

**FULL REPORT**



**EU CITIZENS' IDENTITY,  
BELONGING & REPRESENTATION  
POST-BREXIT**

**TANJA BUELTSMANN & ALEXANDRA BULAT**

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**University of Strathclyde, August 2021**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents findings and data from the 'EU Citizens' Identity, Belonging and Representation Post-Brexit' Survey conducted between 15 February and 15 March 2021. The Survey was designed for adult EU/EEA/Swiss nationals or dual British-EU/EEA/Swiss nationals who acquired British nationality through registration or naturalisation (not by birth) who normally live in the UK and arrived here before 31 December 2020.

The survey contained a mix of 'tick box' and free comment questions around five clusters of questions covering: (1) status in the UK; (2) issues of identity; (3) views on belonging; (4) experiences of representation; and (5) standard demographic questions.

### General Survey Statistics

- 2,424 valid responses.
- 60.40% of respondents have settled status; 15.55% are holders of British citizenship; and 10.48% have pre-settled status.
- 82.22% of respondents are resident in England; 11.8% in Scotland; 3.84% in Wales; and 1.36% in Northern Ireland. While there is some over- and underrepresentation, this distribution is broadly in line with ONS data.
- The mean age of respondents is 46.23 years; their mean age at the time of their arrival in the UK was 27.31 years and, on average, respondents have been living in the UK for 18.71 years.
- The majority of respondents are from Germany, France and The Netherlands; however, some inroads into improving response rates from Eastern Europeans have been made.
- 63.94% of respondents identify as female, while 32.96% identify as male; 0.78% identify as non-binary and 0.21% as transgender.

### Summary of main findings

- 35.06% of respondents came to the UK for work and had an offer of employment before moving; 18.66%, came to the UK to look for work; University education was the second-most important reason, with 29.72% of respondents moving to the UK for it; 14.19% of respondents moved to the UK to join family.
- The majority of Survey respondents can be considered settled in the UK, i.e. their average age profile, details on arrival date and future plans, reflect that a majority of respondents built their lives in the UK and are settled in that sense.
- Despite that, Brexit constitutes a serious rupture: while the majority do see themselves in the UK permanently or long-term at a combined 73.39%, there is a sizable proportion who intend to leave in the near future or only stay short-term at a combined 14.65%.
- Data show that Brexit triggered a new sense of unease and uncertainty among a majority of respondents, with 58.62% agreeing that it increased the likelihood of them leaving the UK.
- Qualitative data highlight that this figure would likely be even higher were it not for practical barriers that many see in a move now, citing, amongst other things, their age and concern over pension rights as the reason they decided not to leave the UK.

- Qualitative data also show that the respondents' sense of home has been negatively impacted by Brexit, particularly in terms of them feeling less attached and more insecure about their status in the UK.
- Despite that, a plurality of respondents, 44.72%, still feel at home in the UK.
- Much of the uncertainty that does exist relates to specific issues over rights and what could happen to the EUSS in future, specifically a clear scepticism that rights might not be preserved as promised; references to the Windrush scandal are common, for example. These concerns are primarily a result of a lack of trust in the UK Government.
- Holders of pre-settled status feel most insecure about their actual right to continue living in the UK, while holders of settled status feel most insecure about the right to welfare support and free healthcare in the NHS in future.
- In terms of EU citizen representation and participation in UK society, a majority of EU citizens feel unrepresented both individually and as a group, at 51.61% and 62.75% respectively. As a further 33.09% and 29.46% respectively feel not well represented. These figures point a worrying void that relates to wider issue of the place of EU citizens in communities and how Brexit has effectively enabled an 'unintegration'.
- Concerns over representation contrast strongly with willingness to participate, certainly when measured in participation at local level and via local elections, with 93.23% of respondents registered to vote and 69.20% having exercised their right to vote in all local elections.
- This also comes out clearly in qualitative data in relation to community involvement of respondents and their engagement with society.
- The ability to further participate, certainly when measured in voting rights, is important to respondents. For General Elections, a majority believe that non-British citizens should have the right to vote if they have settled status or indefinite leave to remain (58.13%). Another sizeable 21.95% believe that all non-British residents in the UK should be able to vote. For local elections, a majority (54.04%) of EU citizens would also like to see a residency-based model of voting rights and believe that all non-British residents should be able to vote in local elections in the UK.

## ABOUT THE SURVEY

This Survey's key aim was to gather data to enhance understanding of EU, EEA and Swiss citizens' (henceforth EU citizens) experiences living in post-Brexit UK, continuing and expanding research from the 2019 Survey 'Experiences and Impact of the EU Settlement Scheme'.<sup>1</sup> Overall, the 2021 Survey focused on exploring people's understandings of their identity, their sense of belonging and home in the UK, and the extent to which they feel represented in the UK as individuals or as part of the wider EU citizen community. The latter was a question that had come out strongly in responses to the 2019 Survey and a second report prepared for the EU citizens' rights NGO the3million, documenting the extent to which EU citizens see themselves as a community, as well as in their distinct home nationalities and in relation to living in the UK. Additionally, the 2021 Survey picked up themes that emerged in qualitative data in the 2019 Survey around issues such as taking up citizenship, voting rights and the place of EU citizens in both their local and EU citizen communities.

The Survey was conducted by Prof Tanja Bueltmann and Dr Alexandra Bulat, University of Strathclyde.

### Research design, methods and research ethics

#### *Survey*

The Survey was designed by Prof Bueltmann and Dr Bulat and went through research ethics clearance, including assessment of compliance with legal, data protection and data storage regulations. The research was granted ethical approval by the School of Humanities Ethics Committee, University of Strathclyde.

Respondents were self-selecting and chose to participate after reading the participant information provided as part of the survey; they could choose to remain completely anonymous if they so wished, though the option to leave contact details for follow-up interviews was provided. Various channels were utilised to inform potential participants about the Survey, including sharing via social media channels and dissemination in relevant community groups, as well as coverage in the press. In light of the self-selection approach adopted, it is important to recognise that this comes with specific questions in relation to data representativeness and how we can extrapolate and identify general patterns—or not—from the data. Considering the number of respondents and how the survey was designed, there can be full confidence in both the relevance and usability of the data gathered. The analysis that follows notes any potential issues that readers may want to bear in mind and relates the survey data to other evidence where appropriate; additionally, the follow-up interviews conducted gave the opportunity for establishing further context and nuance.

#### *Follow-up interviews*

This report also includes a selection of case studies based on in-depth interviews that were conducted with a total of 49 Survey respondents following the Survey; 48 interviews are used for the analysis as one participant did not, as emerged only during the interview, satisfy the participation criteria (the interviewee was a dual citizen, but British-born). Overall, 113 participants had been invited for an interview in three rounds of email invitations, and 49 accepted the invitation.

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<sup>1</sup> Tanja Bueltmann, 'Experiences and Impact of the EU Settlement Scheme: Report on the3million Settled Status Survey' (the3million, 2020).



The interviews took place between 29 March and 17 June 2021 mostly via Zoom, with a few via phone where Zoom was not possible. All interviews were audio recorded and partial automated transcripts produced via Zoom. The transcribed text files were categorised in NVivo using a thematic coding scheme. The top-level codes were the following:

#### 1. Brexit

Interviewees were asked to comment on their first thoughts on Brexit and their lived experiences of Brexit as a process, including specifically reflecting on what they remember from three key Brexit dates: 24 June 2016, 31 December 2020 and 1 January 2021. They were also asked to describe other significant Brexit moments.

#### 2. Status in the UK

This includes participants' accounts of their experiences applying to the EU Settlement Scheme. This theme was further divided into four sub-themes: (in)security; barriers to applying; experiences with the process of applying; and proving status. This overall category includes all text on citizenship, which was sub-divided into: reasons for applying or not applying for citizenship; barriers to applying (cost, Comprehensive Sickness Insurance [CSI] and dual citizenship restrictions); citizenship impact on belonging; citizenship impact on representation; citizenship reform; and a series of sub-themes about the process (English test, Life in the UK test and broader experiences of applying for citizenship). The top-level code 'Status in the UK' also includes accounts from a few participants who applied for EEA Permanent Residence or Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR).

#### 3. Belonging

This includes participants' thoughts on: Brexit impact on their belonging; defining 'home' and feeling at 'home' (both in the UK and outside the UK); any experiences of xenophobia, racism and discrimination; views on how EU citizens are perceived in the UK, with a sub-category on how reactions to EU citizens depend on their country of origin; and the interviewee's plans to stay or leave the UK.

#### 4. Identity

This includes the following sub-categories: Brexit impact on identity; EU citizen identity, with a sub-category on whether EU citizens are considered as a minority by the interviewees; and the interviewees' European identity, any local identities (UK and non-UK), national identities (non-UK and UK, with the latter further sub-categorised into British, English, Northern Irish, Scottish and Welsh).

#### 5. Political representation

This includes participants' views on the following sub-categories: democratic participation with categorisation in relation to Brexit impact on participation, changes in participation, political party membership, protests and voting; non-UK politics; UK politics, with the sub-categories of local politics, national politics, party politics, devolved administrations politics as applicable; non-UK politics; voting rights for both local elections and national elections, and EU citizen representation, which was split into two-sub themes: EU citizen politicians and reforms to increase representation.

### *Follow-up interviews sample*

A sample of 48 interviews was used for the analysis and six in-depth case studies are presented in this report, chosen to reflect the diversity of participants' views and experiences. Participants who received an interview invitation were specifically selected to reflect both the demographic diversity of EU citizens in the UK and the diversity of views on Brexit, identity, belonging and representation. The mean age of the interviewees is 42.3, with an age range of 19 to 77 years old; 52% identify as female (N = 25), 46% as male (N=22) and 2% (N=1) as non-binary. The countries of citizenship were selected to match closer the distribution in the EU citizen population. Appendix 1 provides a table that shows these characteristics in more detail.

## DATA AND FINDINGS

The following report provides key findings from the ‘EU Citizens’ Identity, Belonging & Representation Post-Brexit’ Survey, presenting quantitative and qualitative data, as well as a selection of six in-depth case studies from subsequent interviews conducted with a select number of Survey respondents.

### Number of Survey respondents and their status

	number	%
total number of Survey respondents	2,424	100%
- respondents with settled status	1,464	60.40%
- respondents with British citizenship	377	15.55%
- respondents with pre-settled status	254	10.48%
- respondents who chose ‘other’	119	4.91%
- respondents who submitted an application for citizenship and are waiting for a decision	76	3.14%
- respondents with ILR under the old system, a physical document or a stamp in their passport	65	2.68%
- respondents who qualify for the EUSS but have not applied yet	42	1.73%
- respondents who have applied to the EUSS and are waiting for a decision	21	0.87%
- respondents who are unsure about their status	6	0.25%

**Table 1:** Number of Survey respondents and their status

The ‘other’ category includes a mix of responses, for example from respondents who hold Irish citizenship who mention separate agreements on Irish citizens’ rights. It is positive to see a low number of people unsure about their status, and of those who qualify for the EUSS but have yet to apply. While numerically small, responses of those who have yet to apply mirror issues that earlier research has brought out: 44% of respondents in this category do not think that the EUSS offers a secure status; 24% have concerns about data protection; and 20% plan to leave the UK before 30 June; even now, however, 12% refuse to apply. While numerically small in the Survey, these numbers highlight that we may yet see many more problems following the EUSS deadline. That holds true in particular when considering this within the context of the EUSS backlog that is still significant, leaving 100s of 1000s of EU citizens in a state of limbo.<sup>2</sup>

### UK location of Survey respondents and length of residence

It is important to understand the UK location of Survey respondents as it can potentially point to divergent experiences in the UK—the 2019 Survey conducted by Bueltmann had already highlighted, for instance, different perceptions of the UK government and devolved administrations. For reference, the location of survey respondents is presented alongside ONS data estimates on EU citizen spread throughout the UK. This provides a useful broad yardstick for comparison of patterns.

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<sup>2</sup> At time of report finalisation—mid-August 2021—the backlog was still 500,000, following a last-minute application surge. See for instance: ‘500,000 EU citizens left ‘in limbo’ awaiting decision over right to stay in UK’ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-eu-settlement-scheme-uk-b1901551.html> [last accessed 13 August 2021].

	number of respondents	%	comparison to overall spread/share of the EU citizen population resident in the UK	
			estimated numbers <sup>3</sup>	%
England	1,993	82.22%	3,330,000	89.40%
Scotland	286	11.80%	237,000	6.36%
Wales	93	3.84%	72,000	1.93%
Northern Ireland	33	1.36%	87,000	2.34%
other	19	0.78%	n/a	n/a
	2,424	100%	3,725,000	100%

**Table 2:** UK location of survey respondents with comparison to Office for National Statistics distribution

What the comparison of the respondents' location with the overall spread of the EU citizen population resident in the UK tells us is that there is no significant place bias in terms of the constituent nations of the UK though we can see some relative over-representation of Scottish respondents, and under-representations of Wales and Northern Ireland based respondents.

### Citizenship of respondents

Past surveys have already documented that it can be difficult to attract responses from certain groups of EU citizens, particularly Eastern Europeans, the majority of responses often concentrated in Western European countries.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, a targeted effort was made to recruit more broadly and, specifically, from among Eastern Europeans. While the overall concentration of respondents' background remains Germany, France and The Netherlands, this targeted approach has borne some fruit in the notable expansion, compared to previous surveys, of responses from Polish and Romanian EU citizens (Tables 3a to 3b). It was possible to make inroads into these groups by targeted Survey link dissemination through organisations and social media forums for these specific EU citizen groups. This approach has been labour-intensive, however, we encourage researchers to explore other options to better capture experiences of these groups, such as via focus groups or through interviews of the type we also conducted as part of this research.

Country	%
Germany	17.45%
France	12.25%
The Netherlands	9.74%
Poland	7.55%
Italy	6.89%
Spain	6.48%
Romania	5.69%
Denmark	4.08%
Belgium	2.76%
Greece	2.43%

**Table 3a:** Country of birth of respondents

<sup>3</sup> This is based on Office for National Statistics data estimates for nationality, Table 2.1 here: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/datasets/populationoftheunitedkingdombycountryofbirthandnationality> [last accessed 11 May 2021].

<sup>4</sup> Germany, France and the Netherlands were also the top countries for respondents in the recent Settled Status Survey, see Buelmann, 'Experiences and Impact'.

Country	%
Germany	17.90%
France	12.62%
The Netherlands	10.19%
Italy	7.88%
Poland	7.43%
Spain	6.85%
Romania	5.73%
Denmark	4.21%
Portugal	2.93%
Belgium	2.72%

**Table 3b:** First citizenship held by respondents

Data on second citizenship held reflect the fact that a significant proportion of Survey respondents (15.5%) hold British citizenship, but data also indicate some patterns of prior migration before arrival in the UK or the specific individual family migration history.

Country	%
United Kingdom	58.05%
Italy	4.79%
France	3.94%
Germany	3.94%
United States	2.05%
Ireland	1.88%
Poland	1.88%
Switzerland	1.71%
The Netherlands	1.54%
Portugal	1.54%

**Table 3c:** Second citizenship held by respondents

## Other demographic characteristics of respondents

### Age and time in the UK

age group	%
18-24 years	2.55%
25-34 years	16.00%
35-44 years	26.36%
45-54 years	31.18%
55-64 years	16.08%
65-74 years	6.22%
75+ years	1.52%

**Table 4:** Age group breakdown for respondents

The mean age of respondents is 46.23 years old.

While there are significant individual variances, respondents have, on average, been living in the UK for 18.71 years and were, on average, 27.31 years old when they arrived in the UK.

The distribution of this self-selected sample by age group reflects the patterns of respondents' status and plans in the UK. The majority are settled in the UK (both in terms of status and belonging) and, while many arrived in the UK while relatively young, the current age reflects the average time spent in the UK. One factor behind this age distribution is that the survey was primarily about belonging, identity and representation, dedicating significant space to questions about citizenship. EU citizens who have lived in the UK for a more extensive period perhaps were more attracted and had stronger views on the key topics of this survey.

### Gender identification

In terms of gender identification, the majority of respondents, 63.94%, identify as female, while 32.96% identify as male; 0.78% identify as non-binary and 0.21% as transgender; the remainder preferred not to see or listed a specific description under 'other'. For the purpose of this report, it is worth bearing in mind the gender identification split is not even.

