



# Research Report

## Winter Tracking Research 2019: Data Toplines and Key Findings

Prepared for: Electoral Commission

Prepared by: BMG Research

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**Prepared for: Electoral Commission**

**Prepared by: Vicky Clarke, Research Director & Robert Struthers, Senior Research Executive**

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## 1 Research Background & Technical Note

The Electoral Commission is an independent public body established under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. The Electoral Commission's aim is to ensure integrity and public confidence in the democratic process, as well as regulate party and election finance, and set standards for well-run elections.

Since 2004, the Electoral Commission has commissioned an annual tracking study, measuring public attitudes in the UK towards elections and the voting process.

The Electoral Commission commissioned BMG to conduct the latest wave of the Winter Tracker. BMG conducted 1,731 online interviews with representative samples of electors - that is adults aged 16+ in Scotland (reflecting the voting age in Scotland) and 18+ in the rest of the UK, eligible to vote at general or local government elections. The samples were drawn from online panels managed by Toluna, CINT, Made in Surveys & Viga.

Fieldwork ran from 14<sup>th</sup> January to 1st February 2019.

Quotas were set on: age, gender, social grade, ethnicity, and Government Office Region (England Only) to ensure representativeness of the UK adult population (16+ in Scotland, 18+ in the rest of the UK). Quotas were calculated and set at a country level (England, Scotland, Wales, & Northern Ireland).

Boost samples were targeted for each of the devolved nations, with an aim of 200 responses to allow more robust analysis. The final number of completes achieved in each nation is as follows:

Country	Unweighted Base
England	1,122
Scotland	208
Wales	200
Northern Ireland	201

Weights were applied at the analysis stage to re-balance the impact of these boosts, and to correct for any additional demographic differences between the interviewed sample and known population profiles taken from the census population data.

Weights were applied at a country level (England, Scotland, Wales, & Northern Ireland). Targets were as follows:

- Age
- Gender
- Social Grade
- Ethnicity
- Government Office Region (within England)

The weighted and unweighted sample profiles are as follows:

Country	Unweighted base	Weighted base
East of England	109	163
East Midlands	96	127
London	175	231
North East	54	72
North West	139	193
South East	202	241
South West	111	150
West Midlands	116	154
Yorkshire and The Humber	120	145
Scotland	208	155
Wales	200	58
Northern Ireland	201	44

Age	Unweighted base	Weighted base
18-24	160	180
25-34	268	316
35-44	288	287
45-54	310	301
55-64	307	275
65+	398	372

Gender	Unweighted base	Weighted base
Male	777	842
Female	948	882

Ethnicity	Unweighted base	Weighted base
White	1505	1509
BAME	212	196

Social Grade	Unweighted base	Weighted base
ABC1	1045	913
C2DE	686	818

This wave is the second successive wave to use an online methodology, following its introduction last year. Prior to this, between 2008 and 2016, interviews were conducted by telephone, and prior to this fieldwork was conducted face-to-face.

We should be cautious when comparing results from this wave with data from waves conducted online or by telephone as changes could be explained by mode effects rather than ‘genuine’ changes in the distribution of responses. More specifically, the online self-completion methodology means ‘Don’t know’ options are readily available to respondents, as opposed to telephone or face-to-face interviewing where interviewers do not usually read out the ‘Don’t know’ option and only select it if respondents specifically say they do not know.

Additionally, not having an interviewer asking questions can also impact on results by eliminating social desirability whereby respondents answer questions in a manner that will be viewed favourably by others and under-report behaviour they may consider "bad" or undesirable.

Trend data from previous waves have been included in the Topline Results and are referenced in the Key Findings sections below. Results for 2019 which are discussed as representing an increase or a decrease as compared to 2018 are done so in cases where these changes are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. The topline figures are sometimes for GB only rather than the UK, with other questions asked only to respondents who reside in Northern Ireland. It is also worth noting that some questions have been modified and some questions are new additions for 2019 (these have been noted as such).

In May 2019, local elections are being held in all local authorities in Northern Ireland and 249 local authorities in England. 10 local authorities are taking part in the voter ID pilot during the local government elections. Electors in Braintree, Broxtowe, Craven, Derby, Mid Sussex, North Kesteven, North West Leicestershire, Pendle, Watford and Woking will be required to show some form of ID before being able to vote in polling stations. The forms of ID required will vary by local authority, with some requiring poll cards, some photo identification and others will accept a mix of photo and non-photo. Electors in Watford and Woking were also required to show ID to vote in polling stations in the local elections in May 2018.

While the focus of the Winter Tracker is not related to the ID pilot it is worth noting that 28 respondents have been identified as living in these local authorities. They will be required to show some form of identification before voting in polling stations at the May 2019 local elections.

