

# Final Report: Citizens' Juries on UK Trade Policy

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# Executive Summary

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The Centre for Inclusive Trade Policy (CITP) is a multi-year ESRC-funded research centre, which started in April 2022 and aims to be a centre of excellence for innovative trade-policy research. To support its early work, the CITP commissioned the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen)'s Centre for Deliberative Research (CDR) to conduct a series of citizens' juries on UK trade policy, that sought to gain insights into basic public attitudes towards trade and trade policy through two key research questions:

- 1) What choices do the public make when faced with complex trade policy trade-offs? And how do they make these choices?
- 2) Who do they trust to inform and make these choices?

To investigate these questions, the CDR delivered citizens' juries with 113 members of the public from five different locations across the United Kingdom (Reading, Doncaster, Paisley, Belfast, and Bridgend). These locations reflected a mix of local economic circumstances (e.g., different localised industries and employment) as well as a mix of urban and rural populations. Each jury participated in five workshops in total: four online, each lasting two and half hours, and one face-to-face all-day workshop. These took place over a period of four weeks with the opening online workshop on the evening of 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023 and the final face-to-face workshops on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023. In the online workshops, all participants joined the same Zoom call and were presented with information about trade and trade policy in plenary before deliberating about what they had heard with others from their location. The information presented explored four topics that CITP were interested to understand public perceptions around. These were:

- 1) Trade and human rights
- 2) Balancing trade between regions and sectors of the economy
- 3) Privacy and data-sharing
- 4) Food and the environment

The juries concluded with a day of face-to-face deliberation where participants were invited to deliberate and decide what outcomes they would want to see from specific complex trade-policy options related to the four topics of focus. These face-to-face workshops took place in each of the five locations and involved 20-25 participants from each local area. Participants also completed a survey before and after the jury processes to help us understand how their views on trade policy evolved.

This report outlines preliminary findings generated from exercises across the workshops and from the pre-/post-survey. Data from workshop exercises include forms filled out by participants in response to hypothetical trade-policy decisions that captured their votes and the reasoning underlying these votes; group level prioritisation exercises that captured preferences for *who* people trust to inform and make these decisions; and facilitator notes from group discussions. During all workshops, participants engaged in group discussions of up to eight

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people facilitated by NatCen researchers as they formulated their views. Some of these were recorded and transcribed. This report uses notes produced by facilitators to summarise these discussions, and has not drawn directly on the transcripts, which will be used by CITP researchers for further analysis.

# Key findings

Across locations there was consistent agreement on how participants felt about the various trade policy challenges considered. On overarching principles, such as a special value being placed on expert input to trade decisions, participants were again often in agreement. At a more granular level however, we did see areas of divergence in opinion, which were apparent in, for instance, scenarios where the consequences of trade decisions affected the regions of the UK differently. These are discussed in detail in this report, though further analysis of the deliberation transcripts is needed to better understand the nature of these differences.

Trends from the pre-/post-survey show that participants believed both economic growth and non-economic objectives, such as supporting human rights and combatting climate change, are important when making decisions about trade policy. **People valued economic growth:** when asked to rank the most important objective for UK trade, just over half ranked economic growth as the most important at both the start and end of the juries. However, when asked in the survey about specific trade-offs, the majority of participants prioritised workers' rights, human rights, and climate change over more trade (where trade was presented across the different trade-offs as implying economic gain). This **may reflect a desire to see gains from trade that also achieve non-economic benefits.** It also means that when presented with specific trade-offs rather than a more general principle of what should be valued, participants started to consider trade-policy choices differently.

This finding suggests some potential tension in public attitudes towards what the main objective of trade policy ought to be and illustrates that circumstances matter. This was a theme that also came through clearly when participants faced hypothetical scenarios across the four topic areas under consideration in the final workshop. These scenarios featured deals that involved both economic and non-economic outcomes. In each case, following initial discussion, participants were asked to vote 'yes', 'no', or 'don't know' in response to each deal and note their reasoning. Although participants found the decisions difficult to make, analysis of participants' voting forms gives us further insight into their preferences, including:

- **On trade and human rights:** participants were shown a hypothetical trade deal between the UK and India. The deal would improve Indian workers' rights but have mixed economic outcomes for the UK and India. Most prioritised the non-economic objective, the promotion of workers' rights abroad, suggesting that they do think the UK should use trade to promote human rights abroad and are willing to accept higher consumer prices to achieve this. The deal should be fair to both sides and prioritise long-term outcomes of workers' rights over lower consumer prices, which participants held to be short-term outcomes.
- **On balancing regions and sectors:** participants were asked to consider a section of the current UK-Australia free trade agreement that was profiled to increase the incomes generated by business services (things like legal work and accounting), but decrease incomes generated by agriculture. Protecting the agricultural industry was prioritised by some but more focused on achieving regional fairness. For this reason, most did not prioritise greater overall economic growth resulting from a boost to business services, as this was seen to shore up existing regional inequality given these business roles are currently concentrated in the South East of England. Instead, participants prioritised an outcome in

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which regional inequality was reduced through the new business service jobs being spread across the UK.

- **On privacy and data-sharing:** participants were presented with a hypothetical trade deal that would benefit health research, services, and treatments. This would be based on lowering barriers to cross-border data flows enabling a critical mass of health records that would support potential health research breakthroughs. The trade-offs related to sharing data with countries with lower data protection standards, which could increase the risk of data privacy abuses. Participants were divided on their willingness to share medical data with other countries in return for a greater potential for advances in medical research. This reflects different individual appetite for risk in terms of data sharing.
- **On food standards:** participants were presented with a hypothetical trade deal between the UK and Australia that would result in a decrease in the price of imported food, but an increased risk that the food contains pesticides banned in UK food production. Most participants were not willing to compromise on UK pesticide standards despite the potential benefit of reduced food prices because of the health risks posed by these pesticides. Participants' views were driven by their assessment of the health risk and their levels of trust in UK or Australian food standards.

Analysis of participants' reasons for accepting and rejecting these deals reveals four core ideas that participants used to navigate complexity and make decisions on the selected scenarios:

- **Fairness:** participants considered fairness in trade deals. They were willing to accept some reduction in economic gains provided it promoted regional fairness through the distribution of jobs in the UK, or international fairness through improving workers' rights abroad. When discussing food standards and use of medical data, participants didn't want the deal proposed to result in certain populations being treated unfairly, such as farmers or people with particular medical conditions.
- **National interest:** at a national level, many were willing to accept higher food prices to maintain food standards that had been set by the UK because they trusted these standards and felt it important to maintain them. Some also prioritised national economic growth and job creation over non-economic outcomes.
- **Regional interest:** at a regional level, many wanted to promote regional equality and protect local industries such as agriculture, though not just in relation to their own region. Attention to region was often expressed through contrasting local, community interest against the national level – for example people weighed up creating fewer jobs locally or more jobs nationally. Equally some recognised certain industries to be important locally (e.g., agriculture as important to local identity) and others to be important nationally (e.g., business services as important to national growth).
- **Long-term outcomes:** participants often prioritised outcomes that they understood to be long-term over those that were understood to be more short-term, although no information was provided on the long-/short-term impact of these deals. For example, many interpreted negative economic impacts on food prices as short-term and so worth accepting to achieve longer-term benefits to workers' rights in India, as well as avoiding longer-term health risks associated with pesticides. When considering regions and sectors, some participants saw the protection of the UK agricultural industry as a short-term benefit for a smaller number of people (farmers), whereas increasing jobs in the service sector outside of the South

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East of England was a longer-term benefit that would benefit more people. Conversely, others understood the protection of the UK agricultural industry as having long-term benefits to the UK through increased self-sufficiency, whereas job creation was perceived as a shorter-term benefit.

The desire to achieve both economic growth and non-economic objectives through an ideal balancing of the principles of fairness, national and regional interests, and long-term outcomes in trade-policy decisions was also reflected in the pre-/post-survey data which showed the option of 'balanced growth' remaining a priority for most participants before and after the juries.

Across all scenarios, many participants were unsure of their view and selected the 'don't know' option when asked to decide about these complex trade-offs. This uncertainty was reflected in participants grappling with how and in what way to assess relevant risks, such as the probability of pesticides causing cancer. This was also the case when making an evaluation of impact, such as how the UK could monitor the promised improvement of Indian workers' rights in a deal. To navigate this uncertainty, participants across all locations wanted 'experts' to inform trade-policy decisions related to all four topic areas, and often emphasised two types of experts they thought could offer two different assurances:

- **Those with 'on the ground' experience relevant to a trade-policy decision who can offer 'real world' experience:** participants wanted businesses, workers, and farmers, for example, to inform trade policy because their real-world perspective offers expertise in how deals will impact the day-to-day.
- **Independent specialists who provide trusted data on risks and benefits:** participants wanted independent experts such as scientists and academics to provide an honest assessment of the risks involved in things like pesticides and data sharing, as well as a more accurate assessment of the benefits of each deal. In this context independence was understood as not gaining financially from a deal.

Independent subject experts then, were those who could offer impartial, trusted information which participants – or other decision-makers – could use in navigating the balance they expected to see between fairness and national and regional interest, as well as providing more accurate information on the long-term impact of trade deals.

During the final workshops, participants were asked who they trust to make decisions on trade. Participants were presented with a list of options and across all locations the options with the most votes were **the UK Government and international organisations**.<sup>1</sup> Many caveated their preference for the UK Government with the assertion that they do not trust the government or politicians in general, and facilitators' summaries of discussions suggest that preferences for the UK Government reflect recognition of where power currently lies, *rather* than a reflection of who participants in fact trust to make decisions. Preferences for international organisations may reflect a desire for ensuring standards and arbitration on issues such as standards and workers' rights.

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<sup>1</sup> The full list was as follows: local government, devolved national government, UK Government, international trade organisations (like the European Union or the World Trade Organisation), the general public.

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# 1. Introduction

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## Context

The Centre for Inclusive Trade Policy (CITP) is a multi-year ESRC-funded research centre, which started in April 2022 and aims to be a centre of excellence for innovative trade policy research. To support its early work, the CITP commissioned the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen)'s Centre for Deliberative Research (CDR) to conduct citizens' juries on UK trade policy that sought to gain insights into basic public attitudes towards trade and trade policy. The juries consisted of around 20 people in each of five locations, who participated in five workshops in total: four online, each lasting two and half hours, and one face-to-face all-day workshop. These took place over a period of four weeks with the opening online workshop on the evening of 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023 and final face-to-face workshops on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023.

