

# Future of Britain after the EU Referendum

## Topic Summary



Economic  
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# Future of Britain after the EU Referendum

The Future of Britain event will cover three topics:

- **MIGRATION TO THE UK**
- **FOOD POLICY AND REGULATION**
- **CONSUMER REGULATION**

This document outlines a set of policy options the UK could consider in relation to each topic. In each case, we present the arguments **for** and **against** the different decisions the UK could take. These will form the basis of the group discussions in which you will participate.

Full briefing documents on each topic and the policy options can be found on our website: [www.whatukthinks.org/eu/future-of-britain/event-documents](http://www.whatukthinks.org/eu/future-of-britain/event-documents). We appreciate that you may not have time to read the full briefing document for each topic – but we do ask that you read the summaries outlined here. There will also be time in the event to refer to these materials.

These briefing materials have been prepared with the help of an Advisory Board of relevant experts. A list of the members of this board can be found at the end of this document.

**The Future of Britain after the EU Referendum** project is funded by a grant from the Economic and Social Research Council as part of its Governance after Brexit programme.

Further details can be found at: <https://esrc.ukri.org/news-events-and-publications/news/news-items/new-research-projects-to-assess-long-term-governance-implications-of-brexit-across-the-uk/>

If you have any questions about this pack, accessing the event or the project in general please email: [FutureOfBritain@natcen.ac.uk](mailto:FutureOfBritain@natcen.ac.uk).



# Future of Britain event timetable

## 3rd & 4th October 2020

### DAY 1: SATURDAY 3RD OCTOBER, 2020

9.25	Join the event
9.30	Moderator welcome and group introductions
<b>10.00</b>	<b>Group discussion 1: Migration to the UK</b>
11.15	Short break
<b>11.30</b>	<b>Plenary session 1: Migration to the UK</b>
12.45	Lunch break
<b>13.45</b>	<b>Post-Plenary discussion 1: Migration to the UK</b>
<b>14.00</b>	<b>Group discussion 2: Food Policy &amp; Regulation</b>
15.00	Short break
<b>15.15</b>	<b>Plenary session 2: Food Policy &amp; Regulation</b>
<b>16.30</b>	<b>End of Day 1</b>

### DAY 2: SUNDAY 4TH OCTOBER, 2020

9.25	Join the event
9.30	Moderator welcome
<b>9.45</b>	<b>Post-Plenary discussion 2: Food Policy &amp; Regulation</b>
<b>10.00</b>	<b>Group discussion 3: Consumer Regulation</b>
11.00	Short break
<b>11.15</b>	<b>Plenary session 3: Consumer Regulation</b>
12.15	Closing group discussion & online questionnaire
<b>13.00</b>	<b>End of Day 2</b>



# Summary of Topic 1

## Migration to the UK

These summary arguments relate to a range of important policy questions about immigration the government must decide on.

### Question 1.1

**Should EU nationals now be subject to the same immigration rules as non-EU nationals?  
Should country of origin be taken into account at all?**

**OPTION 1:** The UK should apply the same immigration rules to all countries

#### Arguments For

- Having a clear and simple process avoids the costs and bureaucracy involved in having multiple sets of different rules.

#### Arguments Against

- The government should give preference to migrants from countries that give preference to UK citizens wishing to move there.
- Citizens from some countries may be more likely to overstay illegally – tougher rules should be applied to these countries.

**OPTION 2:** The UK should apply different rules to EU and non EU countries

#### Arguments For

- Making it easier for people from the EU to come to Britain makes sense given its geographical proximity, and the fact that already many EU citizens live in the UK and vice-versa.
- It might make it easier to negotiate a close trading relationship with the EU and rules that make it easier for UK citizens to move to the EU.

#### Arguments Against

- There is nothing special about migrants from the EU. For example, given their historical links with Britain, preference should be given to citizens from Commonwealth countries.

**OPTION 3:** The UK should have different rules for different countries, but membership of the EU should not be the key distinction

#### Arguments For

- There is nothing special about migrants from the EU. The government should have different rules based on individual countries' circumstances, such as whether they have agreed a trade deal with the UK, the relative fiscal impact on the UK by immigrants from that country or historical risk that they might overstay visas.

