

Understanding Voters and Feeling ‘Left Behind’

The question surrounding those who voted Leave in the EU Referendum and if they felt ‘left behind’ has been circulating since the life changing vote over four years ago.

The Centre for Brexit Studies have recently undertaken a large research project into Brexit and Devolution, looking into the reasons behind why people voted the way they did in the EU Referendum, as well as exploring attitudes to devolution and whether bodies such as local councils and the West Midlands Combined Authority have enough power.

The research also aimed to explore whether people feel they have a say in how their local areas are run, and if this had any impact on the Brexit vote. In contrast to Scotland, England has seen the creation of Local Enterprise Partnerships, Combined Authorities, and the emergence of the “Northern Powerhouse” & “Midlands Engine” brands. This raises questions as to whether voter perceptions of “being left behind” could be partly related to a lack of suitably devolved governance arrangements within England.

The Centre’s research brings together evidence on the nature of the Brexit vote, and the potential impact from governance arrangements, on selected areas within the West Midlands and Scotland, with the highest and lowest votes for Brexit.

The findings from the research provide critical insights into why individuals in certain localities voted in such dramatically different ways.

In the latest podcast episode from the Centre, now available to [listen to](#), two of the experts behind the research, Professor Alex de Ruyter, Director at the Centre for Brexit Studies and Professor Geoff Whittam, Professor at Glasgow Caledonian University, analyse the findings.