



What people think,  
feel and do

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# The Political Report

## 9th July 2020



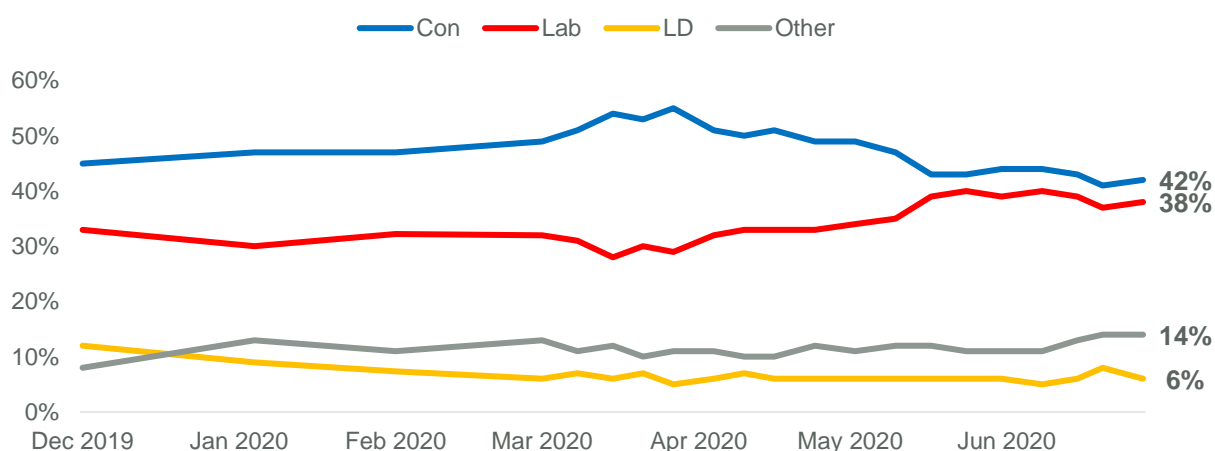
From the Opinium/Observer polling series

10<sup>th</sup> July 2020

## One-minute takeaway

- Conservative lead remains at 4 points over Labour
- Keir Starmer has had a good start to his leadership, with 49% saying they have a more positive opinion of Labour since he started as leader, which is much better than the impact Jeremy Corbyn had on Labour’s brand in his first 100 days.
- Keir Starmer is perceived noticeably more positively than Jeremy Corbyn was at this stage on almost every metric and is perceived better than the Prime Minister on all metrics.
- However, Labour is still seen as not ready for government by 47%, rising to 60% in the ‘Red Wall’ constituencies.
- Trust in Johnson and Sunak to handle the economy has increased slightly since last week: 42% now trust them most, while only 26% trust Starmer and Dodds the most.
- 43% of the public said they approved of the package of measures announced by the Chancellor on Wednesday, with only 12% disapproving
- However, when presented with two options, 36% prefer the end of furlough and introduction of a “job retention bonus”, but 30% would simply prefer the continuation of the furlough scheme, even if only in the hardest hit sectors

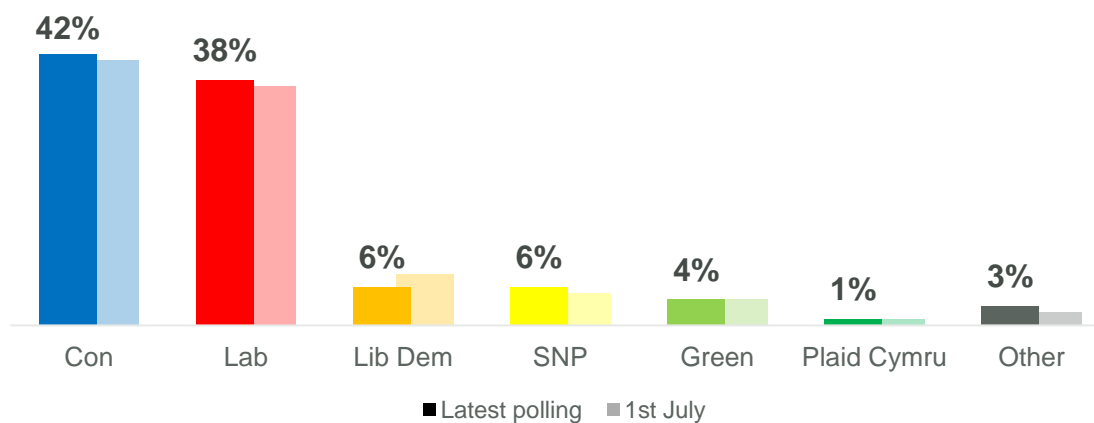
### Voting intention since the 2019 general election



