



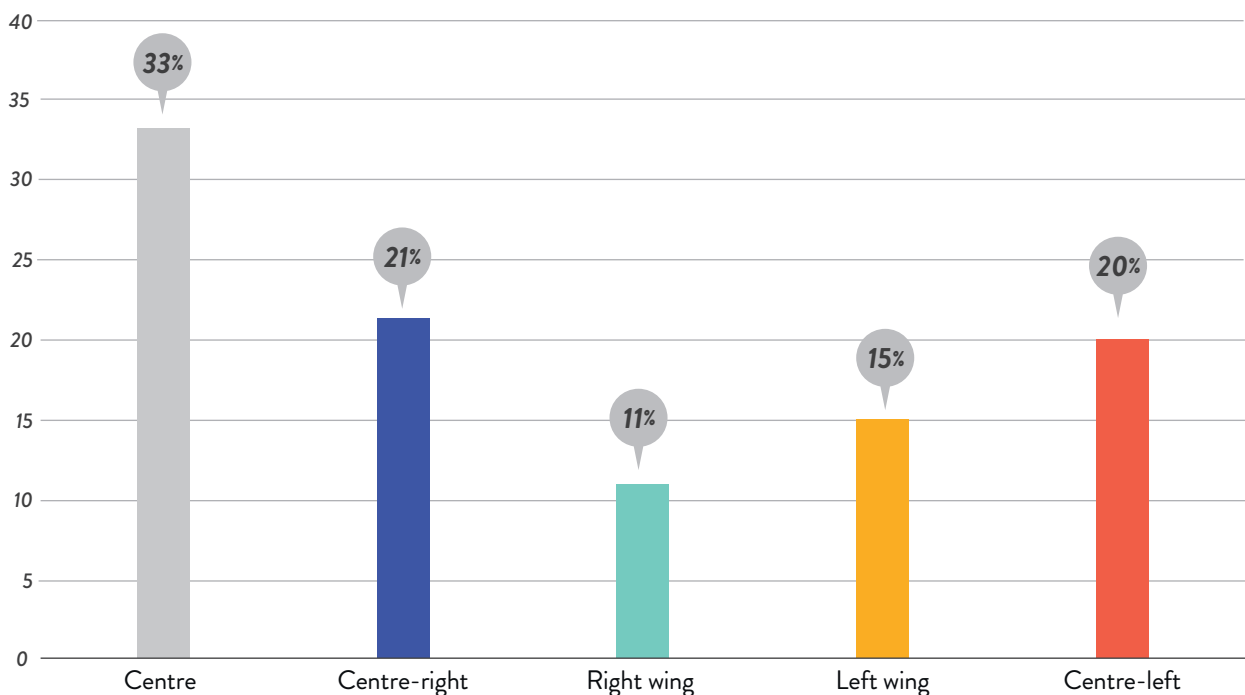
TONY BLAIR
INSTITUTE
FOR GLOBAL
CHANGE

Support for the Centre

March 2017

As Tony Blair writes today, the political landscape all over the Western world is changing. New parties are being formed, those of the traditional left and right are moving further to the extremes under the pressure of populism, while the centre has become marginalised, dislocated and under retreat. In the UK, the Conservative Party is now the party of Hard Brexit, while the leadership of the Labour Party has been captured by the Hard Left.

