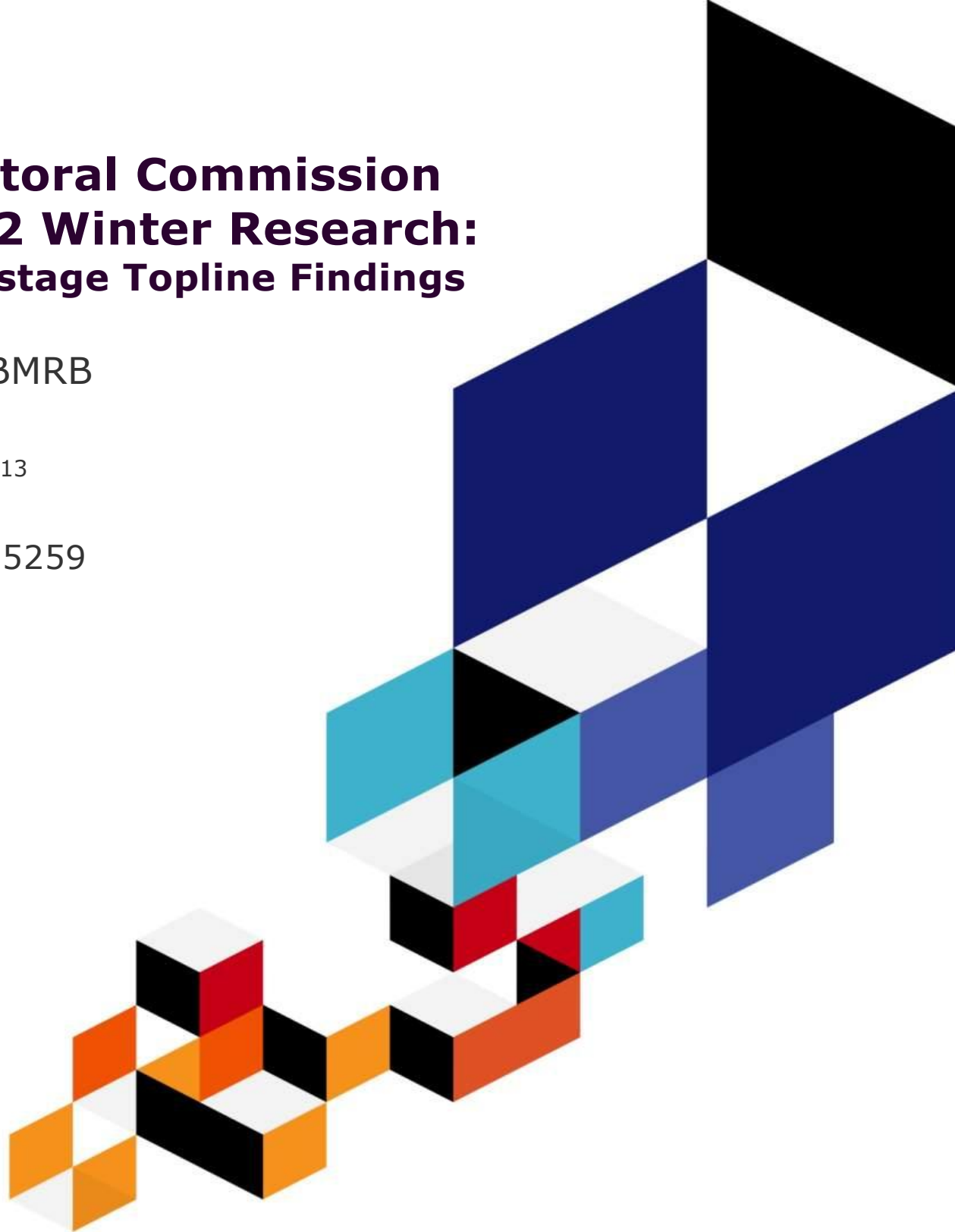


Electoral Commission 2012 Winter Research: Mainstage Topline Findings

TNS BMRB

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TNS BMRB

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Technical Details

- TNS BMRB interviewed a nationally representative quota sample of 1,200 adults living in the UK and aged 18+. The sample consisted of 998 interviews with people living in Great Britain and a boost of 202 interviews with people living in Northern Ireland.
- In addition to the mainstage of interviewing discussed in this report (1,200 UK interviews) a 'BME boost', funded by the Cabinet Office, was conducted amongst black and minority ethnic groups aged 18+ living in the UK. The BME boost used a similar questionnaire to the mainstage, with some additional questions. Questions that were not asked during the mainstage of interviewing are not included in this report, which is why in some cases question numbering is non-consecutive.
- The survey was conducted by telephone and took place between 7th and 10th December 2012.
- Data was weighted to match the profile of the UK population using a range of variables including gender, age, working status, social grade and region.
- Trend data has been included from previous waves of Winter Research where possible. Please note that, unless otherwise stated, prior to January 2008 the Winter Research was conducted as a face-to-face survey. From 2008 onwards the research has been conducted over the telephone. Findings from face-to-face and telephone surveys are broadly comparable but caution should be exercised when comparing findings between the different methodologies, and variations in results should be treated as indicative.
- Where results do not sum to 100%, this is because of rounding, multiple response codes or the exclusion of 'Don't know' responses.
- An asterisk (*) represents results of less than half a percent.

Summary of Key Results

- There have been some changes across survey waves, and these have been highlighted where appropriate in the summary of key results below.

Voting and Registration

- There has been a fall in the proportion of people who are confident that elections in the Great Britain / Northern Ireland are well run. In 2011 72% were confident elections were well run. This fell to 61% in 2012. Over the same time period the proportion who were not confident rose from a quarter (24%) to a third (34%).