To inform their early work the CITP identified two core objectives for the citizens' juries:

- **What choices do people make when faced with complex trade policy trade-offs? And how do they make these choices?**
- **Who do they trust to inform and make these choices?**

As the design of the jury progressed, the CITP identified specific research questions for each of the four topics that were explored when the topics were introduced to participants in the earlier online workshops and deliberated in the final face-to-face workshop. These topics, and the trade-offs posed to participants to deliberate upon, are listed in the order in which they were discussed in the jury process:

- **Trade and human rights:** *should the UK insist on poorer countries agreeing to certain human rights in trade agreements it makes with them, if doing so limits the economic benefits of these agreements?*
- **Balancing sectors and regions:** *should the UK accept trade deals that will benefit the business service sector while agriculture loses?*
- **Privacy and data-sharing:** *should the UK accept trade deals that will make it easier for the NHS to work closely with health data companies outside of the UK?*
- **Food and environmental standards:** *are the risks of importing food into the UK which potentially contain pesticides banned here, worth the benefits such as lower prices and greater choice?*

By the time jury discussions took place Brexit negotiations were no longer in the news, but the UK's decision to leave the European Union (EU) in 2016 and the signing of the withdrawal agreement in 2020 remained important background context for trade policy discussions. Participants were familiar with the idea that now the UK is no longer part of the EU, its trade policy involves the exploration of more bilateral trade agreements with other countries. The deals participants explored in the jury process were fictional or from the recent past. The most notable trade deal explored in the deliberation was the UK-Australia free trade agreement that was signed in

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December 2021<sup>2</sup>, and was introduced by CITP in the second online workshop. While Brexit and its relationship to trade was a feature of participants' views at times in the jury discussions, life after Brexit was a more explicit feature for Northern Irish respondents who referenced delays in purchasing goods due to increased border checks following the UK's exit.

Politically, these juries took place shortly after a change in UK Prime minister with Rishi Sunak appointed in October 2022 following the resignation of Liz Truss. These political changes took place amidst longer term trends of declining trust in politicians and government,<sup>3</sup> which was referenced by participants when discussing UK trade decisions. An additional political factor in Northern Ireland was the ongoing failure of the Northern Ireland assembly to form a government. In the month preceding the jury the Northern Ireland assembly had been unable to elect a speaker for the fifth time,<sup>4</sup> and this was referenced by Northern Irish participants. Though participants in all locations were asked about their views on the role of devolved administrations in trade decisions, Northern Irish participants expressed the view as part of this discussion that the administration was not functioning.

Economically, these juries took place in the middle of a 'cost of living crisis' in the UK. Since the illegal Russian invasion of Ukraine in early 2022, fuel prices increased dramatically in the UK impacting people's decisions around use of heating and petrol. The direct impact of the war in Ukraine on participant's lives gave prominence to ideas of self-sufficiency when discussing trade deals in order to protect the UK from geopolitical events. In addition, the cost of goods rose by almost 10% in the year before February 2023 according to the consumer price index.<sup>5</sup> This rise in the cost of living emerged as a theme when participants considered the impact of trade deals on consumer prices.

# Method

## 1.1 Citizens' juries

Deliberative research methods provide participants with the time, information and discursive conditions needed to engage in depth with a topic, typically taking place over extended periods of full day workshops or multiple workshops. Material on a given topic (in this case trade policy) is provided to ensure that all participants have access to the same balanced information to inform their views. Trained facilitators support participants to debate and deliberate this information to ultimately form a view on the complex policy. These methods yield insights into people's considered views on complex, value-driven issues that often require trade-offs for resolution.

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<sup>2</sup> [UK and Australia sign world-class trade deal – Gov.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-and-australia-sign-world-class-trade-deal)

<sup>3</sup> [British Social Attitudes 38: Democracy – NatCen](https://www.natcen.ac.uk/news-and-views/british-social-attitudes-38-democracy/)

<sup>4</sup> [Northern Ireland Assembly: Stormont's fifth recall as it happened – BBC News](https://www.bbc.com/news/northern-ireland-62811111)

<sup>5</sup> [Consumer price inflation, UK – Office for National Statistics](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/consumer-price-inflation-uk)

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A citizens' jury is a deliberative research and engagement method where a sample of around 15-20 members of the general public consider evidence on a given policy issue in order to reach a decision or recommendation.<sup>6</sup> The method was first developed by the Jefferson Centre in the US and is characterised by a clearly defined question over which participants are asked to reach some consensus.<sup>7</sup> The method is often used for controversial and contentious issues, as it encourages participants to reach common societal goals.<sup>8</sup>

Typically, the process follows the model of a criminal jury where jurors are presented with a balance of evidence to inform their decision. This may involve experts or specialists advocating for a particular policy outcome, or it may take the form of presenting an appropriate range of evidence so that jurors are exposed to key policy debates. Juries tend to take place over a number of meetings, often referred to as workshops, rather than one meeting. This provides time and space for jurors to consider different pieces of evidence in each workshop. Juries are sampled on the principle of the 'mini public' where as much as possible the jury reflects the demographics of the local population. Citizens' Juries are also typically 'transparent' in that the work of those selected, including any decisions they make, is communicated or available to the wider community (geographic or of interest) the jury is convened around.

## 1.2 Our approach

For this project we adopted the core characteristics of a citizens' jury by recruiting a 'mini public' of around 20 people in each location to consider evidence over a series of workshops to understand attitudes towards trade policy. In the final workshops participants were asked to make individual decisions on four different trade deals via a private vote, but they were not asked to achieve a consensus recommendation. As this is a research project rather than a process of public participation, our design also incorporated social research approaches of purposive sampling, a pre-/post-survey, and workshops for deliberation (all detailed below).

In total we conducted five juries concurrently in different locations across all four nations of the UK. A total of 113 people took part in the juries, with 101 attending all workshops. Between 14 and 23 participants attended final face-to-face workshops in each location.<sup>9</sup> The first four workshops took place online and lasted two and a half hours. Participants from all locations attended the same online workshops to ensure that everyone had access to the same information, and each workshop focused on a different topic. To support participants in forming their views on these topics the CITP provided pre-recorded or live presentations on the key issues relevant to them before deliberation in breakout rooms of six-to-eight people. Breakout rooms were moderated by NatCen facilitators and organised so that people from the same location deliberated together.

The information shared by CITP was intended to give participants an introduction to the basic facts and key concepts of each trade topic, as well as an overview of the key debates and issues that they should consider. CITP speakers were introduced as independent academics and were encouraged not to advocate any particular

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<sup>6</sup> [Citizens' Jury – Participedia](#)

<sup>7</sup> [How We Work | Citizens Juries - Center for New Democratic Processes \(cndp.us\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Citizens' Jury – Participedia](#)

<sup>9</sup> See appendix 1 for details on the sample criteria used.

position. During breakout room deliberations, participants were encouraged to submit questions they had for the CITP about the information presented, and answers were made accessible online in between workshops in advance of the final all-day workshop. This approach offered more participants the opportunity to ask clarifications than a traditional live Q&A as well as offering the CITP more time to respond. The CITP also reiterated key concepts that emerged from the participant questions at the start of each online workshop to ensure everyone heard the most important clarification points.

The final face-to-face workshop was structured around participants voting on one trade-off relating to each of the four topic areas. To support them to decide, information was provided around the benefits, costs and outcomes of each trade-off as well as a brief re-cap of 'key facts' related to each area. This information was prepared with the CITP to ensure accuracy but on the day was presented by the lead NatCen facilitator. No CITP researchers attended the final workshops so participants could not ask clarifying questions, and instead their decisions were based on their views from the previous workshops and information shared in the room. This approach ensured that across all five locations all participants made decisions based on the same given information. This choice reflected the risk that CITP attending in person could create an imbalance across locations in terms of questions asked and answered. This also mitigated the risk that CITP researcher presence may influence participant decision-making.

