

Project Red Dawn

Labour's revival
(and survival)

Lord Ashcroft KCMG PC
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Introduction: Red Dawn?

Five years ago I conducted some research to find out why people in the Labour movement thought they had lost the 2010 election and what they thought they should do about it. They believed people had failed to appreciate what Labour had achieved, that credulous swing voters had been influenced by the right-wing media, and that although Labour's policies had been right, they had not been communicated well. Accordingly, they expected the coalition government to prove so dreadful that people would soon see the error of their ways: Labour would not need to make any big changes in order to win the following election.

Well, we know how that story ends. Labour is reduced to 232 seats in the House of Commons, a net loss of 24 since its 2010 defeat, and won only 30 per cent of the national vote. The question for the new leader, whose identity we will know on Saturday, is not just how the party can start winning again, but whether Labour as we know it will survive.

My latest research has looked into this question by examining the views of two sorts of people: how do the views of Labour Loyalists, who voted for the party in 2010 and again last May, compare with the Defectors who have moved away from the party since it was an election-winning force? What caused the switchers to switch, and do they see themselves returning?

Nearly eight out of ten Loyalists said they had always voted Labour at general elections. The same proportion said they identified with Labour or thought of it as "my party". More than three quarters said one of their main reasons for voting Labour had been that the party's values were closest to their own; fewer than half said it had been because they thought Labour would have made the most competent government. This, then, is Labour's loyal core vote. But in our focus groups, few said they had voted for the party with any enthusiasm.

Defectors, not surprisingly, were less likely than Loyalists to have been lifelong Labour voters before 2015. However, their reasons for switching varied depending on where they ended up. While a majority of all Defectors said Ed Miliband had helped push them to another party, the second biggest factor for those who had switched to the Conservatives was the fear that a Labour government would spend and borrow too much. Next was the belief that the country was going in the right direction, so it was not a good time to change the government: they did not want to "rock the boat".

Switchers to the Tories were more likely than Defectors as a whole to say they had been put off by the impression that Labour were not ready to form a competent government. They were also more likely to say they had been attracted by the Conservatives' record in office, especially on the economy, than by any shift in Tory Party values (though some did detect a welcome change). At the same time, the Tories seemed to be showing a sense of direction that chimed with where they themselves wanted to be going in life – symbolised for many by the party's help-to-buy policies. Some said that having been reliant on the state for some time,

their prospects were looking up and they now found the Tories more in tune with their interests (an argument reminiscent of Mondeo Man, who, according to Tony Blair, said when canvassed in 1992 that he would be switching from Labour to the Conservatives because he had just started his own business).

Defectors to the Conservatives were more likely than others to say they struggled with their voting decision: nearly one in five said they found it “very difficult indeed”. Here there was a contrast with those who switched to UKIP, most of whom said they found the decision easy – despite the fact that nearly three quarters of them said they had always voted Labour at previous general elections. For them, the biggest off-putting factor aside from Miliband was that Labour “no longer seem to stand up for people like me” – indeed, unlike the Tory converts, they were more likely to say this had swayed their vote than concerns that the party could not govern competently. The fear that a Labour government would spend and borrow too much was less prominent than it was among switchers to the Tories, but was nevertheless the third biggest concern for Defectors to UKIP.

Predictably, switchers to UKIP very often mentioned immigration as one of the reasons they no longer felt Labour stood up for their views. Notably, however, we found in the groups that this included a number of public sector workers whose worries about the effect of large-scale immigration on the services they worked in outweighed any concerns they had about continued Tory austerity.

Switchers to UKIP all but unanimously agreed that immigration into Britain was too high and needed to be reduced; smaller majorities of Loyalists and Defectors to other parties – and voters as a whole – took the same view. But there were stark differences on other policy questions. More than eight in ten Loyalists, and seven in ten switchers to UKIP, agreed that “cuts in government spending have gone far enough or too far, and it is time for them to end”. Seven in ten switchers to the Conservatives, meanwhile, thought “further cuts in government spending are needed to reduce Britain’s borrowing and get the economy back on a stable footing”. And while most Loyalists thought welfare spending should be maintained or increased, a majority of Defectors – especially to the Tories – thought the benefits system needed tightening up to encourage people back to work and reduce the cost to taxpayers. Voters as a whole agreed.

Yet much of the debate within Labour since the election has not been about the party’s present or future but, implicitly, about its past. Many within the movement seem to regard the decade from 1997 – in electoral terms, the most successful time in the party’s history – as a source of shame rather than pride. Here they are at odds not just with the voters who have since left, but with those that remain. Loyalists, as well as Defectors to other parties (especially the Conservatives) regard Tony Blair as the best Labour leader of the last thirty years. While Loyalists and Defectors overall said John Smith did a better job of standing up for Labour’s values, they put Blair ahead on representing the whole country, appealing beyond traditional Labour voters and offering strong, competent leadership; switchers to the Tories gave him a clear lead in all categories. Under Blair, people in our groups recalled, Labour “were pro-work, but they were fair”; they “offered the best of public and private”. Moreover, Blair and the voters had a rapport: “We got him, and he got us.”

According to the tone of much of Labour's leadership debate, in which candidates who suggest the party should embrace aspiration and fiscal responsibility in order to return to government have been dismissed as Tories, the fact that non-Labour voters think fondly of Blair must be evidence enough to condemn him. And this is the nub of the choice Labour has to make. If, five years ago, Labour misunderstood what it needed to do to win, today it seems to be wondering whether winning is all it's cracked up to be. My poll found Loyalists evenly divided as to whether Labour's priority should be "to win elections, even if this means making some compromises, because the party has to be in government if it is to achieve anything", or "to have the right principles and policies, even if this makes it more difficult for the party to win elections".

As to the best way to go about it, just under half of Labour Loyalists thought a Labour party that offered a "radical socialist alternative" could win a general election and change Britain for the better (around a third of switchers to the Tories also thought such a party could win an election, but most of them thought it would change things for the worse). But a further quarter of Loyalists thought a radical socialist Labour party "would represent many people and be a force for good, even if it would not win a general election." Indeed, with the exception of Defectors to the Conservatives, all groups of current and former Labour voters were more likely to think a radical socialist Labour party would be a good thing than they were to think it would be elected.