#### Arguments Against

- People have a greater incentive to move to countries that are closer to them - and especially if there are existing or potential trade agreements that could be made.
- There is now a long history of migration between the UK and EU countries and these cultural and economic relationships should be maintained.

## Question 1.2

Who should be able to come to the UK for work? What criteria should be used to decide which workers can come here?

### OPTION 1: Only give people work visas if they are coming to work in high-skilled jobs

#### Arguments For

- Economic research suggests that admitting low-paid migrants into the country can create costs for taxpayers, e.g. if they stay long enough to have children or require care from the NHS.
- Migration contributes to population growth, which pushes up the cost of housing.
- Research evidence suggests that low-skilled migration brings relatively little economic benefit.

#### Arguments Against

- While there may not be much evidence that low-skilled migration brings large benefits, there is little evidence that it brings large costs, either.
- There is strong demand for migrant workers in low-skilled jobs, many of which are relatively low paid and offer conditions that are unattractive to UK citizens, e.g. in social care.
- Some sectors, e.g. agriculture often have low-levels of automation and rely primarily on a migrant workforce. Producers may be unable to grow labour-intensive foods such as strawberries if there are no migrant workers to pick them.

### OPTION 2: Admit workers in a wide range of jobs at all skill levels

#### Arguments For

- Employers in many industries want to hire migrant workers and the government should not be 'picking winners' by deciding which industries or employers can do so.
- Limited evidence that low-skilled migration has a negative impact on British workers or the economy.
- Migrants who start off in low-paid jobs may eventually be able to move into better paid work.

#### Arguments Against

- If there were less low-skilled migration, employers would simply adapt to rely on these workers less for example, by increasing wages to attract UK workers, or importing products that require low-cost labour from abroad rather than making them in the UK.
- Admitting low-paid migrants into the country can create costs for taxpayers, e.g. if they stay long enough to have children or require care from the NHS.

### OPTION 3: Issue work visas primarily for those in high-skilled jobs, but with some exceptions

#### Arguments For

- Would enable the government to gain most of the advantages of restricting low skilled migration, but still admit lower-skilled workers where it feels that it would be beneficial.
- For example, the government might decide that it is not realistic to pay social care workers enough to attract more British workers and that a special work visa should be available for these jobs.

#### Arguments Against

- Low-skilled migrants would have to be tied to specific jobs (and specific employers) to make sure they are doing the jobs for which they have been admitted. This makes workers more dependent on their employer and increases the risk they are exploited.
- It is not easy to decide which employers or low-paid jobs should be eligible for such schemes.

### Question 1.3

What rules should govern the admission of family members of British nationals or settled migrants? Should we (1) maintain, (2) increase or (3) reduce the current restrictions on the rights of UK citizens to bring in their partners?

#### OPTION 1: Maintain current restrictions on bringing in partners

##### Arguments For

- An adequate family income and proficiency in English are important for integration.
- Families earning more than £18,600 will usually be ineligible for welfare and so should not need support from public funds.
- Current rules are restrictive enough: further restrictions would prevent the entry of family members who would have not faced any problems integrating.

##### Arguments Against

- People's ability to live with their loved ones should not depend on their income.
- Restricting family income hurts the children of couples separated by migration policies.
- Women and younger people find it more difficult to bring their partner into the UK.
- Partners would learn English more quickly if they came to the UK first.

#### OPTION 2: Increase restrictions on bringing in partners

##### Arguments For

- It would further reduce the number of low-income people coming to the UK.
- Language restrictions are not rigorous enough – only basic proficiency is required, which is not enough to develop social connections with people in Britain or, in most jobs, to be able to work.

##### Arguments Against

- The UK already has among the most restrictive family migration policies in the high-income world.
- A higher income threshold could mean that a majority of UK citizens would be unable to bring a non-EU partner into the UK.

