

The 2016 National Assembly Election

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22nd March 2016

Today's Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Assembly Election 2016: the Background
3. The Latest Evidence: WES2016
4. The Electoral Battleground
5. Q & A

Background, 1: How Wales Votes

- Nearly a century of Labour dominance
- Labour come first in **36 out of 37** Wales-wide electoral contests after 1918 'Coupon' election (*only* exception was 2009 Euro election)
- Relatively poor Welsh Labour performance in last two general elections: 2015 Labour vote share in Wales only 5.3% higher than in England – lowest differential **ever**
- But, unlike in Scotland, divided non-Labour forces – no single, strong challenger

Background, 2: How Assembly Elections Work

- Voters have **Two Votes**
 - **Constituency Vote** (same constituencies as for Westminster)
 - Vote for **Party List** in a broader **Region**
- Choose **60 Assembly Members (AMs)**
 - 40 from Constituencies via First Past the Post
 - 20 from Party Lists : 4 AMs each from 5 Regions
 - Regional seats allocated proportionally, with constituency results in region taken into account

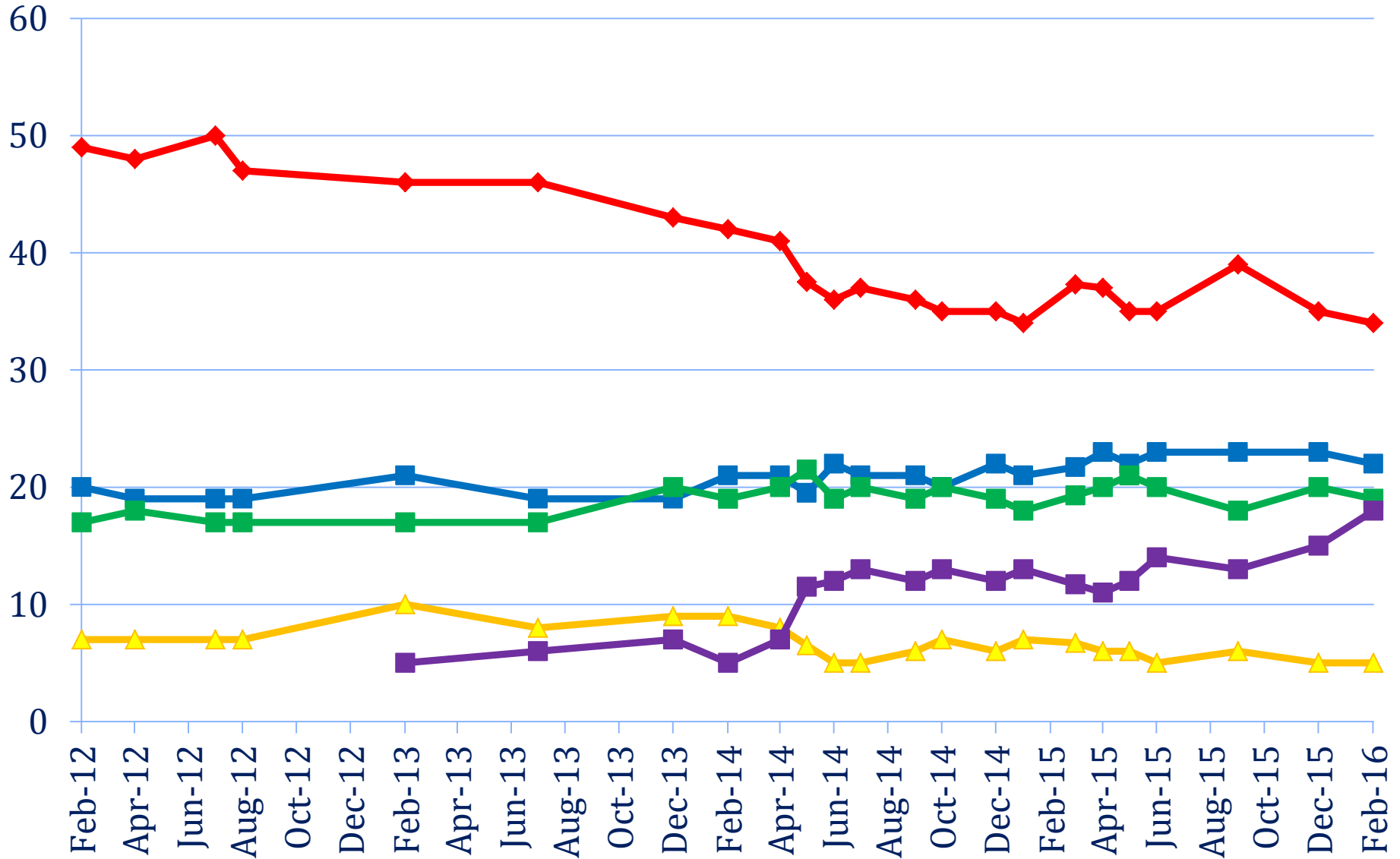
Background, 3: Past Results, 1999-2011

- Four previous Assembly elections: always same four parties elected (plus 1 independent in 2003 and 2007)
- **Labour** always largest party: 26 – 30 seats
- **Conservatives** third in first three elections; second in 2011 with 14 seats
- **Plaid Cymru** second in first three elections; third in 2011 with 11 seats
- **Lib-Dems** always come fourth; 5 seats in 2011

