



Headline findings of a survey of the public conducted On behalf of Theos



April 2009





DEATH POLL HEADLINE FINDINGS

METHODOLOGY NOTE:

ComRes interviewed 1018 GB adults online between 24th and 26th April 2009. Data were weighted to be representative demographically of all GB adults. ComRes is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules.

Guidelines for the public use of survey results

ComRes is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules (www.britishpollingcouncil.org). This commits us to the highest standards of transparency.

The BPC's rules state that all data and research findings made on the basis of surveys conducted by member organisations that enter the public domain, must include reference to the following:

- The company conducting the research (ComRes)
- The client commissioning the survey
- Dates of interviewing
- Method of obtaining the interviews (e.g. in-person, post, telephone, internet)
- The universe effectively represented (all adults, voters etc)
- The percentages upon which conclusions are based
- Size of the sample and geographic coverage.

Published references (such as a press release) should also show a web address where full data tables may be viewed, and they should also show the complete wording of questions upon which any data that has entered the public domain are based.

All press releases or other publications must be checked with ComRes before use. ComRes requires 48 hours to check a press release unless otherwise agreed.

HEADLINES:

- 30% of people said they fear the way they will die but not death itself, 25% fear neither death nor the way they will die, however 20% fear both death and the way they will die. Interestingly 31% of men say they do not fear death or how they will die; compared to 19% of women. However 25% of women fear both death and how they will die; compared to 14% of men.
- When asked about the sort of funeral they would like, 37% of people say that they would like a Christian funeral compared to 17% saying a non religious ceremony and 4% who would like religious but not Christian funeral.
- There is a trend by age group: 53% of people over the age of 65 say they would like a Christian funeral but this decreases to 20% of 18-24 year olds.
- 16% of people have not given their funeral any thought and 13% of people say they they will let their family or friends decide.

People were asked what arrangements, if any, they have put into place for their own death. The results are summarised below:

	Yes	No
I have made a will	42%	52%
I have taken out life insurance	41%	51%
I have made my peace with God	21%	26%
I have made arrangements for my funeral	7%	86%

- People in the younger age groups are less likely to have made a will than the older age groups. 90% of people aged 18-24 say they have not made a will, while 80% of people over 65 have made a will already.
- Just 10% of 18-24 year olds have taken out life insurance policies compared to more than 45% of people aged over 35. People living in London are least likely to have taken out life insurance, a quarter (25%) of people in London taken out life insurance.
- People are more likely to say that they have not made their peace with their God than they have. However, more than half of all people did not say whether they have made their peace with their God or not (52% respond 'not applicable', 'don't know' or refuse to respond). Women are more likely to say that they have made peace with God (27%) than men (16%).
- Two thirds of all people (66%) have seen a dead body. 55% of 18-24 year olds have not seen a dead body in real life while only 16% of people aged over 65 have not.
- 28% of people have seen a dead body three times or more. This increases with age to 42% of people over 65 having seen a dead body three or more times.

- 42% people say that the publicity surrounding the death of Jade Goody was very or fairly helpful, in making people think specifically about death. 20% say it was very or fairly unhelpful. 49% of women say the publicity was helpful while only 33% of men agree. 25% of people in social group AB say it was unhelpful, compared to 15% in social group DE.

People were asked if they agree or disagree with the following statements. The results are summarised in the table below:

	Agree	Disagree
Euthanasia which permits the deliberate ending of a person's life should be legal.	60%	13%
More public money should be given to enable people to die where they choose and as painlessly as possible.	59%	16%
I believe that organ donation in the event of a person's death should be compulsory unless they opt out	52%	29%
There should be a government funded public information campaign on issues related to death and dying to help people prepare for their own death.	49%	21%
The religious faith I have helps me deal with death of a loved one or prepare me for my own death.	30%	38%

- Women are more likely than men to agree that 'more public money should be given to enable people to die where they choose and as painlessly as possible'; 63% of women and 56% agree.
- A third of all women (33%) and a quarter of all men (26%) agree that the religious faith they have helps them deal with the death of a loved one or prepare them for their own death.
- Only 37% of 18-24 year olds agree that organ donation in the event of a person's death should be compulsory unless they opt out, this however was above 50% for all other age groups.