

What **UK**
Thinks **EU**

DISUNITED KINGDOM? ATTITUDES TO THE EU ACROSS THE UK

Rachel Ormston
Head of Social Attitudes at NatCen Social Research

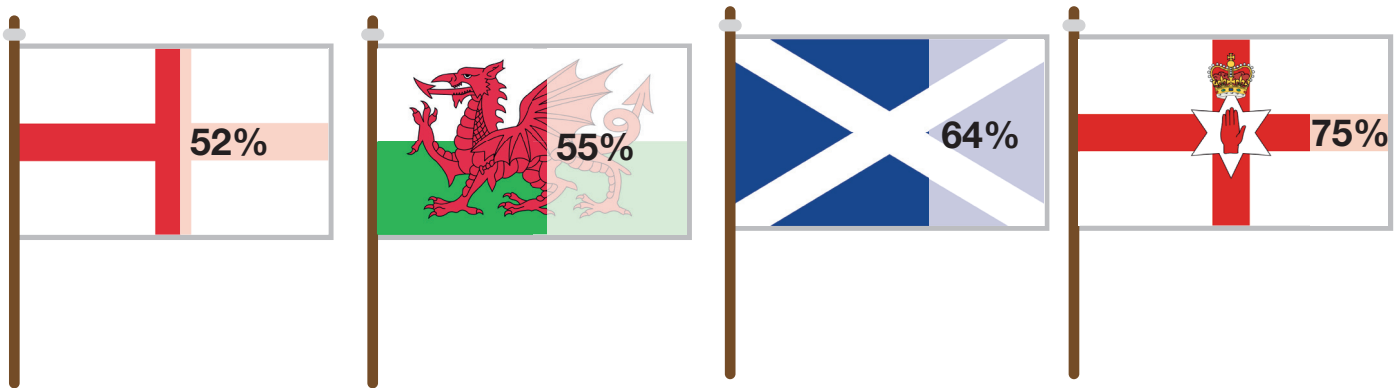
Disunited kingdom?

Attitudes to the EU across the UK

This paper examines the nature and scale of differences in support for the European Union across the four constituent countries of the UK. It assesses how far apart opinion in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland appears to be. It reviews the current state of the polls in each country and what this suggests about whose views might determine the outcome of the referendum. Finally, it examines potential reasons for the variation between England, Scotland and Wales in the level of support for EU membership, including differences in demographic profile, party structure and national identity.

FAR FROM UNITED ON EUROPE

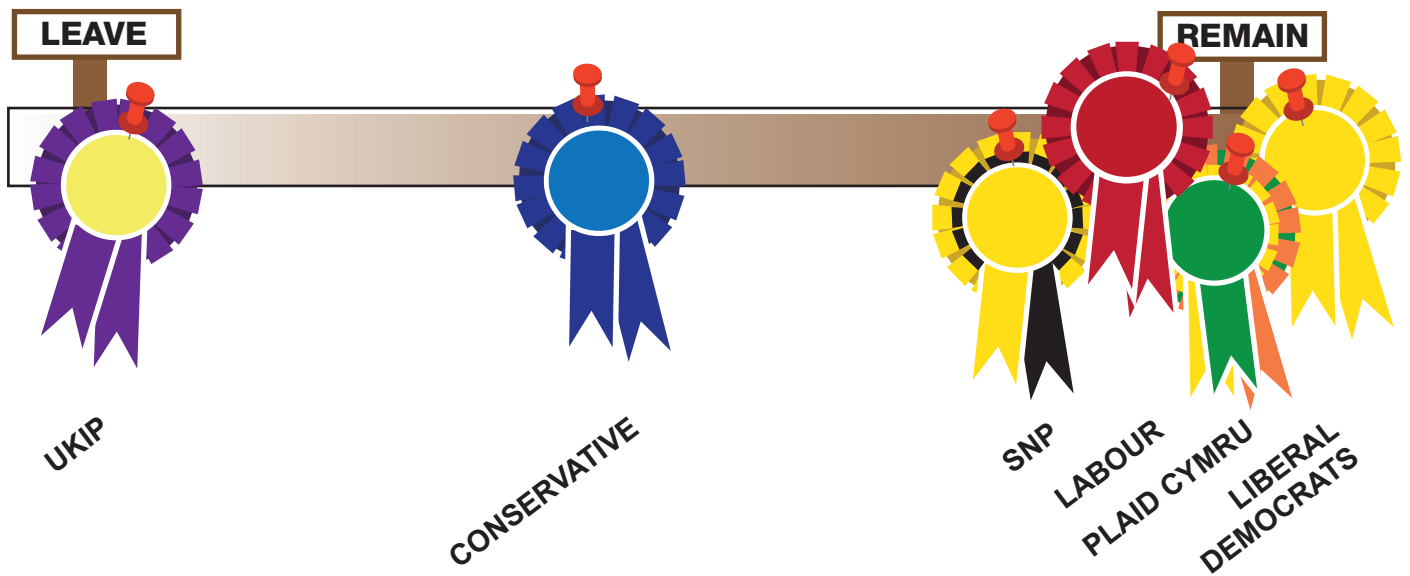
Although recent poll and survey data suggests a slight majority favour remaining in the EU, the size of this majority is much narrower in England than in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.



Figures based on mean of recent polls

PARTY POLITICS AND PUBLIC OPINION

England's relatively anti-EU mood reflects the relatively high level of support for (anti-EU) UKIP and (partly Eurosceptic) Conservatives.



AN ENGLISH REFERENDUM?

Within England, people who feel particularly strongly English are the most likely to want Britain to leave the EU.



INTRODUCTION

From the perspective of 2015, constant constitutional wrangling seems to have become the norm in the UK. The forthcoming referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union – due to take place by the end of 2017 – will be the latest in a series of constitutional flashpoints, following hot on the heels of the 2014 referendum on Scottish independence, moves to devolve further powers to both Scotland and Wales, and arguments around 'English Votes for English Laws' at Westminster. And apparent divergence in how the constituent countries of the UK intend to vote in the EU referendum has become a key issue in ongoing debate about the future of the UK itself. Nicola Sturgeon, the leader of the Scottish National Party, has said that if Scotland were taken out of the European Union against its "democratically expressed wishes" as a result of a majority vote to leave in England, a second referendum on Scottish independence would be "probably unstoppable" (BBC, 16 October 2015). In Wales, Leanne Wood, the leader of Plaid Cymru has warned of a "constitutional crisis" if voters in England swing the EU vote in favour of leaving, echoing SNP calls for a veto if a majority of voters in any of the four nations of the UK vote to remain (The Independent, 23 October 2016). Meanwhile, the Irish Prime Minister has recently suggested that the Northern Irish peace deal might be undermined if the UK leaves the EU (Telegraph, 9 November 2015).

This paper examines the accuracy of claims that views on the EU differ across the United Kingdom. It uses data from both long-running surveys, including NatCen's British and Scottish Social Attitudes surveys and the British Election Studies, and from more recent opinion polls to assess the degree of difference across the UK in public opinion on the EU. It considers potential reasons for these differences, and what this might mean for whether or not we can expect further divergence or convergence of public opinion in the UK as the referendum campaigns gather momentum.

