

Communication in Times of Crisis

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- We measure perceptions, not facts
- Two kinds of findings we bring to our clients: reality, and misperception
- Five things we find: behaviour, knowledge, and...
- three levels of 'views':
 - Opinions
 - Attitudes
 - Values



Research Can:

- Obtain information
- Set the context
- Provide common frame of reference
- Clarify confusion
- Distill wisdom
- Set a framework
- Focus debate
- Provide insight
- Curb claims
- Cinch argument

Research Does Not:

- Dictate policy or sacrifice your organisation's core values/ beliefs/objectives
- Manage the organisation
- Add stress or engender conflict
- Necessarily lead to action
- Confuse the issues

- Guide decision makers
- Enable decision makers to act on knowledge rather than misconception
- Focus attention on relevant issues
- Keeps management from acting on impulse
- Clarify the issues
- Checks on progress
- Guides semantics

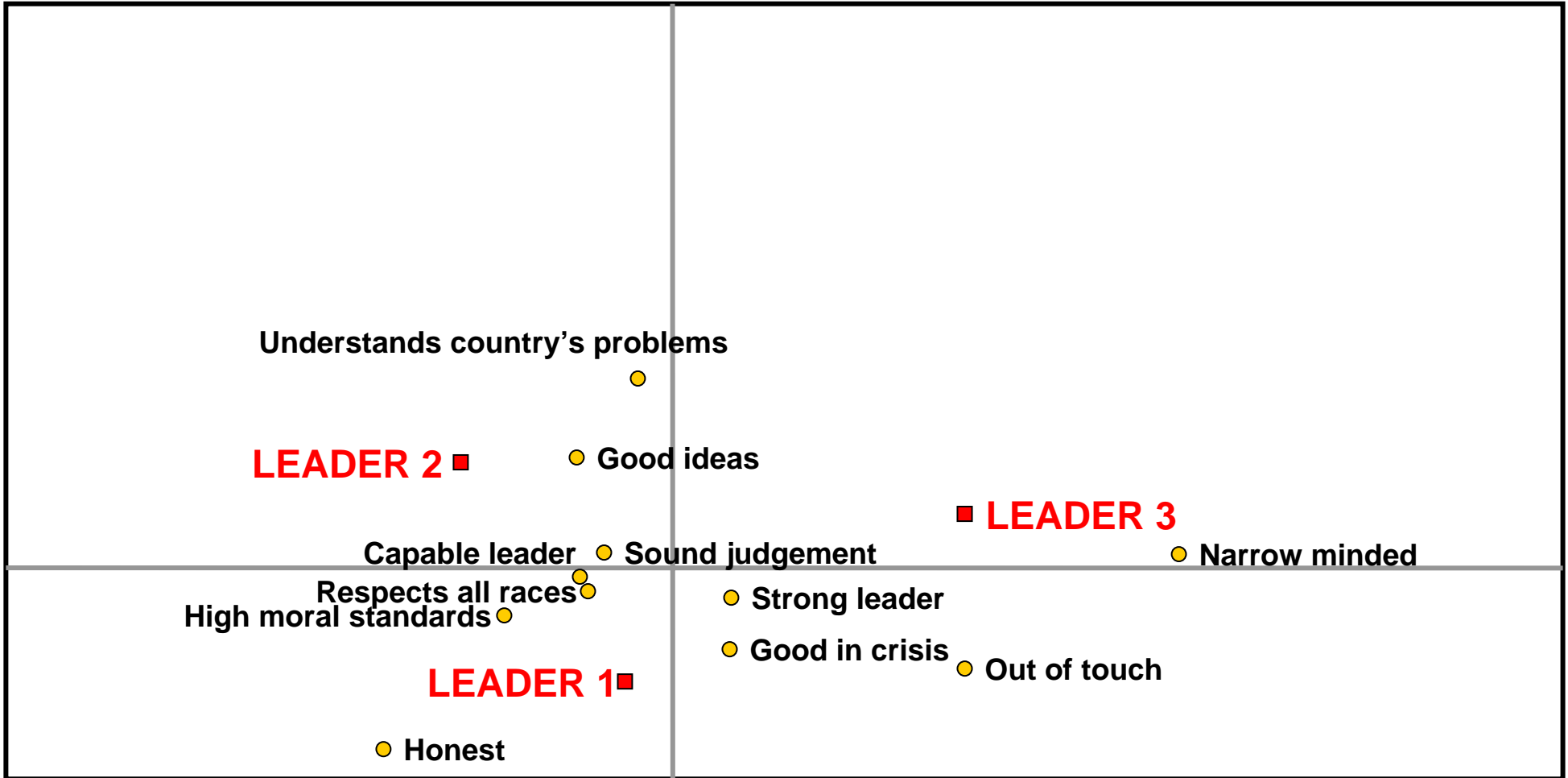
■ Quantitative

- “Omnibus” or “People’s Panel” surveys provide cost-effective access to large general public samples
- Main vehicle for PR and strategic research
- Regular cycle, quick turnaround, face-to-face, telephone or online
- International comparisons available
- Panels provide individual level data and changes

■ Qualitative

- In-depth work among small numbers of people, via individual interviews, focus groups, workshops or ‘citizens’ juries’
- Adds insight: why do people think as they do, what values are driving them...?
- Also useful for testing publicity leaflets, ad concepts, etc. before launch
- Workshops/juries can explore complex issues

Perceptual Map: Leader Image



- Find out what people think and feel now
- Move them so their views are aligned with yours

- Talk to them about what matters to them
- Show you think and feel the same way (if appropriate)
- Then show them the problems and dilemmas
- And explain why you are doing the right thing

- For **re-engagement**, strong case for starting with acknowledgement or apology for not having listened or delivered in the past – ‘wiping the slate clean’

- Don't assume what people know or feel

- In many ways, it is easier to communicate where people admit they do not understand the issues

- However:
 - They might think that they know (and could be wrong)
 - They do not understand what you are saying (jargon, complicated)
 - They do not hear you
 - They do not want to listen
 - They do not trust you

4 Stages of Effective Communications

- 1) **Awareness:** “*Here’s who we are*”
- 2) **Involvement:** “*Here’s what we can do for you*”
- 3) **Persuasion:** “*Here’s what we think*”
- 4) **Action:** “*Here’s what we want you to do*”

