

Taxation, Welfare Spending and the 2024 Election

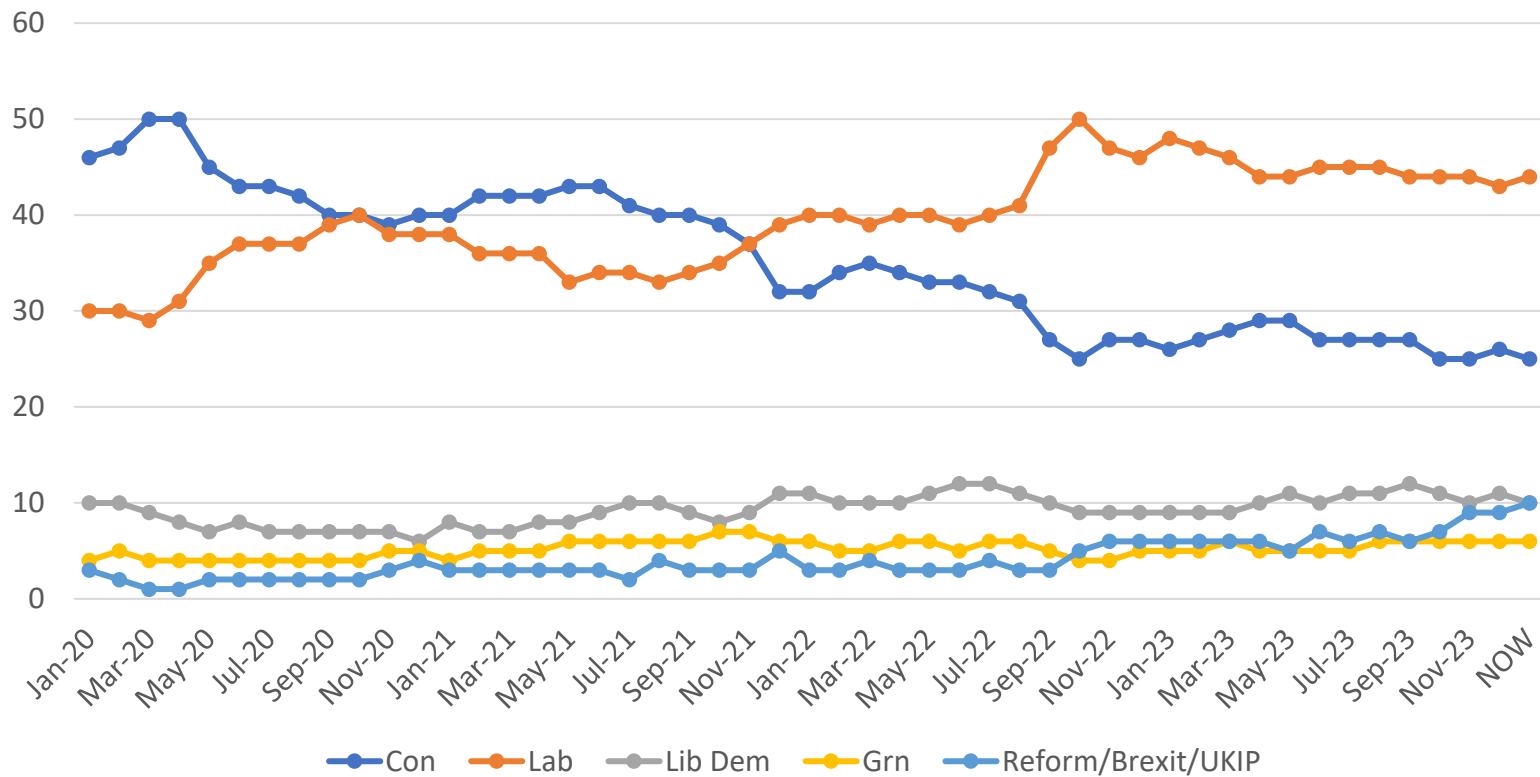
John Curtice

Univ of Strathclyde and National Centre for Social Research

‘The UK in a Changing Europe’

