9

In terms of their own aspirations, the candidates claim to want to be a constituency MP focusing on local issues first – and do not generally prioritise becoming a minister or shadow minister. This may reflect the fact that they are starting their careers – but of course they may not be being entirely honest about their personal ambitions. It is noticeable that the Lib Dem candidates have the most limited range of career aspirations, being slightly more likely to want to be a backbench voice or a locally focused MP – and having less of an aspiration to chair a select committee.

Views on political reform

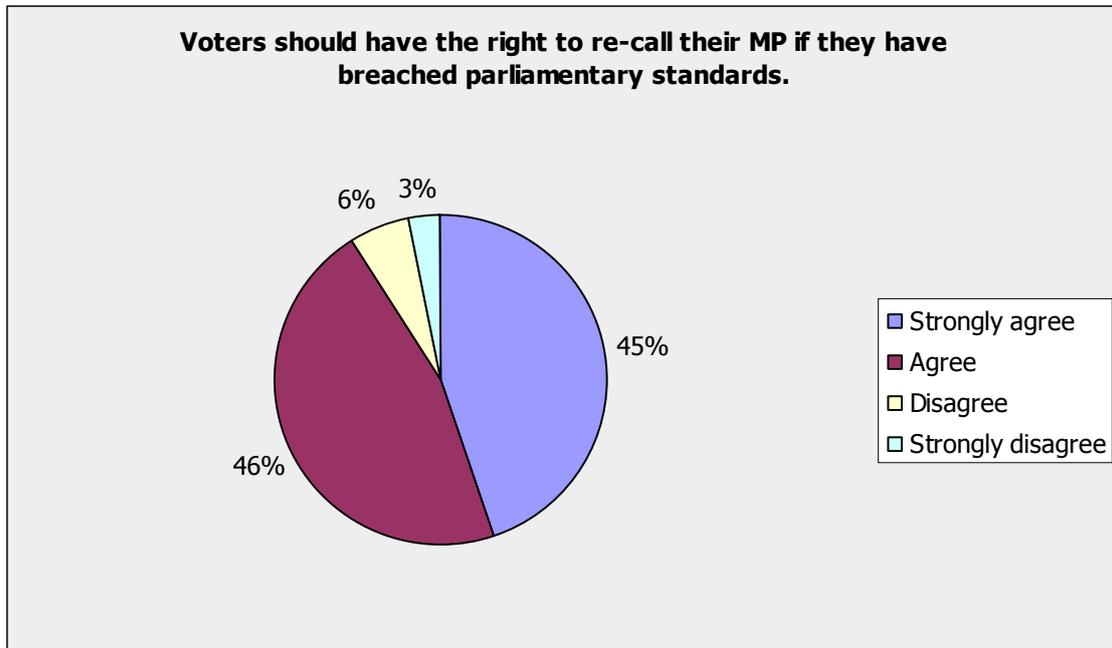
In the aftermath of the expenses scandal, we wanted to find out what the 'class of 2010' thought about a set of proposed reforms to strengthen public trust in our political system.



If there were a referendum on electoral reform for the House of Commons, my preferred system would be					
Answer options	What is your political party?			Response %	Response count
	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat		
First Past the Post	11	22	0	50.8%	33
The Alternative Vote	16	0	0	24.6%	16
A mixed system	2	0	1	4.6%	3
Full Proportional Representation	1	0	12	20.0%	13
answered question					65
skipped question					12

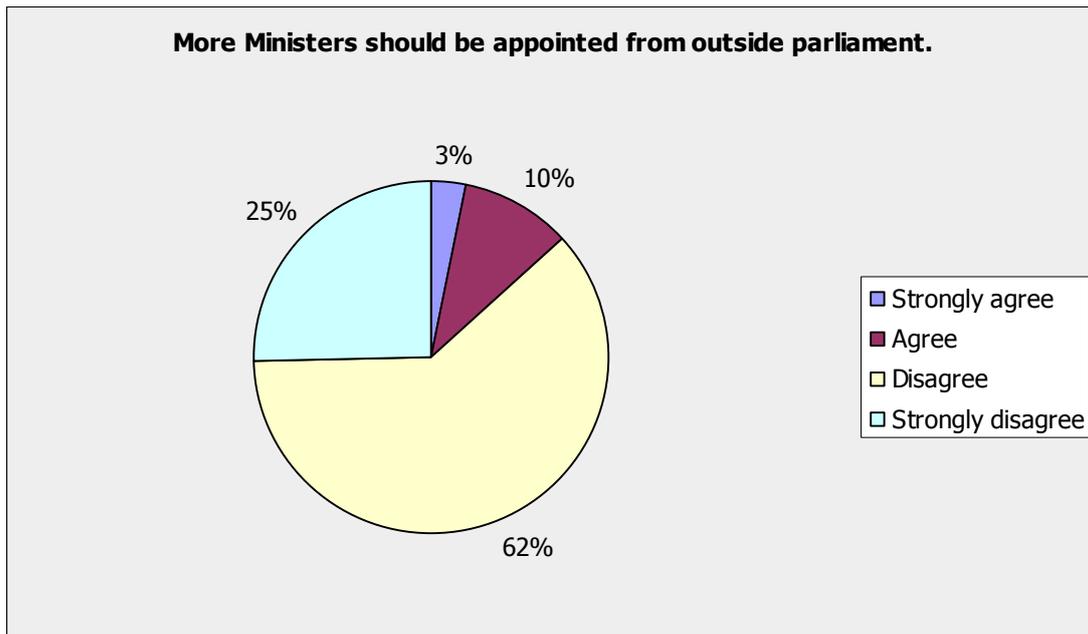
Half the candidates support first past the post, followed by 24% supporting the alternative vote and 20% supporting PR. No Conservatives support PR or a

mixed system – and only 3 Labour candidates do. This suggests that both Gordon Brown and David Cameron would struggle to persuade their parties to back a deal on PR with the Lib Dems in the event of a hung parliament.



