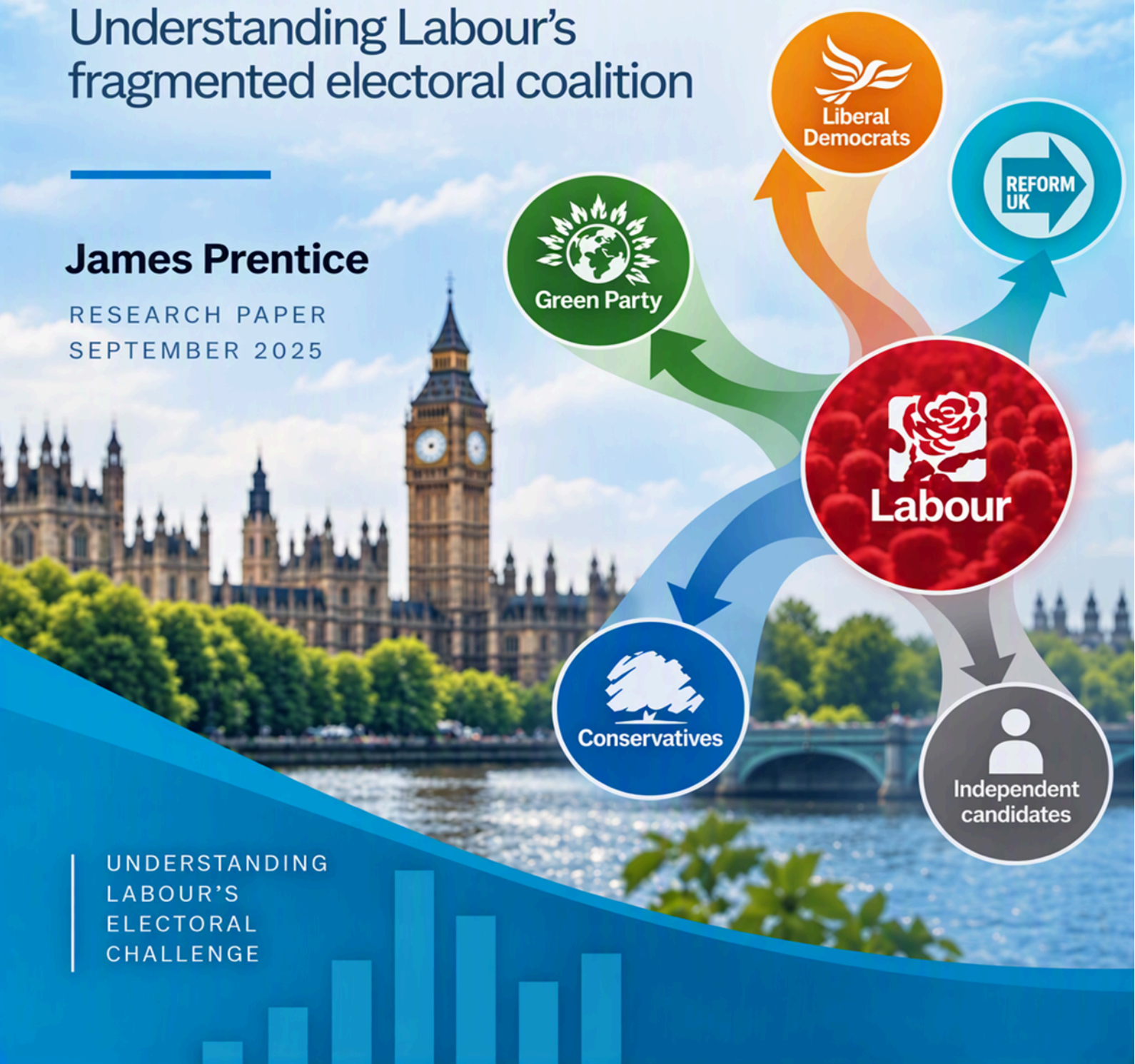
Capture Politics

DATA INSIGHT UNDERSTANDING

UNDERSTANDING POLITICAL CHANGE IN BRITAIN

Labour's New Electoral Challenge

Understanding Labour's fragmented electoral coalition



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RESEARCH PAPER
SEPTEMBER 2025

UNDERSTANDING LABOUR'S ELECTORAL CHALLENGE

Core Findings:

This paper analyses 2024 Labour voters to identify why voters are leaving Labour and explore what the government can do to beat Reform. In summary, this research paper identifies:

1. Labour has lost far greater support to left-liberal parties (Lib-Dem and Greens) than it has to Reform. Further, the number currently undecided greatly outstrips losses to Reform.
2. Most indicators show that losses to left-liberal parties are easier to regain than voters lost to Reform.
3. Voters flowing to left-liberal parties have contrasting demographies, views and priorities to those who have jumped to Reform. Those lost to left-liberal parties prioritise economic concerns, whilst Reform switchers focus on immigration.
4. Left-Liberal and Reform switchers have contrasting opinions on cultural questions. Losses to Left-Liberal parties tend to tolerate migration levels and mostly see migration as a positive, whilst Reform losses take the opposite view.
5. A core driver of Labour's losses stems from economic dissatisfaction and negative perceptions around the government's handling of the economy and public services. However, Reform losses tend to stem from dissatisfaction with managing migration.
6. The government's negative narrative on immigration is likely turning away larger groups of left-liberal voters and not winning over individuals moving from Labour to Reform. This is also limiting the effectiveness of Labour's more positive economic message, which may resonate better with the majority of losses who prioritise economic concerns.

7. Another core cause of losses has resulted from individuals viewing the Labour brand negatively. This indicates government U-turns and instability are damaging Labour's electability.
8. The views of those Labour lost to the Lib-Dems, Greens and Reform in the last parliament reflect the losses to these respective parties in 2025. Therefore, current losses represent a continuation of the electoral challenges Labour faced in the last parliament.
9. Labour's most optimal electoral strategy to beat Reform likely resides in pursuing undecided voters and losses to left-liberal parties. This primarily involves deploying a more progressive platform that focuses on improving the economy, cost of living and the state of public services.

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James Prentice - Research paper - Labour's new electoral challenge & overcoming it

Introduction

With a landslide victory secured in the 2024 general election, it appeared Labour had overcome the electoral challenges that crippled it during the 2010s. Despite the party being dragged to the hard left of British politics and suffering a devastating defeat to the Tories, it won its first national election since 2005.

Labour achieved this by selecting a leader who resonated better with the country and moderating its policy platform. The leadership concentrated on communicating that Labour had learnt lessons on the economy and would run a balanced spending programme. As the cost of living soared after lockdowns were lifted, being seen as the most economically credible party became essential. Vitally, the change in tone on the economy allowed the party to win over key swing voters who drift between Labour and Conservative, primarily for economic reasons. The party also changed its strategy and made a large effort to appeal across the Brexit divide. It mainly achieved this through appealing to working-class voters who had supported Brexit by focusing on messaging that matched these voters' concerns. They altered the party's position on migration, giving clearer commitments to reduce net-migration numbers and tackling rising numbers of people crossing the channel illegally.

To secure a strong victory, the party had also invested heavily in data-driven campaigning techniques, allowing it to more effectively target specific voter groups within target seats. This overcame the problem of Labour increasing its vote share with seats it already held, whilst narrowly missing out on the constituencies it needed to secure to win power. Indeed, the party's vote share was so efficient that Labour secured seats it may not have expected to, with the party now having an overall majority of 148 on only 34% of the vote. This isn't to say that mistakes

weren't made and that a higher vote share couldn't have been obtained, but given where the party was in early 2020, this was a remarkable turnaround. Yet, despite coming out of the previous parliamentary cycle as the strongest party, Labour now finds itself in a distant second place. According to the average of all the polls, Labour sits on 21% of the vote, 9% behind Reform – something that would give Farage an overall majority. The rise of Reform is the next electoral challenge Labour faces, and they must do so from a weak position. Labour's first year in government has proven tricky, and its fragile coalition of voters obtained in 2024 has splintered, showing Labour's electoral problems have returned.

The purpose of this article is to explore the challenges Labour faces in keeping its 2024 voter coalition together and explain why Labour in government has so far been unable to unite its base. It will do this by using the British Election Study (BES) to isolate individuals who voted Labour in 2024 and identify who they would support if a general election were called in the Summer of 2025. The analysis of these voters uses weights to ensure it is representative of the country's population. Its core purpose is to explore these voters' opinions in order to understand why voters are abandoning Labour for each respective party. Such findings will allow the identification of Labour's most optimal electoral strategy to beat Reform and win the next general election. Therefore, it will provide Labour with a clear direction to take for the rest of this parliament. It will also provide a clear electoral strategy that can be deployed in time for the next general election.

This paper argues the most optimum strategy is to focus on economic and government credibility and to target voters the party has lost to the Lib-Dems, Greens and the undecided. Currently, liberal voters are highly fragmented, but they have common concerns and priorities. They prioritise improving the economy and public services, and disagree with the negative viewpoints on immigration. Indeed,

the BES demonstrates that Labour lost some of these voters before the 2024 election and will need to try to win over liberals who didn't vote for them in 2024. Only by doing this can Labour stop the continuation of losing its core liberal base that allows it to be electorally competitive.

Specifically, this article asserts that by uniting these disparate voters, they can secure greater support than in 2024 and beat Reform. In key marginal seats, it is important to remember that it is not a straight fight between Labour and Reform. In a highly fragmented political system, Reform can be beaten by amassing voters they can't reach, rather than by only taking votes directly from them. The targeting of liberal voters provides this as uniting this group can provide 35% of the vote, enough to beat Reform (who repel liberal voters). It would also give the government a clearer identity and provide it with the purpose and vision many wish it to have, thus providing Labour with a clear re-election pitch. This paper argues that such a strategy will also avoid the pitfall of pursuing a relatively small group of voters lost to Reform, who will be much harder to retain.

Labour's 2024 Voters: Who are they and where are they now?

They have mostly moved to left/liberal parties

Labour has retained 51% of all individuals who voted for Labour in the 2024 general election (4.95m people). The biggest loss of support sits amongst those who don't know how they will vote in a future national election. Figure 1 demonstrates that 1 in 5 now say they are unsure who to support, 6.7% of all voters (1.92m people). In part, this reflects rising numbers of people who do not attach themselves to any political party and remain mostly undecided until polling day. Yet, this also reflects how those who backed Labour are unsure they can

continue to back Labour based on its performance within the first year of government. They haven't yet decided to leave Labour, but will need convincing when Labour pitches for re-election.

The next biggest group of losses has occurred to left/liberal parties, 18.4%, 1.79m individuals – 6.2% of those who voted. The Lib-Dems have taken slightly more than the Greens (9.8% to 8.6%), but both have accrued over 835,000 voters from Labour and have taken more support from Labour than Reform. In contrast, Reform has taken 8.2% of Labour's 2024 voter base, 796,000 people. Crucially, this only represents 2.8% of everybody who voted in the last election, and is less than half the number lost to liberal-left parties and those currently undecided. Losses to the Conservatives are also relatively small, with 2.8% of all Labour's 2024 vote flowing to the Tories. It is also important to note that the trend of Labour losing more voters to left-liberal parties is a continuation of a trend that developed in the last parliament. 19.6% of Labour's 2019 vote switched to the Greens (11%) and the Lib-Dems (8.6%) by the time of the 2024 election. Reform losses only comprised 2.4% of Labour's 2019 support base. Therefore, whilst working-class losses from Labour to the radical right may generate a good deal of media attention, it is important to remember that Labour's main losses stem from other sources. It is also important to note that this phenomenon has been occurring for some time.