## 2 Key Findings

### 2.1 Voting

- Around seven in ten electors (69%) are confident that elections are well run in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, while just under 3 in 10 (28%) express a lack of confidence. This is consistent with results seen in 2018 (71% confident, 26% not confident).
- Attitudes towards voting in General Elections have remained stable since 2017, with three-quarters saying that they always vote (73% v 74% in 2018). 16% say that they sometimes vote (v 17% in 2017).
- Around two-thirds of electors say they always vote in local government elections (62%) consistent with 2018 (60%). A quarter say they sometimes vote (24%), slightly lower than in 2018 (28%).
- Electors were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with the process of voting at elections. Overall satisfaction remains unchanged since 2018, with 76% saying they are satisfied. The proportion that are dissatisfied also remains unchanged (17% v 18% in 2018).
- When asked what would increase their satisfaction with the process of voting at elections in your country, the most commonly selected options are voting online (25%), increased security against electoral fraud (20%), and more information on the parties and their policies (17%). Slightly fewer say that a proportional voting system would increase their satisfaction (16% v 20% in 2018).
- The vast majority of electors say they are confident they know how to cast their vote (89%), consistent with 2018 (92%)
- Elector's knowledge levels with respect to voting laws were tested. This was the second time this battery of questions has been asked following their introduction in 2018. Respondents were presented with four statements about voting and asked if they think each is true or false:
  - As was the case in 2018, around seven in ten electors correctly stated that one can register to vote online (69% v 72%)
  - Around three in ten correctly stated you are at risk of getting a fine if you don't register to vote (31%). This represents a slight increase on 2018 (27%)
  - Half of all electors (52%) incorrectly believe they have to take their polling cards to the polling station in order to vote, consistent with last year's findings (49%).
  - 37% incorrectly believe they have to take an ID to the polling station in order to vote. This is again consistent with results in 2018 (34%).



- Respondents were asked about which elections they knew were definitely taking place where they live. The proportion of electors saying they are unsure what elections are definitely taking place this year remains consistent at 41% (v 44% in 2018). Encouragingly, significantly more state that local elections are taking place who live in those areas that are holding local elections on 2<sup>nd</sup> May this year (40%) when compared to those living in areas that are not (25%).
- Of those living in areas holding local elections this year, as many electors say they are likely to vote this year as did so in 2018. A combined 77% said they are either very or somewhat likely to vote (v 78% in 2018).
- Respondents were asked about their political activity in the previous 12 months. Half of all electors say they have not engaged in any political activity in the previous 12 months (53%), which is stable relative to 2018 (also 53%). The most common activity reported was signing a petition on the internet (33%), with a further 10% saying they have signed a non-online petition. Around one in ten say they had contacted a politician, government or local government official (13%) and bought or refused to buy products for political or ethical reasons (11%). All proportions are consistent with 2018, with no significant differences.

## 2.2 Registration

- In line with earlier survey waves, an overwhelming majority say they are confident that they know about how to go about registering to vote (90% v 90% in 2018). While overall levels of confidence have remained stable since 2009, as we saw in 2018, the proportion saying they are very confident remains lower than the levels between 2010 and 2016, where upwards of 60% reported feeling very confident. In 2019, a slim majority report to be very confident (54%), with around one in three fairly confident (36%), figures which are consistent with 2018 (56% very confident, 34% fairly confident). This difference is likely explained, at least in part, by the change in data collection mode between 2016 and 2018/19, with responses in the telephone administered surveys more likely to be influenced by social desirability effects.
- Consistent with 2018, most electors say they are registered to vote at their current address (91% v 92% in 2018), with a small minority registered at another address (4% v 4% in 2018). Unsurprisingly, young people are more likely to report being registered at another address, with 13% of those aged between 18 and 24 and 7% of those aged 25 and 34 saying so. This compares to just 1% of those aged 55 and over.
- Overall confidence in knowing how to register to vote is in line with previous years (90% expressed some confidence v 90% in 2018, 94% in 2016 and 90% in 2015), with the proportion saying they are very confident (54%) also unchanged on last year (56%).
- Overall, 83% are satisfied with the system of registering to vote in their country, similar to the proportion in 2018 (85%). At just 69%, satisfaction is significantly lower in Northern Ireland than it is in England, Scotland and Wales, where at least four in five are satisfied.
- Electors were asked about possible measures that could increase their satisfaction with the system of registering to vote. As was the case in 2018, the most popular

change continues to be automatic registration when people turn 18 (16 in Scotland), with one in four stating this preference (26% v 26% in 2018). Being able to check online if you were registered or not and having your registration automatically update when you move house were the second and third most popular options, the choice of 23% and 16% respectively.

- There has been a slight decrease in the numbers stating they are confident that their personal details are held securely. 72% say they are confident their personal details are being held securely, which compares to 76% in 2018. Whilst this decrease is fairly small, it is worth noting that this is the first time confidence has declined since 2011.
- Around four in ten state they are registered for a postal vote (39%), identical to the share that reported being registered in 2018.

### 2.3 Electoral Integrity

- Electors were presented with several items relating to elections and were asked to what extent each of these items were a problem. Figures remain consistent with 2018, with changes in the proportions identifying each problem as significant no greater than three percentage points. The item that most identify as a serious problem is bias in the media (32%), followed by low voter turnout at elections (29%) and inadequate regulation of political activity on social media (19%).
- There has been a small increase in the number saying they feel voting in general is safe from fraud and abuse. 88% say they believe so, up from 84% in 2018. Fewer feel voting is safe from fraud and abuse in Northern Ireland 81% than do in England (88%), Scotland (90%) and Wales (85%).
- There continues to be a gulf between those stating voting at a polling station is safe from fraud and abuse compared to postal voting. Nine in ten say that voting at a polling station is safe (90%), compared to seven in ten for postal voting (68%). Indeed, the proportion saying so for voting by post has declined slightly from 73% in 2018.
- Attitudes towards electoral fraud were explored in greater depth. There has been an increase in numbers stating that they would report electoral fraud taking place if they saw it happening. 77% agreed with the statement this year, up from 71% in 2018. Otherwise, attitudes remain fairly stable. Two in five say there could be enough electoral fraud in some areas to affect the election result (40%), with 30% of the view that it would be easy to get away with electoral fraud, and 24% stating that elections have been affected by fraud.
- Around one in ten (11%) electors agree that electoral fraud is very common in their area, and the same proportion (11%) claim to have witnessed electoral fraud being committed in their local area. 15% say they have heard of electoral fraud occurring in their area, and 15% say there have been times when they were made to feel that they didn't have a choice about who to vote for because of people they knew.
- Electors in Northern Ireland are more likely to state that elections in their country have been affected by electoral fraud. Around a third (36%) of respondents in Northern Ireland say so, which compares to 23% in England, 23% in Scotland, and 29% in Wales.