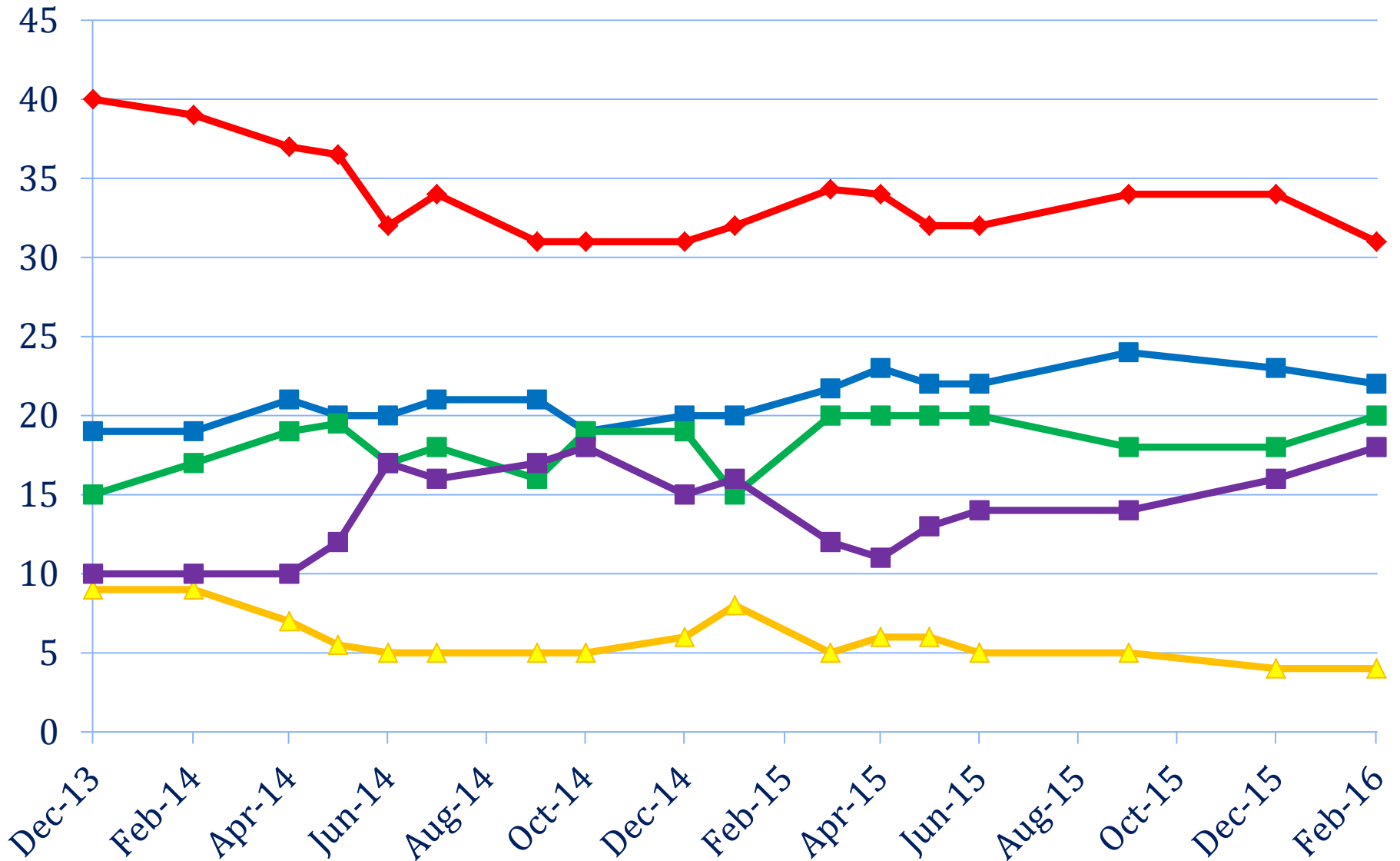
2011 Result (Changes from 2007)

Party	Constit.	Region	Seats
Labour	42.3 (+10.1)	36.9 (+7.2)	30 (+4)
Conserv.	25.0 (+2.6)	22.5 (+1.1)	14 (+2)
Plaid	19.3 (-3.1)	17.9 (-3.1)	11 (-4)
Lib-Dem	10.6 (-4.2)	8.0 (-3.7)	5 (-1)
UKIP		4.6 (+0.7)	0
Others	2.8 (-5.4)	10.1 (-2.2)	0 (-1)

NAW Constituency Vote: Polls, 2012-16



NAW Regional Vote: Polls, 2013-16



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The 2016 Welsh Election Study

- Funded by Economic and Social Research Council (Grant: ES/M011127/1)
- Several Components:
 - Study of Voters
 - Study of Local Campaigning
 - Study of Social Media
- Today:
 - Evidence from Pre-Election Wave of Voter Study
 - Conducted March 7-18
 - Sample size = 3,272