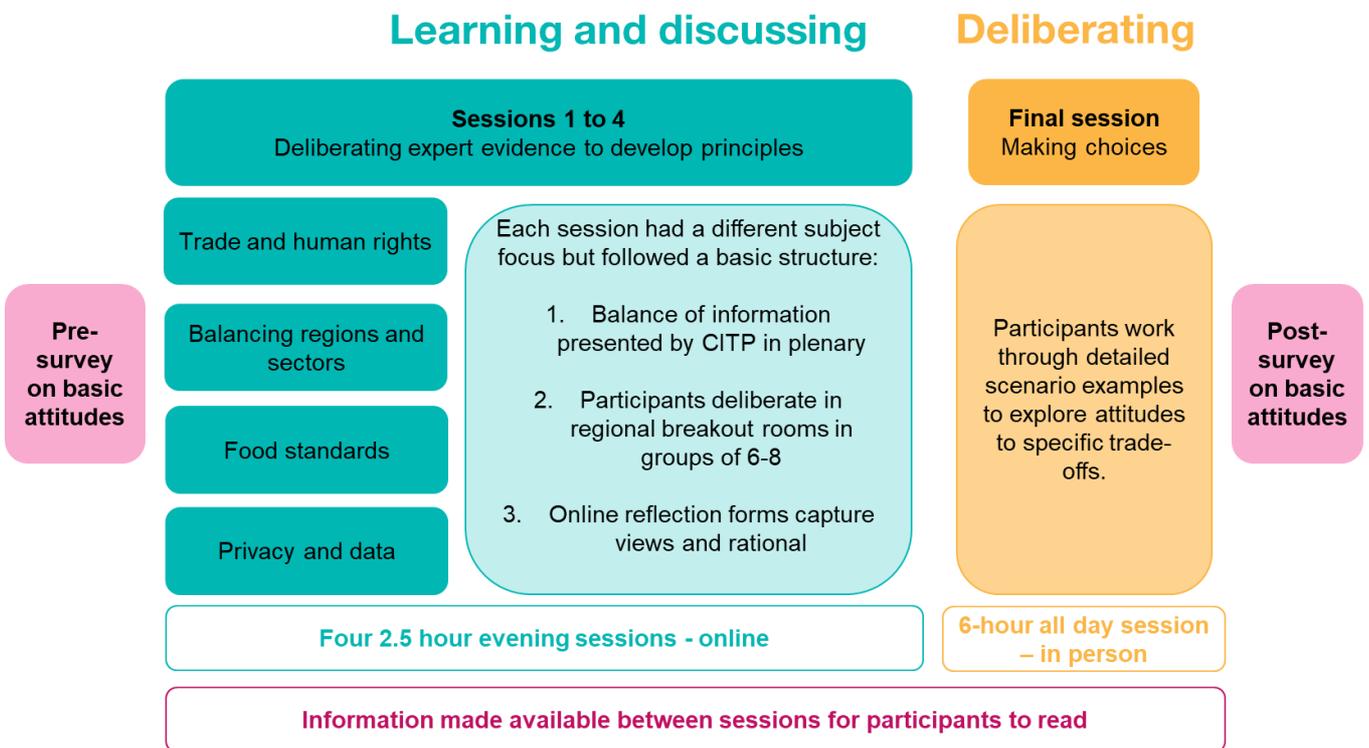


Figure 1: Overview of the jury process

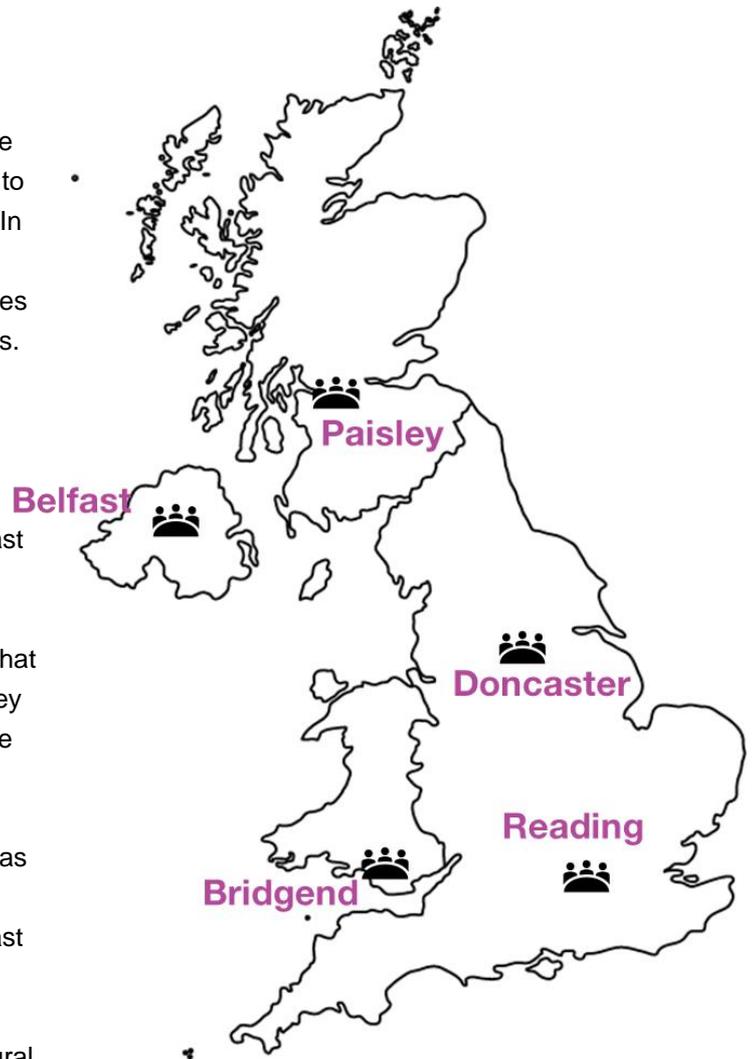
## 1.2.1 Sampling and recruitment

To ensure at least 100 participants (20 in each location) completed the process we recruited 125 (25 in each location) to attend the first workshop. In total, 113 people began the process and 101 of these attended all jury sessions. A full breakdown of the achieved sample is provided in online appendix 1.

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Participants were recruited through two trusted external recruitment providers, Propeller Recruitment and Taylor McKenzie, using a screening questionnaire. To ensure we recruited a 'mini public', quotas were set in each location to ensure those recruited reflected the local demographics. In each location we also ensured a mix of representation of employment in local industries because the trade examples we explored impacted different industries in different ways.

We agreed five locations with the CITP that reflected different localised economic circumstances in the UK, and which brought out a mixture of urban and rural life. In England, Reading was chosen as an affluent South East location with a thriving business services sector, while Doncaster was a more deprived post-industrial Northern city. In Wales and Scotland, we selected regional towns that are close to large cities, Bridgend near Cardiff, and Paisley on the outskirts of Glasgow. These towns both experience deprivation as well as a balance of rural economies and access to larger urban centres. In Northern Ireland the workshop took place in the capital city of Belfast, which has a growing professional services economy alongside the traditional agricultural economy of Northern Ireland. Belfast was also chosen to ensure a span of communities of different national identity (something also included in our sample criteria). In total, 38% of participants were from rural locations, 35% from urban locations, and 27% from mixed locations.<sup>10</sup>



## 1.2.2 Topic information

The CITP provided a balance of information on each of the four topic areas to ensure that participants were informed on the key debates before making decisions about trade policy. In each online workshop participants heard presentations that concluded with a complex trade-off choice for participants to consider. After hearing the information on selected topics in plenary, participants went into breakout rooms of six-to-eight people to deliberate the trade-off question.<sup>11</sup> They recorded their initial reactions on an online form, and then a NatCen facilitator invited participants to discuss their reasoning.

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<sup>10</sup> These locations were determined through matching participant postcode data with ONS rural/urban classifications.

<sup>11</sup> During the online workshops, participants engaged with multiple trade-off questions for each topic. Given time constraints, in the final, in-person workshop they did not return to every trade-off question previously discussed, however.

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In the first workshop, Professor Alan Winters introduced participants to some key ideas in trade policy. This set important context for all future deliberation introducing basic information about why countries trade, the role of trade in the UK economy, and the role of free trade agreements. Professor Daniel Wincott then introduced participants to the relationship between trade, human rights, and the environment, before concluding with a case study of the trade in Covid-19 vaccinations. Participants were then asked to consider fairness in the context of two trade-offs in breakout rooms. One of these concerned vaccine trade and another the use of trade to promote human rights abroad.

In the second workshop, Professor Winters introduced participants to key debates concerning the balancing of the impacts of trade policy on different territories and job sectors of the UK. He summarised the role of business services and agriculture in the UK and how the recent free trade agreement between the UK and Australia impacted both of these sectors, highlighting how it impacted regions of the UK differently in turn. The workshop concluded with Dr Zhihong Yu providing a presentation on the UK's higher education export market, to support participants to consider the economic benefits and potential challenges of increasing the number of international students in the UK. Participants were asked to deliberate on two trade-offs, one concerning the regional impacts of the UK-Australia deal, and another on increasing the numbers of international students in the UK.

In the third workshop, participants were introduced to the potential benefits and risks related to digital trade. Presentations were delivered by Professor Maria Savona and Javier Ruiz Diaz, a representative of civil society perspectives working with the CITP. Participants were introduced to the topic of digital trade and supported to deliberate on two trade-offs within this area. One concerned the sharing of health data, and another considered the trade in technology companies' intellectual property.

In the fourth and final online workshop, Dr Viviane Gravey presented an introduction to agriculture, trade, and the environment, before providing a detailed case study that introduced participants to the arguments for and against compromising on the use of pesticides as part of trade deals. Participants then discussed a trade-off concerning what they were willing to compromise in terms of agricultural standards to achieve a cheaper and wider variety of food products in the UK.

## 1.2.3 Trade-offs and scenarios

In the face-to-face workshop participants made their final decisions on four separate, complex, trade-offs selected from among those considered previously across the four different topics. These trade-offs were hypothetical and stylised through the use of scenarios to support participants to think of these as real trade deals.<sup>12</sup> The full details of the scenarios people were presented with are provided in appendix 5.

At the start of the workshop the NatCen lead facilitator shared information prepared by the CITP that explained the current decision-making process for trade agreements. This information emphasised that UK government rather than parliament made decisions, but that parliament are consulted so MPs do have some influence. Following this, participants were asked to imagine they were an elected MP in the UK parliament and asked to

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<sup>12</sup> A scenario workshop is a technique that is used to support the public to imagine future options in relation to policy or technology. See: [‘A selection of methods used in deliberative and inclusionary processes’ – IIED](#)

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vote on four separate trade deal clauses. They were presented with a brief re-cap of relevant information from the online presentations before being provided with the economic and non-economic benefits and risks of each deal. Each participant voted privately on a paper form. They were encouraged to consider what was best for the UK as well as their local area. They then discussed their vote and reasoning in tables of six-to-eight people. The facilitators then changed one aspect of the deal clause and asked participants to vote again privately before people discussed their reasoning for this new vote. Each deal clause was discussed for up to 45 minutes and involved an exploration of key reasons to vote for the deal including what might change participants' views about the deals and their votes for these.

## 1.2.4 Advantages and limitations

Citizens' jury processes support participants to provide informed views on complicated subjects that they are often unfamiliar with.

The primary advantage of this approach for social attitudes research is that it places emphasis on people's reasoning and provides space for participants to explore and/or change their views after arriving at a more informed position. This is in comparison to other interview and focus group approaches which typically seek to understand current viewpoints and provide less information, time, and space to participants. The exchange of views and a structured dialogue between participants are also key features of a citizens' jury process. This means participants with a range of backgrounds are placed together to ensure they encounter a range of arguments and viewpoints, and since the conditions ensure a civic exchange, participants do not merely share their opinions but must justify them and explain their reasoning.

It is the case of course that in this public setting some participants feel reluctant to voice certain views, or indeed express certain views within constraints of social acceptability. To mitigate this our design attempted to present the range of opinion on each of the four topics in as neutral a way as possible. Predicted benefits and risks were provided in relation to accepting or rejecting each deal, as well as a series of high-level arguments for and against each deal from different actors. This was done to ensure that no option was clearly the 'best' or the 'most publicly acceptable' option, but rather make clear that all options involved difficult trade-offs.<sup>13</sup>

To support participants further we asked them to reflect individually first and vote privately before discussing with others, with the range of opinion reflected in subsequent discussion. Our experience of the deliberation was that although some views were more common than others there was often a mix of participants voting for and against each deal in each location. This suggests that participants were not overly influenced by any particular bias which enabled discussion on a range of opinion for and against each deal.

Another factor that can influence the level and quality of participation in deliberative exercises is the complicated and often new nature of the information being shared. It is often the case that participants can feel overwhelmed or confused at the beginning of deliberative processes as new, and sometimes technical information is shared,

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<sup>13</sup> See appendix 5 for the information provided to participants.

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which some participants may find difficult to assess. To address this, we made all information available online before and after the events and provided space to follow up with clarifying questions. Specifically, during deliberations, participants could submit questions they had for the CITP about the information presented, and answers were shared online in between workshops. The CITP also explained their answers to questions they considered key to understanding the topics at the start of the following workshop. Key information was also reiterated throughout the workshops to ensure important baseline knowledge was established with as many participants as possible.

## 1.2.5 Approach to analysis

Data was generated in four main ways: a pre-/post-survey, participant voting forms, facilitator reflections, and workshop activities. All workshops were recorded with the consent of participants, but these recordings have not been analysed for this report. Instead, transcriptions have been passed to the CITP for their further analysis.

To understand how basic attitudes towards trade-policy evolved over the jury process, participants completed the same survey before and after the workshops. Questions explored attitudes towards priorities in trade as well as who participants want to inform trade decisions. A descriptive analysis of these survey results is reported in chapters two and seven.

To understand participants' approach to making complex trade-off decisions they completed a voting form for each of the four topic trade-offs discussed. This form included their decision to accept or reject the deal as well as their reasoning. The reasoning was coded thematically by NatGen and themes are reported in chapters three, four, five, and six alongside quantitative trends in voting across all locations. Quotes from voting forms have been used to illustrate our interpretation of the data. As forms were completed anonymously these quotes only have the location as a signifier as it has not been possible to analyse responses by any other demographic criteria. Our analysis focused on the forms participants filled out during the final in-person workshop, as these concerned trade-offs which were deliberated most by participants in the jury process as a whole.

The other main inquiry for this research was to better understand who participants would like to see inform and make trade policy decisions. At the start of the final workshop participants generated their own list of trade priorities and organisations that they would like to see *informing* decision-making. These lists were then used in a prioritisation exercise alongside a pre-set list of groups or organisations which allowed participants to identify who they would like to see *making* decisions. Themes from this exercise are reported in chapters two and seven. As the data available from the final workshop about participants' views towards who should make and inform trade decisions was more limited, we also analysed the results of participants votes in the earlier online trade-offs to provide further insight here.