- Satisfaction with the actual process of voting was 64% in 2012; the lowest level recorded since the Winter Research began in 2003.
- Between 2011 and 2012, dissatisfaction with the process of voting rose from 11% to 16%.
- Nine out of ten people (91%) were confident that they knew how to register to vote and a similar number (92%) were confident that they knew how to cast their vote. Both of these figures are in line with findings from previous waves of Winter Research.
- The overwhelming majority (94%) believed their name was on the electoral register, with 91% registered at their current address. Fewer than a third (29%) were registered for a postal vote; the same as in 2011 (30%).
- Three quarters of people (76%) were satisfied with the process of registering to vote in Great Britain or Northern Ireland. Satisfaction has fallen from a high of 85% in 2010, but there has been no corresponding increase in dissatisfaction, which remains unchanged. There was however an increase in the number of people saying they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the process of registering to vote; from 8% in 2010 to 15% in 2012.

Individual Electoral Registration

- In June 2011 the government announced plans to introduce Individual Electoral Registration (IER). Under IER individuals would be asked to provide 'identifying information', such as a date of birth and national insurance number, when they apply to register.
- Currently, knowledge of the information people must provide when registering to vote is low, and it has remained largely unchanged since 2009. In 2012, 78% thought everyone must provide their date of birth and 43% thought that everyone must provide a signature. The only significant change was to the proportion who thought a National Insurance number must be provided, which fell from 29% to 25%.

- The vast majority of people (95%) said it would be easy for them to find their National Insurance number if they needed it for official purposes.
- In 2012, 81% said that a requirement to provide a National Insurance number would either make no difference to their likelihood to register, or that it would make them more likely to do so.
- Nine out of ten (92%) said being required to provide their date of birth would either have no impact or increase the likelihood of them registering. Nine out of ten (92%) also said the same of a requirement to provide their signature. These findings are in line with previous waves of Winter Research.