- Respondents were asked which of a series of potential measures would be most effective in preventing electoral fraud taking place in the UK<sup>1</sup>. The top choice continues to be a requirement to show photographic ID at the polling station (35%), followed by stopping political parties, candidates, canvassers and campaigners from handling postal vote applications and postal ballot papers (13%). Fewer selected non-photographic ID as effective (10%).

## 2.4 Party finance

- Overall levels of self-reported knowledge about how parties are funded in order to fight elections has dropped and are now at their lowest levels since the question was first asked in 2013. 35% of electors say they have at least some knowledge of party finance, which compares to 40% in 2018 and 47% in 2016 (a historic high).
- There has been a fall in the proportion agreeing that the spending and funding of political parties and candidates and other campaigning organisations at elections is open and transparent (19% v 24% in 2018). This is again the lowest level of agreement since the question started being tracked in 2015. Similarly, there has been a seven percentage point drop in agreement that the authorities would take appropriate action if a party or campaigner is caught breaking the rules (51% v 57% in 2018), and a ten-percentage point decrease in the proportion agreeing they could easily find out how much political parties, candidates and other organisations spent on campaigning and how they were funded (22% v 32% in 2018).
- Electors' knowledge of party funding was investigated by asking them where information on party funding could be found. One in five (20%) correctly think information is found on the Electoral Commission website (v 19% in 2018), with similar numbers believing no information is available to the public (17%). The proportion of electors saying they do not know continues to increase year on year, now at 47% (which compares to 22% in 2015, 33% in 2016, and 43% in 2018).
- Electors were asked to indicate on a 0 to 10 scale the degree to which they think information is open and transparent, with 0 being not transparent at all, and 10 being fully transparent<sup>2</sup>. Consistent with findings reported above, few report feeling that the information on these issues is fully transparent. Just 8% selected 9 or 10 on the scale. Around a third (36%) selected scores of less than 5.
- As laws on the publication of information on party finance currently differ in Northern Ireland from the rest of Great Britain, Electors in Northern Ireland were asked whether they think information about who donates money to political parties should be made public or kept confidential. Whilst a majority still feel that the information should be kept confidential, there has been a fall in the proportion of electors saying so (58% v 72%

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<sup>1</sup> This year two additional measures were added to the list presented to respondents: "People being required to show some form of non-photographic identification at their polling station"; and "Restricting activities of political parties, candidates, canvassers and campaigners around polling stations on polling day". These additions likely explain changes in responses on the existing items between 2018 and 2019.

<sup>2</sup>This was the first year that this question was asked in the Winter Tracker survey.

in 2018).<sup>3</sup> However, the fall is not explained by an increase in the proportion stating that these details should be kept confidential, but rather by an increase in the share saying they don't mind (21% v 14% in 2018), as well as the inclusion of a don't know code (selected by 5%)<sup>4</sup>. It is also worth noting that, to reflect legislative changes introduced shortly after the 2018 tracking wave, the following introductory text was added the question in 2019: *"In Northern Ireland, details of who has made donations to political parties since July 2017 is available to the public."* It is possible the decrease in numbers stating that information should be made public is explained either because of changes to the question wording, or that appetite for information to be published going back over the last five years has reduced following recent legislative changes permitting donations since July 2017 to be published, or a combination of the two.

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<sup>3</sup> Whilst this decrease is statistically significant, the lower sample size in Northern Ireland means changes should still be treated with a degree of caution. Readers should also note that

<sup>4</sup> Whilst a don't know code was included in the previous CATI waves between 2008 and 2016 (although not necessarily prompted), a don't know code was not included in the 2018 wave.

## 3 Topline Findings

### 3.1 Notation

Where results do not add up to 100%, this is due to rounding.

**A dash (-)** indicates no respondent selected that answer. **An asterisk (\*)** indicates a value of less than one half of one percent, but not zero. NA indicates an answer was not available in a particular region or in a particular survey wave.

