

UK election: *Nature* polls its readers on the science vote

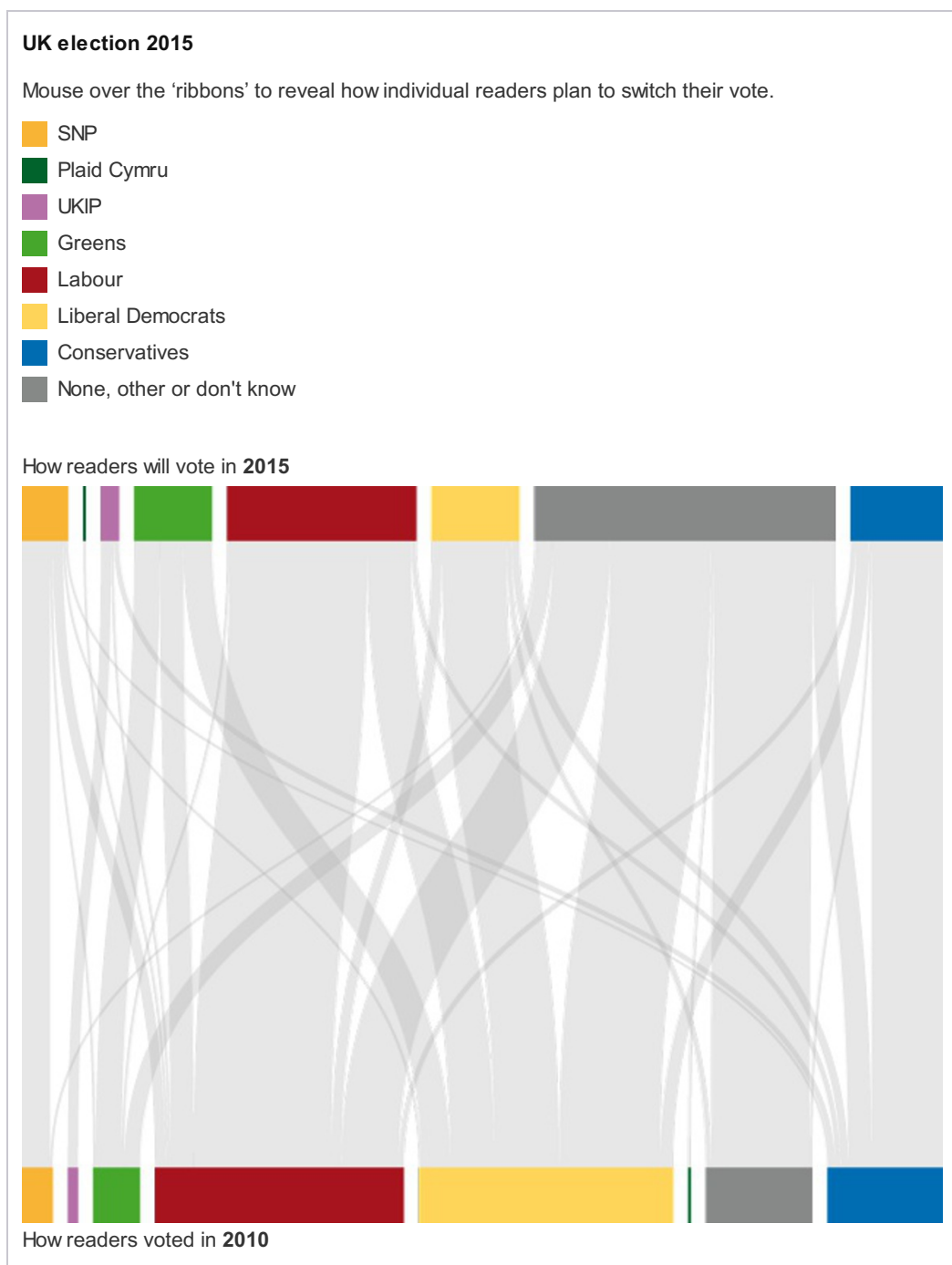
Survey suggests that left-leaning readers are taking more notice of historically minor parties.

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31 March 2015 | Clarified: 01 April 2015

An e-mail poll of 321 UK *Nature* readers suggests that they are taking more notice of the country's **historically minor parties**: in particular, the Green Party and the Scottish National Party (SNP).