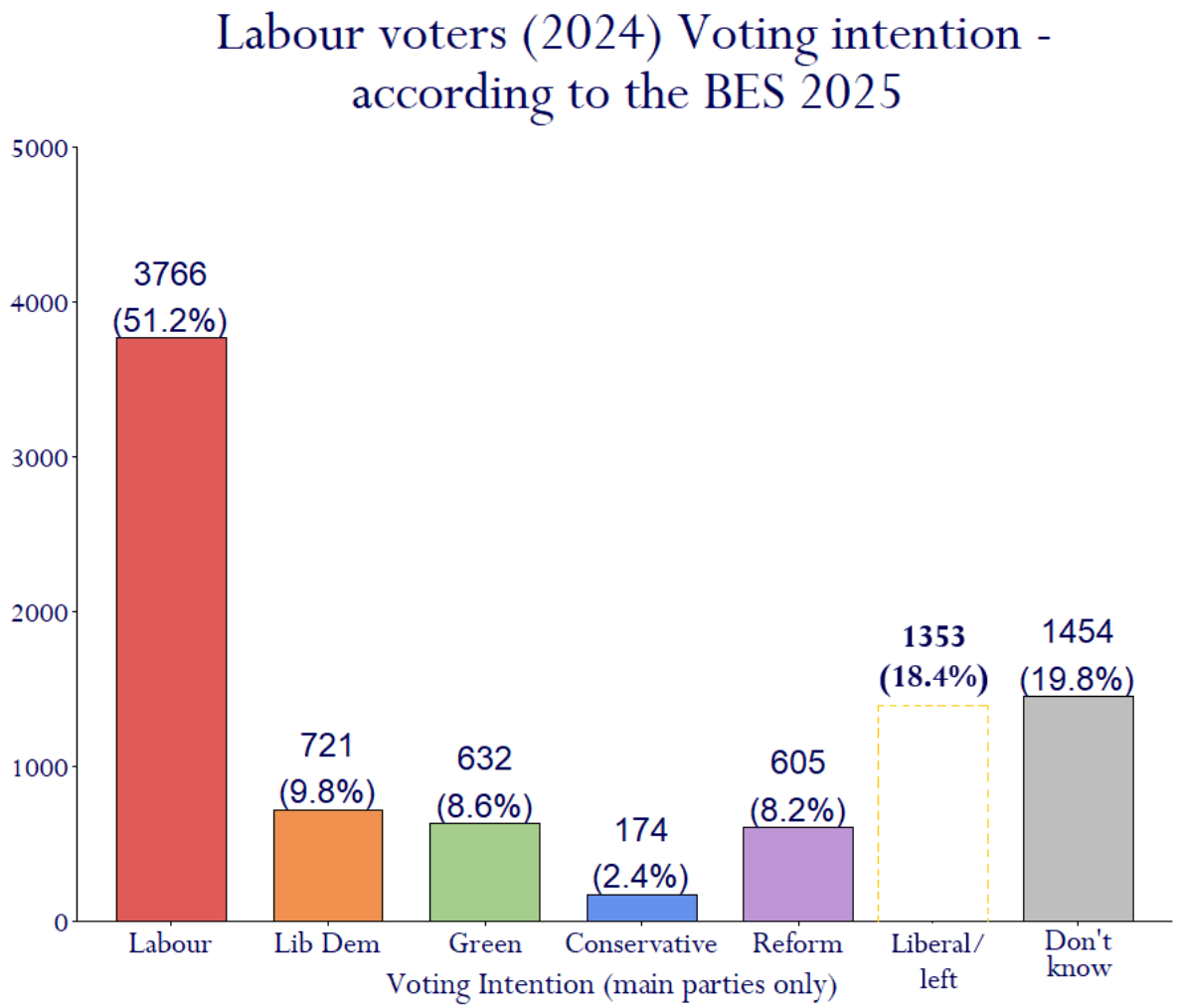


Figure 1.x: Current voting intention of all individuals who voted Labour in the 2024 general election (Note: the analysis cuts SNP & Plaid due to small sample sizes). Source: BES 2025.

Their background varies by their new party

Losses being split between left-liberal and radical right parties raises the prospect that contrasting groups of voters are leaving Labour for different reasons. This is because these parties have incompatible policy platforms, meaning people switching to Reform are unlikely to support the policy platform of the Lib-Dems. The first sign that this is the case can be found in the demographic composition of these voters, see Table 1. Labour to Reform switchers tend to be white, older people who were more often on a low income, and resided within working-class

groupings who live in socially rented accommodation. Fewer of these individuals had gone to university and had acquired home ownership. In contrast, those who have drifted to the Lib-Dems, on average, are more likely to have a high income and more often own property. They also tend to reflect the average age of a Labour voter. The Greens, however, tend to be younger, reflect a broader range of income groupings and rent more often. As a group, Green and Lib-Dem losses are more ethnically diverse, university-educated and work in professional occupations (AB). Further, the losses Labour experienced in 2019 followed the same patterns, such as losses to the Greens in 2024 coming from younger, more highly educated groupings. Alternatively, those who switched to Reform tended to be older individuals with fewer qualifications.

Category	Age	Uni Educated	Home Own	Rent Social	Income High	Income Low	White	AB	DE
Loyal Labour	38	67.0%	66.3%	17.9%	37.9%	21.2%	81.4%	35.3%	15.3%
Lib-Dem	38	63.2%	61.1%	20.9%	37.1%	27.0%	85.3%	32.7%	20.1%
Green	31.5	68.8%	53.2%	24.4%	34.5%	26.7%	83.3%	32.4%	19.9%
Conservative	42.4	56.1%	68.6%	15.4%	32.8%	21.8%	74.6%	31.8%	17.9%
Reform	42.2	**30.5%**	55.8%	**29.5%**	21.0%	**37.6%**	90.4%	19.1%	**30.9%**
Don't Know	39.1	52.7%	64.9%	19.2%	26.1%	25.7%	83.9%	26.3%	22.3%

Table 1: A table showing the demographic composition of Labour 2024 voters by the party they would currently support.

Interestingly, these socio-economic differences identify several potential reasons as to why Labour's 2024 base is fragmenting. Firstly, the population of those lost to Reform highlight the problems Labour experienced in retaining its traditional working-class base in the 2010s have returned. These problems stemmed from a sense that Labour did not reflect concerns about immigration and had forgotten these left-behind communities' economic needs. Specifically, the disproportionate levels of low income indicate that such places feel Labour has not delivered the

economic change that has been demanded by left-behind communities for successive elections. This raises the possibility that Labour's strategy before the election of emphasising change, whilst providing short-term gains, may have produced longer-term problems. This is because whilst those wanting more economic investment voted for change, this government may not have the resources and economy to be able to provide it. Therefore, as the expectation gap between what government these people thought they were electing compared to the government they have grows, they will become less likely to support Labour. Further, the high levels of social housing amongst these individuals may also indicate Labour isn't making a strong enough appeal to people living in areas more likely to be affected by multiple levels of deprivation.

The contrasting demography of those who have flowed to the Lib-Dems and the Green Party also highlights the re-emergence of the cultural divide. The groups most often switching to left/liberal parties are most likely to prioritise maintaining trade links and increasing economic growth. The loss of such voters indicates fears over Labour's ability to manage the economy competently. Whilst this group contains higher levels of homeownership, the increase in the cost-of-living may have also caused those with mortgages and high energy costs to feel noticeably poorer. This again could highlight how disappointment over economic performance and the lack of change being delivered is costing the government support. Perhaps most interestingly, these demographics are also more likely to be indifferent, or even supportive, of immigration. They more often feel that migration is of economic benefit and less frequently state concerns around the cultural impact of migration. They are also more likely to have more liberal outlooks towards international institutions and support unrestricted trade. Therefore, 2024 Labour voters flowing to left-liberal parties are likely to have the opposite opinions on cultural questions that span across the traditional left/right divide. Vitally, this

highlights how a wider political realignment may yet again be limiting the Labour Party's electability. Throughout the 2010s, a value divide separated Labour's base of support into culturally liberal and conservative camps. The party consistently found it difficult to unite these groups, and by 2019, culturally conservative groupings had left them for the Tories. Meanwhile, as the party tried to keep its working-class base on side, it alienated culturally liberal groupings that had contrasting values, who mostly flocked to the Lib-Dems and Greens.

Figure 2 shows that this political phenomenon may be occurring again. The Lib-Dems and Greens have mostly gained voters who are liberal, with those on the left turning to the Greens and those in the centre moving to the Lib-Dems. Reform and the Conservatives have received left-authoritarians who backed Labour in 2024. Importantly, these trends also mirrored the losses Labour experienced amongst those who backed Labour in 2019. The only noticeable difference was in 2024, when there was a slightly stronger trend in left-liberals moving to the Greens and right-authoritarians switching to Reform. These contrasting overall ideological positions of these voters demonstrate how Labour has been losing different voters for contrasting reasons over successive years. Therefore, the value divide that cost Labour so dearly in the latter half of the 2010s may well be back. It also reveals the prospect of how it will be hard to recover losses to Reform. This is because few voters move between this new divide, meaning those who have moved to right-authoritarian parties are unlikely to support liberal parties like Labour in future elections.

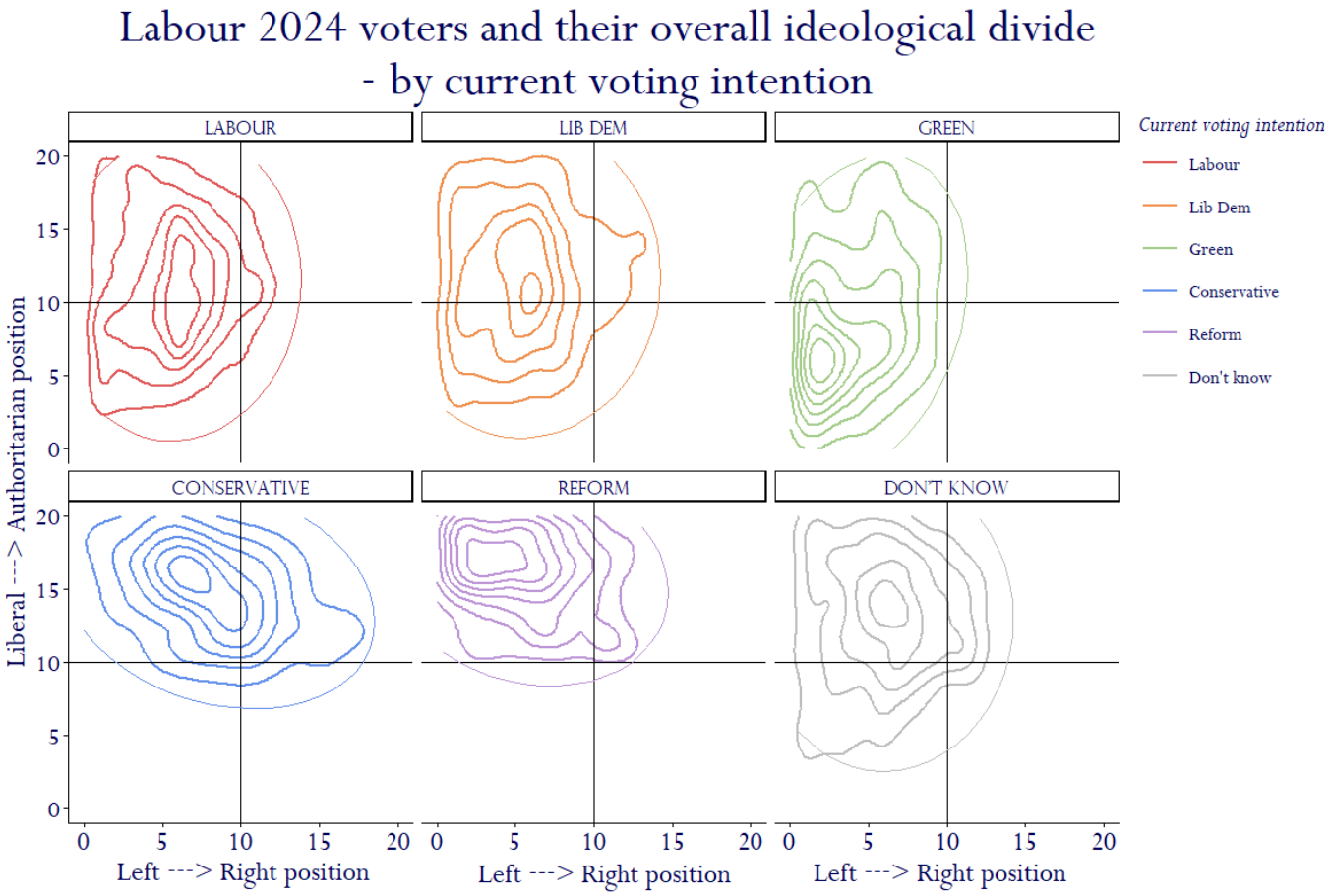


Figure 2: 2024 Labour voters and their overall ideological position (by their current voting intention). Source: BES 2025.

