CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-15072-0 — Brexit
Harold D. Clarke , Matthew Goodwin , Paul Whiteley
Frontmatter
More Information

Brexit

In June 2016 the United Kingdom shocked the world by voting to leave the European Union. As this book reveals, the historic vote for a Brexit marked the culmination of trends in domestic politics and in the UK's relationship with the EU that have been building over many years. Drawing on a wealth of survey evidence collected over more than 10 years, this book explains why a majority of people decided to ignore much of the national and international community and vote for Brexit. Drawing on past research on voting in major referendums in Europe and elsewhere, a team of leading academic experts analyse changes in the UK's party system that were catalysts for the referendum vote, including the rise of the UK Independence Party (UKIP), the dynamics of public opinion during an unforgettable and divisive referendum campaign, the factors that influenced how people voted and the likely economic and political impact of this historic decision.

HAROLD D. CLARKE is Ashbel Smith Professor at the University of Texas, Dallas. His recent books include *Austerity and Political Choice in Britain* (2015) and *Affluence, Austerity and Electoral Change in Britain* (Cambridge, 2013).

MATTHEW GOODWIN is Professor of Political Science at the University of Kent and Senior Visiting Fellow at Chatham House, London. He is the author of four books, including *Revolt on the Right: Explaining Public Support for the Radical Right in Britain* (2014), which was awarded the Paddy Power Political Book of the Year 2015. In early 2016 he authored a report that predicted Brexit. Matthew tweets @GoodwinMJ.

PAUL WHITELEY is a Professor of Government at the University of Essex and is currently the director for the Centre for the Study of Integrity at the University of Essex. He is the author of eighteen academic books including studies of electoral behaviour, party members and citizenship in Britain.

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-15072-0 — Brexit
Harold D. Clarke , Matthew Goodwin , Paul Whiteley
Frontmatter
More Information

Brexit

Why Britain Voted to Leave the European Union

HAROLD D. CLARKE
University of Texas, Dallas

MATTHEW GOODWIN
University of Kent, Canterbury

PAUL WHITELEY
University of Essex

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

4843/24, 2nd Floor, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, Delhi – 110002, India

79 Anson Road, #06-04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107150720

DOI: 10.1017/9781316584408

© Harold D. Clarke, Matthew Goodwin and Paul Whiteley 2017

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2017

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ International Ltd. Padstow Cornwall

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-107-15072-0 Hardback
ISBN 978-1-316-60504-2 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-15072-0 — Brexit
Harold D. Clarke , Matthew Goodwin , Paul Whiteley
Frontmatter
More Information

Every week we send £350 million to Brussels. I'd rather that we control how to spend that money, and if I had that control I would spend it on the NHS.

Gisela Stuart, 15 April 2016

Theresa May says it's difficult to control immigration as part of the EU. She's wrong – it is not difficult, it's impossible.

Nigel Farage, 29 April 2016

… maybe some point down the line, there might be a UK–US trade agreement, but it's not going to happen any time soon … the UK is going to be in the back of the queue …

Barack Obama, 22 April 2016

I am absolutely convinced that our economic security will be better if we stay in a reformed European Union and it will be seriously at risk if we were to leave.

David Cameron, 15 May 2016

Napoleon, Hitler, various people tried this [unifying Europe], and it ends tragically. The EU is an attempt to do this by different methods.

Boris Johnson, 15 May 2016

As Chancellor, I would have a responsibility to try to restore stability to the public finances and that would mean an emergency Budget where we would have to increase taxes and cut spending … [Q]uitting the EU would mean less money. Billions less. It's a lose-lose situation for British families and we shouldn't risk it.

George Osborne, 15 June 2016

It's a pretty overwhelming case when you have a huge body of economists [that agree] that it's going to cost [the UK], it's going to be negative for income purposes, it's going to reduce trade most likely as a result of uncertainty and those are blatant facts.

Christine Lagarde, 17 June 2016

We know how bad our government is at defending our borders, and within a few years all of these people [Middle East refugees] will have EU passports. We are much less safe as part of this European Union.