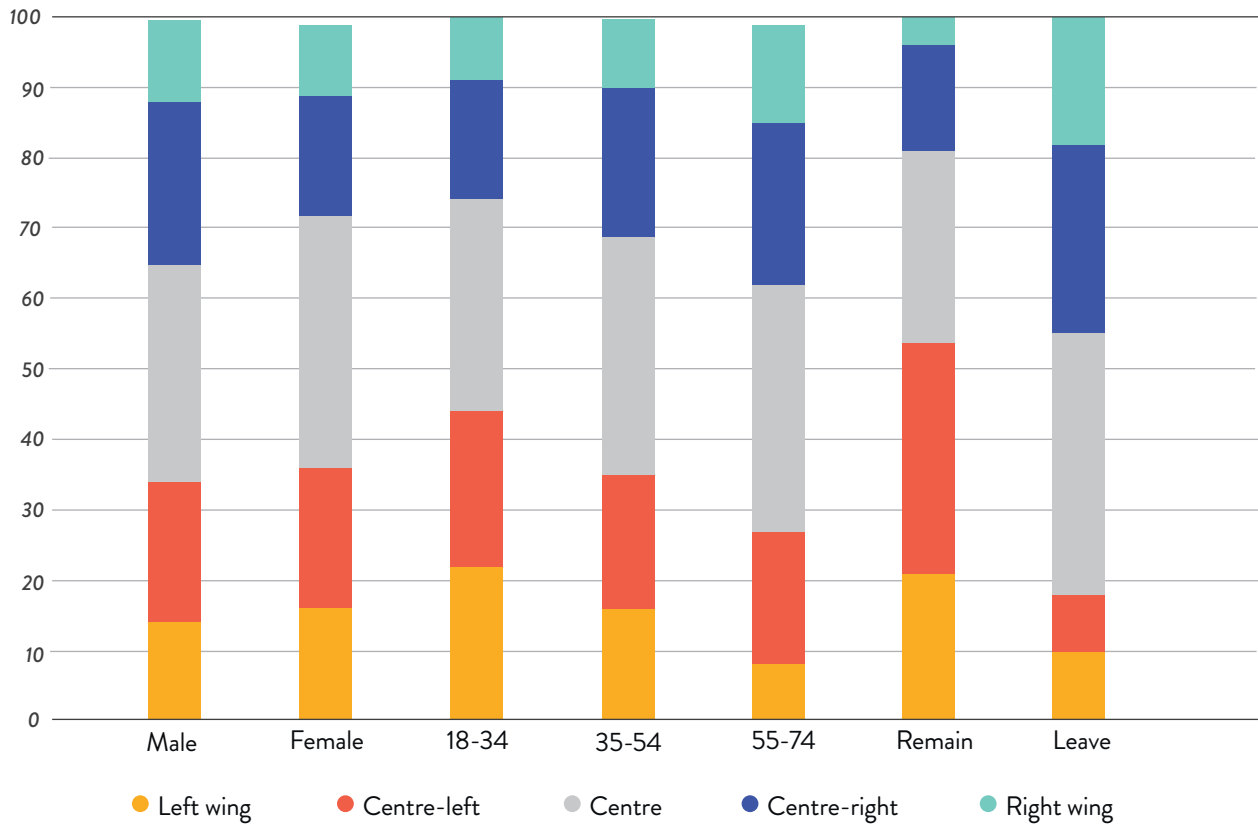
Despite this, support for centrist politics in the UK remains strong. In a survey conducted by the National Research Group for the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, the majority of people in the country define themselves as being in the centre politically. 28 per cent of respondents said that they were of the centre, while 17 per cent said that they were centre-left and 18 per cent centre-right.



How people define themselves politically

Thinking about your own political views, where would you put yourself on the following scale?

With UK political parties congregating further to the extremes, 15 per cent said they were left wing, while 11 per cent described themselves as right wing. Respondents said that parties have shifted in opinion further over the last ten years than they have themselves. 22 per cent said they were more right-wing, with 19 per cent saying they were more left wing, however 28 per cent believed the Conservative Party had shifted right over this time, with 37 per cent feeling that the Labour Party had shifted left.

