

## The Labour 2017 vote and the Referendum according to the British Election Study (BES)

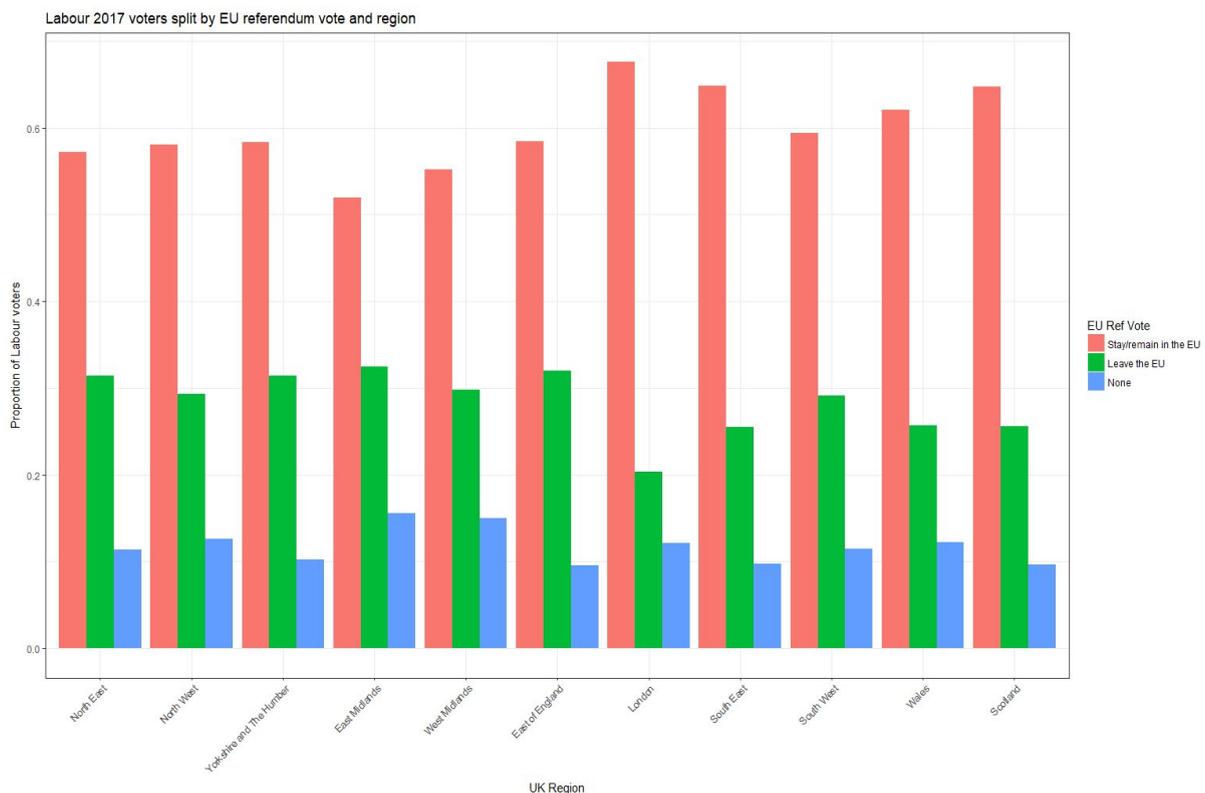
New research shows that Labour is the party of remain, not just in the south and London, not just among the young, but in every age group, every social grade and every region of the country. In safe seats and marginal seats, in remain voting seats and leave voting seats, it is the remain voters, whether Labour supporters, new voters or voters from other parties, who helped deliver Labour's shock result in June 2017.

In August 2017, the British Election Study (BES) released all their data for the most extensive post-election survey that exists in the UK. While some findings were published, the enormous size of the data means that there were still many insights hidden within it. Using this data, this report aims to understand how leave and remain voters drove the Labour vote last June.

