

YouGov Survey Results

Sample Size: 1491 GB Adults
Fieldwork: 17th - 18th June 2010

	Voting Intention			Gender		Age			Social Grade		Region					For/against AV		
	Total	Con	Lab	Lib	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	ABC1	C2DE	Lon- don	Rest of South	Midlands / Wales	North	Scot- land	For	Against
Weighted Sample	1491	491	434	238	716	775	438	532	521	819	671	191	484	319	367	131	445	469
Unweighted Sample	1491	505	430	238	678	813	343	551	597	967	523	178	519	283	360	151	489	477
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

The Conservative-Liberal Democrat government are committed to holding a referendum on changing the voting system for electing MPs to Westminster, from first-past-the post (FPTP) to the Alternative vote (AV). How well do you think you personally understand the system.

I feel I understand it very well	11	9	16	17	18	6	11	11	12	12	11	10	10	13	13	11	21	10
Fairly well	27	31	25	29	33	21	25	23	33	30	23	23	31	22	25	29	40	27
TOTAL WELL	38	40	41	46	51	27	36	34	45	42	34	33	41	35	38	40	61	37
Not very well	32	39	31	28	27	37	26	36	33	32	32	32	31	35	29	39	24	37
Not at all well	23	18	23	20	18	29	27	25	19	21	27	27	22	23	27	16	14	23
TOTAL BADLY	55	57	54	48	45	66	53	61	52	53	59	59	53	58	56	55	38	60
Not sure	6	3	5	5	5	8	11	5	3	5	8	7	5	7	7	5	2	2

At the moment, under first-past-the-post (FPTP), voters select ONE candidate, and the candidate with the most votes wins.

It has been suggested that this system should be replaced by the Alternative Vote (AV). Voters would RANK a number of candidates from a list. If a candidate wins more than half of the '1st' votes, a winner is declared. If not, the least popular candidates are eliminated from the contest, and their supporters' subsequent preferences counted and shared accordingly among the remaining candidates. This process continues until an outright winner is declared.

Do you think it is a good idea to hold a referendum on whether to switch to AV?

Good idea - the issue matters and needs to be decided one way or the other	55	53	53	75	62	48	58	55	52	55	54	47	56	57	55	56	90	32
Bad idea - it's a distraction from much more important issues	24	27	32	12	25	23	19	24	28	26	21	23	25	22	23	31	5	54
Not sure	21	20	16	13	13	29	23	21	20	19	25	31	19	22	22	12	6	14

	Voting Intention			Gender		Age			Social Grade		Region					For/against AV		
Total	Con	Lab	Lib	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	ABC1	C2DE	Lon- don	Rest of South	Midlands / Wales	North	Scot- land	For	Against	
Weighted Sample	1491	491	434	238	716	775	438	532	521	819	671	191	484	319	367	131	445	469
Unweighted Sample	1491	505	430	238	678	813	343	551	597	967	523	178	519	283	360	151	489	477
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Here are some things that different people say about FPTP and AV. Leaving aside your own view as to which you prefer, how effective do you regard each of the following arguments?

The present system is better because it is straightforward: the candidate that wins the most votes locally becomes the Member of Parliament

Very effective argument	26	31	32	15	27	26	23	24	31	27	26	22	25	30	27	25	10	55
Fairly effective argument	37	40	34	38	36	38	40	38	33	38	35	43	37	34	35	38	38	35
TOTAL EFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	63	71	66	53	63	64	63	62	64	65	61	65	62	64	62	63	48	90
Fairly ineffective argument	14	12	14	23	15	13	10	15	17	14	14	9	18	15	12	13	27	4
Very ineffective argument	8	5	8	17	11	6	8	10	7	10	7	8	7	11	11	21	1	1
TOTAL INEFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	22	17	22	40	26	19	18	25	24	24	21	17	25	22	23	24	48	5
Don't know	14	12	12	7	11	17	18	13	11	11	18	19	12	14	15	13	4	4

AV is better because the winning candidate needs the support of at least half of local voters to become Member of Parliament