Their most immediate thoughts and concerns:

These voters are similar in what they feel are the biggest issues facing the country. These thoughts reflect concerns around the economy, migration flows, public sector performance and the wider environment. For all voters, except those who have switched to Reform, they view the economy as the number one issue the country should address. 64% of those who have stayed with Labour, are currently undecided or have switched to the Lib-Dems, Conservative and Green Party state the economy should be this government's focus. Further, 30% of those who have switched to Reform also prioritise this issue the most. Therefore, whilst Labour's

losses have differed, they do share economic concerns and view such worries as of high importance. Yet, the key difference amongst Reform switchers is that 61% feel that the subject of immigration should be Labour's priority. It should also be noted that 20% of undecided voters and 23% lost to the Tories share this feeling. Yet, 30% of those lost to the Greens most prioritise the environment. Whilst these differences in priorities are hard to manage, other concerns, such as health, public service provision, taxation, and government spending, largely follow similar regularity in salience, regardless of which party is supported. Crucially, these priorities follow very similar patterns to the voters Labour lost in the 2019-2024 parliament. A majority (54%) of losses to the Lib-Dems and Greens stated the economy to be their core concern, with the Greens also being more likely to cite the environment as their biggest priority. Again, losses to Reform stood out, with a majority of this group stating immigration to be their top concern (60%) and only a third stating the economy as their core motivation. Once more, this suggests Labour's problems are an extension of the electoral challenges they experienced in the previous parliament.

Whilst most of these voters can agree that the government should be focusing on improving the economy and managing migration, there is no consensus on who they feel can manage their largest concerns. Figure 3 shows that a majority of voters whom Labour has retained believe that the government is handling their most pressing concern better than any other party could (68%). A further 23% feel that no party could deliver on their core concerns. Worryingly for Labour, few of these who have ceased to support the party feel Labour is the party that can deliver for their most immediate concerns. Amongst those who have switched to the Greens, 54% believe the Greens can perform better on their key priorities, which are mostly economic or environment-related. This would indicate that some are moving to the Greens due to a feeling that Labour is not improving the

economy or representing their economic viewpoints. As 47% of the losses Labour experienced to the Greens in the 2019-2024 parliament also felt this way, it would indicate this has been a long-term challenge for Labour.

70% of those now undecided, 46% of those who have moved to the Lib-Dems, and 34% of Green switchers say no party is offering solutions. This indicates that some are leaving Labour as they believe traditional governing parties can no longer deliver. Indeed, only 34% of those moving to the Lib-Dems believe the party to be the best to manage economic affairs. This indicates that a majority of voters are moving due to economic dissatisfaction rather than embracing a different party's policies. Reform voters are the exception to this, where a clear majority (77%) believe Reform can deliver on their core issue, potentially making these voters much harder to win back. 92% of the time, these thoughts related to immigration (62%) or the economy (30%). There was also a large proportion (65%) of those lost to Reform in the previous parliament who believed Reform was best to manage their core concern, again, most often stated to be immigration. Consequently, Labour's long-term inability to convince these voters they can control migration flows is likely a core reason to why these voters have jumped to Reform. This is logical as Reform has heavily focused its messaging on how it would reduce net-migration and small boat crossing numbers. However, Reform's efforts to have an economic pitch to their potential left-wing base of support may also be helping them secure voters dissatisfied with their declining standard of living. Interestingly, a further 20% of recent losses to Reform state that no party can handle their core concerns. This indicates that wider political dissatisfaction with the mainstream may be causing Labour to lose working-class voters to Reform.

Therefore, wider disappointment about government delivery, such as implementing promised economic change, might be partly causing Labour's base to splinter

across small parties. This prospect is confirmed by BES data, where only those who have stayed with Labour mostly state they approved of the government's delivery (47%). Further, 33% are indifferent, meaning only 16% believe the government has performed poorly. Yet, for those who have abandoned the party, there is a clear majority that indicates disapproval, regardless of what party they now support. Reform switchers give the clearest negative opinion, with 77% citing disapproval in government delivery. Again, this strong negative review of the government amongst reform switchers highlights how they may be the hardest group to win back.

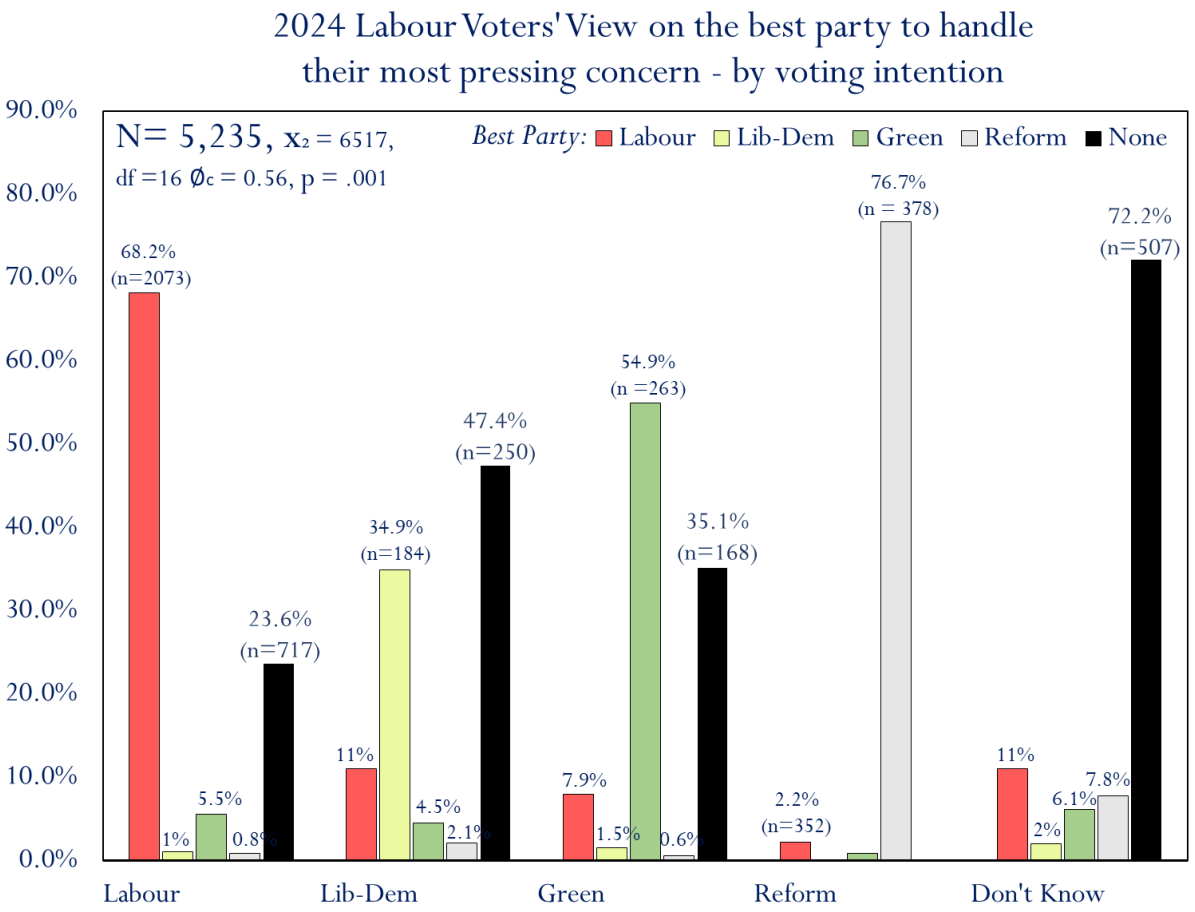


Figure 3: 2024 Labour voters' view on which party can best manage their primary concern by current voting intention. Source: BES 2025.

A perception that Labour has negatively affected the economy and services.

Figure 4 outlines that the majority of individuals who have left Labour in its first year of government have perceived the new government to have negatively impacted the economy. Roughly two-thirds of those who have switched to the Lib-Dems, Green and Conservative (or are currently undecided) see the Labour government as having weakened the economy. A majority of these voters (54%) also say they feel that the government's handling of the economy in general has been poor. Further, only 10% of these voters felt Labour had been performing well on economic matters. Again, this indicates that concerns around economic competence are hindering the party's ability to keep its coalition of voters together.

75% of those who have left for Reform feel that the Labour government have not had a positive impact on UK economic performance. Also, 79% of Reform switchers felt the government had handled economic decisions badly, and only 5% felt they managed such matters well. Again, this shows how hardened these voters may have become against the Labour government, possibly meaning they will be the hardest group to retain. In contrast, more than half of those who have stayed with Labour have perceived the new administration to have improved economic performance. Also, 37% believed they had done a good job in the day-to-day running of the economy. Therefore, when Labour can convince its 2024 voter base that it can manage the economy, the party can retain support. Vitally, this suggests that to retain power, the government needs to convince voters they can handle economic matters well.

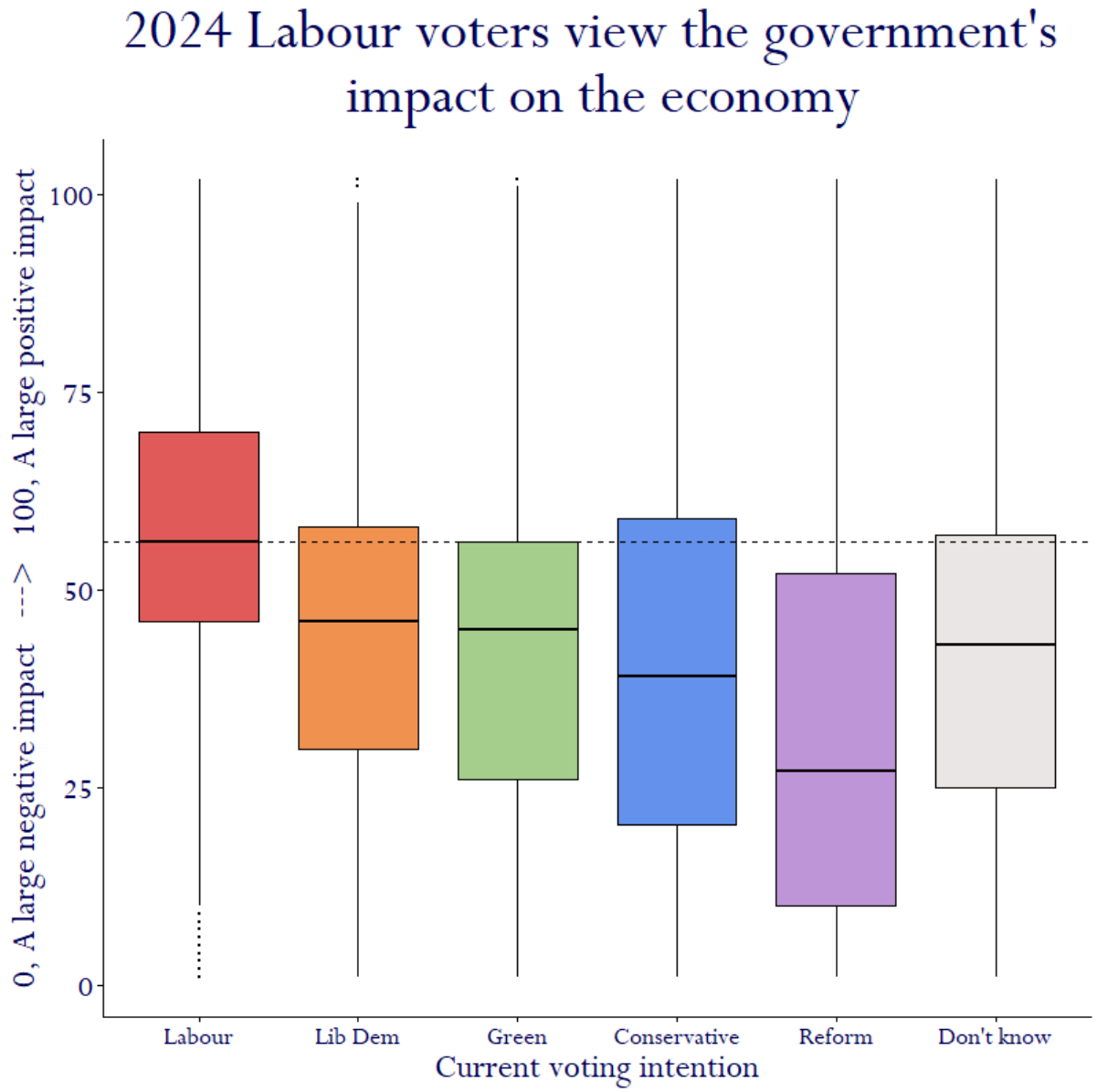


Figure 4. 2024 Labour voters' view on the government's perceived economic impact by their current voting intention (0-100 scale). Source: BES 2025.