### Level of education and employment

The majority of Survey respondents, 64.48%, have a university degree. This is not representative of the general population, but follows a pattern and concentration seen in other surveys of the type we conducted. While mitigation strategies were employed to try and recruit a more diverse respondent body—and this was successful to some extent—it is worth bearing this distribution in mind.

Employment data offer further context to the socio-economic background of respondents (Tables 5a and 5b).

	%
Employed - full-time	52.13%
Employed - part-time	11.24%
Self-employed full-time	9.87%
Self-employed part-time	8.38%
Unemployed - looking for work	2.98%
Unemployed - not looking for work	2.19%
Retired	8.26%
Student - full-time	3.37%
Student - part-time	1.57%
Other, please state:	0.00%

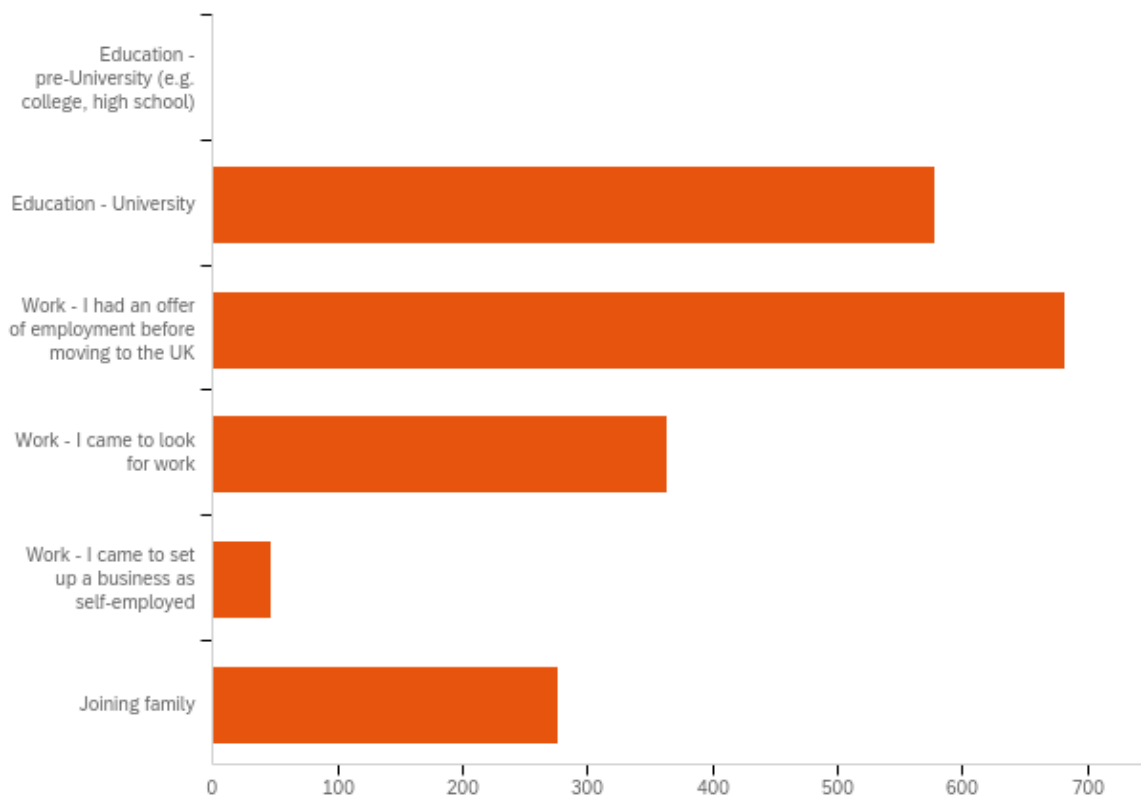
**Table 5a:** Employment status of respondents

	%
Higher & intermediate managerial, administrative, professional occupations	60.82%
Supervisory, clerical & junior managerial, administrative, professional occupations	30.74%
Skilled manual occupations	5.25%
Semi-skilled & unskilled manual occupations, unemployed and lowest grade occupations	3.19%

**Table 5b:** Respondents' employment category if in employment

### Reasons why respondents moved to the UK and their future plans

In order to better understand why the respondents came to the UK, the Survey asked about reasons for moving. A plurality of respondents, 35.06%, came for work and already had an offer of employment before moving to the UK; about half of that, 18.66%, came to the UK to look for work while 2.37% came to set up a business as self-employed. University education was the second-most important reason, with 29.72% of respondents moving to the UK for it. Finally, joining family was also a notable reason for coming, with 14.19% of respondents having moved to the UK because of it (Figure 1).



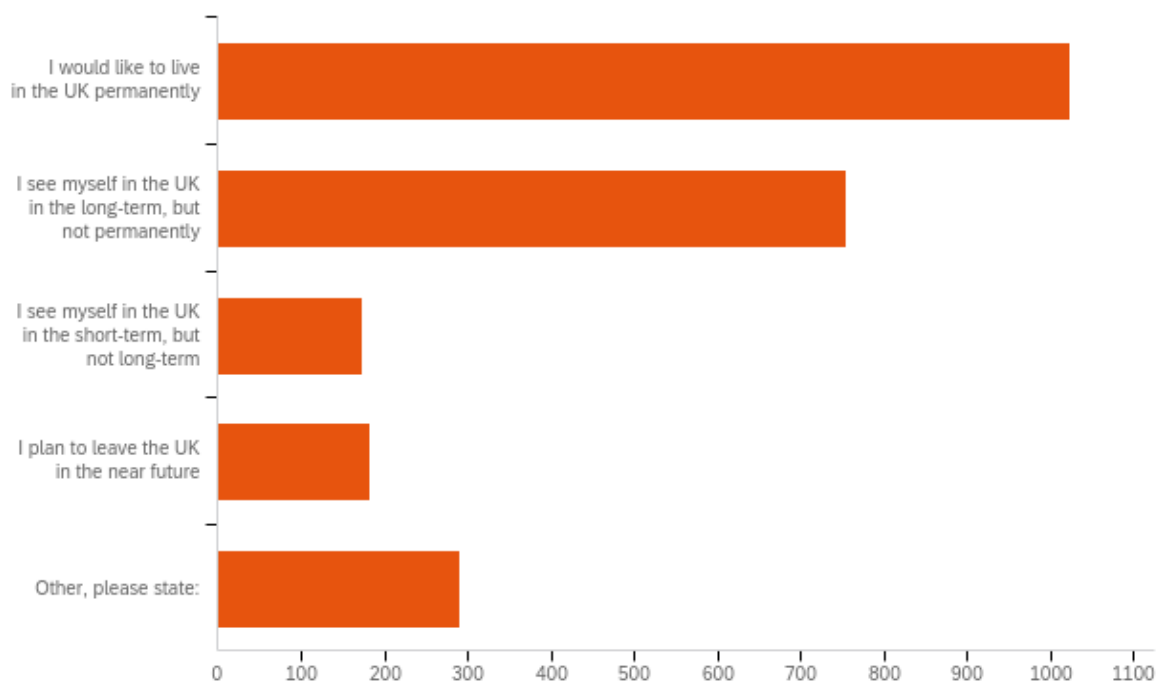
**Figure 1:** What was your reason for moving to the UK?

Statistical breakdowns like this are informative, but they can miss some of the nuances in decisions to move. Qualitative comments made by respondents shed some further light on these. Some reasons are relatively predictable and common, from moving to improve one's English or education to moving for love—the latter connected to Erasmus exchanges in a number of cases, detailing on the context of connections. But it is also notable that a good number of respondents came thinking they would stay short-term—for a gap year, as an Au

Pair or for a work placement—but then remained because they had come to like the UK or found good reasons for staying. For others, coming to the UK was simply about seeking a ‘new adventure’ or new opportunities. As one respondent explained, ‘I wanted to change my life, as silly as it sounds, so I packed my stuff and with some £300 in my pocket I came to London.’ In some cases, the search for opportunities was de facto less for the respondent themselves, but rather for their children, with the desire for a better future for children expressly mentioned by some. Also noteworthy is an emotional motivation for some that was rooted in a genuine love for the UK or specific parts of it. In some cases, this existed long before the actual move, for instance as a result of a holiday; as one respondent noted, for instance, ‘I fell in love with Scotland when on holiday and decided to move.’ There is, in a clear number of qualitative comments, an identifiable theme of Anglophilia, specifically noted as such by some respondents.

Yet while these positive motivations are the reason for most respondents, there are indicators of push factors that contributed to some EU citizens leaving for the UK. One such factor that comes up several times relates to gender identity and sexual orientation; homophobia, for instance, is identified expressly in a number of responses, and as one respondent described, they ‘didn’t feel safe in my birth country due to being gender non-conforming.’ Connected to this is a wider theme of an arrival due to seeking safety, in some cases including from family members in the home country. These types of reasons for migration again reflect that individual stories are vital in assessing and understanding movement patterns and the impact of Brexit on individuals.

While the reasons for arrival provide us with a more nuanced understanding of the respondents’ background and how freedom of movement was being utilised by them, we were also keen to better understand the future plans of respondents. While the majority do see themselves in the UK permanently or long-term (combined 73.39%), there is a sizable proportion who intend to leave in the near future or only want to stay short-term (combined 14.65%).



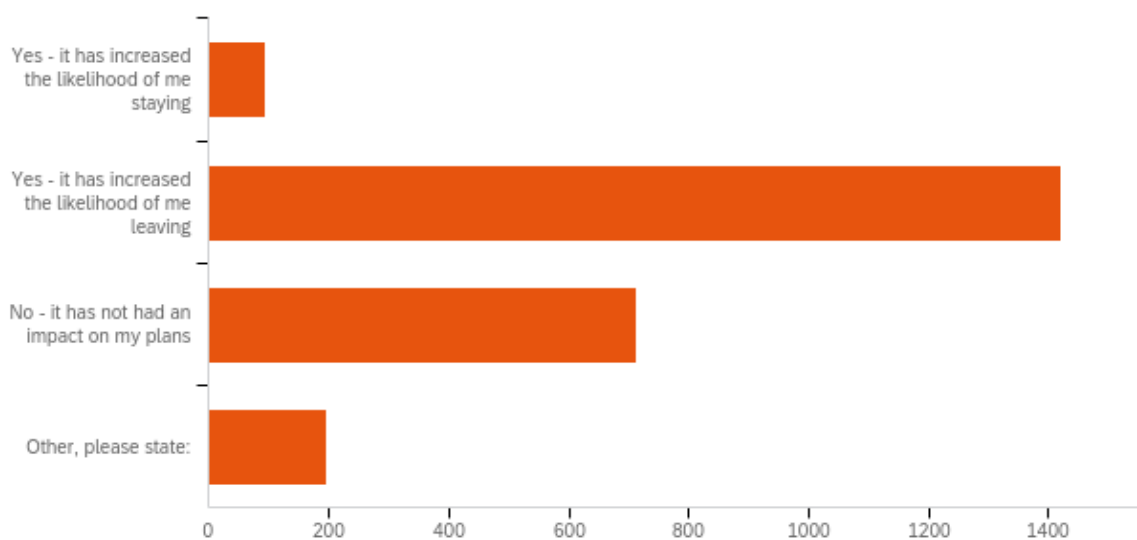
**Figure 2:** Which of the following statements best describes your current plans?



Qualitative data reveal, however, that there is a much more broadly spread desire to leave—or at least the thinking about it: for many, Brexit triggered, for the first time ever, the thought of leaving. This reflects an emotional separation, with an actual departure for many primarily prevented only by practical considerations such as pensions or children in school. Many respondents’ strong attachment has, however, been severely stretched if not severed. While many of the reasons provided for arrival revealed a picture of genuine love for the UK, responses about future plans indicate that Brexit, at a minimum, diminished that for many. The extent to which this is the case, however, does relate—as one would expect—to the length of residency in the UK, but as the statistical data presented earlier show, most respondents can be considered ‘settled’ in that sense.

### The impact of Brexit

The impact of Brexit, therefore, is clearly measurable through different types of data, having triggered a new sense of unease or questions about the future amongst many respondents. This specifically relates to the question of potentially leaving the UK. When asked about the direct impact on plans to stay in the UK, a majority of 58.62% said that it has increased the likelihood of them leaving the UK; 29.41% said that it has not impacted plans, while Brexit increased the likelihood of staying for 3.84% of people (Figure 3).



**Figure 3:** Has Brexit impacted your plans to stay in the UK?

There is a common narrative in the ‘other’ comment category: respondents note how their sense of ‘home’ in the UK and security before Brexit was negatively impacted by the EU referendum and what followed. For example, one participant notes: ‘it has taken away the feeling of home, I never thought it would, but I might leave at some point.’ Brexit has had a significant impact on the sense of belonging of respondents.

*This was firmly my forever country. Now, much less so, not just Brexit although that is the main driver, but [also the] Tory government, corruption, hostile environment, rising inequality, reduced public spending.*

*At first, I thought it might have been difficult for me to stay in the UK because I didn’t know if I would have been able to apply for Permanent*

*Residence under the old system due to my lack of Comprehensive Sickness Insurance, but now I have settled status.*

*I think without Brexit we would probably be more likely to be migrating within Europe. Due to Brexit this is much more complicated than before for my British husband.*

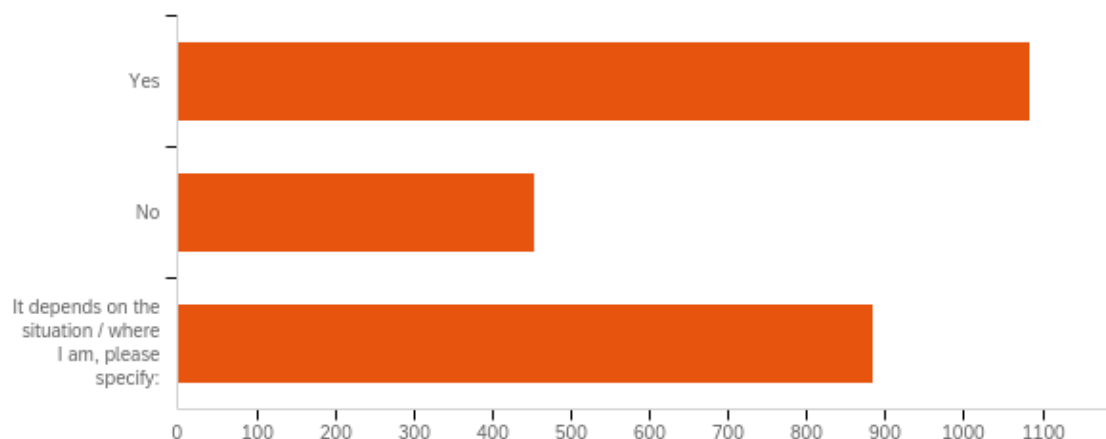
*I always wanted to live here but after Brexit I started feeling less welcome and more worried about my future here. I still want to try but it will depend on the political situation in the country. It's doesn't feel great when you give everything to the country that doesn't respect you.*

*Brexit has changed my love for and view of the UK fundamentally. Since the referendum campaign, this country is unrecognisable to me. With this Tory government and their hostile environment policies, I kind of expect to be discriminated against and/or forced to leave sooner or later.*

*Brexit has made me feel unsettled. It has also exacerbated the uncertainties of other aspects of my life, e.g. job and relationship. Previously, my job and/or my relationship anchored me here, but now everything, really everything is in flux.*

*I have never thought about leaving before Brexit. I had even written in my will that I wanted my ashes to be spread in the Yorkshire Dales. After The referendum I was so disappointed with the country and personal friends that my perception changed and I can't see myself retiring here.*

While quantitative data show that a plurality of 44.72% feel at home in the UK, the answer to this depends on the specific situation for 36.51% of respondents, and at that point emotions and feelings like those expressed by the respondents quoted above come into play. Meanwhile, 18.77% say they do not feel at home in the UK. For those who say that it depends, relevant factors are the perceived attitudes of British people, the location in the UK (some locations are associated with more positive attitudes, e.g., London or Scotland), while other EU citizens have two 'homes'—they feel at home both in the UK and the country where they grew up and, in many cases, spent a significant part of their life.



**Figure 4:** Do you feel at home in the UK?

Much of the uncertainty that still exists, which clearly also has an impact on the sense of EU citizens' belonging, is the result of a lack of trust in the EUSS and what could happen in future.