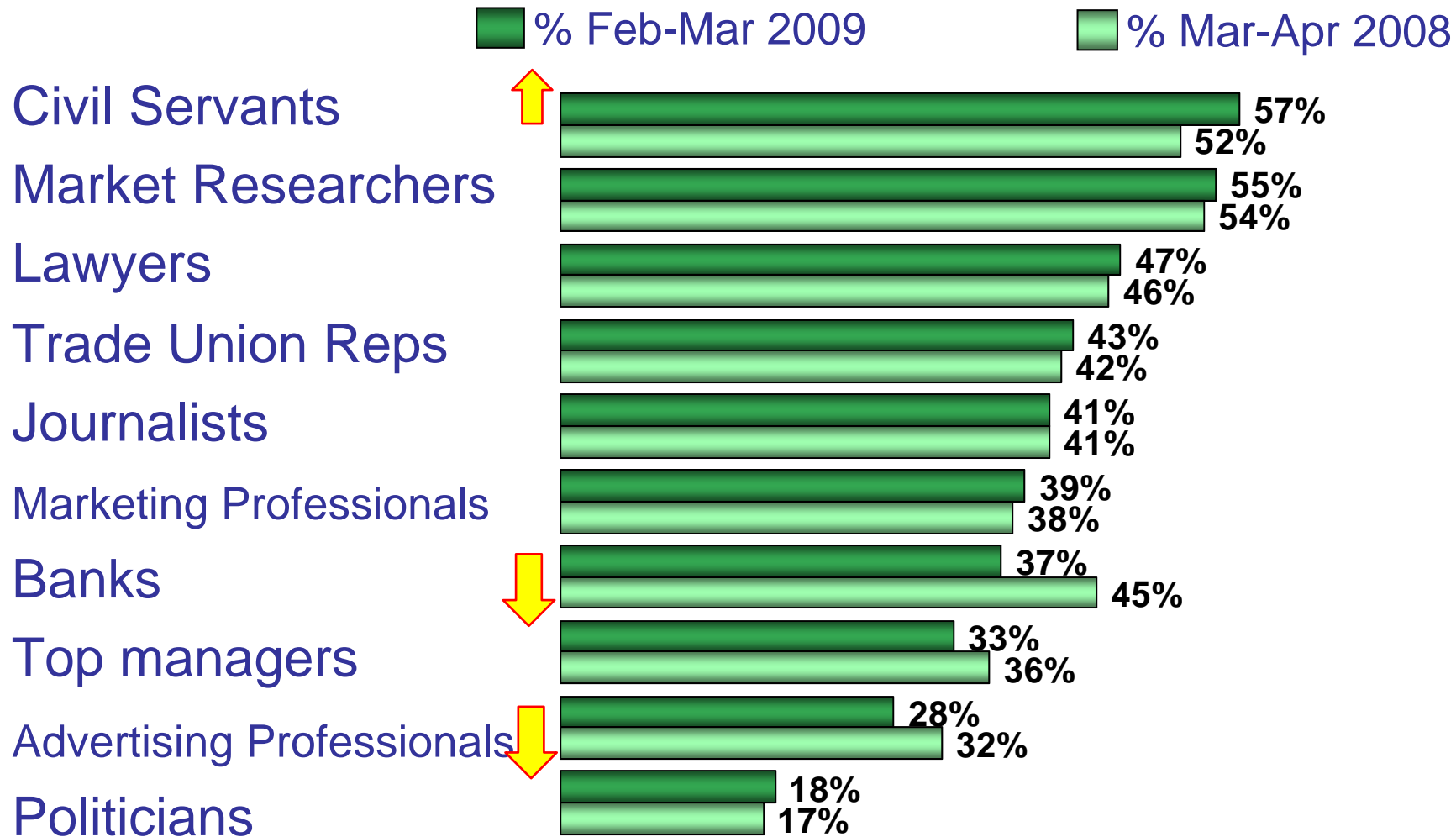
Impact of the Financial Crisis on Communications

- Not had any significant impact on how we can measure effectiveness of government communications
- But has changed what Government should be communicating (and therefore what we should be measuring)
- Clearly more interest in financial world and concern about economic factors
- Economic factors: people relate to their real world (jobs, taxes)
- Financial world: likely to bring their own values

- Measurements needed will depend on specific cases, but generally as a minimum should incorporate the following indicators of public opinion:
 - Are they on my side? Will they look after my interests?
 - Are they competent?
 - Can I trust them? Are they honest?
 - Are they doing what is right?