Evidence from WES2016

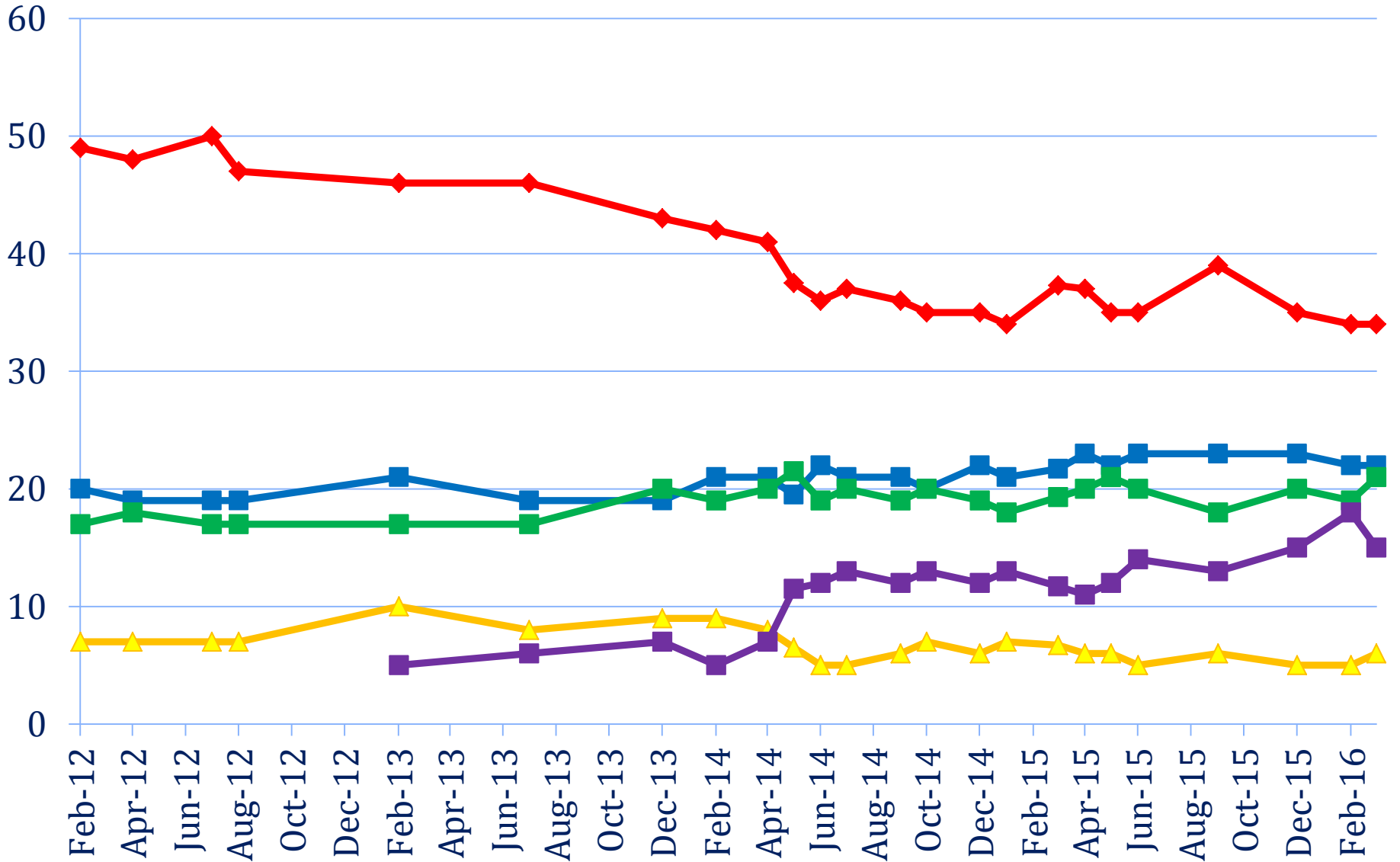
Latest readings on...

- The Standing of the Parties
- The Standing of the Party Leaders
- Campaign Activity
- Levels of public interest