The lack of trust is not universal, however, but primarily reserved expressly for the UK government, a pattern that had already emerged in earlier research.<sup>5</sup>

*I do not trust the UK Government anymore so I need a cast iron guarantee that my status will not be downgraded at the whim of any government in power.*

*Having to apply for status has not given me much trust in the government.*

*The "Hostile Environment" and the many promises made over the years but not kept mean that there is little trust left with the government and its plans.*

*My levels of trust that things will be ok and I will have the same opportunities as British citizens has collapsed*

*I'm Irish with settled status as I don't trust the Tory government.*

*I don't trust the settled scheme. It's a new Windrush in the making.*

*I don't trust UK government to keep their commitments. And I would like to feel secure here. I also would like to be able to vote in all elections.*

In terms of those who hold pre-settled and settled status, the impact of Brexit is also tangible in how secure—or not—they see their rights for the future. This varies depending on what rights we consider. The table below shows the distribution for pre-settled status (top %) and settled status (bottom %).

	<b>Very insecure</b>	<b>Insecure</b>	<b>Neither insecure nor secure</b>	<b>Secure</b>	<b>Very secure</b>	<b>This does not apply to me</b>
Right to continue living in the UK	10.24%	32.28%	13.39%	31.89%	12.20%	0.00%
	11.41%	31.10%	17.77%	28.43%	11.07%	0.21%
Right to work in the UK	10.63%	21.65%	14.17%	36.22%	15.35%	1.97%
	8.13%	28.50%	17.02%	31.03%	10.39%	4.92%
Right to rent in the UK	9.06%	22.05%	14.57%	34.25%	13.39%	6.69%
	9.30%	20.85%	18.25%	20.10%	6.70%	24.81%
Right to study in the UK	9.45%	19.29%	14.57%	24.80%	10.63%	21.26%
	6.84%	18.39%	17.98%	19.28%	6.15%	31.37%
Right to welfare support (e.g. housing benefits)	28.35%	28.74%	19.69%	10.24%	3.54%	9.45%
	18.05%	36.02%	17.50%	10.80%	4.10%	13.53%
Right to free healthcare (NHS)	15.35%	25.59%	15.35%	30.31%	12.99%	0.39%
	17.43%	34.79%	17.57%	21.39%	8.41%	0.41%

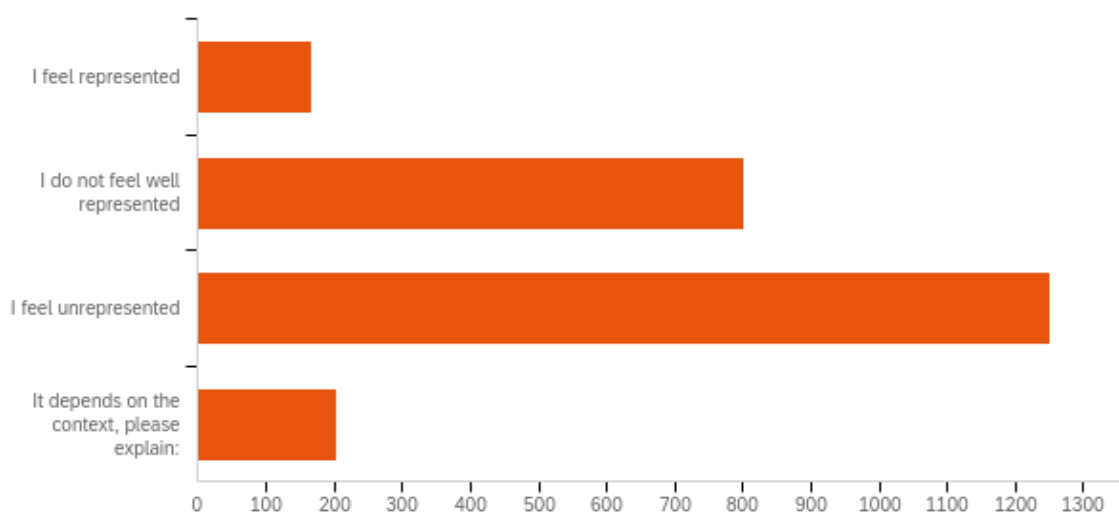
**Table 6:** How secure do you feel about your rights in the UK with (pre-)settled and settled status?

<sup>5</sup> Bueltmann, 'Experiences and Impact'.

Some EU citizens have also already experienced more practical Brexit impacts. In particular, this relates to the fact that around one third of both pre-settled status and settled status holders had already been asked to prove their status during the grace period or even before, which should not have happened. Following the EU Settlement Scheme deadline, these checks are now the norm, but new problems are likely to emerge, as accounts reported to the 3million and shared via social media indicate, for instance.<sup>6</sup> This has happened to people when applying for Universal Credit or during right to work / rent checks, including retrospective ones, but also at the UK border. As one respondent noted, ‘I was asked by Border Force when leaving my airplane from my home at Barcelona [...] I showed him I had my confirmation e-mail from the Home Office that states this is not proof but seemed enough for the Officer’.

## Representation and participation

A key focus of the Survey are the questions of EU citizen representation and participation; these themes emerged prominently in the 2019 ‘Experiences and Impact’ Survey responses,<sup>7</sup> so this Survey offered an opportunity to research these issues in more detail post-Brexit. The inability to vote in the EU referendum has, as much is immediately evident, left a mark on many EU citizens and Survey data show what they do not feel well-represented, neither individually nor as a group. In fact, the majority of respondents—51.61% and 62.75% respectively—feel unrepresented entirely; adding to that the respective 33.09% and 29.46% of those who do not feel well represented, we see a worrying situation of a group of people seeing no clear representation for themselves.



**Figure 5a:** As an individual, do you feel your views are represented in UK politics?

Qualitative comments provide more detailed insights into why respondents feel this way and what contexts make a difference:

*I feel mostly unrepresented although political parties like the greens or liberals are trying the best but with not enough representation to make any difference.*

*I feel represented at a local level.*

<sup>6</sup> One example relating to proving status can be found here, for instance, <https://twitter.com/the3million/status/1414928678409195520?s=20>; the 3million reporting form is available here: <https://www.the3million.org.uk/report-it> [both links last accessed on 15 July 2021].

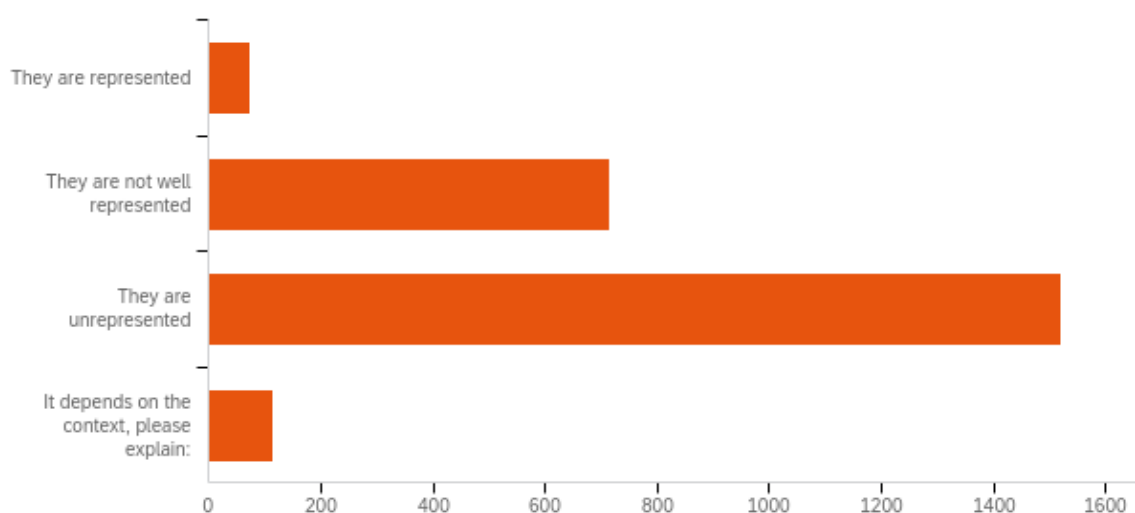
<sup>7</sup> Bueltmann, ‘Experiences and Impact’.

*As a Londoner I do feel represented, in the UK in general I don't really. I rather feel represented by the EU vis-à-vis the UK government.*

*I feel generally disenfranchised by mainstream party politics and clearly think that the concerns of EU citizens (and of course many other groups) are not adequately considered. I feel better represented by emerging pressure groups.*

*I do not feel represented at Westminster but the Scottish government went through great effort to make me feel represented in Scotland, whether it's ability to vote (incl Indy ref), personal letters, statements and general priorities in politics.*

The latter point about representation through pressure groups also relates to their being differences in terms of the sense about individual representation and how EU citizens are represented as a group:



**Figure 5b:** Do you feel EU citizens as a group are represented in UK politics?

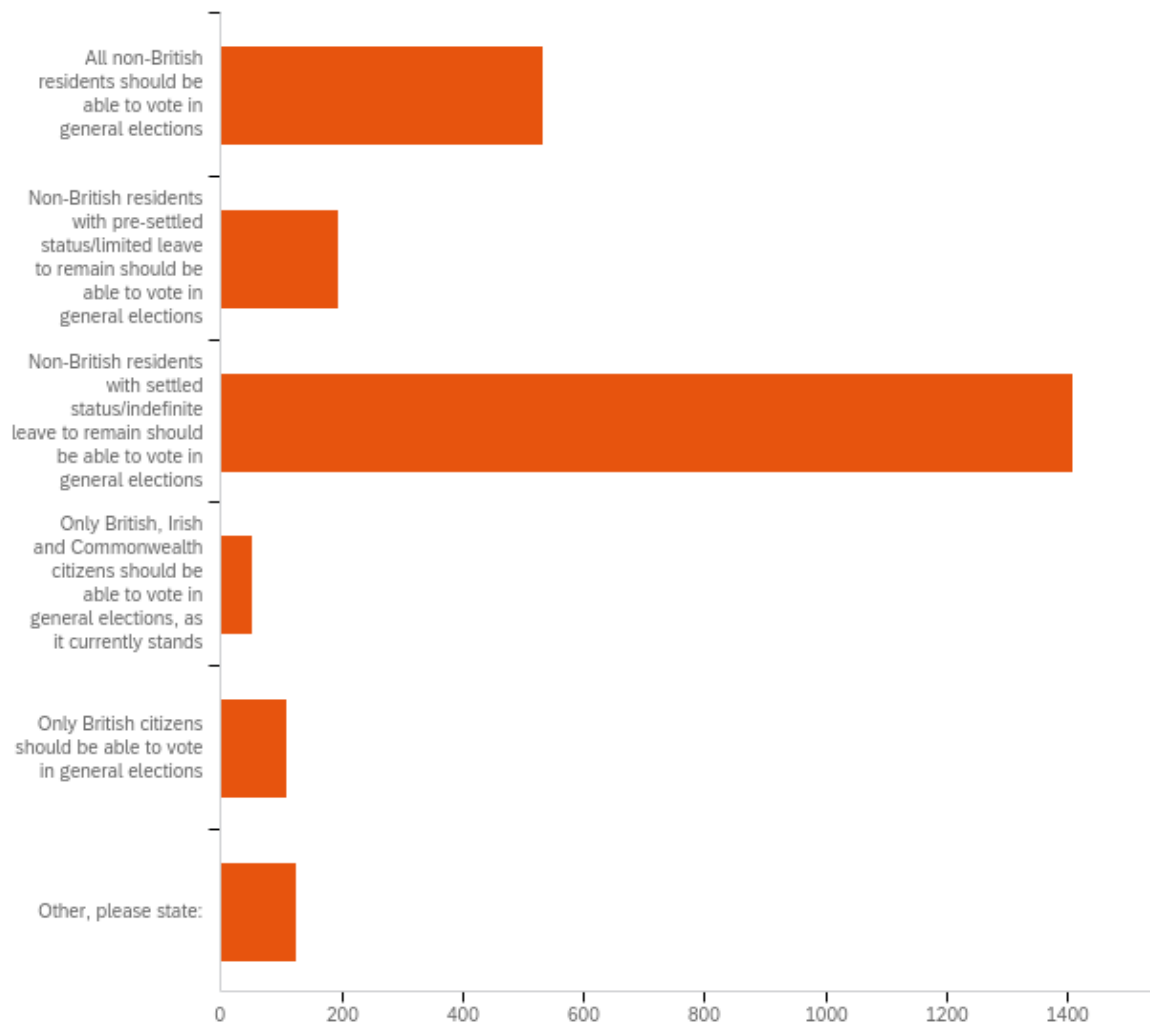
This contrasts with the respondents' willingness to participate in political processes, with 93.23% registered to vote in local elections, for example. The majority, 69.20%, also said that they have exercised their right to vote in all local elections, with another 16.02% noting they voted in most of them. Once again, this shows that our survey sample consists of respondents who are more informed and politically active than the statistical average of EU citizens. For instance, ONS 2019 data shows that in some London boroughs, EU citizens' registration rates (as a percentage of EU residents in a local authority) can even get as low as the 20-40% range. Overall, EU citizens in the UK have lower voter registration rates (with slightly over 50% overall) than Commonwealth citizens and significantly lower than British and Irish citizens.<sup>8</sup>

### Voting rights

To gauge the issue of representation more fully, respondents were also asked to express their view on voting rights, specifically who, apart from British citizens, should have voting rights in UK General Elections (Figure 6a), as well as in local elections (Figure 6b). There is a contrast

<sup>8</sup> Electoral Commission (2016). The December 2015 electoral registers in Great Britain: Accuracy and completeness of the registers in Great Britain and the transition to Individual Electoral Registration.

between these two questions. On the first question, a majority believe that non-British citizens should have the right to vote in general elections if they have settled status or indefinite leave to remain (58.13%). Another sizeable 21.95% believe that all non-British residents in the UK should be able to vote in all elections, while 8.09% qualify this with having pre-settled status or limited leave to remain. Only 2.15% support limiting the rights to vote in Westminster elections as currently, with only British, Irish and Commonwealth citizens being able to vote (2.15%). Another 4.5% would like to see more restrictive voting rights than currently, with only British citizens being allowed to vote for Westminster elections.



**Figure 6a:** Who should have voting rights? (UK general elections)

A key concern that comes up in qualitative comments relates to the connection between taxation and representation:

*If you pay taxes, you should have the right to vote.*

*If you've lived here for a few years and paid your taxes, you should get a vote. No taxation without representation.*

*I feel that if somebody made a life in a country, paying taxes, providing work to people, any legislation will affect their lives. Regardless of what their nationality says, they should have a vote too.*

For local elections, the picture is very different, as is the franchise. However, again, overall, EU citizens would like to see a residency-based model of voting rights. A majority (54.04%) believe that all non-British residents should be able to vote in local elections in the UK – this is currently the model adopted in Scotland and Wales for local elections as well as the devolved administrations. 13.86% would add pre-settled status or limited leave to remain as a criterion, while a sizeable 27.85% think settled status or indefinite leave to remain should be required for one to be able to vote in local elections. Less than 2% overall think that local voting rights should exclude those who are not British citizens.