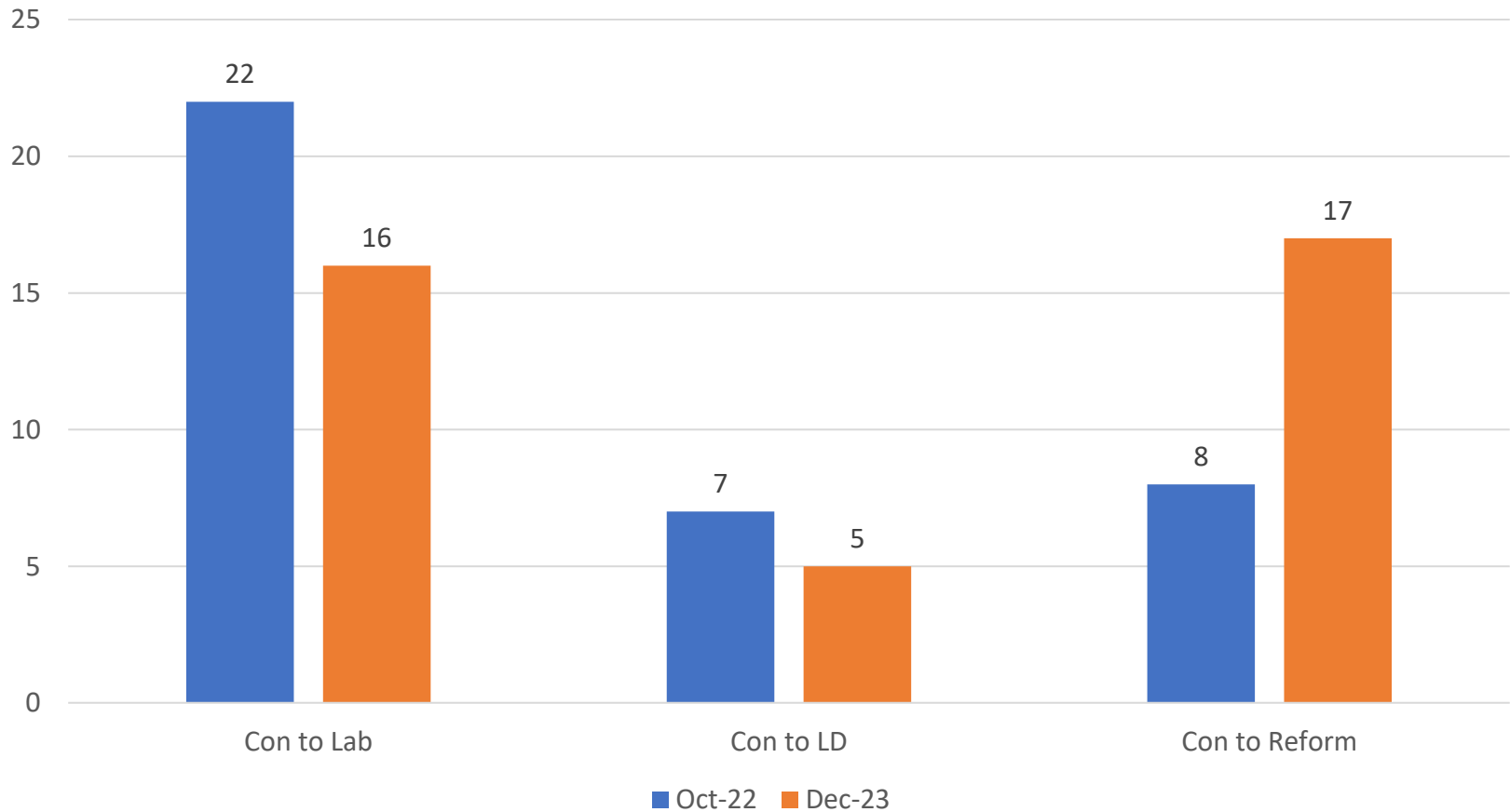
‘Trendy’ podcast

The Trajectory of UK Party Support since Dec 2019



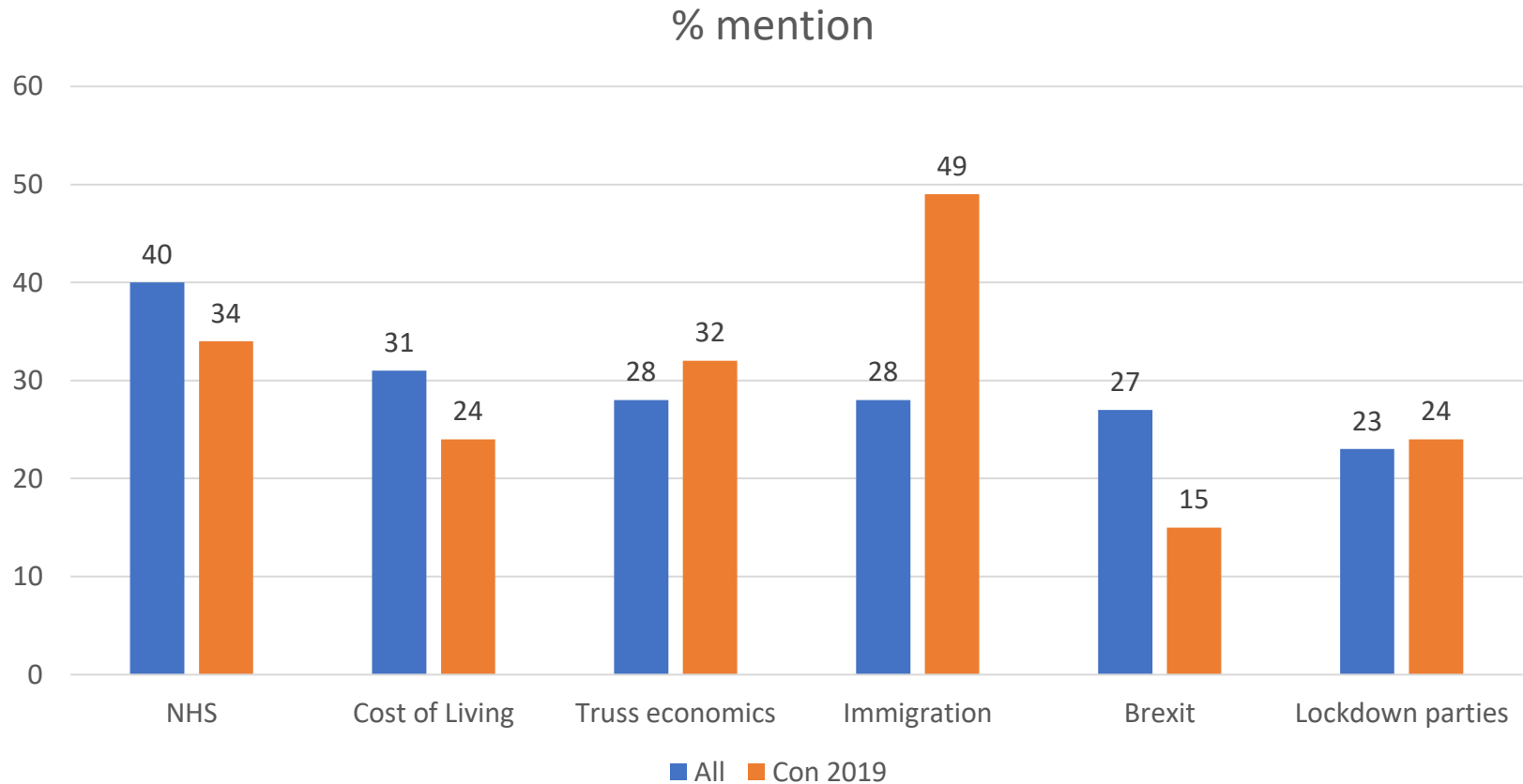
Source: Average of most recent poll in each month by each polling company. Not all companies polled each month. NOW: Based on last poll conducted to 22.1.24

