

Brexit and specific-option decisiveness: the majority problem and alternative social choice criteria¹

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Values, World Society and Modelling

“A few years ago I warned ... that Britain was heading for a major political and constitutional crisis. Sadly that crisis is now arriving. Its root cause is not the actions of any one individual or party, but the historically unprecedented inability of a Parliament to agree on, let alone implement, any course of action at all.”³

William Hague: leader of the Conservative Party opposition, 1997-2001; Foreign Secretary, 2010-2014; leader of the House of Commons, 2014-2015

Cases and concepts

This paper is about the referendum in 2016 in which Britain decided to exit the European Union (EU), ‘Brexit’; about the subsequent votes in parliament on possible Brexit options; and about the voting for a new Conservative party leader caused by the parliamentary impasse.

The conceptual framework has five components: a system in a situation; the set of options; the distribution of opinion; the set of social choice criteria; and changing the procedure.

Slide 2

The cases

The 2016 referendum

Parliamentary votes

Conservative party leadership votes

The conceptual framework

A system in a situation

The set of options

The distribution of opinion

The set of social choice criteria

Changing the procedure

Introduction and overview

Here in the UK we are in the middle of an unprecedented political crisis and it reached new heights last week (2nd to 6th September 2019). The government curtailed (‘prorogued’) parliament; and parliament is now about to pass a law which allows it to

¹ Paper for the Conflict Research Society conference , 9-10 September 2019, university of Sussex. Panel on (De)politicization, Power and Democracy.

² Brexit website: <https://sites.google.com/site/gordonburtmathsocsci/central>

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³ Hague, William. “A crisis like this can only be solved by electing a new Parliament. Terrible precedents are being set for the future of our country by picking a fight to the death with MPs.” *Daily Telegraph*, September 3 2019: 16.

William Hague: leader of the Conservative Party opposition, 1997-2001; Foreign Secretary, 2010-2014; leader of the House of Commons, 2014-2015.

dictate to the government how it should handle Brexit. The political system has been unable to decide how to (or whether to) deliver on the 2016 referendum in which a majority voted to leave the European Union (EU) - what is referred to as Brexit. As William Hague, former leader of the Conservative party, has said: the root cause of the problem is “the inability of a Parliament to agree on, let alone implement, any course of action at all”.

The UK political system is under stress because it is in an unfamiliar situation which it finds difficult to cope with. To help us think about this problem I propose the concept of ‘specific-option decisiveness’. There is a need to think about the set of options, in particular the concept of an option space. There is also a need to think about different social choice criteria. The majority criterion is commonly used but in the case of Brexit the use of the majority criterion is the cause of the problem. There is a need to think of alternative criteria. I shall consider a variety of other criteria, in particular the Condorcet criterion. To illustrate this criterion we consider three situations: voting in parliament for Brexit options; voting for the Conservative party leader; and the indicative votes taken in parliament earlier this year. In the first case the middle is defeated by a majority when the two opposing extremes combine - even though the middle is the Condorcet winner. In the second case the Condorcet winner is an extreme majority. This extreme option is not in the middle (by definition) and also has high polarisation. In this case middle voter criteria and polarisation minimisation criteria select other options as winners. In the third case the indicative votes in parliament suggest a Condorcet winner in the middle. All these criteria have the property of specific-option decisiveness – except for the (absolute) majority criterion which is indecisive.

Future actions being considered include another general election, another referendum and another parliamentary vote on options. However these actions repeat what has already happened and may not solve the problem if the actions lack specific-option decisiveness. A different procedure is needed. The procedure used for the indicative votes should be followed but altered - the difference being that MPs rank (or place value on) the set of specific options. A decisive criterion should be applied to identify the winning option.

A separate procedure is needed to decide which criterion to use. The Condorcet criterion is attractive. Or the mean rank (Borda). Or Middle Voter Democracy criteria. Or polarisation minimisation.

A separate procedure is needed to decide to adopt the aforementioned procedures. For this the procedure used to decide to adopt the indicative vote procedure could be followed.

What option might win? On the basis of the Weale study and the indicative voting, it seems likely that either May’s deal Or Something Softer (MOSS) would win. It is therefore of interest that Stephen Kinnock’s amendment was passed by accident! (It proposed a vote on the final version of May’s deal – the version which was never voted on.)

A system in a situation

Every system encounters situations which it finds difficult to cope with and which put it under stress. In particular, although systems usually have procedures for coping with frequently occurring familiar situations – they usually lack procedures for coping with rare or new situations.

So it is now, with the British political system and Brexit, Britain's exit from the European Union. In 2016 the majority in Britain voted to leave the EU and three years later Britain is still in the EU, still agonising about what to do. In part this is because the British political system is configured to cope with issues on the Left-Right dimension but is not configured to cope with issues on the Leave-Remain Brexit dimension.

The people are polarised, equally divided between Remaining and Leaving the EU. Opinion is divided fairly evenly between four or more political parties. General elections give rise to hung parliaments. Parties are divided. Prime ministers have fallen from favour. Cabinets are divided. Parliaments are indecisive: there is no majority for any option. There is concern that the Queen might be asked to settle partisan issues. In the last fortnight, government has 'suspended' parliament and parliament has 'suspended' government – and now government seeks an election to obtain a new parliament.