#### OPTION 3: Reduce restrictions on bringing in partners

##### Arguments For

- Any income requirement should only prevent someone bringing their partner into the UK if they would be living in significant poverty.
- The government should be more flexible in allowing couples to demonstrate they can live without taxpayer support for example with support from parents or other family members, or the partner's potential future income after they arrive in the UK.
- Around 40% of UK citizens are unable to meet the requirement of an annual income of £18,600.

##### Arguments Against

- An adequate family income is important to ensuring that migrants do not live in poverty. Robust rules are necessary to ensure those coming have the resources to play a full part in British life and do not place excessive financial burden on the UK.
- Lower language proficiency would make it harder for partners to find work and develop social connections with people in the UK.
- Reducing restrictions on partners would mean higher overall migration and more low-income people in the UK.

## Question 1.4

Should there be caps on or targets for the number of migrants admitted to the UK?

### OPTION 1: Cap the number of visas that can be issued to enter the UK each year

#### Arguments For

- An effective way of making sure that migration is actually reduced. Provides a transparent way of reassuring the public that migration is under control.
- May encourage increased domestic training for in-demand professions by limiting access to their foreign counterparts.

#### Arguments Against

- There is no 'optimal' level of migration.
- A hard cap can have unintended and unpopular consequences. Once the cap is reached, some people applying for visas will be rejected even if most people agree that this type of person (such as a doctor) should usually be allowed to come to the UK.

### OPTION 2: Don't cap specific categories of visas, but set a political target for the level of migration

#### Arguments For

- Targets provide a way for the government to set what it believes is an appropriate level of migration and allows people to see whether it has achieved its objectives.
- Targets are much more flexible than caps and can more easily be changed or withdrawn if the government feels it is necessary.

#### Arguments Against

- There is no 'optimal' level of migration – and no guarantee that any target will be met.
- Targets may focus the policy debate on the number of people entering or settling in the UK. As a result, the question of who is admitted may be neglected.

### OPTION 3: Use selection criteria to regulate migration instead of numerical caps or targets

#### Arguments For

- The number of migrants is not what makes most difference to the impact of migration – what matters more is who migrates to the UK and what they do while they are here.

#### Arguments Against

- Without a transparent numerical objective, the government will not have a strong enough incentive to introduce policies to reduce migration.

## Question 1.5

**Under what conditions should migrants be able to stay in the UK permanently?**

- **OPTION 1:** Encourage temporary migration and make it relatively difficult for (work) migrants to settle permanently



### Arguments For

- Short-term migrants often make a higher net contribution to the public finances, as they don't have children or need much healthcare.
- This is a way of satisfying employers' demand for migrant workers in the short run (particularly in low-paid jobs), without adding to long-term population growth or having to worry about how well migrants integrate, either economically or socially.
- The UK can 'test out' prospective permanent migrants, only offering permanent visas to those who demonstrate a certain level of integration or economic contribution.



### Arguments Against

- Integration takes time, so relying on a rotating pool of temporary workers means migrants will be less well integrated. This may have negative impacts for the communities in which they live.
- Employers face additional training costs if they frequently lose their staff.
- Migrants who are only here for a short time are more likely to be exploited at work because they haven't developed the language skills or legal knowledge to stand up for their rights.

- **OPTION 2:** Give more migrants an opportunity to stay in the UK, for example by relaxing criteria for applying for permanent settlement



### Arguments For

- Encourages integration. Because they have more certainty, migrants have a greater incentive to learn English and acquire skills or knowledge that are useful for life in the UK.



### Arguments Against

- Can be expected to lead to higher growth in the non-UK population over time unless it was made it harder to be admitted initially.
- Not all migrants whom it makes sense to admit in the short run (e.g. to satisfy short-term demand from employers) will continue to make economic contributions in the long run.



## Question 1.6

How much access to social security should migrants have – and on what terms? Should we (1) maintain, (2) increase or (3) reduce the restrictions on migrants' access to cash benefits

### OPTION 1: Maintain current restrictions on access to cash benefits

#### Arguments For

- A way of saving taxpayers' money.
- It is only fair that migrants 'pay in' to the tax and benefits system for a while before they can be supported by it.
- The UK has little responsibility for those who have only moved recently to the UK.