Whilst a majority of individuals lost to the Lib-Dems, Greens and Reform recognise the previous government damaged the economy, Labour hasn't been able to convince their 2024 supporters that they can do better. The first reason for this may be due to the handling of key decisions that have attracted much media attention. Decisions on winter-fuel payments, U-turns on welfare reforms and changes in tax that were not communicated before the election may have damaged individuals' faith in Labour's ability to handle day-to-day economic

management. For example, the unanticipated change in employer national insurance contributions will have caused business owners to change their business plans, causing unwelcome instability and challenges. This could help to explain why business confidence has dropped, something that has likely lowered economic growth. Importantly, such factors could have caused support amongst business owners who backed Labour in 2024 to decline. This is confirmed by BES data, where voters who have switched to Reform contain a higher proportion of self-employed business owners (+2.2%-points) than those who have stuck with Labour. Losses to the Lib-Dems and Greens also contained a higher proportion of people identified as self-employed.

A worsening economy

Another reason for this may be that those who have left Labour perceive the country's economy to be weakening. 64% of losses to the Lib-Dems and Greens say that the UK's economy has worsened, and 79% of Reform voters feel the same way. Less than 10% of losses stated they believed the national economy had improved. A similar proportion of voters who Labour lost also believed the economy was worsening and would continue to worsen. This indicates that the concern over Labour's economic credibility could produce long-term challenges for Labour in winning back support. Further, focusing on 2019 Labour voters who switched to other parties in 2024, there are again concerns around economic competence. 77% of voters who lost to Reform thought the economy had worsened, but did not view Labour as able to handle economic affairs. This highlights how long-standing doubts over economic credibility could be causing Labour to lose support. Further, 65% of all voters lost to the Lib-Dems and Greens felt the economy had worsened, but did not view Labour as able to manage

economic affairs. This indicates that such voters who backed Corbyn may be dissatisfied with Labour's shift to the centre.

This level of dissatisfaction also highlights how global events that have lowered economic growth may have encouraged individuals to feel Labour cannot handle the economy. Therefore, now in government, the impacts of tariffs, higher cost-of-living post-pandemic and an inherited long-term stagnant economy may be weakening support for Labour. This is because the same economic trends that weakened the conservatives in government may now be damaging Labour's perceived credibility, thus lowering the number of people willing to support the party. It may also be creating a steady flow of media headlines that is causing people to feel that the economy is weakening. This is because individuals might associate reported rises in inflation, low levels of growth, increasing unemployment and high levels of welfare spending with unpopular government decisions, such as tax rises.

One particular challenge to overcome will be the feeling that most voters' personal finances are being reduced. 47% of Labour's losses to the Lib-Dems and Greens felt that their local economy and household finances had worsened, with 60% of Reform switchers also sharing this view. This can help to explain why 80% of Labour voters believe that the cost of living has become harsher. Again, there is limited optimism from all voters that Labour has lost and that this trend will improve. As Labour had promised to deliver economic change, the lack of progress seen in the national economy and individuals' personal household finances may be causing them to feel that this promise hasn't been fulfilled. This may have caused a proportion of Labour's 2024 base to believe Labour can't deliver this change, causing them to look elsewhere. Indeed, more than 50% of the individuals Labour lost to all parties in the 2019-2024 parliament felt their cost of living and their

local economy had worsened, but did not perceive Labour as a party that could reverse this trend. This highlights how losses post-2024 are a continuation of a concern that Labour can't tackle the cost-of-living crisis. The most recent losses to Reform, who are disproportionately on low incomes, are the most pessimistic about their current and future finances. This means they may particularly feel this way and could be very hard to win back.

Concerns over public services declining

The belief that Labour cannot deliver change may extend far wider than economic-related thoughts. When asked how the Labour government was handling a range of issues, only those who have stuck with Labour feel the government is handling public service delivery well. 41% of those still supporting Labour feel the government is handling the NHS well, with a further 30% feeling that Labour has not worsened things, even though they could not cite improvements. However, 44% of those who have switched to the Lib-Dems believed the NHS had been handled badly since Labour had come to office, and 53% of Green switchers also agreed with this sentiment. A similar proportion of those who were undecided felt the same way. Again, Reform voters were most frequently dissatisfied with Labour's performance, with 71% of these voters feeling the government had not delivered on the NHS.

These concerns over the government's impact extend widely. For instance, 52% of all lost voters believed education services had worsened. 70% of Reform switchers believed Labour had handled crime badly, with a third of Lib-Dem and Green losses feeling the same way. Firstly, this indicates that the frustration over a lack of delivery has occurred across government responsibilities. Again, the gap between the change that people expect and that can be delivered within this

parliament may have contributed to 2024 Labour voters' disappointment. Vitally, this may have encouraged some of these disillusioned individuals to seek alternatives. Further, the widespread nature of performance-related concerns may also reflect how the bumpy first year of government has dented belief in Labour's governing credibility. The mishandling of welfare reforms, backbench rebellions, U-turns on winter fuel allowances and high-profile resignations may have created negative perceptions around the government's ability to govern. Indeed, the large reshuffle recently may have also added to a sense of government instability, again creating concerns with Labour's ability to deliver. Most challenging for Labour is that the 2019 losses they experienced to the Greens and Reform already had a perception that Labour could not handle key services, such as the NHS. 60% of Green losses felt Labour would do a poor job, and 67% of losses to Reform also felt this, indicating long-term concerns about Labour's ability to manage core public services. Therefore, Labour will need to combat this perception with much more stable governing going forward if they hope to regain some of their lost support.

Opinions on Immigration vary across Labour's Fragmented Vote

In terms of the level of immigration, most 2024 Labour voters are indifferent (44% stating they neither want to increase nor decrease migration). 52% of those who have stuck with Labour believe that migration should be maintained at current levels. This is also the case for 49% of Lib-Dem and Green switchers, and 40% of individuals who have swung to the Tories. The core difference can be seen within individuals who have switched to Reform, where only 9% are indifferent and 87% desire net-migration figures to be reduced. In contrast, only 15% of voters who have jumped to the Greens want numbers to be lowered, and 33% would accept

an increase in migration. 22% of Lib-Dem voters and those loyal to Labour would also allow numbers to increase. Undecided voters are more of a mix, with 40% wanting numbers to be reduced and 36% feeling that current levels should be maintained. Crucially, what this shows is how a value divide around a salient issue will make it hard to keep Labour's 2024 base together. Labour's largest losses are mostly content with current migration levels and may not want to see a Labour government focus on reducing numbers. By targeting the losses to Reform, who overwhelmingly want to see migration reduced and see this as a priority, Labour may alienate the larger losses they have experienced to the Lib-Dems and Greens.

Most of Labour's losses do not feel Labour reflects their views on immigration

Further exploration of the BES shows this threat to be real. Respondents are asked what they perceive a party's immigration policy to be. Out of those who have switched from Labour to Lib-Dem, 10% perceive Labour's policy to be to increase migration. Also, only 23% thought Labour was aiming to reduce migration, with most seeing Labour as maintaining current levels. Instead, these voters perceived the Lib-Dem's position to be closer to their own. In contrast, out of those lost to Reform, only 17% see Labour as a party of reducing migration. Yet, 83% perceive Reform as a party of reducing migration, which is the preference of 87% of voters lost to Reform, see Figure 5. Consequently, despite Labour's focus on talking tough on migration, they have been unable to keep these voters partly because of a perception that Reform is the party of reducing migration and Labour isn't. In contrast, those lost to the Lib-Dems and Greens perceive Labour's position on migration differently. Especially with the Greens, far more see Labour as a party of reducing migration (+30%p) and a smaller proportion see Labour as reflecting their pro-migration position (-27%p). Few Lib-Dem switchers also perceived Labour as

reflecting this position (-10%p) and believe Labour to be an anti-immigration party focusing on reducing migration (+9%p).

Labour's messaging has emphasised how the government is cracking down on immigration. On social media, the party has created advertisements communicating how Labour is reducing migration, some of which are styled in Reform colours. The party has released videos showing the public how they are deporting more people. Further, Starmer has intervened with speeches outlining how immigration needed to be tackled to stop the UK from becoming "an island of strangers." This focus on chasing voters who prefer reducing migration levels might be hampering the parties' ability to keep more liberal voters. This is because these voters more often want to see Labour reflecting a less divisive and more positive view of migrants, but are repelled by messaging that resonates more with Reform voters. This has been evidenced in focus group research by the University of Southampton, where liberal voters Labour has lost reported being less likely to back Labour after watching the "island of strangers" speech.

Further, the government's negative narrative around migration may be distracting from the positive economic policies Labour has enacted, such as the rise in minimum wage and increase in investment. This misses the opportunity to counteract the narrative that the government is not delivering on the economy and public services, which is key to securing re-election. It has also resulted in the government placing less emphasis on communicating the delivery of positive policies that left-liberals will support, and placing more emphasis on a migration policy they are unlikely to accept. This is all problematic as the liberal losses to the Greens and Lib-Dem that have resulted from such narratives have greatly surpassed those lost to Reform. Also, those who are indicating they will switch to Reform have not been brought back by this strategy, leaving Labour with

significant losses from both culturally liberal and conservative voters. Therefore, pursuing a larger group of liberal voters who have a more positive outlook on migration and prioritise economic concerns may be a more viable re-election strategy for Labour.