Where Have 2019 Tories Gone?



Source: Average of last poll in Oct 22/Dec. 2023 by BMG/Deltapoll/Ipsos/ More in Common/JL Partners/Opinium/People Polling/Redfield & Wilton/Savanta/Survation/Techne/WeThink/YouGov.

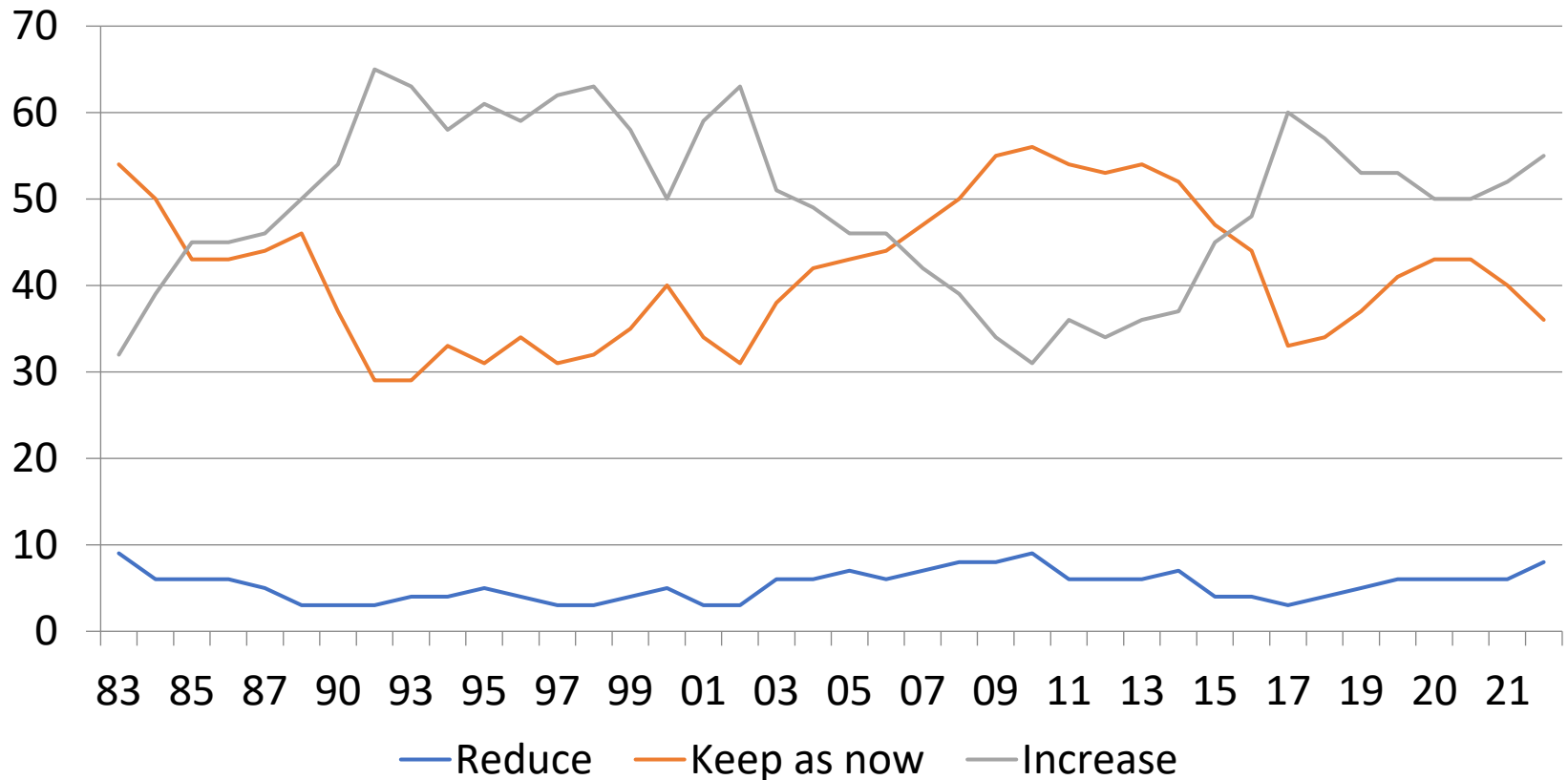
Complaints About The Conservatives' Record Since 2010