## Headline voting intention

### The Tory lead remains at four points with both main parties regaining a bit of ground

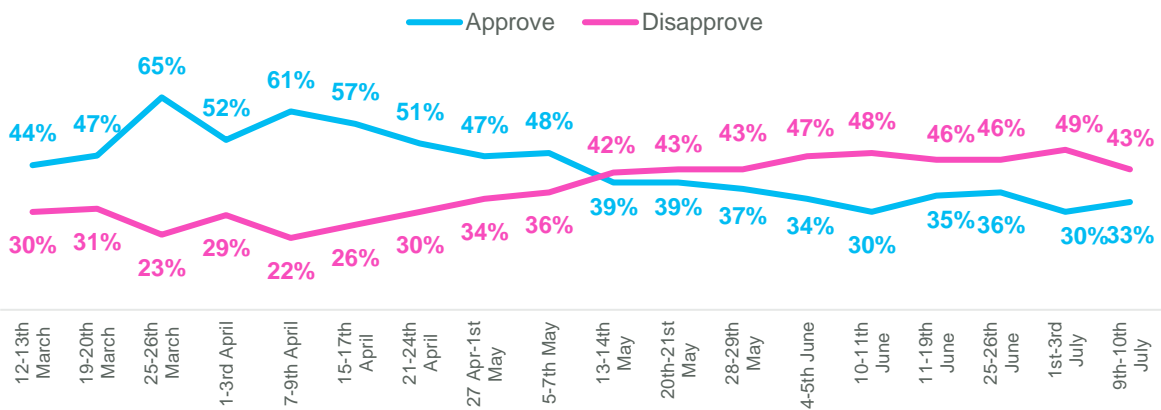
The Conservative's maintained their 4-point lead over Labour this week, with both parties regaining one point. The Conservatives are on 42% this week, up from 41% last week, while Labour is on 38%, up from 37% a week ago. The Lib Dems are back down two points to 6% of the vote.



# Covid-19 crisis

Net approval of government's handling improves from last week but remains in negative territory

Approval of government's handling of the crisis



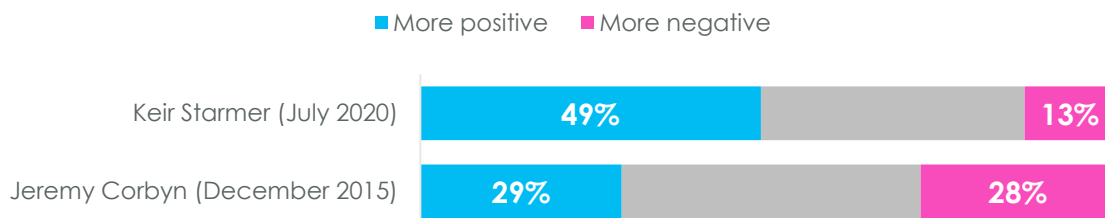
Approval of the government's handling of the Coronavirus crisis has risen since last week, with net approval up from -19% to -10% in a week. However, the government still are considered to be performing poorly, with 43% disapproving of how they are handling the crisis and only a third (33%) approving.

# Keir's leadership

## Keir Starmer's leadership has improved voters' perception of Labour...

A half (49%) of UK adults say that their opinion of the Labour Party has become more positive since Keir Starmer became leader of the Labour Party. Which is much better than Jeremy Corbyn's effect at the end of his first 100 days.