Levels of Trust by Profession – Bottom Ten

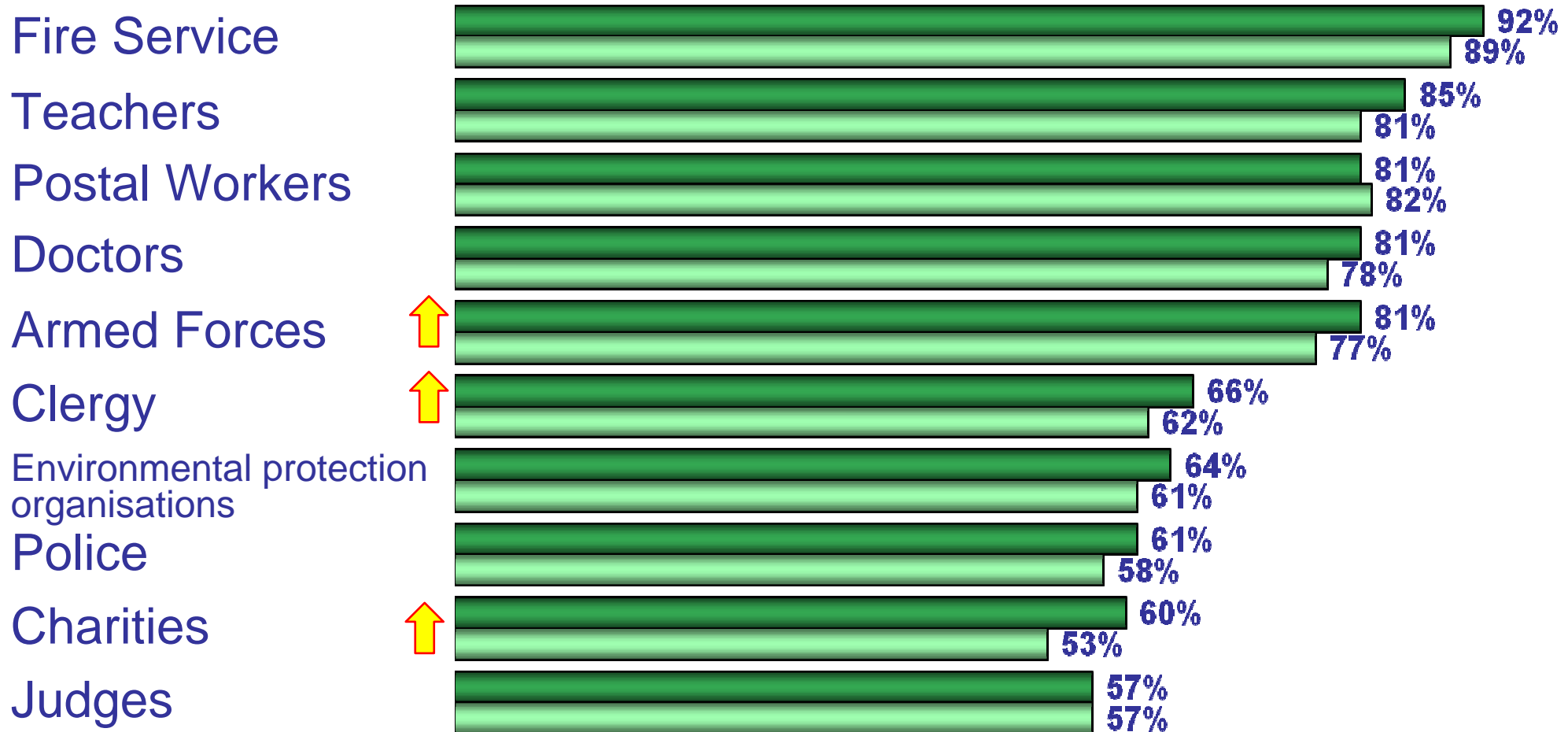
Q How much trust do you have in the following professional groups?



Levels of Trust by Profession – Top Ten

Q How much trust do you have in the following professional groups?

■ % Feb-Mar 2009 ■ % Mar-Apr 2008



Base = 17,295 respondents in 16 European Countries AND USA (GfK Trust Index)

Fieldwork = February – March 2009 / March – April 2008

The Impact of the Crisis - Today

Q To what extent do you consider that the current economic and financial crisis is or is not having repercussions on each of the following?