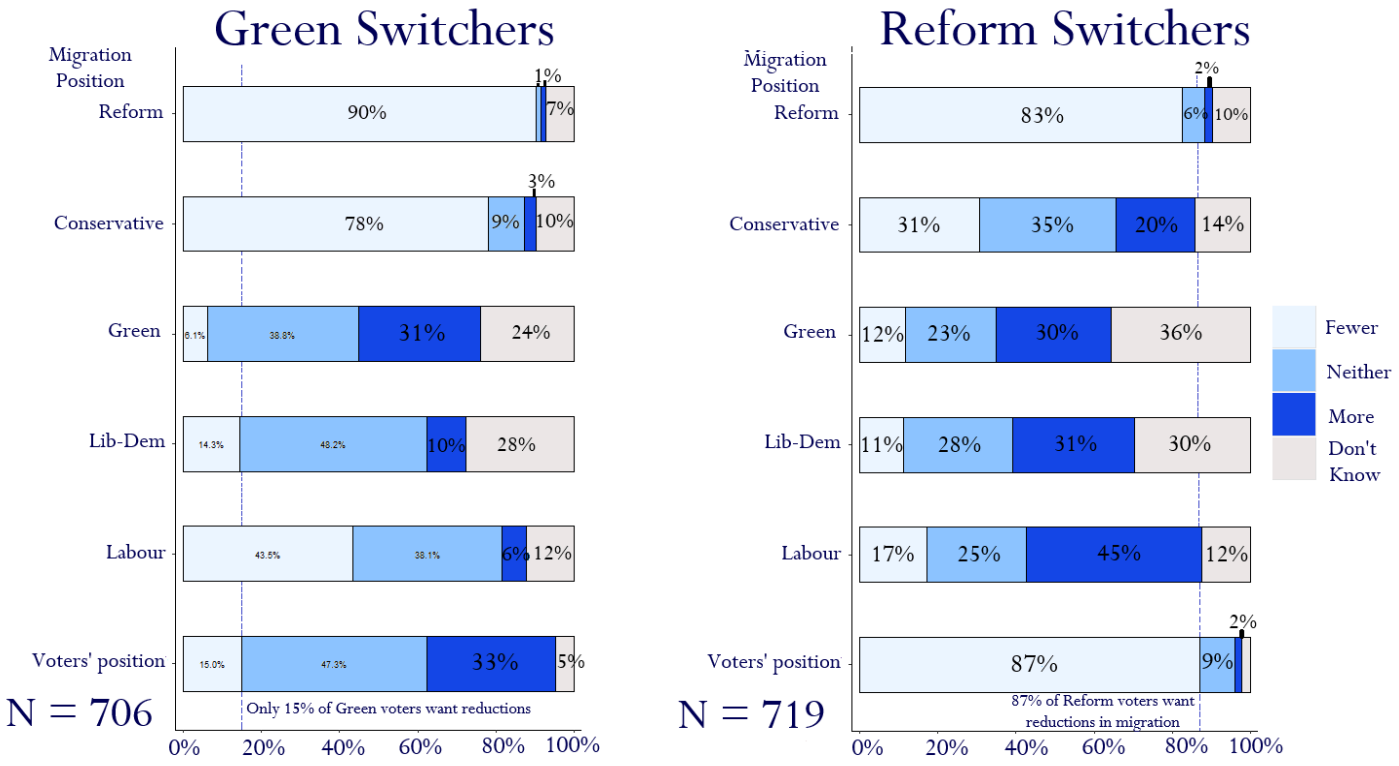


Figure 5: 2024 Labour voters (switched to Reform and Lib-Dems) and their perception of parties' migration policy. Source: BES 2025.

One explanation for why Labour has been unable to convince Reform voters to return is because these voters most often perceive immigration to be higher than the reported level. Voters who have stuck with Labour, switched to the Lib-Dems and flowed to the Greens most often perceive immigration to have stayed roughly at the level it was when Labour took office (45%). Further, another 10% view migration to have decreased, with less than a third feeling it has increased. Oppositely, a clear majority of those who have moved to Reform feel that there has been a clear increase in migration (88%). 68% of voters who were lost to the

Conservatives and 50% of undecided individuals also thought migration to be on the rise. Therefore, Reform voters most often prioritise the migration issue and believe it is increasing, and despite Labour's focus on tackling migration and net-migration lowering by 475,000, this has not altered these voters' perceptions.

Consequently, in terms of migration policy, voters who lost to Reform likely see the current government as an extension of the previous, which allowed migration to rapidly rise. This can help to explain why the BES finds that 92% of all losses to Reform believe Labour is doing a poor job in handling the migration issue. Again, this demonstrates how Reform voters will be much harder to win back. This is because even further reductions in migration can be achieved, there is no guarantee these voters will acknowledge this and reward the government. Meanwhile, 50% of individuals lost to liberal/left parties also feel the government is handling the issue poorly. This indicates that they are also repelling voters who wish to see the government communicate a more positive message about immigration.

The majority of Labour's losses perceive immigration neutrally or positively.

This theory is supported through BES data, where 35% of Lib-Dem switchers and 45% of Green switchers believe immigration to be of an economic and cultural benefit for the country, see Figure 6. Once more, these voters are at odds with individuals lost to Reform, where 58% feel that migration negatively impacts the country. Again, these differences highlight how hard reform voters will be to win back without alienating the much larger left/liberal base Labour needs to retain power. Again, this highlights how Labour should focus on the left/liberal side of British politics, as this is the most effective way to build a large enough support base to beat Reform.

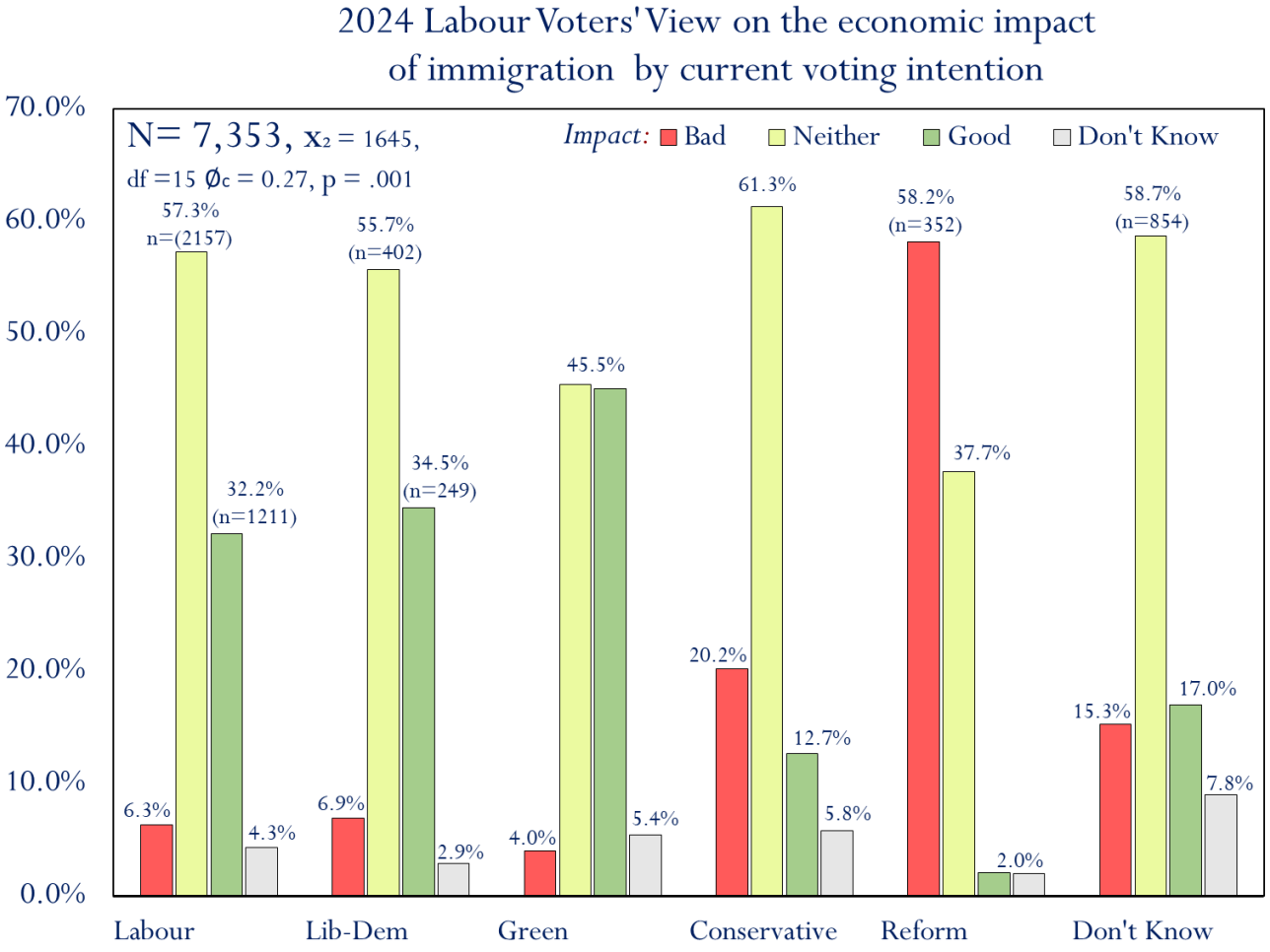


Figure 6: 2024 Labour voters' view on the economic impact of immigration by their current voting intention. Source: BES 2025.

Again, the BES can give supporting evidence for this prospect. Individuals who backed Labour in 2019 but were lost to the Lib-Dems and Greens in the last parliament share similar views on immigration to those moving to these parties recently. 2019 Labour supporters who switched to the Greens clearly viewed migration to have a positive effect on the UK's economy (57%). Further, 36% of individuals who moved to the Lib-Dems also shared this positive feeling towards migration. A similar proportion also did not see migration having a great impact, with 50% of Labour to Lib-Dem switchers between 2019 and 2024 having this opinion. Again, very few losses to left/liberal parties perceived immigration to be a negative force, with only around 5% stating immigration had harmed the UK

economy. Again, the much smaller losses to Reform expressed the opposite view, with 58% stating that immigration had economically weakened the UK.

Losses in the 2019 parliament also had similar thoughts on the level of net-migration. 42% of the losses to the Lib-Dems and Greens were indifferent to immigration flows and felt they should be maintained at the then-current level. Further, 42% of the individuals lost to the Greens believed that it was acceptable to increase migration levels. In contrast, 83% of the small group of voters who lost to Reform wanted migration to be reduced. Additionally, the perception of the flow of migration into the country mirrored the same patterns. Losses to the Lib-Dems mostly thought migration was at a steady level, with 46% expressing this view. Alternatively, 87% of losses to Reform feel migration was clearly increasing. Again, the evidence suggests that the losses Labour has experienced in government are a continuation of the losses it experienced in the previous parliament. This trend has involved the loss of culturally liberal voters more accepting of immigration, something that has been incurred from securing voters from the Tories and aiming to prevent losses to Reform.

Opinions on the EU vary across Labour's losses

Amongst the voters the Labour Party secured in 2024, the Brexit divide has greatly weakened. The first sign of this can be found in how Labour's 2024 base views the perceived economic impact of Brexit. More than 75% of those who stayed with Labour have perceived Brexit to be damaging (scoring less than 50 out of 100). This was also the case for more than 75% of those who left for the Lib-Dems and the Greens. Additionally, more than 60% of losses to Reform and the Tories had a score indicating Brexit had been a negative economic event. Further, this was the exact same trend amongst Labour 2019 voters who left for the Green Party, Lib-Dems and Reform. Therefore, as Brexit becomes seen as more of a policy

failure, the issue becomes less divisive, bringing less potential disruption to Labour when trying to unite its broad coalition of voters.

The second sign can be seen in responses to how people would vote in a second referendum. Out of those still committed to Labour, 90% would vote to re-join the EU, with 92% of Lib-Dem switchers and 95% of Green switchers agreeing with this position. Further, Figure 7 demonstrates that 82% of undecided voters and 60% of those who have moved back to the Tories would accept re-joining the EU. Even amongst those who have switched to Reform, 45% would vote to re-join the EU. This is despite 74% of these voters having backed the decision to Leave the EU, indicating that even some of Brexit's most ardent supporters amongst Labour's 2024 base have changed their mind. Again, this is a continuation of a trend that first developed in the previous parliament. Out of the 2019 Labour voters who switched to the Lib-Dems and Greens, 94% would vote to re-join the EU. 75% of those lost to the Tories would also re-enter Europe, with even 37% of those lost to Reform feeling this way. This means that for some time now, Labour has been losing support from most pro-European individuals. Therefore, some of these voters may be leaving the party due to frustration over the Labour Party's unwillingness to take a pro-European stance.