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A system in a situation

The UK political system under stress ... a difficult, unfamiliar situation

People

Parties and leaders*: David Cameron, Theresa May, Boris Johnson

People: general elections, 2014, 2017, 2019?

Parliament*: no majority for anything

Queen

Government: prime minister and cabinet ... advisers

People: the 2016 referendum* ... a second one?

The set of options

In 2016, a majority of the British people voted to leave the European Union: 51.9% voted to Leave; and 48.1% voted to Remain.⁴

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A majority

The 2016 referendum

Leave the EU 51.9%

Remain in the EU 48.1%

So. A majority ... but a majority for what exactly? A majority for Leave of course! "Leave means Leave" ... "Brexit means Brexit". But what sort of deal would the UK have with the European Union? A deal like Norway? A deal like Canada? Would it be a hard Brexit or a soft Brexit? Prime Minister Mrs May, wanting to be strong in her negotiations with the EU, declared "No deal is better than a bad deal". ...

⁴ <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/elections-and-referendums/past-elections-and-referendums/eu-referendum/results-and-turnout-eu-referendum>

Well, finally, Mrs May secured a deal. However to some of its critics it was ‘Brexit in Name Only’. ... Later, Boris Johnson replaced Theresa May as prime minister. He insisted that the UK would leave the EU on October 31st and prepared energetically for No Deal. Even so, in mid-August, Nigel Farage was worried that Boris Johnson merely wanted Mrs May’s deal but without the Irish backstop – something that Nigel Farage would still regard as ‘Brexit in Name Only’. Farage asked “Is Johnson planning a great Brexit stitch-up?” and called for “a clean-break Brexit” with the EU.

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A majority ...

... for what exactly?

A majority for Leave

Leave means Leave.

A deal like Norway?

A deal like Canada?

“No deal is better than a bad deal.”

a hard Brexit or a soft Brexit?

Mrs May’s deal

‘Brexit in Name Only’

No Deal

Mrs May’s deal without the Irish backstop (May 2.0)

... or May 3.0

Mrs May’s final deal (Stephen Kinnock)⁵

a clean-break Brexit⁶

As you can see there are a lot of options. Whereas in the 2016 referendum the voters were offered only two options, in reality there are many options. Notice that the options that I have listed all involve leaving the EU. So the Leave option in the referendum is not one well-defined specific option but rather corresponds to a set of options – a composite option if you like. In relation to the set of all possible options, the Leave option in the referendum is a subset of the set of all possible options. The Remain option in the referendum is likewise a subset of the set of all possible options.

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The set of options

voters offered only two options ...

... in reality, many options

the Leave option:

not a single specific option

a set of options - a composite option

a subset of the set of all possible options

I propose the concept of specific-option decisiveness. Options can be specific or composite. The choice between two composite options always selects a composite

⁵ Rayner, Gordon and Harry Yorke. “‘Hypocrite’ Corbyn rejects election to break deadlock.” *Daily Telegraph*, September 5, 2019: 1.

An amendment put forward by Stephen Kinnock was accidentally passed. This would give MPs a chance to vote on the most recent version of Theresa May’s Brexit deal.

Also New Statesman: <https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/staggers/2019/09/what-just-happened-stephen-kinnocks-amendment-and-what-does-it-mean>

⁶ Farage, Nigel. “Is Johnson planning a great Brexit stitch-up? My party will not enter an alliance with the Tories if they remain committed to securing an EU exit deal.” *Daily Telegraph*, August 21, 2019: 17.

Heath, Allister. “Farage must be prepared to stand down his victorious Brexit army. It is absurd to depict Boris Johnson as Theresa May 2.0. Remainers are the only threat to a clean exit.” *Daily Telegraph*, August 22, 2019: 16.

option and so always lacks specific-option decisiveness. Example: the 2016 referendum.

The choice between a specific option and a composite option can select either the specific option or the composite option ... and so can either have specific-option decisiveness or lack specific-option decisiveness. Example: the votes on Mrs May's Deal.

The choice from a set of specific options always selects a specific option and so always has specific-option decisiveness. Example: Conservative leadership options (see my analysis).

Note: The indicative votes were indecisive by intention and design – they were not intended to provide the basis for a choice of option.

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Specific-option decisiveness

Options can be specific or composite.

Choice between two composite options

always selects a composite option
and so always lacks specific-option decisiveness.
Example: the 2016 referendum.

Choice between a specific option and a composite option

can select either the specific option or the composite option
and so can either have specific-option decisiveness or not
Example: the votes on Mrs May's Deal.

Choice from a set of specific options

always selects a specific option
and so always has specific-option decisiveness.
Example: my analysis of Conservative leadership data.

To be decisive parliament should set up:

Choice from a set of specific options

Returning to the set of Brexit options, what does the set of all possible options look like? The reference to a hard or a soft Brexit suggests that Brexit is a matter of degree, a dimension running from the hardest possible Brexit to the softest possible Brexit and then running on into different degrees of Remain. Let us assign numbers to the dimension: let us take the two extremes as having the values 0 and 1. In the middle is 0.5 - between Leave and Remain.

