



PRESS RELEASE

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 00.01 HRS**  
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## **NEW POLL SHOWS YES CAMPAIGN FAILING TO PERSUADE VOTERS**

**FOUNDER OF SDP, DAVID OWEN, SAYS 'ELECTORAL  
REFORMERS SHOULD HAVE HELD OUT FOR REAL  
REFORM'**

**Results from a new YouGov poll undermines Yes campaign messages with less than two weeks to go until voting (*full tables below*):**

- **59 per cent of people don't think AV would stop MPs abusing expenses**
- **55 per cent of people don't think AV would stop the BNP**
- **41 per cent of people don't think AV would make MPs work harder**

A poll conducted by YouGov for NO to AV Yes to PR highlights Yes campaign's three key reasons to vote for AV are failing to resonate with voters.

On the Yes campaign claim that AV would stop MPs abusing their expenses, a massive 59 per cent of people polled disagreed with the proposition, compared with just 13 per cent who agreed. A similar result was found on the claim that AV would shut out the BNP; with 55 per cent of people disagreeing to 15 per cent who agree. Finally, on the claim that AV would make MPs work harder, 41 per cent disagreed compared with just 29 per cent who agreed.

The results of the poll may give an insight into why the two most recent polls by the main polling companies – YouGov and ICM – show the Yes campaign trailing to NO to AV.

Lord Owen, the former Foreign Secretary and Founder of the SDP, forerunners to the Liberal Democrats, said:

“I am not surprised that the Yes campaign messages are failing - it is a lukewarm campaign in favour of a miserable compromise. The pro-AV campaign have, from the start, claimed that the Alternative Vote will do things that it simply won't, and that includes the idea that it will somehow lead to a better voting system in the future. That's why electoral reformers should have held out for a referendum on real reform: proportional representation.”

Gisela Stuart, Labour MP for Birmingham Edgbaston, said:

“A referendum on proportional representation would have been an opportunity for real reform. Instead, the Yes campaign chose to support an unfair, disproportional 'miserable little compromise'. The AV system doesn't fix the problems of the first past the post, so it is not a surprise that its backers have struggled to make headway. As a supporter of electoral reform, I will be voting No on 5 May because AV would be a change for the worse, and would make achieving real reform in the future more difficult.”

**ENDS**

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

1. The official results are as follows (full table available on request):

**YouGov / NO to AV Survey Results**

Sample Size: 2431 GB Adults  
Fieldwork: 18th - 19th April 2011

**Weighted Sample**  
Unweighted Sample

	Voting intention			2010 Vote		
Total	Con	Lab	Lib Dem	Con	Lab	Lib Dem
<b>2431</b>	703	823	182	785	637	527
<b>2431</b>	702	786	174	762	614	561
%	%	%	%	%	%	%

**Do you think that changing the voting system from First Past the Post to the Alternative Vote would or would not force MPs to work harder?**

Would	<b>29</b>	15	35	57	15	31	49
Would not	<b>41</b>	59	37	22	57	38	25
Don't know	<b>30</b>	27	28	22	27	31	26

**Do you think that changing the voting system from First Past the Post to the Alternative Vote would or would not help stop MPs abusing their expenses?**

Would	<b>13</b>	8	16	24	8	14	22
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Would not	<b>59</b>		71	60	52		70	60	50
Don't know	<b>27</b>		21	23	24		22	26	28

**Do you think that changing the voting system from First Past the Post to the Alternative Vote would or would not shut the door on extremist parties like the BNP?**

Would	<b>16</b>		12	20	32		11	20	24
Would not	<b>55</b>		67	55	46		65	54	49
Don't know	<b>29</b>		21	25	22		24	26	27

2. NO to AV is the non-partisan, cross-party campaign which has been established to campaign for a 'No' vote in the proposed referendum on the voting system on 5 May 2011. For more information please see [www.no2av.org](http://www.no2av.org)
3. NO to AV, Yes to PR is a permitted participant in the referendum urging a No vote on 5 May. However, while the overall No campaign has not taken a stand on PR, NO to AV, Yes to PR believe that the UK should have a more proportional electoral system, such as the Single Transferable Vote or the Additional Member System. Supporters include electoral reform activists, citizens and representatives, including councillors, MPs and Lords.