Results for 2019 which are discussed as representing an increase or a decrease as compared to 2018 are done so in cases where these changes are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

Where a result from 2019 represents a **statistically significant increase** on 2018, figures in the tables will be marked with the following symbol: ↑

Where a result from 2019 represents a **statistically significant decrease** on 2018, figures in the tables will be marked with the following symbol: ↓

### 3.2 Voting

**Q1. In general, how confident, if at all, are you that elections are well run in your country? Are you?**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Dec 2011 %	Dec 2012 %	Dec 2013 %	Dec 2014 %	Dec 2015 %	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
<b>Very confident</b>	29	18	25	20	22	29	27	27
<b>Fairly confident</b>	43	43	49	45	44	47	44	42
<b>Not very confident</b>	16	20	15	20	19	15	20	21
<b>Not at all confident</b>	8	14	9	13	13	7	7	7
<b>Don't know</b>	4	5	1	2	2	2	3	3
<b>NET: Confident</b>	72	61	75	65	66	76	71	69
<b>NET: Not confident</b>	24	34	24	33	32	22	26	28

**Q2. Which of these statements best describes your attitude towards voting at UK General Elections? This applies to elections to the Westminster parliament.**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Nov 2006 %	Dec 2008 %	Dec 2009 %	Dec 2010 %	Dec 2011 %	Dec 2012 %	Dec 2013 %	Dec 2014 %	Dec 2015 %	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
I always vote at General Elections	65	63	59	70	61	55	61	64	68	75	74	73
I sometimes vote at General Elections	19	23	25	18	23	27	22	21	19	16	17	16
I never vote at General Elections	11	9	8	8	10	14	11	11	10	6	5	6
I've not been eligible in the past to vote at a General Election	4	4	8	4	4	4	5	5	3	3	3	4
Don't know	1	*	*	-	1	*	*	-	*	-	1	2
Always/sometimes (Net)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	88
Never/Not eligible	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	10

**Q3. Which of these statements best describes your attitude towards voting at local government elections?**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
I always vote at local government elections	60	62
I sometimes vote at local government elections	28	24 ↓
I never vote at local government elections	9	10
I've not been eligible in the past to vote at local government elections	3	3
Don't know	1	1
Vote (Net)	88	86
Do not vote (Net)	11	13

**Q4. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the actual process of voting at elections in your country**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Nov 2006 %	Dec 2008 %	Dec 2009 %	Dec 2010 %	Dec 2011 %	Dec 2012 %	Dec 2013 %	Dec 2014 %	Dec 2015 %	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
Very satisfied	21	32	31	28	20	25	31	31	28	36	30	33
Fairly satisfied	54	43	43	45	48	39	41	39	40	41	47	44
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	14	9	11	12	19	19	18	19	17	12	NA	NA
Fairly dissatisfied	3	7	8	7	6	9	4	5	7	6	14	12
Very dissatisfied	1	5	4	6	5	7	4	4	6	4	5	6
Don't know/no opinion	7	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	5	7↑
Satisfied	75	75	73	74	67	64	72	70	68	77	77	76
Dissatisfied	5	11	12	13	11	16	7	9	13	10	18	17

**Q5. Which ONE of the following would be the most likely to increase your satisfaction with the process of voting at elections in your country?**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
More information on how the voting process works	5	6	6
More information on the parties and candidates standing and their policies	31	16	17
Increased security against electoral fraud	17	20	20
If it was possible to vote online	17	23	25
A proportional voting system	23	20	16 ↓
Other (Please specify)	2	1	2
Nothing would increase my satisfaction	3	14	14
Don't know	2	NA	NA

**Q6. How confident, if at all, are you that you know how to go about casting your vote at an election?**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Dec 2009 %	Dec 2010 %	Dec 2011 %	Dec 2012 %	Dec 2013 %	Dec 2014 %	Dec 2015 %	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
Very confident	66	69	67	69	68	70	70	81	67	65
Fairly confident	27	25	27	24	25	22	23	16	25	24
Not very confident	5	3	4	4	3	5	5	2	5	7↑
Not at all confident	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	1	1	2
Don't know	1	*	1	1	*	*	*	-	1	2
Confident (Net)	93	94	94	92	93	92	92	97	92	89↓
Not confident (Net)	6	6	6	7	6	8	7	3	7	9↑

**Q7. Please could you tell me whether you think each of the following statements are true or false?**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Jan-Feb 2018 Correct %	Jan-Feb 2019 Correct %
You have to take ID with you to vote at a polling station	34	37
You have to take your polling card with you to the polling station in order to vote	49	52
You are at risk of getting a fine if you don't register to vote	27	31↑
You can register to vote online	72	69
None of these	NA	8



**Q31. People have many reasons for voting and not voting in elections and referendums. Did you personally vote at the UK parliamentary general election in June 2017?**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
Yes	82	79
No	16	17↓
Don't know	2	4↑

**Q32. Which, if any, of the following elections do you know will definitely take place this year where you live?**

Q32. Which, if any, of the following elections do you know will definitely take place this year where you live? Select all that apply	Eng 2018 %	Eng 2019 %	Local authorities holding local elections 2018 %	Local authorities holding local elections 2019 %	Scot 2018 %	Scot 2019 %	Wales 2018 %	Wales 2019 %	NI 2018 %	NI 2019 %
<b>Base: all</b>	930	1122	501	1032	110	208	60*	200	200	201
UK Parliamentary by-election	10	9	12	8↓	17	8↓	7	12	18	7↓
UK Parliamentary general election	13	15↑	14	13	15	10	16	12	17	8↓
Local Government/local/county council election	33	39	38	40	NA	NA	30	31	NA	33
Scottish council elections	NA	NA	NA	NA	32	23	NA	NA	NA	NA
National Assembly for Wales election	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	15	12	NA	NA
Scottish Parliament election	NA	NA	NA	NA	27	16↓	NA	NA	NA	NA
Northern Ireland Assembly election	NA	NA	NA	1	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	23
Mayoral elections	9	7	11	5↓	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
PCC/Police and Crime Commissioner elections	7	5	9	4↓	NA	NA	5	7	NA	NA
European Parliament elections	NA	9	NA	8	NA	15	NA	10	NA	12
None of these	10	6↓	10	6↓	19	18	9	9	31	11↓
Don't know	45	41	38	42	36	41	48	44	39	35

\*Caution, small base size.

