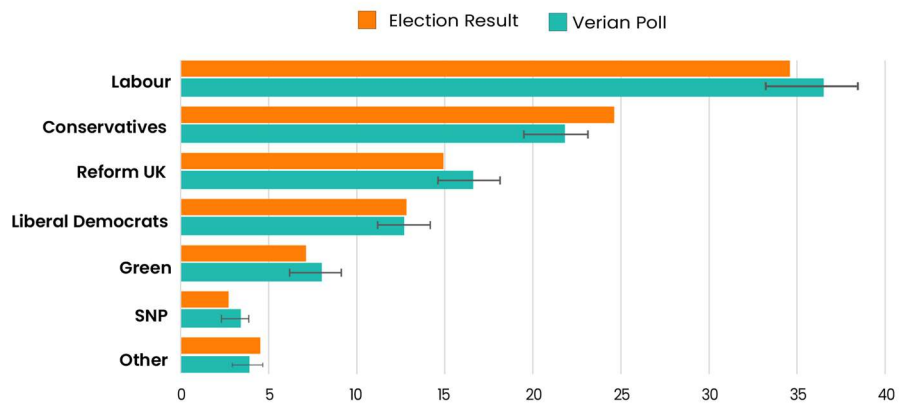


Reflections on 2024 General Election political polling

Verian's [final pre-election poll](#) was conducted between the afternoon of the 28th June and the morning of 1st July 2024.

This generated a broadly accurate estimate of the final election results, although Labour support was overstated slightly and the Conservative party support under-stated.

GB vote shares in the 2024 general election: Verian's final poll vs reality



95% Confidence Intervals taking into account the poll sample design and the weighting applied
Source: Verian Group.

Random probability sample source

We carried out weekly polls throughout the 2024 general election campaign period using our *Public Voice* random probability panel. This panel is used extensively for social research commissioned by government, academic and third sector organisations.

Membership of this panel is restricted to those living in a controlled sample of UK addresses drawn from the Royal Mail master database. This restrictive method of sampling and panel-building is relatively expensive but will ordinarily provide benefits in terms of sample and data quality when compared with a panel that any adult resident in the UK can join.

Although the short-period fieldwork web-only protocol used for our political polls was more limited than is typical for a social research survey, the demographic and political composition of the sample is only modestly degraded compared to what could be obtained using the full social research data collection protocol (two to three weeks using both web and telephone interview modes).

We firmly believe that our random sample source helped to minimise the risk of bias and to help ensure accurate voting intention estimates.

Turnout modelling

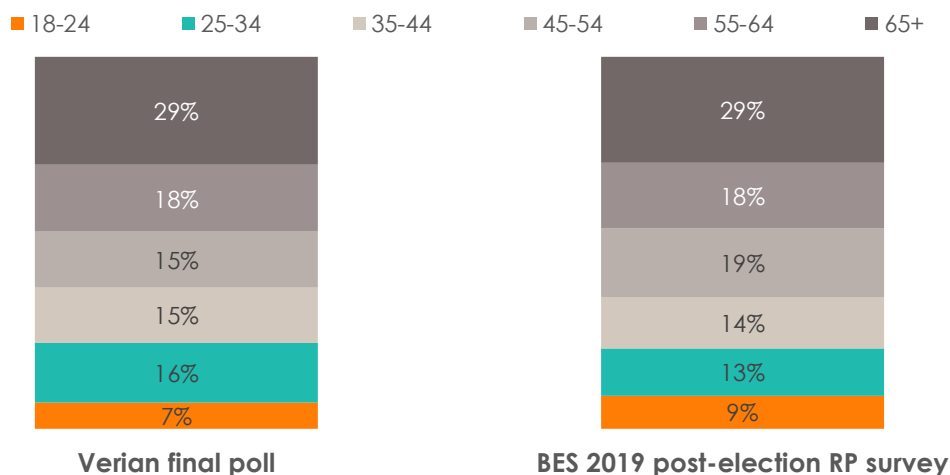
We used a statistical model to convert our initial general population sample to a sample of likely voters on which to base our voting intentions.

Likelihood to vote was estimated based on respondents' stated intention to vote, their age, their voter registration status, and whether they reported voting in the last general election. Our Likelihood to vote model was developed using data from a subset of the Public Voice panel that was recruited just before the 2019 General Election (providing their stated

likelihood to vote in that election) and surveyed about it shortly afterwards (confirming whether or not they voted).