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# 2. Trade priorities

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This chapter explores participants' views on what principles and factors should be prioritised when making decisions about trade policy.

During the online workshops, participants were provided with a basic definition of trade agreements that included how they are made and enforced. The CITP introduced participants to the idea that trade policy involves trade-offs (i.e., it almost always creates both 'winners' and 'losers'), encouraged them to consider what 'fairness' meant in relation to trade, and how trade agreements can balance the interests of different nations and groups of people. Then, throughout the four online workshops, participants heard presentations from the CITP on each of the four trade-policy topic areas so that participants could consider these issues in the context of specific trade deals (either actual or hypothetical).

At the start of the final face-to-face workshop facilitators asked participants to reflect on how their attitudes towards trade policy had evolved over the online workshops. In pairs, they then generated a list of priorities that they would like the UK Government to consider when making trade decisions. Facilitators captured these priorities and posted them around the room so that participants could engage with opinion in the room. Each time participants had voted and deliberated on a scenario, facilitators gave them sticky dots and asked them to select one priority that they felt was most important for the UK Government to consider for each individual scenario. This prioritisation exercise was done publicly with the lead facilitator reporting trends to the room as they emerged throughout the day, highlighting any changes in what mattered to participants.

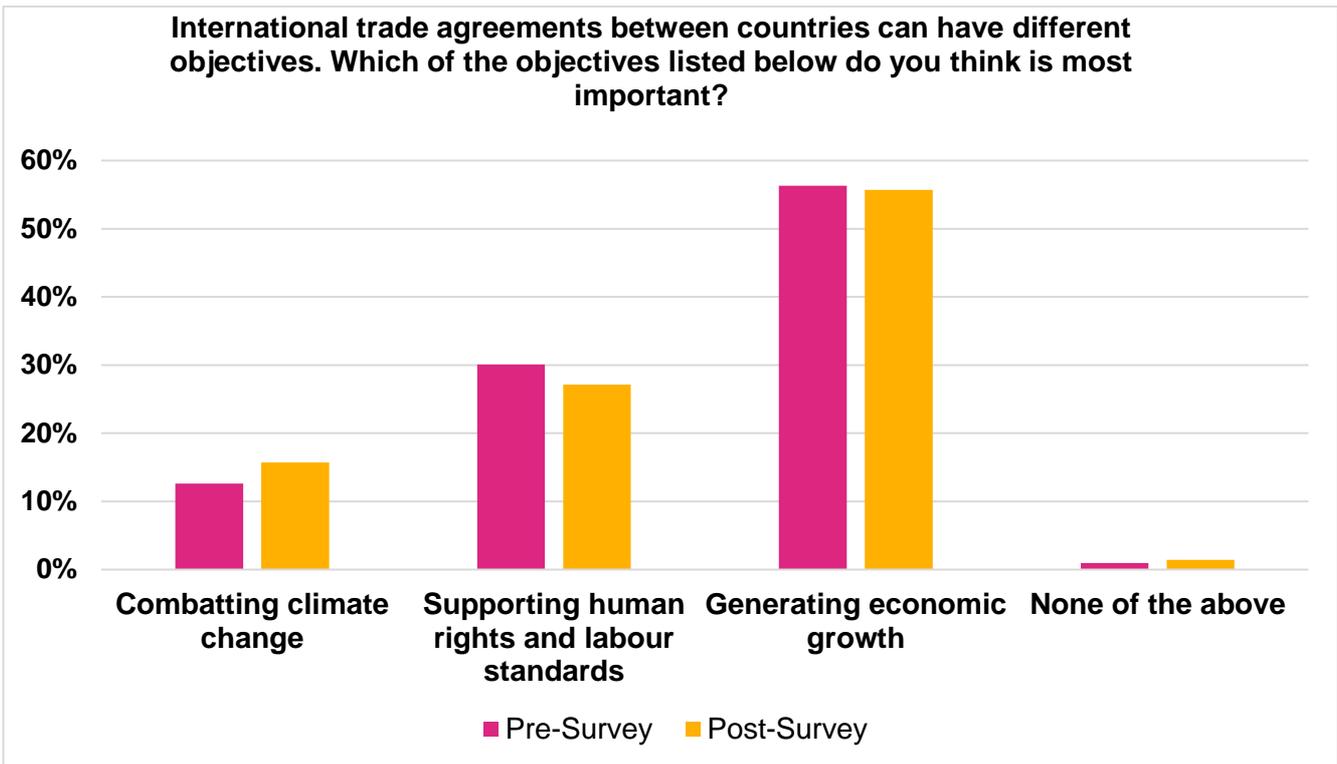
This chapter draws on data from the pre-/post-surveys and final workshop activities to identify key themes in what participants prioritise when making trade policy decisions.

## 2.1 Key findings

**When making complex trade-off decisions about trade policy, participants focussed on issues of fairness, national and regional interests, and the long and short-term impact of deals.** These factors were present in each of the four topic discussions. They reflect participants' engagement with the key concepts of 'winners and losers' introduced by CITP at the start of the jury process as well as a desire to **use trade to achieve a balance of economic and non-economic outcomes.**

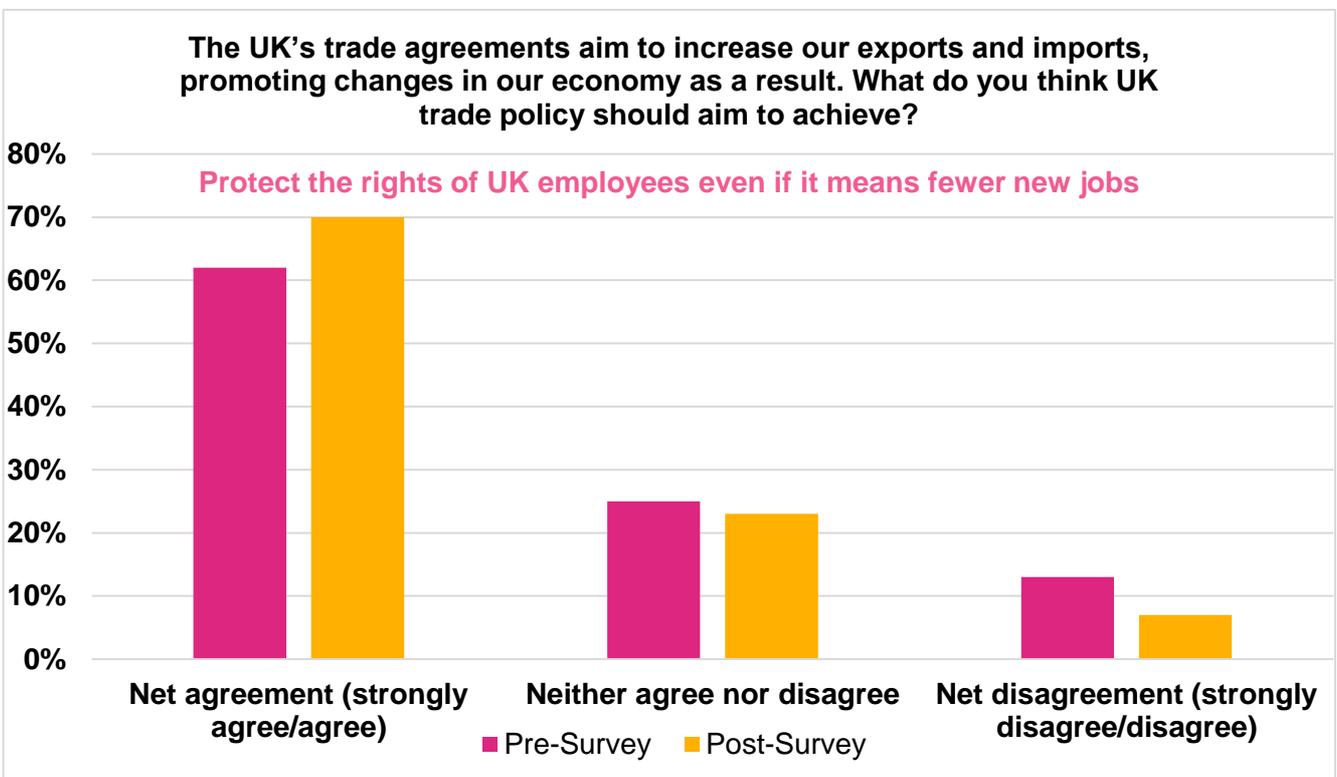
### 2.1.2 Economic and non-economic outcomes

Before and after the deliberation, participants were asked to rank the importance of different objectives in trade-policy. Trends from the pre-/post-survey, shown in the graphs below, suggest that views here varied depending on the specificity of the prioritisation people were asked to make. Figure 2 shows that just over half of participants ranked economic growth as the most important objective at the start and end of the juries.



**Figure 2. Participants' ranking of trade objectives' importance**

However, when asked about *specific* trade-offs in the pre-/post-survey the majority of participants prioritised workers' rights (figure 3), human rights (figure 4), and climate change (figure 5) over economic gains and more trade.