Integrity of Elections

- Attitudes towards electoral fraud remained broadly stable in 2012.
- Self-declared knowledge of electoral fraud was low with only 7% saying they know a lot about it. A majority (60%) felt they knew hardly anything or nothing at all about the issue whilst a third (32%) said they knew a little.
- Despite a low level of self-declared knowledge, around half (52%) said that electoral fraud was either not a very big problem or not a problem at all. Just over a third (36%) viewed it as a problem, with one in ten (9%) saying it was a very big problem. These findings represent no significant change since 2010.
- Whilst perceptions of the safety of postal voting had been improving since 2005, there was no significant change in attitudes between 2011 and 2012. In 2012, 53% thought voting by post was safe from fraud and abuse whilst 33% thought it was unsafe.
- Voting at a polling station was perceived as safe from fraud and abuse by 85%, and registering to vote was considered safe by 78%. These findings are in line with previous waves of winter research.

Party Finance

- Confidence in action being taken against political parties or their members who are caught breaking the rules on party finance has reverted to trend following a significant dip in confidence in 2009 following revelations around MPs expenses.
- In 2012, 36% were confident action would be taken whilst 63% were not confident.
- There was concern that respondents were interpreting this question as relating to a broader range of inappropriate financial indiscretion than intended. To help clarify that the question related only to party finance rules a new question was devised (see page 20 for new question wording). The original question was put to half of respondents with the new question version asked of the remaining half.

- There was no significant difference in responses to the two questions.
- Between 2010 and 2011 there was a significant fall in the number of people who agreed that “there is more information available to the public now than in the recent past about how political parties are funded and spend their money”, from 69% to 58%. This fall appears to be sustained with 58% continuing to agree with the statement in 2012.
- Other measures relating to the openness of party funding and spending have remained unchanged in recent years.

Northern Ireland

- Asked if the 2014 local elections in Northern Ireland should be held on the same day as the European Parliamentary elections, 45% said that they should whilst 29% did not mind either way. A fifth (21%) felt the two elections should not be held on the same day.

Voting

Q1. In general, how confident, if at all, are you that elections are well run in Great Britain/Northern Ireland? Are you...

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE. REVERSE ORDER.

Base: All

	Dec 2010	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%	%
Very confident	18	29	18
Fairly confident	49	43	43
Not very confident	19	16	20
Not at all confident	12	8	14
Don't know	2	4	5
Confident	67	72	61
Not Confident	31	24	34

Q2. Which of these statements best describes your attitude towards voting at General Elections?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE. REVERSE ORDER OF 1 TO 3...

Base: All

	Jan 2005	Dec 2005- Jan20 06	Nov 2006	Dec 2008	Dec 2009	Dec 2010	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
I always vote at General Elections	64	64	65	63	59	70	61	55
I sometimes vote at General Elections	20	20	19	23	25	18	23	27
I never vote at General Elections	11	11	11	9	8	8	10	14
I've not been eligible in the past to vote at a General Election	4	4	4	4	8	4	4	4
Don't know	*	2	1	*	*	0	1	*

Q5. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the actual process of voting at elections in Great Britain/Northern Ireland?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE. REVERSE ORDER.

Base: All

	May 2003	Dec 2005 – Jan 2006	Nov 2006	Dec 2008	Dec 2009	Dec 2010	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very satisfied	26	30	21	32	31	28	20	25
Fairly satisfied	48	48	54	43	43	45	48	39
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9	10	14	9	11	12	19	19
Fairly dissatisfied	9	6	3	7	8	7	6	9
Very dissatisfied	5	1	1	5	4	6	5	7
Don't know / no opinion	3	7	7	4	4	2	2	2
Satisfied	74	77	75	75	73	74	67	64
Dissatisfied	14	7	5	11	12	13	11	16

Q6. Why do you say you are dissatisfied with the actual process of voting at elections in Great Britain/Northern Ireland?

PROBE FULLY. DO NOT READ OUT. MULTICODE.

