

# What 'Brexit Means Brexit' Means to Citizens

Prof Sara Hobolt  
Dr Thomas J. Leeper  
Prof James Tilley

6 December 2017

Research funded by ESRC *UK in a Changing Europe* Initiative



This is an atypical academic talk.

We want to know:

- What does the British public want from Brexit?
- What is Brexit doing to political life in Britain?

1 Poll Trends

2 Conjoint Analysis

3 Brexit Identities

1 Poll Trends

2 Conjoint Analysis

3 Brexit Identities

# Summarising Trends in One Word

# Summarising Trends in One Word

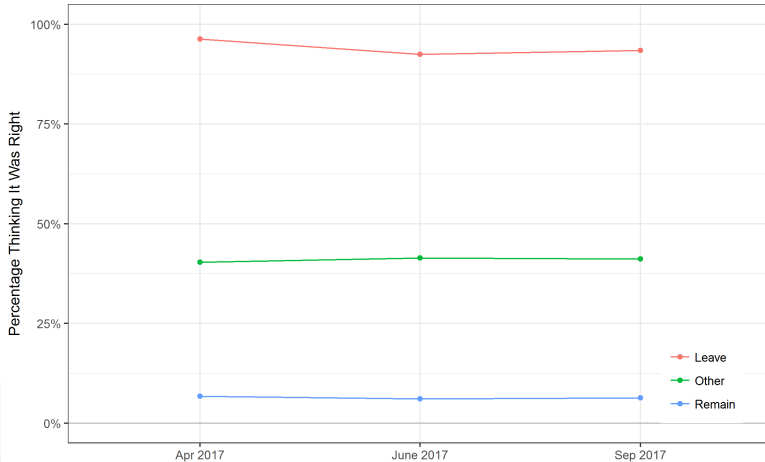
# Stability!

# Tracking Public Opinion

- Custom tracking poll
- 25-26 April, 13-14 June, 25-26 September
- Fielded by YouGov (n=1600 per wave)
- Go beyond the standard polling questions



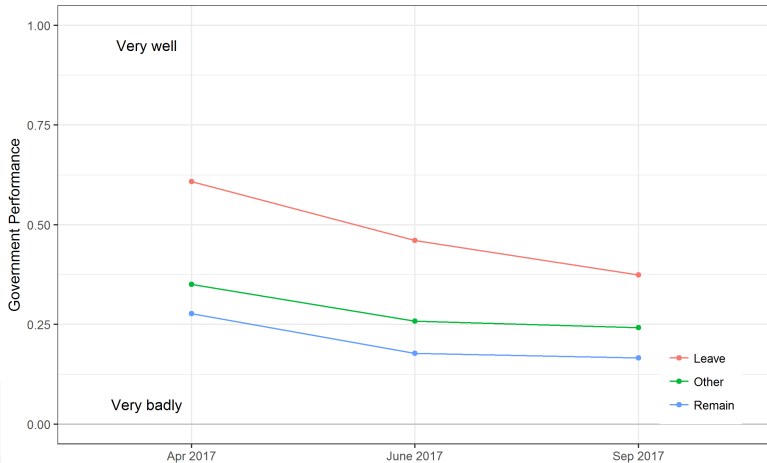
# Trend in Right/Wrong



Source: Hobolt, Leeper, and Tilley (YouGov)

Stability! Except...

# Trend in Government Performance

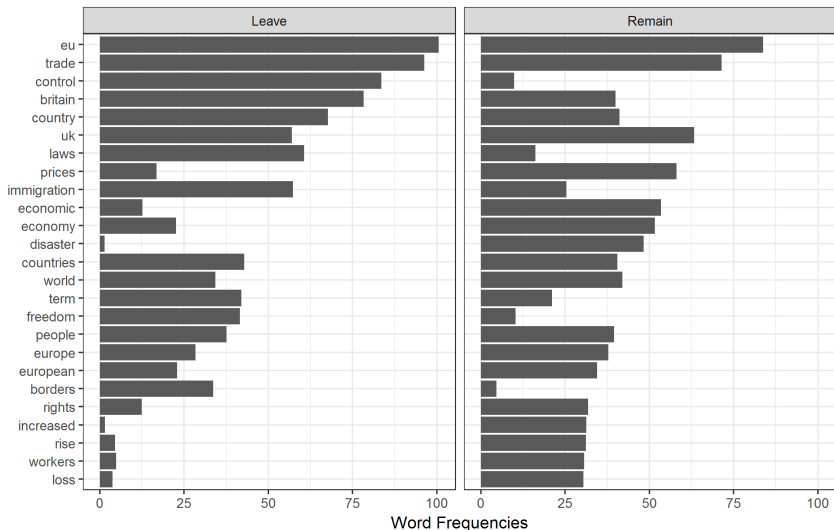


Source: Hobolt, Leeper, and Tilley (YouGov)

# Open-ended Question

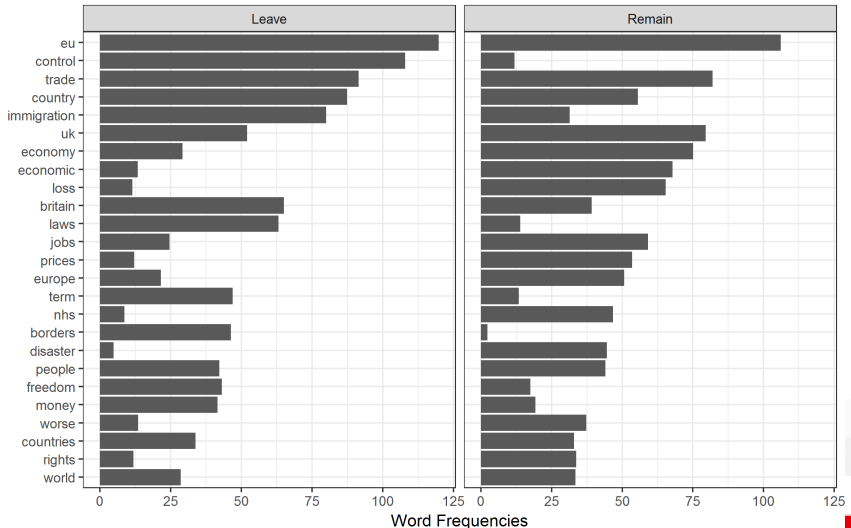
*In a few sentences, please describe below what you think will be the consequences of Britain leaving the European Union*