¹ By comparing the views of BSA respondents resident in England with those of SSA respondents, all of whom live in Scotland.

HOW FAR APART ARE ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND ON THE EU?

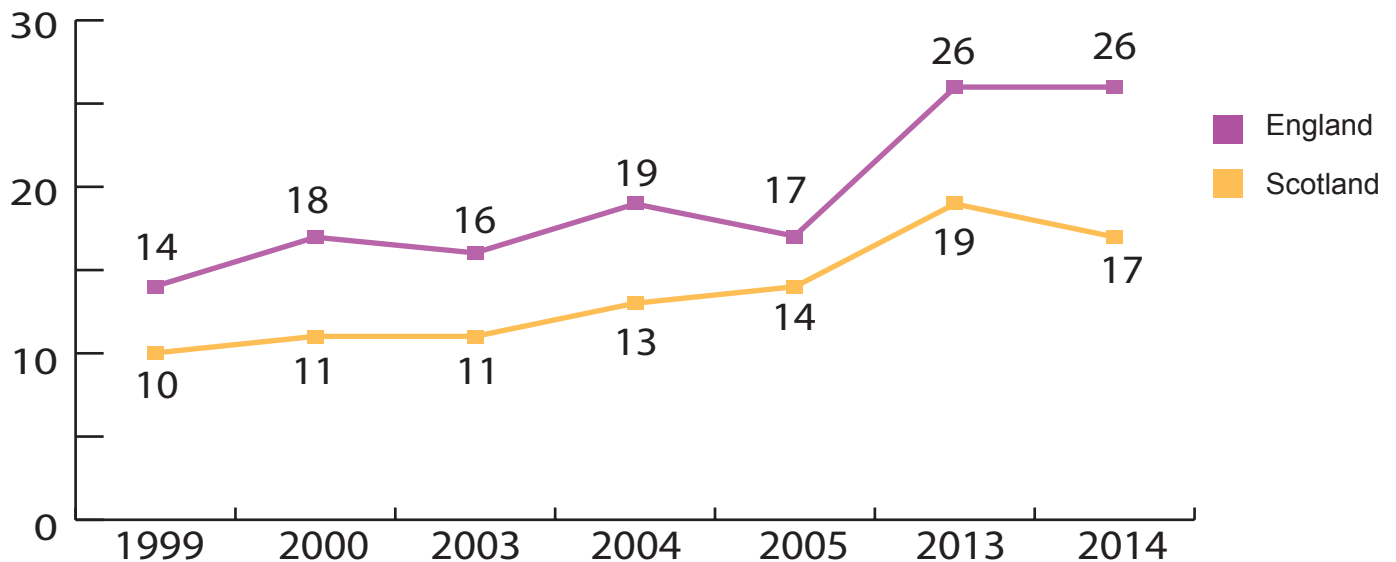
The idea that England may be rather keener than Scotland on leaving the EU has become accepted wisdom, reinforced by differences in the enthusiasm of their respective political leaders for the European Union project. Prime Minister David Cameron has stated that he wants Britain to remain in the EU, but has made clear that his support is contingent on securing reform – including allowing Britain to restrict benefits for migrants and exempting Britain from provisions for ‘ever greater union’ with the rest of Europe. In contrast, Scotland’s First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has made clear that she views membership of the EU as vital to Scotland’s future prosperity, although she also believes there is a need for reform in some areas.

NatCen has repeatedly asked about views on the European Union on its British and Scottish Social Attitudes surveys (BSA and SSA). Based on similar cross-sectional probability samples and often including identical questions, BSA and SSA provide a robust means of comparing views in England and Scotland over time.¹ Each survey has, on a number of occasions since 1999, asked people their views on Britain’s relationship with the EU using the following question:

Do you think Britain’s long-term policy should be ...
... to leave the European Union,
to stay in the EU and try to reduce the EU’s powers,
to leave things as they are,
to stay in the EU and try to increase the EU’s powers,
or, to work for the formation of a single European government?

The findings (summarised in Figure 1 and shown in full in Table A1 in the Appendix) confirm that Scotland is indeed less keen than England on leaving the EU. In 2014, 26% of people in England compared with 17% in Scotland said Britain’s long-term policy should be to leave the EU. This gap has existed for at least 15 years – in each year in which the question has been asked on both surveys, more people in England than in Scotland said they thought Britain should leave. At the same time, the size of the gap between England and Scotland in support for leaving the EU does, at 9 percentage points, appear to be slightly larger in 2014 than in earlier years.

Figure 1 – % who think Britain should leave the EU, Scotland and England, 1999-2014 (selected years)



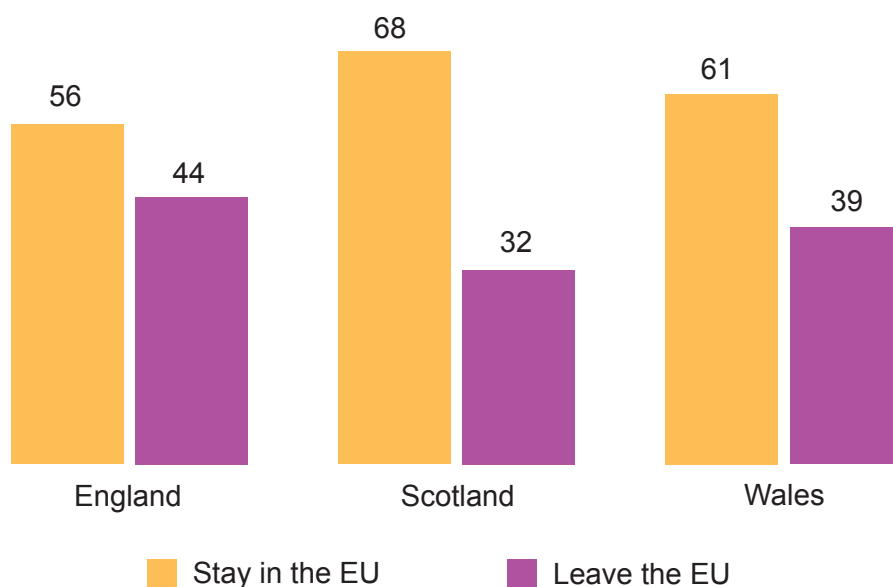
Source: England = British Social Attitudes, Scotland = Scottish Social Attitudes. Bases: See Appendix, Table A1

The BSA sample in Wales is too small (typically fewer than 200) to allow for robust estimates of the views of the population there. However, the 2015 British Election Study included a very large online panel study, with a ‘core sample’ of around 20,000 people and boosts in Scotland and Wales to allow the views of respondents in those countries to be examined separately. Although the BES team have highlighted that surveys based on non-probability internet panels remain less likely to produce a representative sample than surveys like British and Scottish Social Attitudes which use probability samples (British Election Study Team, 2015), its sheer size makes it one of the only datasets suited to comparing all three of England, Scotland and Wales with each other. Respondents to the post-election wave of BES (Wave 6, interviewed between 8th May 2015 and 26th May 2015) were asked:

If there was a referendum on Britain’s membership of the European Union, how do you think you would vote?