Base: All those who are dissatisfied with the process of voting (169)

	%
Voting System	30
The voting system is unfair	18
Because of the voting system, my vote doesn't count	6
I don't agree with the First Past the Post system / I would prefer Proportional Representation (PR)	8
The party/candidate I support has no chance of being elected under this voting system	4
Ease / Convenience of Voting	21
Difficulty in getting to a polling station	10
Voting is too confusing / I don't understand the system	8
There should be more choice on how and where to vote	2
Should be able to vote online	4
Politicians / The Political System	30
Don't like/trust politicians	17
You never see politicians except at election time	5

Politicians do not deliver on what they promise	17
Other	38
There is no point in voting / it doesn't make any difference	7
The procedure for voting is open to fraud and abuse	8
Can't be bothered with it	2
General dissatisfaction with politicians and political parties	4
Other	18
Don't know	5

Q7. As you may know, in 2014 local elections in Northern Ireland may also be held on the same day as the European Parliamentary elections. Do you think that these events should be held on the same day or not?
DO NOT READ OUT.

Base: All those in Northern Ireland (202)

	%
The two elections should be held on the same day	45
The two elections should not be held on the same day	21
Do not mind either way	29
Don't know	4

Q8a. Why do you think that these elections should be held on the same day?

DO NOT READ OUT. MULTICODE.

Base: All those who think elections should be held on the same day (92)

	%
Saves money / resources	18
Saves my time / only need to go to polling station once / only need to post one postal voting envelope	47
Encourages people to vote in both	20
More convenient	6
Other	9
Don't know	6

Q8b. Why do you think that these elections should not be held on the same day?

DO NOT READ OUT. MULTICODE.

Base: All those who think elections should not be held on the same day (41 – caution small base)

	%
Makes it confusing to cast my votes	49
Don't understand the difference between the two	4
Makes the local elections seem less important	5
Need more time to think	2
Other	29
Don't know	14

Q9. How confident, if at all, are you that you know how to go about casting your vote at an election?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE. REVERSE ORDER.

Base: All

	Dec 2008	Dec 2009	Dec 2010	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%	%	%	%
Very confident	68	66	69	67	69
Fairly confident	24	27	25	27	24
Not very confident	4	5	3	4	4
Not at all confident	3	2	3	2	3
Don't know	1	1	*	1	1
Confident	92	93	94	94	92
Not Confident	7	6	6	6	7

Registration

Q10. How confident, if at all, are you that you know how to go about registering to vote?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE. REVERSE ORDER.

Base: All

	Dec 2008	Dec 2009	Dec 2010	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%	%	%	%
Very confident	57	55	68	60	63
Fairly confident	30	34	24	29	28
Not very confident	7	7	4	6	5
Not at all confident	3	3	3	3	2
Don't know	3	1	*	2	2
Confident	88	89	92	89	91
Not confident	10	10	7	9	8

Q11. As far as you know, is your name on the electoral register, that is, the official list of people entitled to vote, either where you are living now or somewhere else?

MULTICODE FOR 1 AND 2 ONLY

Base: All

	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%
Yes – where living now	93	91
Yes – another address	3	4
No	2	4
DK	3	2

Q12¹. Why are you not registered to vote (ADD IF 'YES – ANOTHER ADDRESS': where you are living now)?

PROBE FULLY. DO NOT READ OUT LIST. MULTICODE OK

Base: All those who are not registered to vote or not registered where they are living now (68)

	Dec 2008	Dec 2009	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%	%	%
Just moved	15	24	42	23
Not bothered	11	17	2	6
Haven't got round to it	20	12	3	16
Not eligible for reason(s) other than age (e.g. nationality)	-	12	26	12
Don't know how to register	8	5	3	3
More convenient/prefer to be registered at second home	-	2	-	4
Not old enough/not eligible	35	-	5	13
Other	10	8	17	18
Don't know	10	19	*	6

Q15. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the system of registering to vote in Great Britain/Northern Ireland?

READ OUT. REVERSE ORDER. SINGLE CODE.