Here we see one of the consequences of a heavy defeat, familiar enough from my own time helping to drag the Conservative Party back towards electability. Paradoxically, but understandably enough, a party's first reaction to winning too small a coalition of voters can be to behave in ways that reduces that coalition still further. Activists want to give their time, money and emotional energy for a cause they believe in, among people they agree with – and the more remote victory seems, the truer this is. The voters who have rejected them have also disappointed them, especially if they have gone to the principal enemy; they do not yet have the appetite to try to woo such people back.

But that task is inescapable. The party must win over voters who have switched to the Conservatives, the group that differs most in outlook and attitude from those who currently work and vote for Labour. Doing so is not impossible: in my research, very few ruled out voting Labour again even at the next election (though most thought it very unlikely that they would be persuaded in time). But those who have moved away will not return by default. If voting for a party other than Labour was a hard decision for many, it was also a revelation – even a liberation. As one of our participants put it, "it will be a serious choice for me this time. Politics has changed. We used to vote for one party all the time, but not any more."

In the Conservative Party, by my recollection, post-election disagreements tended to be about how to return to power, not about whether power was worth having. Labour's revival, even its survival as a potential party of government, depends on its picking a leader who wants to be Prime Minister and is prepared to do what it takes to win – whether this time, or next time, or (if the party is still going by then) the time after that.

Methodology

An online poll of 1,507 Labour Loyalists (who voted Labour in 2010 and again in 2015) and Defectors (who voted Labour in 2010 but for a different party in 2015) was conducted between 26 and 31 August 2015.

A further poll of 2,023 adults was conducted online on 4 September 2015. Results of this poll were weighted to be representative of all adults in Great Britain.

Twelve focus groups were held between 21 July and 2 September 2015 in Bolton, Pudsey, Hendon, Southampton and Thurrock. Separate groups were held comprising Labour Loyalists and Defectors.

Key points

- Nearly eight in ten (78%) Labour Loyalists had always voted Labour at general elections before 2015 – as had 72% of switchers to UKIP (but just 49% of switchers to the Conservatives). 80% of Loyalists said they identified with Labour or thought of Labour as “my party”.
- Most switchers to UKIP (51%) said voting for a party other than Labour had been an easy decision, compared to 37% of switchers to the Conservatives (17% of whom said the decision had been “very difficult indeed”).
- Most switchers to UKIP (52%) said they used to identify with Labour but no longer did so; those who had switched to the Conservatives were the most likely to say that although they had voted Labour in the past they had never identified with the party or thought of it as their own.
- For switchers to the Conservatives, the three most important reasons for their vote were that they thought Ed Miliband would not be a good Prime Minister, that a Labour government might spend and borrow too much, and that they thought the country was going in the right direction so it was not a good time to change the government. For switchers to UKIP, the three biggest reasons were Ed Miliband, the view that Labour no longer stood up for people like them, and that Labour might spend and borrow too much.
- Among Defectors who had switched to the Conservatives for positive reasons, more than three quarters (78%) said the main reason had been that the Tories were doing a reasonable job in government; 22% said it was because the Conservatives seemed to share more of their values than they did before.
- Overall, Defectors who had switched mainly because they had been put off by Labour were divided as to whether their main concern was that the party could not offer a competent government, or because Labour no longer seemed to stand for the things it used to. While switchers to the Conservatives were more likely to choose competence, those who voted UKIP were more likely to select the latter explanation.
- Asked who had been the best Labour leader of the last 30 years, Loyalists and Defectors were more likely to name Tony Blair than any other leader (including a majority of switchers to the Conservatives). Loyalists and Defectors as a whole said Blair did the best job of representing the whole country, appealing beyond traditional Labour voters, and offering strong, competent leadership – though they rated John Smith as better at standing up for Labour’s values. Switchers to the Conservatives put Blair ahead in all categories.

- Nearly seven in ten Defectors to the Conservatives thought further cuts in government spending were needed to reduce borrowing and get the economy back on a stable footing; 83% of Labour Loyalists and 71% of switchers to UKIP thought it was time for cuts to end.
- Seven in ten Labour Loyalists thought welfare spending should be maintained or increased as benefit cuts would hurt vulnerable people; 80% of Defectors to the Conservatives and 54% of those who switched to UKIP said the benefits system was too generous and should be tightened up to encourage people back to work and reduce the cost to taxpayers.
- Loyalists were divided as to whether Labour's priority should be "to win elections, even if this means making some compromises, because the party has to be in government if it is to achieve anything" (48%), or "to have the right principles and policies, even if this makes it more difficult for the party to win elections" (52%).
- While most Loyalists and Defectors thought it mattered a great deal who won elections, since parties have different policies they can implement in government, switchers to UKIP were divided between this view (52%) and the idea that "it matters very little which party wins an election, since the parties end up doing the same thing once in government and nothing improves for people like me" (48%).
- 44% of Labour Loyalists thought a Labour party that offered a radical socialist alternative could win a general election and change Britain for the better; a further 27% thought such a party "would represent many people and be a force for good, even if it would not win a general election." With the exception of Defectors to the Conservatives, all groups of current and former Labour voters were more likely to think a radical socialist Labour party would be a good thing than they were to think it would win a general election.

Why vote Labour?

Why did Loyalists stay loyal?

In our poll, the single biggest reason Loyalists gave for having voted Labour in 2015 was that the party's values were closest to their own. Majorities also said they expected to be better off under a Labour government than a Conservative one, or that Labour offered the best chance of ending austerity.

Fewer than half said one of their top three reasons was that Labour would make the most competent government, and only just over one in six said the prospect of Ed Miliband as Prime Minister was among the most important attractions.

| | <i>% naming in top three</i> | Loyalists |
|---|------------------------------|------------------|
| Labour's values are closest to my own | | 77 |
| I thought I or my family would be better off under a Labour government than a Conservative one | | 57 |
| Labour offered the best chance of reducing or ending the effects of cuts | | 51 |
| I thought Labour would make the most competent government | | 46 |
| I was worried I would lose out from further cuts if the Conservatives won | | 37 |
| I thought Ed Miliband would make the best Prime Minister | | 15 |
| | <i>None of these</i> | 3 |

Four out of five Loyalists said they identified with Labour or thought of it as their party; a further 15% said they had once done so but no longer did. Among those who had "usually" (as opposed to "always") voted Labour before 2015, the proportion identifying with the party fell to two thirds. Among those who had only "sometimes" voted Labour in previous elections, half said they had never identified with the party or thought of it as their own.

| | % | Loyalists | Always Lab pre-2015 | Usually Lab pre-2015 | Sometimes Lab pre-2015 |
|--|----------|------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| I identify with Labour, or think of them as my party | | 80 | 84 | 66 | 36 |
| Even though I voted Labour, I no longer identify with them or think of them as my party | | 15 | 13 | 22 | 15 |
| Although I have voted Labour I never really identified with them or thought of them as my party | | 6 | 3 | 11 | 49 |

In the groups, few of those who voted Labour said they had done so with any enthusiasm. If there was any enthusiasm at all, it was at the prospect of getting rid of the Conservatives – though not many were particularly surprised or disappointed that the Tories had won. Most positive reasons given for having voted Labour concerned reducing the effects of austerity, but many had voted Labour simply out of habit.

