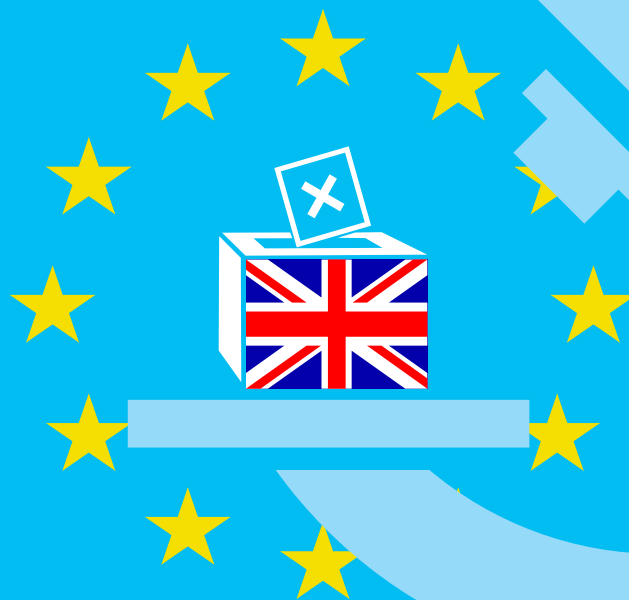


# What sort of Brexit do the British people want?

A proof-of-concept study using stated preference discrete choice experiments

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**Based on a survey of almost 1,000 members of the British public, who were asked to trade on different aspects of a possible agreement to exit the EU, we find that:**



**The British public want a deal**



**People are more concerned with managing demand for public services than simply restricting freedom of movement**



**People highly value having access to EU markets for trade in goods and services, but also would like the UK to be able to make its own trade deals**



**People value the UK being able to make its own laws, but not as much as single market access or the ability to make trade deals**



**People with degrees hold stronger views**



**People prefer a final agreement which is close to a 'Norway-like' model**



# Making trade-offs will be a key part in negotiating the UK's future relationship with the EU

In the wake of the EU referendum result, the government has begun the process of negotiating the UK's exit conditions from the European Union under Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union. On 29 March 2017, the UK Prime Minister formally informed the President of the European Council that the UK wished to leave the European Union. In the six-page letter sent to President Tusk, the Prime Minister set out the UK government's opening position, echoing that described in the White Paper *The United Kingdom's exit from and new partnership with the European Union*<sup>1</sup> (summarised in Box A).

In the White Paper, the government declared that it would not be seeking membership of the single market, but that it would aim for the 'freest possible trade in goods and services between the UK and the EU'. The precedents set by existing trade arrangements between the EU and partner countries suggest that such an arrangement may

not be compatible with the intention to also have full control over immigration policy. But how far the government is willing to compromise between these two objectives is unclear. Similar contradictions may exist in simultaneously seeking both 'frictionless' trade with the EU and the ability to negotiate other trade deals independently, and in regaining full legislative competence (ending the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice in the UK) while also participating in a trade agreement which will inevitably place restrictions on domestic legislation in international law.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the government is unwilling to reveal the trade-offs it would be willing to accept as part of its negotiations. Nevertheless, as with all negotiations, and by definition, trade-offs will be made. Think, for example, of the Good Friday Agreement, the transfer of sovereignty in Hong Kong or, more recently, the Paris climate accord, all of which needed both a shared commitment to achieving a deal and a willingness to compromise in order to get there.

Unfortunately, the 'In/Out' referendum question encouraged the view that the UK's relationship with the EU was a binary choice, that there was one simple thing called 'Leave' and another simple thing called 'Remain'. In reality, a number of possible options exist for the UK's relationship with the EU, ranging from full membership (which may itself not be a static option as the EU continues to evolve) to having no relationship at all. A country can be outside the decision-making structures of the EU and yet be a member of its single market, or a member of its customs union, or of both. But these intermediate relationships require trade-offs and compromises, as illustrated by the variety of existing arrangements the EU has with other countries. These imply that a country cannot be a full member of the single market without accepting freedom of movement. And that a country cannot be a member of the customs union and retain an unrestricted power to make its own trade deals. Discussion of these



<sup>1</sup> HM Government, Department for Exiting the European Union (2017). *The United Kingdom's exit from and new partnership with the European Union*. White Paper, February 2017.

trade-offs was not prominent in the debate leading up to the referendum vote and, in the months since, there has been little discussion of how they might play out in creating different kinds of relationships with the EU.