# What Voters Say (Apr 2017)

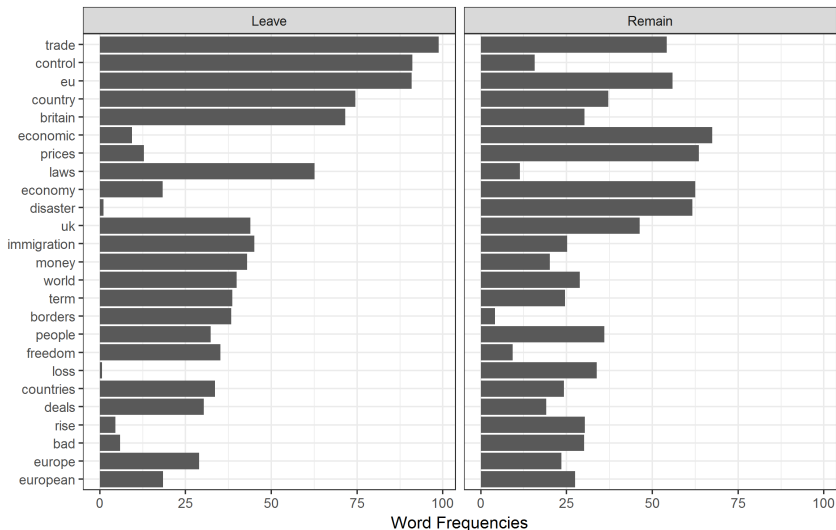


Source: Hobolt, Leeper, and Tilley (YouGov)

# What Voters Say (Jun 2017)

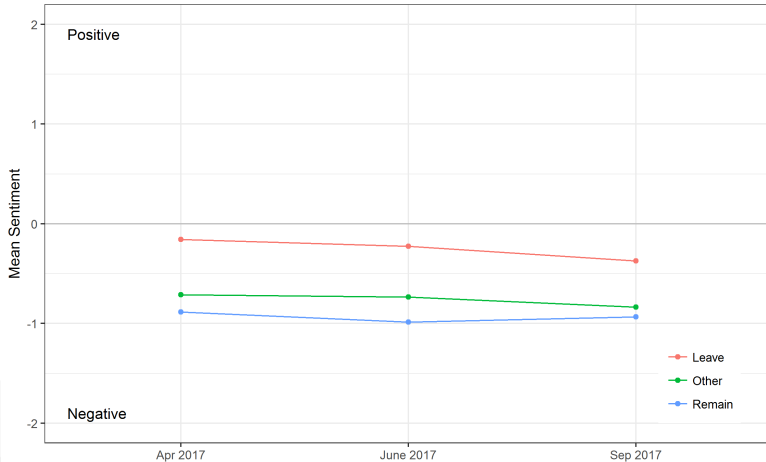


# What Voters Say (Sep 2017)



Source: Hobolt, Leeper, and Tilley (YouGov)

# Trend in Sentiment



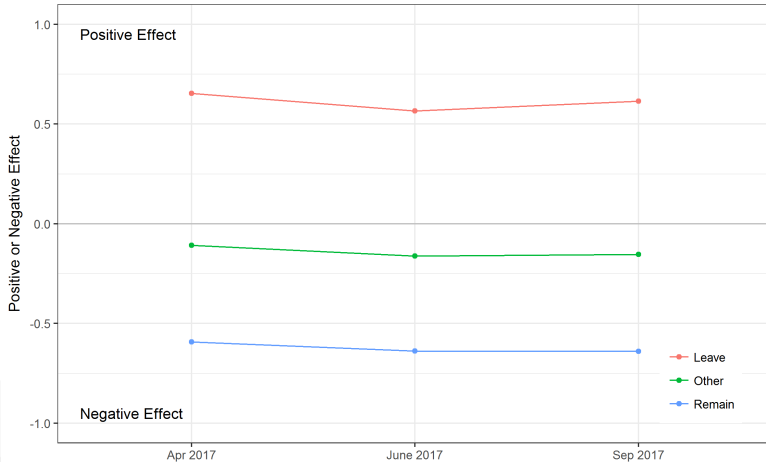
Source: Hobolt, Leeper, and Tilley (YouGov)



# Perceived Effects of Brexit

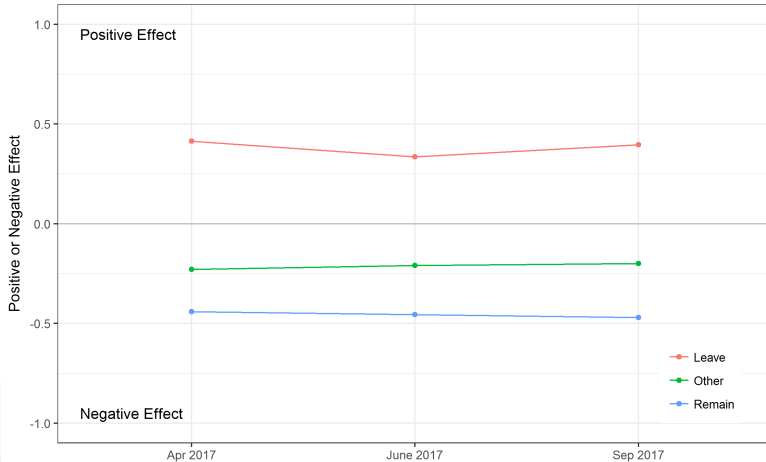
- *Do you think leaving the European Union will have a positive or negative effect **on Britain?***
- *Do you think leaving the European Union will have a positive or negative effect **on you personally?***

# Sociotropic Effects



Source: Hobolt, Leeper, and Tilley (YouGov)

# Personal Effects



Source: Hobolt, Leeper, and Tilley (YouGov)



1 Poll Trends

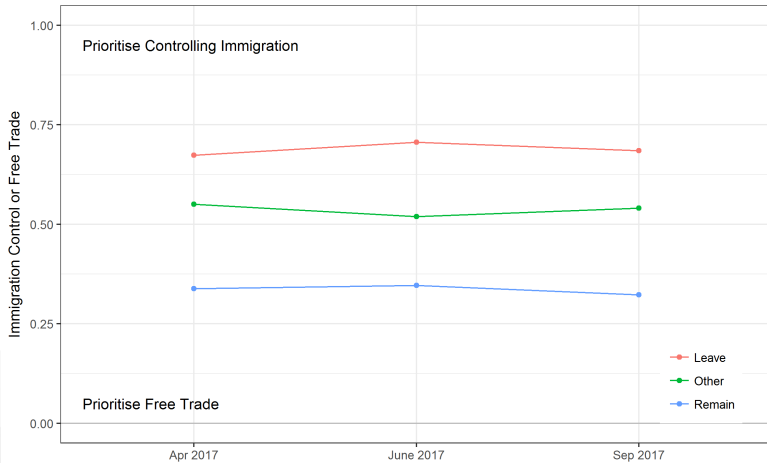
2 Conjoint Analysis

3 Brexit Identities

# What don't the polls tell us?

- What kind of Brexit does the public support or oppose?
- When forced to choose, which aspects of the negotiations are prioritised?