Base: All

	May 2003	Dec 2005 – Jan 2006	Nov 2006	Dec 2008	Dec 2009	Dec 2010	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very satisfied	26	30	19	43	43	46	38	39
Fairly satisfied	49	48	56	39	39	40	41	37
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9	10	14	9	10	8	13	15
Fairly dissatisfied	7	6	3	4	3	3	2	3
Very dissatisfied	4	1	2	2	2	1	2	2
Don't know / no opinion	4	7	7	3	3	2	4	3
Satisfied	75	77	75	82	82	85	79	76
Dissatisfied	11	6	5	5	5	5	4	5

¹ Minor wording and answer category changes from 2008 to 2009 and changes to wording of the question asking where respondents are registered to vote from 2009 to 2011. Note that comparison with previous years should be viewed as indicative rather than statistically significant due to a different approach.

Q16. Why are you dissatisfied with the system of registering to vote in Great Britain/Northern Ireland?

PROBE FULLY. DO NOT READ OUT LIST. MULTICODE.

Base: All those dissatisfied with the system of registering to vote (55)

	%
Difficult / Confusing	35
I don't know how to register to vote	8
It is too confusing / I don't understand the system	14
It is not easy / they could make it easier	17
They do not promote / advertise where / when to register	6
It is Inconvenient	30
It is cumbersome / takes too long	6
You should be able to register to vote over the telephone	10
You should be able to register to vote online	23
Mistakes / Problems	11
The post is unreliable	9
The council makes mistakes with my personal details	2
Not Secure	7
The system of registering to vote is open to fraud and abuse	7
Other	35
There should be more limitations on who can vote	5
There is no point voting / voting makes no difference	10
I do not know where I can get information about the process of registering to vote	6
Other answer	14
Don't know	7

Q17a. As you may know, forms are sent out to households every year to keep the electoral register up to date. This form requires someone to provide or confirm the names of all people living in the household who are eligible to vote. Did you or your household receive a form this year?

SINGLE CODE

Base: All in GB (998)

	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%
Yes	91	89
No	5	6
Don't know / can't remember if received the form	4	5

Q17b. PROBE IF YES: And did you, or someone else in your household, provide or confirm your details?

MULTICODE OK FOR 1 & 2.

Base: All in GB who remember receiving a form (921)

	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%
Yes – me	74	78
Yes – someone else in household	22	19
Yes – but no-one completed/confirmed	2	1
Yes - Don't know / can't remember who filled in	5	7

Q18. Thinking about the system of registering to vote in Great Britain / Northern Ireland, how confident are you that...

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE. RANDOMISE.

Base: All

Q18_1) ...in general, voters' personal details are held securely?			
	2010	2011	2012
	%	%	%
Very confident	15	16	20
Fairly confident	54	52	47
Not very confident	20	21	21
Not at all confident	7	8	9
Don't know	4	4	4
Confident	69	68	66
Not confident	27	29	30

Q18_2)...your own personal details are held securely?			
	2010	2011	2012
	%	%	%
Very confident	16	17	19
Fairly confident	54	50	48
Not very confident	19	21	20
Not at all confident	8	8	9
Don't know	3	4	3
Confident	70	67	67
Not confident	27	29	30

Q18_3) ...the system prevents people who should not be on the register from registering?			
	2010	2011	2012
	%	%	%
Very confident	9	11	12
Fairly confident	47	43	41
Not very confident	23	23	24
Not at all confident	8	8	8
Don't know	12	15	14
Confident	56	54	53
Not confident	31	31	32

Q20. Are you currently registered for a postal vote? That is, registered to send your ballot paper through the post, rather than having to go to a polling station?

SINGLE CODE.

Base: All those who are registered to vote (1162)

	2011	2012
	%	%
Yes, am registered for a postal vote	30	29
No, am not registered for a postal vote	64	65
Don't know	6	6

Q21. Please tell me if you think that the following statements about registering to vote in Great Britain are true or false. If you don't know, just say so and we will move on to the next question.