Very effective argument	20	19	21	33	24	16	25	17	19	20	21	17	19	25	19	20	41	9
Fairly effective argument	42	45	42	45	42	42	35	46	44	47	36	43	38	44	46	40	47	42
TOTAL EFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	62	64	63	78	66	58	60	63	63	67	57	60	57	69	65	60	88	51
Fairly ineffective argument	14	15	17	11	15	14	13	16	15	14	15	13	18	11	12	19	7	26
Very ineffective argument	6	7	6	4	7	4	4	5	7	5	6	4	7	6	5	5	2	13
TOTAL INEFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	20	22	23	15	22	18	17	21	22	19	21	17	25	17	17	24	9	39
Don't know	18	15	15	8	12	23	23	16	15	15	21	23	18	14	18	16	4	11

The present voting system works badly these days, for it allows a party with little over one-third of all votes to win an outright majority in the House of Commons

Very effective argument	28	24	22	48	33	24	24	29	31	28	29	18	33	32	24	30	55	11
Fairly effective argument	31	32	33	29	29	33	34	31	29	33	29	34	27	31	38	26	29	35
TOTAL EFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	59	56	55	77	62	57	58	60	60	61	58	52	60	63	62	56	84	46
Fairly ineffective argument	18	24	22	9	18	17	15	19	19	19	17	22	17	18	15	22	10	30
Very ineffective argument	6	7	8	4	6	6	4	5	8	6	5	4	7	5	6	4	3	13
TOTAL INEFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	24	31	30	13	24	23	19	24	27	25	22	26	24	23	21	26	13	43
Don't know	17	12	16	10	13	20	22	16	12	14	20	21	17	13	17	18	3	11

What Britain needs is a proportional voting system, so that each party is represented in Parliament roughly in proportion to the votes it obtains. AV is a good idea because it is a first step towards a more proportional system.

Very effective argument	20	15	19	35	24	16	22	16	21	19	21	13	20	24	20	19	41	7
Fairly effective argument	34	39	33	36	32	37	33	34	36	37	32	33	36	35	32	35	41	30
TOTAL EFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	54	54	52	71	56	53	55	50	57	56	53	46	56	59	52	54	82	37
Fairly ineffective argument	17	17	19	13	19	15	13	20	16	18	15	16	16	12	19	24	10	29
Very ineffective argument	9	12	12	3	11	7	6	9	12	9	9	8	9	13	8	4	3	21
TOTAL INEFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	26	29	31	16	30	22	19	29	28	27	24	24	25	25	27	28	13	50
Don't know	20	17	18	12	15	25	25	20	16	17	24	30	19	16	22	17	6	13

	Voting Intention			Gender		Age			Social Grade		Region					For/against AV		
Total	Con	Lab	Lib	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	ABC1	C2DE	Lon- don	Rest of South	Midlands / Wales	North	Scot- land	For	Against	
Weighted Sample	1491	491	434	238	716	775	438	532	521	819	671	191	484	319	367	131	445	469
Unweighted Sample	1491	505	430	238	678	813	343	551	597	967	523	178	519	283	360	151	489	477
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

AV would make Britain fairer, more democratic and more responsive to the needs of voters

Very effective argument	17	11	16	34	20	13	15	17	18	16	17	16	15	18	17	20	39	5
Fairly effective argument	36	36	35	46	36	36	39	35	34	37	34	29	40	36	36	32	50	23
TOTAL EFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	53	47	51	80	56	49	54	52	52	53	51	45	55	54	53	52	89	28
Fairly ineffective argument	20	27	21	9	22	18	16	23	21	21	19	18	19	20	19	28	8	39
Very ineffective argument	9	10	12	2	9	9	7	7	12	9	8	7	10	8	9	6	1	23
TOTAL INEFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	29	37	33	11	31	27	23	30	33	30	27	25	29	28	28	34	9	62
Don't know	19	16	15	9	13	24	23	18	15	16	22	30	15	18	19	14	3	11

Our political system is creaking and out-of-date. Along with other reforms that the government is considering, AV would be an important modernising move.