The findings suggest there may be even bigger differences in how Scotland and England vote in the EU referendum than indicated by the long-running BSA and SSA question – 58% of people in Scotland say they would vote to stay in the EU, compared with just 45% in England, a difference of 13 percentage points (Appendix, Table A2) . Wales appears to fall between the two – 50% say they would vote to stay in the EU. Removing those who say they do not intend to vote or do not know how they will vote from analysis (standard practice in estimating vote share) indicates that while a majority (56%) in England said they would vote to stay in the EU, Scotland and Wales would vote to remain by a much larger margin (68% and 61% respectively –Figure 2).

Figure 2 – EU referendum vote by country (‘don’t knows’ and ‘would not vote’ excluded), May 2015



Source: British Election Study Panel Wave 6.

Unweighted sample sizes: England = 11,942; Scotland = 3,054; Wales = 1,544

The British Election Study Panel data were collected before the final wording to be used in the referendum on Britain's membership of the EU was agreed. This was finally settled in early September 2015, following advice from the Electoral Commission. Voters will be asked 'Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?'. Many polling companies have only recently adjusted the wording of their standard question on this issue, either asking the question directly,² or asking how they would vote in a future referendum where they were asked this question.³ Consequently, only a handful of polls to date have asked voters in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland how they would vote in the referendum using the agreed wording or something very close to it.

Figures for England only, taken from the six most recent UK-wide polls at the time of writing (mid-November 2015) give the narrowest of leads for the 'Remain' campaign. Opinion (after those who have yet to make up their mind are removed) is split 52% for remaining vs 48% for leaving – a lead of just 4 points for those wishing to stay in the EU (Figure 3 and Appendix Table A3). By way of comparison, it is worth noting that our rolling average 'poll of polls' in advance of the Scottish independence referendum only narrowed to this extent around a month out from the referendum itself – until late August 2014 the polls were suggesting a much clearer lead for the 'No' campaign (see <http://whatscotlandthinks.org/> for details). As such, the current closeness of the polls on the EU must surely be unsettling for those wishing to remain and encouraging for those wishing to persuade people to leave.

Given that England accounts for 84% of the population, unsurprisingly the average Remain/Leave figures for England are very similar to the current averages for Britain as a whole (see <http://whatukthinks.org/eu/opinion-polls/poll-of-polls/>) – highlighting the extent to which the eventual outcome is likely to be influenced by the decisions of voters in England.

All recent Welsh polling on this issue has been conducted online by YouGov. The results are broadly in line with the BES figures above (unsurprisingly perhaps, since the BES panel study was also based on YouGov's online panel): they suggest that public opinion in Wales is just a little more pro-EU than that in England. Three polls since May 2015 put Welsh support for remaining in the EU at 55% on average, with 45% supporting a 'Brexit' (though note that only the most recent of these asked the exact question that will appear on the ballot paper – see Figure 3 and Appendix Table A4).

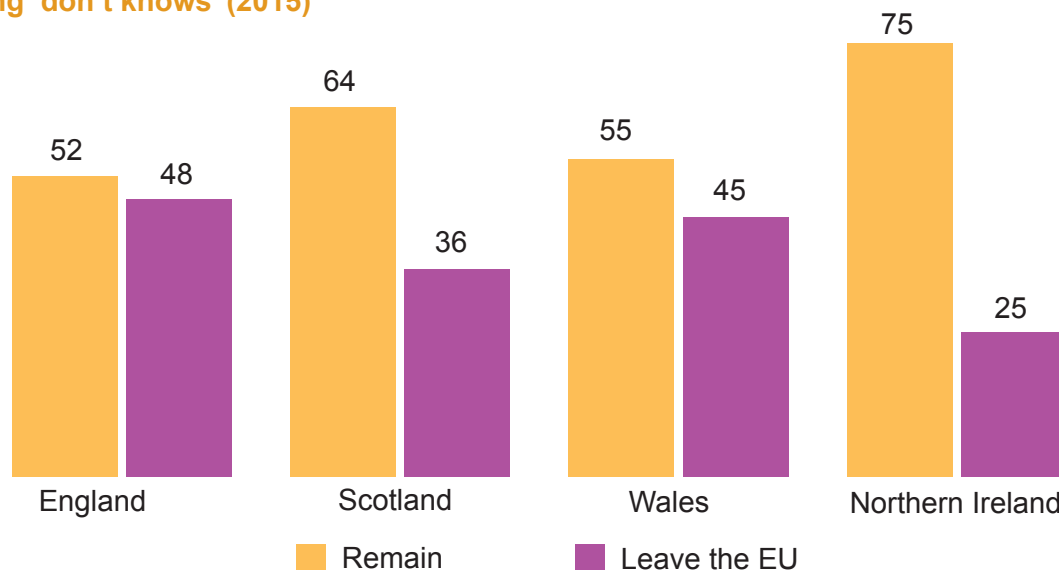
In contrast, polling data for Scotland lends further weight to the evidence above that people in Scotland may indeed be considerably less likely to vote to leave the EU. The four online polls conducted in Scotland to date using the actual referendum question wording have put support for remaining in the EU at between 62% and 66% after those who have not decided are removed (Appendix Table A5). On average, these polls suggest that Scotland is currently split around 64%/36% Remain/Leave – giving the campaign to Remain a potential lead at least 10 percentage points higher in Scotland than in England (Figure 3).

²'Should the UK remain a member of the EU or leave the EU?'

³'If a referendum were held tomorrow on the UK's membership of the European Union (EU), how would you vote on the following question? "Should the UK remain a member of the European Union, or leave the European Union?"'

A handful of recent polls have asked people in Northern Ireland whether they think Britain should remain in or leave the EU. The methodological details provided with some of these are somewhat incomplete⁴ and they did not all ask the exact referendum question⁵, so some caution should be exercised in interpreting the findings. However, if accurate they indicate that support for remaining in the EU may be even higher in Northern Ireland than it is in Scotland – a mean of 75% across three recent polls (Figure 3, Appendix Table A6)

Figure 3 – Mean EU referendum voting intentions by country, based on recent polls, excluding ‘don’t knows’ (2015)



