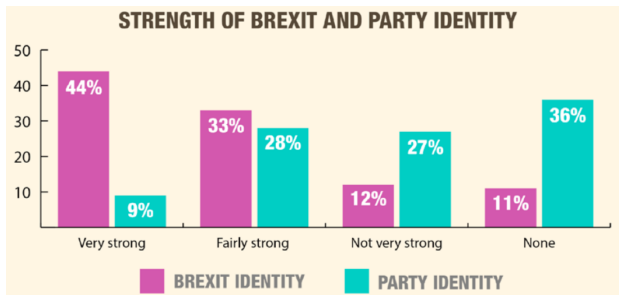


# Brexit and Public Opinion

## How to Reconcile the Divide?

Dr. Miriam Sorace  
European Institute, LSE  
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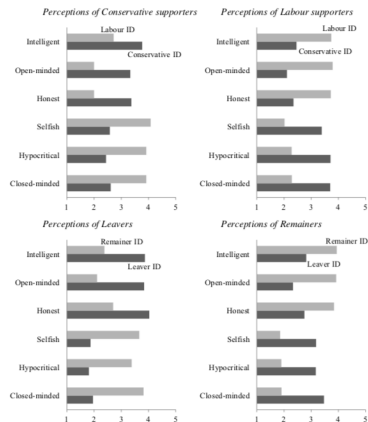
## Brexit Identities (Curtice 2018)



<sup>1</sup> Survey Item: Would you call yourself a very strong (Remainer/Leaver/party) fairly strong, or not very strong? - NatCen July 2018

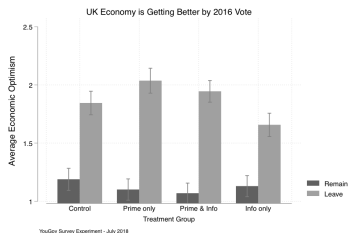
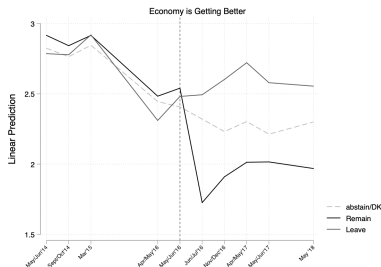
# Brexit Identities: Out-group stereotyping (Hobolt et al. 2018)

**Figure 2.** Perceived characteristics of own side and other side



Note: These are mean scores on a 1-5 Likert scale of agreement that these characteristics describe people with a particular political identity. Data is from the YouGov survey in September 2017. For the party identity descriptions, the unweighted N is 1,648. For the Brexit identity descriptions, the unweighted N is 1,678.

## How Leavers and Remainers see the Economy (Sorace & Hobolt *working paper*)

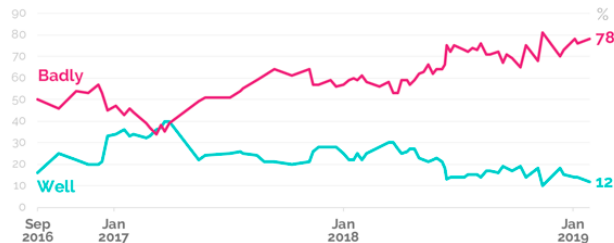


see: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/selective-perception-brexit-economy/>

## Dissatisfaction

### Few think the government is negotiating Brexit well

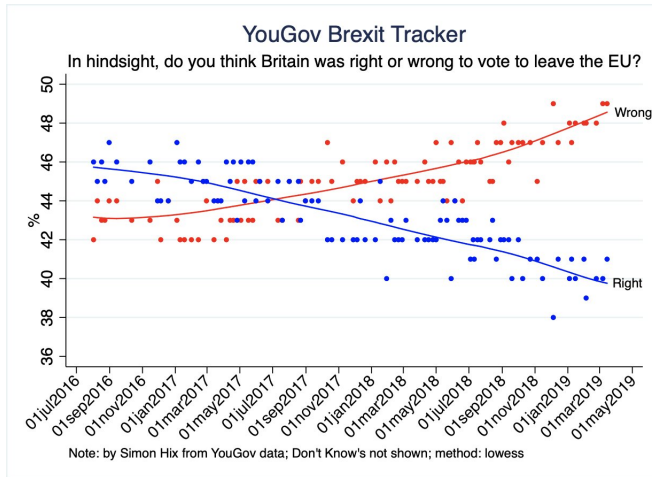
How well or badly do you think the government are doing at negotiating Britain's exit from the European Union? %



YouGov | yougov.com

Latest update: 22-23 Feb 2019

## Dissatisfaction



## Dissatisfaction

Would you now support or oppose a public vote on Britain's future relationship with the rest of the European Union?

	31 Jan-01 Feb	14-15 Mar	Change
<i>Total Support</i>	42	48	+6
<i>Total Oppose</i>	41	36	-5
<i>DK</i>	18	15	-3

Table: YouGov - March 2019

## Indecisiveness

Still a lot of undecided

If there were a public vote, and the choice were to stay in the EU or leave [on the Brexit terms negotiated by the Government] [without a deal], how would you vote?

