

SNP continues to lead but Labour closes the gap



In Ipsos MORI's latest STV News poll of voting intentions for the Scottish Parliament, the SNP remains the largest party but Labour has narrowed their lead.

Among those certain to vote in an immediate Holyrood election, 36% would vote for the SNP, down 3 points since our last STV News poll in September. Labour are now 2 points behind in second place on 34%, down a single point since September, while the Conservatives have gained 3 points, standing at 15% and the Liberal Democrats are on 7%, the same as in September.

Nicola Sturgeon remains the most popular of the political leaders measured, despite her net satisfaction rating (the proportion who are satisfied minus the proportion who are dissatisfied) falling to +16 points, down 5 points from September. Better Together leader Alistair Darling has a net satisfaction rating of +3, down 2 points since September.

Among the party leaders, First Minister Alex Salmond has similar ratings to our last STV News poll in September, with a net satisfaction rating of +7, down by a single point. Johann Lamont is on +9, up 3 points, though nearly a third of Scots still do not know enough about the Scottish Labour leader to provide a rating. Among the other party leaders, Ruth Davidson has a rating of +2, up 2 points from September, Willie Rennie remains at -5 and Patrick Harvie stands at +13, up 2 points. However, for each of these leaders, between a third and a half of Scots do not know enough about them to make a judgement on their performance. David Cameron's approval remains at -28, the same as September.

Mark Diffley, Director at Ipsos MORI Scotland said: 'The SNP

would be likely to remain the largest party at Holyrood if there were an election held now but Scottish Labour will be pleased to see the gap between the main two parties close, even if their own support has not increased. The First Minister and his deputy remain the most well-known and popular political figures in Scotland, a factor which they hope will be important in the independence referendum campaign next year.'