# Trend in Trade/Immigration Tradeoff



# Conjoint Analysis

- Bundle features of Brexit
- Force respondents to choose between bundles
- *Revealed preferences* emerge from those choices
- Estimate *relative* importance of features



# Differences from Traditional Polling

## ■ Advantages

- Reduces “cake and eat it” results
- Lower social desirability biases
- Mimics decision of negotiators/government

## ■ Disadvantages

- More cognitively complex than traditional polling
- No straightforward “% support” statistics

# What goes in the conjoint?

- 1 Immigration/freedom of movement
- 2 Jurisdiction of the ECJ
- 3 Rights of EU (UK) citizens in UK (EU)
- 4 'Divorce bill'
- 5 Ongoing payments to EU budget
- 6 Trade agreement
- 7 Northern Ireland border
- 8 Timeline for implementation

# Implementation

- 26–27 April 2017
- YouGov sample (n=3,293)
  - Median age 49; 56% women
  - 51.3% report voting remain
  - 8.1% support Liberal Democrats
  - Weighting inconsequential
- Respondents make 5 discrete choices
  - Effective sample of n=16,465

# Features: Immigration

- *Full control over EU immigration and little to no EU immigration*
- No control over EU immigration and similar levels of EU immigration to now
- Some control over EU immigration and similar levels of EU immigration to now
- Some control over EU immigration and lower levels of EU immigration than now
- Full control over EU immigration and similar levels of EU immigration to now
- Full control over EU immigration and lower levels of EU immigration than now

## Features: EU Law/ECJ

- *Britain is not subject to EU laws or decisions by the European Court of Justice*
- Britain is subject to all EU laws and all decisions by the European Court of Justice
- Britain is subject to some EU laws and some decisions by the European Court of Justice
- Britain adopts some EU laws but is not subject to decisions by the European Court of Justice

# Features: EU/UK Citizen Rights

- *All must leave*
- All can stay indefinitely
- Can stay if they continue to work while all others must leave
- Must apply for leave to remain under less restrictive terms than people from non-EU countries
- Must apply for leave to remain under the same terms as people from non-EU countries

# Features: Future Payments

- *No contribution and no access*
- £12 billion per year for access
- £6 billion per year for access
- £1 billion per year for access

# Features: “Divorce Bill”

- *No payment*
- £10 billion
- £20 billion
- £50 billion
- £70 billion



# Features: Trade

- *Many administrative barriers to trade in goods and services and 5% average tariff on goods*
- Few administrative barriers to trade in goods and services and no tariffs on goods
- Few administrative barriers to trade in goods and services and 2.5% average tariff on goods
- Few administrative barriers to trade in goods and services and 5% average tariff on goods
- Some administrative barriers to trade in goods and services and no tariffs on goods
- Some administrative barriers to trade in goods and services and 2.5% average tariff on goods
- Some administrative barriers to trade in goods and services and 5% average tariff on goods
- Many administrative barriers to trade in goods and services and no tariffs on goods
- Many administrative barriers to trade in goods and services and 2.5% average tariff on goods

# Features: Ireland/NI Border

- *Full passport and customs checks*
- No passport checks and no customs checks
- Customs checks but no passport checks
- Passport checks but no customs checks

# Features: Timeline

- *2019*
- 2020
- 2021
- 2023
- 2025



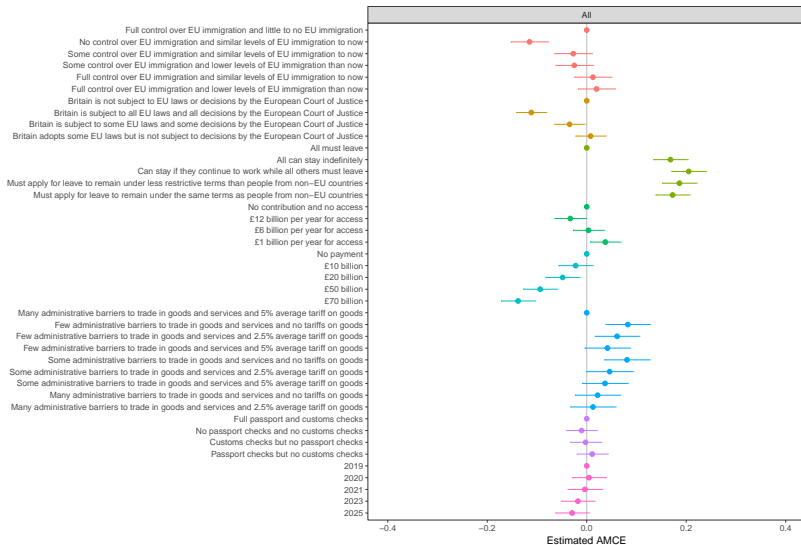
We are interested in your opinions about the negotiations between Britain and the European Union regarding Britain's exit from the EU and future relationship with the EU.

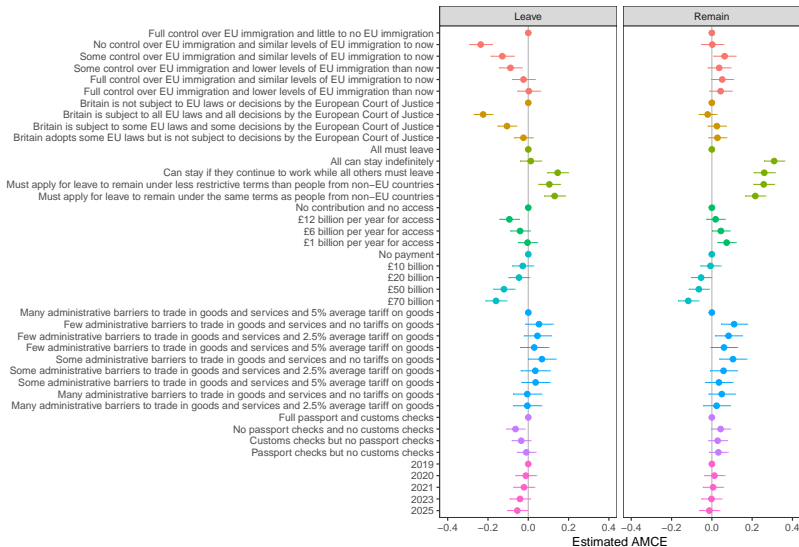
Please look carefully at these two possible outcomes:

