

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

Dalreen Barthelot
Email: dalreen 'at' ihp.lk

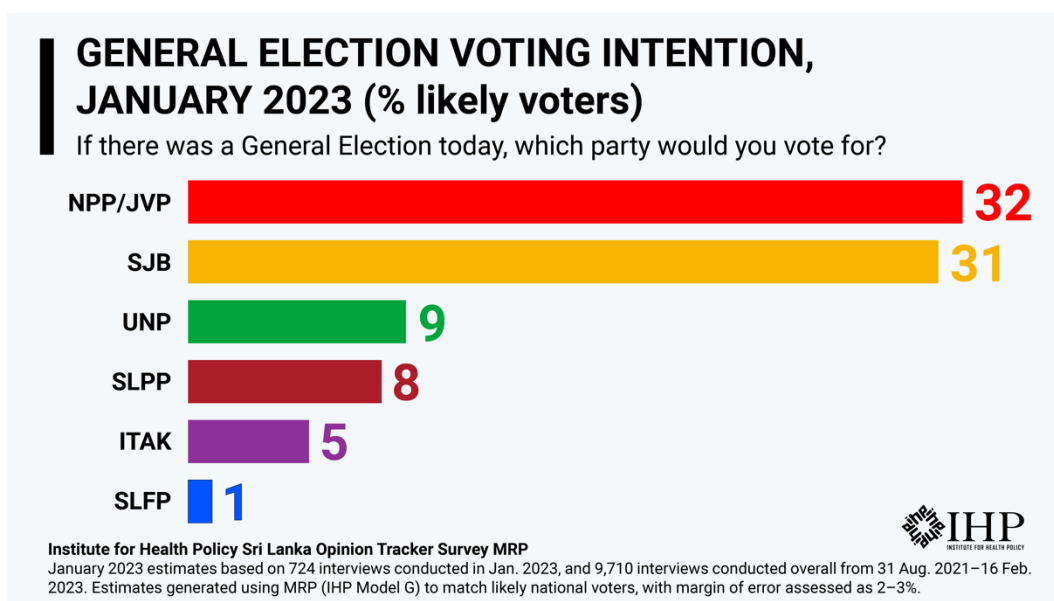
TO CONTACT LEAD INVESTIGATOR

Dr. Ravi Rannan-Eliya
Email: ravi 'at' ihp.lk Twitter: @ravirannaneliya

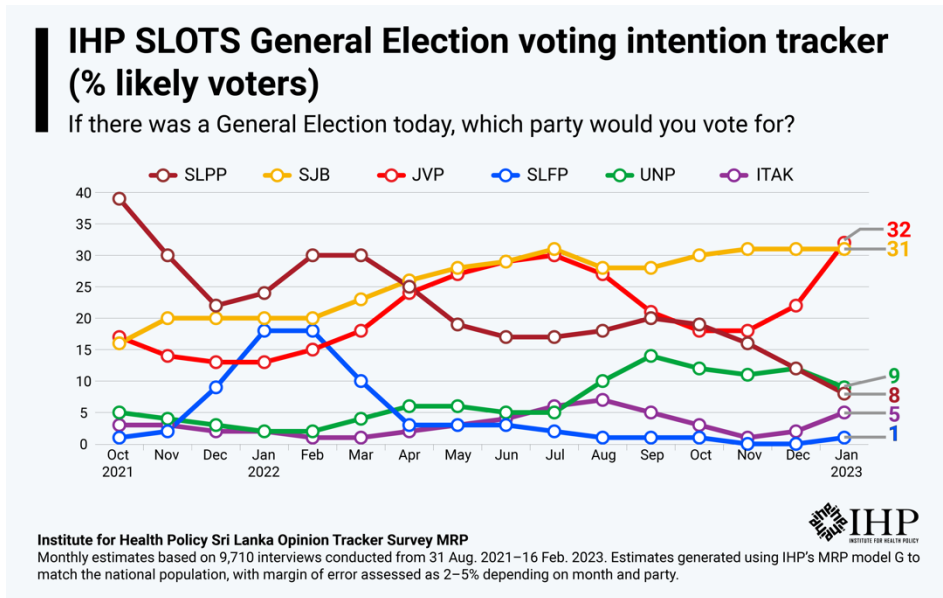
NPP/JVP and SJB running neck-and-neck amongst voters

IHP MRP Voting Intentions Estimates January 2023.

In the latest Sri Lanka Opinion Tracker Survey (SLOTS) polling from January 2023, the NPP/JVP and SJB are running neck-and-neck in General Election voting intentions amongst likely voters at 32% and 31% each respectively, following a surge by the NPP/JVP during December and January. Both are ahead of the SLPP, UNP and SLFP, but the difference between them is within the margin of error.