“They would have been much less harsh on the public sector. The cutbacks are just too much. I have had a 1% pay rise in four years.”

“I just didn’t want the Tories to get in. That was my main reason, which is probably not a great reason.”

Loyalists did not have a clear idea of what Labour would have done in government had they won the election. Nor did they think Ed Miliband would have made a good Prime Minister, though some said they liked him personally. Loyalists often complained that Labour had been “remote” and had failed to offer anything impressive or distinctive. Labour’s election campaign had therefore been more off-putting than inspiring.

“I was very worried when Harriet Harman brought out the pink bus. That was the beginning of the end as far as winning the election was concerned. There is always something that messes it up.”

“That thing they did with their policies etched in stone as a last-minute attempt to win votes. Ridiculous.”

“Miliband was a nice guy but you wouldn’t want him running the country. Even though I voted for him.”

“You had to watch him from behind your hand. I used to cringe sometimes.”

Loyalists often cited the contrast between the two leaders as a principal reason for Labour’s defeat, and many thought fear of a Labour-SNP coalition also played a part. Some said the party had failed to explain why the financial crisis had not been Labour’s fault, but participants were as least as likely to think the party had not properly acknowledged or addressed people’s concerns about it – especially when it came to economic management, welfare spending and immigration. As a result, the Conservatives were more trusted to run the country responsibly and Labour attacks on Tory economic policies lacked credibility.

“People didn’t feel they could be led by Ed Mandarin. Miliband. And any suggestion of a coalition with the SNP was the other thing.”

“Labour were not responsible for the crash but they never got that across.”

“They just ignored the things people were worried about.”

“They had to acknowledge that there was a financial crisis. There was that note left on the desk saying ‘there’s no money left’. Cameron brought it out in every debate and they had no response.”

“They lost because they couldn’t control the economy, they had been handing out benefits left, right and centre, and then we had Ed Miliband and the two kitchens.”

“Ed Balls was always saying how terribly the Conservatives were doing on the economy, and every month it got better and unemployment went down. As far as people were concerned, the Tories had got them out of a hole.”

Labour Loyalists in the groups did not particularly blame others for voting Conservative. Apart from having managed to establish greater credibility than Labour on the economy, several acknowledged that the Tory offer appeared more relevant to large numbers of voters, including some in their own families. Labour’s appeal, meanwhile, seemed largely confined to those in the public sector or otherwise dependent on the state.

“We’ve got an aspirational society now. Labour hasn’t got a new voice.”

“Labour voters were probably in the public sector or people who need benefits.”

“The Conservatives were on the pulse with the younger generation. I think of my kids, 23 and 25, and the Tories were talking about how they could get a house, saying they could have a better future.”

Why not vote Labour?

Positive or negative?

For just over six in ten Defectors, having a better reason to vote positively for another party in 2015 was a stronger factor in their switch from Labour than simply having fewer good reasons to vote Labour. This was particularly true for switchers to UKIP, two thirds of whom said they had found more positive reasons to vote for another party.

| | % | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|--|---|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| There were more good reasons to vote positively for another party in 2015 | | 62 | 55 | 67 |
| There were fewer good reasons to vote positively for Labour in 2015 | | 38 | 45 | 33 |

Competence or values?

Defectors who switched mainly because there were fewer good reasons to vote Labour were divided over whether the party's heart was in the right place was not ready to offer a competent government, or whether Labour no longer seemed to stand for the things it once did.

Most of those who had switched to the Conservatives cited lack of competence as the more powerful reason. Those who had voted UKIP said the idea that Labour no longer stood for the things it used to as the bigger factor.

| | % | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|--|---|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| I think Labour's heart is in the right place but I did not think they were ready to offer a competent government at the 2015 election | | 47 | <u>60</u> | 45 |
| Labour no longer seem to stand for the things they used to | | <u>53</u> | 40 | <u>55</u> |

Reasons for switching away from Labour

Asked about more specific reasons why they had switched away from Labour, majorities of Defectors to both the Conservatives and UKIP said they did not think Ed Miliband would have made a good Prime Minister. The fear that a Labour government would spend and borrow too much was the second most important reason for switchers to the Tories (mentioned by 63% of them), and the third for UKIP voters (mentioned by 37%).

Most (61%) of those who moved to the Conservatives also said they thought the country was going in the right direction so it was not a good time to change the government. For switchers to UKIP, a much more important reason was that Labour "no longer seems to stand up for people like me" – the second most important reason of all for this group, mentioned by six in ten.

| Most frequently given reasons for switching from Labour: | |
|---|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Defectors to Conservatives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I didn't think Ed Miliband would make a good PM 2. I was worried Labour would spend and borrow too much 3. I thought the country was going in the right direction so it was not a good time to change | <p style="text-align: center;">Defectors to UKIP</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I didn't think Ed Miliband would make a good PM 2. Labour no longer seemed to stand up for people like me 3. I was worried Labour would spend and borrow too much |

Those who had switched from Labour to another party often said in our groups that lack of direction and clarity and the absence of credible alternatives counted against Labour more than any specific policies they found unattractive.

"I just didn't feel drawn to Labour. They were just all over the place, scrabbling round, no direction."

"I didn't believe they could deliver anything. He was promising the unbelievable. He didn't give confidence."

A further important reason for moving away from Labour was that the party did not appear to have learned the right lessons from what went wrong during its time in government. Labour seemed to them to have been more interested in explaining why they were not to blame than in showing they had changed for the better. As a result, they had no solutions to the problems that remained, and were likely to make the same mistakes again.

"Labour had had long enough to put the country back on the right track, or begin the turn, but I didn't see the turn."

"They were unlucky with the crash, but they didn't do the right things to solve it."

"Labour would have allowed more foreigners in, for a start."

"They should have held their hands up and said we got it wrong."