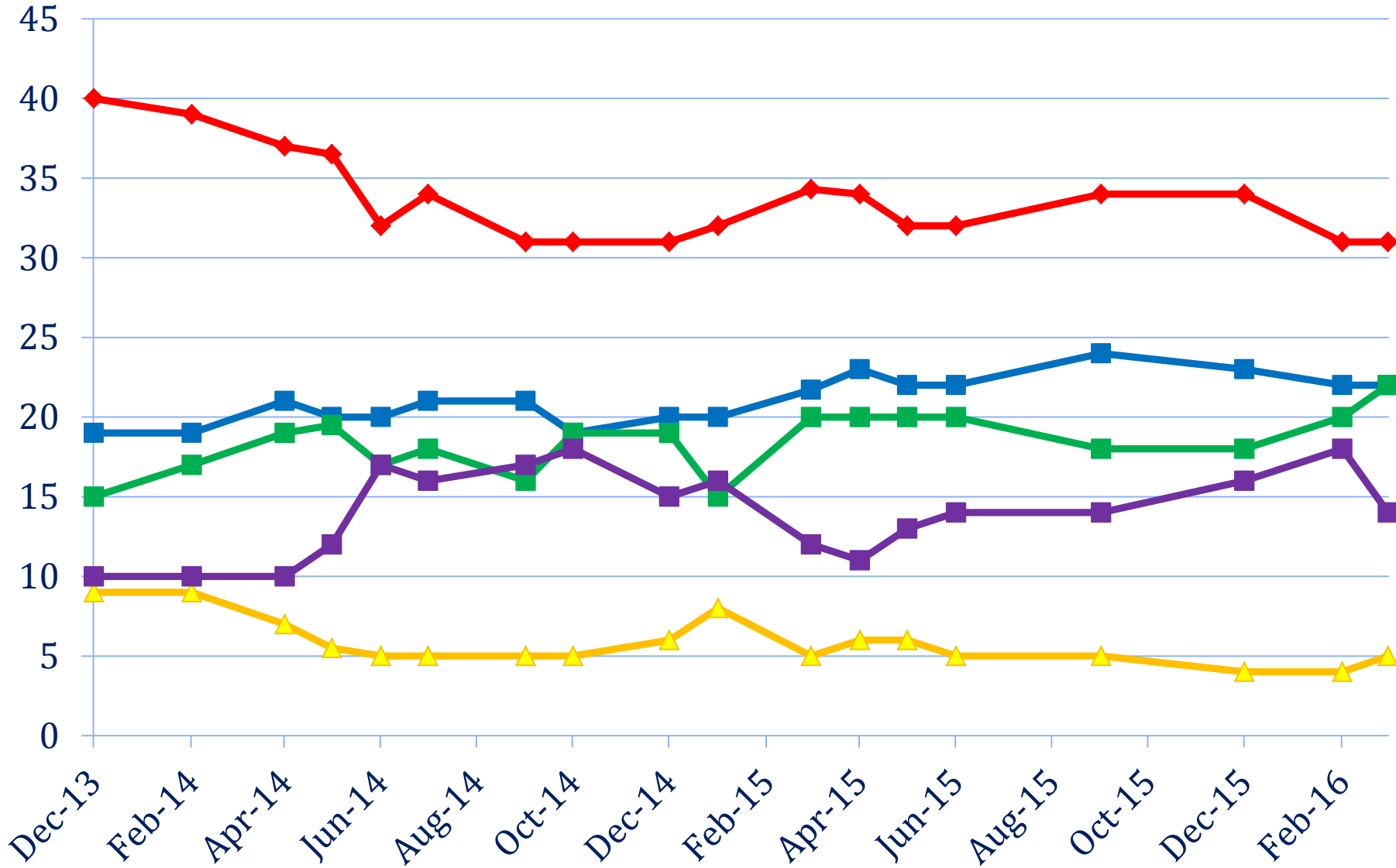
Standing of the Parties: Current Vote Intention

Party	Constit.	Region
Labour	34%	31%
Conserv.	22%	22%
Plaid	21%	22%
Lib-Dem	6%	5%
UKIP	15%	14%
Others	2%	6%

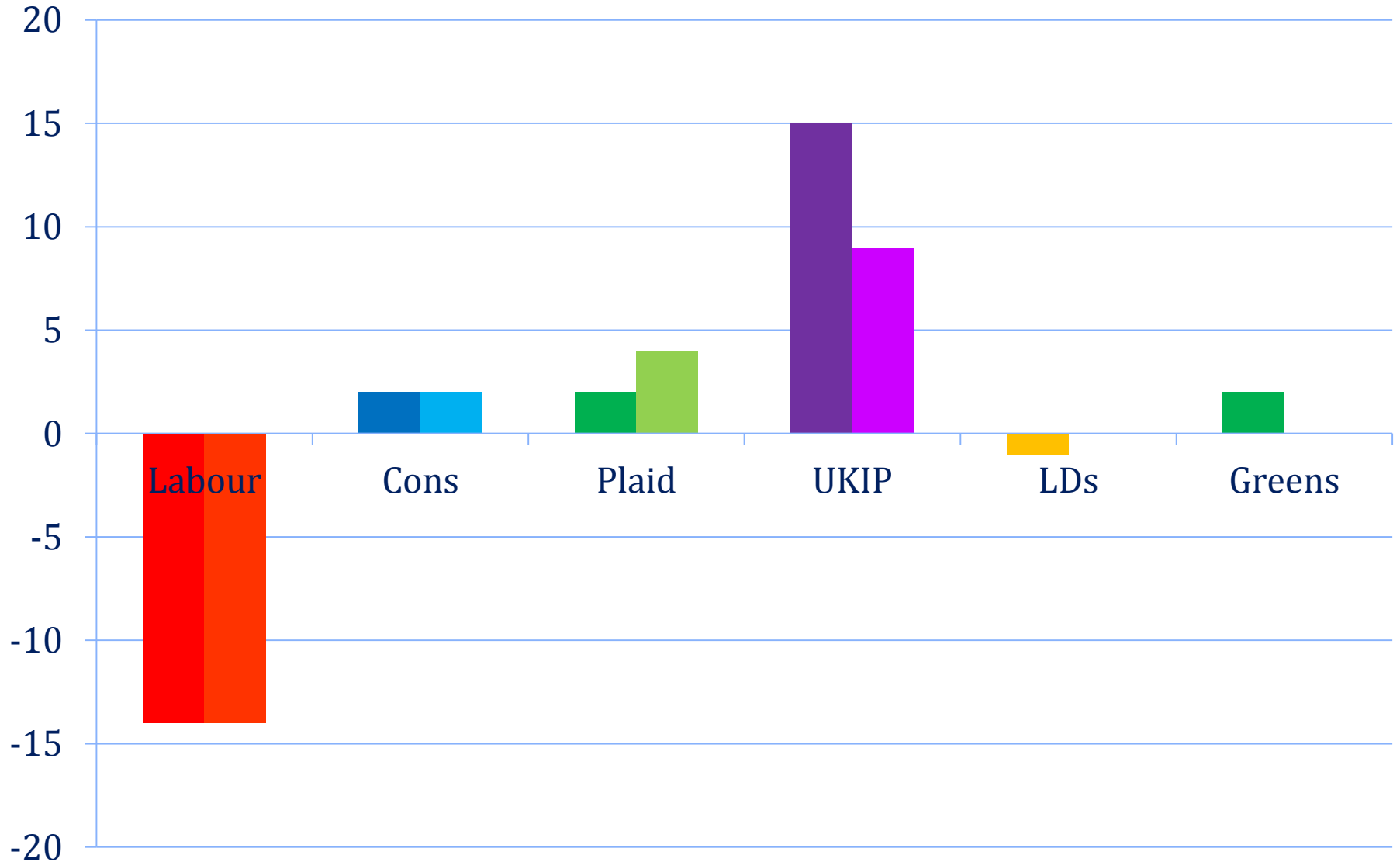
Constituency Vote: Up-Dated...