	Stay vs. Deal	Stay vs. No Deal
<i>Stay in EU</i>	47	47
<i>Govt Deal</i>	32	—
<i>No Deal</i>	—	38
<i>DK/abstain</i>	22	15

**Table:** YouGov - 14-15 March 2019



## Indecisiveness Still a lot of undecided

### If there was another referendum on Britain's membership of the EU, how would you vote?

Field work dates: 28 June 2016 - 11 March 2019

Data from: Great Britain, United Kingdom

Results from: 62 polls



<https://whatukthinks.org/eu/questions/if-a-second-eu-referendum-were-held-today-how-would-you-vote/>

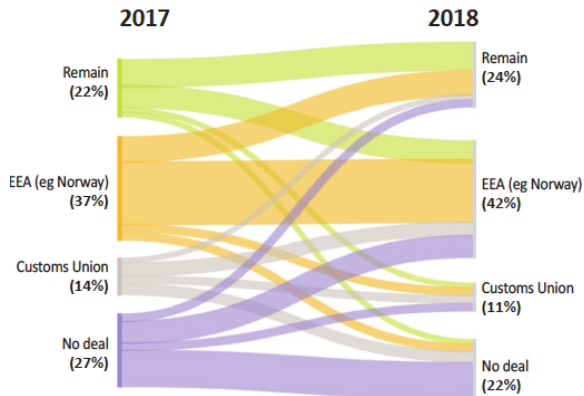
## Inconsistent Preferences

Thinking about when Britain leaves the EU, do you think each of the following scenarios would or would not honour the result of the 2016 EU Referendum?

	Would Honour	Would Not Honour	DK
<i>Leave w/out Deal</i>	46	30	24
<i>Losses in Trade/Investment/Growth</i>	26	42	32

Table: YouGov - 14-15 March 2019

## What do People Want? (Rohr et al. 2019)



‘Stated Choice’ Experiment - Representative Sample of the UK’s population

## What do People Want?

### How good would these Brexit outcomes be?

Imagine that the final outcome of Brexit was [x]. Would you consider this to be... %

■ A good outcome ■ An acceptable compromise ■ Not sure ■ A bad outcome



## Results from the Citizens' Assembly (Renwick et al. 2018)



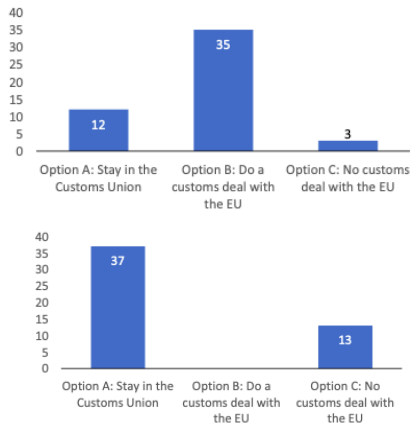
Figure 2: Trade with the EU: points for preferences [Colour figure can be viewed at [wileyonlinelibrary.com](http://wileyonlinelibrary.com)]



Citizens' deliberation over 2 weekends + access to experts

Representative Sample of the UK's population

## Results from the Citizens' Assembly (Renwick et al. 2018)



## Results from the Citizens' Assembly (Renwick et al. 2018)

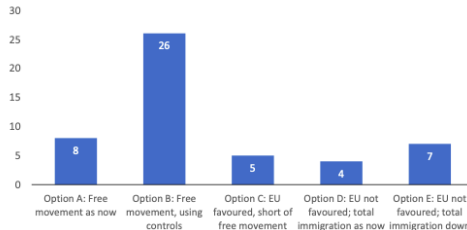


Figure 7: Migration between the UK and the EU: first preferences [Colour figure can be viewed at [wileyonlinelibrary.com](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com)]

# Conclusions

- 3 years after the referendum, UK society and politics is deeply split by the EU issue dimension.
- UK public opinion is dissatisfied with the negotiation process.
- Examining various types of evidence, 'soft Brexit' appears more preferred than either remaining in the EU or leaving without a deal.
- A second referendum would not necessarily clarify things at this moment in time. People deserve leadership on this complex issue.
- Working towards a comprehensive trade deal with the EU, or, alternatively, towards EEA membership (e.g. Norway) is the option that is most likely to reconcile the two camps.



# References

- Curtice, J. (2018), The emotional legacy of Brexit: how Britain has become a country of 'remainers and leavers', Technical report, The UK in a Changing Europe - King's College London.
- Hobolt, S. B., Leeper, T. & Tilley, J. (2018), 'Divided by the vote: Affective polarization in the wake of Brexit', *American Political Science Association, Boston*.
- Renwick, A., Allan, S., Jennings, W., Mckee, R., Russell, M. & Smith, G. (2018), 'What kind of Brexit do voters want? Lessons from the Citizens' Assembly on Brexit', *The Political Quarterly* **89**(4), 649–658.
- Rohr, C., Grant, J., Howarth, D., Lu, H. & Pollitt, A. (2019), Britain's relationship with the EU after Brexit - Brexit and Public Opinion 2019 Report, Technical report, The UK in a Changing Europe.