In the groups, participants also mentioned Ed Miliband himself as a reason for not voting Labour. Few disliked him, but few felt confident in the policies he was offering or his ability to do the job of Prime Minister.

"I felt quite warm to him but I didn't want to let him out into Europe. He was like a driver with one of those green 'L' plates."

"Miliband was never going to be Prime Minister, was he?"

Why switch to the Conservatives?

More than three quarters of those who had switched from Labour to the Conservatives, and said they had done so for a positive reason, said the most important factor had been that the party's performance in government. Only just over one fifth said this had been mostly because they detected a change in the Conservative Party's values.

| | % | Defectors to Con |
|--|----|---------------------|
| I thought David Cameron and the Conservatives were doing a reasonable job in government and should be allowed to continue | 78 | |
| The Conservatives seemed to share more of my values than they did before, which made it easier for me to vote for them | 22 | |

In the focus groups, the reasons people gave for switching from Labour to the Conservatives had three main themes. The first was that the Tories had a reasonable record in government, especially on the economy, and that they did not want to change direction or (as they put it) "rock the boat". This usually coincided with the idea that David Cameron was a capable leader, and certainly the most capable of those on offer.

"For me it was the economy. The Tories had told it straight and made cuts, but it was working."

"In my business, consumers were more confident. I didn't want to rock the boat."

"With David Cameron, it wasn't that I could relate to him but that I was confident he could do what needed doing."

The second was that, unlike Labour, the Conservatives seemed to have a sense of direction which chimed with where they wanted to go in life. For some this was reflected in specific policies, such as help to buy, and for others the party simply projected a determination to tackle some of longstanding problems that would need to be solved for the country – and, therefore, for them – to have a brighter future.

"My boyfriend and I were trying to buy a council flat, and the Tories were offering help with that and Labour said they might reduce that help."

"When I started looking at the long, taking control and being responsible for my housing, family, career, I thought the Conservatives were the more secure option."

"I voted for what seemed like a brighter future, rather than just keeping things afloat and keeping things fair, just juggling things a bit. With the Conservatives it seemed there was going to be a brighter future, they would try and fix some of this stuff."

A few also said that their own circumstances had changed (usually in the sense that they had become less dependent on the state), and this meant they now saw the Conservatives, rather than Labour, as the party which was looking out for their interests.

“I feel like I’m going to have very bad karma for saying this – my previous circumstances weren’t great, I was a single mum, I didn’t work, I was on tax credits. And as nasty as this makes me sound, my circumstances changed – I work now, I got engaged, my husband-to-be has a good job, the stuff that matters shifted. It sounds ultimately selfish but I look at my children and I have to do what’s best for them.”

Some also noted that the Conservatives had changed in recent years by moving to the centre ground or shifting their priorities towards those of ordinary people.

“I was always taught that the Tories only looked after the upper class, but I don’t really get that impression any more. They’ve moved to the centre. After Tony Blair they realised they weren’t going to get into power if they were bang on the right.”

“They were more steady on the economy. They started listening to people north of Watford. Started investing a bit more in the North West.”

“I wish Cameron was in charge of the Labour Party. Conservative policies are like New Labour and I was a big fan of New Labour.”

Several participants noted that Labour supporters on social media, including their own friends, had been unpleasantly aggressive in their comments about the Conservative Party and people who voted for it. While this sometimes made them less likely to admit how they planned to vote, it never made them more likely to vote Labour – and in at least one case strengthened their resolve to back David Cameron.

“I was leaning towards voting Tory and I had a friend on Facebook who was really vocally opposed, saying people who voted Tory were nasty and selfish and wanted to put her on the street. I got really angry. I thought, that’s not me; I will vote for them. I got fed up with other people telling me I couldn’t vote Conservative because they are the scum of the earth.”

Why switch to UKIP?

In the groups, former Labour voters who had switched to UKIP in 2015 nearly always mentioned immigration as part of their reason. For them, Labour had either deliberately allowed excessive immigration while in government or had no interest in tackling it. For many, though, the issue of immigration was simply the

most prominent illustration of their view that mainstream parties were indistinguishable and had nothing to offer people like them. Some had only stuck with Labour in recent elections for lack of an alternative.

Though nobody expected the party to achieve any position of power, they hoped a strong UKIP vote would give the party a bigger platform on which to raise the issues that concerned them and from which they could make further progress in future elections.

They often added that with little to choose between Labour and the Conservatives, there was no real downside to a UKIP vote. Some felt it was now UKIP who spoke for the parts of society Labour had once represented.

“I want my country back. When you go for a walk in Grays, no-one talks English.”

“I knew they wouldn’t win but they would get more support. Not the next election but maybe the one after.”

“I think Labour think they’re probably above UKIP. I think Labour, used to be for the working man but they’ve stepped up a bit. Now you’ve got the really poor, then you’ve got maybe UKIP, then Labour, then the Liberals and so on.”

“I honestly believe that maybe not in the next ten years but maybe the next twenty years, that we’re actually going to have a French Revolution. Everyone is going to go against the government.”

There was also a feeling among UKIP switchers that it made very little difference who won elections any more, since government no longer held the real power.

“A good proportion of what you’re told is not going to happen. If you’re going to go along with a lie you might as well pick the one you’ve got the most belief in.”

“Look what happened in Greece. They voted for a socialist government, they voted in a referendum never accept the deal, the bank told them they must comply, they must sack the finance guy, then they had to take even worse measures.”

“The banks rule the world. They’ve got governments sacked, they’ve replaced them, they’ve put bureaucrats in.”

Notably, many of our Labour-UKIP switchers worked in the public sector. What they saw as the effect of immigration on the services they worked in had been a big motivating factor in their votes.

“Close the floodgates. The health system is at breaking point. There are people who have been here three weeks who come to have their baby. It’s just wrong.”

“I am always ringing for interpreters. It’s constant.”

How much did it hurt?

Defectors who had switched from Labour to UKIP said they had found the decision less painful than those who had moved to the Conservatives. More than half of switchers to UKIP said the decision had been easy; fewer than four in ten of those who moved to the Conservatives said the same, and nearly one in five said the decision had been very difficult indeed.

| | % | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|------------------------------|---|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| It was an easy decision | | 42 | 37 | 51 |
| I had a few hesitations | | 16 | 18 | 17 |
| I had some hesitations | | 27 | 28 | 25 |
| It was very difficult indeed | | 14 | 17 | 7 |

In the groups, some of those who had switched from Labour to another party had found it a very hard decision.