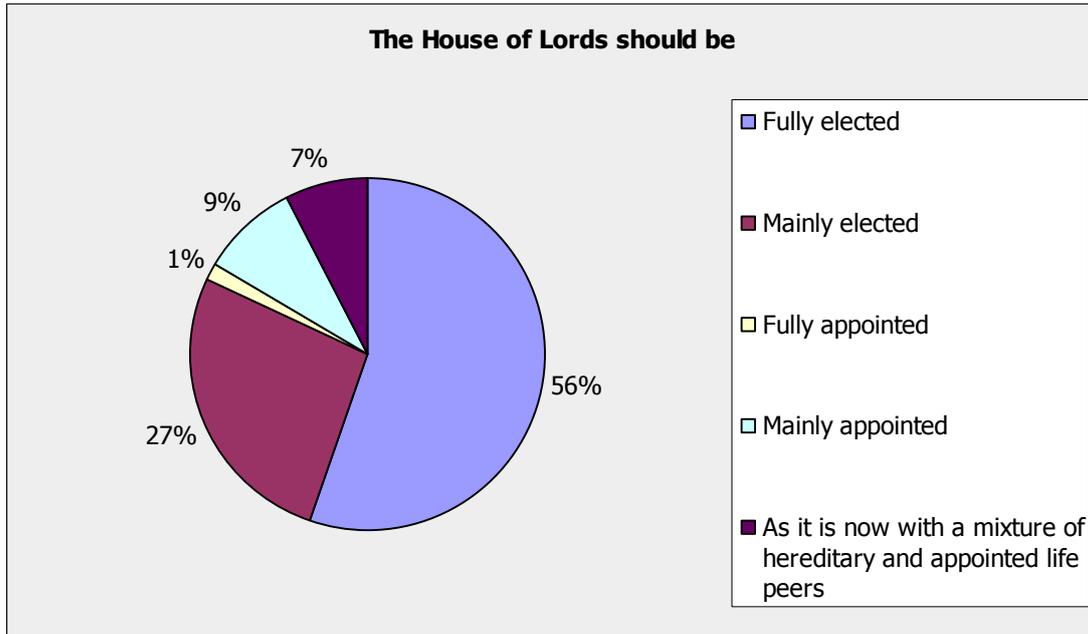
Voters should have the right to re-call their MP if they have breached parliamentary standards					
What is your political party?					
Answer options	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Response %	Response count
Strongly agree	6	13	10	44.6%	29
Agree	19	8	3	46.2%	30
Disagree	3	1	0	6.2%	4
Strongly disagree	2	0	0	3.1%	2
<i>answered question</i>					65
<i>skipped question</i>					12

MPs from all parties support the recall of errant members.



More Ministers should be appointed from outside parliament					
What is your political party?					
Answer options	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Response %	Response count
Strongly agree	1	1	0	3.1%	2
Agree	3	4	0	10.8%	7
Disagree	17	13	10	61.5%	40
Strongly disagree	9	4	3	24.6%	16
<i>answered question</i>					65
<i>skipped question</i>					12

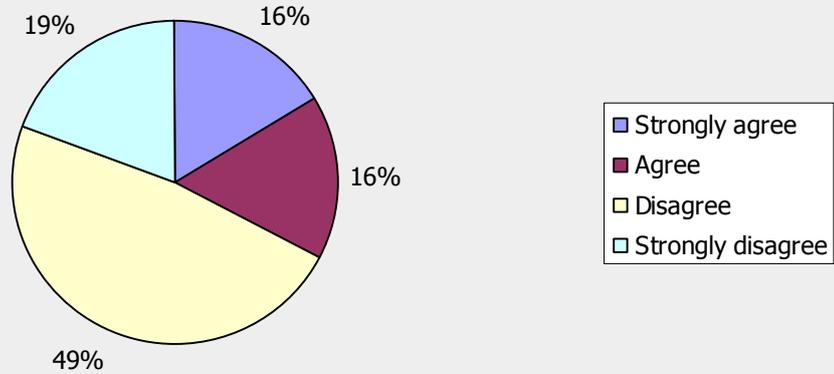
The candidates overwhelmingly oppose the appointment of more ministers from outside parliament.



The House of Lords should be					
	What is your political party?				
Answer options	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Response %	Response count
Fully elected	21	3	12	55.4%	36
Mainly elected	6	10	1	26.2%	17
Fully appointed	0	1	0	1.5%	1
Mainly appointed	3	3	0	9.2%	6
As it is now	0	5	0	7.7%	5
answered question					65
skipped question					12

82% of the candidates support a mainly or fully elected second chamber. Labour and Lib Dem candidates are most in favour – while Conservatives are more divided, with a minority favouring the status quo or a mainly appointed house.

Parliamentary candidates should be chosen through primaries in which supporters and not just members of the parties can vote.