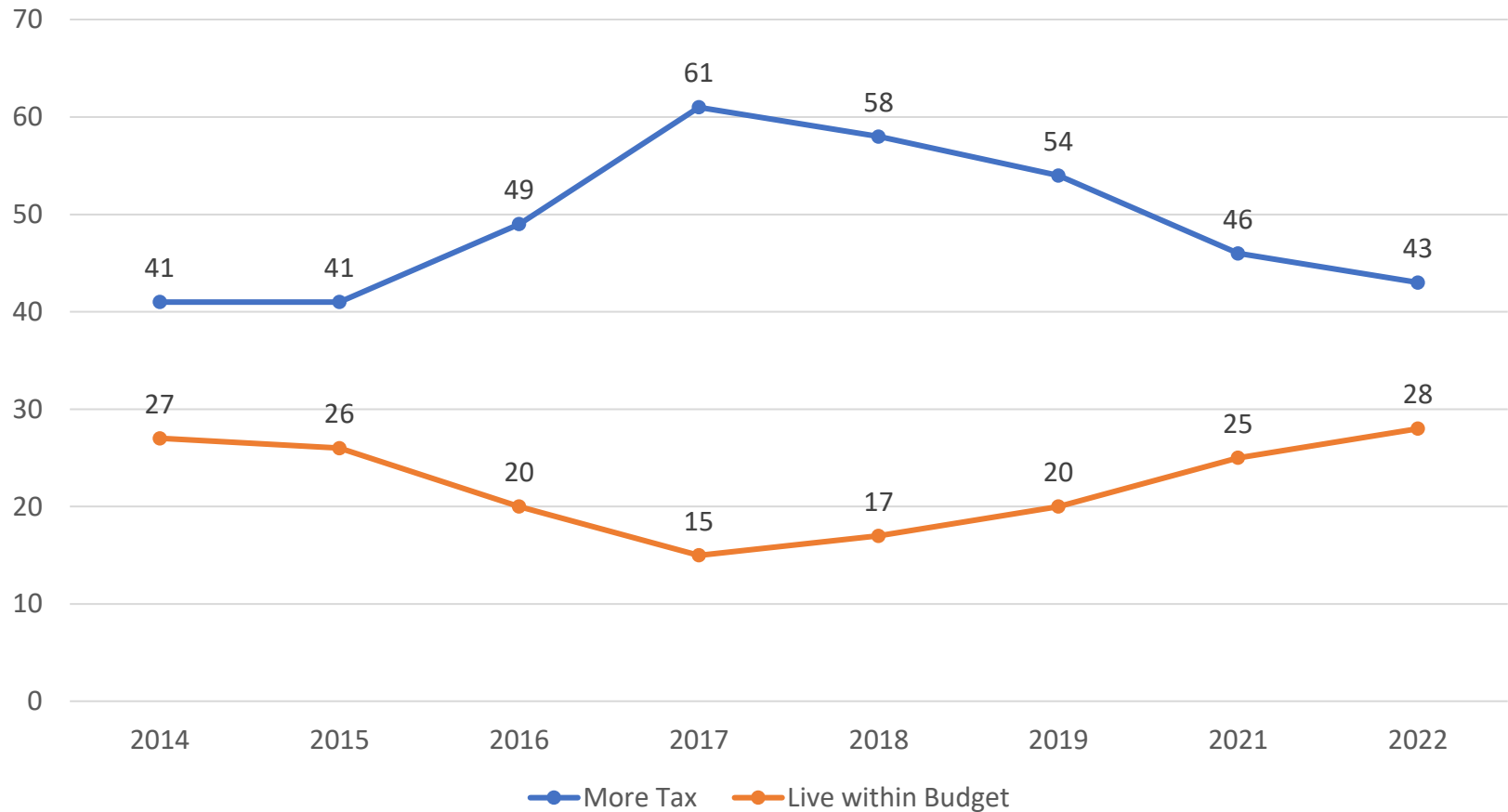
Source: Public First for Onward, 8-15.8.23

Has the Thermostat Been Turned Up?

