

Maritime UK – Business Leaders Poll Summary Document

Sample size: 507

Fieldwork dates: 26th–27th July 2018

Methodology: UK business leaders surveyed online

Table 1. At the recent Chequers summit the Cabinet agreed the Government’s position on Brexit talks. This agreement included a new UK-EU ‘free trade area’, a commitment to replace the free movement of people with a ‘mobility framework’, and a plan to end the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice with UK courts paying ‘due regard’ to ECJ rulings on trade.

To what extent do you support or oppose the agreement reached?

Total support: 58%

Total oppose: 18%

Neither: 17%

Don’t know: 8%

The Chequers agreement has significant levels of support from business leaders, with 58% of those polled supporting it to some extent. The agreement does have lower levels of support from business leaders who work primarily in services compared to those whose businesses primarily focus on goods (45% versus 72%). This could be due to the agreement keeping a common rulebook for goods but not for services.

Table 2. How likely or unlikely do you think it will be that the UK will leave the EU without a deal?

Total likely: 66%

Total unlikely: 27%

Don’t know 8%

A majority of the business leaders polled believe that a ‘no-deal’ scenario is likely to occur, with a quarter believing it is very likely.

Table 3. To what extent has your business made preparations for the UK leaving the EU without a deal?

A lot of preparation:	21%
Some preparation:	29%
Very little preparation:	21%
No preparation:	26%
Don't know:	3%

Although 66% of respondents believe a no-deal scenario is likely, half of the business leaders polled said their business had done a lot or some preparation for such a scenario. A further 21% said they had done very little preparation and 26% had done no preparation. Business leaders whose business primarily served EU markets were more likely to have prepared for a no deal scenario than those serving domestic markets – 70% of the former had done a lot or some preparation compared to 42% of the latter; the sample for the EU market break is too small to draw full conclusions but this reflects the impact a no-deal would have on these businesses.

Tables 4–11. To what extent are you concerned about the following areas in a no deal scenario?

	Total concerned (very/somewhat)	Total not concerned (not very/not at all)	Don't know
An impact on EU citizen's rights	63% (30%/33%)	35% (19%/16%)	2%
Difficulty in accessing talent	51% (23%/28%)	46% (25%/21%)	3%
Increased costs including tariffs	67% (31%/36%)	30% (20%/10%)	3%
Disruption to supply chains including delays at ports and airports	65% (28%/36%)	32% (19%/13%)	3%
Confusion on contracts and reciprocity	61% (26%/35%)	36% (20%/16%)	4%
An impact on cross border services	62% (27%/35%)	33% (17%/17%)	5%
Loss of validity and regulatory recognition of UK goods in EU markets and vice versa	62% (25%/38%)	35% (20%/15%)	3%
Loss of access to EU funding and research programmes including Horizon 2020	55% (25%/30%)	41% (21%/20%)	4%

The business leaders polled were most concerned about rising costs including tariffs in the event of a 'no-deal' scenario (67% said they were very or somewhat concerned). 65% were concerned to some extent with a disruption to supply chains including delays at ports and airports. An impact on EU citizen's rights and on cross border services, as well as a loss of validity of UK goods in EU markets and confusion on reciprocity were concerns for over 60% of respondents. Losing access to EU funding and research programmes and difficulty in accessing talent were of less concern to the business leaders.

Open text question: Are there any other areas that you are concerned about from a no deal scenario?

94 responses

Area	Number of responses	Percentage of 94 respondents
Negative economic impact (such as increased costs and recession)	35	37%
Loss of agreements and arrangements with EU such as security, aviation, and the environment	16	17%
All areas	11	12%
Loss of reciprocal migration and 'Brexitodus'	10	11%
Political crisis and social instability (including rising hate crime)	9	10%
Uncertainty and confusion	4	4%
Other	9	10%

The negative economic impact of a 'no-deal' Brexit was raised as a another concern by 35 respondents (37% of those who gave an extra concern).

Tables 12-20: In which of the following areas do you think there will be the greatest opportunity for the UK once it leaves the EU? (Please rank the top 3 areas of opportunity)

	Top rank	2 nd rank	3 rd rank	Top 3 ranking
Regulation	17%	15%	16%	48%
International trade	26%	16%	9%	51%
Taxation	16%	14%	15%	44%
Public procurement	9%	12%	15%	36%
Industrial strategy	10%	15%	18%	43%
Skills development	12%	13%	13%	38%
Foreign policy	10%	14%	12%	37%

International trade is seen as the area which presents the most opportunity for the UK once it leaves the EU – over a quarter (26%) put it as the top opportunity and a further quarter put it as the second or third greatest area of opportunity. Regulation, taxation and industrial strategy were areas that over 40% of business leaders polled saw as one of the top three areas of opportunity for the UK once it leaves the EU.

Open text question: Are there any other areas that you think will present opportunities for the UK once it leave the EU?

Opportunity	Number of responses	Percentage of 78 respondents giving an opportunity
Increased trade and connections with non-EU countries	21	27%
Less EU bureaucracy and law	16	21%
Economic benefits such as renewal of industries like fishing and manufacturing	14	18%
Controlled immigration and more opportunities for British citizens	10	13%
Other	17	22%

In total, 277 respondents said there would be no further areas opportunities for the UK (78% of 355 eligible responses to the answer). Other areas of opportunity offered by 78 respondents included increasing connections with non-EU countries such as the Commonwealth, the freeing of certain EU laws and the economic benefit that could come to certain industries like fishing.

Table 21: To what extent has your business had any difficulty in accessing skilled labour in the last 12 months?

Lots of difficulty:	12%
Some difficulty:	26%
Little difficulty:	19%
No difficulty at all:	40%
Don't know:	3%

38% of those polled said they had some to lots of difficulty in accessing skilled labour in the last 12 months. A further 19% said they had little difficulty and 40% said they had no difficulty at all.

Table 22: Do you export goods to another country?

Yes:	43%
No:	55%
Don't know:	3%

Table 23: To what extent have you seen an increase or decrease in your exports over the last 12 months? (Base: Those who export to another country)

Significant increase:	24%
Some increase:	39%
No change:	27%
Some decrease:	8%
Significant decrease:	2%

63% of the business leaders polled whose business exported to another country had seen an increase in their exports to some extent compared to 10% who had seen a decrease. 27% of those exporting had seen no change.

Table 24: To access the UK market, freight from abroad has to be carried by train, airplane or ship. Lorries must be carried by one of these. Bearing this in mind which of the following modes of transport do you think carries the largest proportion of imports and exports to/from the UK?

Train:	15%
Airplane:	22%
Ship:	53%
Don't know:	10%

53% correctly answered that the mode of transport that carries the largest proportion of imports and exports to/from the UK was ship. 27% put the wrong answer and 10% did not know.