The purpose of this study is to go beyond the political rhetoric, starting from the premise that compromises will have to be made, and to try and understand what the British public think about these trade-offs. We go beyond the politically contested and sometimes ill-defined language of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ Brexit and look at the public’s views about the detailed choices on offer. Our hope is that knowledge of where the public stand on different characteristics of the future relationship with the EU will inform those who are participating in the negotiations and give them some indication of which trade-offs are likely to satisfy the public’s preferences. Of course, the public respond to more than their underlying preferences. Political framing and other influences are also important, and so we are not predicting how public opinion will react to the political debate about the options as they emerge from the negotiations. What we are saying is that if negotiators believe that public preferences matter, it is important to attempt to understand those preferences using methods that are as robust as possible.

To understand the trade-offs and people’s preferences for them, we used a technique known as ‘stated preference discrete choice experiments’. This economic method is used to quantify people’s preferences for goods or services (as explained in Box B and the accompanying technical addendum<sup>2</sup>) and involves asking individuals to state their preference between alternative scenarios. Each alternative is described by several attributes, in this case attributes like freedom of movement for working or holidays, access to the European single market, sovereignty, etc. Each of these attributes is further described by a range of levels, reflecting the status quo and other possible negotiated outcomes. In this study, we use stated preference discrete choice experiments because the referendum result (or ‘revealed preference’ information) provides no indication of the sort of relationship UK citizens are looking for with the EU.

By asking people to make choices, and trade-offs, between hypothetical options we are able to elicit their preferences rather than asking people to report them directly as is usually done in standard opinion polls. Asking directly can be subject to various distortions, such as giving socially acceptable answers. Our approach also provides information on the relative strength of people’s preferences for each attribute level and the results can be used to quantify how acceptable a range of different scenarios are likely to be to the population as a whole.

Stated preference discrete choice experiments have been successfully applied to thinking through future policy in transport, health, education, post, telecommunications, assessment of research impact, and even in areas like privacy and security. Further details on their use can be found in the technical addendum.

By applying discrete choice modelling to people’s stated preferences on different aspects of Brexit, we are able to:

1. quantify the relative importance of different elements of Brexit to citizens – for example, the importance of freedom of movement compared to UK sovereignty or contributing to the EU budget – and how these vary across different segments of the population.
2. explore citizens’ preferences for different combinations of options that could constitute the UK’s future relationship with the EU.

The next section of this report sets out our study approach, describing the choices we gave people and how they were developed, the survey methodology and how to interpret the results. The following section draws out our key headlines from the analysis, with the final section providing some closing commentary and thoughts on how this approach could be developed.

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<sup>2</sup> Rohr et al. (2017). *What sort of Brexit do the British people want? A proof-of-concept study using stated preference discrete choice experiments – technical addendum*. [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR2126.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2126.html)

**Box A:** UK government White Paper commitments

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1. Providing certainty and clarity – We will provide certainty wherever we can as we approach the negotiations.
2. Taking control of our own laws – We will take control of our own statute book and bring an end to the jurisdiction of the Court of Justice of the European Union in the UK.
3. Strengthening the Union – We will secure a deal that works for the entire UK – for Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and all parts of England. We remain fully committed to the Belfast Agreement and its successors.
4. Protecting our strong and historic ties with Ireland and maintaining the Common Travel Area – We will work to deliver a practical solution that allows for the maintenance of the Common Travel Area, whilst protecting the integrity of our immigration system and which protects our strong ties with Ireland.
5. Controlling immigration – We will have control over the number of EU nationals coming to the UK.
6. Securing rights for EU nationals in the UK, and UK nationals in the EU – We want to secure the status of EU citizens who are already living in the UK, and that of UK nationals in other Member States, as early as we can.
7. Protecting workers' rights – We will protect and enhance existing workers' rights.
8. Ensuring free trade with European markets – We will forge a new strategic partnership with the EU, including a wide reaching, bold and ambitious free trade agreement, and will seek a mutually beneficial new customs agreement with the EU.
9. Securing new trade agreements with other countries – We will forge ambitious free trade relationships across the world.
10. Ensuring the UK remains the best place for science and innovation – We will remain at the vanguard of science and innovation and will seek continued close collaboration with our European partners.
11. Cooperating in the fight against crime and terrorism – We will continue to work with the EU to preserve European security, to fight terrorism, and to uphold justice across Europe.
12. Delivering a smooth, orderly exit from the EU – We will seek a phased process of implementation, in which both the UK and the EU institutions and the remaining EU Member States prepare for the new arrangements that will exist between us.