Nigel Farage, 22 June 2016

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-15072-0 — Brexit
Harold D. Clarke , Matthew Goodwin , Paul Whiteley
Frontmatter
More Information

Contents

List of Figures *page* viii
List of Tables xi
Foreword xiii
Acknowledgements xv
A Note About Data xviii

1 Brexit Introduced 1
2 Campaign Prologue 11
3 Into Battle 30
4 Attitudes to Brexit Over Time 61
5 The People's Army 86
6 The Rise of UKIP 111
7 Voting to Leave 146
8 The Consequences of Brexit 175
9 Beyond Brexit 204

Notes 230
References 241
Index 253

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-15072-0 — Brexit
Harold D. Clarke , Matthew Goodwin , Paul Whiteley
Frontmatter
More Information

Figures

2.1 Average Support for Remain and Leave in 174 Polls Conducted between 8 August 2010 and 20 February 2016 *page* 18
2.2 Preferred EU Membership Options, British Social Attitudes Surveys, 2000–2015 20
2.3 Referendum Vote Depending on Outcome of Negotiations to Change UK's Relationship with the EU 21
3.1 Voters' Views of Who Remain and Leave Represent 43
3.2 Trends in the Balance of Public Opinion on the Consequences of Leaving the EU, 28 January–22 June 2016 47
3.3 Trends in Remain and Leave Vote Intentions, 11 January–22 June 2016 56
3.4 Voter Contact by the Remain and Leave Campaigns 58
4.1 Trends in Public Attitudes towards UK Membership of the EU, April 2004–April 2016 65
4.2 Trends in Variables in Valence Politics Model of EU Approval, April 2004–April 2016 75
5.1 UKIP's Local Election Performance, 2009–2015 88
5.2 Socio-Demographic Profile of UKIP Members 92
5.3 Number of Meetings UKIP Members Have Attended in Past Year 96
5.4 Number of Hours Per Week UKIP Members Have Worked for Party during Past Year 96
5.5 Percentages of UKIP Members Doing Various Party Activities 'Occasionally' or 'Frequently' and Percentages Who Have Run for Public Office 97
5.6 UKIP Members' Motives for Political Activity 98
5.7 Left–Right Ideological Self-Placement, UKIP Members and the British Electorate 100
5.8 Opinions about Immigration and the EU, UKIP Members and the British Electorate 100

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-15072-0 — Brexit
Harold D. Clarke , Matthew Goodwin , Paul Whiteley
Frontmatter
More Information

5.9 Populism: UKIP Members and the British Electorate 102
5.10 Attitudes towards Minority Groups, UKIP Members and the British Electorate 103
5.11 Five Most Important Predictors of Three Party Activity Factors 107
6.1 Trends in Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat and UKIP Vote Intentions, April 2004–April 2015 118
6.2 Trends in Balance of Positive and Negative Evaluations of the National Economy and Personal Finances, April 2004–April 2015 120
6.3 Trends in UKIP Vote Intentions and Attitudes towards Immigration, June 2010–April 2015 123
6.4 Trends in UKIP Voting Intentions and Evaluations of the National Health Service, June 2010–April 2015 124
6.5 Relative Deprivation Index and UKIP Support, April 2004–April 2015 125
6.6 Trends in UKIP Vote Shares and Major Party Leaders Image Index, June 2010–April 2015 127
6.7 UKIP Supporters Who Were Former Conservatives, 2010–2015 143
7.1 Percentages Voting Leave in 23 June 2016 UK Referendum on Continued EU Membership 151
7.2 Percentages of Constituencies in Various Areas of Britain Estimated to Have Voted Leave 152
7.3 Leave Voting by Socio-Demographic Characteristics 155
7.4 Perceived Benefits and Costs of Leaving the EU 156
7.5 Perceived Benefits and Costs of Continued EU Membership 157
7.6 Emotional Reactions to UK Membership of the EU 158
7.7 Perceived Risks of Leaving the EU 159
7.8 Impact of Significant Predictors in Referendum Voting Model on Probability of Voting Leave 164
7.9 Explanatory Power of Rival Models of Voting in the EU Referendum 165
7.10 How Feelings about Boris Johnson Affected Probability of Voting Leave 172
8.1 Trends in Real GDP in Britain, 1950–2014 183
8.2 Differences in Growth Rate after Joining the European Union, 28 EU Countries 189

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-15072-0 — Brexit
Harold D. Clarke , Matthew Goodwin , Paul Whiteley
Frontmatter
More Information