“It was the first time I’d done it and I don’t think I’ve recovered yet. It was a big deal.”

“I haven’t told any of my friends and family.”

Labour's past (and present)

Labour Loyalists and Defectors both said that Tony Blair had been the best leader of the Labour Party in the last thirty years. Defectors to the Conservatives were the most likely to say this (57%), followed by Loyalists (42%), but even those who had switched to UKIP were more likely to name Blair than any other leader.

| % | ALL VOTERS | Loyalists | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|---------------------|------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Tony Blair | 35 | 42 | 41 | 57 | 36 |
| John Smith | 32 | 31 | 32 | 17 | 27 |
| Neil Kinnock | 15 | 10 | 12 | 7 | 22 |
| Gordon Brown | 10 | 10 | 13 | 16 | 14 |
| Ed Miliband | 8 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 1 |

On the question of who had done the best job of standing up for Labour's values, Loyalists and Defectors overall (though not switchers to the Conservatives) named John Smith. But when it came to representing the whole country, appealing beyond traditional Labour voters and offering strong, competent leadership, Blair was the clear winner among all groups.

| <i>Which Labour leader did the best job...</i> | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| | <i>...standing up for Labour's values?</i> | <i>...representing the whole country?</i> | <i>...appealing beyond traditional Labour voters?</i> | <i>...offering strong, competent leadership?</i> | <i>...overall?</i> |
| Labour Loyalists | 1. JOHN SMITH 2. Tony Blair 3. Neil Kinnock | 1. TONY BLAIR 2. John Smith 3. Gordon Brown | 1. TONY BLAIR 2. John Smith 3. Ed Miliband | 1. TONY BLAIR 2. John Smith 3. Brown/Kinnock | 1. TONY BLAIR 2. John Smith 3. Brown/Kinnock |
| Defectors to Con | 1. TONY BLAIR 2. Neil Kinnock 3. John Smith | 1. TONY BLAIR 2. Gordon Brown 3. John Smith | 1. TONY BLAIR 2. Gordon Brown 3. John Smith | 1. TONY BLAIR 2. Gordon Brown 3. John Smith | 1. TONY BLAIR 2. John Smith 3. Gordon Brown |

Labour at its best

Asked when they had been happiest about voting Labour, both Loyalists and Defectors most often mentioned the Tony Blair years. There were three main elements to this. First, they regarded him as a strong, capable, convincing leader. Next, they understood what he was trying to do and, crucially, they believed that he understood them. As a result, they felt that the Labour Party under Blair's leadership had an agenda which combined fairness and decency with respect for enterprise and hard work.

“We got him and he got us.”

“Under Tony Blair they were pro-work, but they were fair.”

“The feeling with Blair was that you got the best of both worlds – still a capitalist society but fairer and more socially oriented.”

“It was the best of public and private.”

“You could relate to Tony Blair. You didn’t feel he was some weird public schoolboy. He was easy to understand.”

“You could look him in the eye and he would look you straight back.”

“When I vote Labour it’s not because I think ‘let’s take it from the rich and give it to the poor’. There are people with businesses who work hard and struggle.”

“New Labour had that left element but they would look after the middle class and business too. I work for myself and I can’t identify with them now.”

Labour's future

Labour Loyalists were evenly divided between those thinking the party's priority should be to win elections even if this means making some compromises, and those saying the priority should be to have the right principles and policies, even if this makes it harder to win elections. Defectors, however, took the latter view by nearly two to one.

| | % | ALL VOTERS | Loyalists | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|--|----|------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Labour's priority should be to win elections, even if this means making some compromises, because the party has to be in government if it is to achieve anything | 33 | 48 | 37 | 40 | 45 | |
| Labour's priority should be to have the right principles and policies, even if this makes it more difficult for the party to win elections | 67 | 52 | 63 | 60 | 55 | |

Overall, Loyalists and Defectors (especially to the Conservatives) said they it mattered a great deal who won elections, since different parties had different policies that they could implement in government. However, nearly half of those who switched to UKIP said it mattered very little who won, since parties seemed to end up doing the same thing once in government and nothing improved for people like themselves.

The various voter types had different views on whether Labour should offer a "radical socialist alternative" and whether it was likely to win a general election if it did so. Nearly half (44%) of Labour Loyalists thought a radical socialist Labour party could win a general election and would change Britain for the better if it did so; a further 27% thought such a party would represent many people and be a force for good, even if it would not be elected.

| | % | ALL VOTERS | Loyalists | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|---|-----------|------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <i>A Labour party which offered a radical socialist alternative...</i> | | | | | | |
| ...could win a general election and change Britain for the better | 22 | <u>44</u> | 28 | 13 | <u>35</u> | |
| ...might win a general election, but would change Britain for the worse | 21 | 9 | 13 | 22 | 11 | |
| ...would represent many people and be a force for good, even if it would not win a general election | 30 | 27 | 27 | 19 | 24 | |
| ...would not win a general election and would therefore be a waste of time | 27 | 20 | <u>32</u> | <u>46</u> | 29 | |
| TOTAL: A radical socialist alternative could win a general election | 43 | 53 | 41 | 35 | 46 | |
| TOTAL: A radical socialist alternative would be a good thing | 52 | 71 | 55 | 32 | 59 | |

Meanwhile, just over one third (35%) of switchers to the Conservatives thought a Labour party offering a radical socialist alternative might win a general election,

but most of these thought that if it did it would change Britain for the worse. Nearly half (46%) thought such a party would not win a general election and would therefore be a waste of time.

Labour Loyalists and Defectors to parties other than the Conservatives were more likely to think a radical socialist Labour party would be a good thing than they were to think such a party would win a general election.