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The set of all possible options

The Brexit dimension

hard	Leave	soft	middle	Remain
0			0.5	1

The distribution of opinion

We now consider what has happened in parliament this year. Mrs May had secured a deal with the EU but on three separate occasions parliament voted against it. Although

Mrs May steadily increased the vote for her deal from 32% to 38% and then to 45%, this third vote still fell short of the required 50% majority.

So there was no majority for Mrs May's deal. In addition to voting on Mrs May's deal, back in the spring there had been a series of indicative votes in parliament on a number of alternative options. Here too there was no majority. It was said that there was 'no majority for anything' in parliament.

Now in September with the new prime minister Boris Johnson even if he agrees a revised deal with the EU, there may not be a majority for his revised deal in parliament.

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The distribution of opinion

No majority ...
... for Mrs May's deal
... for hard Brexit
... for soft Brexit
... for Remain
...
... for Mr Johnson's revised deal?
No majority for anything

The set of social choice criteria

Mrs May's deal was voted against by two opposing groups of people: those who wanted a harder Brexit; and those who wanted a softer Brexit. In terms of the Brexit dimension, Mrs May was in the middle and was defeated by a majority consisting of a combination of the two extremes.

Slide 10

The set of social choice criteria

The middle was defeated by the two opposing extremes combined

Hard Brexiteers May's deal supporters Soft & Remain
The middle is the Condorcet winner

This situation had been foreseen back in January 2019. Albert Weale of UCL's Constitution Unit had considered whether an indicative vote might break the anticipated Brexit logjam. He considered how MPs might vote on five Brexit options. He suggested that MPs might vote in the following way. He noted that there was no majority for anything.

But he went on to say: "The government's strategy has been to try to force compromise by presenting MPs with a choice between the current deal and something that they would find even less attractive. For the Brexiteers, the alternative she offers is no Brexit, whilst Remainers are told it is the government's deal or a hard Brexit.

In effect, this is to present the deal as what voting theorists refer to as a 'Condorcet winner'. A Condorcet winner is an option that can beat every other alternative when pitched in a pair-wise contest against each of them. In terms of the Figure [1], it is the option in the middle of the spectrum. It may be unloved by the overwhelming

majority as a first choice, but it offers the most acceptable compromise when the alternatives are deeply unpalatable to a majority in the Commons.”

Slide 11

The set of social choice criteria

May’s deal: no majority for anything
(Weale, January 2016)

Options	Number of MPs
No Deal	64
Canada	63
PMs Deal	194
Norway	175
second referendum	143

total	639
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<https://constitution-unit.com/2019/01/09/could-an-indicative-vote-break-the-brex-it-logjam/#more-7424>

May’s deal: the Condorcet winner in the middle of the spectrum

PMs Deal > harder Brexit $194+(175+143)>(64+63)$; $512>127$

PMs Deal > softer & Remain $194+(64+63)>(175+143)$; $321>318$

Over and over again people have been reminded in the media that Mrs May’s deal was defeated three times. “May’s deal is dead.” What has not been said is that Mrs May’s deal was the Condorcet winner (potentially).

Conservative party leadership ... alternative social choice criteria

This concept of a Condorcet winner, used by Weale, is just one of many different competing criteria for making a social choice. I shall now present a case study which illustrates a wide range of possible criteria. A YouGov survey in May 2019 provides an excellent source of data for this. The survey concerned (and here we deviate slightly from our concern with Brexit) ... the survey concerned the Conservative party leadership contest and asked a sample of Conservative party members their views about nine possible candidates. Note that the survey predated the actual contest. Note too that the sample of Conservative party members is strongly pro-Leave: 75% had voted Leave in 2016.

We start by considering four important criteria: first preferences; the number of wins in all-play-all pairwise contests (the Condorcet criterion); mean ranking; and mean value. We shall find that these four criteria order the candidates in much the same way.

Consider the first column: first preferences. There was no overall majority (more than 50%) for any of the candidates – but Boris Johnson was well ahead of all the other candidates.

Consider the second column: the number of wins in all-play-all pairwise contests (the Condorcet criterion). Boris Johnson defeats each of the other 8 candidates in pairwise

contests – so he is the Condorcet winner. Dominic Raab comes second, losing only to Boris Johnson.

Consider the third column: the mean rank or Borda count (taking 9 as best). This relates to the Modified Borda Count which is the criterion recommended by Peter Emerson at his book launch yesterday. On this criterion too Boris Johnson comes highest, followed by Dominic Raab.

These three criteria are based on people’s preferences, in other words comparisons between candidates. The fourth criterion is based on value, how good a candidate is. People are asked would the candidate make a good leader?

[Consider the fourth column: mean value.] Yet again Boris Johnson comes highest, followed by Dominic Raab. The other candidates have about zero mean value or even negative mean value. Note that the mean value for Boris Johnson might be referred to as ‘a weakly positive mean value’.

Slide 12

Four different criteria: scores for candidates given by Conservative party members

	% first prefer. majority	pairwise wins Condorc	mean rank Borda	mean value
Boris Johnson	39	8	6.40	52
Dominic Raab	13	7	5.89	33
Michael Gove	9	5	5.18	-10
Sajid Javid	9	4	5.20	2
Jeremy Hunt	8	3	5.17	-10
Andrea Leadsom	5	4	5.00	-15
Penny Mordaunt	5	2	4.83	5
Rory Stewart	4	0	3.28	-37
Matt Hancock	1	1	3.73	-30
max	100	8	9 best	200

Let us look at the preferences in finer detail. Boris Johnson has most first preferences. But what about second preferences and so on? Well, Boris also has most first and second preferences combined ... most first to third preferences combined ... most first to fourth preferences ... most first to fifth preferences ...