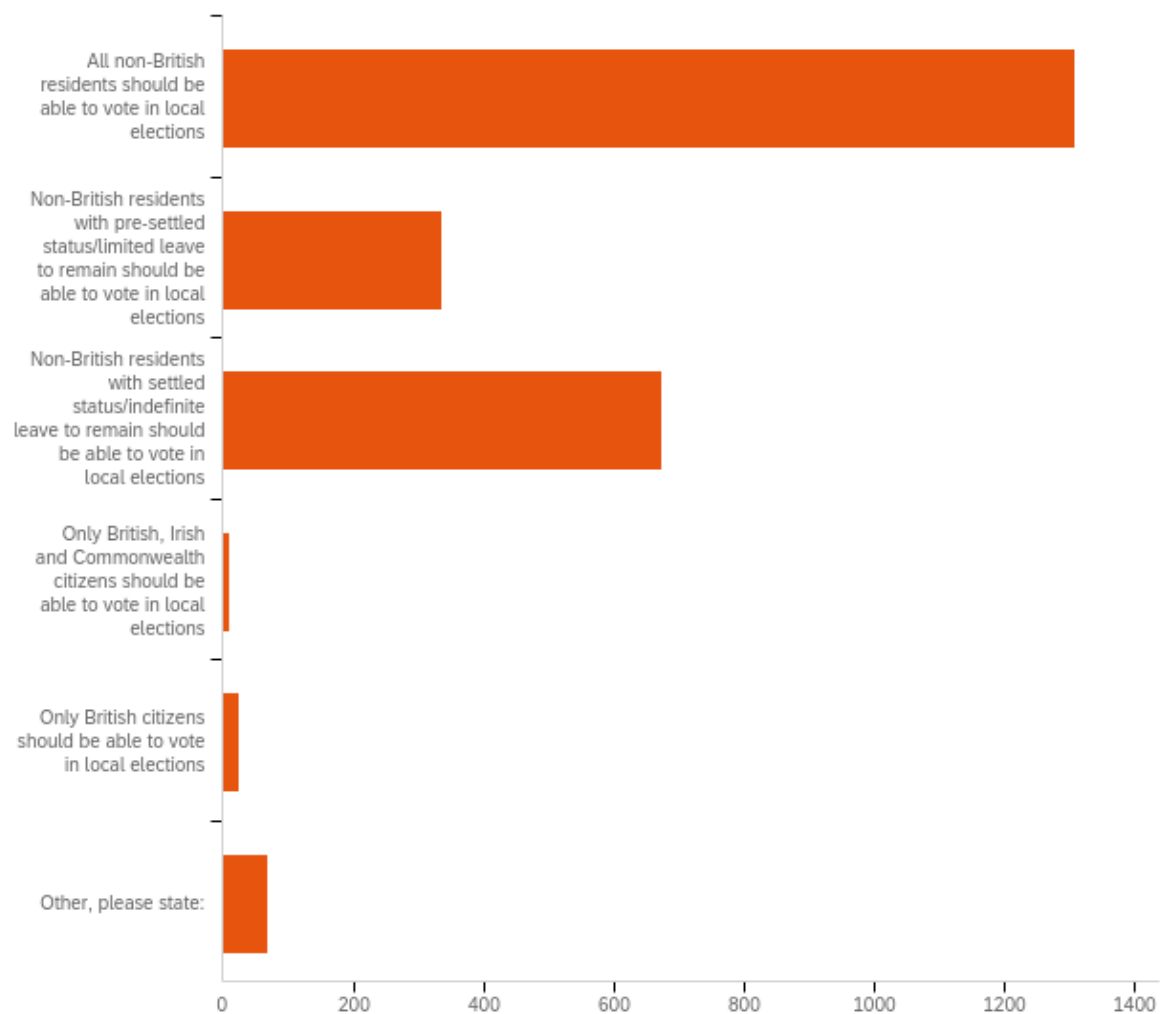


Figure 6b: Who should have voting rights? (UK local elections)

### Views on British citizenship and the application process

One of the issues tied up with both the question on voting rights and the status question of EU citizens post-Brexit is citizenship. As noted above, 15.55% of respondents already held British citizenship at the time of responding to this Survey, and another 3.14% were waiting for a decision on their application. For many, the decision to apply relates to the desire to want to make their status more secure, which is the result of a lack of trust in the EU Settlement Scheme, particularly in relation to the lack of a physical proof of status.

*To be able to come and go as I please without the fear of losing my settled status.*

*It will remove the worry of policy changes regarding my status as an EU citizen. It'll allow me to always move back to the UK, even if I end up moving away for a year or two.*

*UK passports allows me to travel to more countries without visa and better diplomatic protection abroad.*

*To feel more secure and to be able to vote. In 2015 it would have been because I actually felt British and I wish I had done it then, but I thought it was costly and Denmark had only just allowed double citizenship. In 2016 I felt very much "other" and unwanted.*

*Security, access to health care, financial security (I'm particularly worried about my pension, I have spent my entire working life in the UK), worried about the fact that the current Brexit agreement on EU citizens living here can be changed without proper scrutiny by parliament, worries about becoming a second-rate citizen after living here for more than half of my life. Being able to vote in general elections.*

*I want a physical document that proves my rights.*

*Because I do not trust the settled status scheme to keep my rights secure. My British husband works internationally and I want to feel secure that I can join him without losing my right to return to the UK. It's for my own freedom of movement I guess.*

*Because I am engaged to a British citizen and I don't want to be considered forever as a second class citizen in the UK if we remain here. My fiancé will also apply for Irish citizenship so we are both on the same page when we need to travel or have equal rights regardless of where we decide to live.*

The ability to participate fully in all aspects of UK life, including having full voting rights, was an important motivation for respondents. 88.30% of respondents said the ability to vote in all elections is very important to them, with another 7.95% identifying it as somewhat important.

The survey results illustrate the various barriers to acquiring British citizenship. As research by the 3million Young Europeans shows, a number of factors are likely to be prohibitive, including the cost of applying and restrictions on dual nationality.<sup>9</sup> Both are points that many respondents raised. Common issues also relate to residency requirements and evidence, specifically the issue of Comprehensive Sickness Insurance. Language requirements in themselves are not seen as a big hurdle, but there are questions around the need for tests and the process of recognising degrees as a substitute.

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<sup>9</sup> For details see Young Europeans briefing papers on barriers to citizenship: 'The cost of citizenship', [http://0d385427-9722-4ee6-86fe-3905bdbf5e6e.usfiles.com/ugd/0d3854\\_366052d5d5834c5eb2f020608ac6a35c.pdf](http://0d385427-9722-4ee6-86fe-3905bdbf5e6e.usfiles.com/ugd/0d3854_366052d5d5834c5eb2f020608ac6a35c.pdf); 'Restrictions on EEA citizens' dual nationality', [http://0d385427-9722-4ee6-86fe-3905bdbf5e6e.usfiles.com/ugd/0d3854\\_0e0cbb0f0b594b76b1cfb084bd650e6c.pdf](http://0d385427-9722-4ee6-86fe-3905bdbf5e6e.usfiles.com/ugd/0d3854_0e0cbb0f0b594b76b1cfb084bd650e6c.pdf) [last accessed 7 July 2021].



We were also interested in better understanding how respondents who have applied for citizenship experienced the process, and how easy or difficult they found the key steps of it to provide some more in-depth data. It is important to bear in mind the background of respondents and their education level and socio-economic profile, which goes some way towards explaining, for instance, the responses to the English language test: a majority of just over 50% found this very or somewhat easy, while 46.58% did not have to do it at all (which, amongst other things, is a likely indicator of a degree from an English-speaking country). In specific groups—both of EU citizens and immigrants from elsewhere—these figures would likely be more diverse across all categories.

Yet while language was not a barrier for the vast majority of Survey respondents, even among this relatively more privileged group, a plurality found the cost a hurdle, with 39.95% indicating that they found it either somewhat or very difficult to save the funds to pay for the citizenship application fee. This comes as no surprise when considering that the self-declared average cost for those who applied, including all fees and related expenses, such as for document checks, is £1,960 among respondents.

	Very easy	Somewhat easy	Neither easy nor difficult	Somewhat difficult	Very difficult	I did not have to do this	I have not done this yet
Saving sufficient funds to pay for the application fee	13.02%	13.25%	24.50%	26.93%	13.02%	8.83%	0.44%
Passing the 'Life in the UK' test	29.80%	26.71%	15.45%	14.79%	1.55%	11.04%	0.66%
Passing the English language test	44.81%	5.30%	1.55%	0.88%	0.22%	46.58%	0.66%
Having my documents checked / biometrics appointment	20.31%	21.41%	17.22%	22.52%	9.49%	6.62%	2.43%
Gathering the residence evidence required	9.05%	15.67%	16.34%	30.02%	23.18%	5.08%	0.66%
Satisfying the absence requirement	21.85%	21.63%	16.11%	17.66%	9.27%	12.14%	1.32%
Providing good character references	34.00%	26.05%	17.44%	12.14%	2.87%	6.62%	0.88%
Booking my citizenship ceremony	36.20%	18.54%	12.36%	5.30%	3.75%	6.40%	17.44%
Applying for a passport after my ceremony	30.24%	15.23%	9.49%	5.96%	2.21%	5.74%	31.13%

**Table 7:** How easy or difficult have you found the following steps in your British citizenship process?

The most difficult aspect, however, was the gathering of the residence evidence required, with 53.20% of respondents finding this somewhat or very difficult. Yet despite accounts of some problems, 74.58% of respondents did not have any help or guidance applying; 8.9% received free immigration advice from an accredited adviser or lawyer, and 16.53% received paid advice from an accredited adviser or lawyer.

One of the most contentious elements of applying for citizenship is the 'Life in the UK' test. There are a number of reasons for this, but a particularly concerning one is the fact that some components of the test are not actually accurate and have already led to calls for false

information to be corrected and the test to be revised.<sup>10</sup> Many survey respondents would like it scrapped, but there is also a recognition that it can be useful and that such kind of tests exists in other countries. The following selection of comments serves to illustrate the issues that respondents have with the existing test:

*So many questions that have nothing to do with being a good citizen.*

*I don't mind taking the Life in the UK test, but feel like it's a really antiquated thing to do in terms of what you have to learn for it.*

*It requires active de-learning of what I know about world and European history ("mostly ordered" way of dismantling British Empire etc). Very biased. Very patronising. Ridiculous level of details not important in the life in the British society, lack of the information how the British politics works, how is wealth divided, how to help oneself when in trouble etc.*

*The test book is in part a jingoistic exercise about Britain's alleged grandness. It makes little sense.*

*The test itself is shambolic. It has no reference to actual experiences of life in the UK nor it requires any. It is entirely based on the information for the suggested preparation booklet and many questions refer to "small print", e.g. picture captions. A person who has not spent a day in the UK could pass the test by learning the book, yet someone living here for decades has no chance without the booklet. It is a test on good reading and memory, not Life in the UK.*

*It doesn't actually reflect life in the UK at all. I asked several British people to try a mock version of it and none of them passed.*

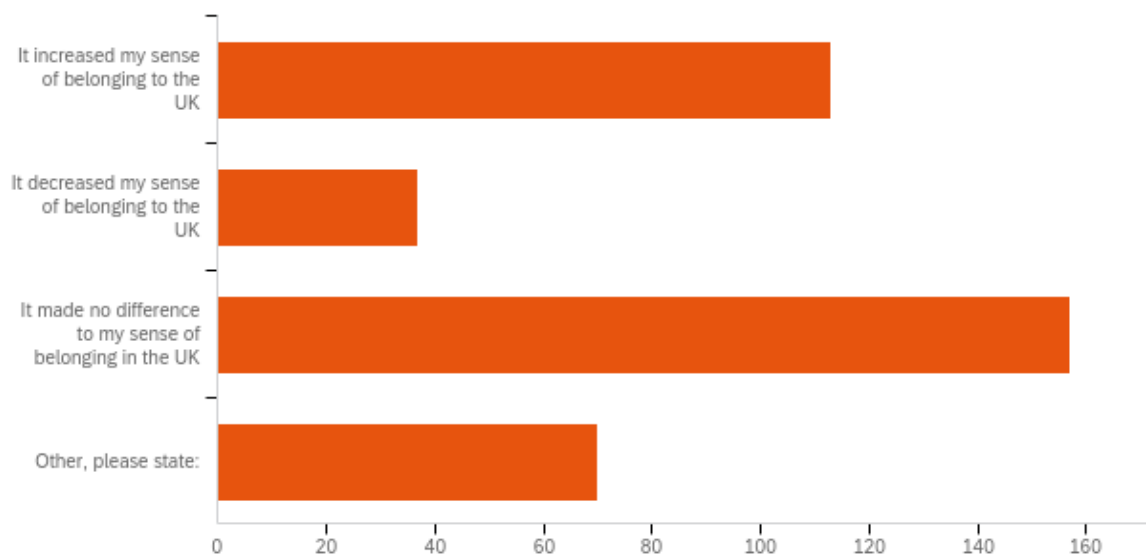
*The test is a way to further provide a narrow-minded view of Britain. I live in Scotland and the Home Office book offers a very stereotypical and scant view on Scotland. My experience on the day was terrible. I was searched with a metal detector and I had my hair and ears searched for Bluetooth devices. I had to take the test with my sleeves rolled up. The woman supervising us shouted at an old man who couldn't get his computer to work. It was hostile environment at its full display. I also almost wasn't allowed to take the test as apparently the online form said I was born in Edinburgh. After I said I hadn't filled it in I was told that my computer must have done it and that I would be allowed to take the test but normally I would be asked to leave. Absolutely rotten treatment.*

Ultimately, there is a lot of criticism from respondents, and it centres primarily on the lack of meaningfulness of the test as it is currently designed. It is, in that sense, a lost opportunity that could genuinely serve to help inform applicants and make them better citizens, but also, in doing so, increase their sense of belonging. For Survey respondents this was the case only for around a third who applied (29.97%), while it made no difference for the plurality (41.64%, Figure 7).

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<sup>10</sup> See for instance 'Home Office urged to correct false slavery information in citizenship test', <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/jul/22/home-office-urged-to-correct-false-slavery-information-in-citizenship-test> [last accessed 12 July 2021].

Qualitative comments indicate that it is important to consider these figures in the specific Brexit context and the motivations and impacts this had on the decision to apply. While some respondents felt that citizenship ‘increased my sense of stability and diminished the feeling of being a foreigner’ or that it ‘confirms my right to stay as an equal’, others speak of resentment because they felt ‘pushed into acquiring it in order to feel secure’ again in their life in the UK. For some, as Figure 7 shows, there was actually a decrease in the sense of belonging, though this may, in part, also reflect a difference between the actual process of applying and what citizenship itself means. As one respondent observed, ‘the process itself decreased my sense of belonging. The actual ceremony in Scotland increased my sense of belonging as it was a celebration of being a welcomed and appreciated citizen.’ Moreover, as the later case studies from interviews indicate, there are applicants who found the test useful.



**Figure 7:** How did acquiring British citizenship make you feel?

It is also interesting to note that, although the ability to vote is a key motivation and recognised by respondents, the impact of citizenship on the respondents’ feeling of being represented or not is not as significant as one might assume: 31.56% feel more represented with citizenship, but a majority of 56.76% feel it makes no difference. Based on comments made throughout, this likely relates, at least in part, to wider issues in the British system, such as the dominance of the first-past-the-post electoral system and experiences of Remain voters who too, based on anecdotal evidence from social media, share a feeling of having been ignored by the Government since the EU referendum.

In terms of citizenship, two questions remain: first, what changes would applicants make to the process, and secondly, what deters those who are choosing not to apply? In terms of any changes, a reduction in the cost is the main response. This is unsurprising given how high costs can get overall, especially if applying for a family, for instance, or if an immigration lawyer is needed. Tying in with this are also questions of add-on costs such as travel to test centres and fees for the services that have been outsourced. Some respondents also have very specific suggestions, such as the scrapping of the CSI requirement.