**Figure 3. Participants' responses to a trade-off concerning workers' rights**

Figure 4. Participants' responses to a trade-off concerning human rights

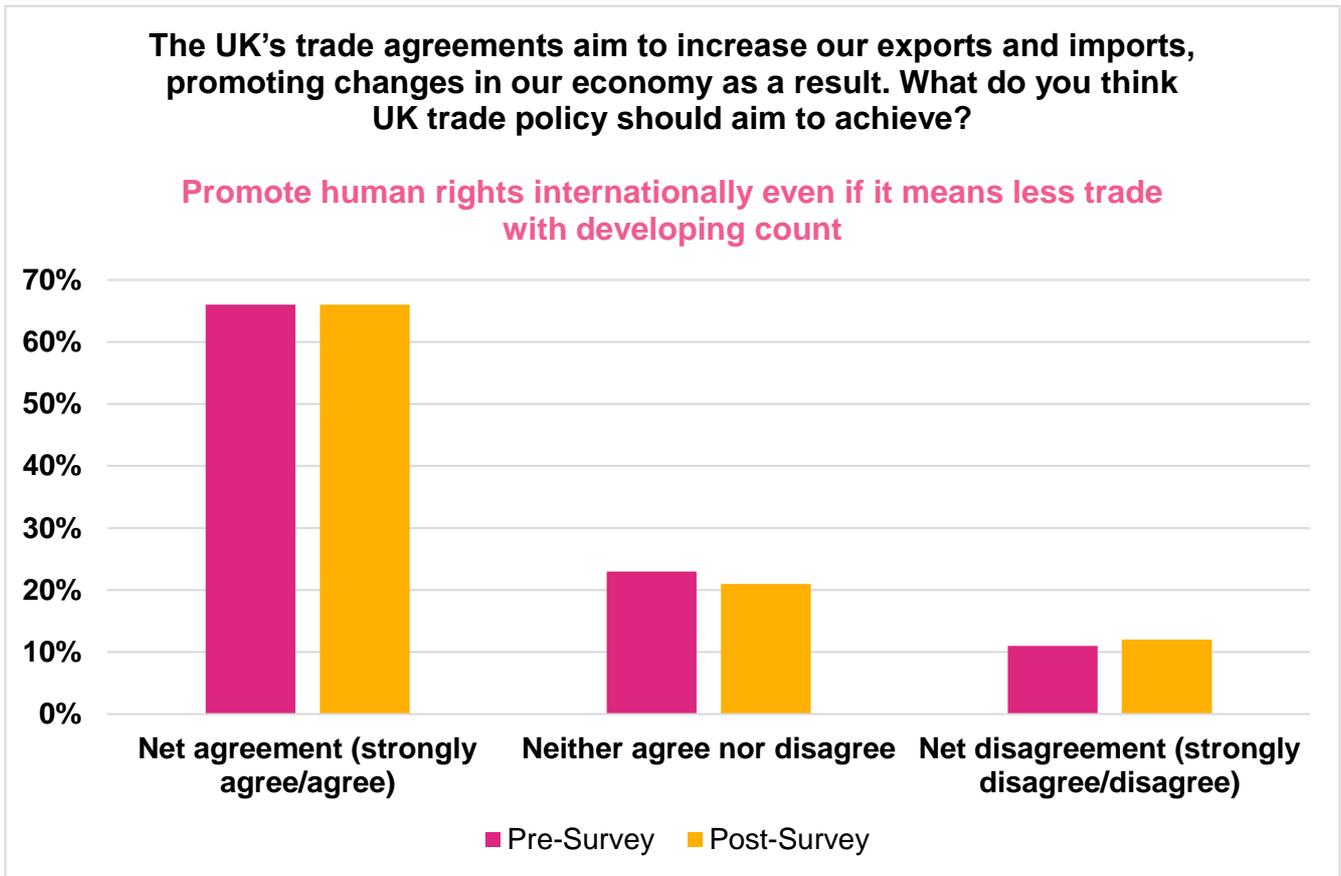
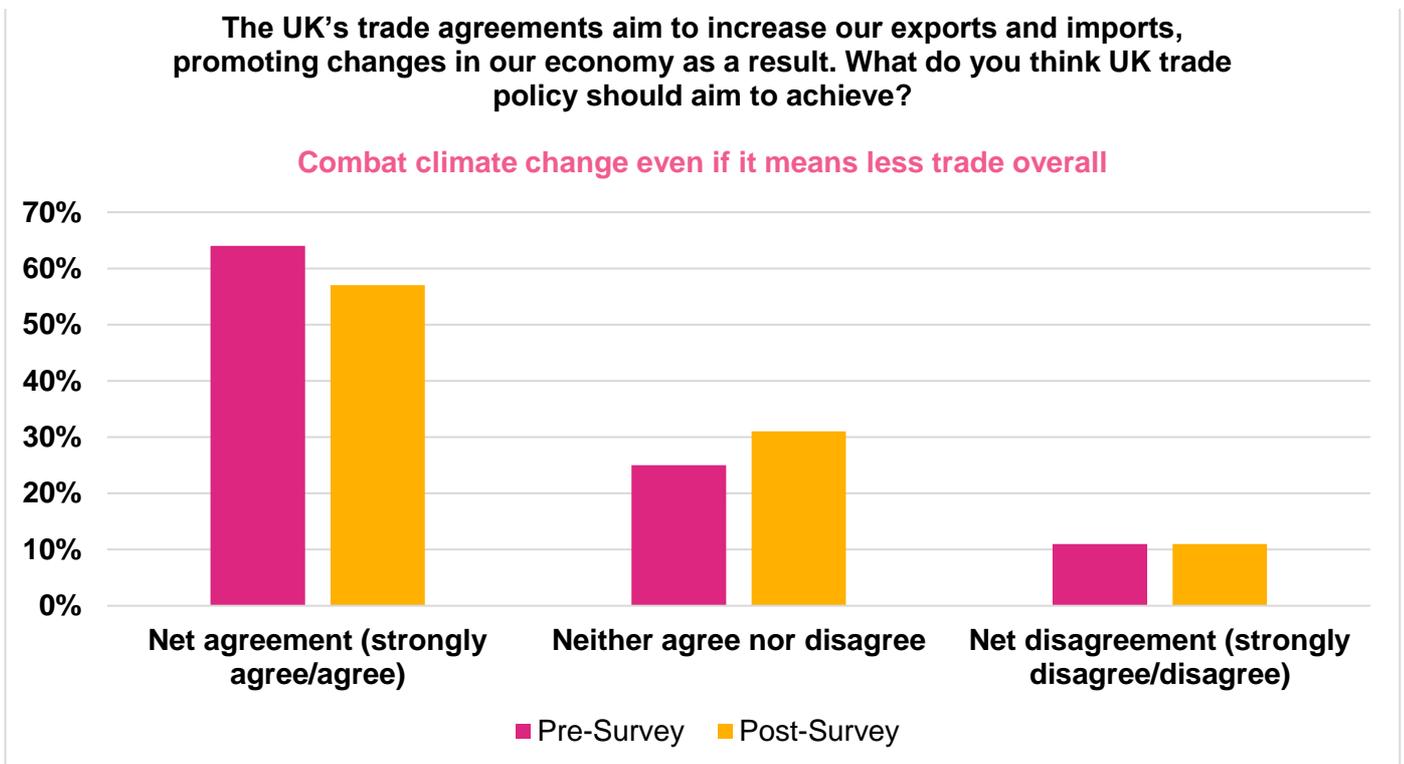


Figure 5. Participants' responses to a trade-off concerning climate change



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## 2.3 Priorities in trade-offs

This desire to achieve more than just economic outcomes from trade was also reflected in the final workshop when participants were asked to generate a list of things they would like the UK Government to prioritise when it comes to making trade decisions. Figure 6 captures the priorities that emerged across all locations, with larger words showing priorities that received the most votes in each location.



**Figure 6. Participant generated trade priorities**

After each topic deliberation, participants returned to these same lists and placed a sticky dot on the factor that they felt should be prioritised for that particular trade deal (dots for each deal were differentiated by colour). Priorities did vary across different scenarios to reflect the different issues discussed, for example human rights and economic benefits were prioritised in the rights scenario and regional needs were prioritised more in the agriculture and business services discussion. Through an analysis of the reasoning given by participants for decision-making in each scenario (detailed more in chapters three to six) and the priorities generated by participants, we have summarised four overarching factors that participants considered when making complex trade-offs in trade policy:

- 1) **Fairness:** participants frequently returned to whether a deal was ‘fair’. This was expressed through participants listing priorities on health and safety, labour rights, ethics, and equality that all reflected a desire for trade deals to have a positive impact on people, or at least not negatively impact certain populations. In participant voting forms fairness emerged in relation to balancing the outcomes of a deal for different people, for example Indian workers and low-income UK consumers, or farmers and business service workers in different regions of the UK.
- 2) **National UK interest:** the best interests of the UK were considered in each scenario. This was expressed in economic outcomes through the generation of priorities such as growth, jobs, and prices of

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goods and services, as well as non-economic outcomes such as national security and what participants termed “public welfare”. In participant voting forms UK national interest was often expressed through choosing an option that benefitted everyone in the UK (e.g., higher food standards), or benefitted more UK citizens (e.g., creating the highest number of jobs). People rarely returned to ideas of national economic growth in participant voting forms, but transcript analysis may reveal more discussion of growth.

- 3) **Regional and local interest:** regional and local interests were identified through people identifying priorities such as the protection of local products, jobs, and community. Similar ideas emerged in participant voting forms when the scenarios discussed impacted local industries such as agriculture and business services.
- 4) **Long-term impact:** although participants were often not provided information about the long- or short-term impact of the trade deals discussed it emerged as a key way in which they navigated complex trade-offs. Priority factors such human rights, standards, environment, and jobs were consistently considered longer-term outcomes whereas economic outcomes such as consumer prices were consistently considered short-term and subject to fluctuation.

# 3. Trade and Human Rights

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This chapter outlines participants’ views towards the use of trade to achieve human rights outcomes. It focusses on participants’ views towards the following complex trade-off that was posed to participants in the final workshop: **‘should the UK insist on poorer countries agreeing to certain human rights in trade agreements it makes with them, if doing so limits the economic benefits of these agreements?’**

Prior to the final, in-person workshop, participants had already been introduced to the key debates around how the UK trades globally, and the impacts of UK trade policies on other countries. This was the subject of the first online workshop in which participants considered the use of trade agreements to achieve non-economic aims through adding conditions to trade deals, such as requiring countries to meet certain rights and environmental standards. Participants were presented with a range of views on this, including on the fairness of high-income countries’ imposing conditions on lower-income countries, a theme which was reflected in the final workshop discussions. Participants then had space in small breakout rooms of six-to-eight people from their local area to vote on related trade-offs and discuss the information presented. Details of the information participants were provided with is available in appendix 5.

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# The trade-off

To understand participants' views towards the complex trade-off introduced above, they were presented with a recap of key points from the first online workshop before being asked to consider a hypothetical trade deal between the UK and India. The deal would improve Indian workers' rights, but have mixed economic outcomes for the UK and India.<sup>14</sup> To help focus on the specific trade-off in question, the exercises in this and subsequent chapters presented the trade-off as if it could be entirely captured within a single section of a trade deal (in this chapter we named it "Section 24"). It was explained that this was not how trade agreements were actually packaged, but it supported participants to imagine they were considering a real piece of legislation, albeit in a more accessible format. In practice, participants referred primarily to the 'deal' or 'agreement' in question even when discussing the trade-off, rather than using the language of the specific section. Participants were asked to imagine they were an MP in parliament and assess whether they thought it was better to accept or reject the deal, giving consideration to what they thought was best for the UK as a whole as well as their constituents.

To support them in making a decision on the deal, participants were given a series of high-level 'for' and 'against' arguments that might be made by parliamentarians, businesses and charities. The views shown in these points included unions and fair trade campaigners' concerns about the existing conditions for some workers in India. Business groups argued that the deal would boost UK GDP and competition, while some UK businesses had concerns about increased costs of imports and the potential trade-policy reactions by other countries to the deal. Parliamentarians' supported the improving of workers' rights or had concerns that it would hamper India's economic development and not be of value to the UK economy.<sup>15</sup>

They were also provided with information, presented as coming from the House of Commons library, that acted as an independent forecast of the economic and non-economic outcomes associated with the deal for both the UK and India:

- **The financial impact:**
  - There is evidence the UK and Indian economies will have a slight gain from the agreement.
  
- **The impact in India**
  - The rights would only immediately impact a portion of Indian workers involved in exporting industries, but should in principle affect all over time.

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<sup>14</sup> This was referred to as 'Section 24' in the hypothetical scenario presented to participants, hence the reference to this in Fig. 1 below.

<sup>15</sup> Full details about the materials shared with participants can be found in appendix 5.

