

IMMIGRATION

Britons Like Labour Proposals, But Tories Have the Edge on Immigration

Most respondents believe illegal immigrants take jobs away from UK workers, and call for their deportation.

[LONDON – Nov. 23, 2009] – A new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found that immigration is clearly in the minds of British voters as the next General Election draws near, and while several proposals developed by the governing Labour Party enjoy support, the public expresses a preference for the Conservatives on this particular file.

In the online survey of a representative sample of 2,006 British adults, 67 per cent of respondents believe immigration is having a negative effect in the United Kingdom.

In addition, 68 per cent of respondents think the number of legal immigrants who are allowed to relocate in the UK should decrease.

Illegal Immigration

A majority of respondents (56%) believe the illegal immigrants in the United Kingdom take jobs away from UK workers, and 57 per cent think these illegal immigrants should be required to leave their jobs and be deported from the UK.

Just 23 per cent of Britons would consent to offering work to these illegal immigrants on a temporary basis, and an even lower proportion (13%) would afford them the opportunity of eventually applying to become UK citizens.

KEY FINDINGS

- **67% believe immigration is having a negative effect in the United Kingdom**
- **68% think the number of legal immigrants who are allowed to relocate in the UK should decrease**
- **57% want illegal immigrants deported from the UK**
- **High support for Labour's immigration proposals...**
- **...but the Conservatives are seen as the best party to deal with immigration**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

On November 17 and November 18, 2009, Angus Reid Strategies conducted an online survey among 2,006 adults who are members of Springboard UK. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 2.2%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current Census data for age, gender, region, social grade and newspaper readership to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of Great Britain.

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Labour's Proposals

On Nov. 12, Prime Minister and Labour leader Gordon Brown delivered a speech on immigration in Ealing. Brown stated that Immigration "is not an issue for fringe parties nor a taboo subject," and outlined new changes to existing policies.

Three-in-five Britons (59%) agree with the Government's proposal to raise the earnings entry threshold for graduate skilled migrants who want to live and work in the UK to £24,000.

Support is noticeably higher for awarding points to probationary citizens who demonstrate a commitment to the UK through volunteering and community service (73%), establishing a points-based test for migrants who want to become probationary citizens (79%), doubling the period for jobs to be advertised first to British workers from two to four weeks (81%), and raising the penalties for employing illegal workers up to £10,000 or two years in prison (87%).

Politics

Despite the fact that most respondents endorse the Government's recent proposals, the level of confidence in Labour as the best party to tackle immigration is particularly low. Only 12 per cent of respondents think Labour is best-suited to deal with this issue, slightly ahead of the Liberal Democrats (8%) and 18 points behind the Conservatives (30%).

Analysis

Gordon Brown's speech on immigration was regarded as the first salvo in the early stages of the electoral campaign. The survey shows that immigration is important for voters, and the level of concern over both legal and illegal immigration is particularly high in Britain at this point. However, although Labour's proposals do enjoy a high level of support, the Conservatives still hold a considerable advantage on this file.

Full tables can be downloaded here:

http://www.visioncritical.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/table_UK_immig.pdf

Full methodology statement can be downloaded here:

http://www.visioncritical.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/2009-11-19_UK_Method.pdf

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Immigration

Next, we'd like to ask you some questions about immigration. All things considered, do you think immigration is having a positive effect or a negative effect in the United Kingdom?

	Region					
	Great Britain	London	South of England	Midlands and Wales	North	Scotland
Positive effect	17%	27%	15%	16%	13%	21%
Negative effect	67%	54%	69%	69%	72%	61%
Not sure	16%	20%	16%	14%	15%	18%

Immigration

From what you have seen, read or heard, do you think the number of legal immigrants who are allowed to relocate in the United Kingdom should increase, remain the same, or decrease?

	Region					
	Great Britain	London	South of England	Midlands and Wales	North	Scotland
Increase	7%	10%	8%	6%	7%	8%
Remain the same	19%	31%	17%	19%	16%	21%
Decrease	68%	53%	71%	72%	72%	63%
Not sure	5%	6%	5%	3%	5%	7%

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Immigration

There are between 500,000 and 700,000 illegal immigrants in the United Kingdom right now. Which of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?

	Region					
	Great Britain	London	South of England	Midlands and Wales	North	Scotland
The illegal immigrants in the United Kingdom take jobs away from UK workers	56%	48%	55%	62%	60%	53%
The illegal immigrants in the United Kingdom are employed in jobs that UK workers do not want	31%	38%	31%	29%	28%	32%
Not sure	13%	14%	14%	9%	12%	15%

Immigration

Which of these statements comes closer to your own point of view on the status of illegal immigrants who are currently working in the United Kingdom?

	Region					
	Great Britain	London	South of England	Midlands and Wales	North	Scotland
They should be allowed to stay in the UK, and eventually apply for citizenship	13%	18%	9%	14%	10%	24%
They should be allowed to work in the UK on a temporary basis, but they should not become citizens	23%	27%	23%	25%	18%	22%
They should be required to leave their jobs and be deported from the UK	57%	46%	60%	55%	63%	45%
Not sure	8%	8%	8%	7%	8%	10%

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Immigration

As you may know, the Government has proposed certain changes to immigration procedures. Do you support or oppose each one of these measures?

	Support	Oppose	Not sure
Raising the penalties for employing illegal workers up to £10,000 or two years in prison	87%	8%	5%
Doubling the period for jobs to be advertised first to British workers from two to four weeks	81%	12%	6%
Establishing a points-based test for migrants who want to become probationary citizens	79%	14%	7%
Awarding points to probationary citizens who demonstrate a commitment to the UK through volunteering and community service	73%	18%	9%
Raising the earnings entry threshold for graduate skilled migrants who want to live and work in the UK to £24,000	59%	25%	16%

Immigration

Which party do you have more confidence in to tackle the issue of immigration?

	Region					
	Great Britain	London	South of England	Midlands and Wales	North	Scotland
Conservative	30%	33%	34%	30%	24%	26%
Labour	12%	13%	7%	11%	15%	22%
Liberal Democrat	8%	7%	9%	9%	8%	5%
Other	12%	8%	11%	12%	14%	11%
Not sure	38%	39%	39%	39%	38%	37%

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Angus Reid Public Opinion is the public affairs practice of Vision Critical—a global research and technology company specializing in custom online panels, private communities, and innovative online methods. Vision Critical is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Strategies team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995

Vision Critical is now one of the largest market research enterprises in the world. In addition to its five offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, London, Paris and Sydney. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.

Angus Reid Public Opinion polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum (www.angusreidforum.com), Springboard America (www.springboardamerica.com) and Springboard UK (www.springboarduk.com) online panels, which are carefully recruited to ensure representation across all demographic and psychographic segments of these populations. Panel members pass through rigorous screening and a double opt-in process ensuring highly motivated and responsive members. These premier online survey platforms present respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses. Each survey is actively sampled and weighted to model that characteristics of the universe required and employs the latest in quality control techniques to ensure data validity.

Angus Reid, the only public opinion firm to exclusively use online methods to follow the views of the electorate during the 2008 federal campaign, offered the most accurate prediction of the results of Canada's 40th election.

<http://bit.ly/4zxf1S>

Since 2006, Angus Reid has covered eight provincial elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes.

More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at

<http://bit.ly/3z0u1l>

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**For more information, please contact
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

Copies of this poll are available on our website:

<http://www.visioncritical.com/category/global-opinions-and-trends>

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