### Main findings

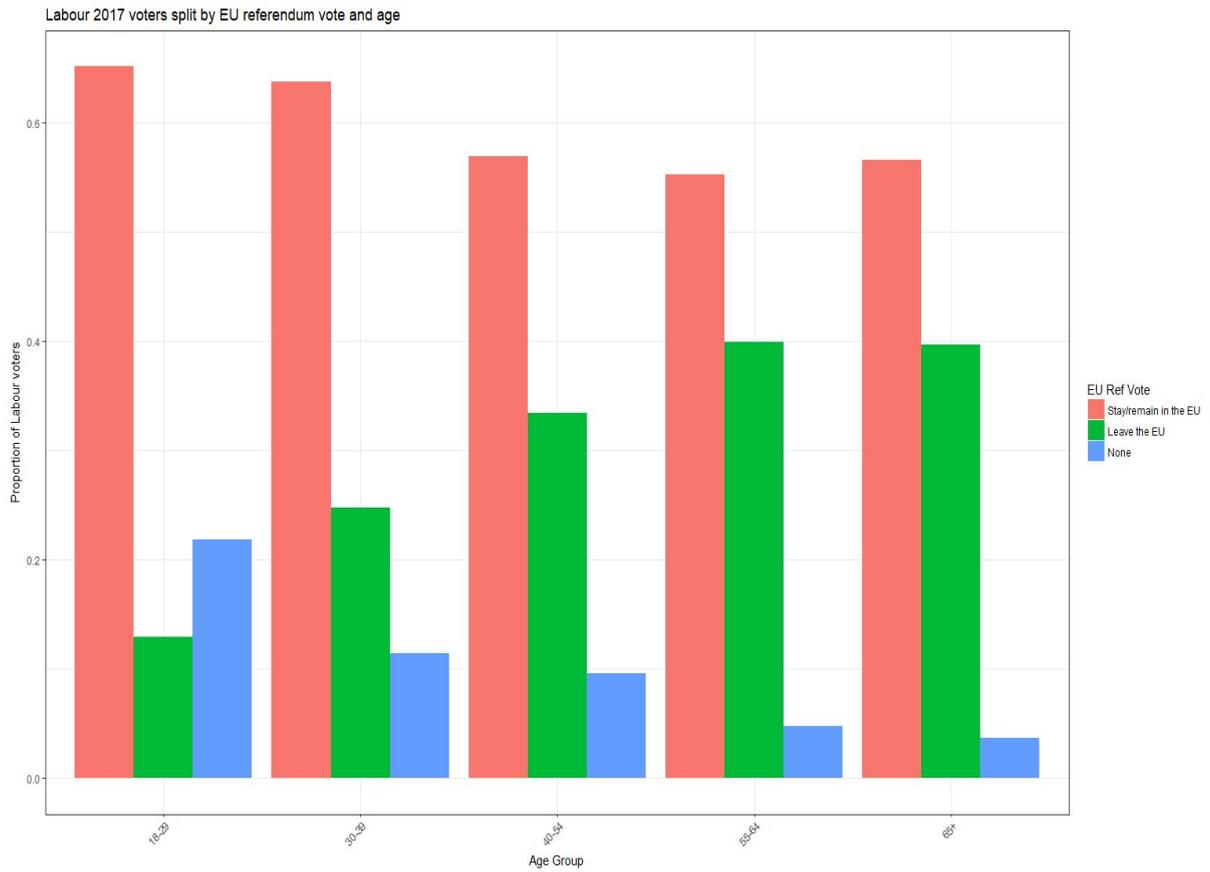
- **Labour vote by regions**

Despite the narrative of the vast divide between voters in the north and south, the graph is astonishingly uniform. Even in the most pro-leave areas, it was the huge support of the remain voters that helped Labour the most across the country. The leave vote is always far behind the remain vote in all areas of the country getting to a maximum of a little over 30% in the most pro-Leave areas.



