Birkbeck
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS

Department of Politics: Brexit Briefing

Below are a selection of writings from the past week on Brexit and its consequences from academics in the Birkbeck Politics Department. You can find out more at http://10-gower-street.com/ and listen to our pre-referendum discussion of Brexit here https://soundcloud.com/british-politics-centre/the-eu-referendum-will-it-be-in-or-out
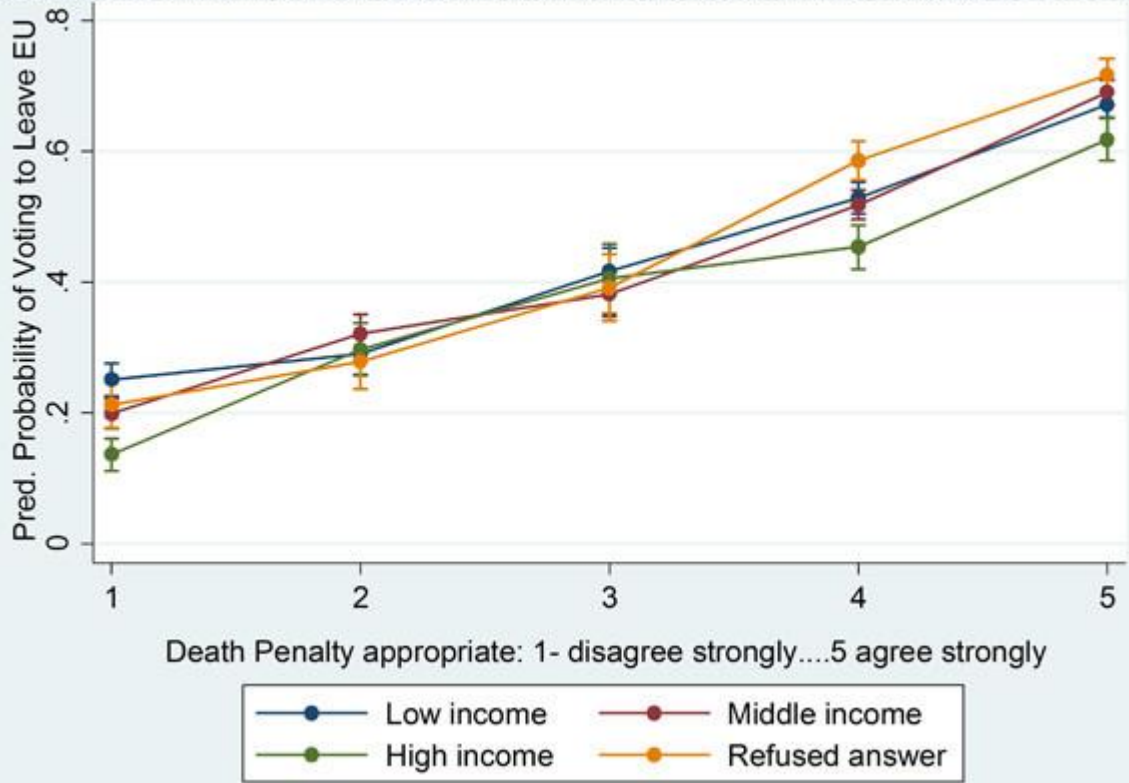
Brexit Voters: NOT the Left Behind