# The UK population's preferred options for the future relationship with the EU can be measured

To understand the sort of future relationship that the UK population want with the EU, we asked them to choose between different hypothetical options described by seven characteristics:

1. Freedom of movement for holidays
2. Freedom of movement for working
3. Contribution to the EU budget
4. The ability to make trade deals outside the EU
5. Trade in services in the EU
6. Trade in goods in the EU
7. The degree to which the UK makes its own laws

Each of these characteristics ('attributes') could take several different values ('levels') in the choices presented to participants, reflecting different possible negotiating positions. By varying the characteristics of a potential deal in this way, we aimed to quantify people's preferences for different aspects of the UK's future relationship with the EU. Presenting a number of these choices to each participant and repeating the exercise in a large sample allowed us to determine the value that people place on each attribute and level and to quantify the trade-offs that people would be willing to make.

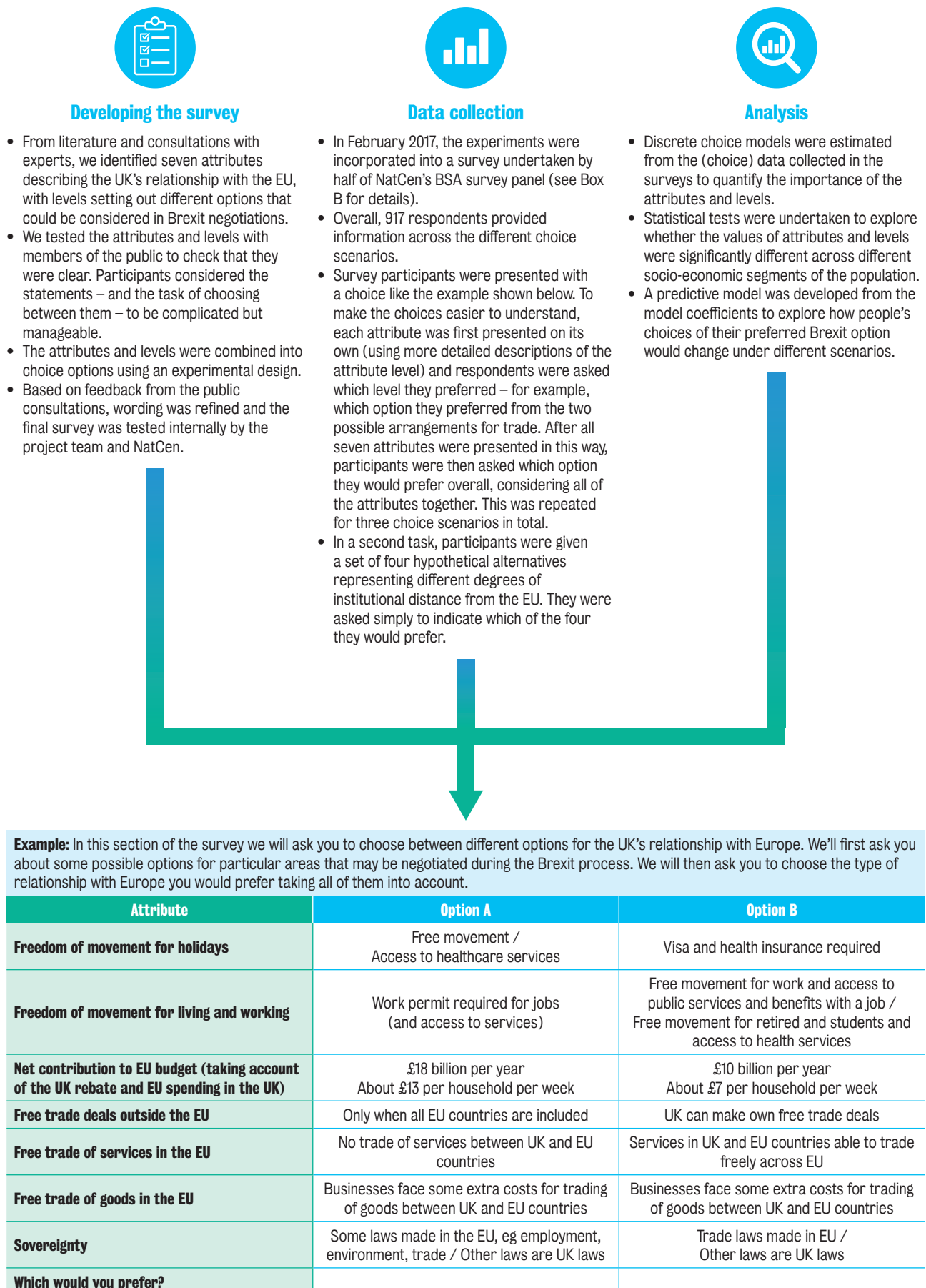
Importantly, the definitions of attributes and levels assume reciprocity – for example, when defining the levels for freedom of movement for holidays we assume that if EU citizens were to require health insurance to access emergency healthcare when travelling on holiday to the UK, then health insurance would also be required for UK citizens travelling to the EU for holidays. This is a deliberate restriction on the range of choices presented, one that conventional opinion polling on Brexit has not tended to address, but which we believe is realistic: for example, it is unlikely that any future relationship will give UK citizens privileges in the EU that EU citizens will not be able to enjoy in the UK.