Personal situation



National economy



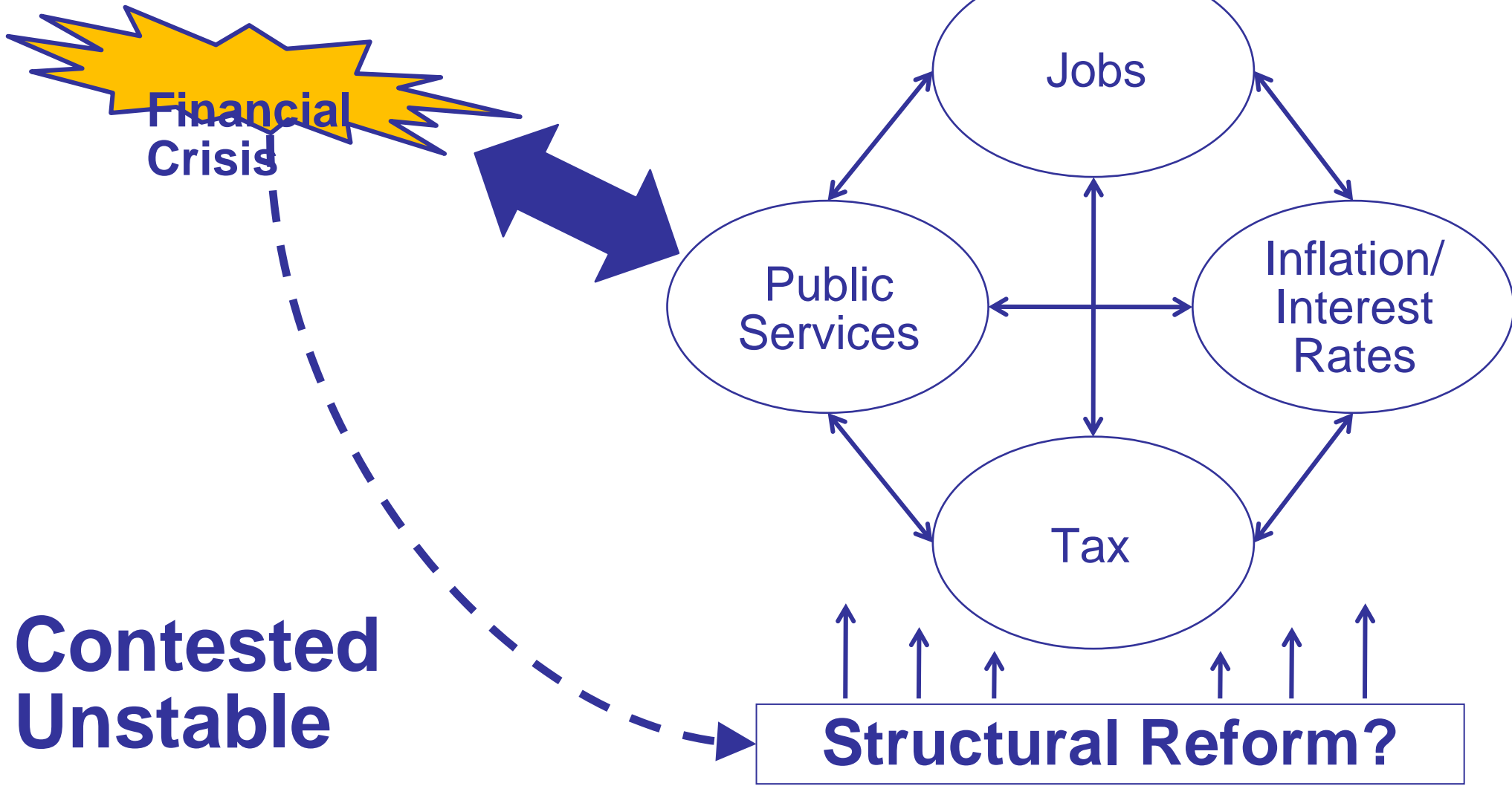
European economy



