

Directorate-General for Communication
Public Opinion Monitoring Unit
The Head of Unit

Parlemeter 2018

A view on Brexit and its consequences

In the Parlemeter 2018, nearly all general indicators measuring support for the European Union show a significant firming up in the aftermath of the UK referendum to leave the EU and the still ongoing negotiations between the EU and the UK on both the withdrawal agreement and the framework of the future relation.

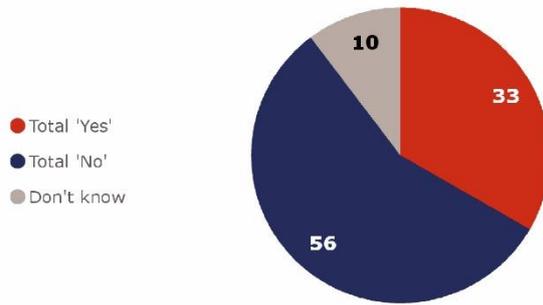
Since autumn 2016 trends for both the support for EU Membership and the view on whether membership has been beneficial for the own country have started to improve significantly. Both the outcome of the Brexit referendum and the ongoing negotiations have impacted on the way citizens see the EU, both in terms of concrete benefits they enjoy from it or which they would like to reinforce and in terms of tangible risks in case of their loss.

A bit more than two years after the UK referendum and a few months ahead of the Art.50 deadline which would require the UK to leave the EU, Parlemeter 2018 takes stock of citizens' views on Brexit and its consequences for both the UK and EU.

The findings of this survey are clear: 56% on EU average believe the British people did not make the right choice in voting to leave the EU, only 33% think that they did. This feeling is the strongest in the Netherlands (82%), Sweden (80%) and Luxembourg (76%), followed by Ireland, Germany and Denmark with 75% each. In the UK, out of the 941 respondents 54% said that they made the wrong choice, 38% believed it was the right choice.

Q From today's perspective, would you say the British people made the right choice in voting to leave the EU? (% - EU)

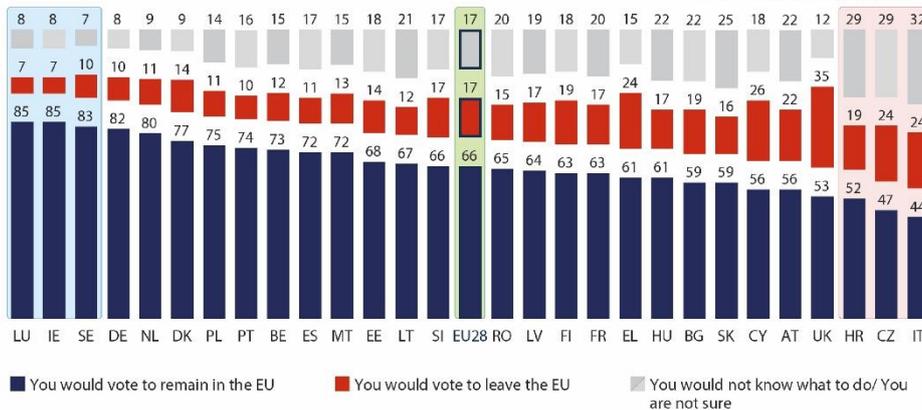
Source: Parlemeter 2018, QA4



This mood towards Brexit is also reflected in answering the question how citizens would decide if a referendum to leave the EU was held in their country. On EU average, 66% of Europeans would vote for their country to remain a member of the EU. Only 17% would vote to leave, 17% of respondents showed themselves as undecided. Looking at one socio-demographic factor, the support for remain is very high with 71% among young people in the EU, yet still also strong among the 55 years and older respondents (61%).

Q If a referendum was held tomorrow regarding (OUR COUNTRY)'s membership of the EU, how would you vote? (%)

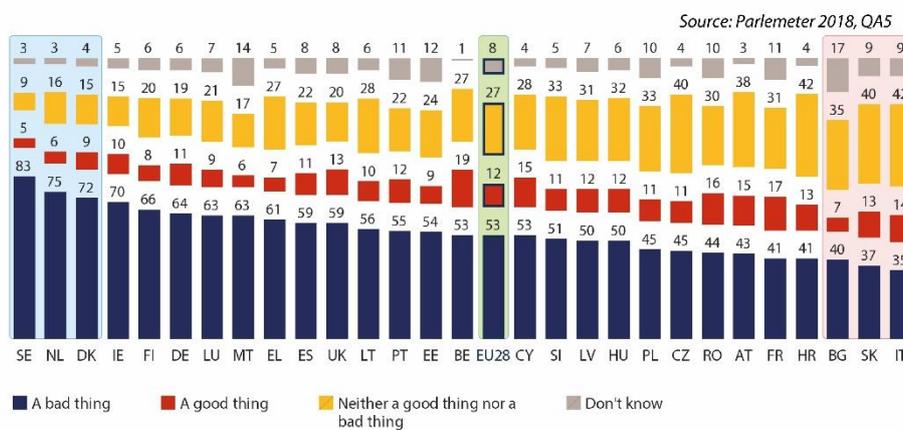
Source: Parlemeter 2018, QA3s



Starting from 85% support for remain in Ireland and Luxembourg and results above 75% are recorded in Sweden (83%), Germany (82%), the Netherlands (80%) as well as Denmark (77%) and Poland (75%). An absolute majority would vote in favour of remain in 26 Member States. Noticeable here is again the result for the UK, where 53% of respondents (aged 16 and above) would vote in favour of remain, 35% would vote in favour of leave and 12% said that at the point of the interview they were not sure what to do. This share for the undecided respondents in the UK - the seventh-smallest compared with the other EU countries - might well be a sign of a settling of views after the preceding months of negotiations.

Finally, when being asked about the impact of the UK decision on the European Union, an absolute majority of Europeans (53%) believe that Brexit represents a bad thing for the EU, while only 12% see Brexit as good thing for the EU. 27% of respondents on EU average answered that Brexit is neither a good nor a bad thing. It is important to note the high level of uncertainty expressed in answering on this question. This might very well reflect the doubts and unknowns stemming from the lengthy negotiation process and the lack of clarity surrounding a likely outcome.

Q Would you say that Brexit is a good or bad thing for the European Union? (%)



Methodology

All results are coming from the survey "Parlemeter 2018 - Taking up the Challenge : from (silent) support to actual vote" that was carried out by Kantar Public on 8-26 September 2018 for the European Parliament and was published on 17 October 2018.

For more information, please contact the Public Opinion Monitoring Unit in DG COMM:

Philipp Schulmeister, Head of Unit (philipp.schulmeister@ep.europa.eu)

or

DGCOMM-POM@europarl.europa.eu