

## EUROPEAN UNION

# Britons Expect Little Change with New European Union Structure

*More than a third of respondents are “happy” that Tony Blair was bypassed for the position of European President.*

[LONDON – Nov. 30, 2009] – People in Great Britain do not believe the new structure of the European Union (EU) will lead to significant changes, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

On Nov. 19, Belgian Prime Minister Herman Van Rompuy was chosen as the first President of the European Council, and British Labour politician Catherine Ashton was selected as the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 2,019 British adults, 54 per cent of respondents believe the United Kingdom’s relationship with the EU will be the same as it was before the election of Van Rompuy and Ashton.

Just 10 per cent of Britons expect ties to be better this time around, while 15 per cent foresee them becoming worse.

One-in-four Britons (26%) are satisfied with Van Rompuy becoming the new EU President, and about one-third (35%) are happy with Ashton's role as the group's Foreign Minister. However, more than two-in-five respondents are undecided when assessing both politicians.

### KEY FINDINGS

- **38% are happy that Tony Blair did not become the first President of the European Union**
- **26% satisfied with Herman Van Rompuy as President; 35% satisfied with Catherine Ashton as Foreign Minister**
- **54% expect the UK’s relationship with the EU to be the same as before under Van Rompuy and Ashton**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

*From November 25 to November 27, 2009, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 2,019 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 data for age, gender, region, social grade and newspaper readership to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of Great Britain.*

### CONTACT:

Andy Morris, Research Director, London, + 44-203-178-3952, [andy.morris@angus-reid.com](mailto:andy.morris@angus-reid.com)

## **Tony Blair**

For months, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair was mentioned as a possible candidate for the EU presidency. More than a third of respondents (38%) claim to be happy that Blair did not get the job, while 19 per cent say they feel satisfied, but not happy. Less than one-in-four respondents are either dissatisfied (12%) or sad (5%) that Blair was not chosen.

## **Analysis**

Britons are not paying a significant amount of attention to the EU at this point. A large proportion of respondents hold no definite opinions on either Van Rompuy or Ashton, and just one-in-ten believe that the new structure will actually be helpful for the UK.

Blair, no longer a factor in these discussions, did not count with a high level of support. Remarkably, the group of people who are happy to see him "lose" this "election" outnumber his backers by an 8-to-1 margin.

### *Download Full Tables*

[http://www.visioncritical.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/table\\_eunov.pdf](http://www.visioncritical.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/table_eunov.pdf)

### *Download Full Methodology Statement*

[http://www.visioncritical.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/2009-11-25\\_UK\\_Method.pdf](http://www.visioncritical.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/2009-11-25_UK_Method.pdf)

---

### **CONTACT:**

Andy Morris, Research Director, London, + 44-203-178-3952, [andy.morris@angus-reid.com](mailto:andy.morris@angus-reid.com)

### European Union

As you may know, Tony Blair will not become the first President of the European Union. How do you personally feel about this?

	Region					
	Great Britain	London	South of England	Midlands and Wales	North	Scotland
Happy	38%	39%	41%	37%	33%	42%
Satisfied, but not happy	19%	17%	20%	18%	21%	16%
Dissatisfied, but not sad	12%	16%	9%	13%	14%	11%
Sad	5%	6%	4%	4%	5%	2%
None of these	26%	22%	26%	27%	27%	28%

**CONTACT:**

Andy Morris, Research Director, London, + 44-203-178-3952, [andy.morris@angus-reid.com](mailto:andy.morris@angus-reid.com)

### European Union

Belgian Prime Minister Herman Van Rompuy has been chosen as the first President of the European Union. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with this choice?

	Region					
	Great Britain	London	South of England	Midlands and Wales	North	Scotland
Very satisfied	3%	3%	3%	4%	2%	4%
Moderately satisfied	23%	21%	23%	22%	24%	29%
Moderately dissatisfied	13%	15%	15%	13%	13%	5%
Very dissatisfied	12%	13%	11%	14%	14%	6%
Not sure	48%	49%	48%	46%	46%	56%

### European Union

British Labour politician Catherine Ashton has been chosen as the first Foreign Minister of the European Union. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with this choice?

	Region					
	Great Britain	London	South of England	Midlands and Wales	North	Scotland
Very satisfied	6%	9%	5%	4%	7%	4%
Moderately satisfied	29%	27%	29%	29%	30%	30%
Moderately dissatisfied	10%	10%	11%	10%	11%	6%
Very dissatisfied	12%	11%	14%	12%	11%	7%
Not sure	43%	43%	42%	44%	40%	54%

**CONTACT:**

Andy Morris, Research Director, London, + 44-203-178-3952, [andy.morris@angus-reid.com](mailto:andy.morris@angus-reid.com)

### European Union

As a result of the election of Van Rompuy and Ashton, do you expect the UK's relationship with the EU to be better, the same, or worse than before?

	Region					
	Great Britain	London	South of England	Midlands and Wales	North	Scotland
Better	10%	15%	7%	9%	10%	13%
The same	54%	49%	55%	55%	53%	56%
Worse	15%	12%	16%	15%	15%	11%
Not sure	22%	23%	21%	22%	22%	20%

**CONTACT:**

Andy Morris, Research Director, London, + 44-203-178-3952, [andy.morris@angus-reid.com](mailto:andy.morris@angus-reid.com)

*Angus Reid Public Opinion is a 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](http://www.angusreidforum.com)), Springboard America ([www.springboardamerica.com](http://www.springboardamerica.com)) and Springboard UK ([www.springboarduk.com](http://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/3z0u11>

- 30 -

**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>**

---

**CONTACT:**

Andy Morris, Research Director, London, + 44-203-178-3952, [andy.morris@angus-reid.com](mailto:andy.morris@angus-reid.com)