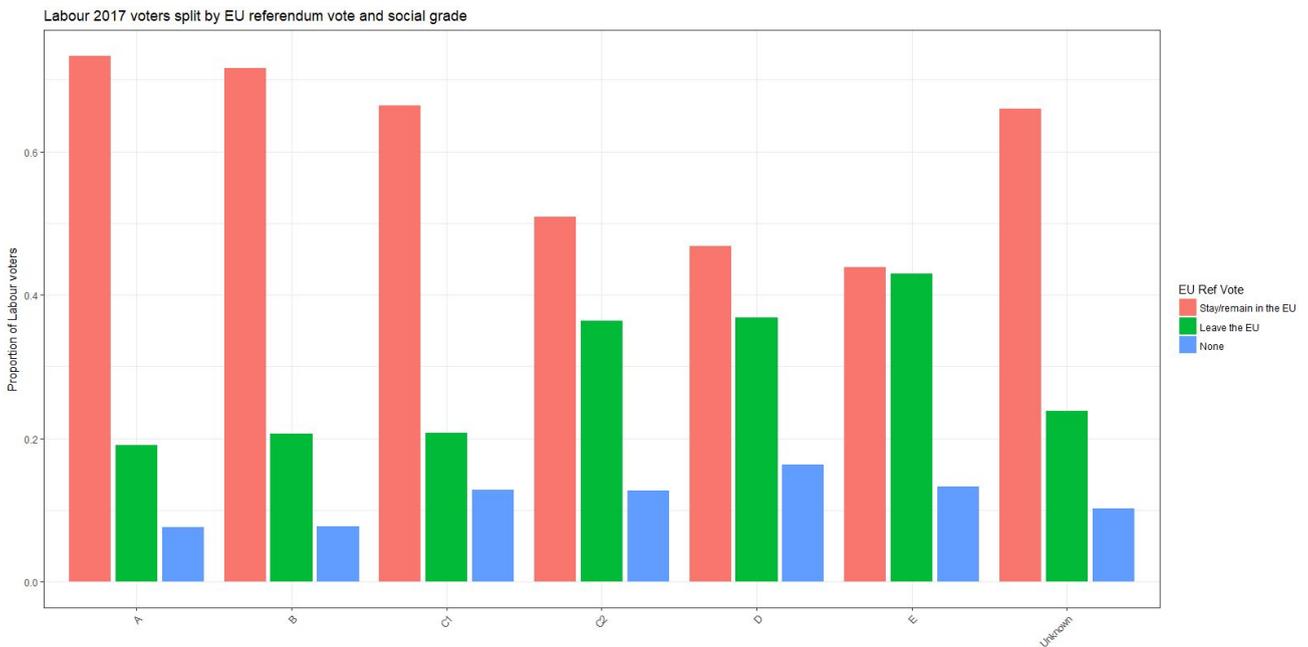
- **Labour vote by age groups**

When broken down by voting age, it is clear that the youngest Labour party voters that represent the future of the party overwhelmingly voted to stay in the EU. Unsurprisingly a tiny proportion of young Labour voters voted leave in 2016, but more surprisingly, even among over 55s, only 40% of Labour voters voted leave in the EU referendum.