8.3 Trends in Migration to and from the UK Involving All Countries, 1991–2015 192
8.4 Trends in Migration to and from the UK and the EU, 1991–2015 192
8.5 Trends in Good Governance Indicators for the UK, 1996–2015 198
8.6 Trends in Good Governance Indicators for 28 EU Countries, 1996–2015 199
9.1 Results of 1 Million Simulated EU Referendums 211
9.2 Right or Wrong Decision to Leave the EU, August 2016–January 2017 212
9.3 Words Used to Describe the Remain and Leave Campaigns 214
9.4 Scores on Scale of More or Less EU Integration, 17 Countries, 2004 and 2014 218
9.5 Change in Public Attitudes towards Further EU Integration between 2004 and 2014, 17 Countries 219
9.6 Percentages Willing to Accept Few or No Immigrants by Ethnicity, 18 Countries, 2014 224
9.7 Percentages Willing to Accept Few or No Poor Immigrants from Inside and Outside Europe, 17 Countries, 2014 225

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-15072-0 — Brexit
Harold D. Clarke , Matthew Goodwin , Paul Whiteley
Frontmatter
More Information

Tables

3.1 Public Perceptions of the Leave and Remain Campaigns *page* 42
4.1 Dickey–Fuller Stationarity Tests of Variables in EU Approval Model, April 2004–April 2016 76
4.2 Tests for Lag Lengths in VEC Model of EU Approval, April 2004–April 2016 76
4.3 Johansen Cointegration Tests for Variables in Model of EU Approval 77
4.4 VEC Model of Net Approval of EU Membership, April 2004–April 2016 78
4.5 Granger Causality Tests: Net Approval of EU Membership and Valence Politics Variables 79
4.6 Multilevel Ordinal Logit Model of Attitudes towards EU Membership 83
5.1 Predictors of Extent of Involvement in UKIP 106
6.1 Models of the Dynamics of UKIP Vote Intentions, April 2004–April 2015 129
6.2 Multilevel Logistic Regression Models of UKIP Vote Intentions 134
6.3 Cross-Level Interactions in Multilevel Models of UKIP Vote Intentions 137
6.4 Individual-Level Logistic Regression Models of Voting for UKIP in the 2014 European Parliament Elections and 2015 General Election 139
7.1 OLS Regression Analysis of Factors Affecting Constituency-Level Leave Voting in Great Britain 153
7.2 Binomial Logit Analysis of Factors Affecting Voting to Leave the EU 162
7.3 OLS Regression Analyses of Predictors of Perceived Benefits and Costs of Leaving the EU 167

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-15072-0 — Brexit
Harold D. Clarke , Matthew Goodwin , Paul Whiteley
Frontmatter
More Information

7.4 OLS Regression Analysis of Predictors of Perceived Risks of Leaving the EU 169
8.1 Determinants of Growth in Real GDP in Britain, 1950–2014 185
8.2 ARIMA Models of Net Migration to the UK from Inside and Outside the EU 194
8.3 Over-Time Trend Correlations: Governance Indicators for the UK and the EU, 1996–2015 198
8.4 Difference of Means Tests of the Governance Indicators in 10 EU Accession Countries, Before and After 2004 200
9.1 OLS Regression Analysis of Support for European Integration, UK and 18 EU Countries, 2014 221

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-15072-0 — Brexit
Harold D. Clarke , Matthew Goodwin , Paul Whiteley
Frontmatter
More Information

Foreword

Brexit changed everything. Or at least so it seemed. For many amongst what have come to be known as the 'liberal metropolitan elite', it overturned several decades of thinking about what Britain is and where it is headed. 'What have we become?' became a common refrain around middle-class dinner tables.

Obviously, and as ever, reality is slightly more complicated. Britain's decision to leave the European Union revealed as much about how its society had been changing for many years as it did about the impact of the short and bitter referendum campaign itself.

Yet there can be little doubt that the decision that was taken will have profound consequences for the future of the country. Obviously, the nature of its relationship with the European Union will change. As important, however, will be the impact of the decision on our politics.

Already, we see the way in which the Scottish National Party is using Brexit to further its own political and independence-related agendas. There is lingering uncertainty about the future of the UK Independence Party now its central aim has been achieved, and still more over where its voters might go should they decide to withdraw their support. Prime Minister Theresa May clearly has half an eye on these people as she renews her pledge to reduce immigration and bring the country out from under the jurisdiction of the EU's Court. Meanwhile, the Labour Party, largely ineffective within parliament as Her Majesty's Opposition, confronts the danger of haemorrhaging votes at the next election as its leader's popularity rating shows no sign of improving.