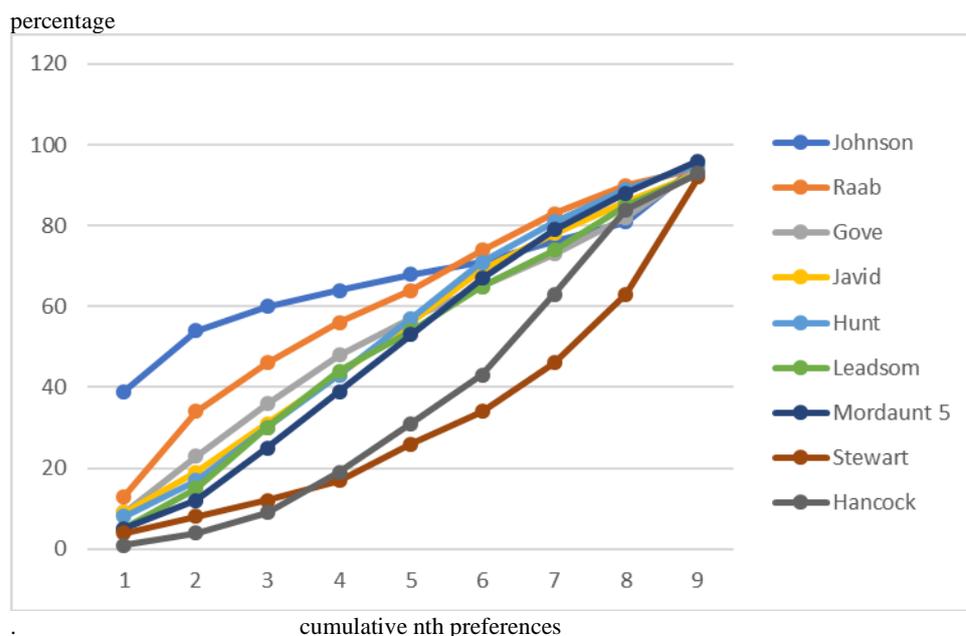
Boris Johnson can do no wrong it would seem: whatever criterion we choose he seems to be the best!

Polarisation

But now the story changes. Boris Johnson does not have most first to sixth preferences combined ... he does not have most first to seventh preferences combined ... he does not have most first to eighth preferences combined. No! ... on these three criteria, it is Dominic Raab who has the most. This is shown in the figure with Johnson highest for the first five points then dipping below Raab.

Slide 13

Cumulative percentages for the top n preferences. Conservative party members.



the least bad person

Here is what is happening. Up till now we have been looking at ‘the most good person’, now we are looking at ‘the least bad person’. Very few people (4%) think that Dominic Raab is the worst person. A lot of people (29%) think that Rory Stewart is the worst person. Almost as bad as Rory Stewart is Boris Johnson: a fair number of people (14%) think that Boris is the worst person.

Polarisation, concept A: a polarising option - the most good and the most bad person

This relates to polarisation. One concept of polarisation is that a candidate is polarising if many people think he is the best and many people think he is the worst. What we have shown here is that Boris Johnson is polarising in this sense. The above argument has used the data on people’s preferences. Unsurprisingly Boris Johnson is also polarising in terms of the amount of value. He has a bipolar rating, 39% saying he is ‘very good’ and 20% saying he is ‘very bad’.

[Update, June 17th: Boris’ ratings have improved substantially but are still polarised: 56% saying ‘very good’ and 12% saying ‘very bad’.]

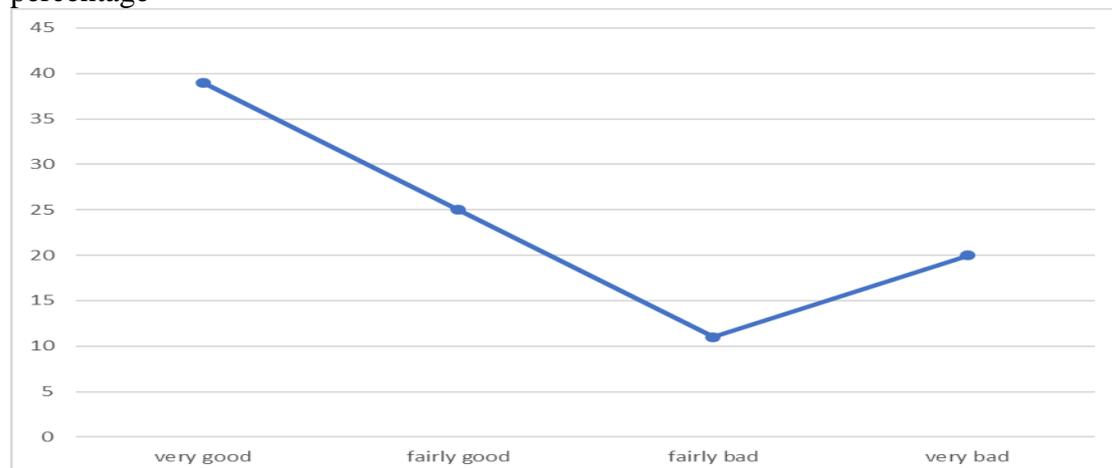
The previous paragraph has shown that Boris Johnson is polarising in terms of preference. Boris Johnson is also polarising in terms of the amount of value: Figure 5 shows his bipolar rating 39% saying ‘very good’ and 20% saying ‘very bad’.