Professor Eric Kaufman **24.6.2016**

The Leave campaign's stunning upset has barely sunk in and already the pundits are flogging a familiar storyline. Those 'left behind' in the hard-luck provinces have punched privileged, corporate London in the nose.
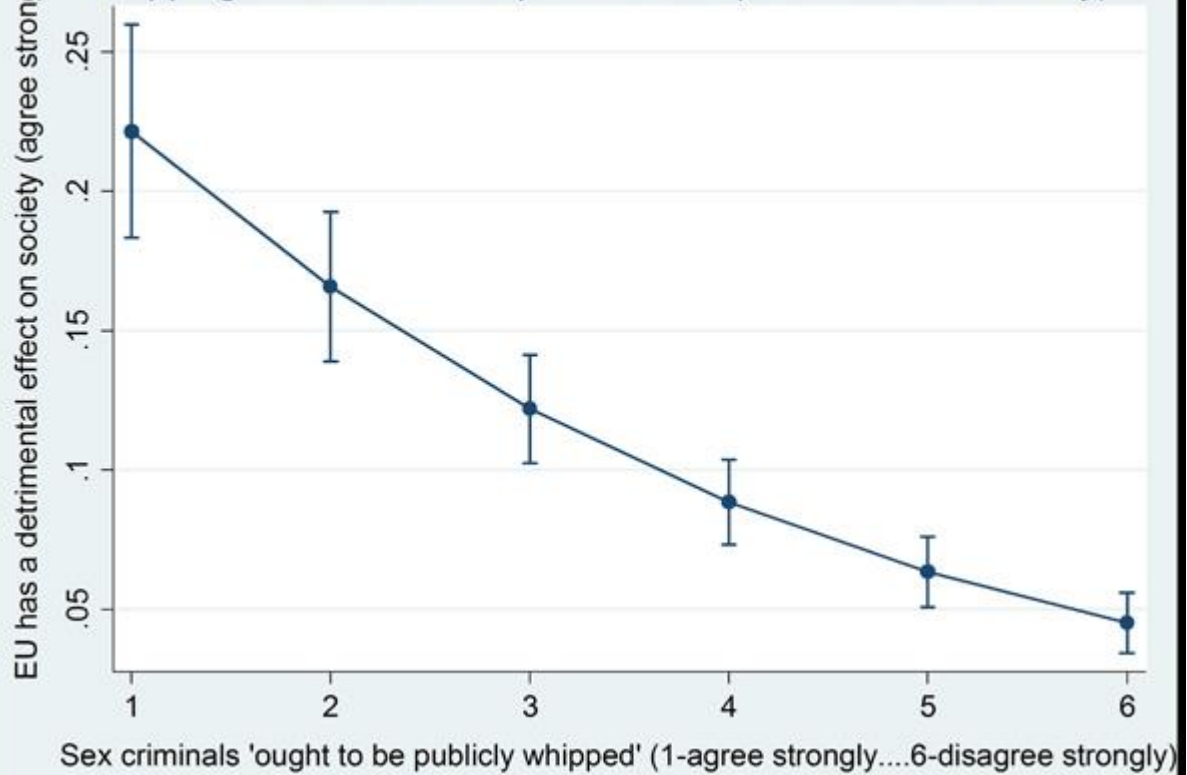
The facts tell a different story: culture and personality, not material circumstances, separate Leave and Remain voters. This is not a class conflict so much as a values divide that cuts across lines of age, income, education and even party. A nice way to show this is to examine the relationship between so-called 'authoritarianism' questions such as whether children should obey or the death penalty is appropriate, and support for the EU. The British Election Study's internet panel survey of 2015-16 asked a sample of over 24,000 individuals about their views on these matters and whether they would vote to leave the EU. The graph below, restricted to White British respondents, shows almost no statistically significant difference in EU vote intention between rich and poor. By contrast, the probability of voting Brexit rises from around 20 per cent for those most opposed to the death penalty to 70 per cent for those most in favour. Wealthy people who back capital punishment back Brexit. Poor folk who oppose the death penalty support Remain.

A similar pattern holds in the British Values Survey for the strongly worded question probing respondents' desire to see those who commit sex crimes 'publicly whipped, or worse.' Political psychologists show a close relationship between feeling fearful of change, desiring certainty, and calling for harsh penalties for criminals and discipline for children. These are people who want a more stable, ordered world. By contrast, those who seek change and novelty are willing to embrace immigration and the EU.

Not the Left Behind: Income, Capital Punishment and Brexit, Whites only, (BES 2015-16)

Death Penalty appropriate: 1- disagree strongly....5 agree strongly

Low income — Middle income
High income — Refused answer

Whipping Criminals and Opinion of EU (British Values Survey)

Sex criminals 'ought to be publicly whipped' (1-agree strongly....6-disagree strongly)

Precisely the same relationship – based on values rather than class – characterises support for Donald Trump. "I've found a single statistically significant variable predicts whether a voter supports Trump—and it's not race, income or education levels: It's authoritarianism," wrote Matthew MacWilliams back in January.