	<b>Outcome A</b>	<b>Outcome B</b>
<b>Britain's one-off payment to the EU to settle outstanding commitments</b>	No payment	£10 billion
<b>When this will come into effect</b>	2025	2023
<b>Border checks between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland</b>	No passport checks and no customs checks	Full passport and customs checks
<b>EU's legal authority in Britain</b>	Britain adopts some EU laws but is not subject to decisions by the European Court of Justice	Britain is subject to all EU laws and all decisions by the European Court of Justice
<b>Britain's future payments to the EU budget to access science and regional development programmes</b>	£1 billion per year for access	£1 billion per year for access
<b>Trade agreement with the EU</b>	Many administrative barriers to trade in goods and services and 5% average tariff on goods	Few administrative barriers to trade in goods and services and 2.5% average tariff on goods
<b>Policy on immigration from the EU</b>	Full control over EU immigration and little to no EU immigration	Some control over EU immigration and lower levels of EU immigration than now
<b>Future rights of current EU nationals in Britain and British nationals in the EU</b>	All can stay indefinitely	Must apply for 'leave to remain' under the same terms as people from non-EU countries

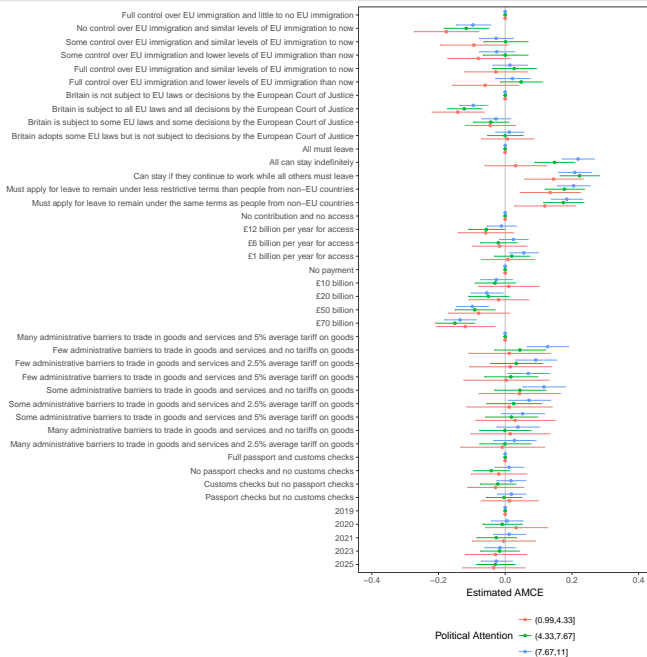
Which of these two outcomes do you prefer?

- Outcome A  
 Outcome B

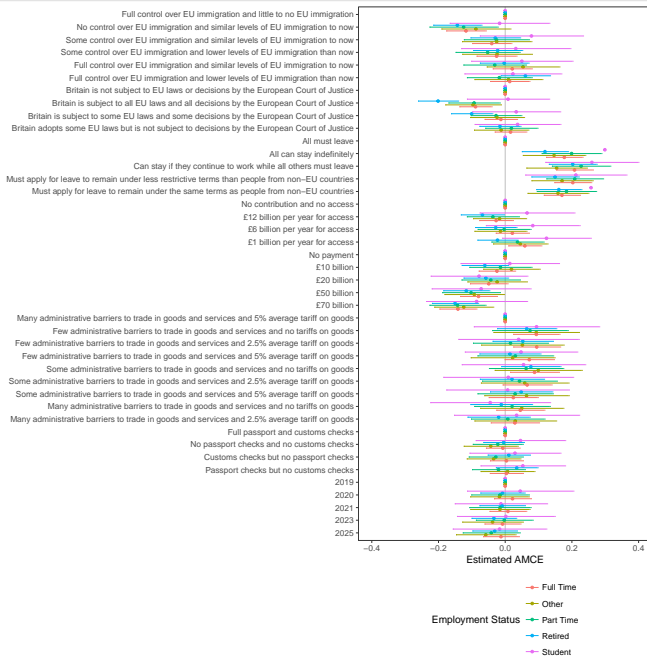


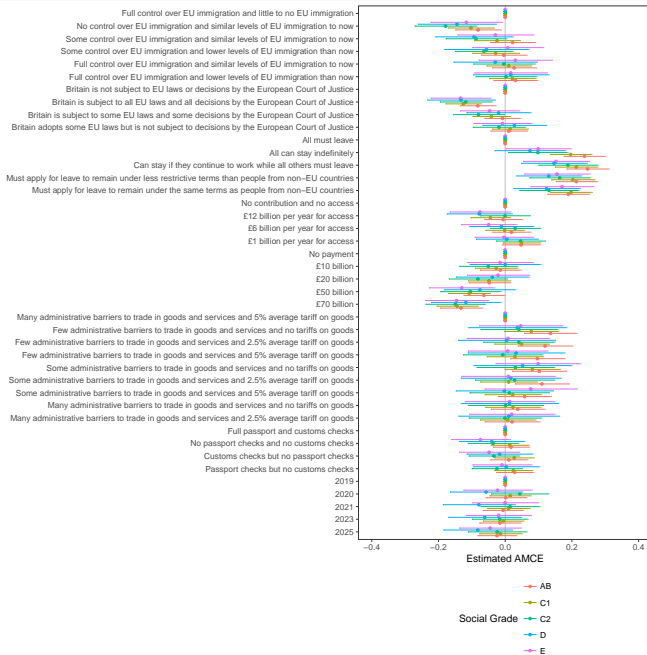


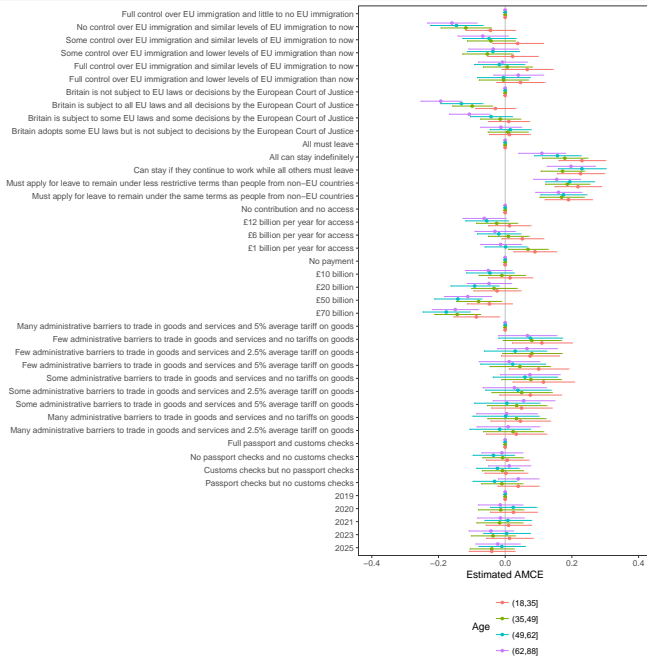
Differences in views?