Taxes and Spending

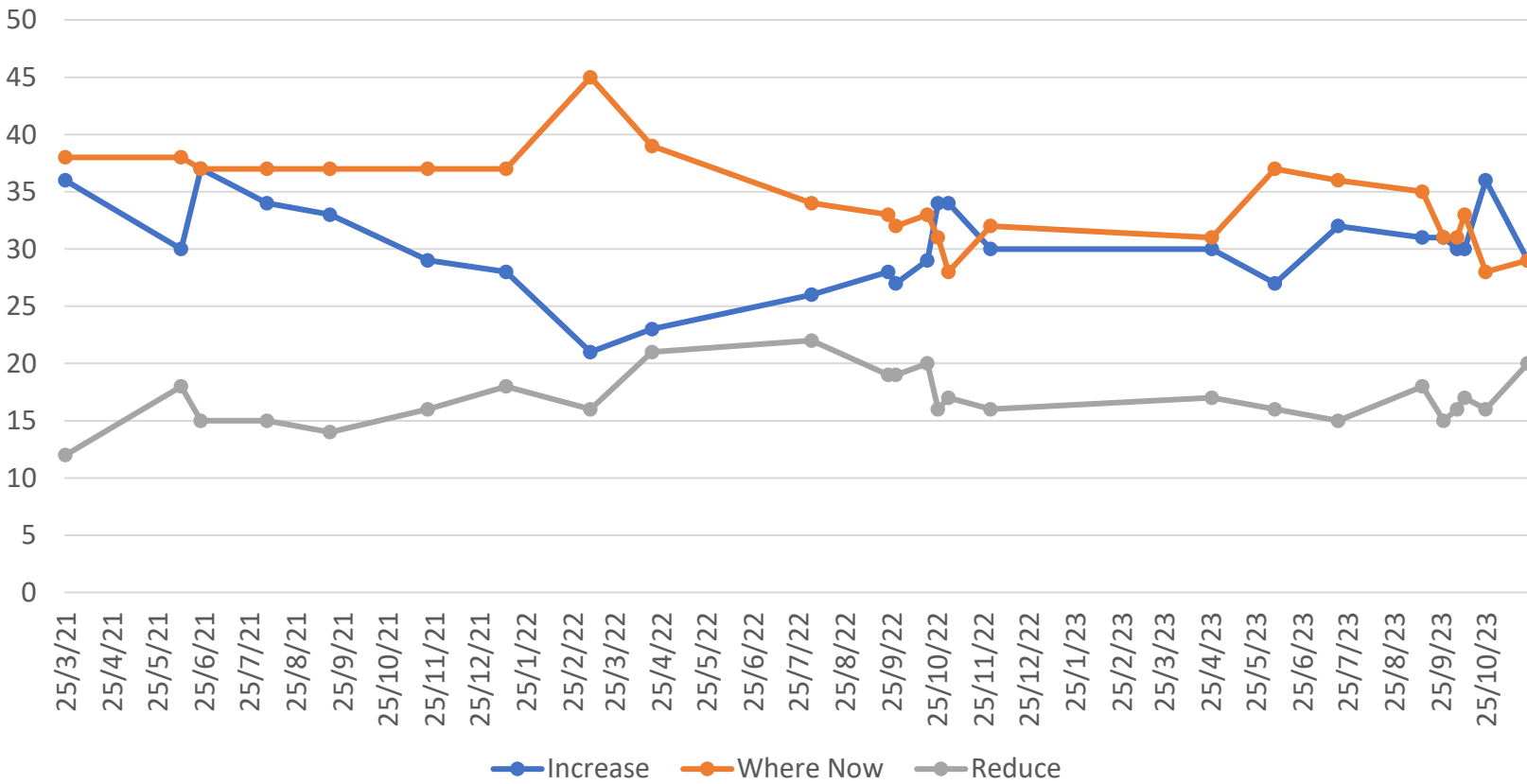


Trends in Attitudes towards NHS Funding



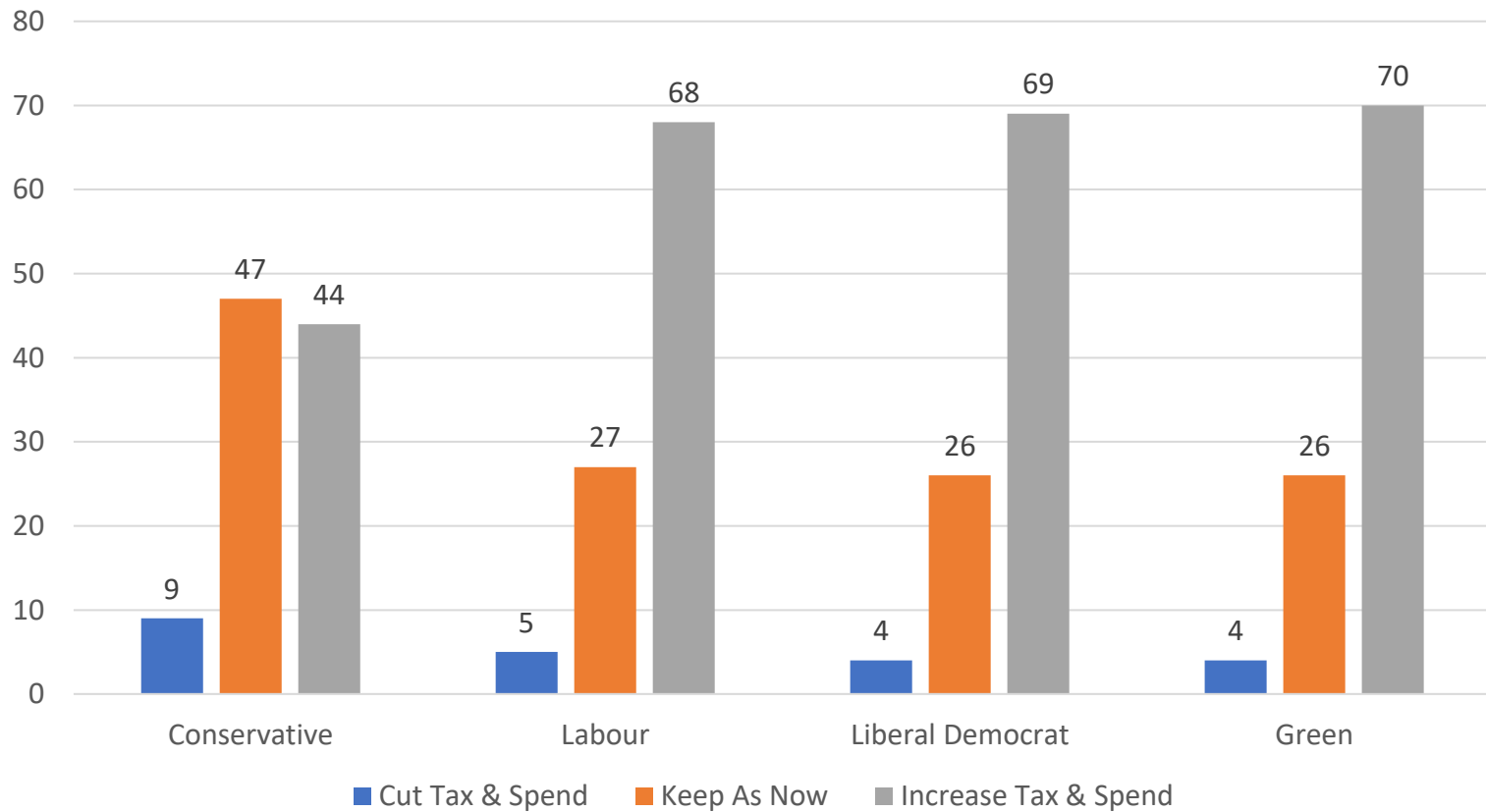
Source: British Social Attitudes

Recent Trends in Attitudes Towards Tax and Spend



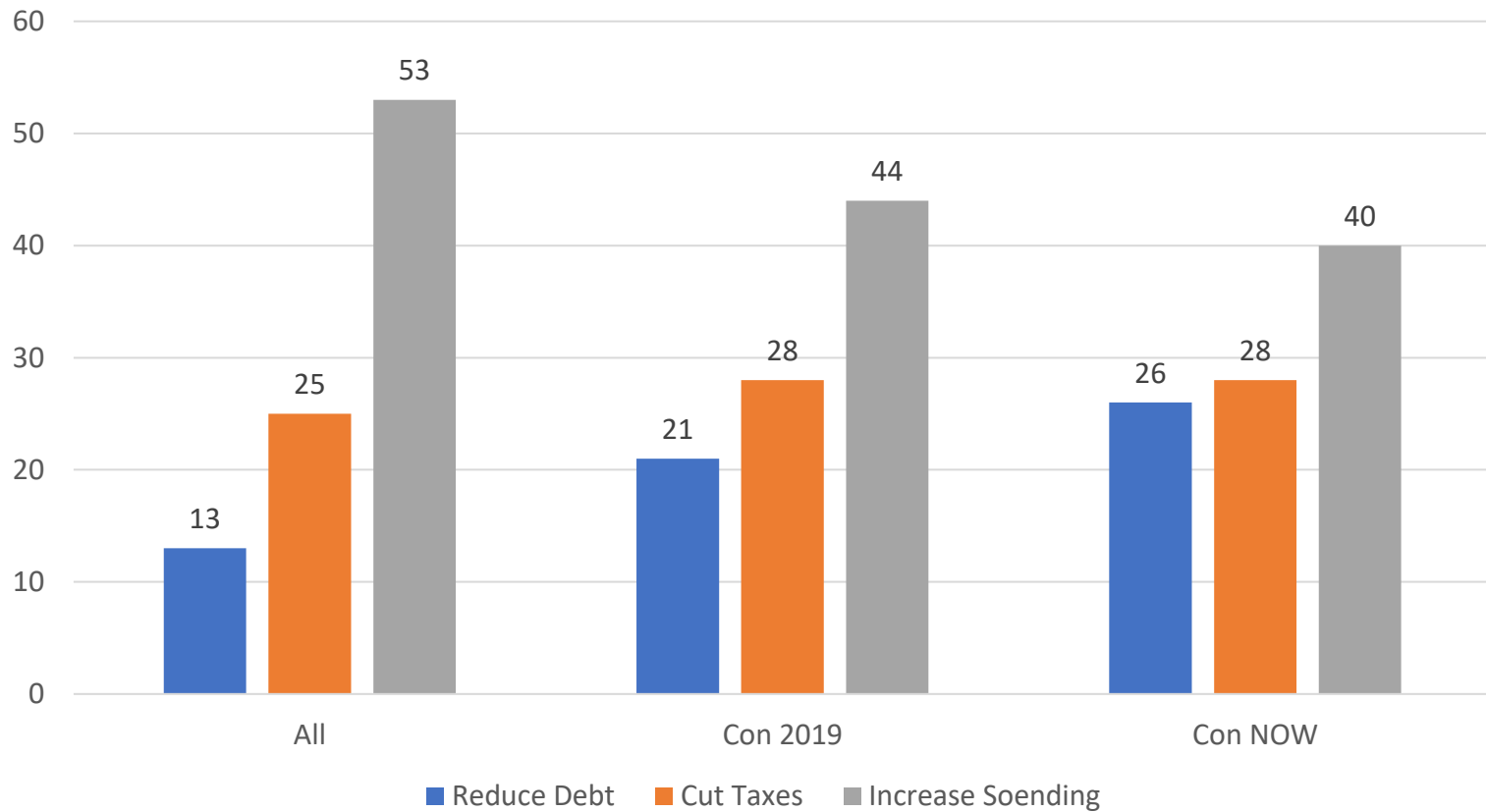
Source: Opinium. Thinking about the amount of money the government raises in taxes and then spends on public services (such as health and education), do you think they should increase/reduce taxes and spend more/less on public services/ keep taxes and spending about where they are now?