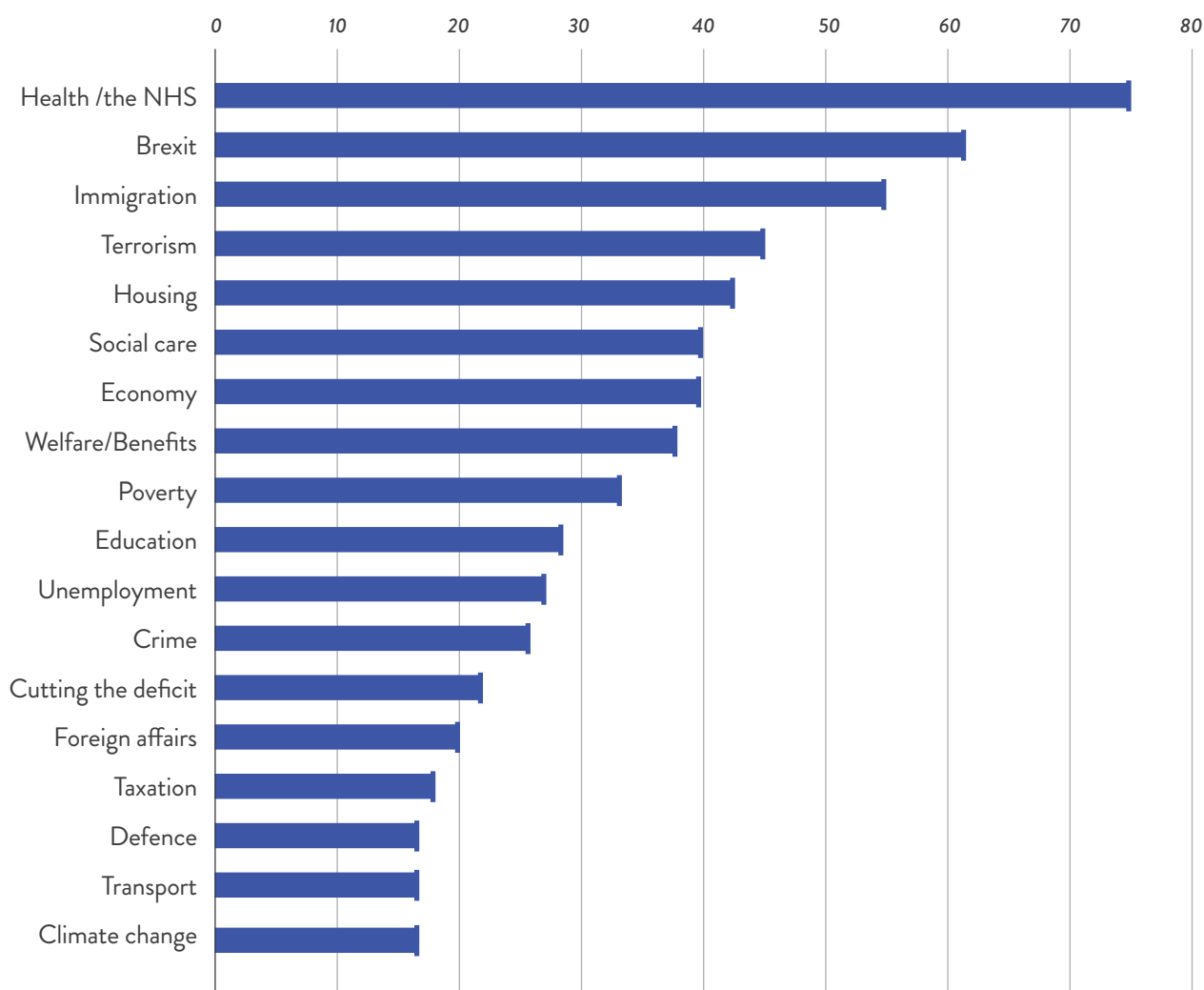


Most important issues for voters

In your opinion, which of the following are the most important issues the UK is facing right now?

Looking at the most important issues facing the country right now, 75 per cent said health/the NHS, followed by Brexit on 61 per cent and immigration on 55 per cent. But asked the single most important issue today, Brexit comes top.