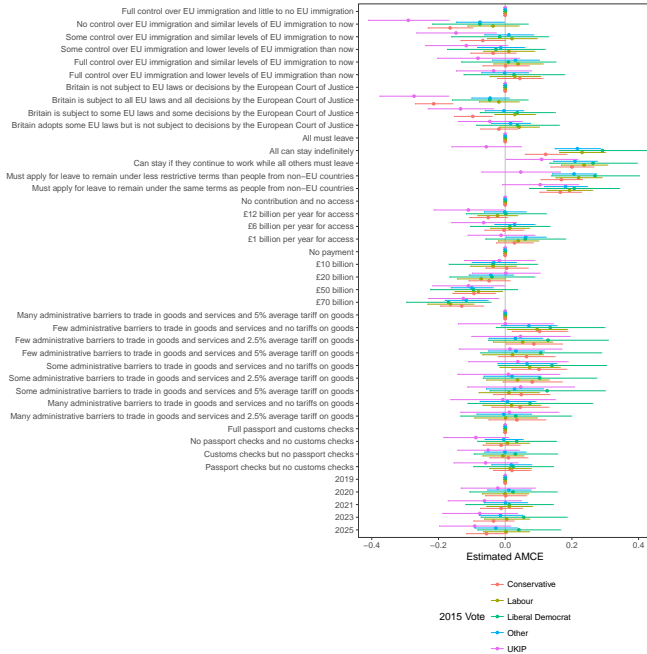










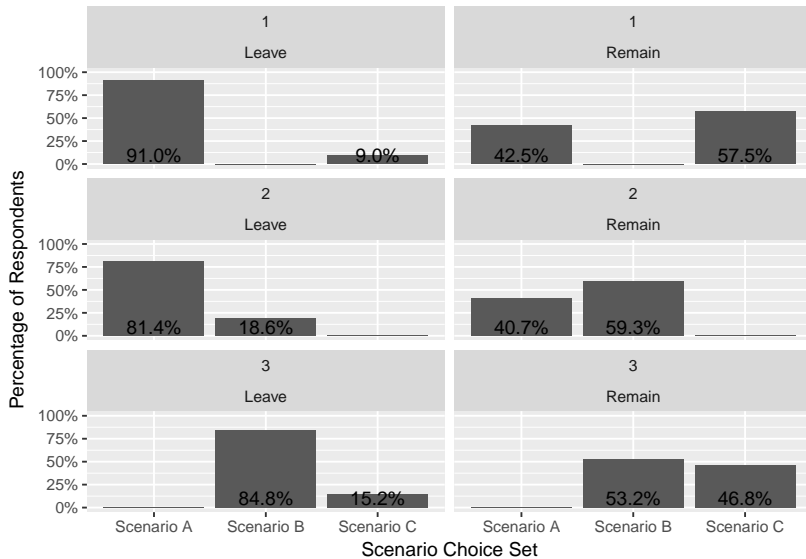




# Boiling it down to a decision

- We also included a “fixed scenario” experiment
- Respondents choose between 2 alternative bundles

	Scenario A (“No deal”)	Scenario B (“Hard” Brexit)	Scenario C (“Soft Brexit ”)
<i>Policy on immigration from the EU</i>	Full control over EU immigration and lower levels of EU immigration than now	Full control over EU immigration and similar levels of EU immigration to now	No control over EU immigration and similar levels of EU immigration to now
<i>Future rights of current EU nationals in Britain and British nationals in the EU</i>	Must apply for ‘leave to remain’ under the same terms as people from non-EU countries	All can stay indefinitely	All can stay indefinitely
<i>Trade agreement with the EU</i>	Some administrative barriers to trade in goods and services and 2.5% average tariff on goods	Some administrative barriers to trade in goods and services and 5% average tariff on goods	Few administrative barriers to trade in goods and services and no tariffs on goods
<i>EU’s legal authority in Britain</i>	Britain is not subject to EU laws or decisions by the European Court of Justice	Britain adopts some EU laws but is not subject to decisions by the European Court of Justice	Britain is subject to all EU laws and all decisions by the European Court of Justice
<i>Britain’s future payments to the EU budget to access science and regional development programmes</i>	No contribution and no access	£1 billion per year for access	£6 billion per year for access
<i>Britain’s one-off payment to the EU to settle outstanding commitments</i>	No payment	£20 billion	£10 billion
<i>Border checks between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland</i>	Full passport and customs checks	Customs checks but no passport checks	No passport checks and no customs checks
<i>When this will come into effect</i>	2019	2023	2021
<i>When choice is between:</i>			
Scenario A and Scenario B	60.3% choose Scenario A	39.7% choose Scenario B	–
Scenario A and Scenario C	66.5% choose Scenario A	–	33.5% choose Scenario C
Scenario B and Scenario C	–	67.9% choose Scenario B	32.1% choose Scenario C