[Update, June 17th: Boris’ ratings have improved substantially but are still polarised: 56% saying ‘very good’ and 12% saying ‘very bad’.]

Slide 14

The percentage of party members rating Boris Johnson on ‘would make a good leader’. May 2019.

percentage



Multiplying Johnson’s 39% ‘very good’ by his 20% ‘very bad’ gives 780 and correcting for the fact that this is based on 95% of the respondents gives 0.086. This can be taken as a measure of polarisation amongst voters about Johnson. Table 10 shows that Johnson’s polarisation score is more than double that of any other candidate. Next highest polarisation scores are Raab, Gove and Stewart.

[Update, June 17th: Multiplying Johnson’s 56% ‘very good’ by his 12% ‘very bad’ gives 672 and correcting for the fact that this is based on 96% of the respondents gives 0.073. Johnson’s polarisation score is more than double that of any other candidate apart from Gove (0.047) and Stewart (0.062).]

Table Polarisation scores

	May 2019	update: June 17
Boris Johnson	0.086	0.073
Dominic Raab	0.036	0.030
Michael Gove	0.041	0.047
Sajid Javid	0.019	0.022
Jeremy Hunt	0.023	0.032
Andrea Leadsom	0.018	0.025
Penny Mordaunt	0.018	-
Rory Stewart	0.044	0.062
Matt Hancock	0.017	0.013
Mark Harper	-	0.006
Esther McVey	-	0.032

The Brexit dimension ... Middle Voter Democracy

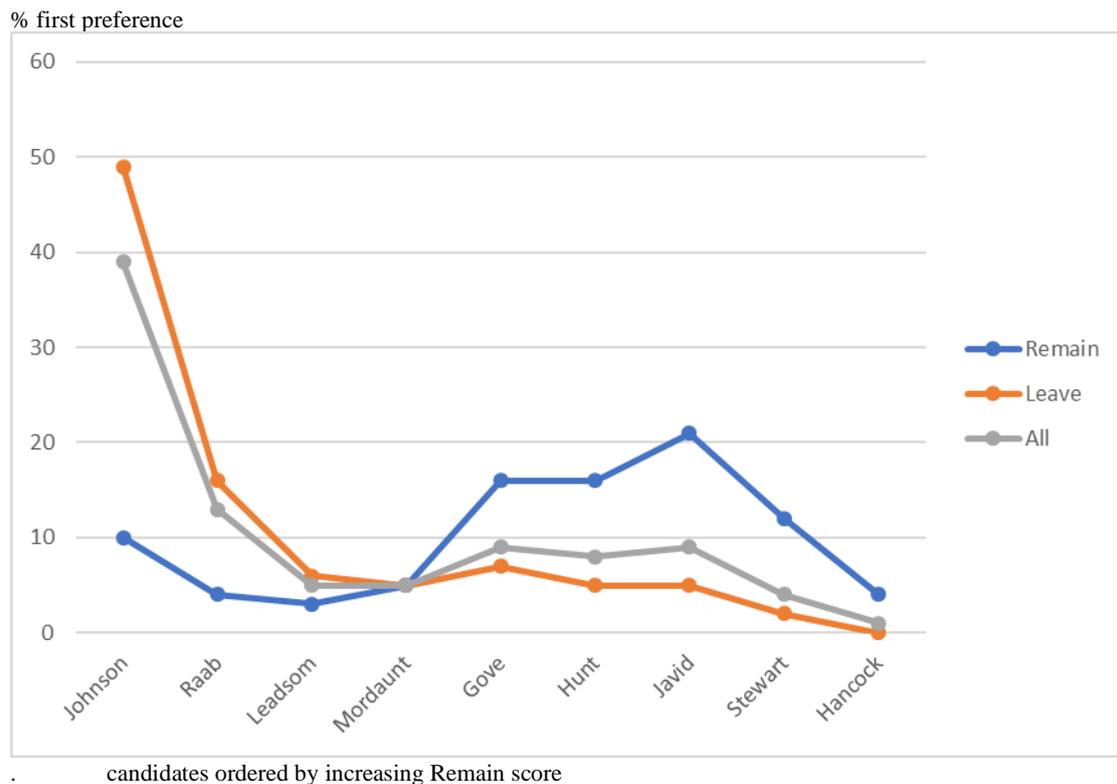
The criteria which we have considered so far have taken no account of the location of options in option space. We now introduce two criteria which do relate to option space. The idea common to both is that the winner is the candidate who is in the middle of option space. One criterion is that we select the candidate who is closest to the median voter. Another criterion is that we select the candidate who is closest to the mean position of the voters' ideal positions in space.