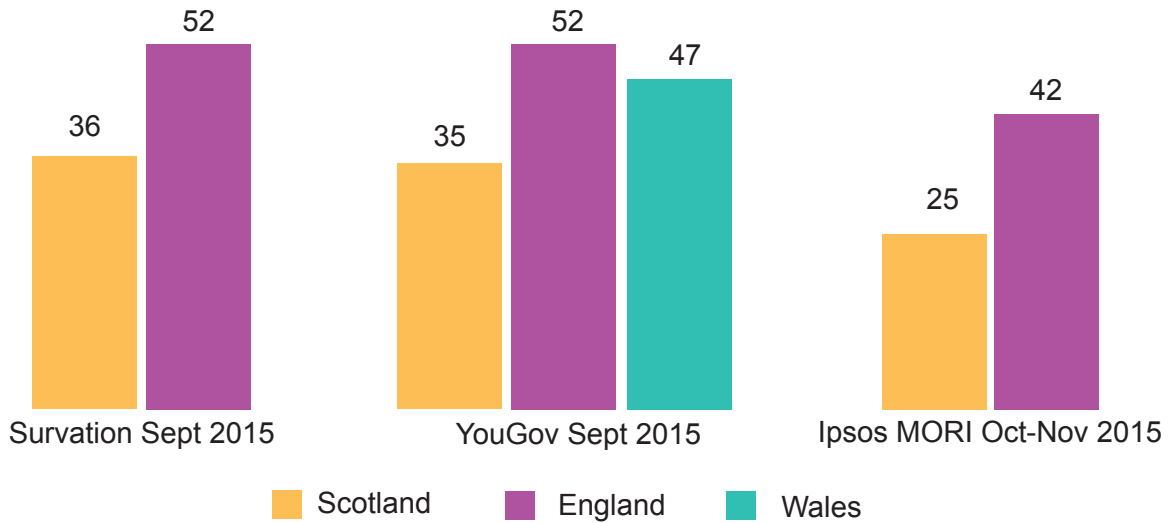
Sources: See Appendix, Tables A3 to A6. England figures based on 6 recent online polls; Scotland based on 4 online polls; Wales based on 3 online polls; Northern Ireland based on 2 face-to-face and one online poll.

A potential criticism of comparing country-averages across recent polls is that this is not comparing like with like. Differences in the polling companies operating in the four countries of the UK and in their methodologies for selecting and weighting respondents might either exaggerate or understate the degree of difference between countries. To rule out this possibility, Figure 4 shows findings from three equivalent English and Scottish (and in one case Welsh) polls conducted by the same polling companies at very similar points in time. The overall figures do vary by polling company – in particular, Ipsos MORI, who conducted the only recent phone polling in England and Scotland on this issue, find rather lower levels of support for leaving the EU. However, the gap between England and Scotland in the level of support for leaving is almost identical (between 12 and 17 percentage points) for each company, while the gap between England and Wales (5 percentage points) is not dissimilar to that found above.

⁴ The organisations involved are often based in the Republic of Ireland and therefore not signed up to British Polling Council rules on methodological transparency and data publication.

⁵ For example, Millward Brown for Danske Bank asked “With regard to European Membership would you like to see NI ... Build even greater connections with Europe; Continue with the current EU terms and conditions; Reduce the European relationship through the UK’s re-negotiations on the terms of membership; Exit the EU”

Figure 4 – % that would vote to leave the EU by country, date and polling company (excluding ‘Don’t knows’)



Sources: See Appendix, Tables A7.

So while at present the ‘Remain’ side enjoys a lead across all four UK nations, all the evidence currently available suggests that a relatively small swing in England towards voting to leave could easily deliver an outcome with which a majority in Scotland and Northern Ireland apparently disagree. At the same time, were Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to vote as the polls currently predict, collectively they could overturn a narrow majority in England in favour of leaving the EU.

If we assume for the purposes of modelling that Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland's votes are indeed eventually split as shown in Figure 3 then taking into account their relative shares of the UK population, the 'tipping point' for votes in England above which those three countries might keep a reluctant England in the EU and below which England might take the rest of the UK out would be 47.5%. That is:

- If 47.5% or more of people in England vote to remain in the EU and the rest of the UK votes as suggested by Figure 3, the overall result would be just over 50% in favour of remaining.
- But if 47.4% or fewer of people in England vote to remain in the EU, then even if Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland vote to remain by majorities of 64%/55%/75% respectively, overall there would be a narrow majority in favour of leaving.⁶

Table 1: Modelling the 'tipping' point for English influence over the outcome

	% of the UK population*	Estimated % vote to Remain in the EU	Contribution to overall vote to Remain
England	84%	47.5	39.9
Scotland	8.3%	64	5.312
Wales	4.8%	55	2.64
Northern Ireland	2.9%	75	2.175
TOTAL VOTE TO REMAIN	100%		50.03%

* <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/compendiums/compendium-of-uk-statistics/population-and-migration/index.html>

⁶ If we instead assume that support for remaining falls from the levels indicated in Figure 3 by the same number of percentage points in each country – e.g. by 4 points in each of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland – then the tipping point is very similar, at 48% vote for remain in England.

WHAT EXPLAINS DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES OF THE UK?

Why is it that voters in England appear rather more willing than voters elsewhere in the UK to contemplate leaving the EU? One possibility is that the structure of support for the EU is simply different in the different UK nations. An earlier paper in this series (Curtice, 2015) outlined the demographic dividing lines across which British public opinion on the EU currently appears to be drawn. A variety of different data sources⁷ indicate that:

- Younger people are considerably more likely than older people to favour remaining in the EU
- Those in managerial and professional occupations are more likely than those in more working-class occupations to favour remaining in the EU
- Support for remaining in the EU broadly increases with level of education: those with a post-16 qualification are inclined to remain; those without lean towards leaving
- There is as yet no clear gender gap in relation to the EU referendum, although women are more likely than men to say they are undecided as to how they will cast their vote
- The views of supporters of particular political parties tend to reflect the position (or positions) of these parties. So while UKIP supporters overwhelmingly wish to leave and Liberal Democrats to remain, the views of Conservative and Labour voters are more divided, as are those of their parties (albeit with Labour supporters more pro-EU on balance, reflecting the general direction of their party over recent decades).

Are these patterns of support similar across the different nations of the UK? Data from the British Election Study online panel and (for England and Scotland only) from British and Scottish Social Attitudes suggest the answer is, for the most part, yes. (Our analysis here is primarily confined to England, Scotland and Wales, as equivalent data for Northern Ireland are not available.)

- Support for leaving the EU increases with age in all three countries (though the pattern by age is a little less linear in Wales – Figure 5).
- Those in managerial or professional occupations in Scotland and England are less likely than those in routine or semi-routine occupations to want to leave the EU (Appendix, Table A9).
- Those with no qualifications in all three countries are much keener than graduates on leaving the EU. BES data suggest that in Scotland and Wales, among those qualified to below GCSE/Standard Grade level over half would to vote to leave (Figure 6).
- Women in all three countries are less likely than men to have made up their minds about how they will vote.⁸