In making comparisons between different kinds of relationships, we do not assume that respondents have a full understanding of either the current or potential future situations – for example, both the current and any future immigration policy is likely to have a complex set of conditions which apply in different circumstances. It is not possible to reflect all of this complexity in a set of statements which can be compared easily using a survey-based approach. This complexity and its implications for our analysis are discussed further in the separate technical addendum.

The study's method is summarised in Figure 1, which sets out how the attributes and levels were developed, the data collection process and the analysis. Detailed information on our methods is also provided in the technical addendum.

**Figure 1:** Methods summary and example of choice task





In order for our findings to accurately reflect the views of the population, it was important for us to use a robust, representative sample. We chose to work with a sample drawn from the British Social Attitudes (BSA) Survey, a random probability sample representative of the population of Great Britain, excluding Northern Ireland. Further detail on this panel and why its approach is considered to be the gold standard in survey research is provided in Box B.

Including the level of the UK's budget contribution to the EU as an attribute in the experiment, and modelling it as a continuous variable in the analysis, allowed us to quantify the value of the attributes and levels in monetary terms (albeit in units of the UK's budget contribution to the EU in GBP per household per week). However, because of differences in the sensitivity of the UK contribution across the population, we recommend that the resulting value be used to compare the relative importance of different attributes and that the absolute values be used to provide order-of-magnitude estimates only.<sup>3</sup>

## Box B: Sampling

The sample we used is recruited from NatCen's British Social Attitudes (BSA) survey, a random probability sample. A random probability sample is considered the gold standard in survey research. It gives every potential respondent in the population a known chance of being selected and, as long as the sample is large enough and has a high enough participation rate, should reflect the views of the population better than other sampling methods.<sup>4</sup>

Potential respondents are identified for the BSA survey using a complex randomisation process to identify households and individuals within the household to interview. Substantial effort is then made to undertake the interviews with these individuals – a time-consuming process lasting months (rather than weeks). The sample for this survey was obtained from those respondents of the BSA survey who said they were willing to participate in further research studies. For this study, surveys were undertaken using a combination of online and telephone methodologies so hard-to-reach and 'offline' parts of the population were included.



<sup>3</sup> There are a number of reasons why people's sensitivity to the UK's contribution to the EU may vary across the population. Some may view this contribution positively, because it signals a relationship with the EU, whereas others may view it negatively. Sensitivity may also be influenced by the way the information was presented to respondents. See Rohr et al. (2017) for a detailed discussion of this issue.

<sup>4</sup> Curtice, J. (2016) British Social Attitudes: The Benefits of Random Sampling, Lessons from the 2015 Election, NatCen. As of 12 May, 2017, available at: <http://bsa.natcen.ac.uk/media/39018/random-sampling.pdf>

**Box C:** An overview of discrete choice modelling

At a supermarket counter, you have the choice of two chocolate bars. One is wrapped in a purple wrapper, has caramel and biscuit coated in milk chocolate, is 25 grams and costs 50 pence. The other is in black packaging, has nuts and raisins, is 30 grams and costs 60 pence. Which one do you choose? You may dislike raisins so opt for the first one; you may be really hungry so go for the bigger one; you may be short of cash so you opt for the cheaper one; you may be indifferent so choose the closest to you or the one with the most appealing look. Either way, you make a decision, a decision that happens in seconds, may be quicker if instinctive or based on habit. Within that moment of decision, you are making trades – a trade between caramel and raisins, a trade between 25 grams and 30 grams, a trade between what you get for 50 or 60 pence, a trade between purple and black. You may not be aware of the trades you make, or that fellow customers make, but this information is invaluable to those who make the chocolate bars and want to understand people's preferences and demand for new products.