Partisan Differences - 1

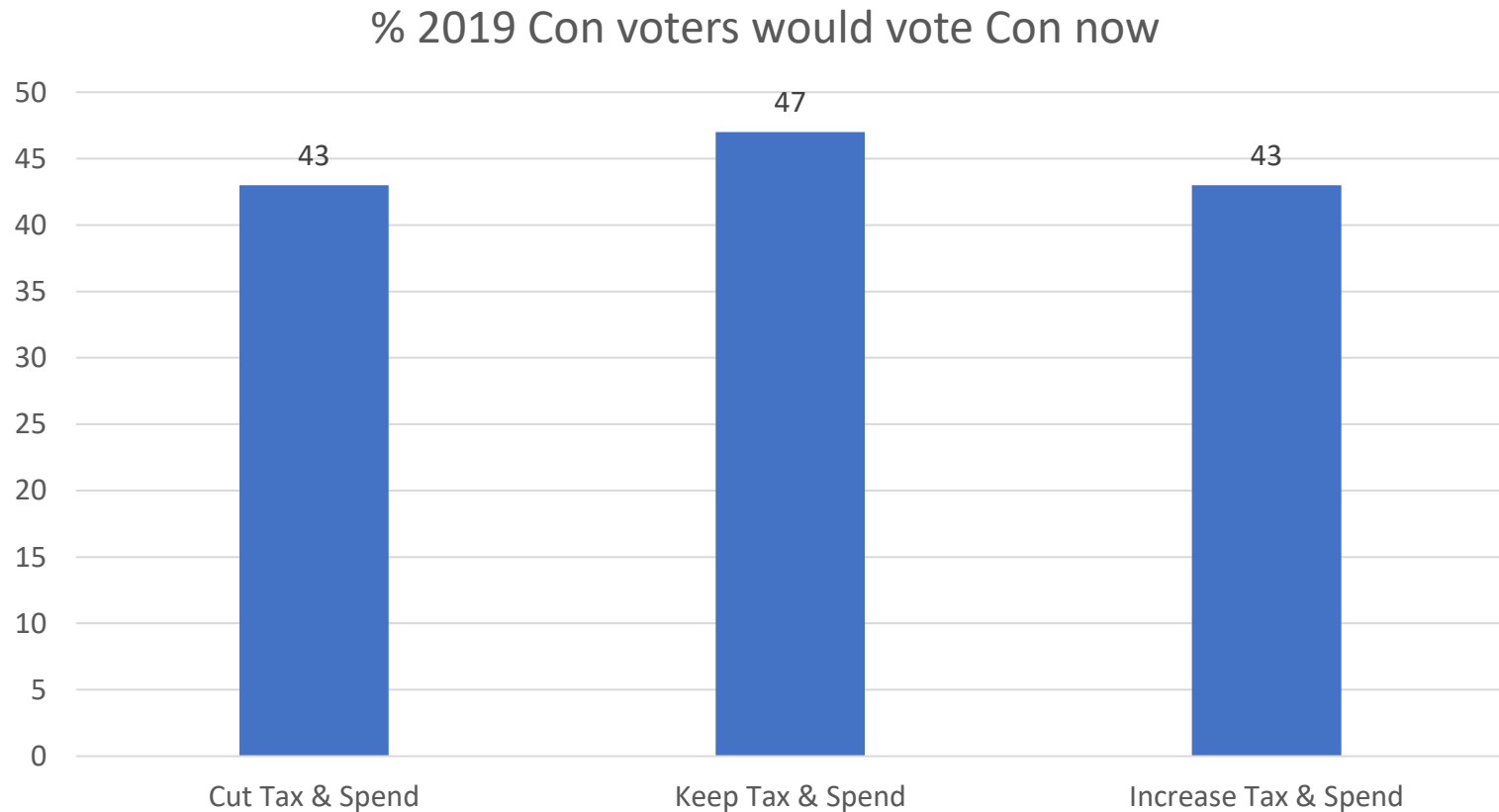


Source: British Social Attitudes. Party is a party identification measure

Partisan Differences - 2

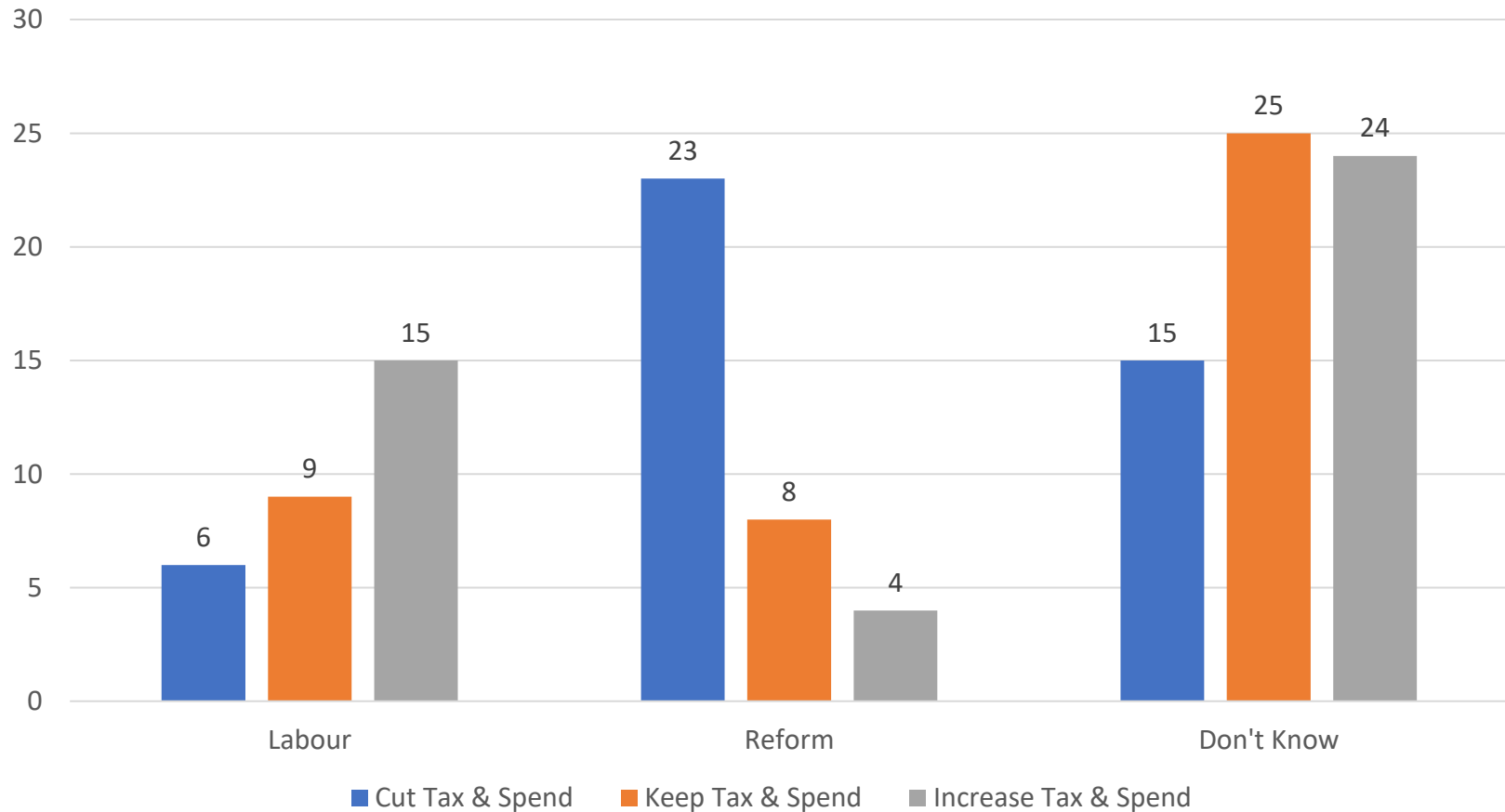


Tax & Spend Preferences and Conservative Loyalty



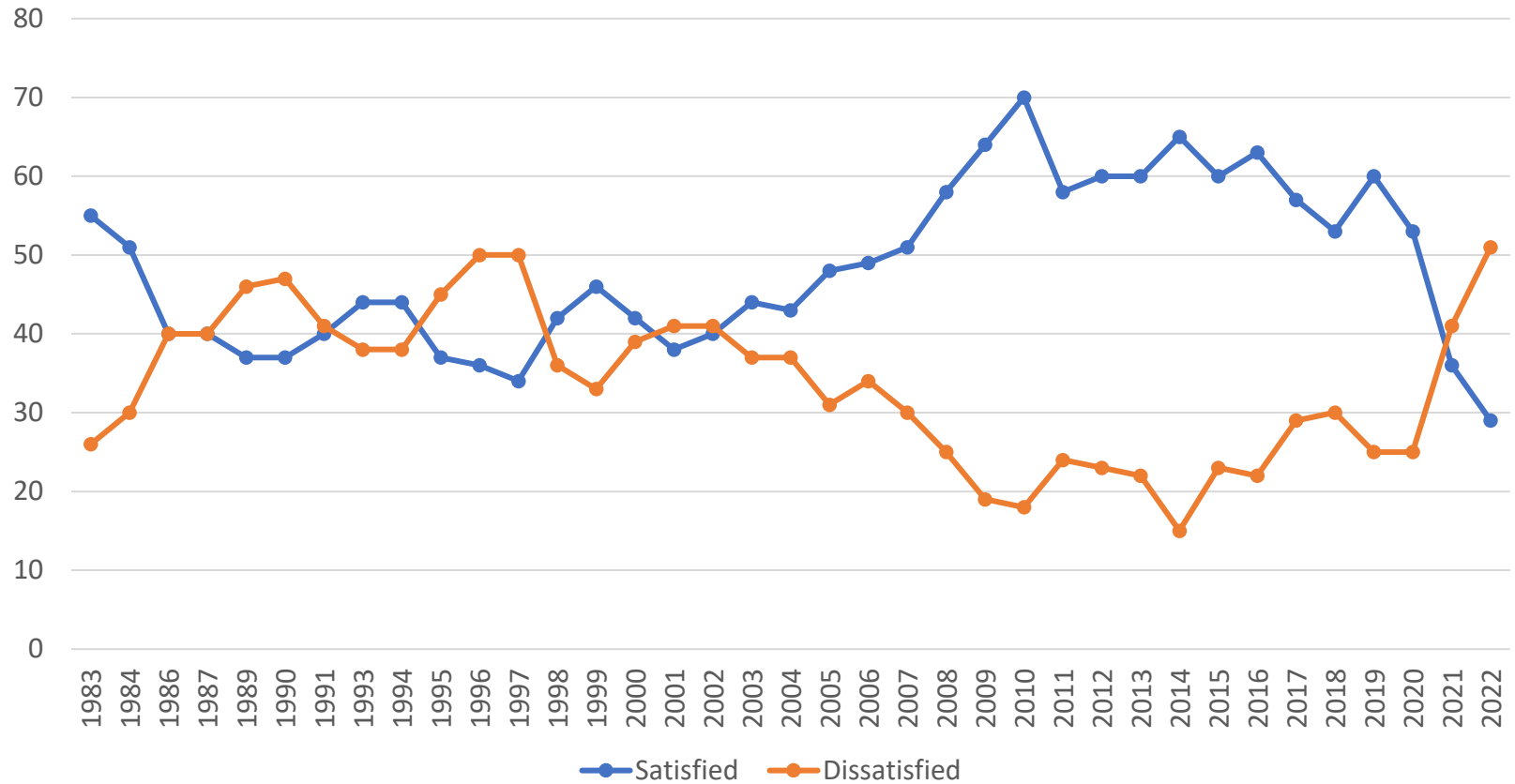
Source: British Election Study Internet Panel May 23 (DK/WNV included in denominator). 16% of 2019 Con voters favoured cutting taxation and spending, 51% keeping it the same, and 26% increasing it.