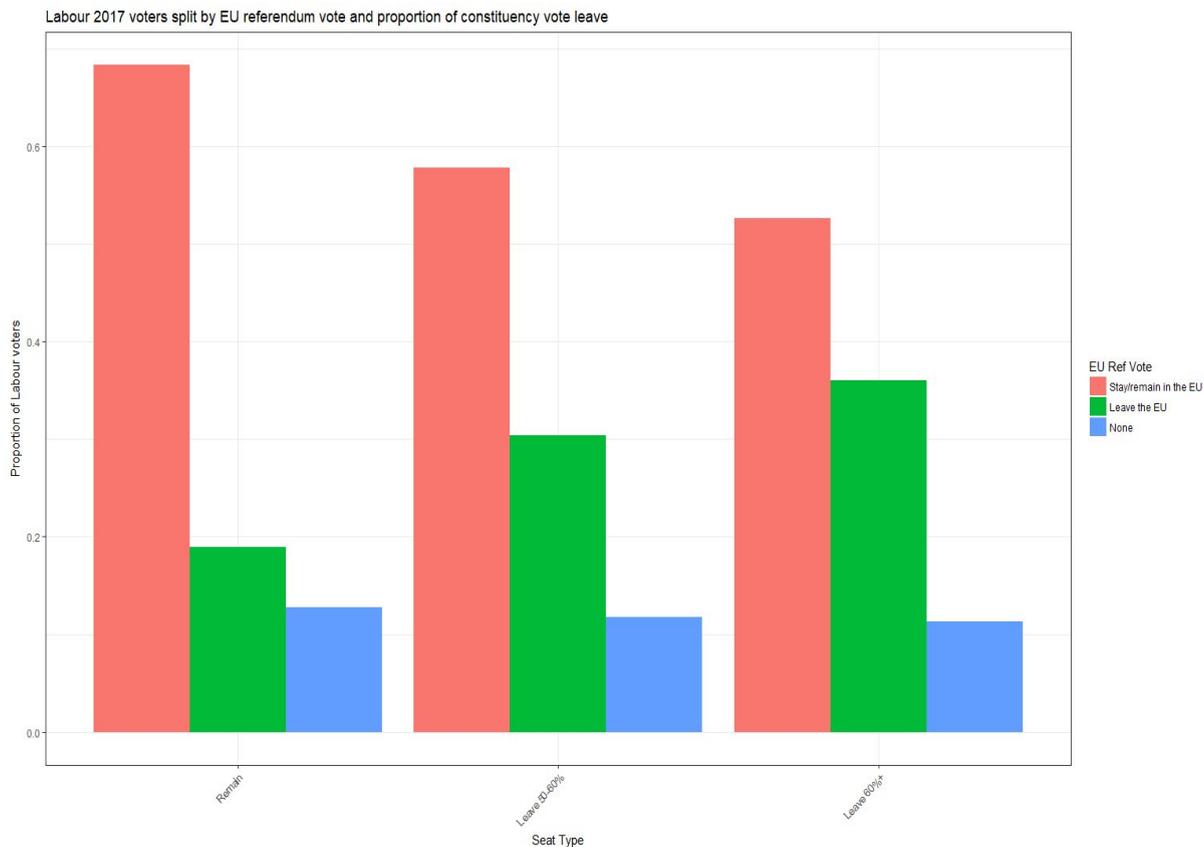
- **Labour vote by social grades**

We know that ABC1 traditionally supported remain and C2DE were more likely to support leave. However, even among the C2DE group, the majority of Labour voters support remain. Among the C2D group, the leave vote is less than 40% of Labour voters. The E social grade is the only group where the leave vote is close for Labour voters (although still slightly lower than remain).



- **Labour vote by constituencies**

In the graph below, we consider remain voting seats, mild leave voting seats (50-60% leave) and strong leave voting seats (60%+). While over 60% of the Labour vote supports remain in remain seats, even in the most leave voting areas, over 50% of Labour voters had voted remain and significantly less than 40% voted leave.



In the graph below, we look a little closer at how people voted where it mattered the most, i.e. marginal seats.<sup>1</sup> Seats are split into safe and marginal seats (a marginal seat is defined as one with a majority less than 15 percentage points) and according to how the constituency voted in the referendum. We consider remain voting seats, mild leave voting seats (50-60% leave) and strong leave voting seats (60%+). The first graph (on the left) shows seats perceived as marginal going into the 2017 election, based on the 2015 results; the second graph shows the new marginal seats based on the 2017 result; and the third one safe seats. In all seats, whether marginal or safe, more than 50% of Labour voters had voted remain in the EU referendum and significantly less than 40% voted leave.

<sup>1</sup> Here we exclude Scotland, as we know that Brexit and the referendum vote had less impact on Scottish voting choices in 2017.

Labour 2017 voters split by EU referendum vote and proportion of constituency vote leave