*The company used for the document checks (I assume outsourced from government) is an issue for me, the appointment availability and prices of it are ridiculous (£50 for someone to scan documents and another £50 if you want to ensure that the documents are correct, on top of the £199*

*pounds to attend the appointment!) Citizenship is expensive enough, companies shouldn't be making profits on top of that.*

*Not having to relinquish important documentation (such as passports) for any amount of time. Have civil servants in offices around the country (eg at council halls) where people can go in person to deal with Home Office affairs.*

*Cheaper, more transparency if application is incorrect and possibility of re applying without losing the fee. No language exams for anyone who has high level of NVQ qualifications or job requiring good use of English.*

*It was quite smooth a lot of the application was online. Maybe not having to list every single absence but would be good to only list if you have been away longer than 3 weeks or a month for example?*

Some of the concerns expressed by respondents about the application process tie in with the reasons given by those who are choosing not to apply. Cost is a major factor, and so is the inability of holding dual nationality for some. But there are also more principled reasons. The following selection of comments highlights some of them:

*I would only apply if this country made me feel truly at home. Everyday acts of casual xenophobia remind me I don't belong here, and a piece of paper will not change that.*

*I was considering to apply a few years back, but the process requires to swear allegiance to the Queen. I believe that people should be equal and dislike the idea of a non-elected head of state. I looked through the booklet about living in the UK, and questions for test and came to the conclusion that I am not that desperate.*

*I do not feel like British citizenship would fit my identity. I do not wish to be subject to a monarch and I do not want to be part of a collective that I feel is defined by exceptionalism and post-colonial nostalgia. If the above was not applicable, then the cost and bureaucracy would discourage me from applying.*

*1. Home country does not allow dual citizenship and not willing to give up native citizenship. 2. Even if dual citizenship was possible, I would be unlikely to apply as I do not feel any emotional attachment to the UK. However, I live in Scotland and have a strong affinity for Scotland, so would consider Scottish citizenship if that was ever to become an option.*

*I don't consider myself British and I don't think this should be the only way to secure a future in "global Britain". I have a PhD from one of the best universities in the world and experience in key roles in the private sector. If my skills and experience are not welcome in the UK, I can easily move elsewhere.*

## Identity and belonging

The 2019 ‘Experiences and Impact’ Survey highlighted without doubt that Brexit constitutes a serious and real rupture in the sense of belonging of EU citizens. A significant 94.7% of respondents to that Survey disagreed or strongly disagreed that they now feel more integrated, and 95.24% disagreed or strongly disagreed that they now feel more at home in the UK. Another notable measure was the respondents’ choice of words in terms of Brexit and its impact, with ‘angry’, ‘anxious’ and ‘unwanted’ being the words most frequently mentioned. Free text comments provided by respondents also included significant evidence of wider negative impacts on respondents’ mental health and well-being.<sup>11</sup>

The current Survey presents some continuity in findings. In terms of identity descriptors, for instance, ‘European’ and ‘EU citizen’, and the nationality of the country of birth, are the terms respondents would most likely use, often together. Regional and local identities, both in the context of the UK and the country of birth, play a noticeable role too, however.

	%
European	24.89%
EU citizen	20.71%
British	3.27%
English	0.73%
Scottish	1.69%
Welsh	0.33%
Northern Irish	0.29%
the nationality of my country of birth. Please specify	23.88%
a regional identity in the UK (e.g. 'I'm from the Midlands'). Please specify	5.87%
a local identity in the UK (e.g. 'I am a Liverpoolian') Please specify	6.48%
a regional identity in a country other than the UK. Please specify	6.69%
a local identity in a country other than the UK. Please specify	5.15%

**Table 8:** Which of these identity descriptors can you relate to?

In terms of the localised identities that we can see, we can find a range of descriptions relating to one of the UK nations, a region, or a city. Respondents are a ‘proud Brummie’; a ‘chosen Londoner’ or an ‘adopted Highlander’; they are ‘South Hams girl’, a ‘Lancashire person’ or a ‘proud adopted son of Liverpool’. Similar local-level identities are evidenced for the home country, ranging from Venetians to Kurpfälzerin, documenting a multiplicity of interwoven identities of respondents.

Some of these layers of identity have been weakened, others strengthened, by Brexit:

<sup>11</sup> Bueltmann, ‘Experiences and Impact’.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Brexit has strengthened my European identity.	53.22%	25.08%	14.89%	2.52%	4.29%
Brexit has strengthened my national identity.	20.92%	25.04%	33.37%	9.08%	11.59%
Brexit has strengthened my local identity, e.g. as a 'Londoner'.	9.12%	16.79%	35.68%	14.77%	23.64%
Brexit has not had an impact on my identity.	7.96%	8.25%	12.13%	26.57%	45.09%

**Table 9:** Brexit impact on identity

In the 2019 survey, across all respondents, 70.29% agree or strongly agree that Brexit strengthened their European identity and for over a third it also strengthened their national identity. In the present Survey the figures are 78.3% and 45.96%. On more localised identities Brexit has had less of an impact, which chimes with qualitative evidence that documents how local links were not necessarily nor automatically affected by Brexit in the same way the relationship with the UK as a country was. The shifts that Brexit triggered are not only shown in these figures, but also come out strongly in the qualitative comments, as they did in the 2019 Survey. Notably, comments are also often very detailed: this suggests a desire to talk about these issues that too was already evident in the previous Survey just based on the sheer volume of free text contributions. No selection of quotes can do justice to this, so it is worth emphasising a point made in the report on the 2019 Survey: Brexit and the application process for settled status 'is about individuals and their lives, not per se about statistical representation.'<sup>12</sup> Every person—every story—matters. The following selection of comments on identity perhaps exemplifies that more than others.

*Brexit has enhanced my 'migrant' identity. My Brazilian identity was already commented on before Brexit but after it, my rights as an EU citizen in the UK came under threat which caused me to pay more attention to my situation as a migrant in the UK.*

*I was proud to be Spanish but also to be living in the UK. I liked the idea of belonging to two places within Europe.*

*Brexit caused me to reassess my own identity. I see my situation as having changed for the worse because of Brexit, but time and reflection have also led to accepting, and perhaps even being proud of, the fact that I share, in some little way, a patchwork of different identities, living in a harmful political context, increasing discrimination because of being a migrant etc with many people across the world. - It is of course a challenge, compared to a rather comfortable European existence and identity in Britain before Brexit, but it helps me to make sense of it in a context of solidarity and enrichment. Also, an identity of 'being the only one' has been become stronger, particular in my wider English family, where I am the only foreigner, with all the pain and discomfort that this sometimes involves, but also opportunities that there are for raising awareness. I am fortunate that I am not 'the only one' in that sense at all in my town and local area, and I have come to appreciate the multinational nature of my town and area a lot more since Brexit.*

*I feel betrayed by Britain. Britain is Europe. I want to feel British AND European. Brexit has messed that up.*

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

*Nationality or having moved from another country was completely unimportant up until a few years ago. No one cared. Some people were mildly interested in where my accent was from in the same way as one talks about weather or travel or kids. Now it's forced on us to think of ourselves as immigrants, to have a position on Brexit and EU policy etc. We are 'Other'.*

*Brexit made me afraid of saying I am Polish.*

*I always felt welcome, but Northern Ireland is very divided and sectarian to start with, and that additional layer of division due to Brexit has anchored those pre-existing positions even more. The paradox between people's kindness and their political views is now even greater. I had never felt worried about my foreign accent, and it's fine at work etc, but I am now much more worried about it in public places...*

*Brexit has made me feel like I belong to a group of people who identify as EU citizens living in the UK. I didn't think about it before Brexit.*

Yet while these comments reveal the scope of how Brexit has either directly impacted respondents' identity or led to new ways of thinking about it, 16.21% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that Brexit had no impact on their identity. This chimes with other findings from the survey: not all respondents see Brexit entirely negatively. While much of the evidence points to a rupture in identity and belonging, as well as many practical issues, some respondents have not had any of these and do not see Brexit as negatively as a majority does.

*Brexit had no impact on my identity. It has nothing to do with me as a person, it's a decision made by English voters and I respect it.*

*I don't feel rejected by the UK for having voted Leave. I live in Wales and the majority of Welsh people voted Leave, especially where I currently live. This has not affected my identity as I believe they did not vote 'leave' against me/immigrants.*

*I mainly moved to Northern Ireland because of the Brexit. I like my home country but was fed up with the EU to dictate what countries can do or not. Now that I'm here I feel closer to northern Irish and Irish than I thought I could be. They're amazing people, they live [sic] their country and this is a massive difference for me! Can't picture myself anywhere else now.*

For those where an impact was felt the resonances are not just about identity, however, but the very sense of belonging and home. While, as previously noted, a plurality of respondents, 44.72%, still feel at home in the UK, for a sizeable number that is no longer the case or it depends on the specific context they are in.

*I don't feel at home in the UK, but I also don't think I could feel at home in my home country anymore.*

*I feel something is broken in my relationship with Britain, and England in particular. I am deeply disturbed by the rise of nationalism and anti-European sentiment. I still feel at home in London. Or Scotland. But elsewhere? It varies.*

*I still feel at home in my local area, outside in the countryside. However, I no longer feel at home when I am at public gatherings, shopping or have contact with big groups of British due to the unpleasant situations I encountered after the Brexit vote.*

*As a Muslim I feel additionally unwanted by both UK and my home country so it's very complicated. I almost wish there were no countries so that everyone could choose to live where they feel most comfortable. Straight after last elections, one of my colleagues asked me 'Where do you belong?' And I found that question weird and a little rude. I did not know what he meant and I stumbled on my words and found it hard and emotional to answer because at that moment I didn't feel like I belonged anywhere...*

*I feel at home in Scotland specifically, because I feel like the Scottish government has not turned its back on EU nationals. It has been communicating with us during the 4+ years since the referendum and I have found it reassuring, even though there is little the Scottish government can do to mitigate the effects of Brexit on EU nationals and UK citizens (including the Scots). Also being granted the right to vote in all Scottish elections definitely makes me feel like I still am welcome in this country.*

*I don't particularly feel at home in the UK but then after almost 25 years I am a foreigner everywhere. My own country, Spain, doesn't help in that regard since ageism in the workplace is rife and bureaucracy is a real nightmare which is a key factor in its endemic economic weakness.*

*I am surrounded by people from around the world in London, and I feel at home particularly because of that.*

*Whenever I leave the UK and come back I always feel a small buzz of happiness when the bus driver from the airport has a chat with me and smiles. It makes me feel like I'm home. I don't have a foreign accent so I think I get perceived as British which helps me fit in more I find the class system in the UK incredibly constricting and an impediment to feeling at home. I've grown up around a huge variety of people and because I'm not really in the class system as an immigrant I feel like I have to put on a cloak and choose to be working class and drop my t's and say garage in that specific way or pronounce my t's and say garage in that other way and appear middle class. I feel like it shouldn't be necessary to think so much about pronouncing things; and makes me feel uncomfortable in a lot of situations as when in doubt I mimic people around me but then feel like an outsider.*

*Having lived in London for 14 years and have my kids here and my home, this is where I now belong. But the rest of the UK sometimes feels like a different country.*



## Integration

One of the common themes that continues to feature in debates surrounding immigration is that of integration. It is particularly relevant in the context of Brexit because of rhetoric around an apparent lack of integration of EU citizens that regularly defined debates in the lead-up to the EU referendum and since. To better understand how this question continues to shape the perceptions of EU citizens, we asked a number of questions. One was a question of agreement to given statements (Table 10). Based on findings from that, Brexit has had a significant negative impact on both EU citizens' sense of integration and their sense of feeling at home in the UK. Over 85% of respondents strongly or somewhat disagree that Brexit made them feel more integrated in the UK, while nearly 90% strongly or somewhat disagree that Brexit made them feel more at home in the UK. What is particularly noticeable too is that a strong majority did previously feel integrated and at home: it clearly is Brexit that constituted the rupture and change. This chimes, post-Brexit, with indicators previously shown in other research of the period before the actual Brexit date and end of the transition period.<sup>13</sup>

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Brexit has made me feel more integrated in the UK.	1.03%	1.77%	12.13%	24.34%	60.73%
Brexit has made me feel more at home in the UK.	1.07%	1.32%	8.09%	21.62%	67.90%
I have never really felt integrated in the UK.	3.67%	9.61%	16.38%	29.87%	40.47%
I have never really felt at home in the UK.	3.47%	8.37%	11.76%	29.37%	47.03%

**Table 10:** Brexit impact on integration and the sense of home

To better understand these views, we also wanted to know how respondents themselves define integration. This brought out fascinating insights. While integration has to do with forms of assimilation for some, others refer to it being strong when they see that rights and obligations are equal between those born here and immigrant arrivals.

*When in Rome, do as the Romans do, is the short answer. The longer answer is that you try to understand the people, language, history, culture, social norms of your adopted country as best you can.*

*An active partaking in civic, social, political and cultural life. A desire to better understand the unicity of my host country, and to participate fully in it.*

*Being part of the society you are living in without necessarily assimilating into it – i.e. not giving up your own cultural belonging but being part of this society, shaping it and letting it shape you as well.*

*It means feeling like you are not discriminated against, that you have a right to be here and that you are only judged on your own behaviour, personality and merit. Being integrated means that your nationality is a non-issue.*

<sup>13</sup> Bueltmann, 'Experiences and Impact'.

*I feel integrated when I can see that rights and obligations which apply to me apply to all.*

*Integration comes laden with undertones of 'assimilation' which feels negative. It feels like pressure to become part of the host culture and abandon that of your family. I have for all intents and purposes integrated - I have an accent, mannerisms, interests, preferences and opinions that are very much the same as my British peers. But by integrating into one culture it feels like you have to lose touch with the other.*

*A balance between adapting to a place/country and enriching it with your difference.*

*It's a strange word that honestly, doesn't mean much to me. I feel like it's a word used by well-intentioned liberals to mean 'we want you to be less immigrant and more [insert some dominant identity].' It sort of implies there's something wrong with you if you're not integrated enough - and it's one-directional. So it doesn't ask: how will the social fabric of this community change now that more people with different lived experiences are here?*

*Integration is very important. You have to integrate in the culture of your new country to be able to enjoy the most what that country can offer you.*

*[To me it's about] equality of rights and obligations.*

## **Community life**

Themes of community and living together in the UK emerged throughout, but become even clearer in questions about the activities of EU citizens and how they actually behave in their local communities, but also, to a certain extent, in the EU citizen community that Brexit shaped in a new way. Given the background of respondents, a high level of activity and involvement is not surprising, ranging from football club membership to allotment groups and community choirs. Brexit specifically has also led many to become involved in pro-EU groups and/or EU citizens' rights groups. Volunteering too is a common theme. Examples include:

*I started volunteering for the National Trust as soon as a possibility arose close to home. This I did out of a sense of belonging to something unique to the UK. During my travels I always admired the dedication and competence of these volunteers. So I felt I could give something back.*

*My children have always taken part in local festivals, and I was very grateful to their volunteers for the opportunities provided. I joined on a local level and we have worked hard to keep an annual festival going. It has given me the opportunity to give back to the community as well as making some wonderful friendships.*

*A long history of volunteering in various areas - including supporting young homeless people, local primary to secondary schools, park maintenance. [...] Part of a strong neighbourhood support network, very connected to local shops, schools. Non-faith myself, however enjoy strong links to local Muslim and Jewish community.*

But Brexit has complicated the situation for many and reveals layers of the sense of disintegration and loss of a sense of home that we have previously noted in quantitative data. What is concerning is that there are also clear traces of a sense of bitterness. This is, we think, understandable to a degree: forcing people to apply to stay in their home or, in some cases, voting genuinely in the hope they'd leave, is not something that is easy to come to terms with. Moving forward, however, it does raise questions about wider impacts in community. This likely does not just apply to the intersection of EU citizens – British citizens, but more specifically also to that of Remainers – Leavers. The divisions that opened up have not just disappeared.

*Due to Brexit, I have stopped my involvement in many community groups (PTA at my children's school, playgroups etc), gave up [...] volunteering with the [well-known humanitarian network] and other organisations as I do not wish to have to give help or support to people who voted to kick me out of my home. My fellow members [of another community-based organisation] have made it clear that they are all Remainers and appalled by Brexit. The charity where I am a trustee is where my husband volunteers and I will only be involved with them until I have completed my current task or drafting a new constitution. I do this for my husband, not the other members.*

*I stopped volunteering in 2016 as too many of the people I supported kept spouting anti-EU and anti-immigrant propaganda.*

*I'm not keen any more to help anyone who voted for Brexit. That doesn't mean that I don't actually help. [...] I finished a few social connections due to change in people's behaviour (mostly after Brexit openly saying one way or another 'Britain for British people only').*

*I am much less active politically due to polarised and hardened views among the general public. Community life is pretty much the same as before, with a rich sprinkling of non-British citizens in my circle of friends.*

*Brexit made me more angry and it created sense of division between people. You're either a Leaver or a Remainer. I don't want to engage with Brexiteers, which means I turn cold shoulder on some people. This isn't good. I don't like being that person, but I don't think the process is reversible. Brexit made me more selfish. I feel the need to fight my corner and I lost a lot of compassion.*

*I have taken a step back from volunteering locally due to Brexit. [...] However, Brexit has made me much more political aware, I follow local news, UK news and [news from EU home country] equally.*

For EU citizens, active engagement in the community that, for many of them, Brexit effectively pushed them into for the first time, has been one means to address the issues they were confronted with. A number of EU citizens' rights groups and activist groups have developed since 2016. While some, most notably the 3million, have emerged as a representative organisation and recognised authority on EU citizens' rights issues by a broad range of external stakeholders, others, like In Limbo, have focused primarily on enhancing and amplifying the voices and experiences of EU citizens. The work of all groups has intersected throughout and, collectively, created a strong community of groups and organisations for EU citizens. Post-Brexit, however, new questions continue to emerge for all of them in relation to

moving forward and sustainability. Within that context it is interesting to better understand how EU citizens see their own rights and representation. Within that context we explored whether they would consider paying a monthly membership fee to an EU citizens' organisation if this offered a service they were interested in. Service is understood in the broadest sense, referring to something respondents consider valuable or a benefit to them. This might be the provision of advice but could also relate to or a more social aspect that many of the groups also pursue.