Tax & Spend Preferences and Destination of Tory Defectors



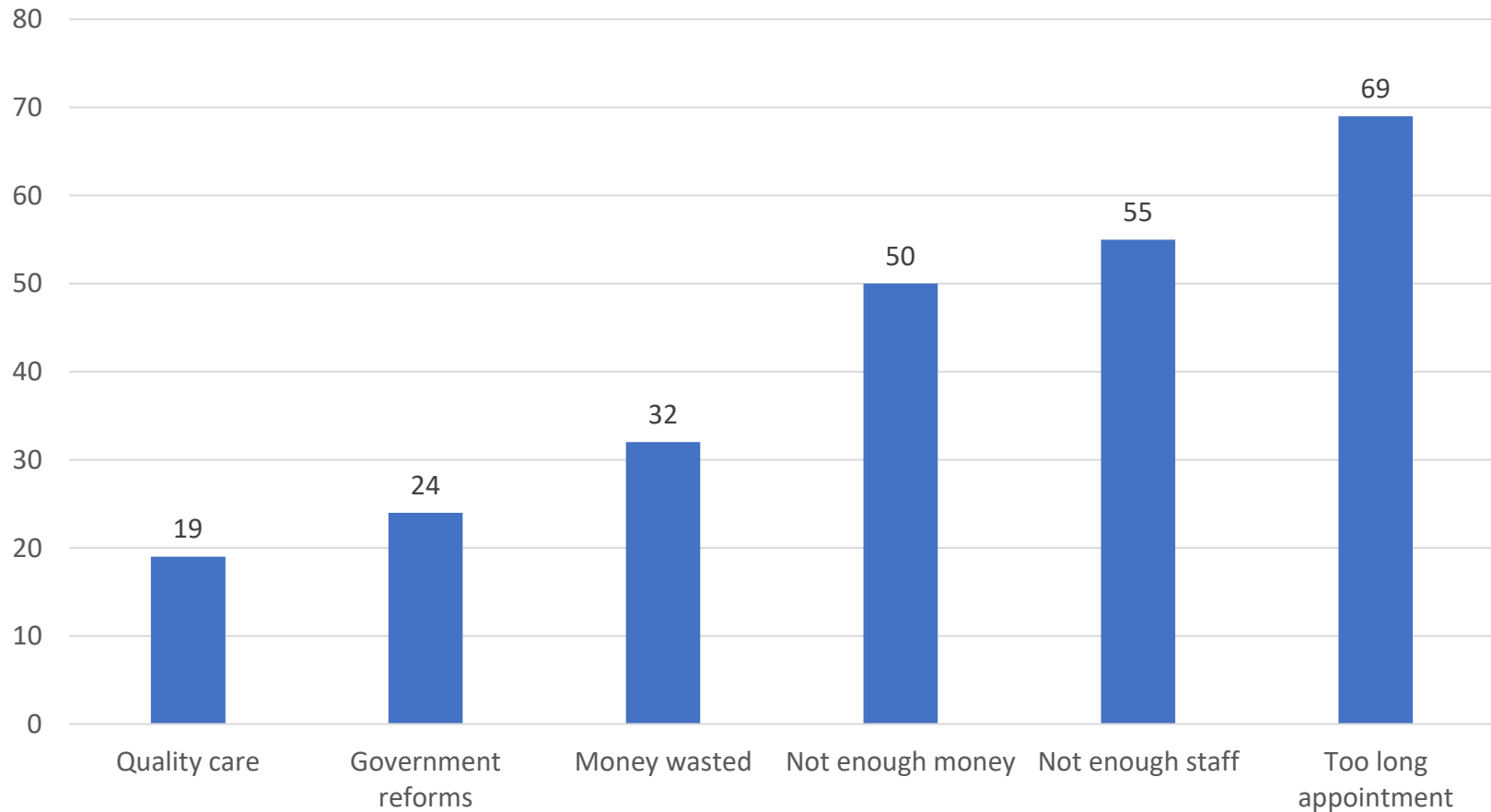
Source: British Election Study Internet Panel May 23 (DK/WNV included in denominator).