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- Even though it will support trade with the UK, as production costs in India may increase, it will also result in a loss of trade for India.
  - **The impact in the UK**
    - Prices in the UK of some goods may increase.
    - Some UK firms may be negatively affected by this change, though others may become more competitive.

After being presented with information in plenary, participants then voted privately on whether they thought the UK should accept this section of the deal. Participants then discussed the reasoning for their choices at tables of up to eight other people. To understand how changes in the costs and benefits of the deal affected participants' views, they were then presented with an altered scenario that imagined the deal would result in a *negative* economic impact on India – with all other parameters remaining the same. Participants voted again in private followed by further discussion.

This chapter draws on participants' voting forms and facilitators' notes to identify the key findings in this trade-off.

## 3.1 Key findings

**Promoting human rights, fairness and long-term outcomes emerged as key reasons to accept the deal, while uncertainty of implementation led many to vote 'don't know'.**

**Promoting human rights abroad was prioritised** by a majority of participants in the first scenario. Just over 60% accepted the proposed deal, reflecting a view that the UK should use trade deals to promote workers' rights abroad. Participants in favour described the deal as **fair because it promotes global equality**. Others supporting the deal were willing to **accept what they understood as short-term costs of rising prices in the UK and increased costs for Indian companies, to achieve the long-term benefits of improved workers' rights in India and overall economic benefit to the UK.**

However, support for the deal dropped in the altered scenario to 44%, with 19% opting for 'no' and 37% for 'don't know'. Among the 'no's some participants began to **view the deal as unfair when the poorer country is faced with a certain level of negative economic impact**. There was also increased uncertainty and 'don't know' votes in the second scenario, with some **questioning whether the Indian Government and Indian businesses would implement improvements to workers' rights.**

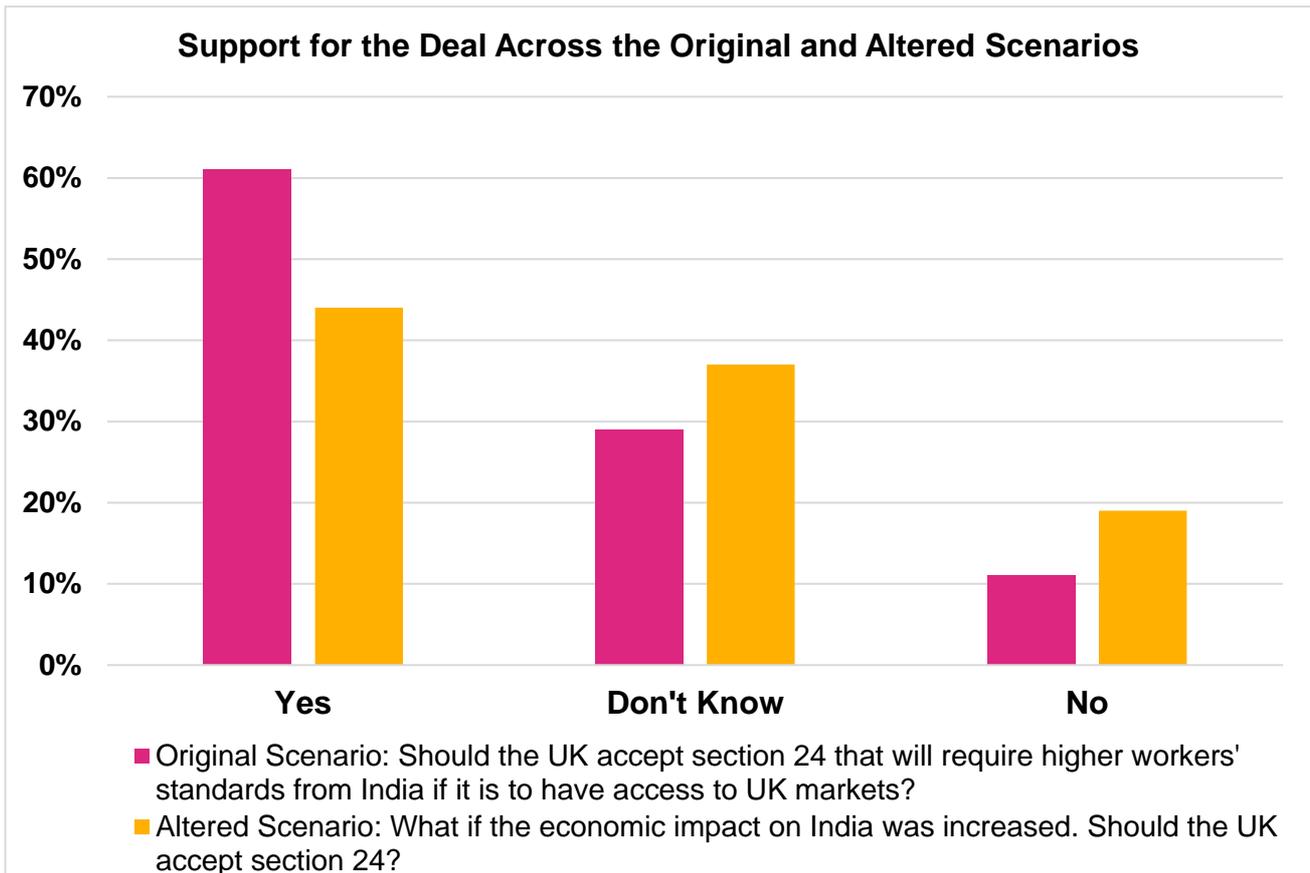


Figure 7. Support for the Deal Across the Original and Altered Versions of the Scenario.

## 3.2 Themes in participants' reasoning

Participants provided a number of different reasons in their voting forms for why they accepted or rejected the original and altered scenarios. We have grouped these reasons into themes and reported these below along with quotes.

### 3.2.1 The UK's role in promoting human rights through trade

The UK's role in promoting human rights abroad featured in participants' reasoning for both accepting and rejecting this deal. While the majority supported this deal, a minority of those accepting it saw the UK as having a *responsibility* to promote better workers' rights abroad.

*"We should become an example for responsibility worldwide." (Bridgend)*

Some of those who rejected the deal or voted 'don't know', argued the opposite; even if Indian workers' rights ought to be improved, it was not the UK's role to influence this and it is India who should determine how its workers are treated.

*"In an ideal world [this trade agreement achieves its ends] but equally I don't think it is for the UK to stipulate/govern." (Reading)*

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### 3.2.2 A fair deal

The promotion of workers' rights abroad was seen as a 'fair' outcome by many of those supporting the deal as it promoted equality. Some of these participants added that the UK should expect the same workers' rights abroad as we expect at home. However, for others the promotion of workers' rights had a limit: namely, when it was judged that the deal would be too economically costly to India.

*"If the outcome on India is negative, [it] would seem to tip the balance." (Belfast)*

Others felt that the increased cost to India was still worth paying and reiterated their belief that trade deals should be used to support workers' rights abroad, in some cases, even explicitly regardless of costs to India.

*"Voted yes. I think the lives of the humans effected (sic) outweighs the money that [is] gained or lost."  
(Paisley)*

### 3.2.3 Uncertainty of implementation

The uncertainty of ensuring that workers' rights really would be improved by the deal caused many to vote 'don't know'. In voting forms participants expressed concerns over how these standards would be implemented, measured, and enforced.

*"To[o] complicated issue. We cannot police whether or not guidelines are being enforced in India." (Reading)*

Some participants expressing this view did not specify the origin of their doubts in their voting form responses. Among those who were explicit, scepticism was aimed at the Indian Government and Indian businesses meeting the new rights requirements. This view was present in some participants' form responses to the original scenario, whereas others noted this for the first time following the altered scenario.

*"[I voted no] because India will not follow through with the higher standards..." (Bridgend)*

### 3.2.4 The UK's national interest

The UK's interests in the deal were prioritised by some participants, including those favouring the agreement because of its overall economic benefit to the UK. Others rejecting the agreement focused on protecting UK consumers from price increases and argued that rising costs would result in consumers choosing imported goods from elsewhere anyway.

*"Our first priority is to improve the UK situation - if other nations gain, that is an added bonus.  
UK consumers will "vote" at the point of sale." (Paisley)*

### 3.2.5 Short and long-term outcomes

Some participants prioritised what they perceived to be long-term benefits (such as workers' rights) despite short-term costs (such as rise in consumer goods). The supporting information provided to participants did not mention the timescale of economic effects, but participants interpreted price hikes for UK consumers, greater costs for Indian businesses to meet requirements, and potential job losses for some Indian workers as short-term impacts. The main long-term benefits identified by participants were the improvements to workers' rights in India and the economic gains to both nations from subsequent trade.

*“If it effect[s] (sic) [us] financially it would only be temporary, and we are strong enough to bounce back.”  
(Bridgend)*

### 3.3 Voting trends across locations

Looking at how participants voted across locations, a majority accepted the deal in its original form, except in Doncaster. Support for the deal decreased when the scenario was altered to negatively impact the Indian economy in all locations except Doncaster where support increased. The largest reductions in support were seen in Belfast, where initial support had been the highest, and in Reading, which saw its ‘don’t know’ response jump from 18% to 64%. As reported above, this reduction in support was primarily driven by a belief among participants that the deal had become unfair.

Without analysis of the transcripts, it is difficult to determine exactly whether support increased in Doncaster due to the discussions that preceded the second vote, or due to the changed conditions of the trade-off in the second scenario itself. However, we can establish that the shift was tentative: a majority of those in Doncaster who supported the deal in its second iteration had previously voted ‘don’t know’, and these participants’ explanations for their votes suggest that while they now supported the deal, they remained uncertain about its impact.