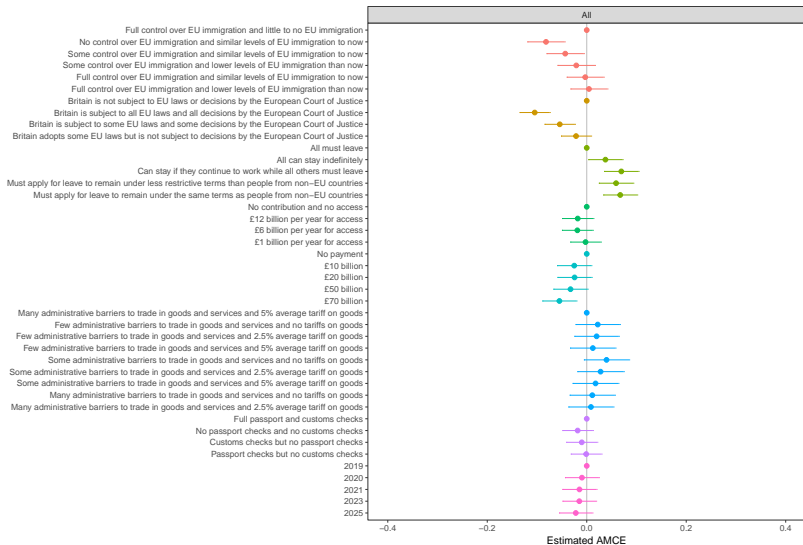


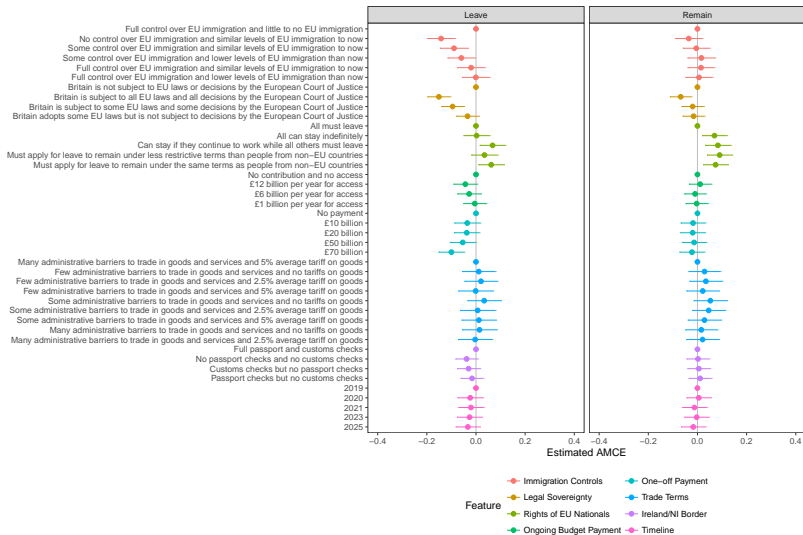


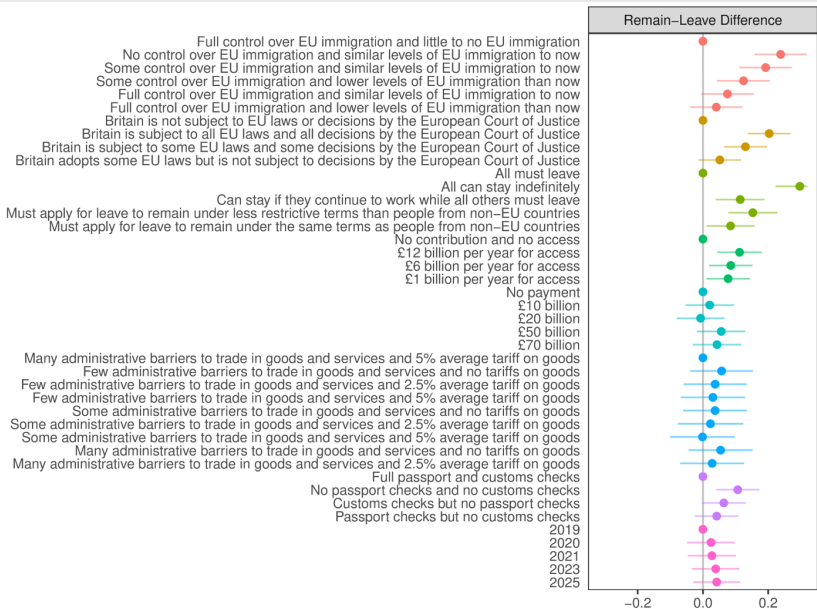


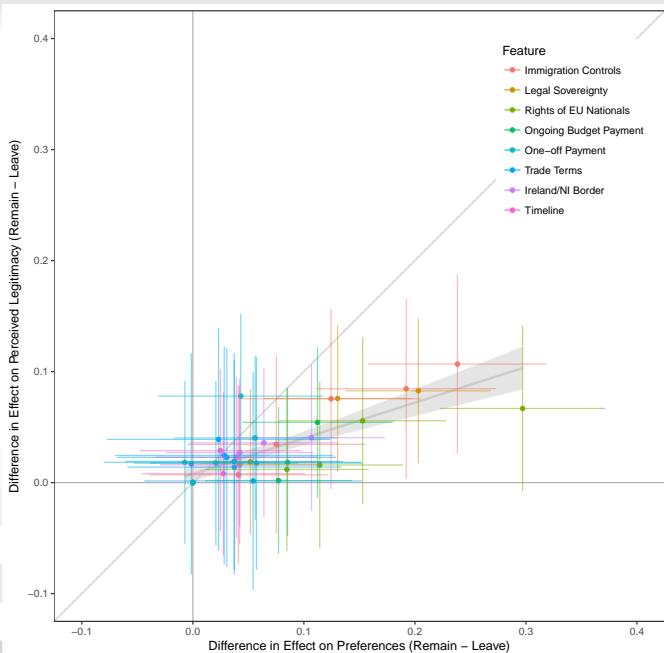
# What respects the referendum?

- Beyond preferences, what does the public think would respect the referendum?
- “Which option(s) do you think would respect the result of the referendum?”
  - Option A would respect the result
  - Option B would respect the result
  - Both would respect the result
  - Neither would respect the result
  - Don't know









# Conjoint Summary

- Key dimensions are:
  - Immigration
  - Citizens' rights
  - Legal sovereignty
  - Budget contributions
- Leave–Remain differences are sometimes large
- Evidence of “losers’ consent”

But wait, there's more!