A Troubled NHS



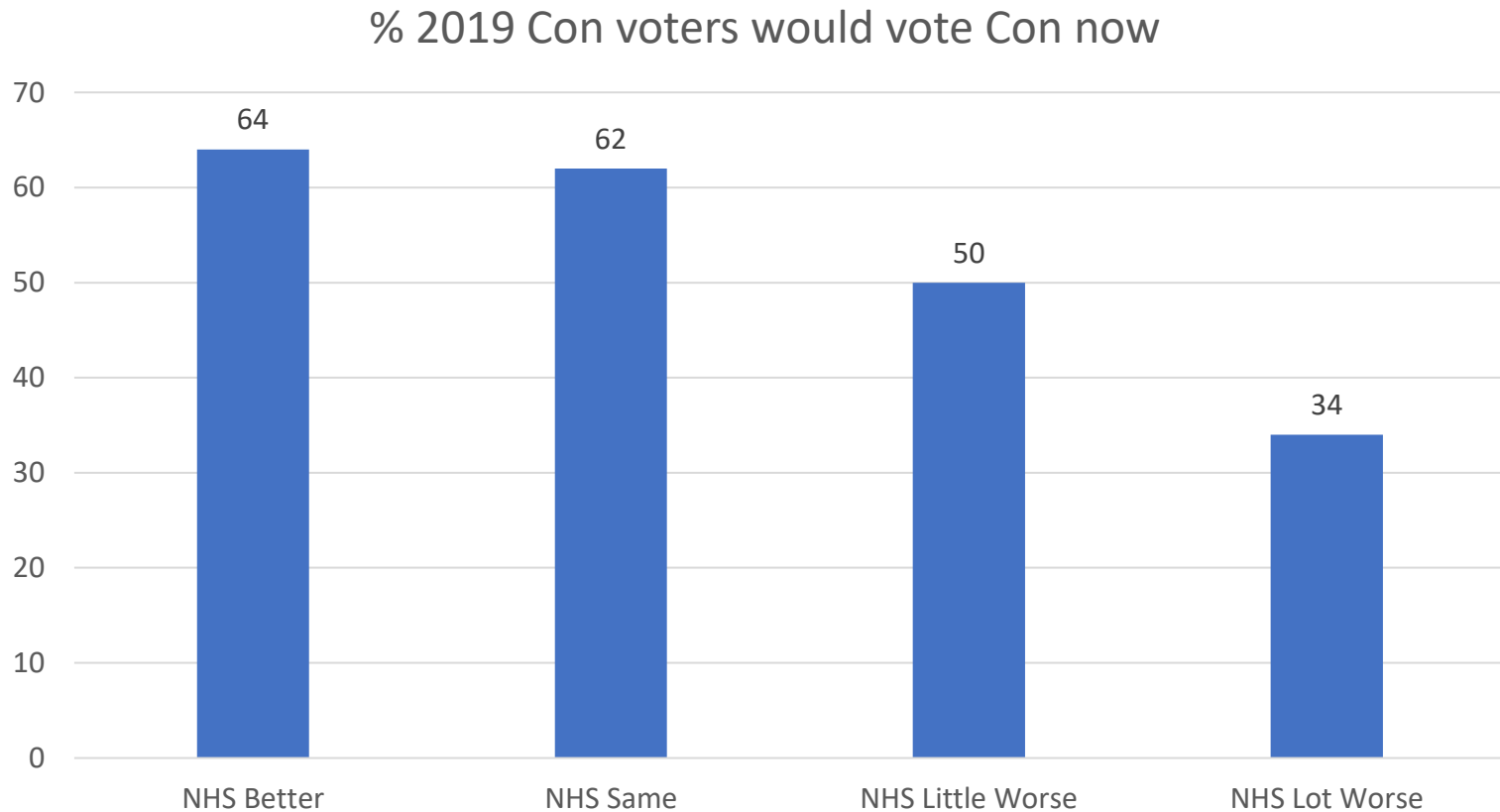
Source: British Social Attitudes

Sources of the Current Dissatisfaction



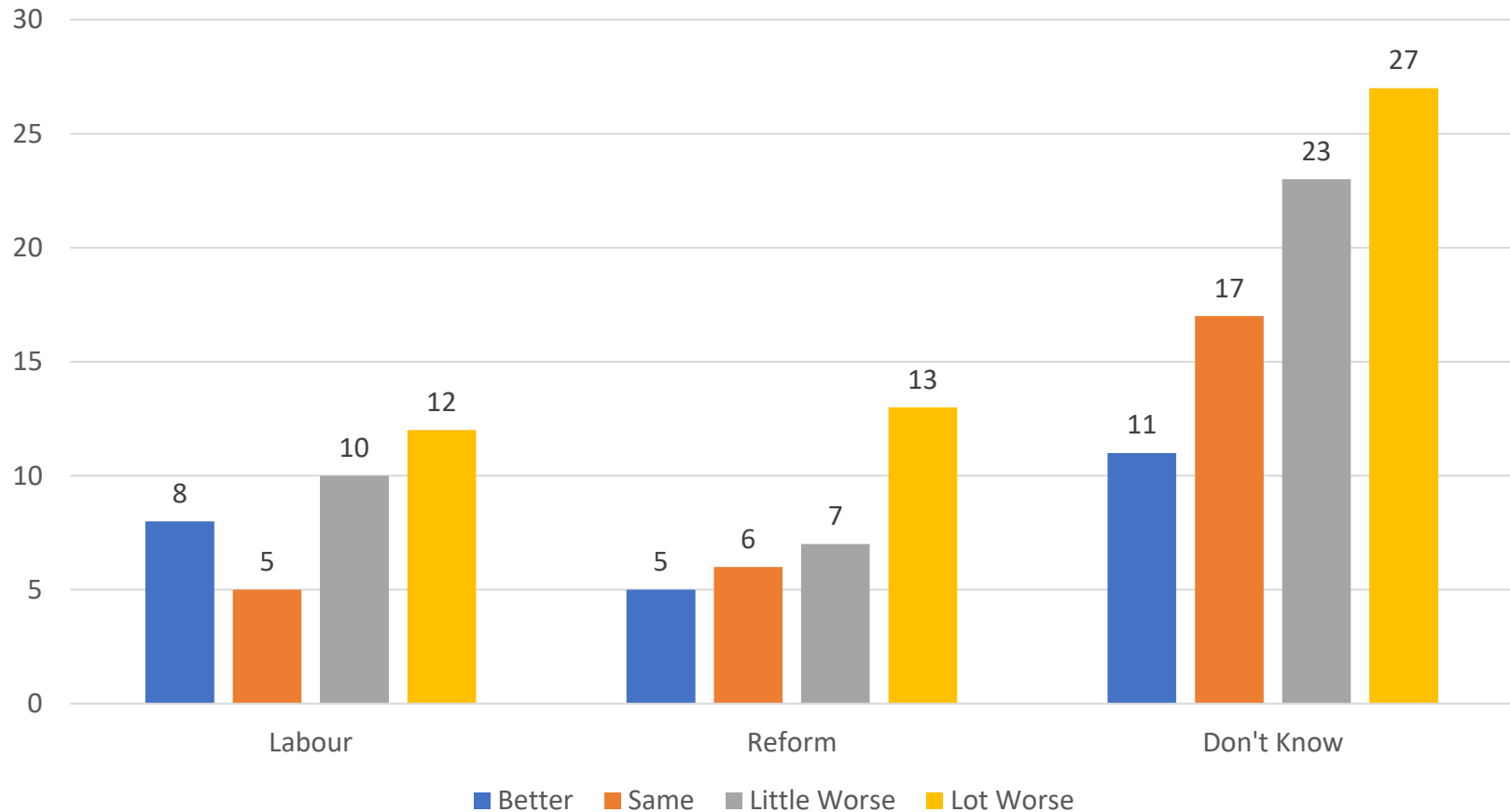
Source: British Social Attitudes 2022. Question only asked of those dissatisfied with the NHS.

Evaluations of NHS and Conservative Loyalty



Source: British Election Study Internet Panel May 23 (DK/WNV included in denominator). . 3% of 2019 Con voters thought the NHS was getting better, 15% that it was staying the same, 32% getting a little worse and 46% a lot

Evaluations of NHS and Destination of Tory Defectors



Source: British Election Study Internet Panel May 23 (DK/WNV included in denominator).

Summary

- Public have not (so far) reacted against the expansion of the state occasioned by COVID-19 etc.
- Seemingly because of concern about state of public services (especially the NHS).
- Conservative supporters are only somewhat more likely to prefer a reduction in tax and spend.
- Little sign that overall decline in Conservative support is associated with tax and spend preference
- But perceptions of the NHS are associated with defection from the Conservatives