	%
Yes - in the range of £15 or more a month (e.g. similar to membership fees for a trade union)	9.41%
Yes - in the range of £5 a month (e.g. similar to membership fees for the National Trust)	40.82%
No - but I would consider making a one-off donation	19.62%
No - but I would consider being involved as a volunteer	7.91%
Yes - but I currently cannot afford to	11.00%
No - I would not want to contribute in any way	11.25%

**Table 11:** Would you consider paying a monthly membership fee to an EU citizens' organisation if this offered you services?

Following on from that we wanted to understand what types of services an EU citizens' organisation would have to offer to make respondents want to become a paying member.

	%
represent my interests, e.g. in relation to my rights in the UK	24.08%
wider membership benefits, e.g. reduced fees for legal services	14.43%
a network of local groups so I can join locally	13.47%
social events, e.g. an annual dinner	7.22%
information, e.g. newsletters, advice on processes to do with my rights	19.23%
networking opportunities	10.41%
training events, e.g. about issues relating to my rights	9.77%
Other, please state:	1.38%

**Table 12:** What types of services would an EU citizens' organisation have to offer to make you want to become a paying member?

Qualitative comments give better understanding of the types of services and activities respondents consider important, but also how, post-Brexit, there is an ongoing need for support. This includes ideas around working together:

*An umbrella organisation who would bring together activity of already existing organisations under one roof and offer updated directory.*

*I feel like EU and overseas migrants should have a council that represents us and our voices in the country more than an NGO type of organisation. We need a political voice and agency to shape, not just help.*

But there is also still a strong sense for this to be a more social space:

*A place where you can meet people in your same situation without wondering if you are disliked. A club for Europeans and families.*

Notably, and in line with the tradition of historical ethnic immigrant associations, there is a desire for specific support and assistance around particular issues:

*Assistance with finding jobs, information on benefits and what help is available for people and their families*

*Legal representation. Travel insurance.*

Yet while that is the case, some recognition of how associations and organisations bringing EU citizens together might also have its own problems:

*I am not sure about an EU citizen's organisation, I'd rather work towards more integration so that we don't need a special organisation - but that might be very naive ...*

### **A note on sample characteristics**

To assess whether there are any important differences by nationality in the participant sample, we categorised respondents into 2007 Accession countries, 2004 Accession countries and pre-2004 Accession countries and compared how these groups scored on various questions. There are some differences between Western European and Central and Eastern European participants. It has also been noticeable in the qualitative comments that respondents from countries who joined the EU before 2004 tend to have stronger negative feelings towards Brexit and assess the Brexit impact on identity and belonging as more severe. It appears that these differences provide one possible reason why this group of EU citizens is less likely to consider applying for British citizenship, while feeling more insecure with (pre-)settled status.

In the groups of respondents from countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007, there is a more pragmatic approach to both Brexit and citizenship specifically. Table 13 illustrates one such difference in attitudes in line with a number of questions relating to the idea of applying for British citizenship.

	<b>Total</b>	Pre-2004 Accession	2004 Accession	2007 Accession
I am in the process of applying but I have not submitted my application yet	3.5%	3.1%	5.5%	6.2%
I am confident I will apply but I have not started the process yet	11.0%	8.6%	18.0%	27.9%
I am thinking of applying but I have not started the process yet	20.4%	17.9%	27.0%	38.0%
I am not thinking of applying	47.6%	51.8%	32.8%	19.4%
Other, please state:	17.5%	18.7%	16.8%	8.5%

**Table 13:** Crosstab: attitudes to citizenship by country group (percentages do not add up to 100 as there are a few 'uncategorised' participants e.g. Croatians, non-EU family members)

Nevertheless, it is important to note that there is a wide range of experiences in all groups, so generalisations should be avoided. However, there is a clear trend interconnecting all questions. Romanians and Bulgarians (2007 Accession) are the most likely to be confident

they will apply for citizenship, are most likely to say they feel represented politically and that they feel at home in the UK, with pre-2004 Accession countries less likely and 2004 Accession countries usually in the middle on all survey items when compared. In a sense, the question about the likelihood to apply for citizenship can be used as a proxy on how one feels about Brexit, belonging and identity.

Similar trends are observed in relation to age. Participants in higher age groups are less likely to apply for citizenship (Table 14), which in turn can relate to the other factors mentioned above. However, the trends are not quite as apparent as when comparing by country group. For instance, older participants do not necessarily feel less 'at home' or less represented in the UK. This is likely an indicator of the impact the length of time spent in the UK has had (in many cases several decades) in the 55-64 and 65+ age groups on belonging and identity.

	<b>Total</b>	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
I am in the process of applying but I have not submitted my application yet	3.5%	1.8%	3.5%	5.2%	4.1%	0.9%	0.7%
I am confident I will apply but I have not started the process yet	11.0%	16.4%	22.9%	11.4%	8.6%	5.8%	1.3%
I am thinking of applying but I have not started the process yet	20.4%	29.1%	25.0%	23.8%	18.4%	15.6%	13.2%
I am not thinking of applying	47.6%	40.0%	38.5%	42.7%	47.7%	57.7%	66.2%
Other, please state:	17.5%	12.7%	10.0%	16.8%	21.2%	19.9%	18.5%

**Table 14:** Crosstab: attitudes to citizenship by age group

## CASE STUDIES

This final section of the report illustrates the complexity of EU citizens' stories through six case studies. These narrative case studies were selected to illustrate the diversity of the 48 interviews conducted following the Survey, as well as the real life experiences of EU citizens. A summary was written for every interview, following Flick's (2014) structure of interview case descriptions.<sup>14</sup> Each case starts with a short quote from the participant that encapsulates the interview, describing the participant's relevant characteristics and the central topics mentioned by the participant in relation to the research questions. A detailed analysis of the interviews is used in other publications, as this report primarily focusses on the survey results.

The case studies presented use pseudonyms.

### Case study 1: Andrada, 20, female, Romanian and Moldovan citizen

*In my secondary school, I felt so insecure about being an immigrant, I would avoid talking to my parents on the phone in Romanian or Russian.*

Andrada was born in the Republic of Moldova and got Romanian citizenship while a teenager. Brexit made her feel unwelcome. She was 16 when the referendum took place and remembers receiving negative comments at school from teenagers asking her when she will be deported. She felt frustrated with not being able to have a vote, but also in general in relation to 16- and 17-year-olds not being able to vote in the referendum. Brexit day was less significant for her. The transition period end was more marked by COVID debates than Brexit. It was 'a quick thing to see, okay, are my rights guaranteed still, the answer is yes, so I am going to brush over it.'

After reading about the EU Settlement Scheme launch, she felt more secure and helped many friends and family members to apply as well. She applied linked to her parents' application—her father left Romania before the rest of the family, so the children received settled status based on his status. For her mother, it was a bit more complicated as there was a need for additional documents.

Andrada has started the process of applying for citizenship; she has done both the English test and the 'Life in the UK' test. She criticises the test's content on colonialism. While in the process, Andrada found via the3million that she needed Comprehensive Sickness Insurance (CSI) to apply, and this stopped her in the process as she did not want to risk paying the naturalisation application fee without clarity on this issue.<sup>15</sup> The fee is a price she would have been 'willing to pay' if she had certainty over the CSI issue. She contrasts the high fees in the UK with the more affordable pathway to Romanian citizenship that her family has been

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<sup>14</sup> U. Flick, *An introduction to qualitative research* (London: Sage, 2014), p. 424.

<sup>15</sup> The question of CSI is a concern for many, see for instance: 'It just got even more difficult for EU nationals to get British citizenship' <https://www.freemovement.org.uk/it-just-got-even-more-difficult-for-eu-nationals-to-get-british-citizenship/> [last accessed 13 August 2021].

through. She believes citizenship would make her feel like she belongs more, and thus, increase her political participation.

Andrada is aware that some British people have negative views about Romanians and is concerned about her safety when someone asks her where she is from. She compares the large city in the north-west of England where she received negative reactions, to the university city in the east of England where she currently lives—a place where she has encountered more positive attitudes towards migrants. She feels a sense of local identity in that city and through her university.

She feels 'like a tourist in my own hometown' in Moldova and her family plans to stay permanently in the UK. For her and her younger brothers, home is the UK, where they had life-shaping experiences in teenage years. For Andrada, Britishness is about the values she learnt at school, such as living in diversity, a tolerant society and freedom to choose in life.

The perceptions of EU citizens have a class component. Andrada speaks about how migrants in more privileged jobs are treated more favourably. Since Brexit, she felt she had to justify herself more than before: to 'prove that I achieved so much'. For her, citizenship is about showing one is 'actually part of the UK, instead of just living here' and it offers more security.

She feels unrepresented in politics and points out how there have been no EU migrant councillors in her UK home city despite the fact that the city is generally very diverse. She is happy with the local council there, but it is 'not the same' representation as having more migrants in politics. She contrasts it with where she currently lives and studies, where there are EU citizens in the council. In national politics, she feels unrepresented. She suggests there should be representatives of the council defending EU citizens' interests. She would like to be more involved in politics and thinking of joining the Labour Party. Her parents also follow politics and get engaged in online forums and discussions. She thinks Brexit increased political participation as EU citizens have seen how this impacts their rights directly.

She is not involved 'too much' in community activities, apart from tutoring and taking part in student societies, including a Romanian society at university. She felt hostility towards migrants plays a part, alongside time limitations, in deciding not to engage too much. Andrada details various experiences of hostility, including when her neighbours told her younger brother to 'go back'. She believes EU citizens should be classified as a minority.

### **Case study 2: Frederik, 60, male, Danish citizen**

*The people's perception changes the further East someone comes from.*

Frederik felt 'absolutely gutted' about Brexit. He recalls watching the result with his wife and feeling it was 'absolutely unbelievable'. He remembers some people in his village suggesting that he could always 'go back to Denmark' and felt affected about this as he has been living in the UK since 1965 with his English family. Brexit day, in contrast, was 'a day like any other day'. The end of the transition period had some impact on businesses but not necessarily on him personally.



He felt it was a 'betrayal' that he had to apply for settled status after so many decades in the UK. He speaks about how the Welsh Government put support in place for EU citizens to apply and this helped him but also made him aware of people who are in much more difficult situations. He was asked for additional information despite having a NINo from age 16 in the UK.

Frederik feels less secure with settled status as there is no physical document. He is worried about travelling and returning to the UK with a digital-only status. Frederik feels 'half Danish, half Welsh'. He thinks he 'should apply for citizenship' for security reasons but at the same time he feels he does not need a 'piece of paper' to confirm his Welsh identity: 'I feel like I'm going to have to [apply] but it's not out of love now.' Before Brexit, he did not feel the need to apply for citizenship as British people were 'all European nationals.' Citizenship won't make a difference to his belonging as it is 'just a piece of paper' and he knows already that he belongs in the UK. He does not expect to have an easy time applying for citizenship. Although he can afford it, Frederik describes the cost as prohibitive to many people and highlights the need for migrant labour in the UK.

Frederik has always felt European, but Brexit made him feel 'more Welsh'. One of the reasons behind this relates to how the Welsh Government supported EU citizens in the UK, compared to England where he does not see support from politicians in that sense. He has always felt Danish. Locally, he relates his identity to the city he lives in. He sees the UK as a fragmented culture and cannot define Britishness in a particular way.

Frederik used to live in London and comments about the more open attitudes towards EU citizens in areas with high migration compared to monoethnic areas. When he says he is from Denmark, the reaction he receives can be confusion as some conflate Denmark with The Netherlands. He also encountered a couple of instances when people hinted that he should return to Denmark. He feels at home in Wales where he lives and home for him means having family close and the security over a home and relationships. Having a Welsh mother and growing up in the UK means that Frederik can 'fit in' easily and people cannot identify that he is not from the UK. Frederik comments that the perceptions of EU citizens depend on their nationality and how 'integrated' they are perceived to be in UK society. They are welcome 'if they're useful'. He gives examples of more negative views towards Eastern than Western Europeans. He draws parallels between class-based stereotypes and nationalities from the EU.

Frederik considers relocating to Scotland if Scotland becomes independent. He feels represented nationally by the Welsh Labour Government but does not feel represented locally by his Conservative councillors as he is sceptical whether they consider the views of EU citizens. He is happy that he can vote in all elections in Wales as an EU citizen. He feels unrepresented by Westminster and thinks the first past the post system is archaic and needs to change. Having British citizenship would make him more comfortable to express his views on politics.

Frederik is involved in his local community in various activities, from helping in the village hall to volunteering with the ambulance service. Brexit did not impact his involvement apart from being 'cross' with some people who voted for Brexit. He became more involved after getting

married and settling in one place, compared to his youth where he moved place frequently, making it more difficult to be involved in civic and democratic participation. After Brexit, he also noticed his growing empathy towards people of different nationalities and cultures.

### **Case study 3: Istvan, 40, male, Hungarian citizen**

*We should be assimilating as much as we can into society.*

Brexit initially made Istvan feel angry. He hoped the UK would have had a closer relationship with the EU before the referendum was announced. He comments on the small margin with which Leave won the referendum. By Brexit day, Istvan was 'accepting it'. The end of the transition period made him think about family reunion rights.

By this time, Istvan already decided that he wanted to apply for British citizenship. He relates to British 'culture and history' and wished he could speak 'much better English' than he currently does. At the time of the interview, Istvan was waiting for a decision on his naturalisation application. Istvan received settled status 'quite fast' despite some technical issues when the application did not work on iPhones. Istvan had previously applied for citizenship but was rejected and now he applied again based on settled status. The main barrier in his case is Comprehensive Sickness Insurance (CSI) while being self-sufficient. He 'loved studying' for the 'Life in the UK' test. He would like to see the cost reduced as he thinks it is unfair especially on those applying for several family members. The main reason for applying is security as he sees himself long-term in the UK and will not consider returning to Hungary due to the political situation there. He also feels that citizenship would make him feel more represented in the UK. He was also asked to prove his status for work and thinks these processes can be made much easier if one has citizenship.

Istvan has a local identity from the North of England where he currently lives as his family and friends are there. He keeps links with Hungary and tried to persuade some family members to move to the UK—one nephew is currently studying in the UK. Although he studied in Hungary and lived in Spain for a few years, he feels at home in the UK as his 'history' is now here. Istvan has heard mixed views on migration in the UK and believes migration policy in the UK should have been more liberal. He thinks that British people do not see a homogenous category of 'EU citizens' but see them in terms of their nationalities. He does not feel that Brexit has impacted his personal sense of belonging to the UK.

Istvan feels unrepresented in UK politics because he pays taxes without having full voting rights. He speaks about wanting to raise issues with his MP but not feeling that he could do that as he does not have the right to vote. He would like to see clearer information on the political rights of EU citizens and hopes that with more EU citizens becoming British, there will be more representation in UK politics.

Istvan found it difficult to have sufficient spare time to engage in community activities but would like this to change in the future. He does not believe EU citizens should be considered a minority and stresses the importance of people assimilating to the UK. He gives examples of Eastern European shops and questions the need of ethnic business that, in his view, can

negatively impact integration. He comments on interpreting services in the UK noting that it is his impression that, say, 'in Germany, after two years, you speak German, that's it', disagreeing that interpreting should be provided for very long-term residents.

#### **Case study 4: Julie, 34, female, French citizen**

*I consider it because I feel I found my home – so why wouldn't I have the same citizenship as everyone else?*

Julie has 'mixed feelings' on Brexit. She moved to the UK after Brexit and supported the UK's decision to leave the EU. But then she realised there have been some decisions in the process that she did not agree with, such as the impact on future migrants' rights. 'I was so happy for them', she said when remembering the referendum result. Julie refers to her training in law, including European law, and how she believes that countries should 'govern themselves'. She remembers people celebrating Brexit day. At the end of the transition period, Julie's employer asked her to prove her settled status. She said that was the only thing she remembers from the end of the transition. Julie lives in Northern Ireland and speaks about the specific and, to her, unexpected impacts of Brexit on Northern Ireland, such as restrictions when ordering certain products from outside the country.

