

# Labour retains absolute majority

## One week is a long time in politics – Joseph Cuschieri now emerges as Labour's third most popular candidate

### JAMES DEBONO

TWO days before next Saturday's election, MaltaToday's latest opinion poll predicts an absolute majority for Labour with 51.2% of declared voters, leading the PN by nine percentage points.

Alternattiva Demokratika has seen its percentage rise from 4.1% to 5.5%, while the major parties have seen a slight drop in support.

The survey has a margin of error of 3.65% and was conducted among 700 respondents contacted in the past week.

Labour incumbent Louis Grech has slightly surpassed Edward Scicluna as PL front-runner, but it was former Labour MP Joseph Cuschieri who made the most remarkable advance, to emerge as Labour's third most popular candidate.

Cuschieri's campaign has emphasised his humble origins and his role in enthroning Joseph Muscat as party leader by giving up his parliamentary seat.

Nationalist incumbent David Casa, also popular with PN grassroots, made significant inroads by clinching the second place in the Nationalist camp, surpassing Roberta Metsola Tedesco Triccas.

The poll reveals 7.8% will not be voting in this election, and 27.3% are either undecided or would not reveal their intentions.

Nearly two-thirds (64.9%) expressed a preference for a particular party. Among this category Labour enjoys a majority of 51.2%.

When all respondents are taken into account, even those who intend to abstain or who are still undecided, both major parties saw their support decrease slightly since the last MaltaToday survey was held last week.

At 33.3%, Labour saw support decrease by 2.1%; the PN saw support decrease by 1.6 percentage points.

But AD saw support increase from 2.8% to 3.6% – significantly AD saw support among respondents aged 18 to 34 double from 3.1% to 6.8%.

### 29% of PN voters undecided

A significant 28.9% of respondents who said they voted PN in 2008, are now undecided on what to do next Saturday – an increase of 7.4 points over the previous survey.

On the other hand, the number of former Labour voters who won't vote decreased from 10% last week to 7.2%.

Only 16% of Labour voters remain undecided – 13% less than the number of undecided PN voters. This indicates that the PN has a greater potential pool of voters to persuade in the last days of the campaign.

But the PN is also losing more votes to AD: over the past week, the number of former PN voters who will vote for AD has increased from 3% to 4%.

On the other hand, Labour is still more successful in mobilising its core support. 76% of those who voted Labour in 2008 are sure to vote again for the PL, as against the 54% of 2008 PN voters who will do the same.

But the number of former Labour voters who would not vote in next week's election has also increased from 3% to 4.7% – an indication that overconfidence could be taking its toll on Labour supporters.

Significantly, while 4.8% of

### Frontrunners (according to PL/PN declared voters) (%)

	PL declared voters	PN declared voters
Louis Grech	12.1	Simon Busuttil 53.1
Edward Scicluna	11.7	David Casa 7.1
Joseph Cuschieri	10.8	R. Tedesco Triccas 4.1
Marlene Mizzi	9.5	Alan Deidun 2
John Attard-Montalto	4.8	Edward Demicoli 2
Steve Borg	2.6	Frank Portelli 2
C. Abela Baldacchino	2.2	Marthese Portelli 2
		Vince Farrugia 2
Others	4.1	Others 2.8
Undecided	42.4	Undecided 30.7

Figures of candidates with less than +/-3.7% margin of error are only indicative. Candidates with less than 2% are not included.