Regional Vote: Up-dated...



Change from this time in 2011...



Projected Seat Implications...

If changes since 2011 result implied by new poll are applied uniformly across Wales...

Labour: 27 seats (25 constituency, 2 region)

Plaid: 13 seats (6 constituency, 7 region)

Conservative: 11 seats (7 constituency, 4 region)

UKIP: 7 seats (all regional)

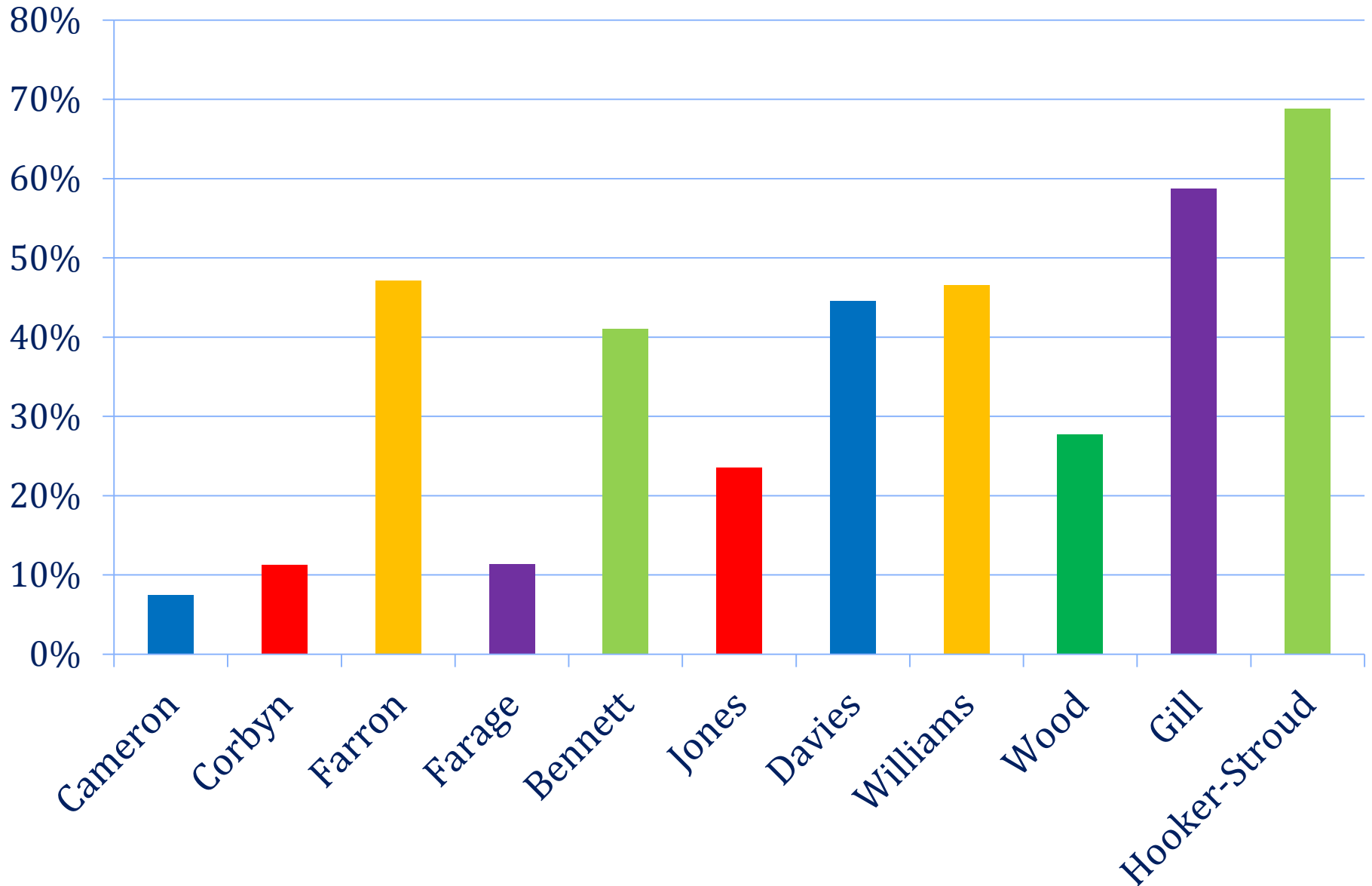
LibDems: 2 seats (both constituency)