Policy questions

On the question of austerity, switchers to the Conservatives were the only group of current or former Labour voters to agree that further cuts in government spending were needed; large majorities of Loyalists and Defectors to other parties thought it was time for cuts to end.

| | % | ALL VOTERS | Loyalists | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|---|----|------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| However uncomfortable, further cuts in government spending are needed to reduce Britain's borrowing and get the economy back on a stable footing | 47 | 17 | 38 | <u>69</u> | 29 | |
| Cuts in government spending have gone far enough or too far, and it is time for them to end | 53 | <u>83</u> | <u>62</u> | 31 | <u>71</u> | |

On welfare reform, a majority of Defectors (including 80% of switchers to the Conservatives) agreed that Britain's benefits system is too generous and needs to be tightened up to encourage people back to work and reduce the cost to taxpayers. Loyalists disagreed, however: nearly seven in ten thought further benefit cuts would hurt vulnerable people and that welfare spending ought therefore to be maintained or increased.

| | % | ALL VOTERS | Loyalists | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|---|----|------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Britain's benefits system is too generous – it should be tightened up to encourage more people back to work and reduce the cost to taxpayers | 54 | 31 | <u>52</u> | <u>80</u> | <u>54</u> | |
| More benefit cuts will hurt vulnerable people, so welfare spending should be maintained or increased | 46 | <u>69</u> | 48 | 20 | 46 | |

In the groups, participants were asked for their views on specific welfare reform measures that had divided opinion in the Labour Party – reducing the benefit cap, and restricting Child Tax Credit to two children per family. The measures divided both types of voter, though the balance of opinion was in favour of reform among both Loyalists and Defectors. While a few of those who had switched to the Conservatives worried that the changes would not take into account the circumstances of those who needed particular help, several Loyalists observed that Labour's position on welfare had driven voters away from the party, or that they agreed the welfare system was in need of radical reform.

“There are people earning more on benefits than I am trying to support three children.”

“People with jobs decide what they can afford in life. It shouldn’t be the case that people on benefits can decide to have more kids and expect other people who might not be able to afford more kids to pay for them.”

“Some families are never going to get out of that situation.”

“It’s just spiteful. They use it as a stick to beat people with. Claimants are the whipping boys.”

On immigration, majorities of all groups were more likely to think immigration is too high and needs to be significantly reduced (ranging from 67% among Labour Loyalists to 99% of switchers to UKIP) than to think immigration is good for Britain and reducing it significantly would do more harm than good.

| | % | ALL VOTERS | Loyalists | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|---|----|------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Immigration into Britain is too high – we need to reduce the numbers coming into this country significantly | 70 | 70 | <u>67</u> | <u>77</u> | <u>87</u> | <u>99</u> |
| Immigration is good for Britain – reducing it significantly would do more harm than good | 30 | 30 | 33 | 23 | 13 | 1 |

Labour’s future direction

There was no settled view among Loyalists or Defectors about the direction Labour should now take. Several spoke of the need for the party to go back to its roots, but there was less agreement about what this actually meant.

Some emphasised the need “to be seen as fairer than the alternative” and to “fight for the underdog”. But for others, including some Loyalists, this had to include offering credible policies, especially on the economy, that people who had moved away from Labour would be able to vote for. This included fiscal responsibility and an understanding of people’s concerns about benefits and immigration.

“They need to go back to basics and fight for the underdog, people like me. I work in a shop, I’m not a manager or a business owner. They’re not addressing the needs of the working class.”

“They can’t just spend. They’ve got to show where the money is coming from. And not just that they’re going to put up taxes.”

“Going back to their roots means looking after the welfare state coupled with strong, credible economic policies.”

“They will only be electable if they go with what people want, the middle ground. The country won’t stand a left-wing government. But a Labour government will fund education. Labour put the most money into education ever.”

“I don’t think they lost because they compromised, they weren’t concerned enough about the swelling of the welfare state. They’ve got to convince the electorate they can handle the economy.”

The leadership election

Though most (by no means all) our focus group participants knew Labour were in the process of electing a new leader, the contest had made no great impression on either type of voter. Most Defectors could not name any of the candidates, let alone say anything about them. Loyalists were more likely to recall some of them (hardly any could name all four, even in the week before the result was announced), but they had not been very impressed and few cared very much who won. Some mentioned other Labour figures they had hoped would stand: Chuka Umunna, Tristram Hunt and Alan Johnson.

“I haven’t heard a squeak out of them since they lost.”

“There hasn’t been much about it in the media.”

“Can you imagine any of them as PM of this country? At least Alastair Campbell got them to present themselves well.”

Some participants were aware of the **Jeremy Corbyn** bandwagon. A number of Loyalists said they would be much happier voting for a Labour party he led. Some argued that the fact he had the courage of his convictions would be enough to win over non-Labour voters, despite his left-wing policies. Rather more, including Loyalists, thought he would put people off, especially those who had voted Conservative; some of these candidly said they agreed with this but wanted him to win anyway.

“The appeal is that he truly believes what he says.”

“Labour should choose someone electable, but that goes contrary to what my gut tells me.”

“I’d like a Corbyn-style Labour Party but I don’t think it would do the country much good in the long run.”

“I think he understands the true value of Labour, but he wants to please people in the party rather than lead.”

“In substance terms he would turn off prospective Conservative switchers. But he would make me feel happier.”

“He’s refreshing in the way that fashions come back again, but he can’t be sold to the public.”

“Why is he standing? Maybe it’s on his bucket list”.

It was notable that although few participants saw Corbyn as a potential election winner, several said they viewed him as a “stepping stone” or “forerunner”, changing the party and paving the way for a leader from a new generation who would be able to take Labour forward (though nobody knew who this might turn out to be).

“I like to think he’s a stepping stone to someone else. It’s changing the team at the top of the party.”

“The Shadow Cabinet would resign and there would be turmoil in the Labour Party. A swirling mass of bodies. Then eventually something will emerge.”

“I think it will be interesting. He could get in as the forerunner.”

The best-known fact about **Yvette Cooper** was that she was married to Ed Balls, which most did not regard as a point in her favour. Most participants could not remember she was standing. However, when shown clips of the candidates speaking, both Loyalists and Defectors often said she seemed the most capable of the four contenders.

Though people could see her leading the party, they were less sure Cooper would win an election, not least because of her association with previous Labour governments.

“She was New Labour, one of Blair’s. She would make a good leader but she’s got a lot of baggage.”

“I can see her leading the Labour Party, I can’t see her winning.”

“Got more about her than her husband. Forceful, focused.”

“Can you imagine her at Number Ten, with Ed Balls doing the Cherie Blair bit?”

A few participants spontaneously said they thought **Andy Burnham** was the best candidate on offer, though again with little enthusiasm or any apparent expectation that he would win a general election. Most knew little or nothing about him. At first glance some thought he seemed like a typical politician (or Sky Sports presenter), but they were sometimes reassured by his accent and delivery.

“Oh that’s Andy Burnham, is it?”

“I liked the regional accent. He seemed more human.”

“The only one who held my attention”.

“I could see him as the party leader but not as Prime Minister of the whole country.”