In order to understand the way in which politics might develop at this unique moment in our history, it is crucial to have a firm understanding of what has happened to date. And here it is important to understand the importance of careful, detailed, empirically based analysis.

The failure of pollsters accurately to predict not only the Brexit outcome, but also the election of Donald Trump and, 18 months earlier, of a majority Conservative Government in the UK have led many people

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE
Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-15072-0 — Brexit
Harold D. Clarke , Matthew Goodwin , Paul Whiteley
Frontmatter
More Information

to conclude that an accurate understanding of contemporary politics is impossible. Yet this is to confuse prediction with explanation. The former has never been simple, and depends, in part, on the ability of pollsters to predict who will vote at all. In contrast, whilst failing to anticipate the outcomes, analysts have proven extremely good at identifying the kinds of choices that people are liable to make.

This book provides an excellent example of the way in which good, clear, methodologically rigorous analysis can further our understanding both of what has happened, and what the implications of these events might be. Following the vote in June, we all knew our country was profoundly divided, but the nature of the divisions and their potential to fundamentally reshape our politics are made abundantly clear in what follows.

Moreover, what the authors have achieved here is to present their findings in a clear and accessible way. Too much academic research is simply impenetrable to non-specialists, meaning that their insights into the social world remain largely undiscovered.

Brexit is too important for that. What follows is of relevance not only to academics but to all those – politicians, journalists, civil servants and 'the public' – who want to understand what has happened and where our politics might be going. I can't think of a better compliment than that.

Anand Menon
Director
The UK in a Changing Europe Initiative
Oxford

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-15072-0 — Brexit
Harold D. Clarke , Matthew Goodwin , Paul Whiteley
Frontmatter
More Information

Acknowledgements

Brexit: Why Britain Voted to Leave the European Union relies heavily on survey data gathered in two projects. The first are monthly surveys with representative national samples of the British electorate conducted over the period April 2004 to June 2016. These 'Essex Continuous Monitoring Surveys' (ECMS) have generated a wealth of data on the dynamics of the political attitudes and behaviour of the British electorate during a 12-year period when the country was experiencing large-scale economic and social change and major political upheaval. In the latter category, Britain's long-lived political party system was encountering serious stress from several sources, one of the most important of which was the rise of the right-wing populist United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). After the 2010 general election, UKIP support increased dramatically, setting in motion a series of events that culminated in the United Kingdom's historic decision in the 23 June 2016 referendum to leave the European Union. The ECMS data provide us with a detailed record of the opinions, beliefs and behaviour of the British electorate as these highly consequential political dynamics unfolded.

The second data set we employ in *Brexit* is the product of a chance encounter between two of the authors, Clarke and Whiteley, and the third, Goodwin, at the September 2014 Elections, Public Opinion and Parties annual conference in Edinburgh. Seated at the same table at the conference banquet, as wine was poured (and consumed!), we talked about the rise of UKIP and the work that we had been doing on the party, as well as earlier studies of party activists in the UK, Canada and the United States that Clarke and Whiteley had undertaken. But UKIP was definitely the focus of attention. All three of us had been using mass survey data to study factors affecting the growing electoral support that UKIP was enjoying. In addition, for his recent book, *Revolt on the Right* (co-authored with Rob Ford), Goodwin had done

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE
Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-15072-0 — Brexit
Harold D. Clarke , Matthew Goodwin , Paul Whiteley
Frontmatter
More Information

in-depth interviews with UKIP's leadership and fieldwork observing the party's local organizations and campaign activities.

As the conversation progressed (and more wine was consumed), we agreed that it would be valuable to conduct a large-scale survey of people who had become members of UKIP, using questions that would permit comparisons with data on public attitudes gathered in the ECMS. UKIP generously agreed to permit us to do the member survey, provided us with contact information and, in November 2014, we were in the field. The data gathered via our UKIP party member survey help us to understand the sources of UKIP support and key factors motivating voters to choose the Brexit option in the EU referendum. The analyses in the chapters that follow employ both the ECMS and the UKIP members study data to help us understand the party's rise and its impact on the referendum decision.