1 Poll Trends

2 Conjoint Analysis

3 Brexit Identities

# New Identities?

*Since the EU referendum last year, some people now think of themselves as 'Leavers' and 'Remainers', do you think of yourself as...*

- A Leaver
- A Remainer
- Neither

# New Identities?



Source: Hobolt, Leeper, and Tilley (YouGov)

# What Identity Crystallisation Might Mean

# What Identity Crystallisation Might Mean

- The ability to politicise identities

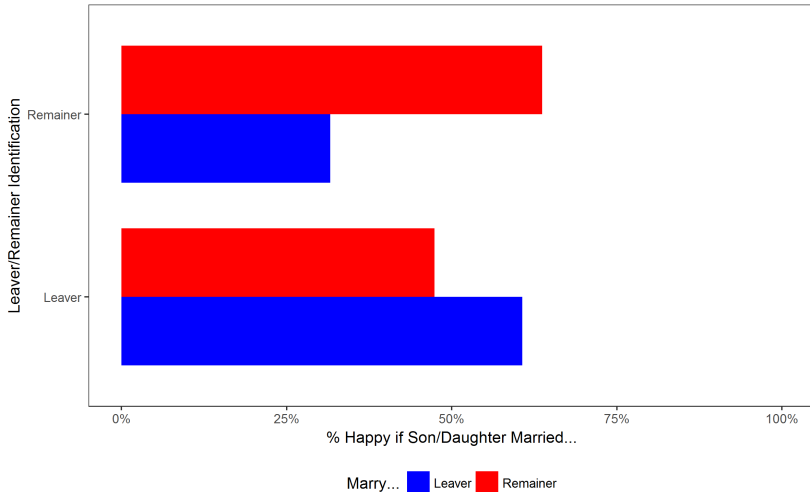
# What Identity Crystallisation Might Mean

- The ability to politicise identities
- Motivated reasoning

# What Identity Crystallisation Might Mean

- The ability to politicise identities
- Motivated reasoning
- Prejudice and animus

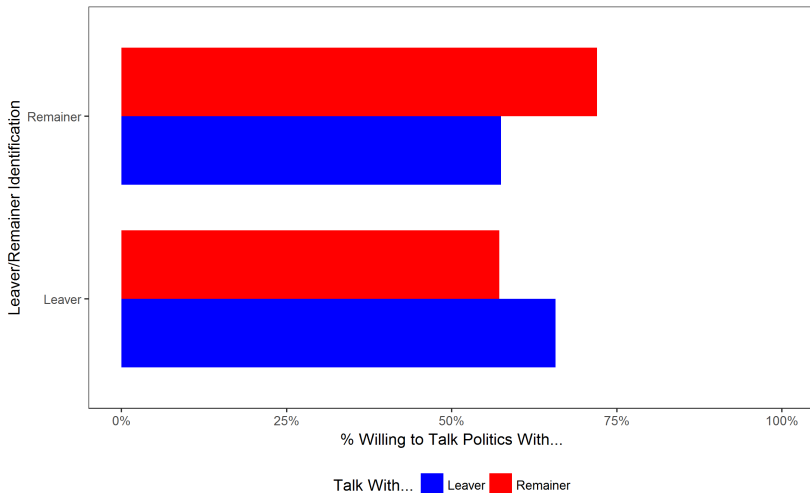
# Out-group animus, already



Source: Hobolt, Leeper, and Tilley (YouGov)

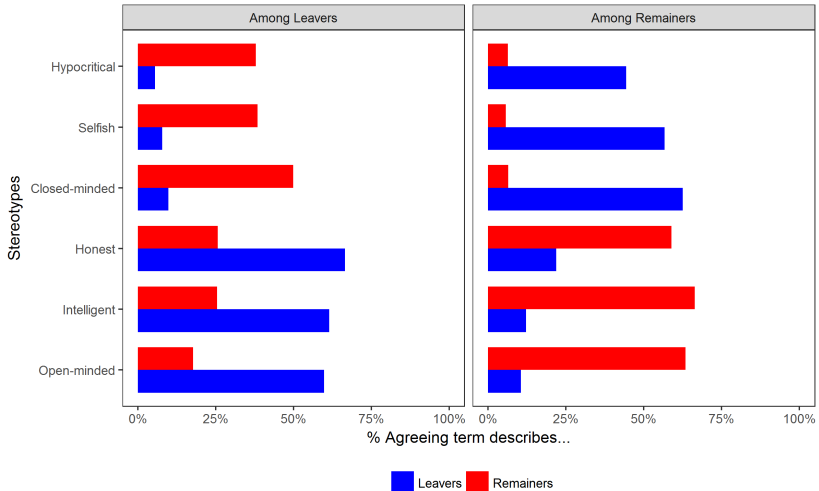


# Out-group animus, already



Source: Hobolt, Leeper, and Tilley (YouGov)

# Out-group animus, already



Source: Hobolt, Leeper, and Tilley (YouGov)



# Conclusions

# Conclusions

- Opinion stability and little regret

# Conclusions

- Opinion stability and little regret
- Only a few key differences in views between Leave and Remain voters
  - But some apparent “losers’ consent” among Remain voters

# Conclusions

- Opinion stability and little regret
- Only a few key differences in views between Leave and Remain voters
  - But some apparent “losers’ consent” among Remain voters
- “Brexit identities” may become defining feature of British politics