**Q33. Local government elections will be taking place in this area on 2 May 2019. How likely are you to vote at these elections?**

<b>2019 Base: All areas holding local government elections (1032)</b>	<b>Jan-Feb 2018 %</b>	<b>Jan-Feb 2019 %</b>
<b>Very likely</b>	53	58↑
<b>Somewhat likely</b>	24	18↓
<b>Somewhat unlikely</b>	8	7
<b>Very unlikely</b>	7	8
<b>Undecided/Don't know</b>	6	8
<b>Likely (Net)</b>	78	77
<b>Unlikely (Net)</b>	16	15

**Q35. Thinking now about how active you are in politics and community affairs, during the last 12 months, have you done any of the following?**

<b>2019 Base: All respondents (1731)</b>	<b>Jan-Feb 2018 %</b>	<b>Jan-Feb 2019 %</b>
<b>Contacted a politician, government or local government official</b>	11	13
<b>Signed a petition on the Internet</b>	33	34
<b>Signed a petition not on the internet</b>	10	10
<b>Done any work on behalf of a political party or action group</b>	4	4
<b>Given any money to a political party, organization or cause</b>	5	5
<b>Taken part in a public demonstration</b>	5	5
<b>Bought - or refused to buy - any products for political or ethical reasons</b>	10	11
<b>Gone on strike or taken industrial action</b>	3	2
<b>None of these</b>	53	53

### 3.3 Registration

**Q8. How confident, if at all, are you that you know how to go about registering to vote**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Dec 2009 %	Dec 2010 %	Dec 2011 %	Dec 2012 %	Dec 2013 %	Dec 2014 %	Dec 2015 %	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
Very confident	55	68	60	63	66	64	63	74	56	54
Fairly confident	34	24	29	28	23	26	28	20	34	36
Not very confident	7	4	6	5	6	6	6	3	6	6
Not at all confident	3	3	3	2	4	4	3	2	2	1
Don't know	1	*	2	2	*	1	*	1	2	3
Confident (Net)	89	92	89	91	89	89	90	94	90	90
Not confident (Net)	10	7	9	8	10	10	9	5	8	7

**Q9. 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?**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Dec 2011 %	Dec 2012 %	Dec 2013 %	Dec 2014 %	Dec 2015 %	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
Yes - where living now	93	91	94	92	93	94	92	91
Yes - another address	3	4	2	3	4	2	4	4
No	2	4	2	3	2	2	2	3
Don't know	3	2	1	2	1	1	2	3
Yes (Summary)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	95

**Q13. 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?**

2019 Base: All registered to vote (1640)	Dec 2011 %	Dec 2012 %	Dec 2013 %	Dec 2014 %	Dec 2015 %	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
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							%	%
<b>Yes, am registered for a postal vote</b>	30	29	36	35	31	33	39	39
<b>No, am not registered for a postal vote</b>	64	65	58	58	67	63	56	54
<b>Don't know</b>	6	6	6	7	2	4	5	7↑

**Q10. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the system of registering to vote in your country?**

<b>2019 Base: All respondents (1731)</b>	<b>Dec 2008 %</b>	<b>Dec 2009 %</b>	<b>Dec 2010 %</b>	<b>Dec 2011 %</b>	<b>Dec 2012 %</b>	<b>Dec 2013 %</b>	<b>Dec 2014 %</b>	<b>Dec 2015 %</b>	<b>Dec 2016 %</b>	<b>Jan-Feb 2018 %</b>	<b>Jan-Feb 2019 %</b>
<b>Very satisfied</b>	43	43	46	38	39	43	38	35	47	44	42
<b>Fairly satisfied</b>	39	39	40	41	37	39	40	40	34	41	41
<b>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</b>	9	10	8	13	15	14	14	17	13	NA	NA
<b>Fairly dissatisfied</b>	4	3	3	2	3	1	4	4	4	5	6
<b>Very dissatisfied</b>	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	3	2	2	1
<b>Don't know/no opinion</b>	3	3	2	4	3	2	2	1	1	8	9
<b>Satisfied (Net)</b>	82	82	85	79	76	82	78	75	80	85	83
<b>Dissatisfied (Net)</b>	5	5	5	4	5	2	6	7	6	7	8

**Q11. Which one of the following would be most likely to increase your satisfaction with the system of registering to vote in Great Britain / Northern Ireland?**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
If it was possible to register to vote on polling day	4	5	5
If you didn't have to provide so much personal information	6	7	5↓
If you could check online if you were registered or not	24	21	23
If your details were automatically updated when you move house	20	17	16
If people were automatically registered when they turn 18 (16 in Scotland)	36	26	26
Other	NA	1%	2
None of these	7	23	23
Don't know	2	NA	NA