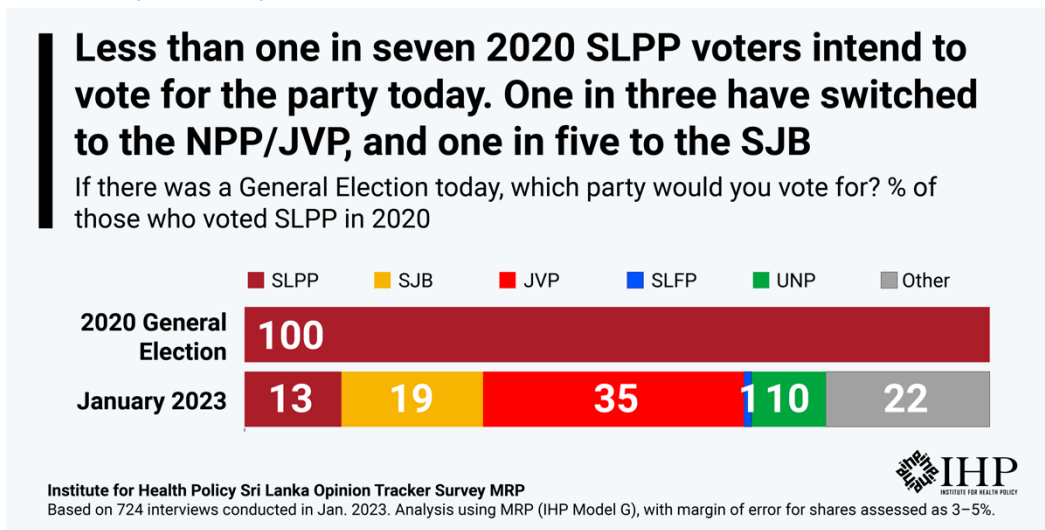


IHP MRP analysis of likely voters indicates that since July 2022 when President Ranil Wickremesinghe took office, the SJB has gained a net three points, the NPP/JVP one point, and the UNP five points. These gains have been largely at the expense of the SLPP whose support fell 11 points.



Assuming general election voting intent transfers to voting in local authority elections due in March, the SLOTS January polling suggests that on current trends the SJB and the NPP/JVP between them will win the plurality in most local authorities and wards. However, most local authorities are likely to end up with divided control, with no party winning an absolute majority. The SJB and ITAK will lead the NPP/JVP in the Northern and Eastern provinces, but the NPP/JVP will likely lead the SJB in the Western, Southern, North-Central, and Sabaragamuwa Provinces, and will do better in rural areas, whilst the SJB will do better in urban and municipal councils.

Dr Rannan-Eliya, lead investigator and Executive Director of IHP, commented that “This will be a huge change from the 2018 local elections. The main drivers are a collapse in the SLPP vote, and the NPP/JVP doing better than the SJB in winning defecting SLPP voters and in retaining their original 2020 General Election vote.”



The NPP/JVP has a clearer lead over the SJB amongst registered voters, but SJB supporters are more likely to vote, reducing the margin between them in likely voters by 2%.

Full report available from ihp.lk

Institute for Health Policy, February 2023, “NPP/JVP and SJB running neck-and-neck amongst voters: IHP MRP Voting Intentions Estimates January 2023”, SLOTS Report #2023-03. Available at <http://ihp.lk/publications/docs/SLOTSReport202303.pdf>

About IHP

IHP is an independent, non-partisan research centre based in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The SLOTS lead investigator is Dr Ravi Rannan-Eliya of IHP, who has trained in public opinion polling at Harvard University and has conducted numerous surveys over three decades.

Methodology

SLOTS combines interviews from a national sample of adults (ages 18 and over) reached by random digit dialling of mobile numbers, and others coming from a national panel of respondents who were previously recruited through random selection. IHP estimates voting intent using an adaptation of Multilevel Regression and Post-Stratification (MRP), which exploits data from all SLOTS interviews to estimate voting in a particular month.

The January 2023 MRP estimates are based on 724 interviews conducted in January 2023, and 9,710 interviews conducted overall from 31 August 2021–16 February 2023, with a margin of error assessed as 2–3% for the leading parties.

MRP is a method that is increasingly used by polling firms in other countries to leverage small samples, most notably by YouGov which used it to forecast results of the UK Brexit Referendum and recent UK general elections. All estimates are adjusted to ensure the sample matches the national population with respect to age, sex, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, education, geographical location, and voting in the 2019 Presidential and 2020 General Elections.

Funding

The SLOTS has been funded by the Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust, the UK National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), The Asia Foundation in Sri Lanka, and others, but the sponsors play no role in the study design, analysis, or interpretation of findings. Interested parties can contact IHP for more detailed data and results.