(Detailed seat projections at: <http://blogs.cardiff.ac.uk/electionsinwales/>)

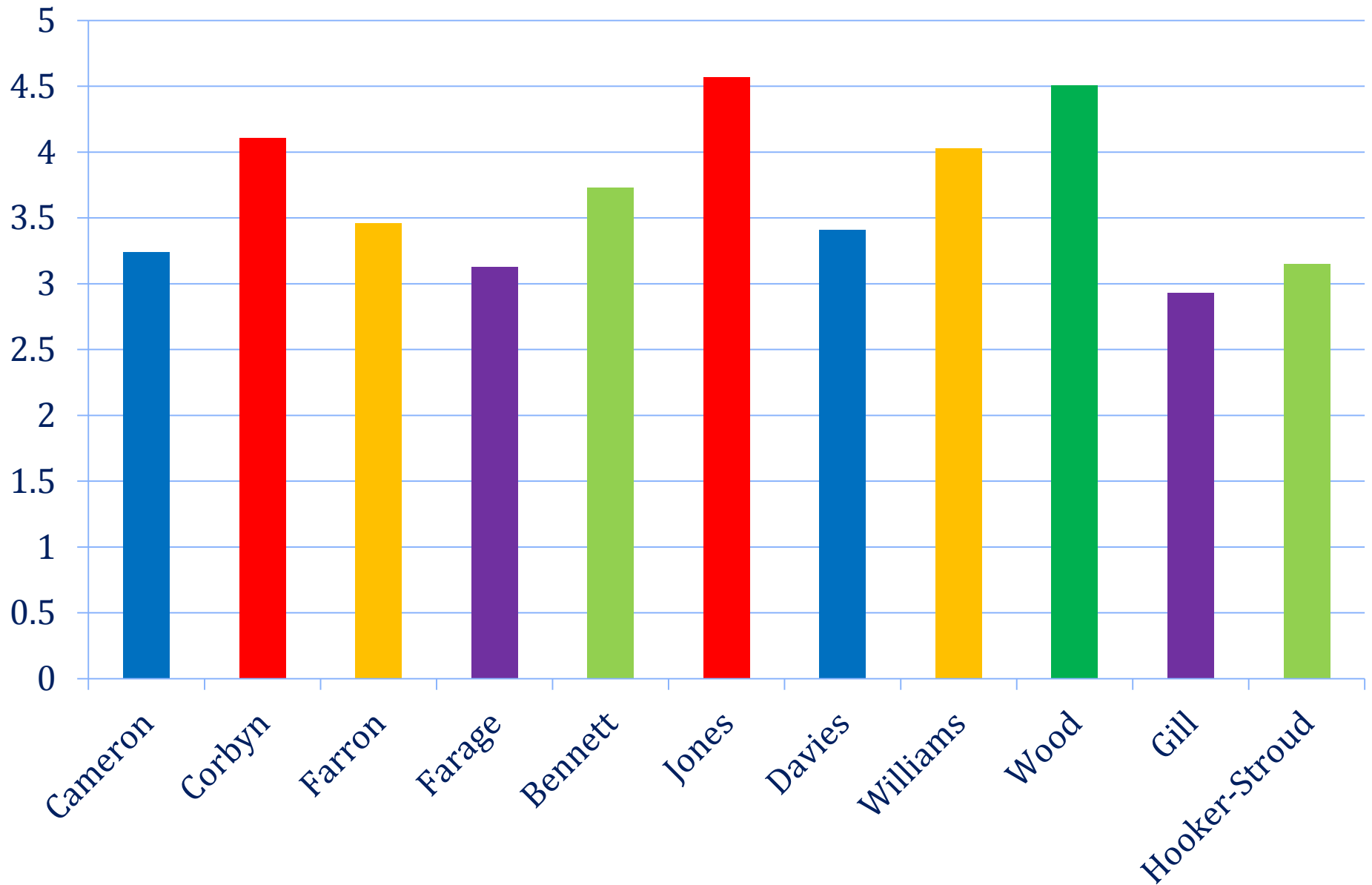
The Party Leaders in Wales

- Used standard question: asking respondents to evaluate party leaders on a 0-10 Like/Dislike scale
- Asked for *all* main UK and Welsh Party Leaders
- Can use to probe both **Visibility** and **Popularity**