Very effective argument	15	13	13	26	18	12	11	15	17	15	15	10	13	18	15	21	34	4
Fairly effective argument	37	35	32	50	36	37	37	38	35	36	37	35	37	37	37	32	51	24
TOTAL EFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	52	48	45	76	54	49	48	53	52	51	52	45	50	55	52	53	85	28
Fairly ineffective argument	21	27	24	11	23	20	21	21	21	22	21	20	23	20	20	23	9	39
Very ineffective argument	10	11	15	3	10	9	8	8	12	11	8	6	10	11	9	8	2	22
TOTAL INEFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	31	38	39	14	33	29	29	29	33	33	29	26	33	31	29	31	11	61
Don't know	18	14	16	9	13	22	23	17	14	16	20	28	16	14	18	16	3	11

There is a real danger than under AV, Britain would often end up with a succession weak coalition governments

Very effective argument	24	29	30	14	24	25	18	24	30	25	24	18	24	29	25	20	11	48
Fairly effective argument	27	29	26	29	28	27	32	28	22	29	25	31	27	25	28	28	28	28
TOTAL EFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	51	58	56	43	52	52	50	52	52	54	49	49	51	54	53	48	39	76
Fairly ineffective argument	18	18	17	29	21	16	16	18	20	17	19	14	19	21	18	18	31	10
Very ineffective argument	10	5	11	16	13	6	9	9	11	10	8	10	10	7	10	13	22	4
TOTAL INEFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	28	23	28	45	34	22	25	27	31	27	27	24	29	28	28	31	53	14
Don't know	21	18	17	11	15	26	25	20	17	18	23	27	20	18	20	21	9	10

The present voting system is better because it normally delivers clear-cut election results, and allows voters to kick out unpopular governments

Very effective argument	19	24	25	9	18	20	15	15	28	20	18	18	18	21	20	16	7	40
Fairly effective argument	27	31	26	23	28	27	29	30	24	28	27	29	26	27	25	39	20	36
TOTAL EFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	46	55	51	32	46	47	44	45	52	48	45	47	44	48	45	55	27	76
Fairly ineffective argument	22	20	24	29	22	22	21	24	21	22	22	19	24	21	24	16	35	13
Very ineffective argument	16	11	13	28	20	11	15	16	16	16	15	12	17	17	15	15	35	4
TOTAL INEFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	38	31	37	57	42	33	36	40	37	38	37	31	41	38	39	31	70	17
Don't know	16	13	13	10	11	19	20	16	12	14	18	22	15	13	16	15	5	7

	Voting Intention			Gender		Age			Social Grade		Region					For/against AV		
Total	Con	Lab	Lib	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	ABC1	C2DE	Lon- don	Rest of South	Midlands / Wales	North	Scot- land	For	Against	
Weighted Sample	1491	491	434	238	716	775	438	532	521	819	671	191	484	319	367	131	445	469
Unweighted Sample	1491	505	430	238	678	813	343	551	597	967	523	178	519	283	360	151	489	477
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

What Britain needs is a proportional voting system, so that each party is represented in Parliament roughly in proportion to the votes it obtains. AV is a bad idea because it is NOT a proportional system.

Very effective argument	16	14	18	15	17	15	11	18	19	15	18	10	17	20	15	15	18	21
Fairly effective argument	28	33	25	30	29	27	31	25	29	28	27	22	25	33	29	28	27	34
TOTAL EFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	44	47	43	45	46	42	42	43	48	43	45	32	42	53	44	43	45	55
Fairly ineffective argument	24	24	25	29	28	20	23	27	21	26	21	22	26	22	21	28	32	22
Very ineffective argument	9	10	10	11	11	8	7	8	12	10	8	12	10	7	9	9	14	10
TOTAL INEFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	33	34	35	40	39	28	30	35	33	36	29	34	36	29	30	37	46	32
Don't know	23	19	21	15	15	30	28	23	19	21	25	33	21	18	26	19	9	13

The Liberal Democrats, who are keen on AV, are more concerned to rig the voting system in their favour than to tackle the big problems that face normal people in their daily lives

Very effective argument	15	17	18	8	16	14	10	14	20	15	15	15	15	16	15	13	7	30
Fairly effective argument	26	33	32	11	26	25	27	24	27	26	26	25	24	26	28	30	23	37
TOTAL EFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	41	50	50	19	42	39	37	38	47	41	41	40	39	42	43	43	30	67
Fairly ineffective argument	24	24	21	33	24	24	24	27	20	26	21	21	24	25	25	22	31	19
Very ineffective argument	16	10	15	37	20	13	16	15	19	17	16	14	20	14	15	17	35	6
TOTAL INEFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	40	34	36	70	44	37	40	42	39	43	37	35	44	39	40	39	66	25
Don't know	19	16	15	11	13	24	22	20	15	16	22	26	18	18	18	18	5	8