### Which party will you vote for?

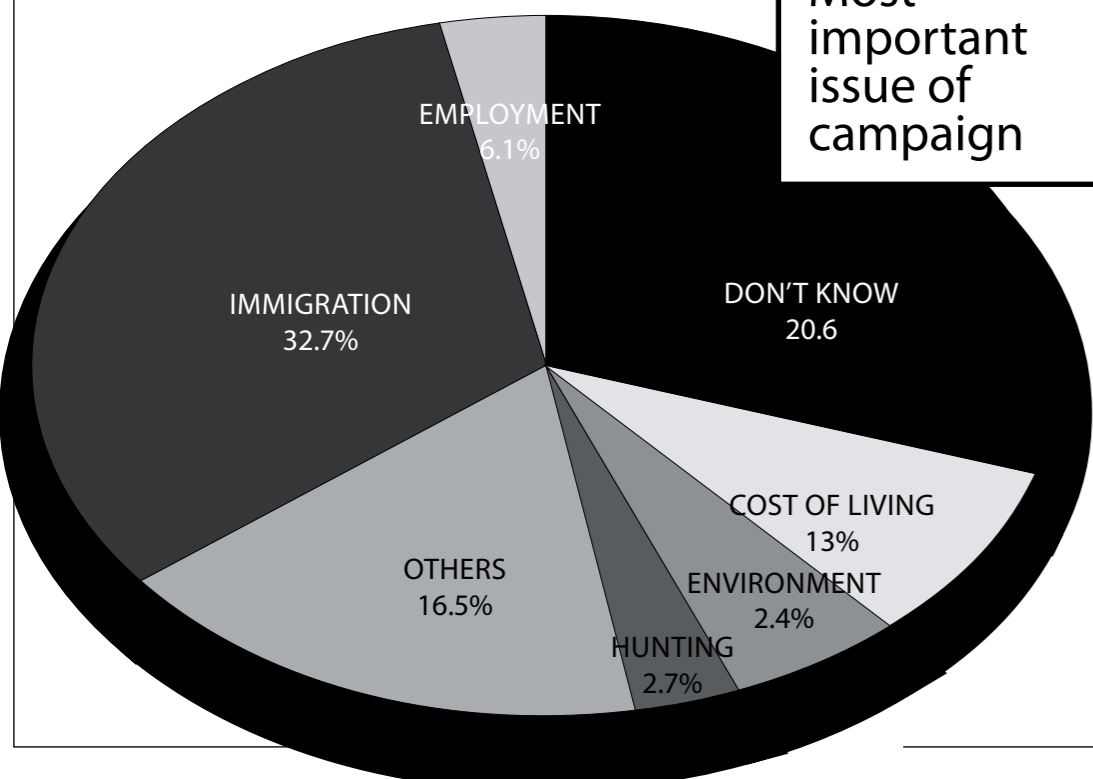
	Declared Voters	Change	All respondents
PL	51.2%	-0.5	33.3
PN	42.1%	-0.3	27.4
AD	5.5%	+1.4	3.6
AN	0.5%	-0.4	0.3
Others	0.5%	-0.4	0.3
No answer	-	-	27.3
Not voting	-	-	7.8

(Declared voters' results excluding from the sample respondents who do not intend to vote or who are still undecided)

### Voting intentions according to age bracket (%)

	PL	PN	AD	AN	Others	Not Voting	No Answer
18-34	30.5	22.9	6.8	0	0	9.3	30.5
35-54	33.9	23.2	1.5	0.6	0.6	10.2	30
55+	35	33.8	2	0.3	0.3	3.5	25.1

### Most important issue of campaign



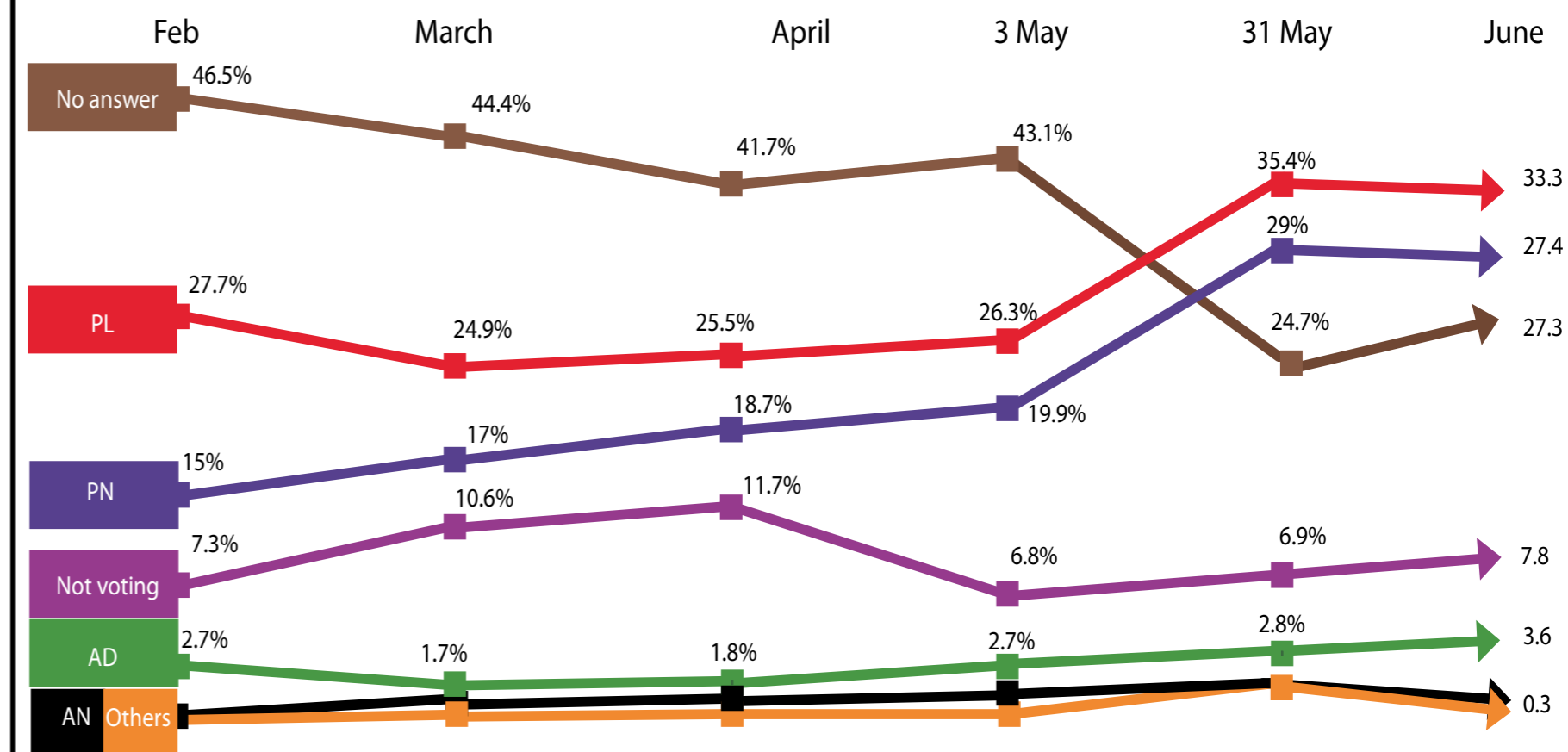
### Which party did you vote for in the 2008 general election? (%)

