



May 4<sup>th</sup> 2011,

**AV – MPs overwhelmingly reject ‘alternative vote’ as the best system available**

**MPs of all major parties overwhelmingly reject AV, as put forward in the referendum on May 5<sup>th</sup>, as the best voting system for the UK when given a free choice from all possible voting systems, new research finds. Three quarters (76%) of MPs choose the existing ‘first past the post’ system as being best. AV comes third with just 9% selecting it, behind the ‘single transferable vote’ system which is chosen by 11% of MPs.**

**The findings come from a representative survey of 100 MPs by independent research agency YouGovStone. It finds that just 9 out of the 40 Labour MPs surveyed believe AV is the best system when selecting from a list of seven leading systems, despite Labour leader Ed Miliband’s support for AV at the referendum – ‘first past the post’ is most popular with 27 Labour MPs picking it. Meanwhile none of the 56 coalition MPs polled (47 Tories and 9 Liberal Democrats) choose AV as their best option. 8 of the 9 Lib Dems instead prefer ‘single transferable vote’ while all Tories pick ‘first past the post’.**

YouGovStone, a division of polling company YouGov plc, interviewed 100 MPs who were representative of the House of Commons in the first two weeks of April 2011. The survey found that when asked to pick their favourite from a list of major voting systems, three quarters (76%) of MPs choose the incumbent ‘first-past-the-post system’; just 9% want the ‘AV’ system as proposed in the referendum on May 5<sup>th</sup>.

Indeed the ‘single transferable vote’ system is just as popular as ‘AV’ amongst MPs with 11% of them wanting it, while 2% want ‘AV+’.

Not a single Conservative or Liberal Democrat MP (47 Conservative and 9 Lib Dem) interviewed for the study picked ‘AV’ as their personal preference given a free choice. However 9 of the 40 Labour MPs who took part in the poll selected it, compared to 27 who picked ‘first past the post’, showing limited support amongst Labour MPs for Ed Miliband’s decision to back the ‘Yes’ campaign.

Support for ‘first past the post’ seems to have increased, with 67% of MPs choosing it when MPs polled by YouGovStone over the Christmas and New Year recess, rising to 76% now. Previously 8% supported AV and 14% the ‘single transferable vote’.

Commenting on the results, Oliver Rowe, YouGovStone’s Research Director says “There is a clear lack of support for AV from within Parliament’s rank and file MPs when given a free choice. AV isn’t even the preferred option of the Liberal Democrat MPs we spoke to, who would mostly choose ‘single transferable vote’ if given a free option, but they have been forced to compromise with AV. Meanwhile Ed Miliband’s support of AV does not seem to reflect his MPs preferences - they mostly prefer ‘first past the post’.

[Please click here to view the full table of results](#)

## **Notes to editors**

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGovStone. The survey was carried out online. Total sample size was 100 MPs. Fieldwork was undertaken between 31<sup>st</sup> March – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2011. 100 MPs also completed our Christmas recess survey between 10<sup>th</sup> December 2010 – 14<sup>th</sup> January 2011.

The results are representative of the main Parliamentary parties.

The survey is part of the YouGovStone MPs Omnibus service which regularly interviews Members of Parliament for client organisations.

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## **About YouGovStone**

YouGovStone is the division of YouGov plc, the independent AIM-listed market research company, which specialises in research amongst opinion leaders and hard to reach individuals such as politicians, business leaders and leading decision makers in the UK and overseas. YouGovStone has created an omnibus research product which regularly interviews a sample of at least 100 MPs.

YouGovStone also has a panel of 4,000 opinion leaders in the UK who take part in monthly surveys covering topics of political, social and business interest. The company also conducts regular research with leading individuals from business, media and politics around the world.

**For further information visit [www.yougovstone.com](http://www.yougovstone.com)**

## **About YouGov**

YouGov is an international, full-service market research company primarily using online panels to provide quantitative and qualitative research across a range of specialisms. These include consumer markets, financial services, public sector, technology and telecoms and media. YouGov's full-service offering

spans added-value consultancy, syndicated and product offers, market intelligence reports, omnibus and field and tab services.

YouGov is considered the pioneer of online market research. Through panel management expertise, flexibility and an innovative approach to recruitment, YouGov operates a quality panel of about 300,000 UK members representing all ages, socio-economic groups and other demographic types, with excellent response rates. YouGov also specialises in growing and maintaining dedicated panels of specialist consumer and professional audiences.

YouGov has been acclaimed as the UK's most accurate opinion pollster and dominates Britain's media polling. YouGov is one of the most quoted agencies in Britain and has a well-documented and published track record illustrating the success of its survey methods and quality of its client service work.

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