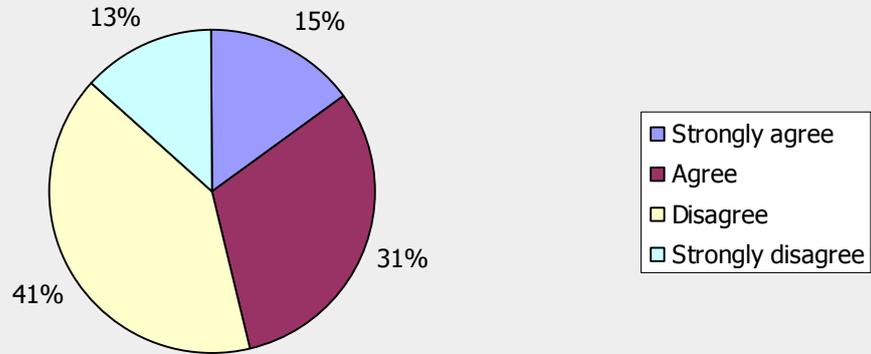


Parliamentary candidates should be chosen through primaries in which supporters and not just members of the parties can vote.

Answer options	What is your political party?			Response %	Response count
	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat		
Strongly agree	1	9	1	16.9%	11
Agree	3	6	2	16.9%	11
Disagree	16	6	8	46.2%	30
Strongly disagree	10	1	2	20.0%	13
answered question					65
skipped question					12

There is general opposition to primaries as a way of selecting parliamentary candidates. There is support for the use of primaries among Conservatives, who have of course been experimenting with the use of these.

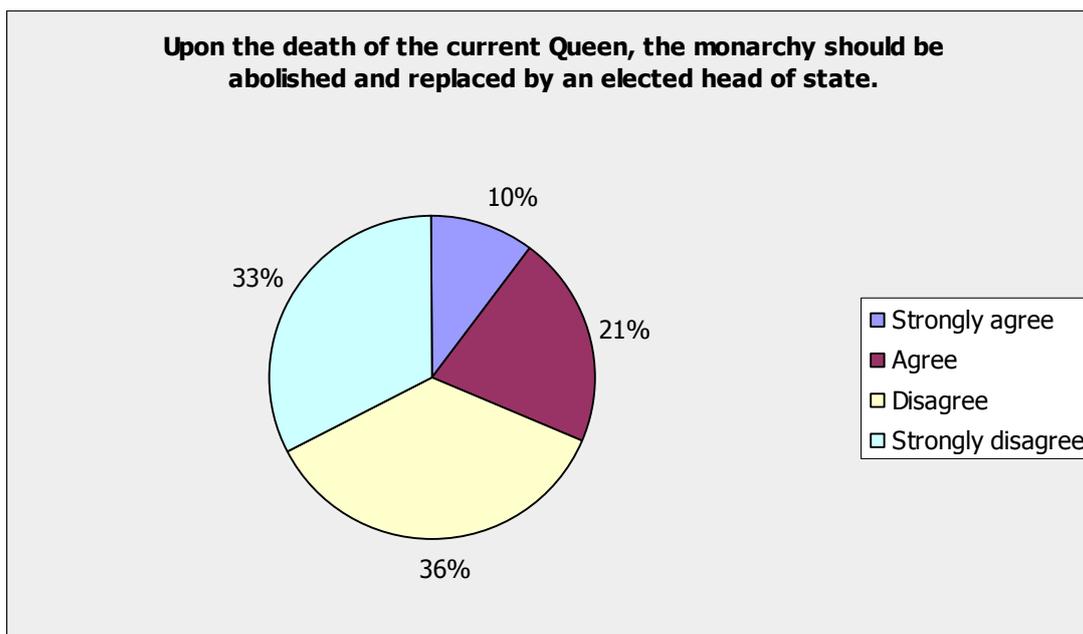
The best way to increase voter turnout would be to introduce compulsory voting for general elections.



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Answer options	What is your political party?			Response %	Response count
	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat		
Strongly agree	8	0	2	15.4%	10
Agree	16	4	0	30.8%	20
Disagree	6	11	9	40.0%	26
Strongly disagree	0	7	2	13.8%	9
answered question					65
skipped question					12

A majority of 54% oppose compulsory voting, but most Labour PPCs support it.



Upon the death of the current Queen, the monarchy should be abolished and replaced by an elected head of state

Answer Options	What is your political party?			Response Percent	Response Count
	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat		
Strongly agree	5	0	1	9.2%	6
Agree	9	1	4	21.5%	14
Disagree	12	3	8	35.4%	23
Strongly disagree	4	18	0	33.8%	22
answered question					65
skipped question					12

69% of the candidates are monarchists, while 31% are republicans (including 1 Conservative and a sizeable minority of both Labour and Lib Dem PPCs).

Ideology

These questions aim to find out where these candidates stand on the ideological spectrum. We deliberately did not ask about specific policy positions – where they might be expected to support their manifesto positions, but rather asked broader questions to tease out how left or right wing they are, or alternatively how libertarian or authoritarian they are.