Here for the option space we look at the Brexit dimension. The slide orders the candidates according to their Remain score. Those on the left receive most of their support from Leave voters. Those on the right receive most of their support from Remain voters. The line for the Leave supporters decreases steadily from Leave to Remain. The line for the Right supporters decreases steadily from Leave to Remain.

In between is the line for all of the respondents. Clearly people are heaped up towards the Leave end of the scale. Boris Johnson is at the extreme and with 39% of the vote does not receive the vote of the median voter. But Dominic Raab is next most extreme and with 13 % does receive the vote of the median voter (because 39% plus 13% equal 52%). Because there are a lot of candidates beyond Dominic Raab, the mean position is dragged across the boundary and Angela Leadsom receives the support of the mean voter.

Slide 15

Candidates in Brexit option space: first preferences for Leave and Remain groups of Conservative party members. Median voter: Raab. Mean position: Leadsom



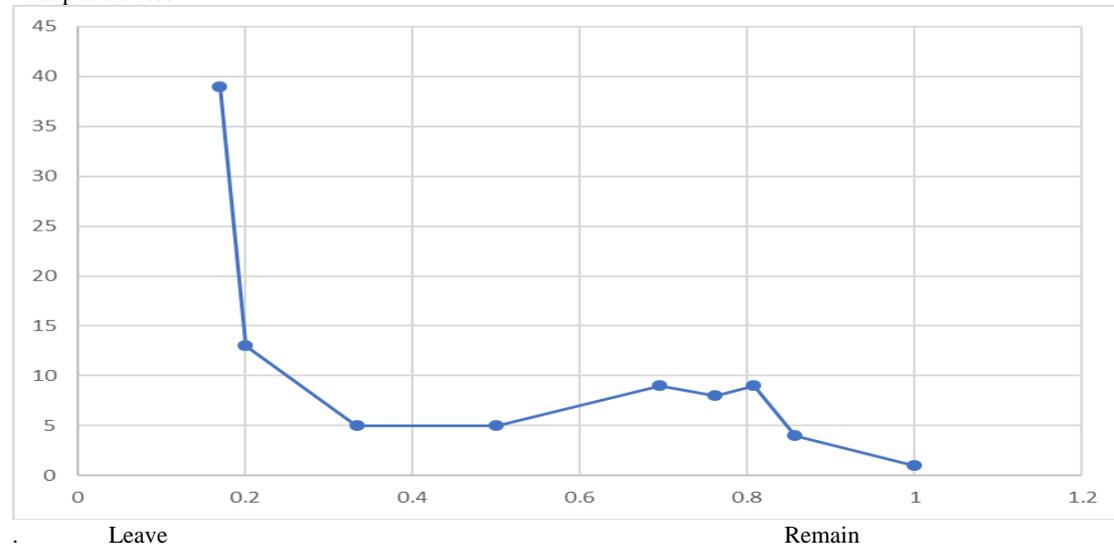
Polarisation, concept B: a polarised distribution

The distribution of voters in Brexit space is polarised if it has two peaks at or near the extreme ends of the dimension.

Slide 16

A polarised distribution: two peaks at or near the extreme ends of the dimension. (Conservative party members)

First preferences



The indicative votes in parliament

We now look at the indicative voting in more detail. The MPs were asked to consider eight different options. Unusually they were given a bit of paper! It listed the eight options and they had to indicate which they approved of – they could approve of more than one.

The percentage approval for each of the eight options along the Brexit continuum is shown in the slide. Two specifications are used, in both cases looking at the number of votes For ... in one case dividing For by the sum of For and Against; and in the other case dividing For by the total number of MPs (whether or not they participated in the voting).

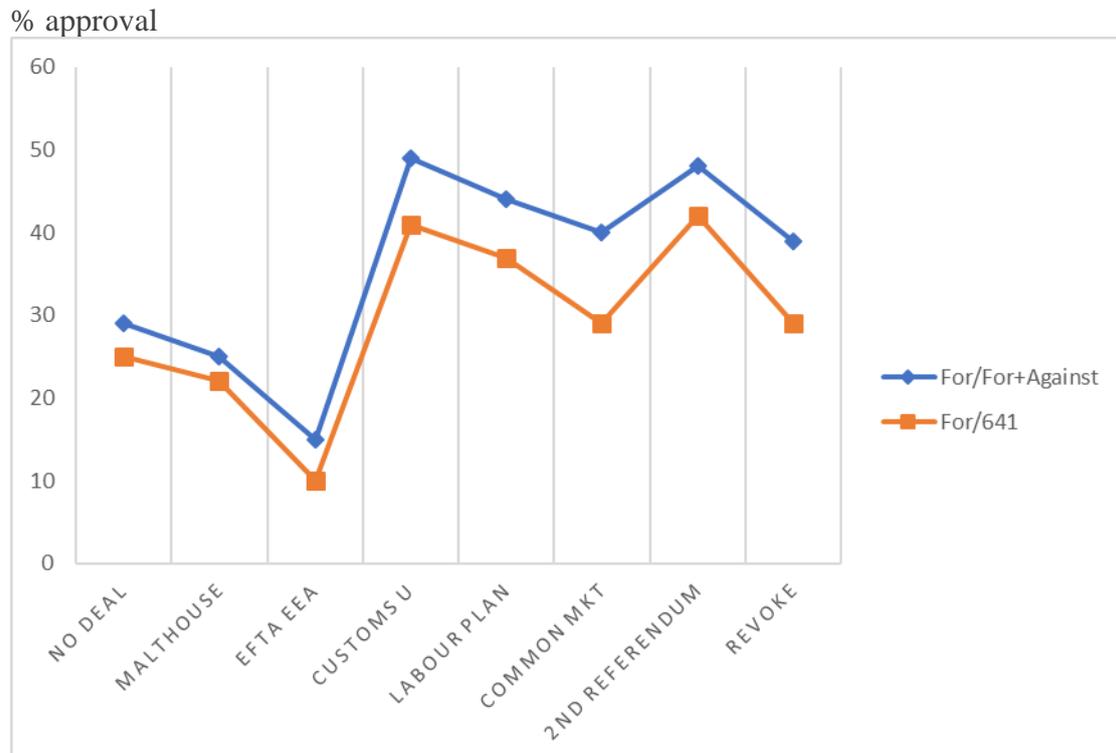
The approval profiles for the two specifications are broadly similar. The Customs Union and the referendum are the two options with the highest approval (49% and 48% of the vote respectively; 264 v 272 and 268 v 295 MP votes respectively). The Labour plan comes third. Next are Common Market 2.0 and Revoke. The options with least approval are all towards the Leave end of the scale: No deal, Malthouse and EFTA/EEA decreasing in that order.