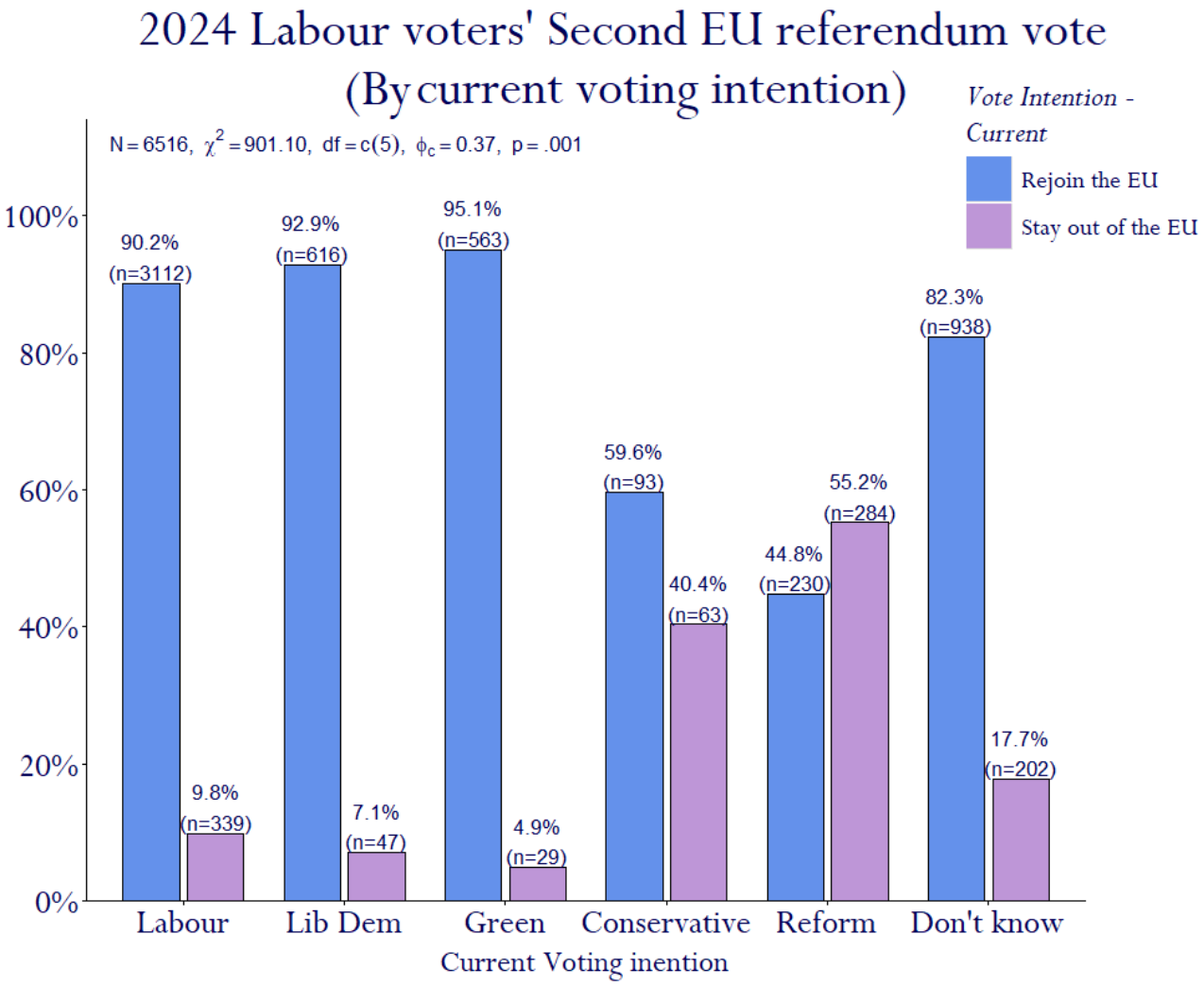


Figure 7: 2024 Labour voters vote if a referendum on re-joining Europe were held this year by their current voting intention – BES 2025.

Most of Labour's losses do not feel Labour reflects their position on EU-UK relations

When asked if they would like closer ties with the EU or valued protecting the UK's independence, 81% who have switched from Labour to the Lib-Dems stated they wanted more UK-EU integration. This was also the case for 48% of those undecided. Therefore, this would indicate that Labour's base could be better united by building closer relations with the EU. Yet, the reluctance to talk about the EU for fear of pushing away reform voters might be limiting Labour's ability to build a space that can help bring their fractured coalition together. The BES

suggests that this is the case. This is because those who have switched to the Lib-Dems less frequently see Labour as a pro-EU party than compared to the proportion of these voters who take a pro-EU position (-54%p). This group was also more likely to view the Lib-Dems as providing the pro-EU position they were looking for. Yet, individuals lost to Reform less often view Labour reflecting their pro-independence outlook (-30%p, than compared to the 65% of Reform voters who want to avoid renewed integration with the EU). In contrast, such voters perceived Reform to much better match their EU scepticism. Again, this is a continuation of trends experienced in the last parliament, where Labour lost mostly pro-EU voters who felt other parties better reflected this sentiment. Therefore, Labour's decision to rule out joining the single market or re-joining the EU may have sent signals to their left-liberal base that they were not on their side. Such feelings may have caused some of these voters to switch to a more pro-EU party. Importantly, this could indicate that Labour have not been able to keep former Brexit-supporting individuals by committing to keep EU-UK separation, whilst this messaging may have driven away support from their left/liberal base.

The main cause of Labour's losses?

Whilst these patterns provide indications, they do not reveal the main driver of losses. To identify the main causes, a statistical model can be generated. By taking all voters who stayed with Labour and all individuals who switched to the Lib-Dems and Greens, a logistic regression model can identify the probability that specific opinions caused voters to move away from Labour. The same can also be done for Labour voters switching to Reform by selecting all those who have stayed with Labour and also those who have moved to Reform.

From these models, the biggest impact was identified to be perceptions of which party was most able to handle their primary concern. When an individual perceived the Lib-Dems to perform best on core issues (most often the economy), they were 42.5% more likely to leave Labour for a left-liberal party, see Figure 8. The Greens were also significantly more likely to take support from Labour when they were seen to be more able on the core issues of the economy and the environment. In contrast, 2024 Labour voters were 25.1% more likely to abandon Labour for Reform when they perceived Reform to be the most able party on their core concern. For these voters, this was most often immigration. Therefore, the inability to improve the economy and handle day-to-day economic decisions has been the main driver of losses towards left-liberal parties.

Additionally, the perception amongst Reform switchers that Labour can't be trusted on the immigration question is likely the most influential cause of losses. Therefore, the visual reminder of small boat crossings may be causing these voters to feel the government can't deal with the issue. Such feelings may have caused these individuals to switch to a party that very much focuses on tackling this issue. Further, the model identified that perceptions of government incompetence have caused Labour to lose voters. This is because when an individual stated they disapproved of the government's performance, they became significantly more likely to switch to a left-liberal party. They also became significantly more likely to switch to Reform. This is another indication that instability during Labour's first year in government, unpopular decisions and U-turns on key policy areas have contributed to Labour's losses.

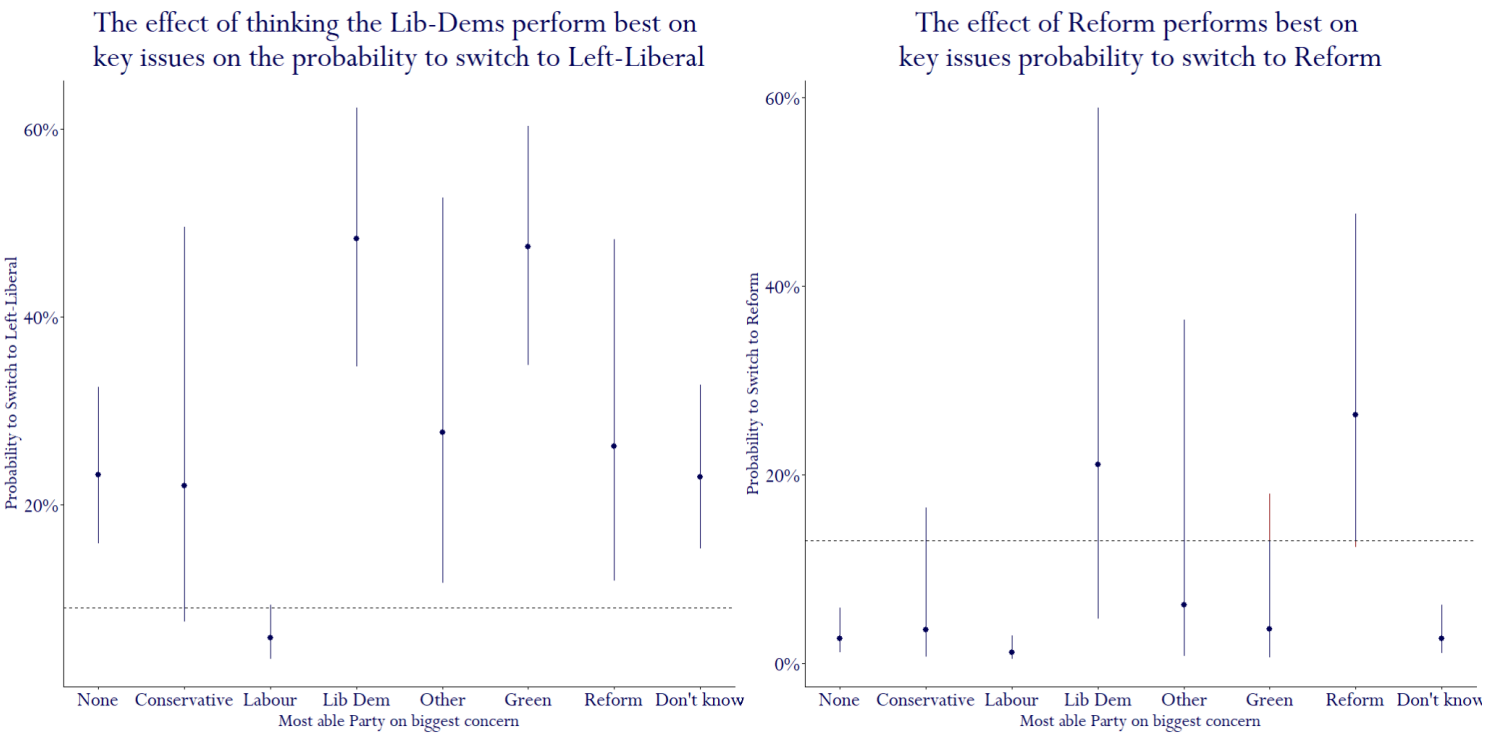


Figure 8: The effect on the probability of voting leaving Labour by view on which party a voter felt was most able to handle their core concerns. Source: BES 2025.

The second most impactful factor was the extent to which the parties were liked. For individuals who moved to left/liberal parties, individuals who strongly liked the Lib-Dems were 50% more likely to switch to a left/liberal party, and those who moderately liked the Lib-Dems were 30%. Someone who liked Reform was less likely to switch to a left-liberal party. Instead, individuals who strongly liked Reform were 40% more likely to switch to Reform. When an individual liked Labour more than other smaller party options, they were significantly more likely to retain a voter. Crucially, it is important to remember that a high proportion of these individuals strongly liked the Greens or Lib-Dems. For instance, only 62% of individuals who moved from Labour to the Lib-Dems highly rated the Lib-Dems. Further, out of those who have switched to Reform, 62% strongly liked Reform. Consequently, such feelings have made a specific group of voters move away from Labour. This trend was weaker for party leaders. When an individual strongly approves of Farage, they become 20% more likely to switch to Reform. But, it

should be noted that 54% of those who switched to Reform strongly like Farage, meaning this effect was strong amongst a very specific section of Labour's 2024 base. Further, even when an individual highly rated Ed-Davey, this had no significant impact in encouraging people to leave Labour.

Interestingly, there was a stronger trend where Labour became significantly less likely to hold onto support as the party registered a lower favourability rating. Amongst those most likely to indicate support for Reform, Labour was 47% less likely to retain a voter when they strongly disliked the party, see Figure 9. This effect was even greater amongst those indicating support for a smaller liberal or left-leaning party. When such a voter registered a dislike of Labour (32% of all Green switchers), they became 82% more likely to abandon Labour in favour of the Lib-Dems or Greens. Therefore, the weakening of the Labour Party brand is a major factor in the loss of voters to smaller parties. Importantly, this highlights how events that have damaged the Labour brand (such as high-profile resignations, government instability and unpopular policy announcements) are limiting Labour's electability. It also demonstrates how Labour's loss of voters is not so much a warming towards other parties and their respective leaders, but wider dissatisfaction towards the Labour Party brand. Therefore, rather than being converted to different policy platforms and new leadership, these voters are mainly seeking new alternatives after disappointment in Labour's first year of office.