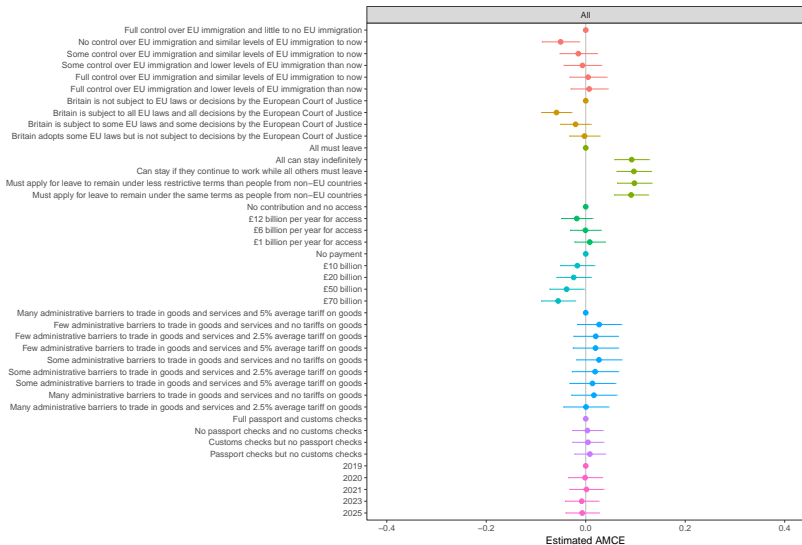
# Conclusions

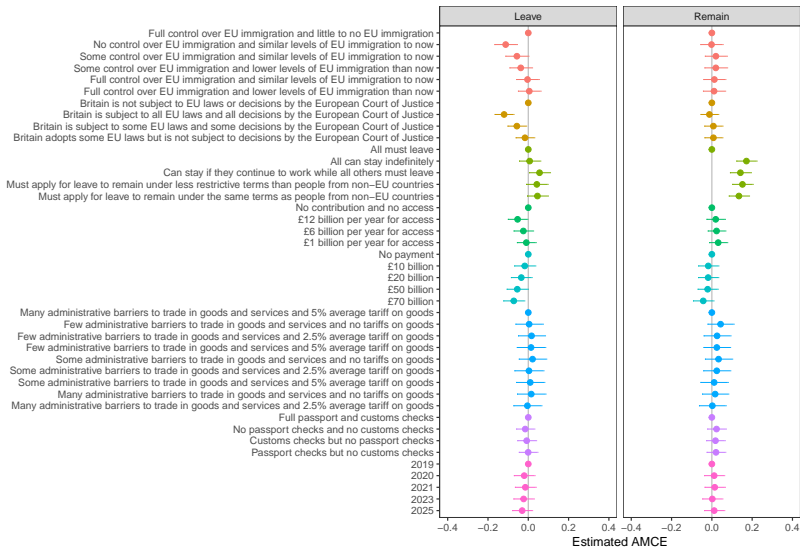
- Opinion stability and little regret
- Only a few key differences in views between Leave and Remain voters
  - But some apparent “losers’ consent” among Remain voters
- “Brexit identities” may become defining feature of British politics
- What does this mean for the government and negotiations?





Support (Q2)





## Mean Support

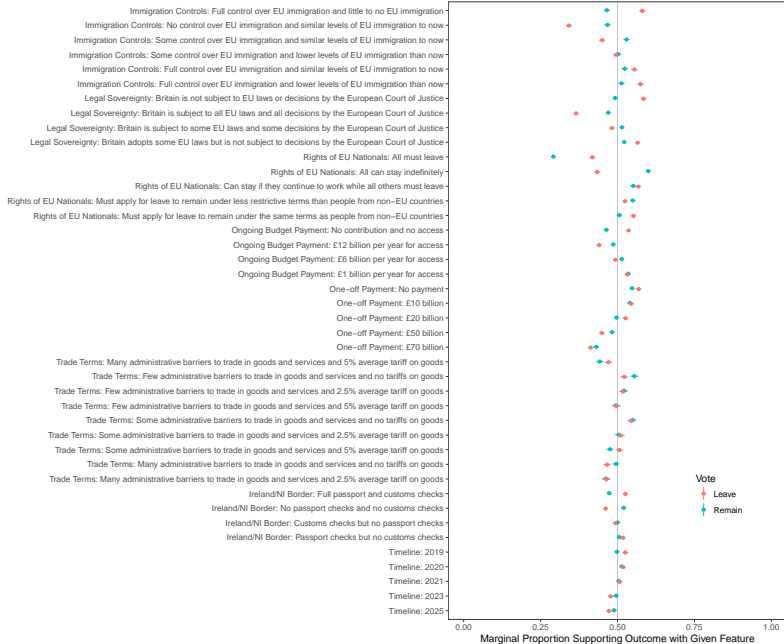


## Mean Support



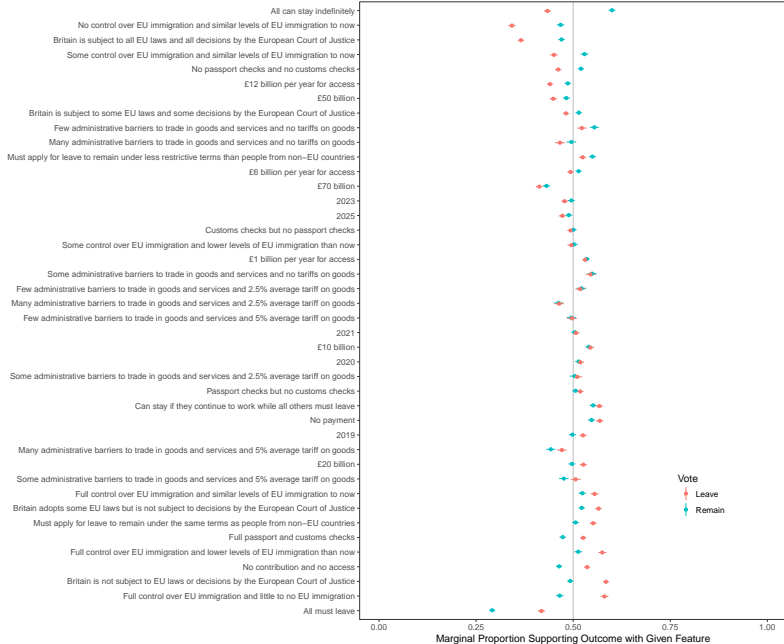
## Marginalised Proportions (Preferences, Q1)

## Preferences





## Preferences



## Marginalised Means (Preferences, Q2)

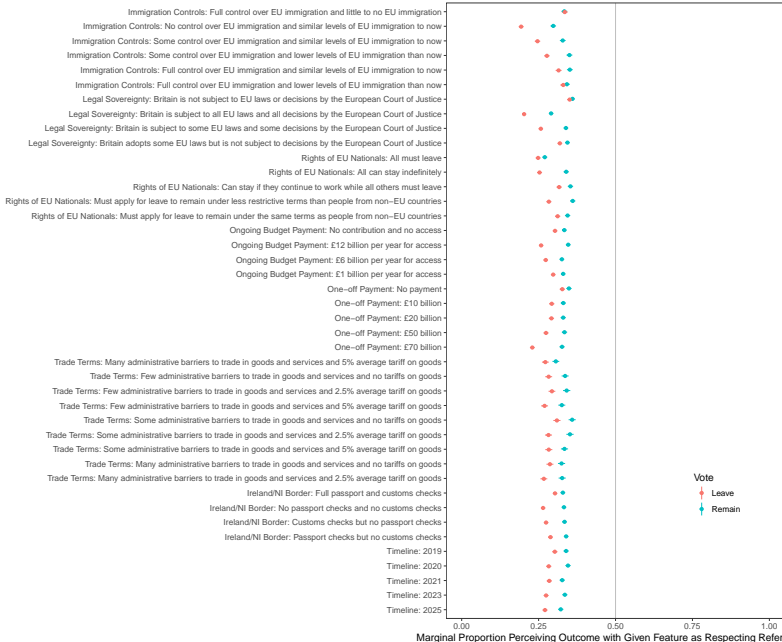


## Mean Support



# Marginalised Proportions (Respect)

## Proportion



## Proportion