World economy

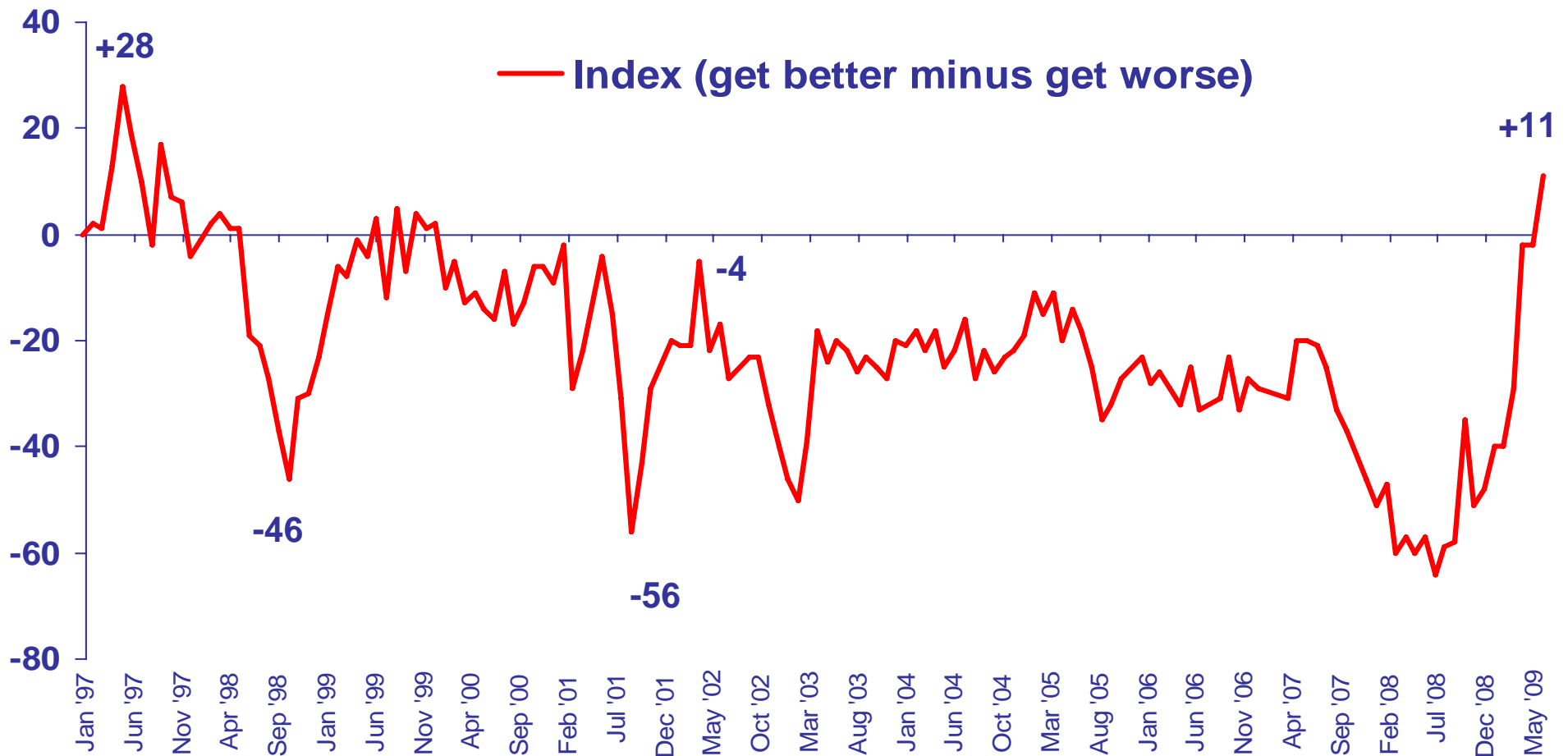


The New Communications Challenge?



