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**RUNNYMEDE TRUST AND EMBES PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**

**ONLY 16% OF ETHNIC MINORITIES VOTED CONSERVATIVE IN THE 2010
GENERAL ELECTION, NEW STUDY FINDS**

A new study has found that ethnic minorities were substantially less likely to vote for the Conservative party than white British people at the last election.

The findings are from the Ethnic Minority British Election Study (EMBES), the largest and most authoritative study of ethnic minority voting behaviour ever conducted in Britain.

The research found that:

- Only 16% of ethnic minorities voted for the Conservative party at the last election, compared to 37% of white British people
- 14% of ethnic minorities voted for Liberal Democrats in comparison to 22% of white British people
- In contrast, 68% of ethnic minorities voted Labour, compared to 31% of white British people

The research shows that despite a record number of Conservative MPs being elected from ethnic minority backgrounds in 2010, the Conservative party still has work to do in attracting ethnic minority voters.

When looking at specific ethnic groups, around 5 in 6 Black voters voted Labour, compared to less than 10% for the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats. David Cameron's party did best among Indians, with one in four voting Conservative, though this compared to 61% voting Labour. Pakistanis were the strongest supporters of the Liberal Democrats with one in four voting for the coalition partners.

However, the picture is not all good news for Labour. While ethnic minorities voted strongly for the party in 2010, levels of support were well down on 1997 levels (the last time a major study of minority voting was carried out), reflecting the general swing away from Labour.

The study also found that ethnic minorities were, on the whole, highly supportive of British democracy, with similar levels of participation as white British people. Ethnic

minorities share the British norm of a duty to vote, and the great majority identify with Britain.

However, there is worrying evidence that second-generation citizens of Black Caribbean heritage do not feel that the British political system has treated them fairly. Black Caribbeans, not Muslims, are the group who feel most alienated from British political life.

While in many respects the political concerns of ethnic minorities are similar to those of white British people, unemployment was a big concern, as well as the need for improving opportunities for minorities. These concerns appear different from white British voters and indicate that ethnic minority voters have particular interests and views that are likely to influence how they vote.

Oxford Professor Anthony Heath, the leader of the EMBES research team, said

‘Many of our findings are very reassuring. They refute alarmist views about minorities’ alleged lack of integration into British democratic life. But they also raise an important question about what should be done to address the real grievances of many young Black Caribbeans.’

Dr Omar Khan, Head of Policy Research at the Runnymede Trust said

‘This survey is a unique insight into the voting behaviour and attitudes of Black and minority ethnic people in Britain. It shows that a commitment to political participation, democratic values and identification with Britain is shared among all ethnic minority groups. For all political parties, fielding more ethnic minority candidates is less likely to gain them more ethnic minority votes than ensuring that Black and minority ethnic people have equal opportunities in the labour market.’

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. For press inquiries or to arrange interviews contact Rebecca Waller on 020 7377 9222 or Rebecca@runnymedetrust.org or Omar Khan on 07738 222302 (omar@runnymedetrust.org)
2. Information on the project: A team of researchers from Oxford, Manchester and Essex Universities carried out a major survey of ethnic minorities’ political attitudes and behaviour after the 2010 general election. This is the largest and most authoritative study of ethnic minority voting behaviour and political integration ever conducted in Britain. It focussed on the five main established minorities in Britain – those of Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean and Black African background. The fieldwork was carried out by TNS-BMRB and the study was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).
3. The Runnymede Trust is a social policy research organisation focused on race equality and race relations. We work by:
 - Identifying barriers to race equality and good race relations
 - Enabling effective action for social change

- Influencing policy at all levels through providing thought leadership and robust evidence

Further information is available on the Runnymede website: www.runnymedetrust.org

4. A workshop is being held at the offices of TNS-BMRB on 27th October to launch some of the main findings from the study. To register, please contact Emily.Pickering@tns-bmr.co.uk.