#### Arguments Against

- Faster access to benefits may help integration (for example, by improving access to language classes) and prevent people from living in poverty.
- Family migrants should be allowed to receive benefits in order to help them establish themselves in the UK.
- Can shift costs on to local councils, who have an obligation to support destitute families with children.

### OPTION 2: Increase restrictions on access to cash benefits

#### Arguments For

- A way of saving taxpayers' money.
- It is only fair that migrants 'pay in' to the tax and benefits system for a considerable period of time before they are supported by it.
- EU citizens moving to the UK should have to wait the same length of time as non-EU citizens before they are eligible for cash benefits.

#### Arguments Against

- Migrants and their families will be at greater risk of ending up in poverty.
- Local councils may find themselves having to support more destitute migrant families with children.

### OPTION 3: Reduce restrictions on access to cash benefits

#### Arguments For

- Faster access to benefits may prevent people from living in poverty and improve migrants' access both to language classes and to job finding services, thereby promoting their integration.
- Family migrants who have access to welfare benefit may establish themselves in the UK more quickly.

#### Arguments Against

- The cost of paying more welfare benefits would fall on taxpayers.
- It is only fair that migrants 'pay in' to the tax and benefits system for a while before they can be supported by it.
- The UK has little responsibility for those who have only moved recently to the UK.

## Question 1.7

How easy or difficult should it be for migrants to become a British citizen and for example, have the right to vote?

### OPTION 1: Make it easier for migrants to become UK citizens

#### Arguments For

- Migrants who become citizens are more likely to have a sense of belonging and participate fully in society.
- Having the vote will make it more likely politicians take their views into account.
- At present, citizenship fees are higher than the cost of processing the applications, and can be too expensive for some migrants, especially families where more than one person is applying.

#### Arguments Against

- Citizenship is a privilege to be earned. People should demonstrate that they are well integrated and committed to life in the UK – including its culture and values before they are given the rights of citizenship.
- High fees ensure the immigration system as a whole is self-funding without support from the taxpayer.

### OPTION 2: Make it harder for migrants to become UK citizens

#### Arguments For

- May encourage people to integrate better. They would have to learn English to a higher level.
- A tougher citizenship test should ensure that new citizens share 'British values' and understand British ways of life.

#### Arguments Against

- Will reduce social integration, excluding people who already have the right to live here permanently from full membership of society.
- If there are large numbers of long term residents who cannot vote, politicians will have no incentive to take their views in to account.

# Summary of Topic 2

## Food policy and regulation

These summary arguments relate to examples of policy areas in food safety and animal and plant health standards.

### Question 2.1

Should the UK ban the cultivation and sale of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)?

■ **OPTION 1:** Carry on with a regulatory regime similar to the current one based upon a strict approach to authorising the cultivation and release of GMOs and requiring the labelling of food and feed that contain GMOs



#### Arguments For

- It may be easier to trade with the EU.
- It would be possible to address the wider concerns about the safety of GMOs for the environment and consumer health, such as the possibility that genes might be transferred to other species, which can lead to unwanted resistance to antibiotics or herbicides.



#### Arguments Against

- There is a risk that the UK may find it difficult to secure trade deals with non-EU trade partners that produce GMOs, such as the US, Brazil and Argentina.
- Advocates of GMOs argue that the EU system stifles innovation and risks damaging the commercial viability of the UK biotechnology industry
- A more restrictive regime may mean we miss out on the potential environmental and social benefits of GMOs, such as the reduced use of pesticides or the development of crops that can thrive in inhospitable environments or provide certain nutrients more effectively.

■ **OPTION 2:** Adopt a less restrictive regime than at present based upon a looser interpretation of the precautionary principle. Allow wider cultivation of GMOs and also loosen rules on labelling of GM products



#### Arguments For

- It could be easier for the UK to secure trade deals with non-EU partners and could facilitate the development of a domestic biotechnology industry.
- It could mean we are able to take advantage of the potential environmental and health benefits of GMOs, such as reduced pesticide use and the introduction of new drought-resistant or nutrient-enhanced crops.