AV looks fairer - but what it really does is take the power to choose our government out of the hands of voters, and give the power to the Liberal Democrats

Very effective argument	13	16	17	4	13	13	8	10	20	14	12	10	11	16	15	8	7	24
Fairly effective argument	24	29	25	19	27	22	26	26	20	25	23	23	27	21	24	29	20	34
TOTAL EFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	37	45	42	23	40	35	34	36	40	39	35	33	38	37	39	37	27	58
Fairly ineffective argument	25	26	24	32	26	25	26	26	24	25	25	23	25	30	23	22	35	19
Very ineffective argument	18	11	19	34	19	16	17	16	20	19	16	15	20	16	17	18	32	12
TOTAL INEFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	43	37	43	66	45	41	43	42	44	44	41	38	45	46	40	40	67	31
Don't know	20	19	15	10	15	25	24	21	16	17	24	28	17	18	20	23	6	10

AV is better because it normally means that no single party can win power on its own, and two or more parties have to work together in government

Very effective argument	7	5	6	13	8	6	5	6	8	6	8	4	6	5	9	10	13	3
Fairly effective argument	24	20	21	39	26	22	24	21	26	25	22	23	25	25	21	26	39	15
TOTAL EFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	31	25	27	52	34	28	29	27	34	31	30	27	31	30	30	36	52	18
Fairly ineffective argument	29	33	30	29	29	29	29	34	24	30	28	29	31	31	28	20	29	34
Very ineffective argument	21	23	26	10	22	19	19	19	23	22	19	20	19	20	22	27	12	39
TOTAL INEFFECTIVE ARGUMENT	50	56	56	39	51	48	48	53	47	52	47	49	50	51	50	47	41	73
Don't know	19	19	16	9	14	24	22	19	18	17	23	24	18	18	21	16	6	10

	Voting Intention			Gender		Age			Social Grade		Region					For/against AV		
	Total	Con	Lab	Lib	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	ABC1	C2DE	Lon- don	Rest of South	Midlands / Wales	North	Scot- land	For	Against
Weighted Sample	1491	491	434	238	716	775	438	532	521	819	671	191	484	319	367	131	445	469
Unweighted Sample	1491	505	430	238	678	813	343	551	597	967	523	178	519	283	360	151	489	477
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Do you think that a switch to AV would lead to Britain being governed better, or worse, or would it make little difference either way?

Britain would be governed better	20	13	19	45	28	12	18	19	22	22	17	12	20	24	18	25	56	1
Britain would be governed worse	23	31	29	6	25	21	19	22	28	24	21	23	21	24	23	29	2	60
It would not make much difference either way	35	31	35	28	34	37	38	36	32	33	39	37	36	33	36	34	33	29
Don't know	22	25	16	21	13	30	24	23	19	21	23	28	23	19	24	12	9	9

If a referendum were held tomorrow on whether to stick with first-past-the-post or switch to the Alternative Vote for electing MPs, how would you vote?

I would vote in favour of switching to the Alternative Vote	33	23	32	63	43	25	36	31	33	37	28	25	37	35	30	37	100	0
I would vote in favour of keeping first-past-the-post	34	44	44	11	35	34	30	35	37	34	34	34	31	35	35	39	0	100
I wouldn't vote	9	5	4	5	7	10	12	9	6	7	10	14	8	7	8	8	0	0
Don't know	24	28	19	21	16	31	23	25	24	21	27	26	23	23	27	16	0	0

The referendum is unlikely to be held until next year. Have you made up your mind whether, and how, to vote, or will you wait until nearer the time before finally deciding?

Made up my mind	30	27	33	43	37	24	26	27	37	33	26	29	32	32	28	28	48	37
Will wait until nearer the time	60	67	59	51	56	64	64	61	56	60	61	57	58	60	63	63	50	60
Not sure	10	6	8	6	7	12	10	11	7	7	13	14	10	8	9	9	2	3