Based on our initial analysis, we think this approach worked well. The age distribution of our likely voter sample looks sensible when compared to benchmarks from previous elections. In the chart below we display the likely voter profile from our final poll next to the profile of self-reported voters from the 2019 British Election Study post-election random probability survey.

Age profile: Verian 2024 GE final poll likely voters vs BES 2019 self-reported voters



In contrast, some other pollsters seemed to under-represent older people in their likely voter samples and to over-represent younger people. This may have contributed to larger errors for Labour and Conservative vote shares observed in some of these polls.

We will conduct additional work to validate our turnout model once the 2024 post-election BES random probability survey has been published.

Political engagement

Survey respondents are typically more politically engaged than the general population, and it is important to correct for this when weighting polling data.

After the 2015 general election, Mellon and Prosser¹ suggested that this could be corrected for by including the number of likely voters as a target in poll weighting schemes. We have used this approach for political polls we have conducted in the run up to all general elections since then.

We had previously developed a model for estimating, based on our polling data, the number of voters that would vote in elections which we then used as the turnout weighting target. This proved reasonably accurate in both 2017 and 2019. For instance, in 2019 we estimated that 32 million votes would be cast (bootstrapped 95% intervals of 30.9 – 32.8m) and there were actually 31.4 million votes cast in Great Britain at this election.

¹ Mellon, Jonathan and Prosser, Christopher, Correcting Polling Error in Over-Engaged Samples Using Representative Turnout Weighting (January 22, 2016). Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2720206> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2720206>

However, this model was specifically developed for the convenience sample source we used at previous general elections. The model did not produce sensible estimates when we used Public Voice data as the input.

For the 2024 election, we therefore decided to fix the number of people voting in the election in our weighting matrix at 31.5 million (c.60% of the general population of GB aged 18+). This was based on the actual turnout in Great Britain at the 2017 and 2019 general elections (31.4 and 31.3 million). However, this proved to be an overestimate of turnout.

Re-weighting our final poll, not changing anything about our approach except to ensure the number of voters matches the **actual turnout** in GB, improves our voting intentions slightly by decreasing the Labour vote share by 1pt (other party estimates rounded to the closest full percentage are unchanged).

It is important to note that this error was only easy to identify post-election, once we knew the actual number of votes cast. Prior to the election, we did not have strong evidence relating to the turnout level. Although we did conduct some sensitivity testing before the election which demonstrated that the level of turnout would only have a modest impact on voting intention estimates.

We have now developed a new way of estimating turnout specifically for our Public Voice sample source. This is based on the polling data which we collected for the 2024 election. We plan to use this approach for the next general election, which should hopefully ensure that we do not have the same issue in future.

Non-informative responses

There are a number of poll respondents that we expect to vote in an election, but who do not express a firm voting preference (unsure or that prefer not to say who they will vote for). For our final poll ahead of the 2024 general election, **11%** of our likely voter sample did not express a preference.

We used a “squeeze” question to get an indication of which way non-disclosers were leaning. However, even after this stage we still had **7%** of our likely voter sample unallocated to a party for our final voting intentions.

As a result, voting intention was imputed for those that did not state a preference (at either the main voting intention question or at the squeeze). The imputation used a decision tree approach with a range of predictors: age, gender, country, self-assessment on a 7-point left-right political spectrum, pro / anti-EU sentiment, media consumption, views on immigration, personality traits, and the most important policy area for the election.

This approach (using both squeeze and imputation) improved our voting intentions – if we had based our voting intentions just on those with a firm preference only, Labour would have been 1pt higher than in our final published estimates.

Nevertheless, we have reviewed the imputation approach which we used for our final poll.

Initially we had planned to use an additional question on who would make best leader for Britain as one of the predictors – Rishi Sunak, Keir Starmer, Neither, and Don't know. However, when we inspected our polling data, we chose not to include this specific question in the imputation model.

- It was the strongest predictor for the voting intentions among those that gave a vote

choice. As unsurprisingly, if you chose Keir Starmer – you were very likely to vote for Labour, and if you chose Rishi Sunak – you were much more likely to vote for the Conservatives. As such, this variable would have a very strong influence on the imputed vote choice for non-disclosers.