*“To benefit poorer countries would be good as long as [it does have] a positive impact.” Doncaster*

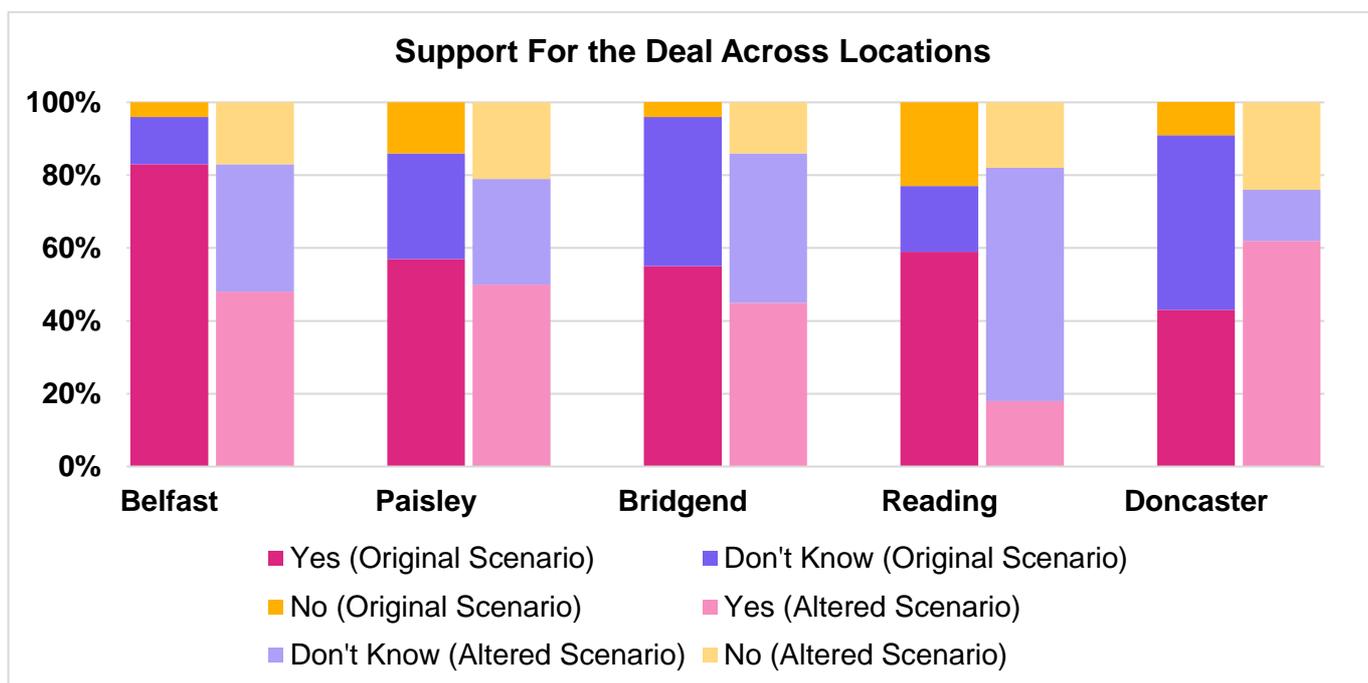


Figure 8. Support for the Deal Across Locations

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# 4. Balancing Sectors and Regions

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This chapter outlines participants' views towards balancing the interests of different sectors and regions in trade deals. It focusses on participants' views towards the following specific trade-off question that was posed to participants in the final workshop: **'should the Government sign a trade deal that benefits the business service sector while agriculture loses?'**

Prior to attending the final workshop participants had already been introduced to the key debates and information related to the role of agriculture and business services in the UK economy through a two and a half hour online workshop. In the second online workshop the CITP presented information to participants that highlighted the significant role that business services play in the UK economy in terms of imports and exports, and how this varies significantly between the South East of England and the rest of the UK. During this online workshop the CITP also presented key aspects of the UK-Australia trade deal and highlighted the benefits for business services and negative consequences for UK farmers. Participants then had space in small breakout rooms of six-to-eight people from their local area to vote on related trade-offs and discuss the information presented.

## The trade-off

In the final face-to-face workshop participants were presented with some stylised summary information related to the Free Trade Agreement between the UK and Australia. To help focus on the specific trade-off in question, as before, participants were presented with a single section of the deal (in this chapter "Section 83"). It was explained that this was not how trade agreements were actually packaged, but it supported participants to imagine they were considering a real piece of legislation, albeit in a more accessible format. In practice, participants referred primarily to the 'deal' or 'agreement' in question, rather than focusing on specific section, therefore we have referred to 'deal' or 'agreement' in the text. The proposed deal is predicted to increase the incomes generated by business services (things like legal work and accounting), but decrease incomes

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generated by agriculture.<sup>16</sup> Participants were asked to imagine they were an MP in parliament and assess whether they thought it was better to accept or reject the deal, giving consideration to what they thought was best for the UK as a whole as well as their constituents. To support them to make a decision, participants were given a series of high-level for and against arguments made by parliamentarians, businesses, and charities. These included the farmers union arguing the importance of protecting jobs and heritage, and business think tanks advocating for increased GDP. They were also provided with information, presented as coming from the House of Commons library, that acted as an independent forecast of the economic and non-economic outcomes associated with the deal.

The views shown in these points included farmers' and food producers' concerns about the impact on their jobs, lawyers, accountants and consultants' support for the resulting job creation, and business groups and think tanks belief that it will boost UK GDP. Parliamentarians argued for the boost to growth to be prioritised, that agriculture should be protected, or thought it would lead to more countries demanding similar deals. They were also provided with information, presented as coming from the House of Commons library, that acted as an independent forecast of the economic and non-economic outcomes associated with the deal:

- **The financial impact:**
  - A projected net gain of £118 million per year in the UK economy.
  - The UK stands to gain £212 million per year through law, consulting, research and accountancy.
  - The UK stands to lose £94 million per year through livestock.
  
- **The impact on jobs**
  - A projected net gain 1,200 jobs.
  - Estimated 3,700 jobs are created across the UK. 2,700 of these are in the South East of England.
  - Estimated 2,500 jobs are lost. 700 of these are in the South East of England.
  - Estimated net increase of 800 jobs for women.
  
- **The impact on consumers**
  - Food prices will be 0.3% lower, but there is a risk of lower food-safety standards.

After being presented with information in plenary, participants then voted privately on whether they thought the UK should accept this deal before discussing their reasoning at their tables. To understand the extent to which the negative impact on certain regions of the UK influenced people's votes they were asked to vote on an altered scenario - imagining that all details of the deal remained the same but all the job creation occurred outside the South East of England. They then discussed their reasoning for this altered scenario. This chapter draws on participants' voting forms and facilitators' notes to identify the key findings in this trade-off.

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<sup>16</sup> This was referred to as 'Section 83' in the hypothetical scenario presented to participants, hence the reference to this in Fig. 8 below.

## 4.1 Key findings

Regional fairness, national economic growth, the protection of agriculture and prioritising long-term outcomes were all factors in why participants accepted or rejected the agreement.

Regional fairness and the protection of agriculture was prioritised by the majority of participants. Almost 60% initially rejected the deal. Some of these participants described the deal as **unfair because it increased regional inequalities within the UK**. Others against the deal thought that **the net gain to the UK economy was insufficient to justify the losses to the agricultural sector**, and felt that **farming in the UK should be protected**. Others cited what they thought would be the **negative long-term impacts of the deal** (e.g., on the environment and food security) as reasons to reject it.

Support for the deal in the second vote increased by 15 percentage points when the scenario changed to indicate that all job creation occurred outside the South East of England, which suggests that **regional fairness was a more important priority than protecting agriculture per se for some participants**.

National economic growth was prioritised by a minority of participants who initially supported the deal. In total, 20% of participants initially accepted the deal because this was the option that created the most jobs. Some of these participants also saw investing in business services as having long-term benefits since it presents more opportunities for the UK than investing in agriculture.

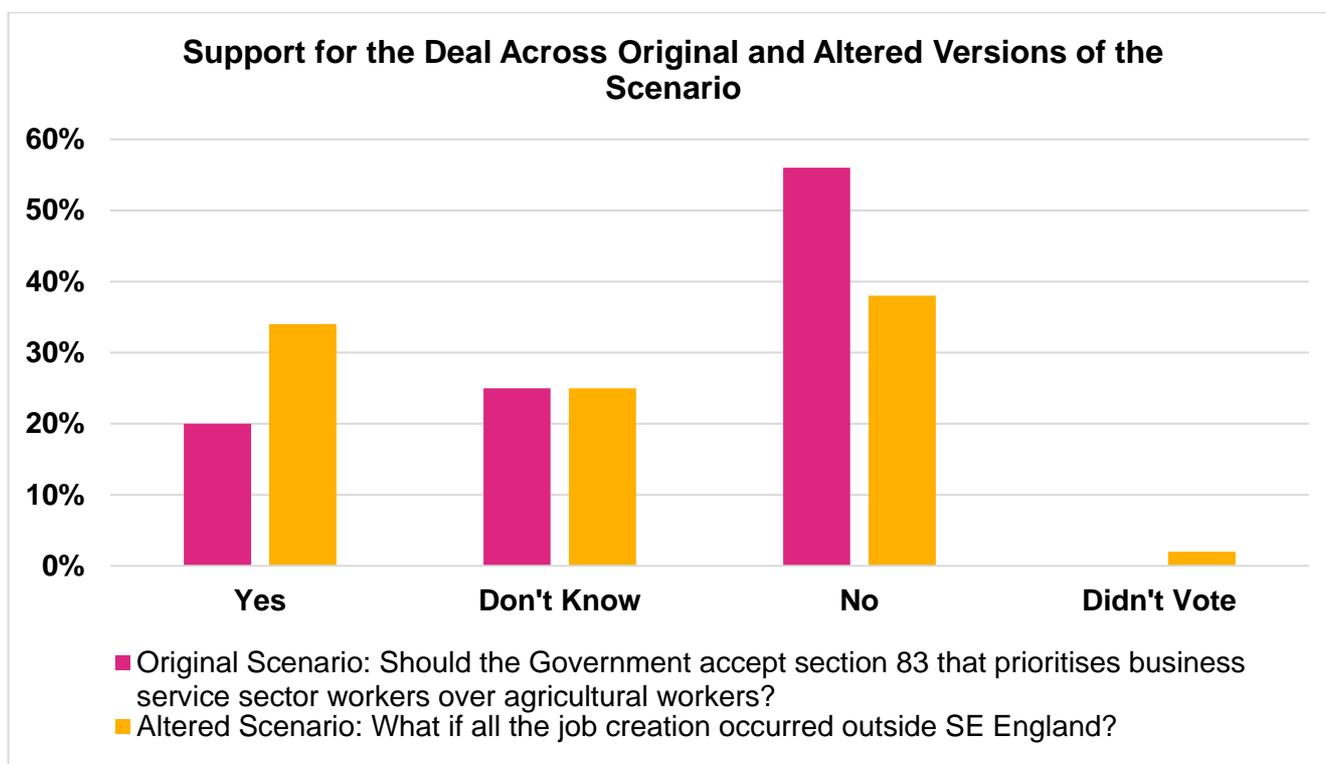


Figure 9. Support for the Deal Across the Original and Altered Versions of the Scenario.

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## 4.2 Themes in participants' reasoning

Participants provided a number of different reasons in their voting forms for why they accepted or rejected the deal. We have grouped these reasons into themes and reported below along with quotes.

### 4.2.1 Regional fairness

Many participants rejected the initial agreement because the creation of jobs in the South East of England was seen to exacerbate regional inequalities in the UK, and disproportionately benefit the already wealthy South East. The business service sector was seen as already doing well or as having enough support, making the benefit marginal, and therefore many wanted to prioritise supporting what they saw as a comparatively struggling agricultural sector.

*“Agriculture is important too and it needs protecting. The UK consists of more than London and SE and the detrimental effect of this trade will just intensify the disparity across the areas outside of the South England. It's not all about London and SE.” (Belfast)*

The importance of regional fairness was also evident in the second vote where support for the deal increased by 15 percentage points when the scenario was altered so that all job creation occurred outside the South East of England. Those accepting the agreement felt that it would more evenly spread the benefits of the deal throughout the UK, reducing the North/South divide and bringing new jobs and opportunities to regions outside the South East (including progression into service roles for those who would lose agricultural work).