**Q12. Thinking about the system of registering to vote in your country, how confident are you that your own personal details are held securely?**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Dec 2010 %	Dec 2011 %	Dec 2012 %	Dec 2013 %	Dec 2014 %	Dec 2015 %	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Feb-March 2018 %
Very confident	16	17	19	19	18	16	20	27	23↓
Fairly confident	54	50	48	49	51	52	53	49	49
Not very confident	19	21	20	21	19	21	17	14	15
Not at all confident	8	8	9	10	10	11	8	4	5
Don't know	3	4	3	3	3	1	2	6	8↑
Confident (Net)	70	67	67	67	69	68	73	76	72↓
Not confident (Net)	27	29	30	30	29	32	25	18	20

### 3.4 Electoral Integrity

**Q14. How much of a problem do you think that each of the following is in Great Britain / Northern Ireland at the moment?**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)		Not a problem 1	2	3	4	Serious problem 5	Don't know
Electoral fraud	Jan-Feb 2018 %	10	19	25	20	16	11
	Jan-Feb 2019 %	8	19	27	19	13↓	14↑
Bias in the media	Jan-Feb 2018 %	5	5	18	31	35	6
	Jan-Feb 2019 %	3↓	6	21↑	30	32	8↑
Low voter turnout at elections	Jan-Feb 2018 %	3	7	19	36	30	5
	Jan-Feb 2019 %	2	6	22↑	33	29	7↑
Barriers to democratic participation for minority groups	Jan-Feb 2018 %	15	15	26	17	10	17
	Jan-Feb 2019 %	13	16	27	16	9	19
Foreign influence on UK election results	Jan-Feb 2018 %	9	15	25	22	16	13
	Jan-Feb 2019 %	6↓	14	25	24	17	15
Inadequate regulation of political activity on social media	Jan-Feb 2018	7	15	22	24	19	13
	Jan-Feb 2019 %	5↓	10↓	25	25	21	14
Intimidation of candidates that run for election	Jan-Feb 2018 %	14	18	25	17	13	13
	Jan-Feb 2019 %	12	22↑	26	16	10↓	14
Inadequate regulation of the money political parties spend on their election campaigns	Jan-Feb 2018 %	5	10	23	29	22	11
	Jan-Feb 2019 %	4	9	27↑	30	19↓	11

**Q15. In general, when it comes to being safe from fraud or abuse, would you say that voting in general is very safe, fairly safe, fairly unsafe or very unsafe.**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
Very safe	18	28	36↑
Fairly safe	55	56	52↓
Neither safe nor unsafe	15	NA	NA
Fairly unsafe	7	9	6↓
Very unsafe	3	2	1
Don't know	2	5	5
Safe (Net)	73	84	88↑
Unsafe (Net)	10	11	7↓

**Q15. In general, when it comes to being safe from fraud or abuse, would you say that voting at a polling station is very safe, fairly safe, fairly unsafe or very unsafe.**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Jan 2008 %	Dec 2008 %	Dec 2009 %	Dec 2010 %	Dec 2011 %	Dec 2012 %	Dec 2013 %	Dec 2014 %	Dec 2015 %	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
Very safe	30	33	38	40	43	41	30	28	31	32	35	41↑
Fairly safe	51	50	48	46	43	44	49	51	48	50	53	49↓
Neither safe nor unsafe	10	9	8	5	4	4	11	12	12	10	NA	NA
Fairly unsafe	4	5	3	4	6	6	7	6	6	4	7	5↓
Very unsafe	1	*	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	1
Don't know	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	4	4
Safe (Net)	82	83	87	85	86	85	79	79	79	82	88	90
Unsafe (Net)	5	6	4	7	7	9	9	8	8	6	8	6↓

**Q15. In general, when it comes to being safe from fraud or abuse, would you say that voting by post is very safe, fairly safe, fairly unsafe or very uns**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Nov 2006 %	Jan 2008 %	Dec 2008 %	Dec 2009 %	Dec 2010 %	Dec 2011 %	Dec 2012 %	Dec 2013 %	Dec 2014 %	Dec 2015 %	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
Very safe	5	8	8	10	10	10	13	16	15	17	14	28	29
Fairly safe	33	34	32	36	43	46	40	39	41	39	43	45	39↓
Neither safe nor unsafe	17	16	15	14	11	8	8	12	13	14	15	NA	NA
Fairly unsafe	25	29	29	25	19	24	23	19	19	19	14	14	17↑
Very unsafe	9	9	11	11	9	8	9	8	9	9	8	5	6
Don't know	10	5	5	5	8	4	6	6	4	2	6	8	10
Safe (Net)	38	42	40	46	53	56	53	55	56	56	57	73	68↓
Unsafe (Net)	34	37	40	36	28	32	33	27	28	28	22	19	22↑

**Q15. In general, when it comes to being safe from fraud or abuse, would you say that registering to vote is very safe, fairly safe, fairly unsafe or very unsafe?**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Dec 2010 %	Dec 2011 %	Dec 2012 %	Dec 2013 %	Dec 2014 %	Dec 2015 %	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
Very safe	22	23	23	25	25	27	28	39	43↑
Fairly safe	57	58	55	55	52	50	52	48	43↓
Neither safe nor unsafe	10	6	7	9	11	13	10	NA	NA
Fairly unsafe	7	8	8	7	6	6	5	6	6
Very unsafe	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	1
Don't know	3	4	3	3	3	1	3	6	7
Safe (Net)	79	80	78	80	78	77	80	88	86
Unsafe (Net)	9	10	11	8	8	9	7	7	8



**Q16. The following questions are about electoral fraud. By electoral fraud we mean offences such as members of the public or candidates or their campaigners:**