PN	41.7
PL	36.7
AD	0.8
AN	0.3
No answer	13.3
Was under 18	2.2
Did not vote	5

### Voting intentions according to 2008 voters (%)

	Voted PN in 2008	Voted PL in 2008
Will vote PL	4.8	76.6
Will vote PN	54.2	2
Will vote AD	4	0.4
Will vote AN	0.6	0
Will vote N. Lowell	0.3	0.4
Will vote for others	0.3	0
No answer	28.9	16
Not Voting	7.2	4.7

### TIMELINE



former PN voters will be voting for the PL this time around, 2% of former Labour voters will switch sides to PN.

This is an indication that Labour is not only benefiting from apathy among Nationalist voters, but has also made small inroads among PN voters. Former Nationalist voters constitute 72.2% of AD's current level of support – a clear indication that the green vote contributed to the GonziPN electoral victory in 2008.

Although the vote was evenly split in the last general election, 42% of the MaltaToday sample was made up of people who

vote PN in 2008, and 37% who voted Labour.

### Casa and Cuschieri make inroads

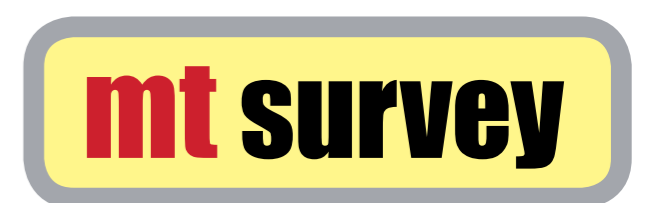
Nationalist incumbent David Casa has seen his support increase from 2.8% to 7.1% of declared PN voters in the last week of the campaign, surpassing Roberta Metsola Tedesco Triccas who follows at 4.1%.

But with the support of 53.1% of declared PN voters, front-runner and campaign architect Simon Busuttil remains by far the most popular candidate. His second preferences are likely to determine which other PN can-

didate will be elected.

Former Labour MP Joseph Cuschieri has seen his support increase from 4% to 11% of declared Labour voters, edging closer to frontrunners Louis Grech and star candidate Edward Scicluna, and slightly ahead of newcomer Marlene Mizzi.

While Scicluna has seen a slight drop in support since last week, incumbent Louis Grech has increased support from 10% to 12%. The other incumbent, John Attard-Montalto, has fallen to fifth place among Labour's contenders.



### Methodology

A total of 1326 respondents were randomly selected and contacted by telephone. Of these 700 accepted to be interviewed. The results were weighed to reflect the age/sex balance of the population as represented in the latest demographic review. The survey has a margin of error of +/-3.65. The survey was conducted between Wednesday 27th May and Wednesday 3rd June.



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