Similarly, when the Bay Area Rapid Transport (BART) system was being built in San Francisco in the 1970s, economist Daniel McFadden set out to predict how many people would choose the new train service. He collected data on the travel choices made by about 700 commuters and, using a discrete choice model, he predicted that about 6 per cent of the commuters would use the new BART system. His prediction was surprisingly accurate – within a few decimal places of the actual uptake. So was born the obscure branch of economics known as discrete choice modelling, for which McFadden won the Nobel prize, with James Heckman, in 2000. He and others began to apply the method to a number of different areas of public policy – for example, health and social care, the environment and security. The great strength of discrete choice modelling is that it links choices that people make to the characteristics of the alternatives – as well as the characteristics of the people themselves.

The basic tenet of discrete choice modelling is utility maximisation; that is, given a set of alternatives, each individual chooses the (discrete) alternative which brings them the most utility. Utility functions are specified for each choice alternative, reflecting a systematic component describing the attributes (and levels) of the alternative – for example, characteristics of different chocolate bars as described above, or our relationship with the European Union for this study – as well as the characteristics of the individual, plus a random component. The random component means that the models predict the probability of making a choice. The attributes and levels in the systematic component are multiplied by coefficients, reflecting the importance of the attributes in describing people's choices.

The process of model estimation is one of defining the utility formulations to best explain the (stated) choices. The outputs from discrete choice models can be used to improve understanding of the relative importance of each of the attributes, and how this varies across the population. They can also be used to develop predictive models to gain insight into how people's choices of their preferred Brexit option will change under different offers.

# Key findings

## The British public want a deal

The Prime Minister's letter to President Tusk, informing him of the UK's intention to leave the EU, marked the start of a two-year notice period for agreeing the terms of exit. Failing to successfully negotiate a deal within this Article 50 notice period would imply, at least in the short term, ending free movement of people and reverting to World Trade Organization rules on the cross-border trade of goods and services. The Prime Minister has indicated that this may, in some instances, be the government's preferred option, noting infamously that 'no deal for Britain is better than a bad deal for Britain'.<sup>5</sup>

We found that the British public would not agree. While some aspects of this scenario are valued favourably, such as being able to make trade deals, not being subject to EU laws and the cessation of payments into the EU budget, these perceived benefits would be outweighed by the need to obtain a visa and health insurance for holiday travel, to have a work permit to get a job in an EU country and the additional costs of trading goods and services outside the single market. The average values placed on each characteristic by respondents are shown in Figure 2 (expressed in terms of contribution to the EU per household per week). Our analysis shows that the British public, netting out the positives and negatives, think that the current situation of EU membership is worth about £14 per household per week more than leaving the EU with no deal. This implies that the average household would want at least £14 a week to compensate it for the loss of EU membership without any kind of deal about the UK's future relationship with the EU. Multiplying up by the number of households and converting to a yearly figure, that amounts to requiring compensation of around £20 billion a year for loss of EU membership without any deal about the future.

## People are more concerned with managing demand for public services than simply restricting freedom of movement

Immigration was one of the most widely discussed issues during the referendum campaign, and the Prime Minister has recently reemphasised the government's commitment to reducing net flows of people into the UK. While our results do show a desire to control movement of people to some extent, we find that this stems from a concern about managing demand for public services, rather than from wanting to limit freedom of movement per se.