Please tick one box for each statement to show how much you agree or disagree with it							
	What is your political party?						
Answer options	Labour		Conservative		Liberal Democrat		Response count
Government should redistribute income from the better-off to those who are less well-off							
Agree strongly	20	67%	1	6%	4	33%	
Agree	10	33%	4	24%	8	67%	
Neither agree nor disagree	0	0%	4	24%	0	0%	
Disagree	0	0%	5	29%	0	0%	
Disagree strongly	0	0%	3	18%	0	0%	
Don't know	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	
	30		17		12		59
Ordinary working people do not get their fair share of the nation's wealth							
Agree strongly	15	50%	0	0%	5	42%	
Agree	9	30%	5	29%	4	33%	
Neither agree nor disagree	5	17%	5	29%	3	25%	
Disagree	1	3%	4	24%	0	0%	
Disagree strongly	0	0%	3	18%	0	0%	
Don't know	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	
	30		17		12		59
People who break the law should be given stiffer sentences							
Agree strongly	1	4%	3	18%	0	0%	
Agree	4	14%	10	59%	1	8%	
Neither agree nor disagree	16	57%	3	18%	2	17%	
Disagree	6	21%	1	6%	6	50%	
Disagree strongly	1	4%	0	0%	3	25%	
Don't know	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	
	28		17		12		57
Cutting welfare benefits would damage too many people's lives							
Agree strongly	7	23%	0	0%	0	0%	
Agree	14	47%	4	24%	7	58%	
Neither agree nor disagree	6	20%	3	18%	3	25%	
Disagree	0	0%	8	47%	2	17%	
Disagree strongly	2	7%	2	12%	0	0%	
Don't know	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%	
	30		17		12		59
The welfare state encourages people to stop helping each other							
Agree strongly	1	3%	5	29%	0	0%	
Agree	1	3%	7	41%	3	25%	
Neither agree nor disagree	5	17%	3	18%	2	17%	
Disagree	12	40%	2	12%	5	42%	
Disagree strongly	11	37%	0	0%	2	17%	
Don't know	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	
	30		17		12		59
Britain has relied too much on the City for economic growth and its role in the economy should be curtailed							
Agree strongly	2	7%	0	0%	7	58%	
Agree	11	37%	3	18%	4	33%	
Neither agree nor disagree	9	30%	3	18%	1	8%	
Disagree	7	23%	6	35%	0	0%	
Disagree strongly	0	0%	5	29%	0	0%	

Don't know	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%	
	30		17		12		59
Britain should spend less on defence and stop trying to be a major military force in the world							
Agree strongly	2	7%	0	0%	3	25%	
Agree	6	20%	1	6%	7	58%	
Neither agree nor disagree	7	23%	1	6%	1	8%	
Disagree	12	40%	11	65%	1	8%	
Disagree strongly	2	7%	4	24%	0	0%	
Don't know	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%	
	30		17		12		59
The European Union is a threat to Britain's national sovereignty							
Agree strongly	2	7%	2	12%	0	0%	
Agree	0	0%	8	47%	0	0%	
Neither agree nor disagree	0	0%	2	12%	1	8%	
Disagree	8	29%	4	24%	2	17%	
Disagree strongly	16	57%	1	6%	8	67%	
Don't know	2	7%	0	0%	1	8%	
	28		17		12		57
Climate change is real and man-made, and requires major changes to the way we live and work							
Agree strongly	22	73%	2	12%	11	92%	
Agree	8	27%	7	41%	1	8%	
Neither agree nor disagree	0	0%	3	18%	0	0%	
Disagree	0	0%	3	18%	0	0%	
Disagree strongly	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	
Don't know	0	0%	2	12%	0	0%	
	30		17		12		59
answered question							59
skipped question							18

In terms of broad ideological positioning, we can conclude the following:

- On almost all issues Labour and Lib Dem PPCs have more in common with each other than with Conservative PPCs. This confirms the view that these are two essentially centre-left parties with very similar positions on many issues and whose main *ideological* opponent is the Conservative party. This implies that a Lib-Lab coalition in a hung parliament would be much more sustainable in policy and political terms than a Lib-Con coalition, which would be marked by serious political disagreement. It should be pointed out of course that the Liberal Democrats and the Conservatives have often cooperated in a sustained way at the local government level.
- Labour PPCs are slightly to the left of Lib Dem PPCs on questions of distribution and the welfare state: 67% of Labour PPCs agree strongly that government should redistribute income from rich to poor, compared to 33% of Lib Dem PPCs. Despite Conservative Shadow Cabinet ministers saying they now favour redistribution, only 30% of Conservative PPCs in our survey support it and 47% oppose it.
- Labour and Lib Dem PPCs are 'less tough' and more liberal on sentencing issues than Conservative PPCs, but Lib Dem PPCs are the most liberal, as one might expect.

- 59% of Conservative PPCs disagree that cutting benefits would damage too many people's lives, compared to just 7% of Labour PPCs and 17% of Lib Dems.

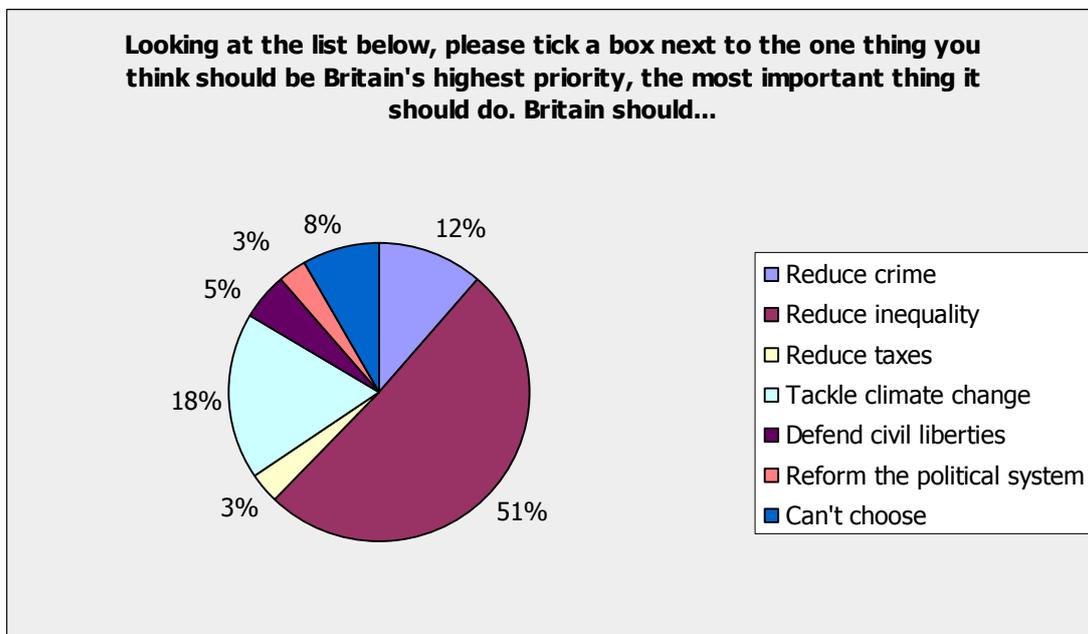
- 70% of Conservatives agree that the welfare state 'crowds out' civic endeavour and community self-help. By contrast 77% of Labour and 59% of Lib Dem PPC disagree with this.