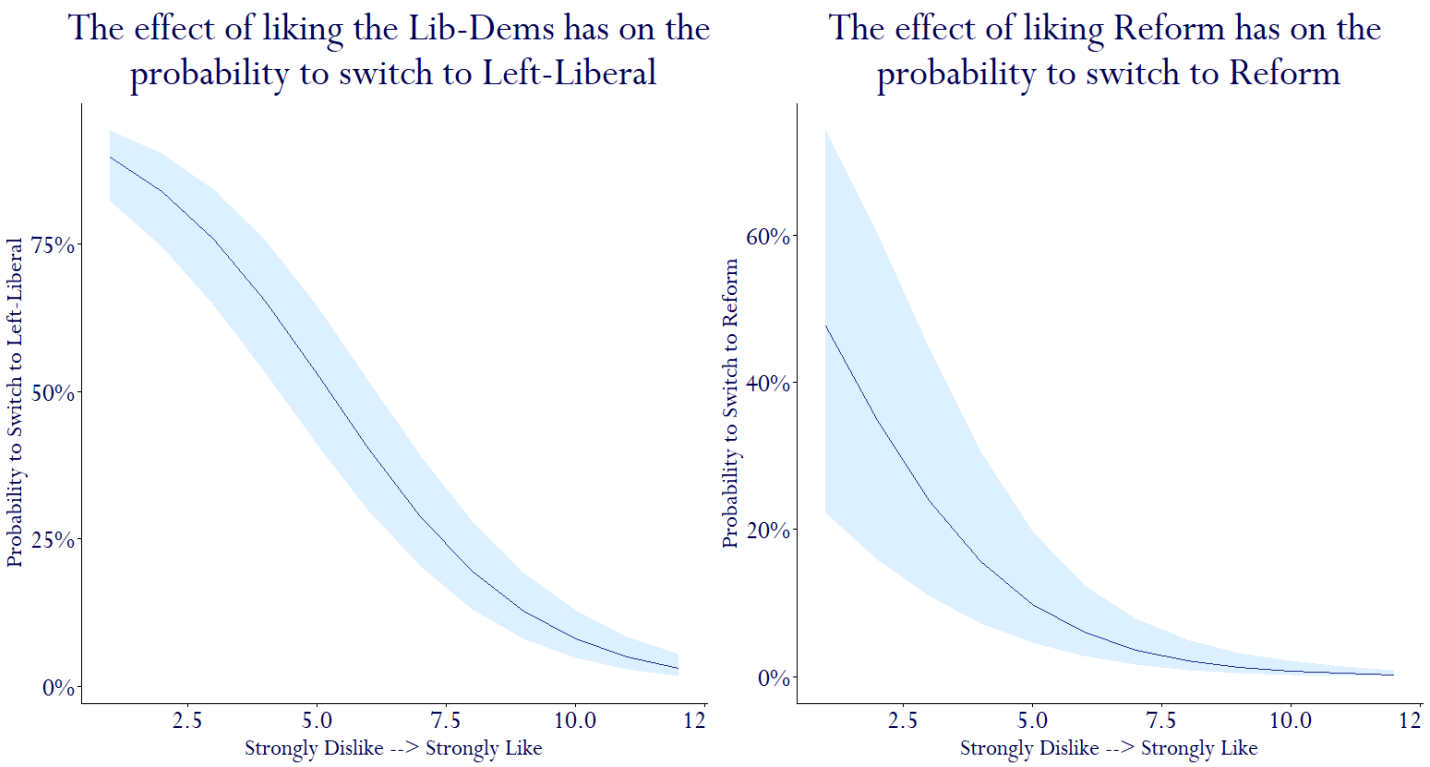


Figure 9: The effect of an individual's rating of the Labour Party on the probability to stop supporting the Labour Party. Source: BES 2025.

The final significant force driving voters away from Labour was their overall outlook on immigration. Out of the individuals who stayed with Labour or switched to a liberal or left-leaning party, those who felt immigration was good for the economy were 17% more likely to leave Labour than those who were more sceptical. In contrast, those lost to Reform were significantly more likely to leave Labour when they believed migration to be bad for UK economic output. Crucially, this highlights how Labour's strong tone on migration may have lost them left-liberal voters who hold a more positive view on migration, without enabling them to hold those with a more negative outlook. Vitally, this also highlights how the value divide that caused Labour's base to fragment in 2019 may have returned. Therefore, this again indicates that Labour will find it hard to keep their 2024 coalition together. This means that they will need to try and bring in new voters to recover losses that naturally occur from this value divide.

According to the models, the Brexit divide is no longer significant in causing the fragmentation of Labour's base. This gain highlights how Labour can pursue close economic ties with Europe to improve UK economic performance without losing support. Labour's perceived handling of the economy had limited significance, indicating that wider performance concerns were the core driving factor. The overall ideological position was also insignificant in causing voter shifts, instead indicating that a wider value divide around cultural issues like immigration had a greater impact.

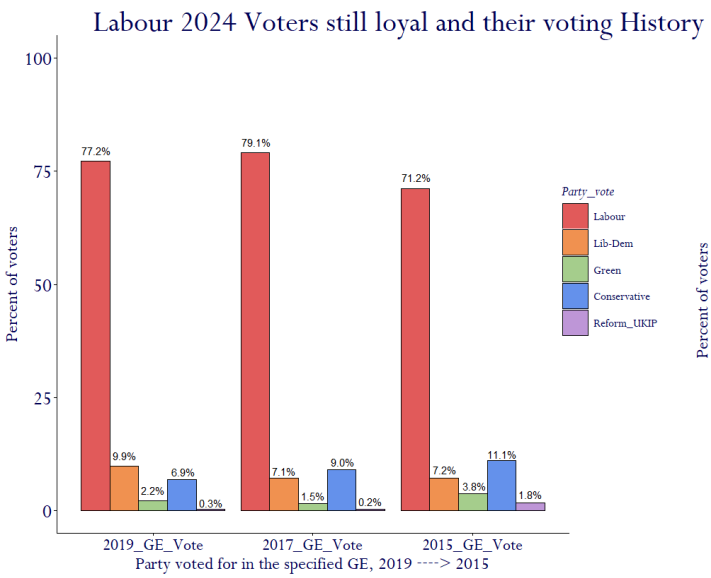
Past voting trends: who can be won back?

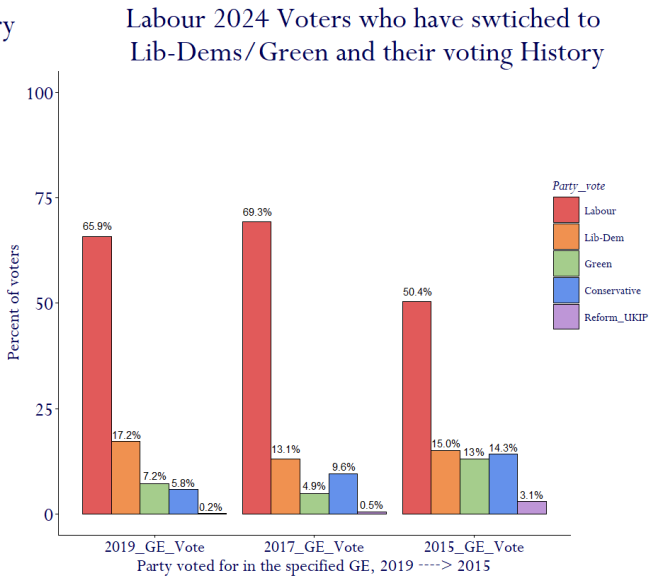
One indication of future behaviour can be inferred from past actions. To gauge which voters are most likely to return to Labour, past voting behaviour can be analysed. Out of the voters who have stayed loyal to Labour, 77% backed Labour in 2019, 79% in 2017 and 71% in 2015. Unsurprisingly, the group still backing Labour has most frequently voted for the party in the last 10 years of British politics. The next most loyal group was Lib-Dem and Green switchers, see Figure 10. 66% of this group backed Labour in 2019, and 69% had supported Labour in 2017. This historical rate of support was much greater than that of those who have moved to Reform since 2024. In this group, only 41% voted Labour in 2019 (-25%p when compared to Green & Lib-Dem switchers). In 2017, only 54% of these switchers supported Labour (-15%p less than the group who has moved to left-liberal parties). Further, those who now support Reform have a more of a history of voting for the Conservative Party. In 2015, more of these voters backed the Tories than compared to the voters lost to Left-liberal parties (+7%p). In 2017, an even greater proportion of this group supported the Conservatives than compared to left-liberals and loyal Labour voters (+25%p). In 2019, this disparity rose to 35%p. Additionally, it should also be noted that amongst those currently undecided, there

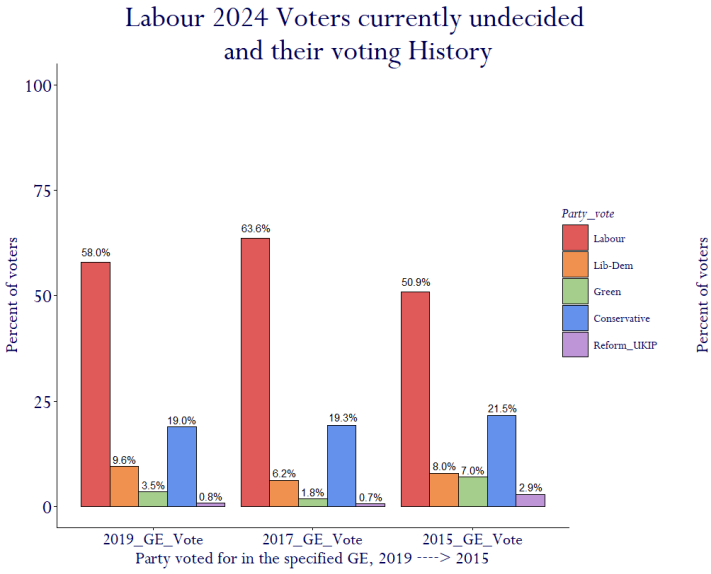
was a higher proportion of individuals who voted for Labour in every election since 2015 than compared to Reform switchers. As has repeatedly been the case, these trends are a continuation of historic behaviour. In terms of supporting Labour, this means that out of all lost support, losses to reform have the weakest voting history. Therefore, based on past behaviour, it can be argued that Reform switchers will be the hardest to retain. Consequently pursuing Reform voters means focusing on a smaller group of individuals who have less consistently voted Labour in the last decade rather than targeting larger groups of voters who have been more loyal.