This doesn't mean age, education, class and gender don't count. But they largely matter because they affect people's level of authoritarianism. Genes, strict parenting and straitened circumstances contribute to people's aversion to difference, which gets wired into their personality. For Karen Stenner, this makes authoritarians resistant to exhortations to embrace diversity. Younger, wealthier and better educated people, and women, are a bit less oriented toward order and intolerance. But education is not the reason. A recent study in Switzerland showed that liberal-minded kids select into university – their liberalism was apparent as early as age 13. University itself had no liberalising effect on attitudes.

As large-scale migration challenges the demographic sway of white majorities, the gap between whites who embrace change and those who resist it is emerging as the key political cleavage across the west. Compared to this cultural chasm, material differences between haves and have nots, managers and workers, are much less important. From Trump to Hofer, Le Pen to Farage, the authoritarian-libertarian axis is taking over politics.

Where does this leave Britain? The country has emerged from a bruising battle in which those fearing change lined up to Leave while folk comfortable with difference plumped for Remain. However, the two lines don't perfectly overlap. Boris Johnson, Douglas Carswell and other Vote Leave leaders are libertarian or even globalist in instinct. As negotiations move forward, this freedom-oriented leadership will be inclined to cut deals with Europe on migration in order to secure Britain's access to the European market. While this 'soft Brexit' pose will irritate the authoritarian majority among Leavers, Johnson's credibility as the man who led Britain out gives him the latitude to make compromises. The history of right-wing populism from the southern US to Northern Ireland is one of populist leaders riding their base to power but rapidly moderating once in office. Expect a fuzzy divorce, not a clean break.

Independence Day: What Happens Next in the UK and EU

By: Euro Realist Newsletter

Dr Dermot Hodson **24.6.2016**

Many Britons went to bed last week thinking that their country's membership of the EU was secure. They awoke this morning to hear UKIP leader Nigel Farage declare 'independence day' after 52% of voters chose to leave the EU. Shock seems to be the prevailing mood among politicos, but the referendum result is not entirely unexpected. Opinion polls were too close to call in advance of the vote even after, what appeared to be, a late surge for the Remain side. Bookies were even more optimistic about the chances of a vote for Remain but they have now joined the ranks of discredited elites in this country.

EU referendums are always difficult to win, as evidenced by 'no' votes against the Maastricht, Nice and Lisbon Treaties and the European Constitution. Winning an EU referendum in Britain was never going to be easy given the country's fractious form on Europe. Asking a high-stakes question about membership rather than the ratification of a treaty made little difference in the end.

Prime Minister David Cameron knew these risks when he committed himself to a referendum in January 2013 but he judged the rewards to be worth it. With Conservative backbenchers spoiling for a fight on Europe and UKIP surging in the polls, the referendum pledge bought Cameron time and, so it seemed until he resigned earlier today, a second full term in Number 10.

A dynamic campaign in support of Remain might have helped to mitigate these risks but it failed to materialise. Although EU supporters won the economic argument, they failed to address people's legitimate concerns about how the EU was governed. This left room for Leave's rallying cry to 'take back control' from Brussels, a powerful political slogan that trumped dire economic predictions about the consequences of Brexit.

The UK's fragmented political parties were another complicating factor in the referendum campaign. That the Conservatives would implode over Europe was always a possibility. Implode they did when Michael Gove and Boris Johnson joined the Leave campaign, allowing the less politically palatable Nigel Farage to stay behind the scenes.

None in 2013 would have predicted that Labour would move to the left and elect Jeremy Corbyn, a leader with little love for Europe. Labour MPs Alan Johnson and Chuka Umunna, among others, made a strong case for EU membership. However, their efforts were undermined by a leader who, when asked to put his passion for Europe on a scale of 1 to 10, replied: 'seven, or seven and a half'.

Whatever the reasons for the referendum result, and it will take time for the evidence to emerge, Europe has entered a period of profound political uncertainty. All eyes are now on next week's European Council to see how EU heads of state or government manage the political process set in motion by UK voters. Expect this process to play out over years rather than weeks or months.