- forcing others to vote in a particular way
- stopping others from voting
- casting votes pretending to be someone else, or candidates or their campaigners offering to reward voters for voting for them.<sup>5</sup>

**For each of the following please tell me whether you agree or disagree.**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)		Agree strongly	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Disagree strongly	Don't know	Agree (Net)	Disagree (Net)
<b>There could be enough electoral fraud in some areas to affect the election result</b>									
Dec 2013	%	18	24	19	18	12	9	42	30
Dec 2014	%	17	26	29	18	11	*	43	28
Dec 2015	%	14	31	26	16	11	2	45	27
Dec 2016	%	19	25	17	19	13	6	44	32
Jan-Feb 2018	%	10	28	35	18	9	NA	38	27
Jan-Feb 2019	%	10	30	38	15↓	7↓	NA	40	22↓
<b>It would be easy to get away with electoral fraud in Great Britain/Northern Ireland</b>									
Dec 2013	%	15	22	18	21	16	8	37	37
Dec 2014	%	15	21	27	21	17	*	35	38
Dec 2015	%	12	23	27	24	12	3	34	36
Dec 2016	%	14	19	16	28	16	8	32	44
Jan-Feb 2018	%	9	21	38	21	11	NA	30	32
Jan-Feb 2019	%	8	22	40	22	8↓	NA	30	30
<b>The results of elections in this country have been affected by electoral fraud</b>									
Jan-Feb 2018	%	7	19	38	23	12	NA	26	36
Jan-Feb 2019	%	6	17	44↑	23	9↓	NA	24	32↓
<b>I would know electoral fraud was taking place if it was happening in my area</b>									

<sup>5</sup> Please note: the introduction text was only shown to respondents in 2018 and 2019. Caution is needed when comparing results with previous years.

Jan-Feb 2018	%	6	12	37	29	17	NA	18	45
Jan-Feb 2019	%	4↓	13	30↓	35↑	17	NA	17	53↑
<b>I would know how to report electoral fraud</b>									
Dec 2013	%	14	13	11	17	38	7	27	55
Dec 2014	%	18	15	15	20	32	*	33	52
Dec 2015	%	15	19	12	20	31	3	34	51
Dec 2016	%	17	14	7	22	33	7	31	55
Jan-Feb 2018	%	10	18	26	30	17	NA	28	46
Jan-Feb 2019	%	8	20	23	32	16	NA	28	48
<b>I would report electoral fraud taking place if I saw it happening</b>									
Jan-Feb 2018	%	41	30	20	6	3	NA	71	9
Jan-Feb 2019	%	40	37↑	19	4↓	1↓	NA	77↑	4↓
<b>There are sufficient safeguards in place to prevent electoral fraud</b>									
Dec 2013	%	17	31	20	15	8	8	48	24
Dec 2014	%	19	29	29	13	9	*	48	23
Dec 2015	%	12	28	30	17	10	4	40	27
Dec 2016	%	15	31	20	15	9	10	46	24
Jan-Feb 2018	%	9	30	41	15	5	NA	39	20
Jan-Feb 2019	%	7↓	31	45↑	14	3↓	NA	38	17↓
<b>Electoral fraud is very common where I live</b>									
Dec 2013	%	3	4	21	22	34	16	7	56
Dec 2014	%	3	3	33	22	39	*	6	61
Dec 2015	%	2	5	32	26	30	6	7	55
Dec 2016	%	4	4	18	24	35	7	8	59
Jan-Feb 2018	%	4	9	31	25	31	NA	12	56
Jan-Feb 2019	%	4	7↓	37↑	30↑	22↓	NA	11	51↓

There have been times when I was made to feel that I had little or no choice									
Jan-Feb 2018	%	5	10	16	19	50	NA	15	69
Jan-Feb 2019	%	5	10	15	18	52	NA	15	70
I have personally seen electoral fraud offences being committed in my local area									
Jan-Feb 2018	%	3	10	14	20	53	NA	12	73
Jan-Feb 2019	%	4	6↓	14	18	57↑	NA	11	75
I have heard about electoral fraud offences being committed in my local area									
Jan-Feb 2018	%	6	12	18	22	41	NA	18	64
Jan-Feb 2019	%	6	10	17	22	46↑	NA	15↓	68↑

**Q17. Which one of the following do you think would be most effective in preventing electoral fraud from taking place in the UK?**

2019 Base: All respondents in Great Britain (1531)	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
People being required to show some form of photographic identification at their polling station	52	37	35
People being required to show some form of non-photographic identification at their polling station	NA	NA	10
Stopping postal voting on demand.	4	6	4↓
Stopping political parties, candidates, canvassers and campaigners from handling postal vote applications and postal ballot papers	20	19	13↓
2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
Restricting activities of political parties, candidates, canvassers and campaigners around polling stations on polling day	NA	NA	9
Having independent observers in all polling stations	8	14	9↓

Stopping people voting for others by proxy.	11	13	8↓
Other (specify)	1	1	1
None of these	1	10	10
Don't know	3	0	NA

### 3.5 Party finance

**Q23. Political parties need money to run themselves and fight elections. How much would you say you know about political party finance - that is the way in which parties raise money to pay their staff and fight elections?**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Dec 2013 %	Dec 2014 %	Dec 2015 %	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
A lot	8	10	11	10	8	7
A little	30	34	32	37	32	28↓
Hardly anything	25	27	26	28	34	37
Nothing at all	35	28	30	24	23	23
Don't know	1	*	1	1	3	5↑
A lot/a little (Net)	39	44	43	47	40	35↓
Hardly/nothing at all (Net)	60	55	57	53	57	59