Liz Kendall was even less well-known than the other candidates. Though some were impressed by her TV performance, Loyalists in particular were concerned that she would put winning ahead of any other concern.

“I saw her interviewed. She was fierce, in a good way. She stood up for herself.”

“Sounded positive, like she was in control. She knew what she wanted.”

“She doesn’t really stand for anything, she thinks it’s more important to win.”

Will they go back?

A large majority of Defectors said either that they still identified with Labour or thought of them as their party, or (more likely) that they had once identified with Labour but no longer did so. A majority of switchers to UKIP took this latter view, as did nearly half of Defectors overall. Those who had switched to the Conservatives were the most likely to say that although they had voted Labour in the past, they had never identified with them or thought of Labour as their party.

| | % | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|--|---|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Even though I did not vote Labour this time, I still identify with them or think of them as my party | | 36 | 30 | 39 |
| I used to identify with Labour or think of them as my party, but not any more | | <u>45</u> | <u>39</u> | <u>52</u> |
| Although I have voted Labour in the past, I never really identified with them or thought of them as my party | | 18 | 31 | 10 |

Very few of the Defectors in the groups said they ruled out returning to Labour at the next general election. However, they were equally unlikely to say they would probably do so. Though several said they would like to be able to vote for the

party again, the usual response was that they would see how things turned out in the next five years: “it depends how badly this government does.”

Having broken the habit of supporting Labour every time, they would return to the party only as a result of a considered decision, not by default. Some saw little prospect of being tempted back in time for the 2020 election, and even some Labour voters said they would be more inclined to look elsewhere next time. At this stage, very few thought Labour had much chance of winning.

“At the moment, Labour just seem like old fogeys stuck in a time warp.”

“I am at a crossroads with my voting. I voted Labour, but looking at some of the things Cameron is doing I am clapping my hands, the stuff on benefits. But I’m worried about what’s happening with the NHS.”

“Voting UKIP has opened my eyes. If the Conservatives were doing well in the next five years maybe I might go there. It depends what happens in the next five years.”

“It will be a serious choice for me this time. Politics has changed. We used to vote for one party all the time, but not any more.”

Full poll results

4,035 adults were interviewed online between 26 August and 4 September 2015. The sample included:

- 1,507 “Loyalists”, who voted Labour in 2010 and again in 2015
- 505 “Defectors”, who voted Labour in 2010 but for a different party in 2015
- 2,023 members of the general public

Full data tables are available at LordAshcroftPolls.com

Loyalists and Defectors

1. Which of the following applies to you?

| | % | Loyalists | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|---|---|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Before 2015, I had <u>always</u> voted Labour at general elections | | 78 | 62 | 49 | 72 |
| Before 2015, I had <u>usually</u> voted Labour at general elections | | 20 | 26 | 34 | 19 |
| Before 2015, I had <u>sometimes</u> voted Labour at general elections | | 3 | 12 | 17 | 9 |

Defectors

2. How easy or difficult was your decision to vote for a party other than Labour at the 2015 election?

| | % | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|------------------------------|---|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| It was an easy decision | | 42 | 37 | 51 |
| I had a few hesitations | | 16 | 18 | 17 |
| I had some hesitations | | 27 | 28 | 25 |
| It was very difficult indeed | | 14 | 17 | 7 |

- In Scotland, 75% of Defectors said it had been an easy decision to vote for a party other than Labour in 2015.

Defectors

3. Here are some reasons people have given for voting for parties other than Labour at the 2015 election. Which of these applied to you?

| <i>% naming in top three</i> | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|--|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| I did not think Ed Miliband would make a good Prime Minister | <u>57</u> | <u>69</u> | <u>62</u> |
| My circumstances haven't changed very much but Labour no longer seemed to stand up for people like me | <u>44</u> | 25 | <u>59</u> |
| I was worried a Labour government would spend and borrow too much | <u>40</u> | <u>63</u> | <u>37</u> |
| I thought I would be worse off under a Labour government | 30 | 43 | 31 |
| I thought the country was going in the right direction so it was not a good time to change | 26 | <u>61</u> | 12 |
| My circumstances have changed since I last voted Labour, so they are no longer the party that best represents my interests | 17 | 16 | 23 |
| <i>None of these</i> | 16 | 5 | 13 |

Loyalists

4. Here are some of the reasons people have given for voting Labour at the 2015 election. Which of these applied to you?

| <i>% naming in top three</i> | Loyalists |
|--|-----------|
| Labour's values are closest to my own | 77 |
| I thought I or my family would be better off under a Labour government than a Conservative one | 57 |
| Labour offered the best chance of reducing or ending the effects of cuts | 51 |
| I thought Labour would make the most competent government | 46 |
| I was worried I would lose out from further cuts if the Conservatives won | 37 |
| I thought Ed Miliband would make the best Prime Minister | 15 |
| <i>None of these</i> | 3 |

Defectors

5. Which of the following two statements comes closest to your view about your decision over whom to vote for at the 2015 election?

| <i>%</i> | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|---|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| There were more good reasons to vote positively for another party in 2015 | 62 | 55 | 67 |
| There were fewer good reasons to vote positively for Labour in 2015 | 38 | 45 | 33 |

Defectors who voted positively for the Conservatives

6. You say there were better reasons to vote positively for the Conservatives in 2015. Which of the following better describes why you thought this, even if neither completely describes your view?

| | % | Defectors to Con |
|---|---|------------------|
| I thought David Cameron and the Conservatives were doing a reasonable job in government and should be allowed to continue | | 78 |
| The Conservatives seemed to share more of my values than they did before, which made it easier for me to vote for them | | 22 |

Defectors who said there were fewer positive reasons to vote Labour

7. You say there were fewer reasons to vote positively for Labour in 2015. Which of the following better describes why you thought this, even if neither completely describes your view?

| | % | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|---|---|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| I think Labour's heart is in the right place but I did not think they were ready to offer a competent government at the 2015 election | | 47 | 60 | 45 |
| Labour no longer seem to stand for the things they used to | | 53 | 40 | 55 |

All voters

8. From what you remember or have heard, who would you say was the best leader of the Labour Party in the last 30 years?

| | % | ALL VOTERS | Loyalists | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|--------------|---|------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Tony Blair | | 35 | 42 | 41 | 57 | 36 |
| John Smith | | 32 | 31 | 32 | 17 | 27 |
| Neil Kinnock | | 15 | 10 | 12 | 7 | 22 |
| Gordon Brown | | 10 | 10 | 13 | 16 | 14 |
| Ed Miliband | | 8 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 1 |