READ OUT. RANDOMISE ORDER

Base: All in Great Britain (998)

	Q21_1) In order to register to vote everyone must provide their National Insurance Number			Q21_2) In order to register to vote everyone must provide their date of birth		
	2009	2011	2012	2009	2011	2012
	%	%	%	%	%	%
True	35	29	25	77	78	78
False	41	47	53	11	10	12
Don't Know	24	24	22	12	12	10

	Q21_3) In order to register to vote everyone must provide their signature			Q21_4) People can register to vote, or change their voting registration details such as those on where they live, at most points during the year		
	2009	2011	2012	2009	2011	2012
	%	%	%	%	%	%
True	46	45	43	58	58	59
False	40	39	43	13	13	16
Don't Know	14	16	14	29	29	25

Q22. At the moment, when registering to vote in Great Britain, you are not required to provide a National Insurance number or date of birth and only the person filling in the form must provide their signature. Would a requirement to personally provide your (INSERT A-C IN TURN) when you register to vote make you more likely to register, less likely to register or would it make no difference?

RANDOMISE ORDER OF A-C. SINGLE CODE ONLY FOR EACH.

Base: All in Great Britain (998)

Q22_1	National Insurance Number		
	2009	2011	2012
	%	%	%
More likely	6	10	8
Less likely	18	15	17
It would make no difference	74	73	73
Not eligible to vote (SPONTANEOUS ONLY)	*	*	*
Don't know	2	2	2

Q22_2	Date of Birth		
	2009	2011	2012
	%	%	%
More likely	7	10	9
Less likely	5	5	6
It would make no difference	87	85	83
Not eligible to vote (SPONTANEOUS ONLY)	*	*	*

Don't know	1	1	2
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Q22_3	Signature		
	2009	2011	2012
	%	%	%
More likely	9	9	9
Less likely	6	6	5
It would make no difference	84	84	83
Not eligible to vote (SPONTANEOUS ONLY)	*	*	*
Don't know	1	1	2

Q23. Why would a requirement for you to provide your [National Insurance number or date of birth or signature] when registering to vote make you less likely to register?

PROBE FULLY. DO NOT READ OUT. MULTICODE.

Base: All those who answer that providing NI, DOB or Signature would make them less likely to register (197)

	%
Because of fraud/identity fraud	20
Do not like giving personal details out	32
No need/already have enough details	12
Invasion of privacy/should be kept confidential	17
Hard to find National Insurance number	8
May fall into wrong hands	8
May be used for other purposes	5
Too much hassle/time consuming	3
Do not want anyone to know my National Insurance number	2
Security risk	12
Signature could be copied	1
Would prefer to register online/by phone	1
Do not like the idea of a data base	2
Other	13
Don't know	3
None of these	1

Q24. How easy or difficult would it be for you to provide your National Insurance number if you needed it for official purposes?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE. REVERSE ORDER.

Base: All

	2011	2012
	%	%
Very easy	73	75
Fairly easy	22	20
Fairly difficult	2	2
Very difficult	1	2
Don't know	1	1
Easy	95	95
Difficult	3	4

Integrity of Elections

Q25. As you may know, there are many types of fraud such as benefit fraud and insurance fraud. From what you know or have heard, how much do you feel you understand about electoral fraud in the UK, that is fraud relating to elections and voting? Would you say....?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE. REVERSE ORDER.

Base: All

	Dec 2010	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%	%
A lot	10	6	7
A little	41	37	32
Hardly anything at all	28	33	31
Nothing at all	19	23	29
Don't know	2	2	1

Q26. How much of a problem, if at all, do you think electoral fraud, that is fraud relating to elections and voting, is in Great Britain/Northern Ireland? Do you think it is...

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE. REVERSE ORDER.

Base: All

	Dec 2003 ²	Apr 2005 ³	Dec 2005 – Jan 2006	Nov 2006	Jan 2008	Dec 2008	Dec 2009	Dec 2010	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A very big problem	8	17	9	11	7	8	8	10	8	9
A fairly big problem	16	29	22	26	26	25	19	30	29	27
Not a very big problem	40	34	40	36	48	42	44	41	43	39
Not a problem at all	13	8	11	7	11	12	19	9	8	12
Don't know	24	11	19	21	9	13	9	10	13	13
A problem	23	46	31	37	33	34	27	40	36	36
Not a very big problem / not a problem at all	53	42	51	43	58	53	64	50	51	52

² Telephone survey

³ Telephone survey

Q27. And why do you say electoral fraud is a problem?