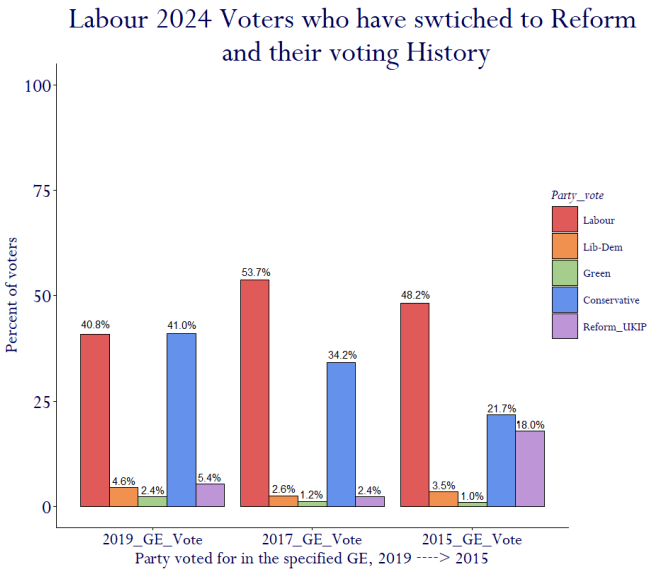
Another indication can be found in the question that asks respondents to indicate how likely they would be to vote Labour in the next general election. 89% of individuals who have stuck with Labour report a high likelihood of voting for the party. However, those who indicate they will vote for Reform in the next general election state a low likelihood of coming back to Labour, with 56% stating a low likelihood of voting Labour. Indeed, only 18% indicate a high likelihood to return. In contrast, those lost to left-liberal parties more often stated a high likelihood of returning to Labour. 28% of Lib-Dem losses stated they will likely back Labour at the next general election, and 37% of Green losses reported the same. Further, more reported a middle position, where they had not ruled out returning to Labour. 43% of Lib-Dem losses had not yet come to the position of being unlikely to return to Labour, and this was also the case for 37% of Green switchers. Only 22% of Reform switchers had this feeling of being neither likely nor unlikely to return to Labour. This is also reflected in average scores to vote Labour. Losses to the Lib-Dems, Greens and those not sure recorded a 6.3 likelihood to back Labour (on a scale of 0-10), whereas Reform switchers only scored 4.1. These numbers are also reflected in the voters Labour lost in the 2019-2024 parliament. Individuals who voted Labour lost to the Lib-Dems and Greens currently have an average score of

5.6 of voting for Labour. Those lost to Reform report a likelihood of 2.7. Therefore, the most optimal strategy to regain support is to target individuals lost to left-liberal parties, as they are a bigger group that is more likely to return to Labour. This includes individuals lost since the 2024 general election and in the last parliament.









Future voting intention: who can be won back?

Labour faces a huge electoral challenge in beating Reform. Obviously, in order to do this, they have to receive more votes than Reform, but they currently sit 9% behind Reform in the polls. There are two ways Labour can surpass Reform. Firstly,

they can directly take voters from Reform to reduce Reform's vote share and increase their own. This conversion strategy was successfully deployed against the Conservatives in the last parliament. Alternatively, Labour can increase its vote share to surpass Reform by securing voters that Reform can't, known as the building strategy.

The current strategy of reacting against the growing support for Reform is unlikely to yield enough support to win the next election. Pursuing voters lost to Reform has not yet encouraged them to return, and there are few signs it will. Further, there is greater evidence that this is alienating Labour's left-liberal base, causing them to lose support amongst a bigger group of voters. This is because the tone and focus of the communications of the government sit in contrast to the preferences of their left-liberal base, whilst it is also not convincing individuals moving to Reform. This is often because those most likely to move to Reform from Labour perceive migration to be higher than it is and believe such trends are negatively impacting the UK. Therefore, they are looking for a party that will strongly act on the issue, and it will be hard to convince such voters that Labour will act as stringently as a Reform government. Additionally, this approach distracts from communicating the far more positive message that they have on the economy, such as greater levels of investment.

Therefore, the strategy that secured Labour victory isn't the strategy that can beat Reform and retain power. The conversion strategy worked well in the last parliament as Labour had to reduce the Conservative Party's strong vote share in order to win. Labour did successfully convert many former Conservative voters. Yet, this strategy was only highly successful due to Labour's vote being efficiently located in key constituencies and Reform taking many voters from the Tories, thus lowering the vote share needed to win. This masked the large losses to left-liberal

parties, and the continuation of chasing more culturally conservative voters has resulted in further losses to the Lib-Dems and Greens. Further, British politics has developed, and Labour's coalition is no longer as efficient as it once was. Consequently, as this paper has repeatedly argued, a new strategy is needed, one that targets the much larger losses to liberal-left parties experienced in the last year and previous parliament. This would be a building strategy, where Labour would overcome the inevitable churn of voters by expanding its vote share by securing voters Reform can't.

Figure 11 demonstrates how this strategy could beat Reform. Firstly, it would solidify the 21.2% of the vote Labour possesses (according to an average of all polls in September). By focusing on the economy, this could better appeal to the 30% of Labour to Reform switchers, who represent 0.7% of the electorate. They could also secure some losses to the Conservatives who prioritise the economy, comprising another 0.3% of all voters. After this, successfully targeting left/liberal voters would help to target the 6.2% of the electorate Labour has lost to the Greens and Lib-Dems in the last year. If Labour were to get three-quarters of these voters back, it would award 4.6% to Labour's vote share. If 75% of those now undecided could be clawed back, this would add another 5% to Labour's tally. After this, retrieving 50% of the voters Labour lost to the Lib-Dems and Greens in the previous parliament would secure another 3.2% of the vote. In total, Labour would go up to 34.7%. Reform would dip to 29.6% of the vote through Labour taking back a small proportion of their losses to Reform. Reform would dip further the more undecided and former non-voters backed Labour. In the imagined scenario, if Reform just dropped one point, to 28.8%, then Labour could fashion a 34-seat majority. A further 1%p drop to 27.8% would yield a majority of 68. There are many caveats and unknowns with this strategy, as with any strategy. Yet, a strategy that would seek to build a progressive coalition would likely yield better

results than the current YouGov projections showing Reform falling just short of an outright majority.

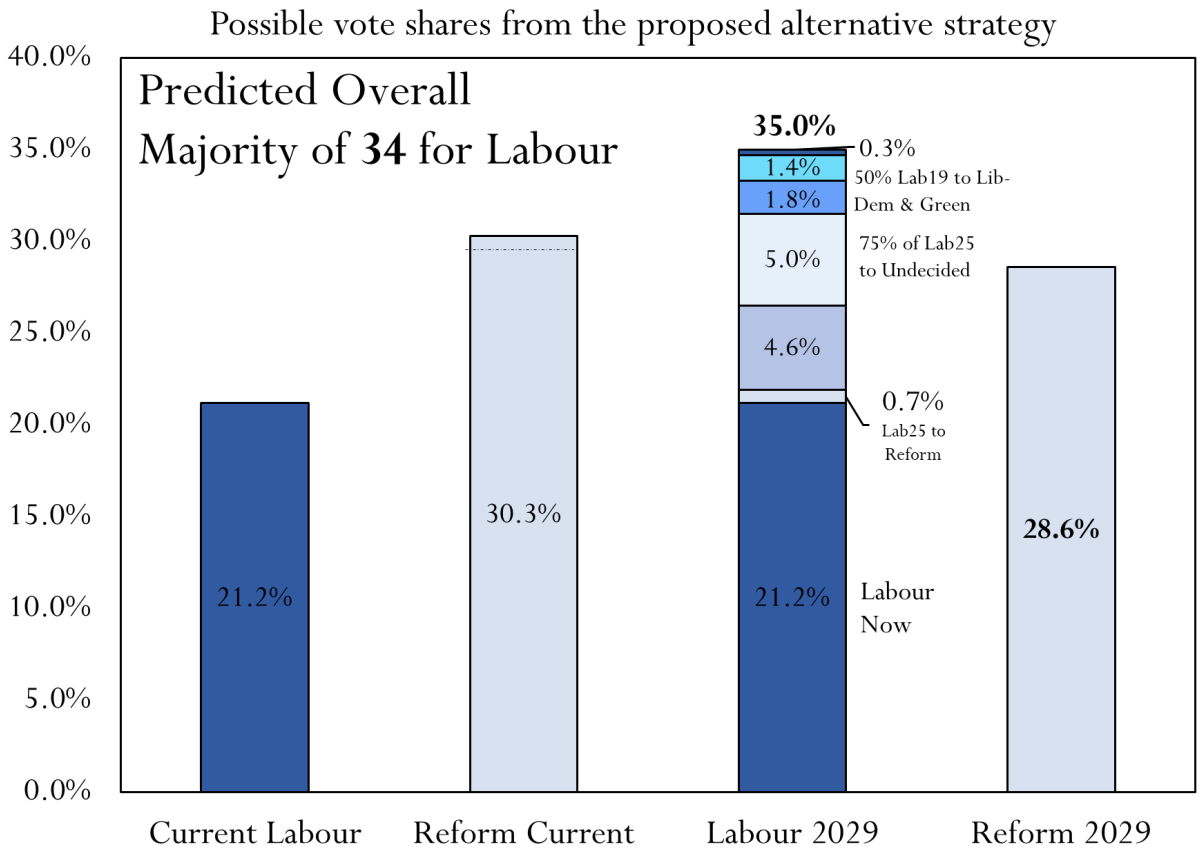


Figure 11: Predicted vote share upon the proposed strategy being successful. Predictions based on electoral calculus website inputs.

What would the strategy of building a progressive coalition entail?

There would be four key pillars to such a strategy.

1. **Rejecting the radical right and highlighting the costs of Reform.**

   The current public discourse is creeping ever rightwards, and this has to change. Showing that Labour in no way seeks to emulate Reform will be key to winning support back from lost culturally liberal voters. It will also assist in protecting Labour's current base of support. It is important that this is not

done through branding Reform as the enemy, as a core part of this strategy aims to detoxify political discourse, especially around immigration. It is also important that Labour doesn't focus too much on Reform, so not to fuel their fire. By rejecting the gradual conservative shift on subjects like migration, cultural liberals can be reassured Labour is on their side, whilst at the same time taking away some of Reform's spotlight. Further, by better highlighting that a Reform administration would bring costs, such as reduced spending on public services due to tax reductions, a small proportion of losses to Reform could be readmitted.

2. **Changing the narrative.**

Currently, Reform controls the narrative, and Labour is reacting to it. This is increasing the perception that Labour is just mimicking Reform. Instead, Labour will need to work out what messages will help Labour regain control of the public discourse. This work has shown that the voters Labour can unite mostly have economic concerns. Further, modelling highlighted these voters' reasons for leaving were primarily due to concerns around the state of the economy and the government's handling of economic affairs. Here, Labour can focus its communication to stress the work it is doing to improve the economy, raise the standard of living and fix public services. This would help develop a more positive message of a proactive government solving problems and reduce the perception that it is dancing to Reform's tune. It would also help to detoxify public discourse, which is becoming increasingly angry. By focusing on everyday concerns around the economy, public services and how government can best handle these, a more positive dialogue could be constructed with the left-liberal base Labour needs to regain. Importantly, the migration question can't be ignored. However, the government will need to

change the narrative and communicate how they are managing the issue to get positives from migrant flows.

3. **Labour's purpose: Winning back left-liberal voters with progressive values.**

By adopting a clear progressive platform, this could give the Labour government the clear identity, purpose and agenda it is searching for. Labour could take such a stance on the economy as 52.7% of their 2024 support base are in favour of higher taxation. Also, an even higher proportion of those lost to the Lib-Dems and Greens in the last parliament hold this position. Further, 43% of Labour's 2024 base also support greater redistribution, with a large proportion of 2019-2024 losses sharing this view. In the last parliament, Labour was unwilling to pledge greater tax and redistribution measures, largely in fear of repeating the loss of 1992. This does not mean Labour should lurch to the left and adopt radical economic policies, but it does show that the government may have greater scope in fiscal policy than it realises. By increasing investment in the economy and public services, they could better unite a group of voters that could be large enough to win them the next election. It would also give Labour a clearer purpose, where the government could communicate a mission to improve the economy, raise the standard of living and fix broken services. Further, Labour tends to poll better amongst Reform losses on the NHS. This means that a message of investing in public services could help win over the 30% of Reform losses who prioritise economic matters over migration. A more progressive approach could also be deployed on immigration. Immigration is a big issue that can't be ignored, but Labour could use more progressive solutions to answer the migration question. This would help to address the issue for those voters who greatly value action on migration without alienating its more liberal base.

4. **Providing reassurance that Labour can do the job.**

Whatever strategy is deployed, a common concern amongst the voters Labour has lost resides within the party's perceived ability to handle the economy, day-to-day fiscal decisions, key public services and individuals' core concerns. Whilst governments always experience churn of support due to the cost of governing, Labour has not helped itself in the first year of office. To decrease churn and win back lost voters, Labour must reinstall a sense of stability. This will mean that after the reshuffle, high-profile resignations must be avoided, and the new team must go and deliver the change promised. It will need to win over left-liberal voters who reject Reform and believe that Reform can't provide good, competent government. It must also deliver an improved economy that raises the standard of living and improves poorly functioning public services. Without doing all this, winning back lost voters will be hard.