The UK will be central to this process but not the sole focus. EU leaders will be concerned too about member states, such as the Netherlands, which are weighing up referendums of their own. Greece too will be closely watched for signs that Brexit might renew risks of Grexit. The euro crisis has demonstrated EU leaders' ability to do deals during moments of high political drama. Such diplomatic skills are now needed more than ever.

The EU has been deeply damaged by the UK referendum, but crises are endemic to a political project as experimental as European integration. While no member state has ever left the EU, the Union has encountered a succession of constitutional crises since the 1950s. The EU has not always handled these crises well but it has developed a standard operating procedure in such situations based on intensive intergovernmental diplomacy between heads of state or government. This deliberative intergovernmentalism now faces a major new challenge.

The UK faces constitutional turmoil of its own – after a majority in Northern Ireland, London and Scotland voted to stay in the EU – but it lacks comparable operating procedures. Within minutes of the referendum result, Northern Ireland's Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness called for a referendum on Irish unification, confirming that fears about Brexit and the peace process were not devised by 'project fear'. Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon soon followed with a statement that a second referendum on Scottish independence is now 'highly likely'.

Intergovernmentalism within the UK is considerably less developed than it is in the EU. David Cameron promised to include the leaders of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland in Brexit negotiations but he said little about how this might work. There is quite simply no template to tackle deep regional divisions in a political system that, in spite of devolution, remains highly centralized.

Who Will Replace Cameron? A Brief History of Takeover Prime Ministers

Credit: Number 10 CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Dr Ben Worthy **24.6.2016**

David Cameron will not be Prime Minister by October, and is going even earlier than I predicted. So what does the past tell us about who might take over as Prime Minister, and how they might fare? Who, out of these runners and riders, will be next as First Lord of the Treasury?

There's generally two ways you can become Prime Minister in the UK through (i) winning a General Election (ii) winning a party leadership election (or in the pre-1965 Conservative party being 'chosen') to become head of the largest party when a Prime Minister leaves-see this great infographic here.[1]

Whoever sits in 10 Downing Street after David Cameron will be what I'm calling a 'takeover' leader, who takes over government by (ii) rather than (i). As the UK Cabinet Manual states:

Where a Prime Minister chooses to resign from his or her individual position at a time when his or her administration has an overall majority in the House of Commons, it is for the party or parties in government to identify who can be chosen as the successor (p.15).

Although often seen as 'lame ducks' or less legitimate, remember both Lloyd George and Winston Churchill and Lloyd George, [number 1 and number 2 respectively in the highest rated Prime Ministers of the 20th century](#), got to 10 Downing Street without winning an election.

Here's a table looking at the last six Post-war 'takeover' Prime Ministers that sets out who they took over from, their previous position before Prime Minister, and – the all-important question – whether they went on to win the next election.

Takeover Prime Ministers 1955-2010

Prime Minister	Position	Took Over From	Won or Lost
Gordon Brown	*Chancellor*	Tony Blair in 1997	Lost 2010 (narrow loss?)
John Major	*Chancellor*	Margaret Thatcher in 1990	Won 1992 (narrow win)
James Callaghan	*Foreign Secretary*	Harold Wilson in 1975	Lost 1979 (medium loss)
Alec Douglas-Home	*Foreign Secretary*	Harold Macmillan in 1963	Lost 1964 (narrow loss)
Harold Macmillan	*Chancellor*	Anthony Eden in 1957	Won 1959 (increased majority)
Anthony Eden	*Foreign Secretary*	Winton Churchill in 1955	Won 1955 (increased majority)

Interestingly, of the 12 Post-war Prime Ministers almost half were actually takeovers. So how did these takeovers do in the General Elections that followed? It seems there are exactly even chances of winning or losing, as 3 takeovers lost their elections and three won, though drilling down it can be close. John Major had a very narrow win in 1992 and Alec Douglas-Home a surprisingly narrow loss in 1964. What the table doesn't show is the danger in stepping into Downing Street without an election, which explains why the other 50 % failed to win. Takeover is a risky business even in tranquil times, as this great [paper](#) shows.