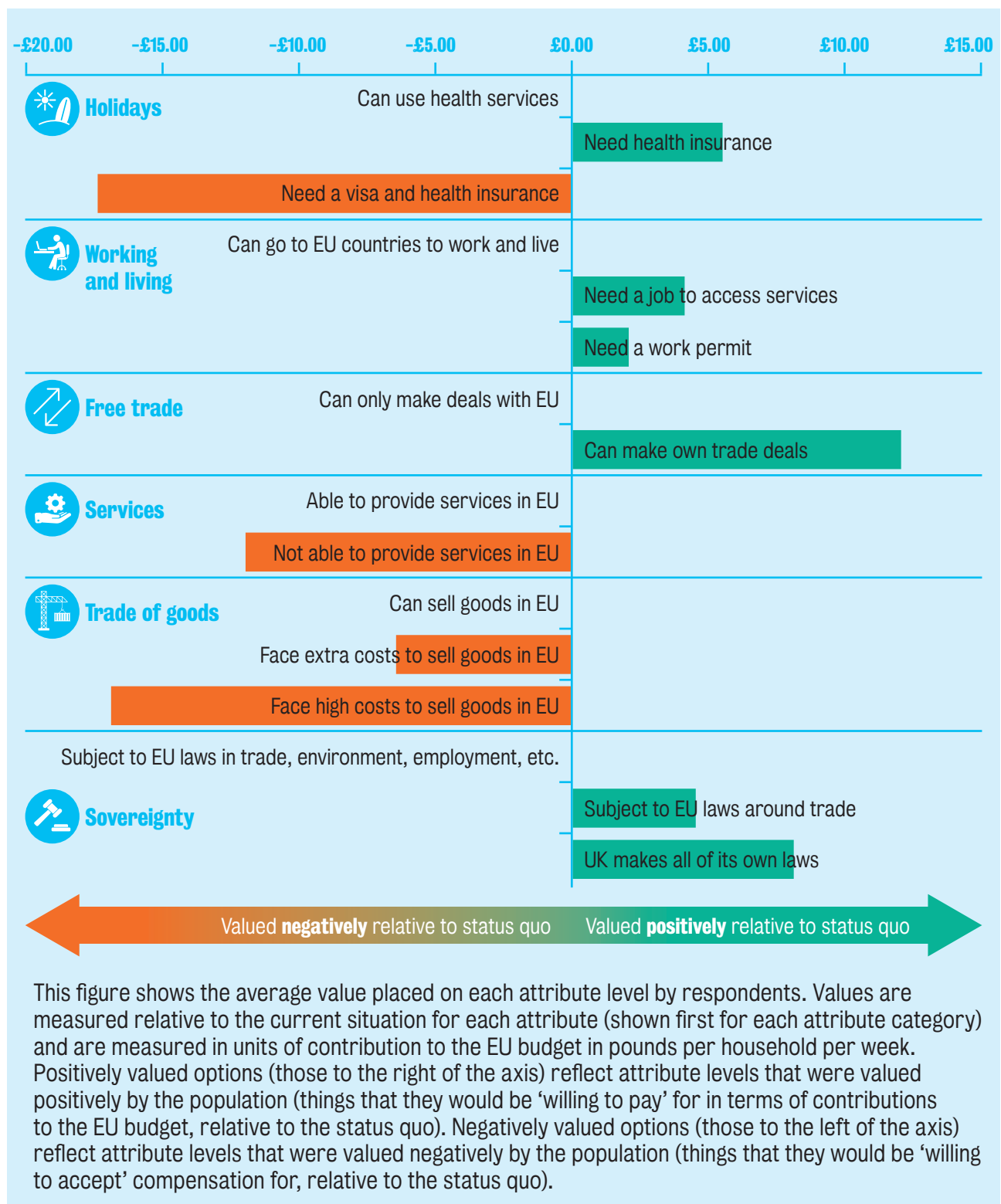
In terms of freedom of movement for holidays, people want to preserve free movement (without a visa), but favour an arrangement where health insurance is required for medical emergencies. In fact, this desire for visa-free holiday travel, both for UK citizens and their EU counterparts, was the most strongly valued statement across all of the attributes included in the study. For working and living, respondents showed a slight preference for the requirement that EU nationals have a job in order to access public services (and correspondingly, for the same conditions to apply to UK citizens in EU member states). The requirement for migrants to hold a work permit was viewed positively on average, although this differed by education level – among those with degree-level education, it was the least preferred option.

Of course, free movement of people is a complex issue, which is not easily represented in the kind of simple statement necessary for our survey. This complexity, which may influence people's understanding of the issues, is discussed further in the technical addendum.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-governments-negotiating-objectives-for-exiting-the-eu-pm-speech>



**Figure 2:** Value placed on each option, relative to the status quo (expressed in terms of EU budget contribution in GBP per household per week)





### **People highly value having access to EU markets for trade in goods and services, but also would like the UK to be able to make its own trade deals**

Respondents showed a strong preference for maintaining free trade in goods with EU markets, as well as for the reciprocal provision of services such as banking. In fact, views relating to trade between the UK and the EU were broadly the strongest and most consistently held across our sample. People would be willing to pay £17 per household per week to avoid there being high additional costs to trading goods with the EU (i.e. reverting to WTO rules). Even more moderate additional costs (as might result from, for example, membership of the single market but not the customs union, or the customs union but not the single market) were viewed negatively by respondents, with people willing to pay £6 per household per week on average to avoid such an outcome. The corresponding value for the freedom to provide financial services was £12 per household per week.