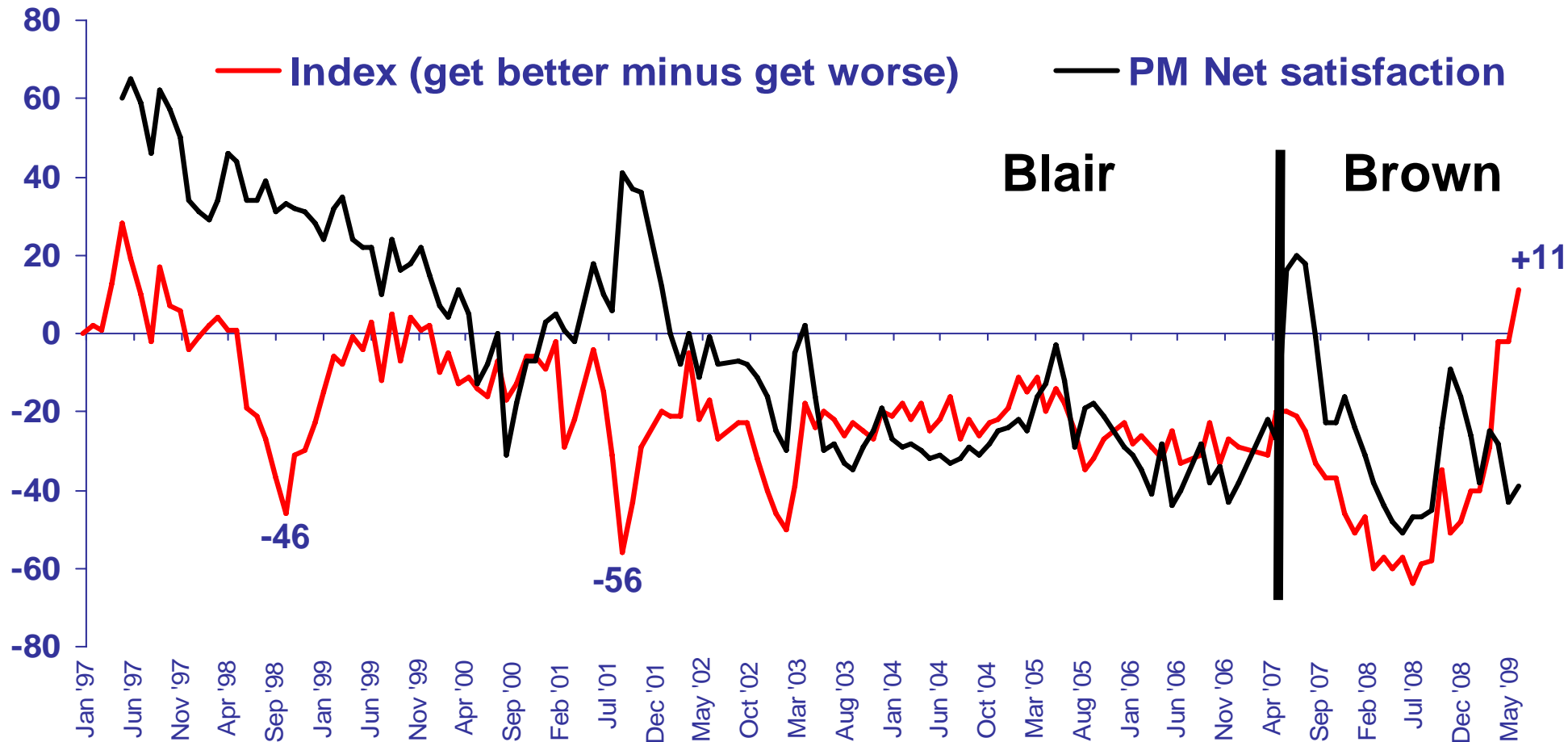
The Ipsos MORI Economic Optimism Index

Do you think that the general economic condition of the country will improve, stay the same or get worse over the next 12 months?



EOI vs. PM (net) Satisfaction

Do you think that the general economic condition of the country will improve, stay the same or get worse over the next 12 months?



Base: c. 1,000 British adults each month

Source: Ipsos MORI Political Monitor

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**THANK YOU
Questions?**

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