Note that none of the eight options receives more than 50% - none has the approval of a majority of MPs.

Different parties had different approval profiles. These are shown in the next figure (alongside the profile for all MPs given in the previous figure). What does an

approval profile look like for an individual MP? We can see this by looking at the Green Party. Caroline Lucas is its only MP. We see that she is willing to approve two options, namely a referendum and the revoking of Article 50. Note that these two options are adjacent. We might say that Lucas has a two-option adjacent option approval profile. In general we suppose that each MP has an adjacent option approval profile with approval for a certain number of options.

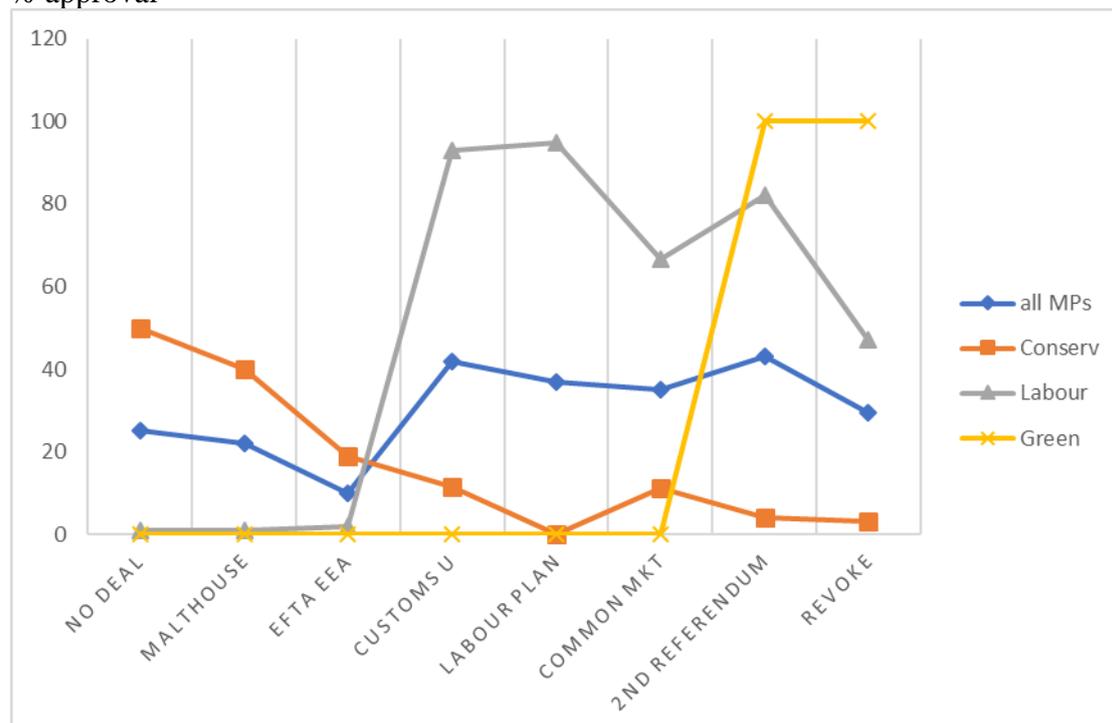
Slide 17 Approval profile for the indicative vote options; MPs can vote for more than one option



What does an approval profile look like for a group of MPs? The Conservative MPs give their highest support to No Deal and their support falls off the softer the option. The Labour MPs give their highest support to middle options and their support falls off for options towards either extreme, particularly the harder Brexit options. In general we suppose that each group has a peak approval option with approval falling off the further an option is from the peak approval option.

Slide 18 MPs approval profile for the indicative vote options; different parties

% approval



Future actions

The default is No Deal on 31st October 2019. Future actions being considered include another general election, another referendum and another parliamentary vote on options. However these actions repeat what has already happened and may not solve the problem if the actions lack specific-option decisiveness.