The science vote has never been representative of that of the wider UK population: if the country were made up only of scientists like those who answered the survey, a left-leaning party would win easily. Around a third of readers responding to *Nature's* poll were still undecided about their vote, but those who had made up their minds plan to give most support to Labour in the 7 May general election. Nine of 96 Labour voters in 2010 said they would switch their support to the Green Party, however.

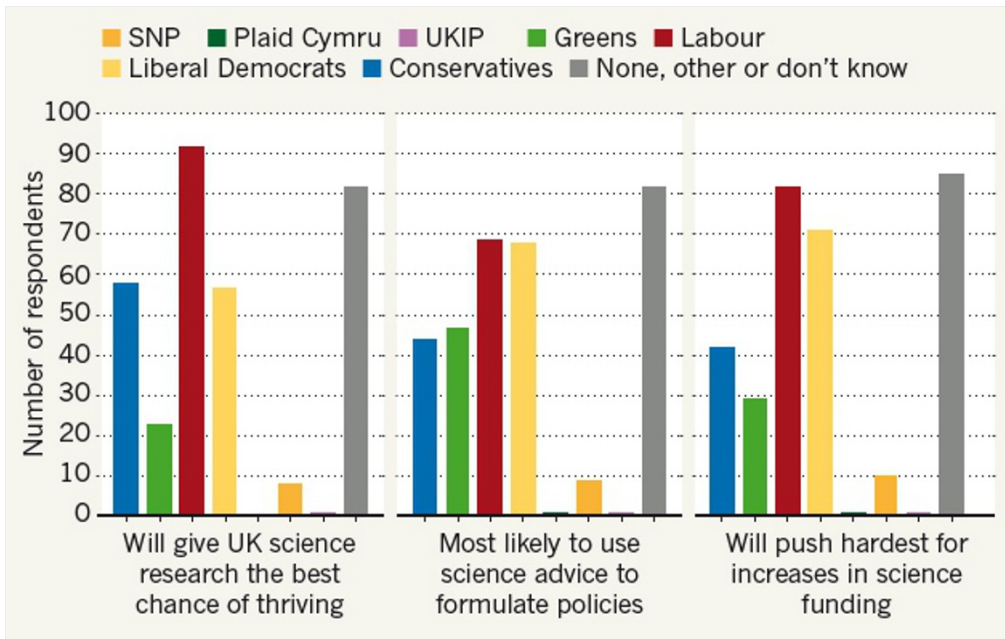


A fall in support for the Liberal Democrats is also apparent: of 98 respondents who told *Nature* that they had voted for the Liberal Democrats in the last election, only a quarter have committed to casting the same vote this time around, with the Green Party and Labour making the biggest gains.

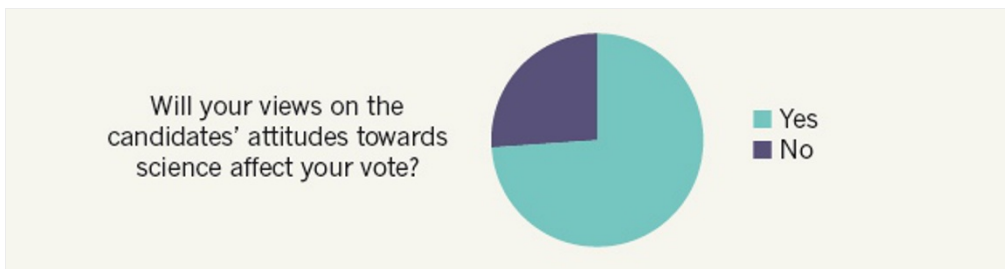
Overall, both the Green Party and the SNP seem to have gained support among scientists.

Labour is also the party that the scientists *Nature* polled think would give UK research the best chance of thriving, with the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats in second and third place, respectively. But researchers rated the Green Party higher than the Conservatives when asked which party would be most likely to use science advice to formulate policies.

Nature/Chris Ryan



Roughly three-quarters of researchers polled by *Nature* said that the candidates' attitudes to science would affect their vote — a proportion similar to the 80% recorded in a *Nature* poll before the last UK general election, five years ago.



Which political party do you think would give scientific research the best chance of thriving in the UK?

Click here for the full survey results: [Science in UK election 2015](#) 📄

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Clarifications

Clarified: This article has been amended to make it clear that the results are suggestive only of *Nature's* UK reader opinion, not of all UK scientists.