⁷ Including BSA, BES and various polls

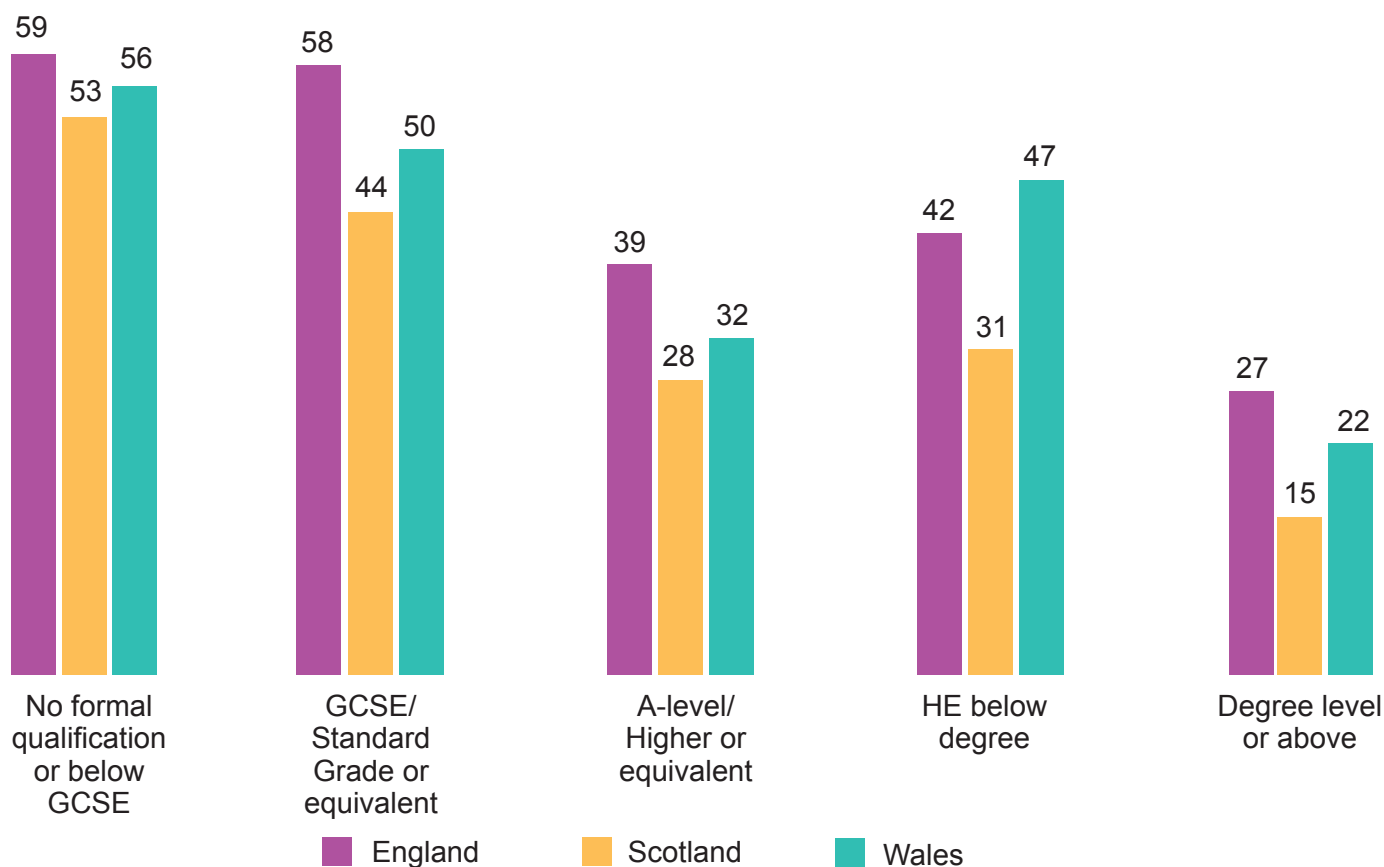
⁸ BES data indicate that women in England and Wales are both a little less likely to vote to remain and a little less likely to vote to leave than are men. In Scotland women are less likely than their male compatriots to vote to remain (52% v 65%) and a little more likely to vote to leave (29% v 26%). However, recent polls in Scotland have not replicated this pattern, and it is not apparent in Scottish Social Attitudes data on views of the EU.

Figure 5 - % saying they will vote to leave the EU, by age and country (May 2015)



Source: BES internet panel Wave 6. Data based on respondents excluding those who said they did not know how they would vote. For sample sizes, see Appendix Table A8.

Figure 6 - % saying they will vote to leave the EU, by education and country (May 2015)



Source: BES internet panel Wave 6. Data based on respondents excluding those who said they did not know how they would vote. For sample sizes, see Appendix Table A10.

There are some differences in the demographic and socio-economic structure of England, Scotland and Wales⁹ - in particular, England has rather more people than Scotland and Wales in managerial and professional occupations. However, these differences do not explain the differences by country in views on the EU. In fact, if anything they tend to point in the opposite direction to the findings discussed above – given that people in managerial and professional occupations tend to be more strongly in favour of remaining in the EU, we might have expected England to be the most pro-EU of the three countries. So neither differences in overall demography, nor differences in the demographic pattern of attitudes to the EU across the three countries can explain why people in England are keener than those in Scotland or Wales on leaving the EU.

DIFFERENT POLITICAL LANDSCAPES?

If demographic differences between England, Scotland and Wales are often minor, political differences between the three countries in 2015 are anything but. As Table 2 shows, while in England the Conservatives took the largest share of the vote in this May's General Election, outpolling Labour by almost 10 percentage points, in Scotland the SNP polled more votes than Labour, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats combined. Meanwhile, in Wales Labour remained the largest party, while Plaid Cymru secured around 1 in 8 votes. UKIP won around 14% of the vote in both England and Wales but only 1.6% in Scotland. On the 8th May, one might be forgiven for thinking that the only thing all three countries had politically in common was the dramatic decline in the fortunes of the Liberal Democrats since 2010.

Table 2: 2015 General Election vote share by country

	England	Scotland	Wales
	%	%	%
Conservative	41.0	14.9	27.2
Labour	31.6	24.3	36.9
Liberal Democrat	8.2	7.5	6.5
SNP	-	50.0	-
Plaid Cymru	-	-	12.1
UKIP	14.1	1.6	13.6
Green	4.2	1.3	2.6
Turnout %	65.9	71.1	65.6

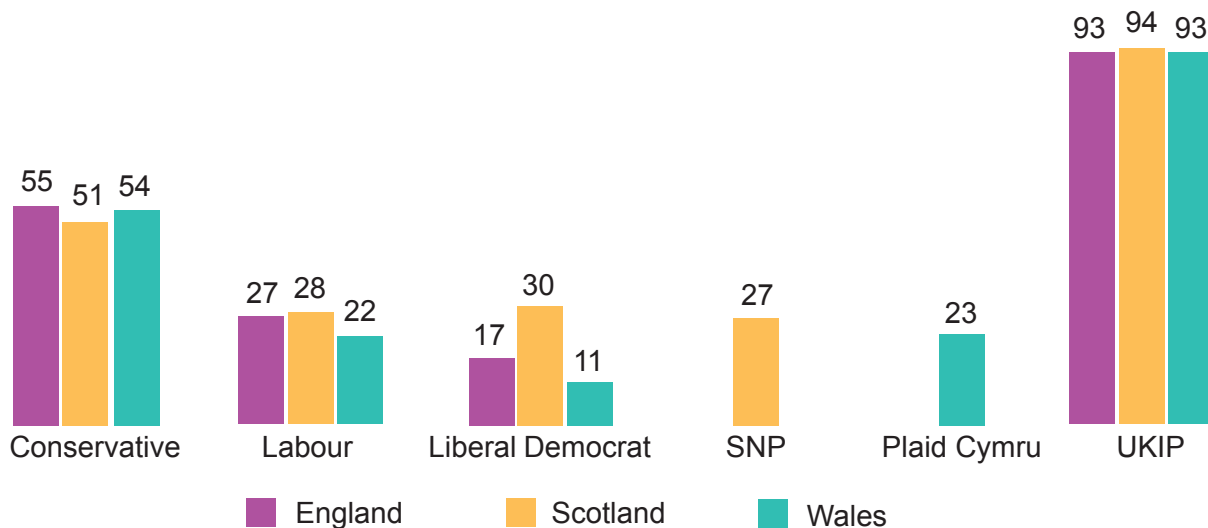
Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2015/results>

⁹ See the ONS website for detailed profiles based on the 2011 Census.

