

## THE BUDGET

# Majority of Britons Disapprove of Government's Pre-Election Budget

*David Cameron leads Gordon Brown on four key issues related to economic management.*

[LONDON – Mar. 26, 2010] – The pre-election budget presented by the UK Government did not please a large proportion of the population, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 2,020 British adults, more than half of respondents (54%) disapprove of the budget, while only three-in-ten (30%) approve of it.

### The Deficit

The predicted deficit of £167 billion at the end of the current fiscal year represents "a severe impediment" for 57 per cent of respondents.

One-in-four Britons (24%) believe the deficit outlined in the budget is "a manageable situation" for the future.

### Effect of the Budget

Only 22 per cent of respondents are "very confident" or "moderately confident" that the budget will promote economic recovery in the UK, while 71 per cent are "not too confident" or "not confident at all" that this will be the case.

Britons are clearly concerned about the effect the budget will have on their household. Only 10 per cent expect a positive impact, while a majority (57%) foresee a negative impact. Conversely, one third of respondents (32%) believe the budget will be positive for the UK, and 36 per cent think it will be negative.

### KEY FINDINGS

- **54% disapprove of the most recent Government budget; 30% approve of it**
- **32% expect the budget to have a positive impact on the UK; only 10% foresee a positive impact on their household**
- **David Cameron leads Gordon Brown as the best person to boost the economy, minimise the deficit and deal with taxes**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

*From March 25 to March 26, 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 2,020 randomly selected British adults who are Springboard UK panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 2.2%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region data to ensure samples representative of the entire adult population of Great Britain. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.*

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## **Brown and Cameron: Head-to-Head**

Conservative leader David Cameron has a clear edge over Prime Minister and Labour leader Gordon Brown on several issues. While 39 per cent of respondents express confidence in Cameron to find the right solutions for the UK economy, only 28 per cent feel the same way about Brown. In addition, 45 per cent of respondents think the Tory leader is sensitive to the needs of the country, while just 33 per cent concur when it comes to Brown.

At least half of respondents believe the two main party leaders are more interested in doing what's best for their political career than doing what's best for the UK (Brown 54%, Cameron 51%). When asked about whether the leaders have a clear plan to deal with the economic slowdown, 38 per cent of respondents say Cameron has one, while 30 per cent feel the same way about Brown.

Still, Cameron has one decisive advantage over Brown at this stage. Two-in-five respondents (42%) think the Tory leader has a strong team. Just one-in-four Britons (26%) believe the incumbent prime minister has a strong team.

Respondents were also asked which one of the two leaders they trust more to handle four economic issues. Cameron was supported by about a third of respondents in three of them (Minimising the deficit 34%, Boosting the economy 33%, Dealing with Taxes 32%), while Brown could not reach the 24 per cent mark in any of these issues. On job creation, Cameron holds a six-point lead over Brown (28% to 22%).

## **Analysis**

The budget did not boost provide an immediate boost to Brown's economic credentials. On three key issues related to finance, the former Chancellor of the Exchequer is trailing the opposition leader by at least ten points. Cameron is also regarded as having a stronger team, and being sensitive to the needs of the country as the campaign is set to begin.

The disparity between the expected benefits of the budget is remarkable. At this point, about a third of Britons foresee the spending plan having a positive impact on the country, but just one-in-ten think their household will be better off. This suggests that bread-and-butter issues will take on a more prominent role in the campaign, as the prevalent sentiment at this point is that the budget will not help families.

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### The Budget

Based on what you have seen, read, or heard, do you approve or disapprove of the budget presented by the Government headed by Gordon Brown?

	Region					
	United Kingdom	London	South of England	Midlands and Wales	North	Scotland
Approve	30%	29%	28%	27%	31%	42%
Disapprove	54%	51%	58%	59%	52%	35%
Not sure	16%	20%	14%	14%	17%	23%

### The Budget

The budget predicts a deficit of £167 billion at the end of the current fiscal year. Do you think this budget deficit is a severe impediment for the future, or a manageable situation for the future?

	Region					
	United Kingdom	London	South of England	Midlands and Wales	North	Scotland
A severe impediment	57%	50%	60%	60%	57%	49%
A manageable situation	24%	26%	22%	24%	25%	31%
Not sure	19%	24%	18%	17%	18%	20%

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### The Budget

Now we'd like to ask you some questions about Gordon Brown. Do you agree or disagree with each of these statements?

	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
<b>Gordon Brown has a clear plan to deal with the economic slowdown</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Right now, Gordon Brown is more interested in his political career than in doing what's best for the UK</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>I have confidence in Gordon Brown to find the right solutions for the UK economy</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Gordon Brown has a strong team</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Gordon Brown is sensitive to the needs of the country</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>9%</b>

### The Budget

Now we'd like to ask you some questions about David Cameron. Do you agree or disagree with each of these statements?

	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
<b>David Cameron has a clear plan to deal with the economic slowdown</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Right now, David Cameron is more interested in his political career than in doing what's best for the UK</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>I have confidence in David Cameron to find the right solutions for the UK economy</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>David Cameron has a strong team</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>David Cameron is sensitive to the needs of the country</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>13%</b>

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### The Budget

How confident are you that the budget will promote economic recovery in the UK?

	Region					
	United Kingdom	London	South of England	Midlands and Wales	North	Scotland
Very confident	3%	4%	3%	2%	3%	2%
Moderately confident	19%	22%	17%	15%	18%	30%
Not too confident	39%	34%	35%	42%	45%	35%
Not confident at all	32%	27%	39%	33%	26%	27%
Not sure	8%	13%	6%	7%	8%	7%

### The Budget

What impact do you expect the budget to have on each of the following?

	The UK	Your household
A major positive impact	5%	2%
A minor positive impact	27%	8%
No impact at all	23%	26%
A minor negative impact	19%	40%
A major negative impact	17%	17%
Not sure	9%	7%

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### The Budget

Which of these two leaders do you trust more to handle each of the following economic issues?

	Gordon Brown	David Cameron	Neither	Not sure
Boosting the economy	23%	33%	29%	15%
Minimising the deficit	20%	34%	31%	15%
Creating jobs	22%	28%	34%	16%
Dealing with taxes	22%	32%	31%	15%

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*Angus Reid Public Opinion is a practice of Vision Critical—a global research and technology company specialising 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 Public Opinion 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.*

*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.*

*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. More information on our electoral record can be found at:*

*<http://www.visioncritical.com/record-of-accuracy>*

*More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at <http://www.visioncritical.com/what-we-do/practices/angus-reid-public-opinion/>*

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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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