Julie was working in a call centre when she was informed that she must apply for her pre-settled status. She found the process 'pretty straightforward'. The only memorable thing was having to send her passport to the Home Office as she applied at the time when the app did not work on iPhones, as she has never sent her passport by post before. She compares the process to the administration in France which she describes as 'awful': in contrast to French paperwork, the EU Settlement Scheme 'was super straightforward'. She now plans to apply for settled status in a year's time and considers citizenship but is still researching the costs. She feels she found her home in the UK and would like to share the same citizenship of the country. The decision is not so difficult in her view as she can have dual citizenship. For her, citizenship would be an 'achievement' and would have a positive impact on her belonging in the UK. She also considered security over rights as a reason, because currently she does not feel secure with pre-settled status. She is concerned about proving it, although she expects to feel more secure with the full settled status.

Julie never felt European, despite coming from a mixed family background, with Polish, German, Australian, French and Spanish roots. She gives examples about how Latin countries would have more in common in her view than the current group of countries in the EU. She feels more like 'a citizen of the world than just Europe'. Being an EU citizen only means something 'on paper' for Julie, making her think of commercial exchanges and trade deals. She feels closer to a Northern Irish identity than a British one, describing it as 'a mix of Irish and Northern Irish'. Julie likes some aspects of France, such as the food, but 'cannot wait' to come back to the UK when on holiday. One of the reasons is that she feels people are kinder in Northern Ireland. She relates to a southern identity in France. She never felt like a minority in the UK, and she rejects the idea of being surrounded only by co-nationals.

Julie feels at home in the UK. For her, home is stability. She has a mortgage in Northern Ireland, something she could not afford while living in France. She does not have 'a lot of people' to visit in France and remembers an instance where her mother was surprised that she said she is going 'home' to the UK. She would prefer to bring her mother to the UK as well. Julie thinks attitudes towards EU migrants are positive in Northern Ireland, despite reading some news about hate crimes in other parts of the UK. She stressed that she never received any negative reaction to disclosing her nationality. Julie believes that migrants coming to any country need to integrate. She heard some negative views towards Polish people abusing the welfare system, but she dismisses them as untrue.

Julie feels there are some tensions in Northern Ireland and Brexit impacts, and she would consider moving to Scotland if things do not work out for her there. She 'doesn't care' about politics, describing it a 'circus'. Julie chooses not to vote as she does not feel she can have a real choice or an informed vote and will wait until she learns enough about politics to 'choose wisely'. Voting doesn't depend on citizenship as much as 'feeling ready to do it.' She thinks the reforms that are needed in politics is to have more politicians who have worked in non-politics fields before standing for elections. Julie has been involved in some community activities, such as charity marathons. Brexit had no impact on her involvement.

#### **Case study 5: Magda, 42, female, Polish and British citizen**

*Being a migrant and being surrounded by all these migrants in [the large city I live in], I can feel at home, I feel like I belong because I'm different, but everyone around me is different.*

Brexit made Magda feel panic and anxiety. Looking back, she thinks she was 'very naive' not to have seen the Brexit result coming. She felt surprised on the 24 June 2016. By Brexit day, the referendum 'wasn't a big deal' anymore. There was enough time to 'get used to the idea' that the UK is leaving the EU. The end of the transition period made her realise the practical implications of Brexit, for instance the additional costs when sending parcels to family in Poland. A significant Brexit moment for Magda was when Boris Johnson became Prime Minister and she realised that Brexit is going to happen.

If it was not for Brexit, Magda would not have applied for British citizenship. She remembers 'loads of stupid questions' in the 'Life in the UK' test, where '90% of things' she learnt were 'totally irrelevant'. The process was 'relatively straightforward'. The cost 'wasn't a big deal' as she thinks it is a 'reasonable amount of money to pay to be a citizen of a country'. She thinks she 'gained a lot' by becoming British, for instance being able to have the assistance of the British embassy when abroad, if needed. Magda initially applied for EEA Permanent Residence (PR) but was rejected due to the Comprehensive Sickness Insurance (CSI) issue. Compared to PR, settled status was easy as it required her to only provide minimal evidence. Having British citizenship alleviated the sense of insecurity felt before. It is important to Magda that she can leave the UK and return if needed without worrying about spending too much time abroad.

Before Brexit, Magda started to reflect more on who she was in the UK and thinks that she will 'always be a migrant' in the UK because, despite being British, 'when I open my mouth it's obvious'. She identifies more like a person from the city she lives in 'than anything else'. Magda describes how she can communicate easier with other migrants in that city because there is no assumed understanding of cultural references. She also does not feel 'a hundred percent Polish' anymore after a long time spent in the UK, a country she now calls home. She struggles with 'the bureaucracy' as well as using official Polish language when visiting her country of birth. She does not necessarily relate to a European identity and she points out there are differences between EU citizens.

Magda cannot describe what it means to be British. She comments that there are English and Scottish identities, but not British. She feels 'horrible' for not feeling British, as the UK has been 'so generous' to offer her British citizenship. When she is asked where she is from, Magda would say Polish and receive positive reactions. Although her experiences have been positive, she is aware there are some negative views towards EU migrants, especially in some parts of the media.

Magda lives in a Conservative-run area in a large city and although she opposes the party in terms of its Brexit policy, she supports the local councillors who are 'doing a relatively good job' making the borough 'green and pleasant to live in'. She does not 'take it personally' that the majority voted for Brexit in the area. At the national level, she is critical of all parties and believes that the referendum vote should be respected. She was not involved in politics when she arrived in the UK as a student, but after having a family, she became more interested in local issues as she wants to 'live in a nice area'. Magda believes there are already strong voices who have represented the interests of EU citizens in politics and the media since the referendum. She believes there should be more migrant representation in general rather than separating EU citizens in a group to be represented. Magda has not been involved in community activities but stated joining some online groups of neighbours as her husband is part of the neighbourhood watch. She does not usually feel like a minority due to living and working in multicultural spaces, but she comments this may be different if living in a village.

### **Case study 6: Tomas, 27, male, Portuguese citizen**

*The only national identity that I am almost comfortable with is Britishness.*

For Tomas, Brexit was 'a joke'. The day of the referendum result was 'very sad'. He was representing the UK at a festival in France for his work and remembers becoming apologetic to people because the UK voted to leave. He could vote in the referendum as a Commonwealth citizen. On Brexit day, he could feel there was 'this pro-Brexit sentiment in the air' with people celebrating, singing the national anthem and going to pubs where he lives. In contrast, no memory comes to his mind about the end of the transition period, when there was 'a feeling of having given up almost'.

Tomas has a Portuguese passport but never lived in Portugal and does not speak Portuguese, thus this is a 'difficult national identity to embody'. Thus, he found the term EU citizen to be a

more welcoming, overarching identity, with which he identifies. Tomas says he usually 'passes as British' and he has a local identity in relation to the city he lives in. Tomas gave up his Indian citizenship after Brexit due to rules about dual citizenship not being permitted and chose to have what he describes as 'an overseas citizen visa', which is a lifelong visa. He plans to apply for British citizenship soon because he feels British and is not comfortable with the other national identities attributed to him.

Tomas feels at home in the UK, but he also comments on his privileges impacting this sense of belonging in a 'very classist society'. He thinks citizenship would improve people's sense of belonging in the UK and he is passionate about campaigning to reduce the barriers to citizenship, such as cost. He remembers the process applying for settled status was easy for him. He supported family and friends in their applications. The Government's assumption that 'we're all somehow digital natives' is 'terribly presumptuous' in his view. He comments on it being unbelievable that the 'Life in the UK' test has not been reformed. He says the test needs to reflect how life in the UK is in 2021. He also mentions that the English language test should be simplified to recognise more qualifications but also it could be shorter and based at the local council instead of test centres that add additional cost for applicants.

Tomas was not political before the referendum, but after a couple of years he joined the Labour party and became active in pro-EU activities, such as protests and marches - 'I've been to every one of the protests that happened in London'. Tomas is thinking about standing as a local councillor in his area and joined a Labour Party training in this sense. He recognises he did not know 'until not very long ago' that being a councillor is something 'anybody can do' and it 'does not equate with citizenship'. Overall, he believes a lack of awareness, both in terms of British citizens not being aware of EU migrants' contributions to society and EU citizens not being well informed about their rights, leads to a lack of representation. He comments that groups such as the 3million 'help to some degree' but that there is a long way to go to representation and he does not have the answers.

At the local level, Thomas feels represented in a Labour area. National level politics feels 'exhausting' and he feels we are 'stuck' with a Conservative government because of the electoral system. He would not know where to move in the UK if he had to leave where he currently lives in order to find a political home. For EU citizens to be more represented in politics, he thinks that their local election voting rights need to be preserved and the franchise expanded. He praises organisations like the 3million for their efforts and thinks more campaign to inform EU citizens about using their political rights need to be conducted. Citizenship could improve representation but for Tomas is mainly about practical benefits, especially avoiding discrimination when crossing the UK border.

Tomas has always been very involved locally and feels Brexit did not change that. The fact he lives where he lives does matter as he feels less likely to have negative experiences as a migrant there. Tomas discusses the role of whiteness in categorising EU citizens. For first generation EU migrants, being a minority is more strongly felt, but white children of EU parents won't feel 'othered' in the same way.

## APPENDIX 1

### Interview participants – key demographic characteristics

No	Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Nationality(ies)
1	Martin	male	55	Netherlands, Kenya
2	Lina	female	38	Lithuania
3	Istvan	male	40	Hungary
4	Tomas	male	27	India, Portugal
5	Sam	male	32	Poland, UK
6	Karl	male	35	Germany, UK
7	Marta	female	33	Poland
8	Miguel	male	58	Spain
9	Maria	female	23	Spain
10	Aly	non-binary	25	Romania
11	Lena	female	35	Poland
12	Fabio	male	74	Italy, UK
13	Christos	male	27	Cyprus
14	Liisa	female	76	Finland
15	Lotte	female	40	Netherlands
16	Giovanni	male	55	Tanzania, Italy
17	Jan	male	19	Slovenia
18	Paula	female	46	Poland
19	Agata	female	32	Slovakia
20	Jeff	male	77	Netherlands, US
21	Alena	female	40	Bulgaria, UK
22	Herta	female	45	Estonia
23	Mihai	male	42	Republic of Moldova, Romania
24	Sergio	male	38	Portugal
25	Kostas	male	46	Malta, South Africa
26	Elias	male	35	Greece, UK
27	Bisera	female	40	Bulgaria
28	Tatiana	female	41	Bulgaria
29	Lili	female	29	Hungary
30	Luc	male	40	Belgium
31	Laura	female	39	Estonia
32	Juris	male	43	Latvia
33	Georgy	male	24	Greece
34	Kira	female	28	Greece
35	Radu	male	40	Romania
36	Sofia	female	46	Germany
37	Mia	female	69	Switzerland
38	Andrada	female	20	Romania
39	Emma	female	69	Germany

40	Jozef	male	44	Slovakia
41	Frederik	male	60	Denmark
42	Magda	female	42	Poland, UK
43*	Fleur	female	62	France, UK
44	Caro	female	64	Luxembourg
45	Nicole	female	56	France
46	Guy	male	27	France
47	Julie	female	34	France
48	Pauline	female	33	France
49	Margarita	female	53	France

\* excluded based on survey eligibility



## APPENDIX 2

### Survey questions and routes

#### ROUTE FOR ALL RESPONDENTS

Welcome

Information for Participants

Informed Consent

- If 'No' is selected, Survey ends

*Note: This first set of questions will ask you about your background, your immigration status in the UK and how your plans were affected - or not - by Brexit. There will be some specific follow-up questions depending on your answers.*

For how long have you been living in the UK? Please state your answer in years.

How old were you when you arrived in the UK?

What was your reason for moving to the UK? Please tick all that apply.

- Education - pre-University (e.g. college, high school)
- Education - University
- Work - I had an offer of employment before moving to the UK
- Work - I came to look for work
- Work - I came to set up a business as self-employed
- Joining family
- Other, please state:

Which of the following statements best describes your current plans?

- I would like to live in the UK permanently
- I see myself in the UK in the long-term, but not permanently
- I see myself in the UK in the short-term, but not long-term
- I plan to leave the UK in the near future
- Other, please state:

Has Brexit impacted your plans to stay in the UK?

- Yes - it has increased the likelihood of me staying
- Yes - it has increased the likelihood of me leaving
- No - it has not had an impact on my plans
- Other, please state:

You can use this space for any further comments on how Brexit has impacted your plans.

Which of the following best describes your status in the UK?

- I have British citizenship
- I submitted my application for British citizenship but have not received a decision yet
- I have Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) under the old system, a physical document or a stamp in my passport
- I have settled status
- I have pre-settled status
- I applied for the EU Settlement Scheme but have not received a decision yet
- I qualify for the EU Settlement Scheme but have not applied yet
- I am not sure what my status is
- Other, please describe:

*This is followed by bespoke Survey routes.*

### **ROUTE 1: 'Other'**

Which statement best describes your position on acquiring British citizenship?

- I am in the process of applying but I have not submitted my application yet
- I am confident I will apply but I have not started the process yet
- I am thinking of applying but I have not started the process yet
- I am not thinking of applying
- Other, please state:

Depending on choice, followed by:

*Either*

What are your main reasons for applying - or thinking of applying - for British citizenship?

*Or*

What are your main reasons for not thinking of applying for British citizenship?

What do you think are the top barriers for EU citizens who wish to apply for British citizenship?

If you could change the British citizenship application process, what changes would you make?

If you have any other comments about any of the topics in this section, please make them here before proceeding to the next section on *identity*.

### **ROUTE 2: 'I am not sure what my status is'**

Which statement best describes your position on acquiring British citizenship?

- I am in the process of applying but I have not submitted my application yet
- I am confident I will apply but I have not started the process yet
- I am thinking of applying but I have not started the process yet
- I am not thinking of applying
- Other, please state:

Depending on choice, followed by:

*Either*

What are your main reasons for applying - or thinking of applying - for British citizenship?

*Or*

What are your main reasons for not thinking of applying for British citizenship?

What do you think are the top barriers for EU citizens who wish to apply for British citizenship?

If you could change the British citizenship application process, what changes would you make?

If you have any other comments about any of the topics in this section, please make them here before proceeding to the next section on *identity*.

### ROUTE 3: 'I qualify for the EU Settlement Scheme but have not applied yet'

Why have you not applied for (pre-)settled status yet? Please tick all that apply.

- I have not had the time yet, but will apply before the 30 June 2021 deadline
- I have concerns about data protection
- I do not think this status is secure
- I refuse to apply
- I plan to leave the UK before the 30 June 2021 deadline
- I do not know if I have to apply
- Other, please state:

Which statement best describes your position on acquiring British citizenship?

- I am in the process of applying but I have not submitted my application yet
- I am confident I will apply but I have not started the process yet
- I am thinking of applying but I have not started the process yet
- I am not thinking of applying
- Other, please state:

Depending on choice, followed by:

*Either*

What are your main reasons for applying - or thinking of applying - for British citizenship?

*Or*

What are your main reasons for not thinking of applying for British citizenship?

What do you think are the top barriers for EU citizens who wish to apply for British citizenship?

If you could change the British citizenship application process, what changes would you make?

If you have any other comments about any of the topics in this section, please make them here before proceeding to the next section on *identity*.

### ROUTE 4: 'I applied for the EU Settlement Scheme but have not received a decision yet'

How long have you been waiting for a decision for your EU Settlement Scheme application?

Please describe any impact waiting for a decision is having on you.

Which statement best describes your position on acquiring British citizenship?

- I am in the process of applying but I have not submitted my application yet
- I am confident I will apply but I have not started the process yet
- I am thinking of applying but I have not started the process yet
- I am not thinking of applying
- Other, please state:

Depending on choice, followed by:

*Either*

What are your main reasons for applying - or thinking of applying - for British citizenship?

*Or*

What are your main reasons for not thinking of applying for British citizenship?

What do you think are the top barriers for EU citizens who wish to apply for British citizenship?

If you could change the British citizenship application process, what changes would you make?

If you have any other comments about any of the topics in this section, please make them here before proceeding to the next section on *identity*.