- The Lib Dem PPCs are 'to Labour's left' on the role of the City in the economy, with 91% agreeing that we have been too reliant on it, compared to just 44% of Labour PPCs. 64% of Conservative PPCs disagree that the City's role should be curtailed.

- Lib Dem PPCs are the most 'doveish' on foreign policy, with 91% wanting Britain to stop trying to be a major military force in the world, compared to just 27% of Labour PPCs and 6% of Tory PPCs. There is clearly a political difference here between parties that are more or less willing to see British troops engaged overseas.

- 59% of Tory PPCs think that the EU is a threat to the UK's national sovereignty, whereas Labour and Lib Dem PPCs overwhelmingly reject this.

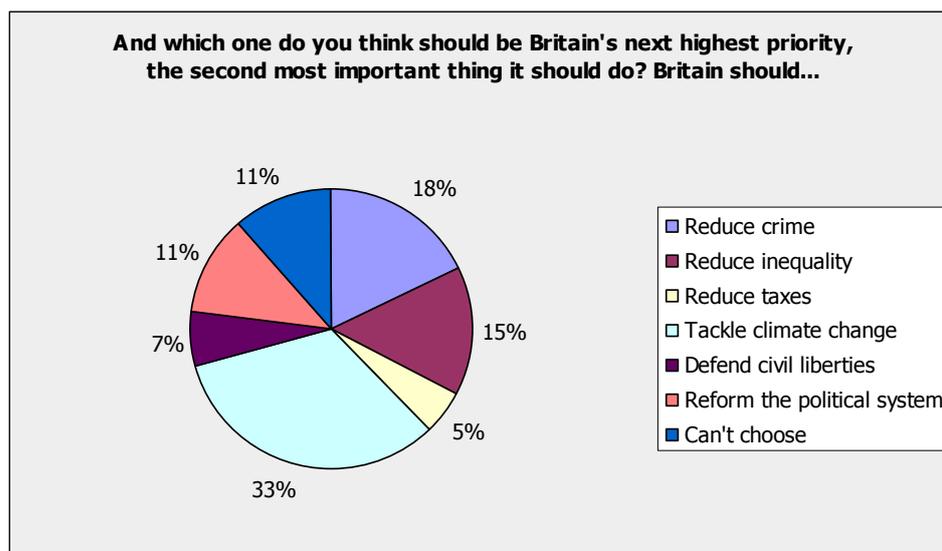
- Whereas all Labour and Lib Dem PPCs agree that climate change is real and man made and requires major social changes, only 53% of Tory PPCs believe this. 18% of Tory PPCs in this survey are climate change deniers, while another 12% don't know and 18% neither agree nor disagree with the statement.



Looking at the list below, please tick a box next to the one thing you think should be Britain's highest priority, the most important thing it should do. Britain should...

Answer options	What is your political party?			Response %	Response count
	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat		
Reduce crime	2	5	0	11.9%	7
Reduce inequality	24	3	3	50.8%	30
Reduce taxes	0	2	0	3.4%	2
Tackle climate change	3	1	6	16.9%	10
Defend civil liberties	0	3	0	5.1%	3
Reform the political system	0	0	2	3.4%	2
Can't choose	1	3	1	8.5%	5
answered question					59
skipped question					18

Labour PPCs overwhelmingly think that reducing inequality is the most important issue facing the country, whereas Lib Dem and Conservative PPCs have more disparate views on this question.