As discussed above, the different political parties obviously take very different positions on the EU. The SNP, Plaid Cymru and the Liberal Democrats are strongly in favour. UKIP is strongly opposed – campaigning for a ‘Brexit’ was central to its initial formation. The Labour party, in spite of some internal differences over the years and more recently, is broadly in favour. Meanwhile, the Conservative party remains deeply divided on Europe. And the pattern described above, whereby voters’ views on the EU broadly mirror those of the parties they support, is replicated across the UK – for example, Conservative voters in each of England, Scotland and Wales are divided in their views, with a little over 50% in each country favouring leaving the EU (after those who do not know how they would vote are excluded – Figure 7 and Appendix Table A11). The views of Labour voters are also similar regardless of where in the UK they live, while UKIP voters across Britain are almost universally favour leaving the EU.

But of course, the proportions of Labour, Conservative and UKIP voters are very different in England, Scotland and Wales. Meanwhile, voters in Scotland/Wales who support their respective nationalist parties are strongly in favour of remaining in the UK (Figure 7, Appendix Table A11). Once differences in party support across the UK are taken into account, differences between England, Scotland and Wales in support for leaving the EU all but disappear – indicating that differences in party structure are indeed very strongly linked with differences in public opinion on the EU between England, Scotland and Wales.¹⁰

Figure 7 - % saying they will vote to leave the EU, by 2015 General Election vote and country (May 2015)



Source: BES internet panel Wave 6. Data based on respondents excluding those who said they did not know how they would vote. For sample sizes and figures for ‘Remain’, see Appendix Table A11.

¹⁰This is confirmed by a forward stepwise logistic regression model of support for a vote to leave the UK using BES waves 6 data. Differences by country are not significant once differences by 2015 General Election vote are controlled for.

In Northern Ireland too, voters appear split on party lines. A recent online poll by Lucid Talk for the Belfast Telegraph¹¹ found that those who supported one of the unionist parties (the DUP, UUP, TUV, UKIP, PUP, or NI Conservative) bucked the overall Northern Irish trend by leaning towards voting to leave the EU: 54% supported a 'Brexit', just 21% said they would vote to remain in the EU and 24% were undecided. Meanwhile, those who normally vote for the nationalist Sinn Fein or SDLP were overwhelmingly in favour of remaining in the EU – as many as 91% said they intended to vote to remain. Given that Sinn Fein have said they view a 'Brexit' as potentially 'economically disastrous' for Northern Ireland¹² while the DUP have adopted a relatively hard Eurosceptic stance, again the views of the public appear to mirror those of their favoured political parties.

Of course, this analysis can only show that there is a connection between which party people support and their position on the EU. It does not tell us in which direction this connection runs. It is probable, for example, that some people support UKIP because of their position on the EU - they are not following their party's lead but rather choosing the party that reflects their pre-existing views on the European project. However, as Curtice (2015) argues, voters do not make up their minds about referendums in a vacuum – they take notice of the views being expressed by political and opinion leaders. And there is evidence to show that they tend to take notice of the views of the people who lead the parties they support (Curtice, 2013a).

This is perhaps particularly likely to be the case for referendums on complex issues or those for which many voters may have relatively little enthusiasm. Both of these arguably apply to the forthcoming EU referendum at present – a recent ICM poll asked people to say how much enthusiasm they had, on a scale of 1-10, for the referendum on EU membership. While 34% gave a score of 8-10, indicating a reasonable level of enthusiasm, 41% gave a more 'neutral' score (4-7) and 18% had very little enthusiasm for the EU referendum.¹³

In this context of lukewarm public interest, the steer given by the leadership of the various political parties may well prove crucial in the EU referendum. Not that this necessarily makes it any easier to predict the eventual outcome, particularly given current divisions among both Conservative voters and the Conservative leadership on this issue. As Curtice (2015, forthcoming) has argued, David Cameron's influence over Conservative voters may be limited by their appetite for greater concessions from Europe than are currently on his agenda. At the same time there are other figures in the Conservative party whose decision on the EU referendum may well influence party supporters.

¹¹ <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/debateni/bill-white/how-will-northern-ireland-vote-in-the-upcoming-eu-referendum-34176966.htm>

¹² <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/sinn-fein-to-protect-eu-membership-31156231.html>

¹³ [http://www.icmunlimited.com/data/media/pdf/2015-150915-inouttracker%20\(SEPT%202015\).pdf](http://www.icmunlimited.com/data/media/pdf/2015-150915-inouttracker%20(SEPT%202015).pdf)

NATIONAL IDENTITY

The difference in party structure across England, Scotland and Wales is, at least in part, a reflection of more deep-seated differences of national identity. At an obvious level, the extent to which people feel Scottish, English or Welsh varies very widely across Britain. There are also differences in the extent to which people in England, Scotland and Wales identify as ‘British’ and in how they balance their British and their English/Scottish/Welsh identities. British and Scottish Social Attitudes have long demonstrated that, while in England many people feel equally English and British, in Scotland most people tend to prioritise their ‘Scottishness’ over any feelings of ‘Britishness’. Wales appears to sit somewhere between the two, with the proportion saying they feel ‘Welsh not British’ or ‘More Welsh than British’ rather higher than the equivalent figure for England but lower than the figure for Scotland (Curtice, 2013b).

But how are people’s feelings of national identity related to their views of the EU? Given the pro-EU stances taken by the nationalist parties in Scotland and Wales we might anticipate, for example, that the relationships between feeling strongly Scottish, Welsh or English and views on the EU might be rather different.¹⁴

Wave 4 of the 2015 British Election Study online Panel survey, conducted in March 2015, asked respondents to place themselves on two scales – one to indicate how British they felt and another to indicate how English/Scottish/Welsh they felt. In each case, a score of 1 indicated that they felt ‘Not at all British/English/Scottish/Welsh’, while a score of 7 indicated that they felt ‘Very strongly British/English/Scottish/Welsh’.