#### Arguments Against

- There is a risk is that consumers may not be provided with sufficient information about the content of their foods.
- Failing to apply a rigorous risk assessment in line with the precautionary principle may increase risks for consumers and the environment. Previously safe foods might cause an allergic reaction in some people, while others might give rise to antibiotic resistance.

## Question 2.2

Do you think the UK should ban the use of glyphosate (a weed killer)?

- **OPTION 1:** Develop a similar regime to the EU's and continue to follow EU recommendations



### Arguments For

- The UK would be able to export food treated with pesticides to the EU market as long as it meets the appropriate standards.



### Arguments Against

- If the EU bans glyphosate in future, the UK is likely to have to do so too, even if its domestic safety assessment found the use of glyphosate to be safe.

- **OPTION 2:** Develop a different regime using a different set of safety and authorisation rules.



### Arguments For

- If the EU moved to ban the use of glyphosate the UK could continue to use it, if it was deemed safe by UK experts.



### Arguments Against

- If the UK's rules do not meet the EU's rules on the acceptable use of pesticides/herbicides, the UK may find it more difficult to export food to the EU.

### Question 2.3

Now the UK has left the EU do you think it should continue to ban the import of hormone treated beef and chlorinated chicken?

#### OPTION 1: Continue to apply the same kind of food regulations as the EU

##### Arguments For

- The UK will be able to export food for sale to the EU market and to guarantee current food safety standards, which may benefit consumers concerned about the quality and safety of food.
- The UK can continue to prevent imports of hormone treated beef and chlorinated chicken.

##### Arguments Against

- The UK may struggle to secure a trade deal with third parties such as the US, which might make looser food standards one of the conditions of reaching a trade deal.
- Like the EU, the UK could find itself subject to a complaint to the World Trade Organization (WTO).
- Consumers might lose the opportunity to buy cheaper food imported from third countries.

#### OPTION 2: The UK develops its own food regulations

##### Arguments For

- Having separate rules may make it easier for the UK to reach a trade agreement with third countries.
- If the UK allowed the import of food produced to what might be regarded as lower standards but also at lower prices, this would benefit consumers who want cheaper food.

##### Arguments Against

- If the UK chooses to weaken standards, UK producers will still need to observe EU standards when exporting to the EU market.
- Cheaper imports will threaten UK producers and potentially reduce consumer choice.
- Consumers may not wish to see products such as hormone treated beef and chlorinated chicken on the UK market because of concerns about lower animal welfare standards.

## Question 2.4

Do you think the UK should ban the live export of animals?

- **OPTION 1:** Carry on exporting live animals using similar regulations to those that apply at EU level



### Arguments For

- Industries that rely on live exports will not be at risk of being put out of business.



### Arguments Against

- Live exports pose risks to animal welfare as a result of transporting animals over long distances and allowing them to be slaughtered outside the UK to different potentially lower standards.

- **OPTION 2:** Ban the export of live animals



### Arguments For

- The welfare of animals will be protected according to the UK's own standards throughout their lives.



### Arguments Against

- The UK may face legal action in front of the WTO.
- Stopping the trade may have negative implications for parts of the UK that are especially dependent upon income from live animal exports.

## Question 2.5

Do you think that products such as stilton and Cornish pasties should have special designation on the basis of where or how they are produced?

- **OPTION 1:** The UK implements the UKGI (UK Geographical Indication) national approval scheme and negotiates a reciprocal agreement with the EU to ensure continued protection of UK and EU foods in both markets



### Arguments For

- UK products would continue to be protected in the EU and would also have protected status in countries with a free trade agreement or bilateral agreement with the EU.



### Arguments Against

- The UK will have to meet the cost of setting up its own approval system that meets EU requirements.

- **OPTION 2:** The UK develops its GI national approval scheme but fails to agree a reciprocal agreement with the EU



### Arguments For

- The UK can develop its own rules without reference to the EU.
- UK producers who still wish to be protected within the EU should still be able to apply separately for protected status in the EU.



### Arguments Against

- UK products currently protected under EU rules would no longer be protected in the EU unless a separate application is made to the European Commission.
- UK products and producers may lose the commercial advantage that comes from having protected status across the EU.
- Other producers in the EU could use current UK designations, which may confuse consumers.