All voters

9. From what you remember or have heard, which recent Labour leader did the best job on each of the following things?

| % | ALL VOTERS | Loyalists | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|---|------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Standing up for Labour's values...</i> | | | | | |
| 1. JOHN SMITH | <u>30</u> | <u>32</u> | <u>33</u> | 20 | <u>28</u> |
| 2. Tony Blair | 22 | 23 | 26 | <u>35</u> | 27 |
| 3. Neil Kinnock | 25 | 20 | 23 | 21 | 27 |
| 4. Gordon Brown | 10 | 13 | 14 | 17 | 15 |
| 5. Ed Miliband | 12 | 12 | 4 | 7 | 3 |

| % | ALL VOTERS | Loyalists | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|--|------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Representing the whole country...</i> | | | | | |
| 1. TONY BLAIR | <u>36</u> | <u>42</u> | <u>43</u> | <u>54</u> | <u>43</u> |
| 2. John Smith | 28 | 26 | 28 | 15 | 22 |
| 3. Gordon Brown | 10 | 12 | 15 | 18 | 17 |
| 4. Neil Kinnock | 14 | 10 | 11 | 7 | 16 |
| 5. Ed Miliband | 11 | 9 | 3 | 5 | 2 |

| % | ALL VOTERS | Loyalists | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|--|------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Appealing beyond traditional Labour voters...</i> | | | | | |
| 1. TONY BLAIR | <u>51</u> | <u>57</u> | <u>60</u> | <u>67</u> | <u>53</u> |
| 2. John Smith | 20 | 18 | 17 | 9 | 16 |
| 3. Neil Kinnock | 12 | 9 | 10 | 5 | 18 |
| 4. Gordon Brown | 8 | 6 | 10 | 13 | 10 |
| 5. Ed Miliband | 10 | 10 | 4 | 5 | 3 |

| % | ALL VOTERS | Loyalists | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|---|------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Offering strong, competent leadership...</i> | | | | | |
| 1. TONY BLAIR | <u>40</u> | <u>48</u> | <u>48</u> | <u>60</u> | <u>42</u> |
| 2. John Smith | 29 | 27 | 25 | 14 | 20 |
| 3. Gordon Brown | 9 | 9 | 14 | 16 | 18 |
| 4. Neil Kinnock | 16 | 9 | 11 | 7 | 20 |
| 5. Ed Miliband | 7 | 7 | 2 | 4 | 0 |

All voters

10. Which of the following statements comes closest to your view about...

...cuts?

| % | ALL VOTERS | Loyalists | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|--|------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| However uncomfortable, further cuts in government spending are needed to reduce Britain's borrowing and get the economy back on a stable footing | 47 | 17 | 38 | <u>69</u> | 29 |
| Cuts in government spending have gone far enough or too far, and it is time for them to end | 53 | <u>83</u> | <u>62</u> | 31 | <u>71</u> |

...welfare reform?

| % | ALL VOTERS | Loyalists | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|--|------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Britain's benefits system is too generous – it should be tightened up to encourage more people back to work and reduce the cost to taxpayers | 54 | 31 | <u>52</u> | <u>80</u> | <u>54</u> |
| More benefit cuts will hurt vulnerable people, so welfare spending should be maintained or increased | 46 | <u>69</u> | 48 | 20 | 46 |

...immigration?

| % | ALL VOTERS | Loyalists | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|---|------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Immigration into Britain is too high – we need to reduce the numbers coming into this country significantly | 70 | <u>67</u> | <u>77</u> | <u>87</u> | <u>99</u> |
| Immigration is good for Britain – reducing it significantly would do more harm than good | 30 | 33 | 23 | 13 | 1 |

Defectors

11. Which of the following best applies to you?

| % | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|--|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Even though I did not vote Labour this time, I still identify with them or think of them as my party | 36 | 30 | 39 |
| I used to identify with Labour or think of them as my party, but not any more | <u>45</u> | <u>39</u> | <u>52</u> |
| Although I have voted Labour in the past, I never really identified with them or thought of them as my party | 18 | 31 | 10 |

Loyalists

12. Which of the following best applies to you?

| % | Loyalists | Always Lab pre-2015 | Usually Lab pre-2015 | Sometimes Lab pre-2015 |
|---|-----------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| I identify with Labour, or think of them as my party | 80 | 84 | 66 | 36 |
| Even though I voted Labour, I no longer identify with them or think of them as my party | 15 | 13 | 22 | 15 |
| Although I have voted Labour I never really identified with them or thought of them as my party | 6 | 3 | 11 | 49 |

All voters

13. Which statement out of the following pairs comes closest to your view even if you don't completely agree with either?

| % | ALL VOTERS | Loyalists | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|--|------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Labour's priority should be to win elections, even if this means making some compromises, because the party has to be in government if it is to achieve anything | 33 | 48 | 37 | 40 | 45 |
| Labour's priority should be to have the right principles and policies, even if this makes it more difficult for the party to win elections | 67 | 52 | 63 | 60 | 55 |

| % | ALL VOTERS | Loyalists | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|--|------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| It matters a great deal which party wins an election, since the parties have different principles, priorities and policies that they can put into practice in government | 63 | 79 | 62 | 76 | 52 |
| It matters very little which party wins an election, since the parties end up doing the same things once in government and nothing improves for people like me | 37 | 21 | 38 | 24 | 48 |

All voters

14. Which statement out of the following pairs comes closest to your view even if you don't completely agree with either?

| % | ALL VOTERS | Loyalists | All Defectors | Defectors to Con | Defectors to UKIP |
|---|------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <i>A Labour party which offered a radical socialist alternative...</i> | | | | | |
| ...could win a general election and change Britain for the better | 22 | 44 | 28 | 13 | 35 |
| ...might win a general election, but would change Britain for the worse | 21 | 9 | 13 | 22 | 11 |
| ...would represent many people and be a force for good, even if it would not win a general election | 30 | 27 | 27 | 19 | 24 |
| ...would not win a general election and would therefore be a waste of time | 27 | 20 | 32 | 46 | 29 |
| TOTAL: A radical socialist alternative could win a general election | 43 | 53 | 41 | 35 | 46 |
| TOTAL: A radical socialist alternative would be a good thing | 52 | 71 | 55 | 32 | 59 |