Visibility: % 'Don't Know'

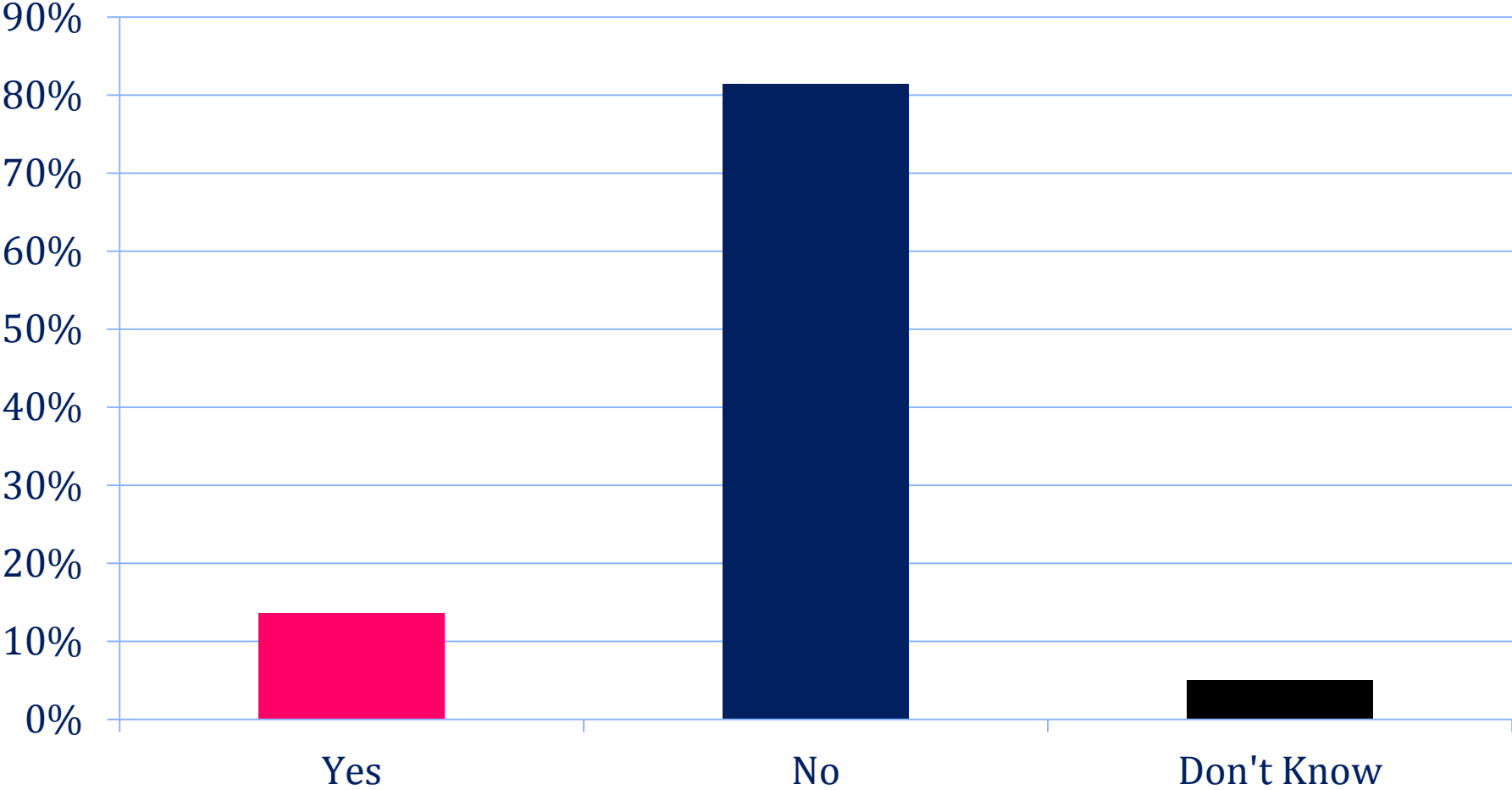


Popularity: Average /10

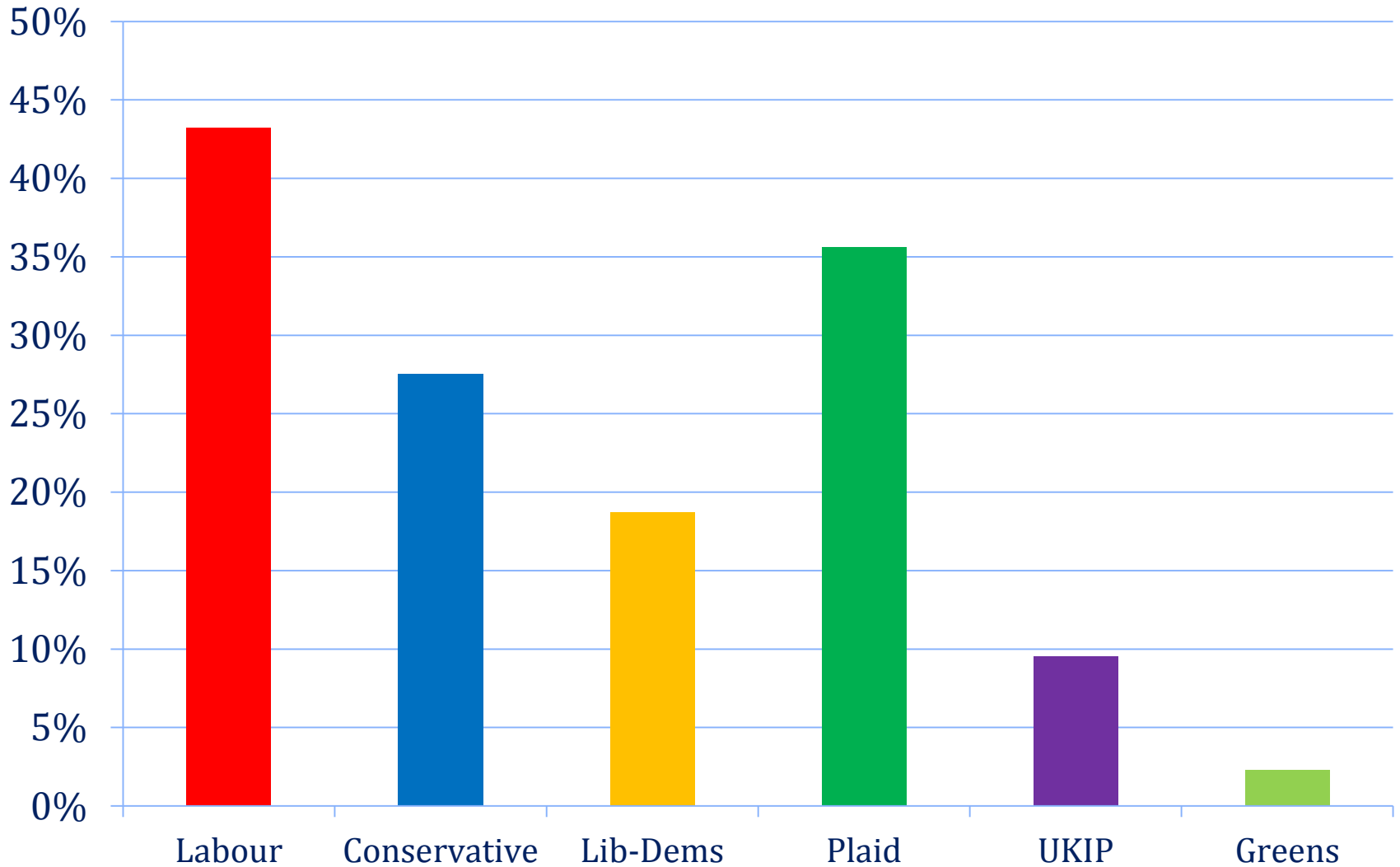


Campaigns: Contact as of early-March

'Have you been contacted by a political party during the [National Assembly] election campaign?'



Of Those Contacted – Which Party?



‘How interested, if at all, are you in...?’ (%)

Level of Interest	NAW	PCC	EURef
Very	23	7	58
Fairly	36	24	24
Not Very	24	37	8
Not at all	14	27	7
Don't Know	3	4	3

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The Electoral Battleground

	Plausible	'Stretch'
Gains	Targets	'Dreams Come True'
Losses	Defences	'Nightmare Scenario'

The Electoral Battleground: **Labour**

	Plausible	'Stretch'
Gains	No constituencies North list – if constituency losses	Carm. W & SP Preseli Pembs Aberconwy
Losses	Llanelli Cardiff Central Cardiff North Vale of Glamorgan Vale of Clwyd Gower	Delyn, Wrexham, Clwyd South Rhondda, Cardiff W, Caerphilly Swansea W Newport W Bridgend (?)

Electoral Battleground: **Conservative**

	Plausible	'Stretch'