- **OPTION 3:** The UK does not develop its own national approval scheme



### Arguments For

- The UK does not have to meet the costs of setting up its own approval system.



### Arguments Against

- UK products would lose the market value that may come from having protected status in the UK, with negative impacts upon producers
- A separate application would have to be made to retain protected status in the EU.
- UK Consumers could not be sure of the authenticity of foods labelled with a special designation.

## Question 2.6

What should the UK do about farm payments after it has left the EU. Should it:

- i. continue to pay farmers based on the amount of land they farm,
- ii. opt for a 'public money for public goods' approach, or
- iii. remove support payments entirely?

### OPTION 1: The status quo option. Payments according to the amount of land held by a farmer

#### Arguments For

- Farmers and food producers will know how much subsidy they will get
- The price of food produced in the UK should remain relatively stable.
- The livelihoods of farmers from less favoured areas and those engaged in less profitable kinds of farming will be protected.
- It might make it easier for UK farmers to export to the EU.

#### Arguments Against

- The payments provide no incentive for farms to become more efficient or to innovate.
- Profitable farms that have no need of support will continue to receive payments.
- Some food prices will be kept artificially high.

### OPTION 2: The public money for public goods option. Payments for the provision of public (environmental) goods

#### Arguments For

- Large profitable farms that have no need of subsidies will only receive payments if they are engaged in environmentally beneficial activities or projects.
- Support for farmers in less favoured areas or less profitable kinds of farming will continue as long as they are engaged in delivering public goods.
- Farmers should still know how much subsidy they will get, while the price of UK-produced food should still be relatively stable.
- This option should be better for the environment.

#### Arguments Against

- It is likely that some farms will go out of business and this could mean greater reliance on food produced overseas to different standards.
- It may not encourage innovation or efficiency.
- Food prices may be kept artificially high and domestic producers put at an advantage over those in other (poorer) countries.

### OPTION 3: The New Zealand option. Remove support payments

#### Arguments For

- The government and taxpayers will save money.
- It should result in greater efficiency and innovation in UK farming.
- It will lead to lower food prices for some products.

#### Arguments Against

- In the short term, it will lead to bankruptcies and farms going out of business. This could have negative social and economic consequences, such as a loss of population in remote and rural areas.
- Through discouraging biodiversity and encouraging fertiliser and pesticide use, it might lead to increased environmental damage.
- It may lead to cheaper imports flooding the market, reducing consumer choice. It may also make domestically produced goods more expensive.



# Summary of Topic 3

## Consumer Regulation

These summary arguments refer to how aspects of travel and the things we buy should be regulated after we leave the EU.

### Question 3.1

**People currently have certain travel protections under EU law for situations where their flights are cancelled, delayed or if they are denied boarding. These will no longer exist for the same types of flight after Brexit unless the UK makes new provisions. Should the UK retain these protections or not?**

#### Arguments For

- When travelling from the EU (including the UK) and when on EU airlines arriving into the EU, people can obtain compensation for any inconvenience caused by a delay or cancellation and are not put at risk of incurring significant costs.
- It avoids the possibility that passengers on UK airlines do not have the right to food, drink and hotel accommodation in the event of a delay/cancellation when passengers on an EU airline flying the same route do.

#### Arguments Against

- It is argued that the protections are too burdensome and costly and makes airlines liable for delays caused by events outside their control.
- The levels of compensation are high relative to the ticket price and the compensation payable for delays in other forms of transport – and the costs airlines incur ultimately get passed on to customers through the prices they charge.

### Question 3.2

Under an arrangement known as 'Roam Like at Home', people can currently use their mobile phone in the EU without incurring any charges additional to their normal tariff. This will no longer be the case after Brexit unless the UK makes new arrangements. Should the UK retain 'Roam Like At Home' or not?

#### Arguments For

- UK consumers are not put at risk of incurring significant roaming charges when using their phone in the EU, similar to the charges incurred when using their phone in countries such as the US.
- Consumers might otherwise be constrained in the calls, texts and data they can afford to make/use when roaming in the EU.
- Operators might otherwise place limits on the extent to which people can roam.