### Change in perception of Labour since they started as leader



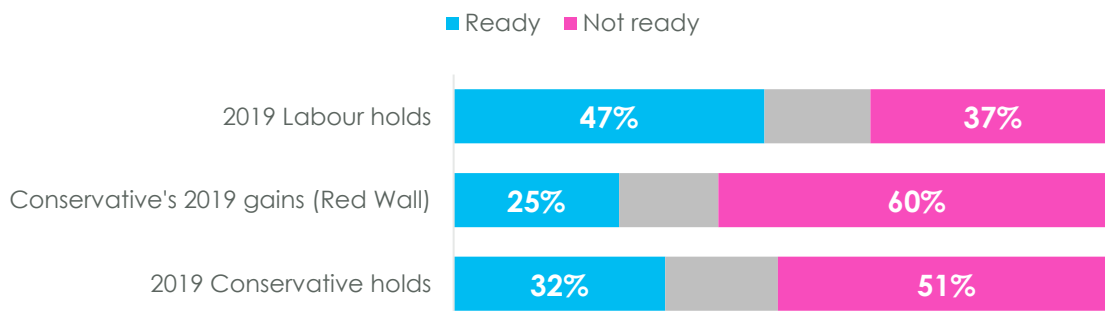
Another positive is that 52% of the public can imagine Sir Keir as prime minister, including over a third (36%) of 2019 Conservative voters, while only 30% cannot imagine him as prime minister.

## ... but it'll take more than 100 days to turnaround the negative perceptions of Labour

However, there are still some real challenges to Labour's brand. Only 36% think that the Labour Party is ready to form the next government, with almost half (47%) saying they are not. This includes over a fifth (22%) of 2019 Labour voters who think the party isn't ready.

Especially problematic for the party is that in Labour's old Red Wall seats (the seats the Tories gained at the last election), 60% of voters think the party is not ready to go back into government, while only 25% think they are ready.

