

Brexit Britain still divided over EU referendum five years on with public split on whether leaving was right

A new poll finds just one in nine voters regrets how they cast their ballot in 2016.



Boris Johnson signing the UK/EU free-trade agreement in December (Photo: Leon Neal/Getty Images)

The UK remains deeply divided over the vote to leave the European Union, five years since the Brexit referendum which upended British politics and created whole new political tribes.

The public is split almost exactly 50/50 on whether or not it was the right decision to quit the EU. And despite a number of historic developments since June 2016 – including two general elections, two deals with Brussels, a pandemic, a recession and the Covid-19 vaccines rollout – just one in nine voters would change how they cast their ballot five years, according to the survey for **i** by Redfield & Wilton

Strategies.

Wednesday will mark the fifth anniversary of polling day, when the Leave campaign shocked Westminster by winning by 52 to 48 per cent, triggering the resignation of David Cameron the next day.

Asked whether the public made the right decision in 2016, 45 per cent said they did with 44 per cent disagreeing while 12 per cent did not know. The finding, from a poll of 1,500 people, suggests there has been no significant swing in favour of either Remain or Leave.

Redfield & Wilton asked those who were old enough to vote in the referendum whether they wish they could change their mind. Only 11 per cent said yes while 82 per cent said no – Leavers were slightly more likely than Remainers to express regrets, by 13 per cent to 9 per cent.

Despite the recent success of the SNP in Scotland, most voters are sceptical of claims that Brexit makes the break-up of the UK more likely: 36 per cent agreed, while 37 per cent said it had no effect on the future of the Union and 7 per cent believe that the UK is less likely to split apart now it has left the UK.

The public is also broadly divided on the specific effects of Brexit. 38 per cent think it has helped the UK's economy and 24 per cent think it has harmed. 46 per cent said that leaving the EU had harmed relations with other member states, with 21 per cent thinking it has boosted them.

There is broad consensus that Brexit has helped the British response to Covid-19, especially when it comes to the rollout of vaccines in which the UK moved more quickly than most of its neighbours: 55 per cent said Britain moved faster on vaccines because of Brexit while 11 per cent said the opposite.

The three biggest benefits of leaving EU are perceived to be regulatory freedom, control over immigration and the end of payments to the Brussels budget; the three biggest drawbacks are the end of free movement rights, more expensive imports and a loss of trade, according to the poll.

Source:

<https://inews.co.uk/news/brexit/brexit-britain-divided-eu-referendum-five-years-pu>

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