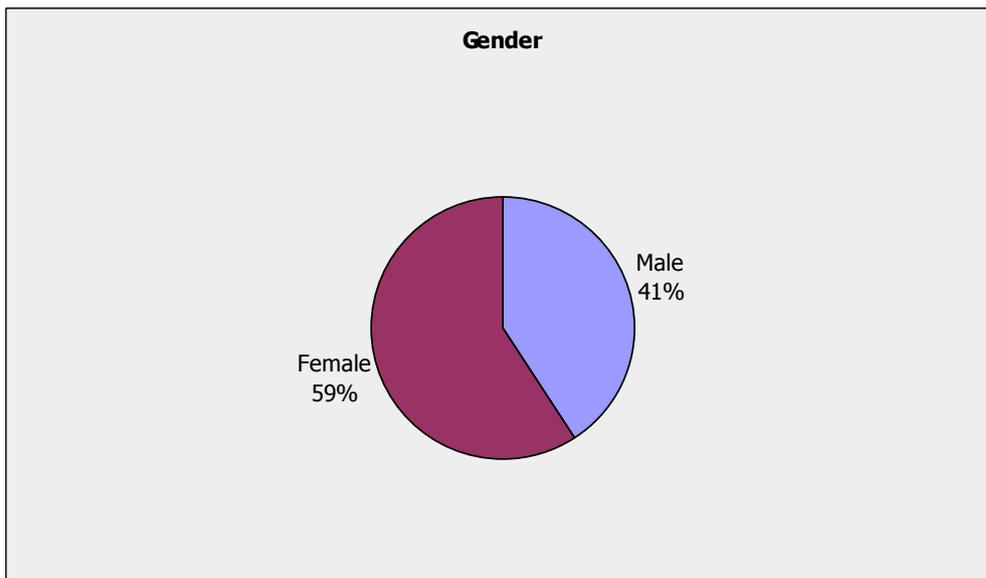
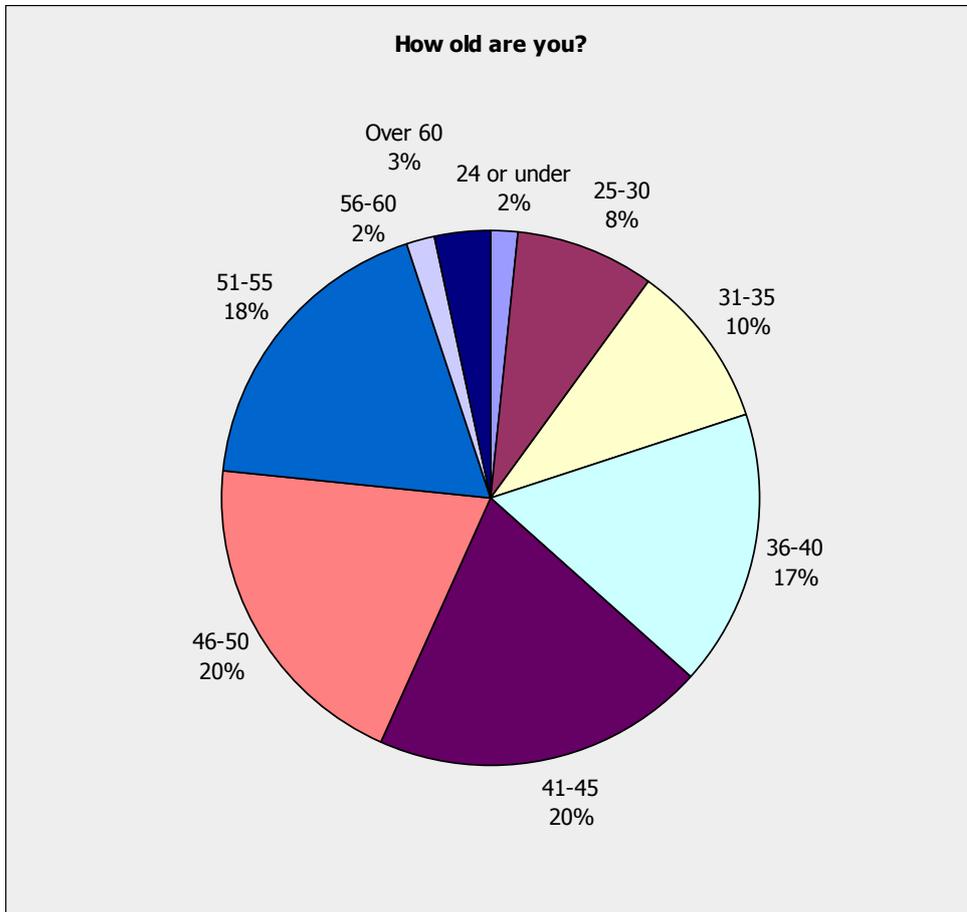


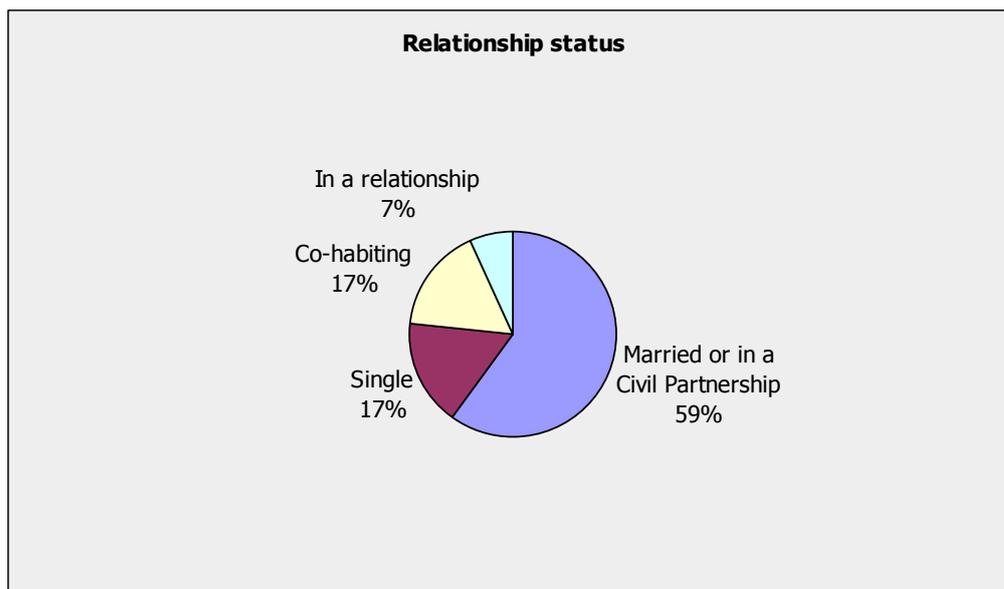
And which one do you think should be Britain's next highest priority, the second most important thing it should do? Britain should...