### Is Labour ready for government?

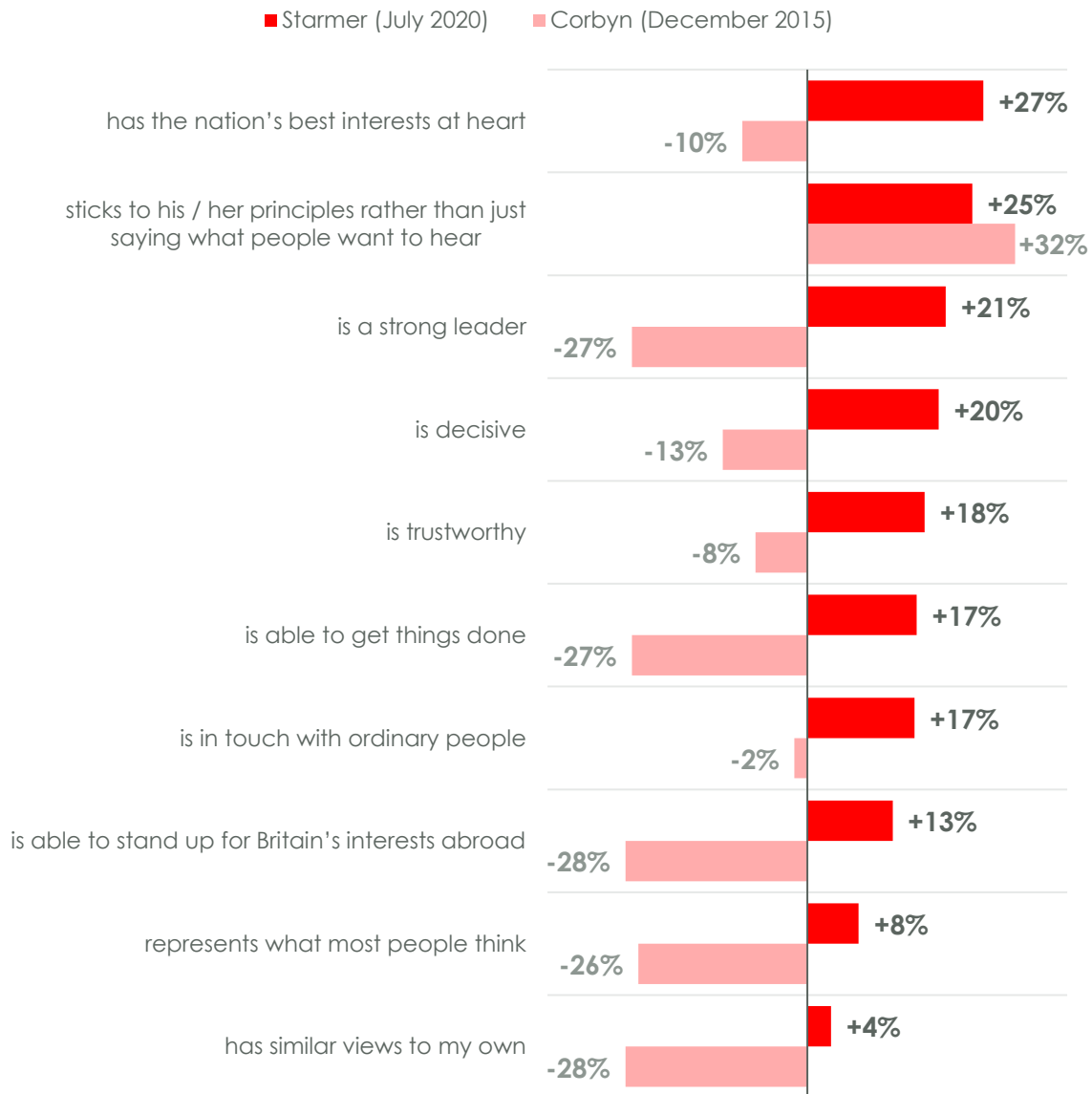


## Keir Starmer's performing well

On almost every metric Keir Starmer has a better rating than Jeremy Corbyn had at his 100 days, except on being someone who sticks to their principles where both Starmer and Corbyn were rated favourable.

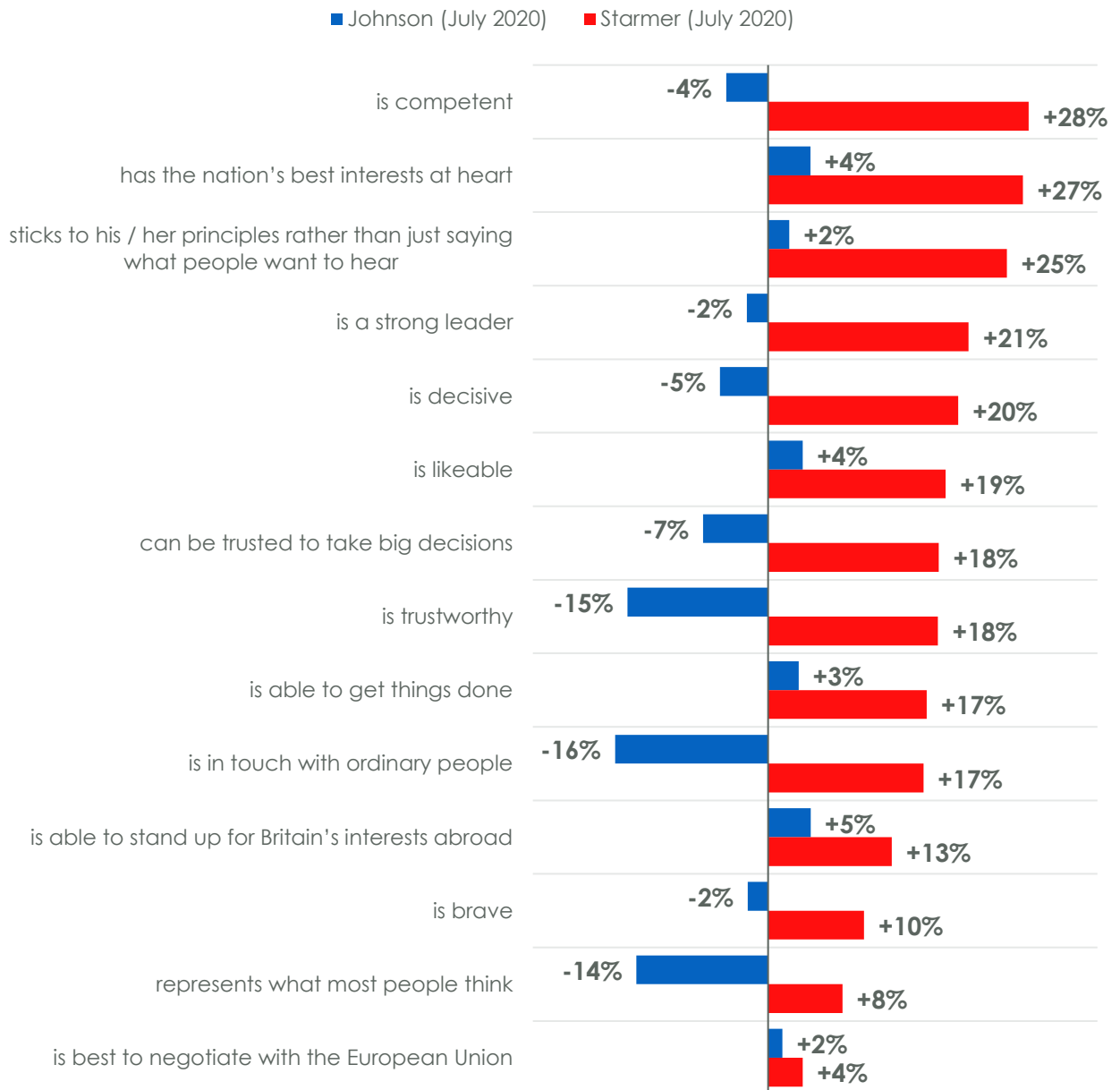
Keir Starmer's biggest strengths now are that he is competent has the nation's best interests at heart (+27%), sticks to his principles (+25%) and is a strong (+21%) and decisive leader (+20%).