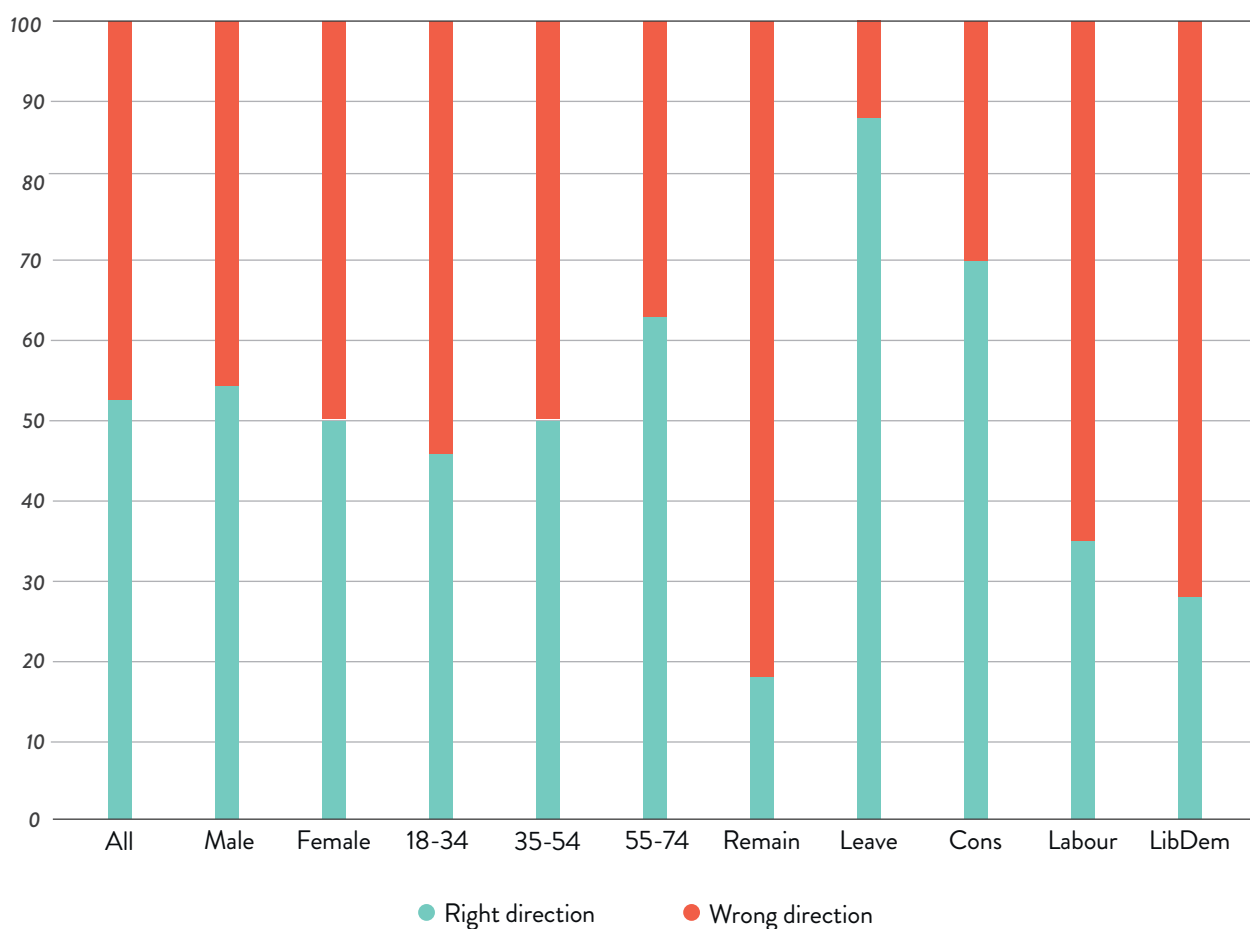
However, there is some variation between those who voted Remain or Leave. For those voting for the former, the single biggest issue was Brexit, over health/the NHS. For Leavers, the single most important was immigration, ahead of Brexit and health/the NHS.



The country's direction

Do you think things in the UK are going in the right direction or the wrong direction?

Division between the two groups is reflected in views on the direction the country is headed. While 53 per cent of voters feel it is heading in the right direction, 82 per cent of those who voted for Remain felt it was heading in the wrong direction; 88 per cent of those who voted to Leave said the opposite.



Technical Note

The survey was conducted between 2nd and 4th of February 2017 by the global research based consultancy National Research Group. It was conducted online with a sample of 1,001 UK citizens eligible to vote in UK general elections (respondents over the age of 25 who said they had never

voted in a general election were screened out). The sample was 18-74 year olds, and representative of the UK population in terms of age, gender and region. Weighting was applied to reflect the results of the 2015 General Election.