The findings (Tables 3 and 4) show that:

- First, those who feel most strongly British are particularly likely to want to leave the EU – in each of England, Scotland and Wales, those who chose the top end of the scale were more likely to want to leave than those who felt less strongly British.
- Second, in England only, those who say they feel ‘not at all British’ are also likely to want to leave the EU.
- Third, among those who felt ‘very strongly English’, 63% would vote to leave the EU, compared with between 21% and 37% of those whose English identity was weaker (Table 4). Moreover, in England, how English people feel is much more closely associated with how they think they will vote in the referendum than is how British they feel.¹⁵
- The association between Scottishness and views on the EU is much weaker, while there appears to be little relationship at all between Welsh identity and views on Europe (Table 4). Feeling ‘exclusively English’ is more strongly associated with ‘Euroscepticism’ than is feeling ‘exclusively’ Scottish or Welsh.
- However, it is worth noting that feeling ‘very strongly Scottish’ is by no means associated with being particularly pro-EU – if anything, the 62% of respondents in Scotland whose Scottish identity was ‘very strong’ were a little more likely than average to favour leaving the EU (41%, compared with 37% across Scotland as a whole in BES Wave 4).

¹⁴ Although of course, feeling strongly Scottish/Welsh does not necessarily imply political support for Scottish or Welsh nationalism.

¹⁵ This is confirmed by a forward stepwise regression – although ‘Britishness’ and ‘Englishness’ are both significant, Englishness is far more strongly predictive of intention to vote to leave.

In summary, these findings suggest that very strong feelings of Britishness, Englishness and (to a lesser extent) Scottishness are all associated with being more likely to vote to leave the EU. As suggested in Ormston (2015), a strong sense of local territorial identity perhaps means that people are less willing to support more distant supranational institutions. However, the particular strength of the relationship between feeling very strongly English and supporting a vote to leave the EU suggests that the closeness of the race at present is particularly being driven by the views of 'English' voters, in an emotional as well as a geographic sense.

Table 3: % vote to leave the EU, by British identity within country (BES, March 2015)

% vote to Leave	1 – Not at all British	2	3	4	5	6	7 – Very strongly British
England	57	52	47	43	39	36	57
Scotland	29	25	33	39	32	33	46
Wales	31	15	34	42	30	37	53
<i>Unweighted base England</i>	280	185	294	1011	1832	2661	6491
<i>Unweighted base Scotland</i>	408	200	165	408	467	456	1005
<i>Unweighted base Wales</i>	64	40	55	152	210	252	795

Note: Those who do not know how they would vote are excluded from the base.

Table 4: % vote to leave the EU, by English/Scottish/Welsh identity within country (BES, March 2015)

% vote to Leave	1 – Not at all English/Scottish/Welsh	2	3	4	5	6	7 – Very strongly English/Scottish/Welsh
England	32	21	21	24	28	37	63
Scotland	43	36	39	35	29	23	41
Wales	48	37	53	46	38	40	45
<i>Unweighted base England</i>	520	265	352	972	1499	1990	7143
<i>Unweighted base Scotland</i>	235	96	77	201	237	422	1813
<i>Unweighted base Wales</i>	274	92	74	141	154	164	634

Note: Those who do not know how they would vote are excluded from the base.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper confirms the popular view that England is indeed the most Eurosceptic nation in the UK; all the available survey and polling evidence points to there being a much narrower majority in England for remaining in the EU than there is Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

At this point in time, the 'Remain' campaign has a lead in all four countries – so it is far from clear that there will necessarily be an outcome that divides England from its neighbours. Yet the narrowness of the Remain lead means that a relatively small swing in England towards leaving the EU could produce one of two outcomes with the potential for constitutional upset. England could either be kept in the EU by the rest of the UK, in spite of narrowly voting to leave, or England could take the rest of the UK out of the European Union, in spite of voters in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland opting to remain.

At the same time, the closeness of the link between the positions taken by different UK political parties on Europe and the views of their supporters highlights the potential for further divergence between the constituent nations of the UK. If people remain relatively unenthusiastic about the EU referendum, then they are arguably likely to take their cues as to how to vote from the political leaders they most support. In this context, the stance taken by leading Conservative figures in England may well be crucial, not only to the overall outcome but to the level of divergence within the UK. If the Conservative leadership in England moves in a more Eurosceptic position, while at the same time political leaders in Scotland and Wales maintain their strongly pro-EU stance, we could easily see a widening of the gap between Conservative-led England and its UK neighbours. And if this gap reaches a 'tipping point' whereby the views of England are either overruled by or overrule votes in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the constitutional implications may extend beyond the specific question of whether or not the UK remains in the EU.

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APPENDIX

Table A1: Attitudes to Britain's long-term policy on the EU, Scotland and England, 1999-2014

	1999	2000	2003	2004	2005	2013	2014	Change 1999- 2014
<u>% choosing 'leave the EU'</u>								
England	14	18	16	19	17	26	26	12
Scotland	10	11	11	13	14	19	17	7
GAP (Scotland – England)	-4	-6	-5	-6	-3	-7	-9	-5
<u>% choosing 'stay in the EU and reduce the EUs powers'</u>								
England	45	40	33	39	36	40	39	-6
Scotland	36	37	29	31	36	40	40	4
GAP (Scotland – England)	-9	-1	-4	-8	0	0	1	10
<u>% choosing 'leave things as they are'</u>								
England	20	18	27	23	23	18	16	-4
Scotland	21	21	24	27	21	25	24	3
GAP (Scotland – England)	1	2	-3	4	-2	7	8	7
<u>% choosing 'stay in the EU and increase the EUs powers'</u>								
England	9	10	11	7	10	6	10	1
Scotland	14	13	19	12	13	8	7	-7
GAP (Scotland – England)	5	3	8	5	3	2	-3	-8
<u>% choosing 'work for single EU government'</u>								
England	6	7	6	5	4	3	4	-2
Scotland	9	9	8	7	5	3	4	-5
GAP (Scotland – England)	3	2	2	2	1	0	0	-3
<i>Unweighted base England</i>	<i>902</i>	<i>1928</i>	<i>1917</i>	<i>2684</i>	<i>3643</i>	<i>1854</i>	<i>827</i>	<i>902</i>
<i>Unweighted base Scotland</i>	<i>1482</i>	<i>1663</i>	<i>1508</i>	<i>1637</i>	<i>1549</i>	<i>1497</i>	<i>1501</i>	<i>1482</i>

Source: England = British Social Attitudes, Scotland = Scottish Social Attitudes

Table A2: EU referendum voting intention (BES, May 2015)

	England	Scotland	Wales
Stay in the EU	45	58	50
Leave the EU	35	28	33
I would not vote	3	2	2
Don't know	16	13	15
<i>Weighted base</i>	17174	1768	1039
<i>Unweighted base</i>	14639	3516	1831
Excluding Don't know/would not vote			
Stay in the EU	56	68	61
Leave the EU	44	32	39
<i>Weighted base</i>	13853	1512	856
<i>Unweighted base</i>	11942	3054	1544

Table A3: EU referendum vote intention, latest 6 polls at mid-November 2015 (England only)

Polling company and Fieldwork end date	BMG* (online), 27 Oct 2015	ICM (online), 1 Nov 2015	ICM (online), 8 Nov 2015	Survation+ (online), 11 Nov 2015	ICM (online), 15 Nov 2015	Survation (online), 17 Nov 2015
Remain a member of the EU	39	44	46	37	42	41
Leave the EU	41	38	38	44	39	42
Don't know	20	18	16	18	18	17
Excluding 'Don't knows'						
Remain a member of the EU	50	54	55	46	52	49
Leave the EU	50	46	45	54	48	51
<i>Sample size (including DKs)</i>	1267	1773	1743	1633	1722	1288

Source: <http://whatukthinks.org/eu/>

* NB BMG figures excluding 'don't knows' also include people who initially said they did not know how they would vote, but who leaned towards voting to remain or leave when asked a 'squeeze' question about which direction they were leaning.