A different procedure is needed

A different procedure is needed. The procedure used for the indicative votes should be followed but altered - the difference being that MPs rank (or place a value on) the set of specific options. A decisive criterion should be applied to identify the winning option.

A separate procedure is needed to decide which criterion to use. The Condorcet criterion is attractive. Or the mean rank (Borda). Or Middle Voter Democracy criteria. Or polarisation minimisation.

A separate procedure is needed to decide to adopt the aforementioned procedures. For this, I suggest parliament follow the procedure that was used when parliament decided to hold the indicative votes.

What option might win? On the basis of the Weale study and the indicative voting, it seems likely that either May's deal Or Something Softer (MOSS) would win ...

The EU may not grant an extension and so such a procedure needs to be completed before October 31st.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/brexit-news-latest-eu-will-refuse-delay-in-current-circumstances-france-says-a4231506.html>

Stephen Kinnock's amendment

... it is therefore of interest that Stephen Kinnock's amendment was passed by accident!⁷ Stephen Kinnock proposed an amendment to the bill. Supporting the aim of stopping No Deal and asking for an extension to 31 January 2019, he argued that

“if the UK does not specify the purpose of the extension, we will end up in exactly the same position ... [our nation will still be stuck in limbo] ...

... Therefore, amendments 6 and 7, together with new clause 1, aim to set a purpose for the extension request until 31 January. The explicit purpose, we state, should be to pass a Brexit Bill, and, more specifically, to pass something similar to the withdrawal agreement Bill that was drafted in May 2019 as a result of cross-party talks.

[the final version of May's deal – the version which was never voted on.]”

Kinnock's proposed option is an example of *May or Something Softer (MOSS)*. This is in accord with Albert Weale's study (see earlier section); in accord with the 45% who voted for Mrs May's Deal on the third attempt; and in accord with the most popular of the options in the indicative voting that took place.

Slide 19

The default is No Deal on 31st October 2019.
Future actions may not change the situation.

A different procedure is needed

Needs to have specific-option decisiveness
Some similarity with indicative votes
A procedure to decide social criterion
A procedure to decide to do this
Possible outcome:
May's deal Or Something Softer (MOSS)

The alternative outcome:
Harder or No Deal

Into the week of 9th to 13th September there were a number of new developments. There was further discussion of Labour's policy:

“Labour referendum could offer people May's deal or Remain, McDonnell hints. Shadow chancellor suggests party may revive accord rejected three times in apparent policy change.”

Yorke, Harry. *Daily Telegraph*, September 9, 2019: 5.

“We will tweak May's deal and put it to the people, says Labour.”

⁷ Stephen Kinnock, House of Commons: <https://www.stephenkinnock.co.uk/our-nation-is-stuck-in-limbo-if-the-uk-does-not-specify-the-purpose-of-the-extension-we-will-end-up-in-exactly-the-same-position/>

Wright, Oliver. *The Times*, September 9, 2019: 9.

There was further discussion of the government policy:

“Could Johnson have the answer to solve the Brexit deadlock? Prime Minister discusses ‘all-Ireland’ plan in attempt to remove backstop and satisfy the DUP.”

Rayner, Gordon. *Daily Telegraph*, September 10, 2019: 1.

“A last-minute deal is still within our grasp. A Northern Ireland backstop may enable our beleaguered PM to get a deal through parliament.”

Lynn, Matt. *Daily Telegraph*, September 10, 2019: 16.

A cross-party group has formed following up on the Kinnock amendment.

“50 Labour MPs could back May deal.”

Coures, Eleni. *The Times*, September 10, 2019: 7.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/sep/10/group-of-cross-party-mps-launch-bid-to-reach-compromise-brexit-deal>;

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-latest-no-deal-labour-boris-johnson-caroline-flint-eu-a9099156.html>

Appendix

Slide 20

Opinion stays much the same?

Remain 48%; Leave 52% (2016 referendum)

Remain 53%; Leave 47% (recent opinion polls)

<https://whatukthinks.org/eu/opinion-polls/euref2-poll-of-polls/>

Group A 51% in 4 to 11 September 2019 (50, 54, 50, 50, 51, 55, 54)

Group B 46% in 4 to 11 September 2019 (49, 45, 46, 46, 48, 45, 44)

[other 0% to 5%].

Dates: 27 June ... 8 September

Group A: Labour, LibDem, Green, SNP, PC, Change;

Group B: Conservative, Brexit, UKIP

<https://yougov.co.uk/topics/politics/articles-reports/2019/09/03/voting-intention-con-35-lab-25-lib-dem-16-brex-11->

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opinion_polling_for_the_next_United_Kingdom_general_election#Graphical_summaries.

Brexit polarisation

Two main parties (ambivalent about Brexit)

58% in 4 to 11 September 2019 (60, 58, 53, 59, 56, 59, 59)

82% in 8 June 2017 general election

Respect democracy, yes or no

Parliament: 35 v 41%

No Deal opponents: 29 v 52%

<https://yougov.co.uk/topics/politics/articles-reports/2019/09/03/voting-intention-con-35-lab-25-lib-dem-16-brex-11->

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