#### Arguments Against

- 'Roam Like at Home' may result in consumers using data when on holiday instead of relying on wi-fi. As a result, some smaller phone operators may experience significant revenue losses.
- If operators bring in less revenue, they may invest less in infrastructure, such as better quality 4G networks or the rollout of 5G.
- Some operators may choose to no longer offer roaming, increase retail prices, or change the bundles they offer in order to limit their exposure to wholesale roaming charges (e.g. no longer offering contracts with unlimited data).

### Question 3.3

Should the UK keep the ban on incandescent light bulbs or not? (these are light bulbs that contain a wire filament and are less energy efficient than other alternatives)

#### Arguments For Keeping the Ban on Incandescent Lights

- Reducing the use of electricity is beneficial for the environment and helps address the risk of global warming.
- Having light bulbs that use less electricity helps reduce people's electricity bills.
- Many other countries outside the EU have similar bans – indeed the UK itself started phasing out incandescent bulbs a couple of years before the EU as a whole.
- LED bulbs have overcome many of the disadvantages of the CFL bulbs that originally had to be used instead.

#### Arguments Against Keeping the Ban on Incandescent Lights

- LED and CFL bulbs are more expensive to buy in the first place, which can be a particular issue for those on a low income.
- CFL bulbs contain mercury that needs to be disposed of carefully.
- Consumers should be free to choose what kind of light bulb they buy.

### Question 3.4

Should the UK maintain limitations on the electricity use and noise made by vacuum cleaners, or allow the sale of more powerful machines?



#### Arguments for Keeping the Current Limitations

- Reducing the use of electricity is beneficial for the environment and helps address the risk of global warming.
- Having vacuum cleaners that use less electricity helps reduce people's electricity bills.
- Vacuum cleaners that use less electricity are not necessarily less successful at picking up dirt and dust.
- Without these regulations, cheaper, but less efficient machines might be imported into the UK from countries outside the EU, such as China.
- There is little incentive for manufacturers to manufacture machines that could not be sold in the rest of the EU.



#### Arguments Against Keeping the Current Limitations

- The impact on most people's electricity bills is small.
- The energy efficiency of a vacuum cleaner can vary according to how full it is, thereby potentially limiting the extent to which the regulations help consumers reduce their energy use.
- Consumers should be free to choose what kind of vacuum cleaner they buy.
- The regulations do not currently apply to cordless vacuum cleaners.

### Question 3.5

Should the UK continue to adopt measures that will reduce/ban single use and micro plastics or not?



#### Arguments in Favour of the UK Adopting These Measures Post-Brexit

- Plastic has become a major pollutant of the seas and beaches. Animals that eat pieces of plastic can die. It is thought that plastic does not degrade in the sea for hundreds of years.
- There is a risk that micro-plastics end up in the food eaten by humans.
- Plastic in personal care products such as wet wipes and sanitary towels can block sewers.
- Although it can often be recycled, plastic is made originally from oil, a non-renewable fossil fuel.
- Countries outside the EU have taken similar measures.



#### Arguments Against the UK Adopting These Measures Post-Brexit

- The cost of eating out may go up if cafes and restaurants have to provide cups and cutlery that have to be washed.
- The UK is responsible for a very small proportion of the world's plastic pollution.
- If plastic cups and plates are replaced with paper ones this could result in more trees being cut down, which would also be bad for the environment.
- Plastic packaging may be the best way of keeping food fresh.
- Some people with a disability may need to use a plastic straw.
- Consumers should be able to decide for themselves whether to use plastics or not.

# Advisory Board

These briefing materials have been prepared with the help of the project's advisory board, whose members are:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Prof. Bobby Duffy (chair)	King's College, London
James Kirkup	Social Market Foundation
Iain Martin	The Times/Reaction.life
Sunder Katwala	British Future
Neil Anderson	Migration Watch
Nick von Westenholz	National Farmers' Union
Rob Percival	Soil Association
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Sue Davies	Which?