OPEN ENDED QUESTION.

Base: All who believe electoral fraud is a problem (450)

	%
Fraud does go on / is a problem / is easy	14
Issues of fraud with the postal vote	5
Wrong people / party getting into power	3
Can distort the vote / affect the result	4
People being influenced who to vote for / voting within their communities	4
Dishonest MP's / party's	2
People not being honest / being dishonest	2
Too many people / government doesn't know who is supposed to be here and who isn't	2
Identity / data theft / computer hacking	7
Using names of people who have died	*
Inventing false names and addresses	2
Issues being in a shared occupancy house / added names to forms	1
Immigration issues / illegal immigrants	7
People getting benefits that they are not entitled to	2
People able to vote who are not eligible / entitled / registered	7
People voting multiple times	1
People voting who are not the person on the polling card / should show some form of identity (not just the polling card)	12
Hear about it in the press	5
Word of mouth / what I've heard	1
General lack of trust in the system	2
Don't know	11
Other Answer	22

Q28. Can I just check, have you...?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Base: All

	2011	2012
	%	%
Seen stories in the media about electoral fraud happening in Great Britain/Northern Ireland	36	29
Heard from someone you know about electoral fraud happening	7	9
Had firsthand experience of seeing electoral fraud happen	2	2
None of these	58	63
Don't know	1	1

Q30. Can I just check, what was the electoral fraud that you had firsthand experience of?

OPEN ENDED QUESTION.

Base: All who have had firsthand experience of seeing electoral fraud happen (23 – small base. See cross-tabulations for further information).

Q31. In general, when it comes to being safe from fraud or abuse, would you say that [INSERT: a, b and c] is very safe, fairly safe, neither safe nor unsafe, fairly unsafe or very unsafe.

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE EACH. REVERSE ORDER OF SCALE.

Base: All

Q31_1) Voting at a polling station

	Dec 2005 – Jan 2006	Nov 2006	Jan 2008	Dec 2008	Dec 2009	Dec 2010	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very safe	37	29	30	33	38	40	43	41
Fairly safe	46	49	51	50	48	46	43	44
Neither safe nor unsafe	9	10	10	9	8	5	4	4
Fairly unsafe	2	4	4	5	3	4	6	6
Very unsafe	*	1	1	*	1	2	2	3
Don't know	5	7	3	2	2	3	2	2
Safe	83	78	82	83	87	85	86	85
Unsafe	2	5	5	6	4	7	7	9

Q31_2) Voting by post

	Apr 2005 ⁴	Dec 2005 – Jan 2006	Nov 2006	Jan 2008	Dec 2008	Dec 2009	Dec 2010	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very safe	6	8	5	8	8	10	10	10	13
Fairly safe	30	35	33	34	32	36	43	46	40
Neither safe nor unsafe	14	16	17	16	15	14	11	8	8
Fairly unsafe	27	26	25	29	29	25	19	24	23
Very unsafe	19	7	9	9	11	11	9	8	9
Don't know	4	9	10	5	5	5	8	4	6
Safe	36	42	38	42	40	46	53	56	53
Unsafe	46	33	34	37	40	36	28	32	33

⁴ Telephone survey

Q31_3) Registering to vote

	Dec 2010	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%	%
Very safe	22	23	23
Fairly safe	57	58	55
Neither safe nor unsafe	10	6	7
Fairly unsafe	7	8	8
Very unsafe	2	2	3
Don't know	3	4	3
Safe	79	80	78
Unsafe	9	10	11

Party Finance

Q32a. I am now going to talk about political party finance, that is, how parties raise and spend money for campaigning and other activities.

How confident, if at all, are you that when a political party or one of its members is caught breaking the rules of political party finance, the authorities will take appropriate action? Are you...⁵

READ OUT. REVERSE ORDER. SINGLE CODE.