These findings are consistent with a desire to remain in the EU's single market, but we also found a strong preference for the UK to be able to make its own trade deals independently of EU/EEA members (valued at around £12 per household per week). This is not possible within the terms of the single market, and is one example of the trade-offs and compromises that will need to be navigated during the Brexit negotiations.

These seemingly incompatible preferences are important, though. Our results show that the UK's

future trading relationships with the EU and more widely elicit the most strongly held views among the British public. Given the Prime Minister's stated position that neither membership of the EU single market nor the customs union are acceptable options, development of a trade deal with the EU clearly emerges as an immediate priority for the government.

### **People value the UK being able to make its own laws, but not as much as single market access or the ability to make trade deals**

As an EU member state, EU law currently has primacy over UK law in some areas, including some aspects of legislation relating to employment, consumer protection, environmental regulations, energy cooperation and agriculture. Our analysis indicated that, on average, respondents would prefer a future relationship in which the UK is able to make and interpret all laws itself, but this was considered less important than maintaining free trade or being able to negotiate new trade deals independently.

However, this was the attribute on which we found one of the starkest differences between groups. Respondents with a degree-level education showed a preference for the UK being subject to EU laws, favouring the status quo and placing a negative value on the option in which the UK makes all of its own laws. In direct contrast, those without a degree favoured the UK making all of its own laws and placed a negative value on the UK being subject to EU laws in areas

like trade, employment, the environment and consumer protection. It is worth noting, however, that although sovereignty is an area in which the population seems divided in its views, these preferences are held less strongly than those relating to other aspects of the negotiations, such as trade or freedom of movement.

### People with degrees hold stronger views

The single most important explanatory factor in people's preferences from our analysis was the education level of the respondent.<sup>6</sup> In particular, we see differences between those educated to at least degree level, who comprised 25.2% of our sample, and those who do not hold a degree.

While all people, on average, placed a negative value on the UK making any contribution to the EU budget, people with a degree had a lower sensitivity to the level of this contribution than those without a degree. This may relate to relative income levels of the two groups.

Otherwise, those with degrees had stronger preferences for the non-monetary characteristics, compared to those without. They were much more strongly opposed to needing a visa to travel on holiday: they would pay over £40 per household per week to avoid the need for a visa and health insurance to travel between the UK and EU, compared to the current arrangements. They were also opposed to needing a work permit to live and work in the EU (and vice versa for EU citizens in the UK), although the value placed on this was much lower, at around £5 per household per week compared to the status quo.

A similar pattern was found in relation to trade preferences. Respondents with a degree placed a higher value on closer economic cooperation with the EU, both in terms of the free trade of goods and the provision of financial services. They also placed a higher value on the ability to make trade deals independently of the EU.

### People prefer a final agreement which is close to a 'Norway-like' model

Using the relative valuations of the different levels presented for comparison and eliminating the contradictions between these preferences, we can calculate the package of options that is most acceptable to the public. Our analysis shows that the majority of people favour a closer institutional relationship with the EU over having no deal at all. A relationship with the EU resembling that of a European Economic Area member, such as Norway, would see the UK remaining a part of the EU single market for goods and services. Operating outside the customs union (again, like Norway) would also allow the UK to make its own trade deals with other countries, independently of EU member states.

On balance, we calculate that the public value a Norway-like deal of this kind at about £14 per household per week more than the status quo, largely a result of the ability to make trade deals with countries outside the EU. This is despite the perceived disadvantage that it would entail allowing free movement for holidays and working and living. In comparison to no deal at all, the public value a Norway-like relationship at £28 per household per week. That the public prefer this kind of deal to the status quo, but prefer the status quo to leaving the negotiations with no deal at all, may present the government with a potentially challenging position from which to negotiate.<sup>7</sup>

As we have highlighted previously, it is important to note that our study was only able to consider a limited range of characteristics of the future relationship with the EU. This means that there are aspects of Norway's (or any other country's) relationship that have not been taken into account, preventing direct comparison. However, in terms of the characteristics tested in our survey, a relationship of this kind would seem the most acceptable option to the British public.

<sup>6</sup> In the modelling, we tested the impact of education, age, gender, income, marital status, economic activity, occupation type, country of birth, home region and ethnicity on the attribute valuations and were only able to identify statistically significant effects for education and country of birth (impacting the values for freedom of movement for working and living levels only).