**Q24. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

*The spending and funding of political parties and candidates and other campaigning organisations at elections is open and transparent.*

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Dec 2015 %	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
Agree strongly	7	10	6	5
Tend to agree	18	17	18	15↓
Neither agree nor disagree	27	17	35	39↑
Tend to disagree	28	30	31	31
Disagree strongly	18	21	11	10
Don't know	2	4	NA	NA
Agree (Net)	25	26	24	19↓
Disagree (Net)	46	52	42	42

**Q24. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

*If a political party or another campaigner is caught breaking the rules, the authorities will take appropriate action.*

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Dec 2015 %	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
Agree strongly	25	33	17	12↓
Tend to agree	26	25	40	40
Neither agree nor disagree	14	12	25	29↑
Tend to disagree	21	17	15	15
Disagree strongly	14	11	4	4
Don't know	1	3	NA	NA
Agree (Net)	50	58	57	51↓
Disagree (Net)	34	28	19	19

**Q24. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

*If I wanted to, I could easily find out how much political parties, candidates and other organisations spent on campaigning and how they were funded.*

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
Agree strongly	16	6	5
Tend to agree	24	26	17↓
Neither agree nor disagree	12	31	40↑
Tend to disagree	25	25	28
Disagree strongly	18	12	10
Don't know	5	NA	NA
Agree (Net)	39	32	22↓
Disagree (Net)	44	38	38

**Q25. Which ONE of the following statements about party finance in [Great Britain / Northern Ireland] do you think is true?**

2019 Base: All respondents (1731)	Dec 2014 %	Dec 2015 %	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
Information on the funding of political parties is available on individual political party websites	20	23	20	13	12
There is no information on the funding of political parties available to the public	18	22	19	17	15
Information on the funding of political parties is available on the Electoral Commission's website	14	21	18	19	20
Information on the funding of political parties is available on your local council's website	12	12	10	9	7↓
Don't know	36	22	33	43	47↑

**Q26. In Northern Ireland, details of who has made donations to political parties since July 2017 is available to the public. In your opinion, should information about who donated money to political parties in Northern Ireland going back over the last 5 years be made available to the public or kept confidential, or do you not mind either way?<sup>6</sup>**

2019 Base: All respondents in NI (201)	Dec 2008 %	Dec 2011 %	Dec 2012 %	Dec 2013 %	Dec 2014 %	Dec 2015 %	Dec 2016 %	Jan-Feb 2018 %	Jan-Feb 2019 %
Made available	59	62	62	64	67	68	73	72	58↓
Kept confidential	8	4	7	6	8	6	3	14	15
Do you not mind either way	32	33	31	29	24	25	23	14	21
Don't know	*	1	*	*	2	1	1	NA	5

<sup>6</sup> To reflect legislative changes introduced shortly after the 2018 tracking wave, the following introductory text was added the question in 2019: "In Northern Ireland, details of who has made donations to political parties since July 2017 is available to the public."

**Q25a. Thinking about the funding of political parties and campaigners, how open and transparent do you think information on this is? Please use the scale below where 0 is not transparent at all and 10 is fully transparent.**

<b>2019 Base: All respondents (1731)</b>	<b>Jan-Feb 2019 %</b>
<b>0 - Not transparent at all (0)</b>	9
<b>1 (1)</b>	2
<b>2 (2)</b>	6
<b>3 (3)</b>	9
<b>4 (4)</b>	10
<b>5 (5)</b>	22
<b>6 (6)</b>	12
<b>7 (7)</b>	12
<b>8 (8)</b>	10
<b>9 (9)</b>	3
<b>10 - Fully transparent (10)</b>	5
<b>Summary: Transparent (6-10)</b>	42
<b>Summary: Neutral (5)</b>	22
<b>Summary: Not transparent (0-4)</b>	36

## Appendix: Statement of Terms

### **Compliance with International Standards**

BMG complies with the International Standard for Quality Management Systems requirements (ISO 9001:2015) and the International Standard for Market, opinion and social research service requirements (ISO 20252:2012) and The International Standard for Information Security Management (ISO 27001:2013).

### **Interpretation and publication of results**

The interpretation of the results as reported in this document pertain to the research problem and are supported by the empirical findings of this research project and, where applicable, by other data. These interpretations and recommendations are based on empirical findings and are distinguishable from personal views and opinions.

BMG will not publish any part of these results without the written and informed consent of the client.

### **Ethical practice**

BMG promotes ethical practice in research: We conduct our work responsibly and in light of the legal and moral codes of society.

We have a responsibility to maintain high scientific standards in the methods employed in the collection and dissemination of data, in the impartial assessment and dissemination of findings and in the maintenance of standards commensurate with professional integrity.

We recognise we have a duty of care to all those undertaking and participating in research and strive to protect subjects from undue harm arising as a consequence of their participation in research. This requires that subjects' participation should be as fully informed as possible and no group should be disadvantaged by routinely being excluded from consideration. All adequate steps shall be taken by both agency and client to ensure that the identity of each respondent participating in the research is protected.





With more than 25 years' experience, BMG Research has established a strong reputation for delivering high quality research and consultancy.

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