In terms of who does the taking over now, a superficial look at the table offers good news for Theresa May and Michael Gove and bad news for Boris Johnson. All the takeovers Post-War were already holders of 'great offices of state'. In fact, 3 were Chancellors and 3 were Foreign Secretaries. This makes sense as it is senior politicians who will have the resources, the reputation and, most importantly, the support in the party to win a leadership election.

The past is not, of course, always a good guide to the future, especially in a Brexit-ing Britain. To be Conservative leader you must make it through a [particular bottleneck](#), as two potential

leaders must emerge from the votes of the Conservative MPs for a run-off with the rest of the party. This morning it is very, very unlikely that the next leader will be the (probably) soon to be ex-Chancellor George Osborne. Foreign Secretary Phillip Hammond is, as far as we know, not interested.

The closest 'great offices' are Theresa May in the Home Office, whose chances have been talked up until yesterday, and Justice Secretary Michael Gove, who has ruled himself out repeatedly (though so did his hero Lyndon Johnson, many times). However, Boris Johnson, who has no great office but was Mayor of London for eight years, will have a large amount of political capital and has powerfully bolstered his reputation. A Brexit Johnson versus a Eurosceptic May run-off looks likely.

Gauging how 'successful' the takeover leaders were is more tricky-the whole question of whether and how a Prime Minister 'succeeds' depends on how you measure it. Half of the leaders achieved the most basic aim of winning an election and a number of them not only won but also increased their majority. Beyond this, some are widely regarded as having failed amid crisis, splits and defeats, especially John Major and Gordon Brown. Not all takeovers are failures or lame ducks. Three of the leaders came number 4, 7 and 8 in the academic survey of the top ten Post-War Prime Ministers and Harold Macmillan in particular is widely regarded as a highly capable and astute Prime Minister.

Whoever takes over from Cameron will face deep problems. He or she will be in charge of a ruptured party, and a worrying in-tray of pressing problems. Being prime Minister of Brexit Britain will mean trying to hold together a divided country and Dis-united Kingdom, not to mention overseeing a hugely complex negotiation process. Whoever takes over will need a very healthy dose of fortune and skill to be a Macmillan rather than a Brown.

⎯

[1] There are other ways but it all gets a bit complicated and constitutional see p 15 of the Cabinet Manual 2.18-2.19. If a government falls and an opposition can muster up a majority then an opposition leader could become Prime Minister without an election (but would probably want to call a General Election soon after). The Cabinet Manual hedges its bets by saying 'The Prime Minister will *normally* be the accepted leader of a political party that commands the majority of the House of Commons'.

Department website:
http://www.bbk.ac.uk/politics/
Twitter: *@bbkpolitics*
10 Gower Street Blog *http://10-gower-street.com/*

Birkbeck
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

DEPARTMENT OF
POLITICS

Staff	Expertise	Email
Professor Rosie Campbell	British Politics, Voting	r.campbell@bbk.ac.uk
Dr Dionyssis Dimitrakopoulos	EU	d. Dimitrakopoulos@bbk.ac.uk
Dr Jason Edwards	British Politics, Political theory	j.edwards@bbk.ac.uk
Dr Dermot Hodson	EU, Public Policy	d.hodson@bbk.ac.uk
Professor Eric Kaufmann		e.kaufmann@bbk.ac.uk
Professor Deborah Mabbett	Public Policy	d.mabbett@bbk.ac.uk
Dr Benjamin Worthy	British Politics	B.worthy@bbk.ac.uk

Selected BA and MA programmes	
Undergraduate Programmes	- Global Politics and International Relations (BA) (Full-time) - Politics (BA) (Full-time) - Politics, Philosophy and History (BA) (Full-time)
Postgraduate Programmes	- Global Environmental Politics and Policy (MSc) - Middle East in Global Politics: Islam, Conflict and Development (MSc) - Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict (MSc) - Politics (MRes) - Politics of Population, Migration and Ecology (MSc) - Public Policy and Management (MRes) - Public Policy and Management (MSc) - Social and Political Theory (MSc) - Social Research (MSc) - Social Research (Postgraduate Certificate) - Social Research (Postgraduate Diploma)