<sup>7</sup> Of all the potential deals we examined, participating in a customs union-like relationship is valued the least, with the public valuing this option at about £19 per household per week worse than the status quo. Further details are provided in the technical addendum.



# **The British public's negotiating guidance to the government is...**

**February 2017**

**Dear Prime Minister,**

**We are writing to inform you of the British public's preferences with regard to our future relationship with the EU to inform the Brexit negotiations.**

**We realise that compromises will have to be made. We would like to have completely unrestricted trade with Europe, as we have now, as well as being able to control immigration and make our own trade deals. But we realise that it is not possible to have everything we want. A compromise would:**

- Allow us to travel to the EU for holidays without a visa and for EU citizens to visit the UK under the same terms. However, in both cases we would prefer that people should need health insurance to cover medical emergencies.**
- Allow us to go to EU countries to look for work, and for EU citizens to look for work in the UK, but for public services only to be accessible to those who have a job.**
- Allow UK businesses to trade freely in EU countries, and EU businesses to do the same in the UK. This is important both for goods and for services such as banking.**
- Allow the UK to make its own laws in most areas, although we realise that we will need to be bound by EU laws around trade.**
- Allow the UK to make its own trade deals outside the EU, which we accept may mean remaining outside the EU's customs union.**

**We hope that you will consider our collective views, and what we are willing to accept and not accept, as you continue your negotiations to exit the EU.**

**Yours sincerely,  
The British public**



## Closing comment

The political landscape of the UK has changed dramatically in the wake of the EU referendum, and one year on we find ourselves in a volatile and unpredictable environment. Other EU member states have experienced their own changes, with national elections in countries including Germany and Italy still to come within the next year. Against this complex and shifting backdrop, the course of Brexit negotiations and their likely outcome remain far from clear, and it is more important than ever for the UK government to adopt a clear and realistic negotiating position. Inevitably, trade-offs will have to be made and our research provides valuable evidence about the public's preferences regarding our relationship with Europe to help guide policymakers' decisions. These preferences indicate that the majority of the British public prefer closer institutional ties to the EU and indicate that 'no-deal' is a very unattractive option.

Our findings do, however, reflect only a snapshot in time, and we cannot assume that public preferences will remain static in an unpredictable political climate. It is worth noting that our survey was carried out prior to the announcement of the June 2017 general election. It is quite feasible that in the current climate of political volatility views may have changed already, both in terms of preferences for different kinds of relationship with the EU and perceptions of the likely outcomes of these choices. As further details of intended negotiating positions on both sides emerge, it would be valuable to assess if and how the public's preferences evolve. The likely timescales for establishing the various aspects of the UK's future relationship may also affect the acceptability or otherwise of a particular position. For example, it may take substantially longer to develop a comprehensive free trade agreement than it would to initiate new policies on migration. It is unclear if and how these kinds of considerations affect public preferences, or how sensitive preferences would be to changes in the likely timeline for agreeing and implementing the various aspects of a new relationship.

Aside from the immediate negotiations around the UK's departure from the EU, there have also been discussions more widely about the role of the EU and how it engages with its member states. The methods used in this study are not specific to exit negotiations; they also have the potential to be applied more widely in exploring public preferences for EU engagement and it may be fruitful to consider views in other EU countries in future.

We are in a time of considerable change in the European political landscape. This proof-of-concept study provides a starting point for considering how citizens view these changes and their wishes for a future relationship with the EU. The UK government's negotiations as it prepares to leave the EU will be complex and, inevitably, will be unable to meet everyone's expectations – as we have seen in this study, preferences vary and compromises must be made. What is acceptable to the public in making these compromises can be informed by our findings. We hope that it provides useful insights into what Brexit really means to UK citizens, and that it can serve as a starting point for guiding the government's negotiations in the coming months.

## Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge the input of the many people who have contributed to this study. We thank Catherine Barnard and Amy Ludlow for their advice in developing the attributes and levels for the choice experiments and for testing them in their public engagement exercises. We also thank Martin Wood and the team at NatCen Social Research for their patience and skill in coding the very complicated choice experiments into their survey software. We are very grateful to George Murkin for designing the report, and to Anand Menon, Paul Adamson, Nick Butler, Jennifer Rubin, Sarah Rawlings, Peter Burge and Andrew Daly for their insightful suggestions and comments on the study.

### **Photograph on page 13**

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