#### ROUTE 5: 'I have pre-settled status'

How secure do you feel about your rights in the UK with pre-settled status?

[range from 'Very insecure' to 'Very secure' + not applicable option]

- Right to continue living in the UK
- Right to work in the UK
- Right to rent in the UK
- Right to study in the UK
- Right to welfare support (e.g. housing benefits)
- Right to free healthcare (NHS)

Please use this space to describe any other concerns or issues you have with pre-settled status. For example, accessing your rights, updating and maintaining your status or things like taking out a mortgage.

Have you already been asked to prove your pre-settled status to an employer, landlord or other agency in the UK, or when travelling?

If applicable: Please use this space to describe your experience of being asked to prove your status. For example: where were you asked and were there any consequences?

Which statement best describes your position on acquiring British citizenship?

- I am in the process of applying but I have not submitted my application yet
- I am confident I will apply but I have not started the process yet
- I am thinking of applying but I have not started the process yet
- I am not thinking of applying
- Other, please state:

Depending on choice, followed by:

*Either*

What are your main reasons for applying - or thinking of applying - for British citizenship?

*Or*

What are your main reasons for not thinking of applying for British citizenship?

What do you think are the top barriers for EU citizens who wish to apply for British citizenship?

If you could change the British citizenship application process, what changes would you make?

If you have any other comments about any of the topics in this section, please make them here before proceeding to the next section on *identity*.

#### ROUTE 6: 'I have settled status'

How secure do you feel about your rights in the UK with settled status?

[range from 'Very insecure' to 'Very secure' + not applicable option]

- Right to continue living in the UK
- Right to work in the UK
- Right to rent in the UK
- Right to study in the UK
- Right to welfare support (e.g. housing benefits)
- Right to free healthcare (NHS)

Please use this space to describe any other concerns or issues you have with settled status. For example, accessing your rights, updating and maintaining your status or things like taking out a mortgage.

Have you already been asked to prove your settled status to an employer, landlord or other agency in the UK, or when travelling?

If applicable: Please use this space to describe your experience of being asked to prove your status. For example: where were you asked and were there any consequences?

Which statement best describes your position on acquiring British citizenship?

- I am in the process of applying but I have not submitted my application yet
- I am confident I will apply but I have not started the process yet
- I am thinking of applying but I have not started the process yet
- I am not thinking of applying
- Other, please state:

Depending on choice, followed by:

*Either*

What are your main reasons for applying - or thinking of applying - for British citizenship?

*Or*

What are your main reasons for not thinking of applying for British citizenship?

What do you think are the top barriers for EU citizens who wish to apply for British citizenship?

If you could change the British citizenship application process, what changes would you make?

If you have any other comments about any of the topics in this section, please make them here before proceeding to the next section on *identity*.

ROUTE 7: 'I have Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) under the old system, a physical document or a stamp in my passport'

Please tell us about your reasons for choosing to keep ILR instead of exchanging it for settled status.

Which statement best describes your position on acquiring British citizenship?

- I am in the process of applying but I have not submitted my application yet
- I am confident I will apply but I have not started the process yet
- I am thinking of applying but I have not started the process yet
- I am not thinking of applying
- Other, please state:

Depending on choice, followed by:

*Either*

What are your main reasons for applying - or thinking of applying - for British citizenship?

*Or*

What are your main reasons for not thinking of applying for British citizenship?

What do you think are the top barriers for EU citizens who wish to apply for British citizenship?

If you could change the British citizenship application process, what changes would you make?

If you have any other comments about any of the topics in this section, please make them here before proceeding to the next section on *identity*.

ROUTE 8: 'I have British citizenship & I submitted my application for British citizenship but have not received a decision yet'

How have you acquired - or how do you plan to acquire - British citizenship?

- Naturalisation based on my settled status
- Naturalisation based on my Permanent Residency (PR) card
- Child registration as a British citizen
- Another route, please state:

Please tell us why you chose to become / want to become a British citizen.

How easy or difficult have you found the following steps in your British citizenship process?  
[range from 'Very easy' to 'Very difficult' + not applicable options]

- Saving sufficient funds to pay for the application fee
- Passing the 'Life in the UK' test
- Passing the English language test
- Having my documents checked / biometrics appointment
- Gathering the residence evidence required
- Satisfying the absence requirement
- Providing good character references
- Booking my citizenship ceremony
- Applying for a passport after my ceremony

The 'Life in the UK' test is a key part of the citizenship application process. We welcome any further comments you may have on the test so we can better understand how you view the test and its purpose.

You can use this space for further comment on any steps of your application process or issues you faced.

What help/guidance did you have when applying for citizenship? You can select more than one option.

- I did not have any help/guidance
- I had free guidance from friends, family or online resources
- I received free immigration advice from an accredited adviser or lawyer
- I received paid advice from an accredited adviser or lawyer
- I requested an organisation, adviser or lawyer to complete the application on my behalf
- Other, please describe:

How much do you estimate the overall process of becoming British has cost you? Please include the application fee, test costs, legal fees, translations and any other costs and provide an estimate in GBP (£).

British citizenship comes with the right to vote in all elections in the UK, including general elections. How important are general election voting rights to you?

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not important
- I have not considered this before when thinking about citizenship

Please use this space if you have any other comments on becoming a British citizen, your reasons for doing so and any issues you may have faced.

What do you think are the top barriers for EU citizens who wish to apply for British citizenship?

If you could change the British citizenship application process, what changes would you make?

If you have any other comments about any of the topics in this section, please make them here before proceeding to the next section on *identity*.

## **RETURN TO JOINED ROUTE FOR ALL RESPONDENTS**

*Note: This second section will ask your views on your identity and the extent to which Brexit has impacted it - or not.*

What does 'identity' mean to you?

Below are some descriptors people often use to talk about their identity. Please tick all that you relate to. You can choose more than one.

- European
- EU citizen
- British
- English
- Scottish
- Welsh
- Northern Irish
- the nationality of my country of birth. Please specify
- a regional identity in the UK (e.g. 'I'm from the Midlands'). Please specify
- a local identity in the UK (e.g. 'I am a Liverpudlian') Please specify
- a regional identity in a country other than the UK. Please specify
- a local identity in a country other than the UK. Please specify
- Other, please specify:

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements.

[range from 'Strongly agree' to 'Strongly disagree']

- Brexit has strengthened my European identity.
- Brexit has strengthened my national identity.
- Brexit has strengthened my local identity, e.g. as a 'Londoner'.
- Brexit has not had an impact on my identity.

Identities can be complex and 'tick boxes' like those used before do not always reflect the nuances. But we are very interested to get a detailed understanding of views, so would welcome any further thoughts you may have about the impact Brexit has had on your identity. Please add any further comments here before proceeding to the next section on *belonging*.



*Note: This third section will ask your views on your sense of belonging in the UK.*

Do you feel at home in the UK?

- Yes
- No
- It depends on the situation / where I am, please specify:

If you would like, please tell us more about your sense of belonging and feeling at home - or not - in the UK, which factors determine this and any changes as a result of Brexit.

What does 'integration' mean to you?

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements.

- Brexit has made me feel more integrated in the UK.
- Brexit has made me feel more at home in the UK.
- I have never really felt integrated in the UK.
- I have never really felt at home in the UK.

Status-specific follow-up:

*Either*

How did acquiring British citizenship make you feel?

*Or*

Would having British citizenship make any difference to your sense of belonging in the UK?

Please add any further comments you'd like to make about the impact Brexit has had on your sense of belonging. Please add your comments here before proceeding to the next section on *representation*.

*Note: This fourth section will ask questions about your views on representation and participation in British society to identify the extent to which EU citizens feel represented - or not - within UK political and community contexts, and how they participate in society.*

As an *individual*, do you feel your views are represented in UK politics?

- I feel represented
- I do not feel well represented
- I feel unrepresented
- It depends on the context, please explain:

Do you feel EU citizens *as a group* are represented in UK politics?

- They are represented
- They are not well represented
- They are unrepresented
- It depends on the context, please explain:

If applicable based on status:

Does having British citizenship affect how represented you feel in the UK?

Are you registered to vote in UK local elections?

- Yes
- No
- I was not aware I could vote in local elections as an EU citizen
- I cannot vote in local elections (e.g. EEA/Swiss citizens in England and NI)

Have you voted in UK local elections?

- Yes, in all local elections
- Yes, in most local elections
- Yes, in some local elections
- No

Do you support any political party in the UK? You can select more than one option.

- Conservative Party
- Co-operative Party
- Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)
- Green Party
- Labour Party
- Liberal Democrats
- Plaid Cymru
- Sinn Féin
- Social Democratic and Labour Party (Northern Ireland)
- Scottish National Party (SNP)
- Reform UK (previously Brexit Party)
- United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP)
- Ulster Unionist Party
- Other party not listed here, please specify:
- I support various parties tactically
- I do not support any political party in the UK

Are you a member of any political party in the UK?

- Conservative Party
- Co-operative Party
- Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)
- Green Party
- Labour Party
- Liberal Democrats
- Plaid Cymru
- Sinn Féin
- Social Democratic and Labour Party (Northern Ireland)
- Scottish National Party (SNP)
- Reform UK (previously Brexit Party)
- UK Independence Party (UKIP)
- Ulster Unionist Party

- Other party not listed here, please specify:
- I am not a member of any political party

Which statement best describes your view on who should have voting rights for UK general elections?

- "British citizens and ...." (please choose option below).
- All non-British residents should be able to vote in general elections
- Non-British residents with pre-settled status/limited leave to remain should be able to vote in general elections
- Non-British residents with settled status/indefinite leave to remain should be able to vote in general elections
- Only British, Irish and Commonwealth citizens should be able to vote in general elections, as it currently stands
- Only British citizens should be able to vote in general elections
- Other, please state:

Which statement best describes your view on who should have voting rights for UK local elections?

"British citizens and ...." (please choose option below).

- All non-British residents should be able to vote in local elections
- Non-British residents with pre-settled status/limited leave to remain should be able to vote in local elections
- Non-British residents with settled status/indefinite leave to remain should be able to vote in local elections
- Only British, Irish and Commonwealth citizens should be able to vote in local elections
- Only British citizens should be able to vote in local elections
- Other, please state:

Are you a member of any other organisation or association in the UK?

Please provide more details about your membership and activities in organisations or associations.

Would you consider paying a monthly membership fee to an EU citizens' organisation if this offered you services?

- Yes - in the range of £15 or more a month (e.g. similar to membership fees for a trade union)
- Yes - in the range of £5 a month (e.g. similar to membership fees for the National Trust)
- Yes - but I currently cannot afford to
- No - but I would consider making a one-off donation
- No - but I would consider being involved as a volunteer
- No - I would not want to contribute in any way

What types of services would an EU citizens' organisation have to offer to make you want to become a paying member? Multiple answers possible.

- represent my interests, e.g. in relation to my rights in the UK

- information, e.g. newsletters, advice on processes to do with my rights
- wider membership benefits, e.g. reduced fees for legal services
- a network of local groups so I can join locally
- training events, e.g. about issues relating to my rights
- networking opportunities
- social events, e.g. an annual dinner
- Other, please state:

We are keen to understand the ways in which you are involved in your local community. Please tell us your story of involvement if you like.

Please use this space to describe whether Brexit impacted how you engage with politics, community life and society in the UK.

If you wish to make any other comments about the topics covered in this survey, or the impact Brexit has had on you more broadly, please use this space. This is your last opportunity before proceeding to the final part of the survey on *demographic questions*.

*Note: Finally, we would like to know just a little bit more about you and your background. This is important for our research so we can see if there are any particular patterns in, for example, certain age groups or locations in the UK.*

Please state your age in years.

What is your gender identification?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Transgender
- Prefer not to say
- Other, specify if you like:

Please select your country of birth from the drop-down list.

What is your first citizenship?

Do you have a second citizenship?

Do you have a third citizenship?

What language(s) do you speak at home?

Do you identify as an ethnic minority? If yes, please describe.

What part of the UK do you live in?

- England
- Wales
- Scotland

- Northern Ireland
- Other, please state:

What is your highest level of education?

- Primary school
- Secondary school
- High school or college
- Professional or vocational degree
- University degree - undergraduate
- University degree - postgraduate
- Doctorate
- Other, please state:

What is your employment status? You can tick multiple options.

- Employed - full-time
- Employed - part-time
- Self-employed full-time
- Self-employed part-time
- Unemployed - looking for work
- Unemployed - not looking for work
- Retired
- Student - full-time
- Student - part-time
- Other, please state:

If in employment, which category best describes the work you do?

- Semi-skilled & unskilled manual occupations, unemployed and lowest grade occupations
- Skilled manual occupations
- Supervisory, clerical & junior managerial, administrative, professional occupations
- Higher & intermediate managerial, administrative, professional occupations

Permission question RE: for follow up contact for potential interview.

*Survey completion.*

# APPENDIX 3

## Interview topic guide

### **1. Introduction to the interview**

The participant will have to sign the consent form before the interview begins. They will have the chance to ask any questions to the interviewer and raise any issues before the audio-recording can begin.

### **2. Questions**

#### **A. Lived experiences of Brexit**

This part of the interview will naturally progress from the icebreaker exercise and contextualise participants' feelings within the historical dimension of the Brexit process.

Main questions:

- Q1: How do you remember feeling when hearing the Brexit referendum result in 2016?
- Q2: Can you describe how you felt on Brexit day on 31 January 2020?
- Q3: How did you feel when the UK ended its transition period on 1 January 2021?
- Q4: What moments have been most significant for you in this Brexit process?

Follow-up questions will detail on the examples given by participants in the interviews and also follow-up some threads from their survey answers.

#### **B. Identity**

This part aims to unpack the nuances behind participants' identities expressed in the survey, focussing on both national-level and local-level identities, both in the UK and other EU countries.

Main questions:

- Q1: In what ways has Brexit impacted your identity as an EU citizen?
- Q2: Can you expand more on both your local and national level identities in the UK?
- Q3: Can you expand more on both your local and national level identities in your country of birth?
- Q4: What does 'being British' mean to you and to what extent do you relate or not with it?

Prompt for examples of change as follow-up if it is not incorporated in the answers.

Follow-up questions will depend on participants' survey answers e.g., if an EU citizen identifies as British, there will be more follow up questions unpacking that experience.

#### **C. Belonging**

This part has the purpose of zooming into questions of belonging, which often intersect with identity questions in the first part. Parts B and C are thus expected to be mixed in the interviews.

Main questions:

- Q1: Where do you feel 'at home'?
- Q2: What makes it feel 'at home'?
- Q3: To what extent are EU citizens part of UK society in your view?
- Q4: To what extent has Brexit impacted your sense of belonging in the UK?

Q5: In what ways does being a British citizen matter or not to one's sense of belonging in the UK?

This topic is more difficult to predict, given it is highly dependent on participants' own immigration status and attitudes towards naturalisation as British citizens (which are explored in the survey data), hence follow-up questions will be tailored to individual circumstances.

#### **D. Representation**

The final key topic examines what EU citizens think about their representation both as individuals and as a minority group in the UK. This will include a discussion on how EU citizens have mobilised or not in the Brexit context and the forms of collective action that have emerged.

Q1: Can you expand more on why you feel unrepresented/not well represented/represented in UK politics as an individual?

1B. Does this depend on whether it is a national, regional or local level?

Q2: Can you expand more on why you feel unrepresented/not well represented/represented in UK politics as an EU citizen?

2B: Does this depend on whether it is a national, regional or local level?

Q3: What changes, if any, need to happen in your view for EU citizens to feel represented in the UK?

Q4: To what extent having British citizenship matters for one to feel represented in the UK?

Q5: (especially if no free text comments were provided in the survey) How have you engaged as an EU citizen in community life since arriving in the UK?

Q6: Has your involvement been impacted by Brexit?

The follow-up questions will detail on the forms of collective action participants took part in – or the reasons behind the lack thereof.

#### **E. Other relevant topics**

This is a space for participants to be able to express any other relevant experience they feel it is important to be mentioned in this study.

Q1: Is there anything you expected me to ask which I have not asked?

Q2: Is there anything that you would like to add?

### **3. Interview ends**

The Researcher thanks their participant for their time, informs them about the next steps in the research project and asks whether they want to see the results of the research. Participants can be signposted to support organisations if needed e.g., if they need free immigration advice from a charitable organisation or mental health support.