- However, among non-disclosers the vast majority answered “neither” or “don't know” at the best leader question. We were concerned that respondents that gave these answers and then went on to provide a voting intention were likely to be systematically different to those who did not provide a voting intention.

We have now trialled adding this variable as a predictor for the imputation (with all other predictors also still included). This would have improved our voting intentions slightly by dropping the Labour score by a percentage point (using exactly the same weighting as our published poll).

Making the change to both the turnout weighting and the imputation model at the same time improves Labour and Conservative estimates, as shown in the table below. Although this slightly reduces accuracy for Reform UK and the Green party.

Table 1: Comparison of Verian polling data – published and with post-election adjustments – to 2024 election result			
	GB result*	Published Verian poll	Verian poll adjusting both weighting and imputation
Labour	34.7%	36%	34%
Conservatives	24.4%	21%	22%
Reform UK	14.7%	16%	17%
Liberal Democrats	12.5%	13%	13%
Green	6.9%	7%	8%
Other	6.8%	7%	7%

*[The Performance of the Polls in the 2024 General Election - British Polling Council](#)

Did pre-election poll respondents do what they planned?

Finally, we have also looked at whether there is evidence of a late swing. Given our final poll was conducted between the 28th of June and the 1st of July 2024, some respondents may have changed their mind after responding to our survey.

Since the election, we have been asking Public Voice respondents sampled for other studies whether they voted in the 2024 election, and if so, for whom. As of early 2025, of the 2,135 adults surveyed in our final poll we have obtained this data for 1,482 respondents. We have generated attrition weights to compensate for systematic non-response to the recontact exercise.

The recontact data **confirms that our turnout model was effective at predicting who would vote in the election**. The voting probability we estimated for each respondent prior to the election has a 0.74 correlation ($p < 0.01$) with whether or not respondents reported actually voting after the election.

The data also demonstrates that some people did change their mind after taking part in our pre-election poll. However, the Labour party and the Conservative party were broadly equally affected and **there is no evidence of a late swing specifically away from the Labour**

party among our poll respondents. There is modest evidence of a slight swing away from Reform UK and the Liberal Democrats after our final poll was conducted.

The following table shows what those that planned to vote for the four major parties in our final poll reported actually doing at the recontact (along with 95% Confidence Intervals – as sample sizes for this analysis are relatively small).

Table 2: Proportion of likely voters (that expressed a firm voting intention) for the four major parties at our final pre-election poll split out by reported vote after the election (column percentages)				
	Pre-election poll – party intending to vote for			
Post election re-contact reported vote	Conser-vatives	Labour	Reform UK	Lib Dems
Reported voting, AND for the same party as they planned to vote for at pre-election poll	81.1% (75.1 – 85.9%)	83.8% (79.3 – 87.4%)	73.4% (66.3 – 79.6%)	70.6% (61.8 – 78.1%)
Reported voting, BUT for a different party	8.8% (5.5 – 13.7%)	6.8% (4.4 – 10.4%)	13.3% (8.8 – 19.6%)	19.8% (13.5 – 28.2%)
Reported voting, BUT refused to say for whom	2.5% (1.1 – 5.6%)	3.4% (1.7 – 6.4%)	3.6% (1.7 – 7.3%)	3.5% (1.4 – 8.4%)
Reported NOT voting	7.6% (4.7 – 12.0%)	6.1% (4.2 – 8.6%)	9.7% (6.3 – 14.6%)	6.1% (3.2 – 11.2%)

For further information on our political polling

Please contact luke.taylor@veriangroup.com and richard.crawshaw@veriangroup.com, or visit: <https://www.veriangroup.com/services/political-opinion-and-electoral-advisory>

Verian's expertise and track record for accurately reporting election outcomes

Verian has decades of experience in election monitoring, forecasting and reporting. We are known for our exceptional track record, with the most accurate poll ahead of [the 2024 general election](#). In addition, we were one of the only pollsters to correctly predict the [2016 EU referendum](#), having Leave ahead in our final poll. In 2019, we also correctly predicted the outcome of the [general election](#) and were within 1% point of the final vote shares for both the Conservative and Labour parties.

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We work with our clients to help solve the next generation of public policy challenges.