We are pleased to have this opportunity to thank those individuals and organizations that made the *Brexit* project possible. First, we thank Anand Menon, Director of The UK in a Changing Europe Initiative, for his interest in our proposal to do the pre- and post-referendum surveys. These surveys are essential for the success of the project and they would not have been possible without generous support from the Initiative. Additional funding for the referendum surveys was provided by the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) and the University of Essex. At the University of Essex, we particularly wish to thank Lawrence Ezrow, Chair of the Department of Government, for his interest and support. At UTD, we are pleased to acknowledge the encouragement of Vice President Hobson Wildenthal, Dean Denis Dean and Political Science Program Head, Jennifer Holmes.

We also are pleased to acknowledge the Economics and Social Research Council (ESRC) for its generous financial support for the 2005 and 2010 British Election Studies (BES). The monthly ECMS data collections were funded for several years by grant monies from the 2005 and 2010 BES. Major funding for the ECMS also was provided by a grant from the US National Science Foundation (NSF). We especially appreciate the interest in our work shown by NSF Political Science Program Officers, Frank Scioli, Jim Granato and Brian Humes. We also acknowledge ongoing financial support provided by UTD. In addition to assisting with the ECMS surveys, UTD supports the Qualtrics survey platform used for the UKIP members survey.

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-15072-0 — Brexit
Harold D. Clarke , Matthew Goodwin , Paul Whiteley
Frontmatter
More Information

There are also a large number of people who helped us to develop our knowledge about how to study the important choices that people make in elections, parties, referendums and other democratic political settings. In particular, we wish to thank Robert Ford, Jeff Gill, Ron Johnston, Peter Kellner, Allan Kornberg, Matt Lebo, Larry LeDuc, Mike Lewis-Beck, Helmut Norpoth, Jon Pammett, Jason Reifler, David Sanders, Tom Scotto, Pat Seyd, Randy Stevenson, Marianne Stewart, Guy Whitten and Stan Wong. Also, like many other social scientists, we owe a special debt of gratitude to our colleague and dear friend, the late Allan McCutcheon, who developed valuable tools for studying the dynamics of public attitudes and behaviour and then generously taught us how to use them.

There are also people who assisted us with administrative and technical aspects of the project. At UTD, Cheryl Berry, Political Science Program Assistant, cheerfully kept the paperwork moving smoothly and efficiently, while Karl Ho and Russell Hoffman provided the computing expertise needed to build the *Brexit* website. A very special shout-out is due to Karl for the many hours he spent developing the web survey of UKIP party members. His services are greatly appreciated.

In addition, we are pleased to thank UKIP for permitting us to conduct a rigorous, non-partisan survey of the party's members. In particular, we thank Matthew Richardson, Damian Wilson and Steve Crowther for helping us to field the web and mailback versions of the survey and Nigel Farage for endorsing the project with the membership. Their willingness to assist us made the study possible and we appreciate their co-operation.

Last, but most certainly not least, we are very pleased to acknowledge the assistance of Joe Twyman, Head of Political and Social Research, YouGov, plc. All of the ECMS surveys since April 2004 were conducted by YouGov under Joe's careful supervision. His assistance has been generous, unflagging and invaluable and he is an excellent colleague and great friend. Thanks so much, Joe!

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-15072-0 — Brexit
Harold D. Clarke , Matthew Goodwin , Paul Whiteley
Frontmatter
More Information

A Note About Data

In this book we draw on a wealth of quantitative survey data to examine public attitudes and the vote for Brexit. Not every reader will be familiar with this kind of data analysis. For this reason, we advise those readers who are unfamiliar with quantitative methods to focus their attention on the text that surrounds the tables and on our write-up of the results, which we have tried to make as accessible as possible.

For those who would like further information about the data that underpins this book – including a description of the variables used in the multivariate analyses, questionnaires, data and a data dictionary for the pre- and post-waves of our EU referendum survey – please visit the following website and click on 'Brexit': www.utdallas.edu/epps/hclarke/. The questionnaires, data and the data dictionary will also be posted on the Harvard Dataverse Archive.

Readers can find further information relating to the book at: www.cambridge.org/gb/academic/subjects/politics-international-relations/british-government-politics-and-policy/brexit-why-britain-voted-leave-european-union?format=PB.

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org