Base: All in sample group 1 (592)

	Dec 2008	Dec 2009	Dec 2010	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%	%	%	%
Very confident	7	7	7	8	6
Fairly confident	33	25	30	30	29
Not very confident	39	39	38	37	35
Not at all confident	21	30	23	22	28
Don't Know	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	2
Confident	41	31	37	39	36
Not confident	59	69	61	59	63

Q32b. I am now going to talk about political party finance, that is, how parties raise and spend money for campaigning and other activities.

At present there are rules that mean political parties have to be open about where they get their money from and how they spend it.

How confident, if at all, are you that if a political party is caught breaking these rules, the authorities will take appropriate action? Are you...

READ OUT. REVERSE ORDER. SINGLE CODE.

Base: All in sample group 2 (608)

⁵ Q32a has been asked since 2008. There was concern respondents may be interpreting the question as referring to inappropriate financial activity unrelated to party finance, such as expense claims. To test this Q31b was to make the link with party finance more explicit. Both Q31a and Q31b were asked of half the sample, with respondents allocated at random to the two groups.

	Dec 2012
	%
Very confident	8
Fairly confident	31
Not very confident	34
Not at all confident	24
Don't Know	3
Confident	39
Not confident	58

Q33_1. And if the rules on political party finance were broken, do you think information is made available about what actions were taken by the authorities?
OPEN ENDED QUESTION

Base: All

	Dec 2012
	%
Yes	43
No	40
Don't Know	18

Q33_2. And where would you go for this information?

OPEN ENDED QUESTION

Base: All who expressed an opinion on where they would go for information

	Dec 2012
	%
It should be made available	12
Local MP / party	5
Government website	4
Government offices / departments	1
Local authority / council offices / town hall	9
Police / police station	2
Electoral office	1
Local library	5
Freedom of Information Act	2
Internet	30
Media (TV news/newspaper/radio news)	53
Other	14

Q34. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

READ OUT. REVERSE ORDER OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE.

Base: All

a) There is more information available to the public now than in the recent past about how political parties are funded and spend their money.

	Dec 2008	Dec 2009	Dec 2010	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	20	25	23	16	15
Tend to agree	42	40	46	42	43
Neither agree nor disagree	14	13	10	15	20
Tend to disagree	12	10	10	14	10
Strongly disagree	7	8	8	7	8
Don't know	5	5	4	6	4
Agree	63	65	69	58	58
Disagree	19	17	18	21	18

b) The spending of political parties and candidates at UK elections is open and transparent.

	Jan 2006	Dec 2010	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	3	8	7	6
Tend to agree	22	29	25	25
Neither agree nor disagree	20	17	22	26
Tend to disagree	29	24	26	24
Strongly disagree	13	17	14	13
Don't know	13	5	7	5
Agree	25	37	32	31
Disagree	42	40	39	38

c) The funding of political parties in the UK is open and transparent.

	Jan 2006	Dec 2010	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	3	7	6	6
Tend to agree	23	27	21	22
Neither agree nor disagree	18	15	21	22
Tend to disagree	32	28	30	26
Strongly disagree	11	18	16	18
Don't know	12	5	6	6
Agree	26	34	27	28
Disagree	43	46	46	44

Q35. In your opinion, should information about who donates money to political parties in Northern Ireland be made available to the public or kept confidential, or do you not mind either way?

SINGLE CODE.

Base: All those in Northern Ireland (202)

	Dec 2008	Dec 2011	Dec 2012
	%	%	%
Made available	59	62	62
Kept confidential	8	4	7
Do you not mind either way	32	33	31
Don't know	*	1	*

Q36. And can I just check, are you...?

RANDOMISE ORDER. MULTICODE.

Base: All

	Dec 2012
	%
A British citizen or citizen of the Republic of Ireland	93
A citizen of a European Union country	2
A citizen of a British Commonwealth country	3
A citizen of any other country	2
Don't know	*