Gains	<p>Cardiff North Vale of Glamorgan Vale of Clwyd Gower Brecon & Radnor</p>	<p>Delyn Wrexham Clwyd South Swansea West Newport West Bridgend (?) MWW List</p>
Losses	<p>Carmarthen W & SP Aberconwy 2nd List seats in: North, SWW, SWC, SWE</p>	<p>Montgomery Preseli Pembrokeshire Other List seats</p>

Electoral Battleground: **Plaid**

	Plausible	'Stretch'
Gains	<p>Llanelli</p> <p>Aberconwy</p> <p>Carm W & SP</p> <p>North, SWW, SWC List</p>	<p>Caerphilly</p> <p>Rhondda</p> <p>Cardiff West</p>
Losses	<p>No constituencies</p> <p>MWW List</p> <p>SWE 2nd List</p> <p>Other List seats if constit. gains</p>	<p>Ceredigion</p> <p>Some List seats</p>

Electoral Battleground: **Lib-Dems**

	Plausible	'Stretch'
Gains	Cardiff Central	Ceredigion Montgomery
Losses	Brecon & Radnor North, MWW, SWW, SWC Lists	

Electoral Battleground: **UKIP**

	Plausible	'Stretch'
Gains	Some Regional Seats	More Regional Seats: but very difficult to get beyond 2 per region
Losses	NOTHING TO LOSE!	

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