Answer options	What is your political party?			Response %	Response count
	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat		
Reduce crime	7	4	0	18.6%	11
Reduce inequality	5	1	3	15.3%	9
Reduce taxes	0	3	0	5.1%	3
Tackle climate change	14	1	4	32.2%	19
Defend civil liberties	1	2	1	6.8%	4
Reform the political system	1	2	3	10.2%	6
Can't choose	2	4	1	11.9%	7
answered question					59
skipped question					18

Demographic details

We asked these questions to find out what kind of people would be represented in the next parliament.





Ethnicity (Please tick as appropriate)

Answer Options	Response %	Response count
White (English)	80.7%	46
White (Scottish)	7.0%	4
White (Welsh)	3.5%	2
White (Irish)	0.0%	0
White (Other)	5.3%	3
Mixed (White & Black Caribbean)	0.0%	0
Mixed (White & Black African)	0.0%	0
Mixed (White & Asian)	1.8%	1
Mixed (Other)	0.0%	0
Asian (Indian)	0.0%	0
Asian (Pakistani)	1.8%	1
Asian (Bangladeshi)	0.0%	0
Asian (Other)	0.0%	0
Black or Black British (Caribbean)	0.0%	0
Black or Black British (African)	0.0%	0
Black (Other)	0.0%	0
Chinese	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)		3
answered question		57
skipped question		22

Do you belong to any of the following religious groups?

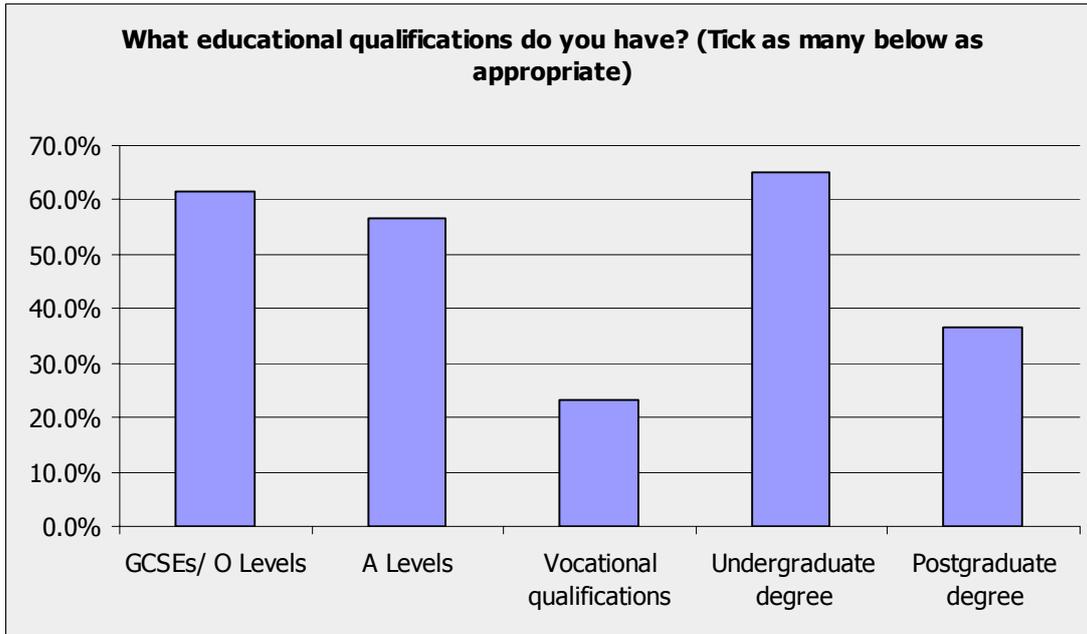
Answer options	Response %	Response count
Christianity	52.6%	30
Islam	1.8%	1
Judaism	3.5%	2
Hinduism	0.0%	0
Sikhism	0.0%	0

Buddhism	0.0%	0
None	42.1%	24
Other (please specify)		1
answered question		57
skipped question		22

Do you belong to any of the following religious groups?					
Answer options	What is your political party?			Response %	Response count
	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat		
Christianity	13	9	7	52.7%	29
Islam	0	1	0	1.8%	1
Judaism	0	1	1	3.6%	2
Hinduism	0	0	0	0.0%	0
Sikhism	0	0	0	0.0%	0
Buddhism	0	0	0	0.0%	0
None	15	4	4	41.8%	23
Other (please specify)					1
answered question					55
skipped question					22