### How Starmer and Corbyn were perceived at the end of their first 100 days



Turning to present day, Starmer also has a better rating than the Prime Minister on every metric. To some extent the difference is because a large number have not yet come up with a clear opposing view of Keir Starmer, but this is still a noticeably positive position for the leader of the opposition to be in.

## How Johnson and Starmer are currently perceived



# Summer Statement

## State of the economy

The Chancellor faces a grim economic situation at present, with 68% of the public believing the economy to be in a bad state, with a further three in five (60%) believing it will get worse in the next 12 months.

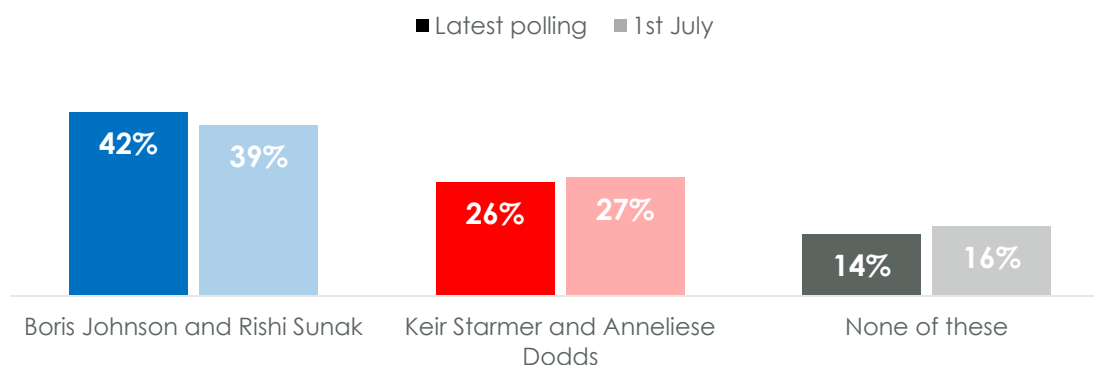
Similarly, one in ten (9%) would describe themselves as “struggling” financially, while a further 36% would say they are “coping”. A small majority (55%) say they are “comfortable”: on balance, the expectation is their personal situation will get slightly worse (28%) rather than better (20%).

The main challenge the Chancellor will face is confidence to return to normal, and this appears to not be there yet: just over half (51%) still think we’re coming out of lockdown too fast, with only 27% saying we’re going at the right pace and 10% saying too slowly.

## Summer statement and furlough approach

The summer statement seems to have a slightly positive effect on the government’s position, with the proportion trusting Boris Johnson and Rishi Sunak the most to handle the economy up from 39% last week to 42% this week.

### Most trusted to handle the economy



When asked directly, 43% of the public said they approved of the package of measures announced by the Chancellor on Wednesday, with only 12% disapproving.

However, when the government’s general approach for furlough was put up against the opposition’s plan the gap was much less clear: 36% prefer the end of furlough and introduction of a “job retention bonus”, but 30% would simply prefer the continuation of the furlough scheme, even if that is only in the hardest hit sectors.



# About Opinium

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