+ Survation figures are weighted by voting likelihood.

Table A4: How think would vote in EU referendum, recent online (YouGov) polling data for Wales

Fieldwork end date	6 May 2015	26 June 2015	24 Sept 2015
Remain a member of the EU	47	44	42
Leave the EU	33	37	38
Don't know/would not vote	21	19	21
Excluding 'Don't knows'			
Remain a member of the EU	59	54	53
Leave the EU	41	46	47
Sample size (including DKs)	1202	1151	1010

Source: <https://yougov.co.uk/publicopinion/archive/?year=&month=&category=europe>
<http://blogs.cardiff.ac.uk/electionsinwales/2015/10/01/the-new-welsh-political-barometer-poll-referendum-voting-intentions/>

NOTES: The first two polls asked people "If there was a referendum on Britain's membership of the European Union, how would you vote?", with answer options: I would vote to remain a member of the European Union; I would vote to leave the European Union; I would not vote; Don't Know

The September poll asked: "If there was a referendum on Britain's membership of the European Union and this was the question, how would you vote: Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?"

Table A5: EU referendum vote intention, recent online polling data for Scotland

Polling company and Fieldwork end date	Panelbase, 3 July 2015	Survation, 10 September 2015	YouGov 27 September 2015	YouGov, 13 October 2015
Remain a member of the EU	55	50	55	51
Leave the EU	29	28	30	31
Don't know/would not vote	16	22	15	17
Excluding 'Don't knows'				
Remain a member of the EU	66	64	65	62
Leave the EU	34	36	35	38
Sample size (including DKs)	888	975	1004	1026

Source: <http://whatukthinks.org/eu/>

Table A6: Views on the EU, recent polling data for Northern Ireland

Polling company and Fieldwork end date	Milward Brown, June 2015 (1)	B&A (Face-to-face, quota) 16 Oct 2015 (2)	LucidTalk (online), 21 Oct 2015 (3)	
Remain a member of the EU	58	55	56	
Leave the EU	16	13	28	
Don't know	26	32	15	
Excluding 'Don't knows'				
Remain a member of the EU	78	81	67	
Leave the EU	22	19	33	
Sample size (including DKs)	1000	1012	2517	

Sources: 1) <http://www.danskebank.co.uk/en-gb/About-the-bank/Media-and-Press/Press-releases/2015/Pages/eu-membership-survey-ni.aspx>

NB the question was worded: "With regard to European Membership would you like to see NI ... Build even greater connections with Europe; Continue with the current EU terms and conditions; Reduce the European relationship through the UK's re-negotiations on the terms of membership; Exit the EU"

2) <http://banda.ie/wp-content/uploads/RT%C3%89-BBC-BA-Cross-Border-Survey-Tabular-Report.pdf>

3) <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/debateni/bill-white/how-will-northern-ireland-vote-in-the-upcoming-eu-referendum-34176966.html>

Table A7: Views on the EU, by polling company and country

	England		Scotland		Wales	
	Remain	Leave	Remain	Leave	Remain	Leave
Survation, Sept 2015	48	52	64	36	NA	NA
YouGov, Sept 2015	48	52	65	35	53	47
Ipsos MORI, Oct-Nov 2015	58	42	75	25	NA	NA

Source: all available via <http://whatukthinks.org/eu/>

Exact dates: Scotland: Survation 7-10.9.15; YouGov Sept 22-27.9.15; Ipsos MORI 9-16.11.15

England: Survation 3-4.9.15; YouGov Sept 9-16.9.15; Ipsos MORI 17-19.10.15

Wales: 21-24.9.15

Table A8: % saying they will vote to leave the EU, by age and country, after those who do not know how they will vote are excluded (BES, May 2015)

% Leave	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	66+
England	23	33	45	49	54	53
Scotland	12	24	31	39	40	42
Wales	30	28	32	40	51	49
Unweighted base England	1380	1542	1644	2203	2881	2190
Unweighted base Scotland	314	379	479	605	750	499
Unweighted base Wales	125	175	207	262	432	335

Table A9: % saying they would prefer to leave the EU, by class and country (BSA and SSA 2014)*

% Leave	Managerial/ professional	Intermediate	Small orgs & own account workers	Lower supervisory/ technical	Routine/ semi- routine
England	22	26	27	28	29
Scotland	10	18	18	21	21
<i>Unweighted base England</i>	294	112	82	63	242
<i>Unweighted base Scotland</i>	484	204	123	134	440

* This table is based on BSA and SSA data rather than BES as the underlying bases for the BES sample show that those in managerial and professional occupations are very significantly over-represented in the BES internet panel, leaving some doubt about the representativeness and accuracy of analysis by class.

Table A10: % saying they will vote to leave the EU, by highest educational qualification and country, after those who do not know how they will vote are excluded (BES, May 2015)

% Leave	No formal qualification or below GCSE	GCSE/ Standard Grade or equivalent	A-level/ Higher or equivalent	HE below degree	Degree level or above
England	59	58	39	42	27
Scotland	53	44	28	31	15
Wales	56	50	32	47	22
<i>Unweighted base England</i>	2302	1875	1858	823	3334
<i>Unweighted base Scotland</i>	471	285	569	242	979
<i>Unweighted base Wales</i>	286	234	187	116	476

Table A11: How think would vote in EU referendum, by 2015 General Election vote and country, after those who do not know how they will vote are excluded (BES, May 2015)

		Conservative	Labour	Liberal Democrat	Scottish National Party (SNP)	Plaid Cymru	UKIP
% Stay in the EU	England	45	73	83	-	-	7
	Scotland	49	72	70	73	-	6
	Wales	46	78	89	-	77	7
% Leave the EU	England	55	27	17	-	-	93
	Scotland	51	28	30	27	-	94
	Wales	54	22	11	-	23	93
<i>Unweighted base England</i>		4032	3798	1074	-	-	1526
<i>Unweighted base Scotland</i>		402	747	219	1414	-	68
<i>Unweighted base Wales</i>		363	522	117	-	173	195

Contact us

NatCen
Social Research

020 7250 1866

35 Northampton Square
London
EC1V 0AX

www.natcen.ac.uk

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