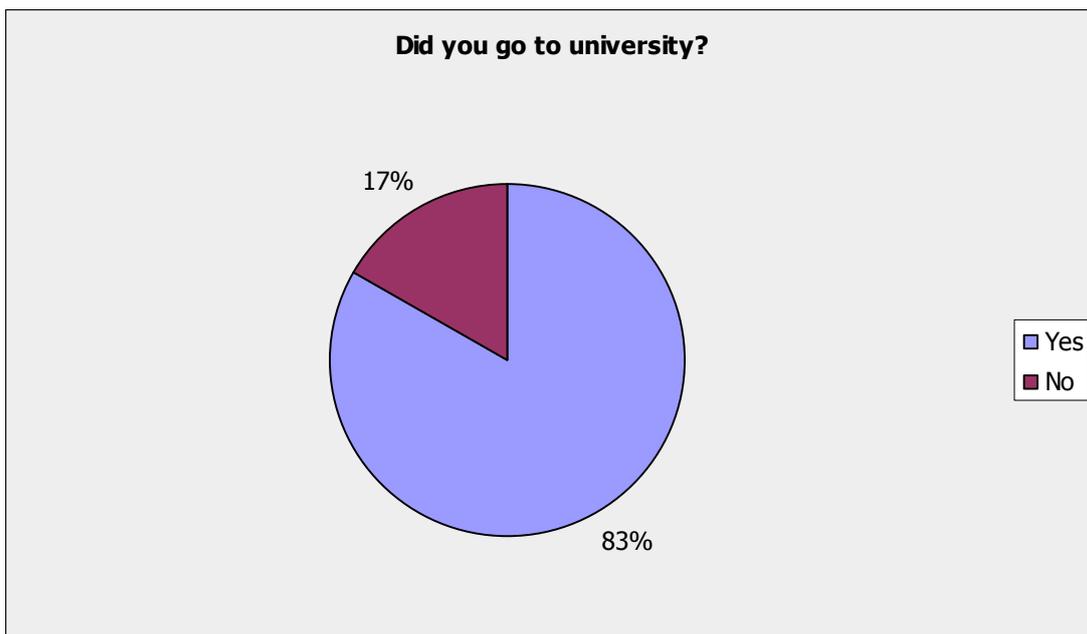
Labour is the least religious party in this survey.

If so, how often do you attend a place of worship?		
Answer options	Response %	Response count
More than once a week	6.7%	3
Once a week	17.8%	8
Once a month	31.1%	14
Annually	24.4%	11
Never	20.0%	9
answered question		45
skipped question		34



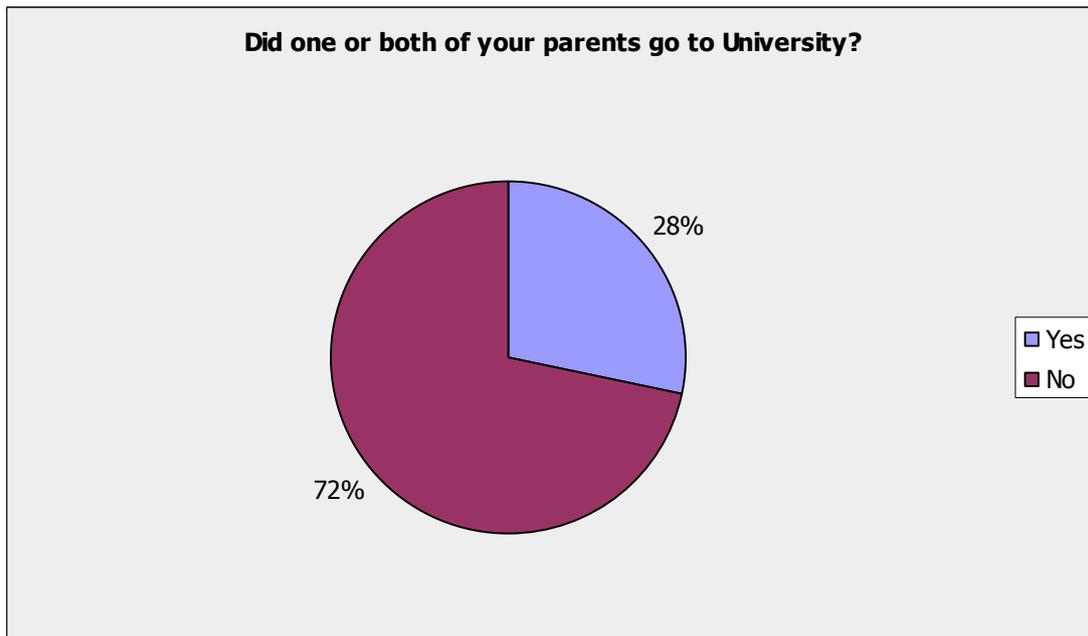
What educational qualifications do you have? (Tick as many below as appropriate)

Answer options	What is your political party?			Response %	Response count
	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat		
GCSEs/ O Levels	19	10	8	63.8%	37
A Levels	15	12	7	58.6%	34
Vocational qualifications	10	2	2	24.1%	14
Undergraduate degree	19	10	10	67.2%	39
Postgraduate degree	12	5	3	34.5%	20
answered question					58
skipped question					19



Did you go to university?

		What is your political party?				
Answer options	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Response %	Response count	
Yes	26	12	10	82.8%	48	
No	4	4	2	17.2%	10	
answered question					58	
skipped question					19	



Did one or both of your parents go to University?

		What is your political party?				
Answer options	Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Response %	Response count	
Yes	7	3	5	25.9%	15	
No	23	13	7	74.1%	43	
answered question					58	
skipped question					19	

Most of the PPCs went to university but also most said that their parents did not. This suggests that these PPCs from all the parties are not from very privileged backgrounds on the whole.

Current occupation		
Answer options	Response Count	
	56	
<i>answered question</i>	56	
<i>skipped question</i>	23	
Occupations	Previous	Current
Business	5	7
Law	0	4
Politics	5	16
Finance	2	3
Science	1	1
Librarian	2	0
Senior management	3	4
Consultancy	2	3
Journalism/media	5	2
Academia	0	3
Other	4	8
Third sector	2	2
IT	0	3
Teacher/lecturer	6	0
Local government	2	0
Police	1	0
Health	1	0

These figures do offer some support for the thesis that increasingly our MPs are drawn from within a professional political class: 30% of them work in a political job. Nevertheless it should be pointed out that 70% of them do not. What is true is that these candidates are overwhelmingly from professional or managerial occupations, with none from manual or traditional working class occupations.