*“As long as it's north of Watford! This would be better if this deal had to go ahead and perhaps farmers would be compensated or helped to diversify with government grants. Win! Win! Win!” (Doncaster)*

There were also a few participants who moved from rejecting the initial agreement to voting 'don't know' in the altered scenario. While these participants felt that creating more jobs outside of the South East would be beneficial for regions and communities in different parts of the UK, they wanted more information on how the transition away from agricultural jobs would be managed before they accepted the deal. This included the need to create jobs in specific areas affected by the loss of farming, a need to ensure these jobs would be good quality, and the need to improve infrastructure (especially in transport) to ensure that these jobs would be viable for people to transition into.

### 4.2.2 National economic growth

The overall net gain to the UK economy, which was presented in the agreement through increased national income and job creation, was important to some participants who accepted the deal on this basis. Some emphasised the importance of creating the largest number of jobs, wherever they are located in the country, while others stated that growth will benefit everyone in the UK. These views were based on the net gains to the economy and jobs which were forecast within the scenario.

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*"[Accepting the deal is the option that] Has the most growth. Understand job losses but more new jobs will be created. Most foods are already imported. Jobs can be given all around UK. Chance for UK people to develop and grow." (Bridgend)*

*"Economy growth and increase in jobs outweighs loss to specific industry." (Reading)*

The type of jobs created was also mentioned, with some participants highlighting that business service jobs are better paid and employ more women.

*"Overall growth to economy, more jobs, more jobs for women. Always winners and losers. Service industry [is] higher paid anyway." (Bridgend)*

#### **4.2.3 Protecting agriculture**

People often wanted agricultural work protected, rather than seeing reductions to its income and jobs. Where they did provide explanations for this, some participants expressed sympathy for farmers losing their jobs, while others talked of farming as part of our national heritage, as a way of life that needs preserving, or particularly important in the areas where participants lived or came from. These arguments were found across workshop locations and not just in more rural locations. The sentiment of farming as a national and regional heritage which should be protected was mentioned in some forms, and facilitator feedback suggests it was a strong theme at some table discussions in Northern Ireland and Wales. Further analysis of transcripts will reveal the extent of these views.

*"Although there is a good financial gain, we are losing a big part of English heritage and also a big regional impact, for example in the north. There is already social deprivation in the north and lack of jobs, and even more could be lost. [The deal] will benefit a region which already has money/jobs." (Reading)*

Many felt the net gains to jobs and projected profits were not big enough to make the resultant loss to agriculture and farming communities' livelihoods worthwhile.

*"The overall business benefits of 1,200 jobs is an insufficiently large number to warrant the deal and will disproportionately benefit a small area of the UK which is already a wealthy area of the country." (Belfast)*

Among those who voted 'no' and 'don't know', some intimated that they might change their mind if there were more concessions or support given to farmers to compensate for job losses. Others expressed more generally a wish to make the deal more balanced between the two sectors affected. Some who supported the agreement still gave the caveat that they would like to see protections for farmers, for example through subsidies taken from the additional profits generated by business services.

*"Creating more jobs - increase in GDP. Incentives for farmers. I think/worry our current and future generations don't want to go into farming." (Doncaster)*

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Not all participants wanted agriculture protected. Some thought that farmers were already heavily subsidised and shouldn't be treated as a 'special case', as well as having assets in their land that they could use for other profit-making purposes.

*"This is a no brainer. Clearly the service deal is (by far) the better option for the UK as a whole. Farmers are not a 'special' case." (Paisley)*

#### **4.2.4 Short and long-term outcomes**

Although participants were not provided with information in relation to the long- or short-term outcomes of the agreement, many interpreted key information with regard to effects across timescales.

Investing in agriculture was seen as a long-term investment by many of those rejecting the agreement. These participants wanted to protect farming and ensure future generations had agricultural skills and were incentivised to enter the sector, so as to ensure domestic food production. This was seen as necessary due to risks from international supply chains, rising food prices, and growing population demands.

*"It is good to create more jobs and get cheaper products, but I don't want to rely on foreign countries to get something as important as food." (Belfast)*

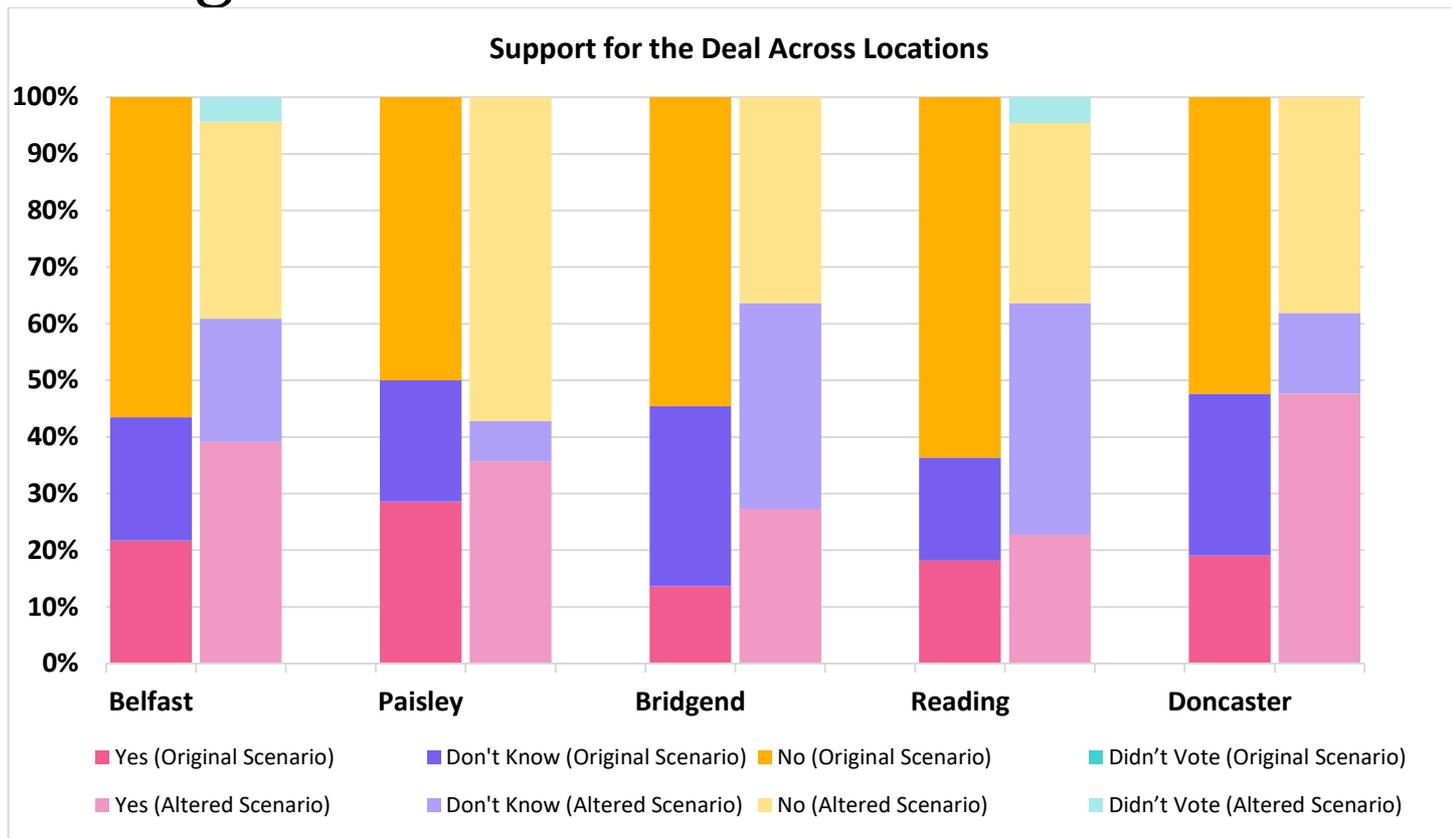
Others focused on the long-term benefits to environmental and food standards which are preserved by protecting UK agriculture. Some saw prioritising business services as having a negative impact on the environment in the long-term, from building on agricultural land, to losses in wildlife, and increased air miles from greater food imports. The risk of lower food standards that was part of the information material provided to participants was also seen as a long-term risk.

*"Overall jobs and economy should get priority however the agricultural industry needs more support in order to survive the future problems caused by the climate crisis/cost of living/reduction of fossil fuels. Food security should get priority over trade in this instance." (Doncaster)*

In contrast, participants who voted in favour of the deal felt that trying to protect domestic agriculture was not sustainable in the long-term; farms were already struggling, and the UK was reliant on food imports, thus the country should embrace the shift away from the agricultural industry.

*"If on balance it benefits the UK economy, it's one of those difficult decisions that has to be taken and needs to be affirmative. [...] UK is not as dependent on agriculture as before. This is the way the economy is heading. Go with it." (Belfast)*

# Voting trends across locations



**Figure 10. Support for the deal across locations**

Although there was a strong regional element to this scenario there is no significant difference in voting pattern between Reading in the South East of England and other locations in the first vote where most participants across all locations rejected the original deal. Support for the altered deal increased after discussion and the second vote, but this increase was very slight in Reading where the largest shift was from ‘no’ to ‘don’t know’. Support increased more significantly in all other locations. Doncaster and Belfast saw the biggest increase in support for the deal in the second vote, and the view that the altered scenario would reduce regional inequalities was particularly prevalent in these two locations. Participant voting forms did not reveal much information about these changes, though analysis of discussion transcriptions is likely to yield more insight.

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# 5. Privacy and data-sharing

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This chapter explores participants' views on the costs and benefits of digital trade. It focusses on participants' views towards the following complex trade-off that was posed to participants in the final workshop: **'do the benefits of accessing digital health services and potential development of cutting-edge medical treatments outweigh the risks of privacy abuses this creates?'**

Prior to attending the final, in-person workshop participants had already been introduced to the key debates and information related to digital trade through a two-and-a-half-hour online workshop. In the third online workshop CITP presented information to participants that explained the nature of digital trade, and how it has grown in significance with recent technological developments. During the online workshop the CITP also presented key perspectives on two trade-offs that arise in digital trade. The first looked at the sharing of health data, introducing participants to different kinds of data concerned (both personal and aggregated) and the risks posed to privacy that this sharing this internationally could lead to. They also heard arguments about how increased sharing could benefit healthcare services and advance medical research. The second trade-off introduced in this workshop by the CITP looked at the protection of technology companies' intellectual property, and the disadvantages for trade that comes from governments protecting the intellectual property these companies create through software advances. The CITP also shared arguments about the costs posed by not having these protections. Participants then had space in small breakout rooms of six-to-eight people from their local area to vote on related trade-offs and discuss the information presented.

## The trade-off

In the final face-to-face workshop, participants were presented with a summary of key information related to digital trade before being presented with the details of a hypothetical trade deal that would **benefit health research, services, and treatments, but risks data privacy abuses by sharing health data with countries with lower privacy standards than the UK.**<sup>17</sup> To help focus on the specific trade-off in question, as explained in chapter three participants were presented with a single section of the deal (in this chapter "Section 25"). It was explained that this was not how trade agreements were actually packaged, but it supported participants to

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<sup>17</sup> This was referred to as 'Section 25' in the hypothetical scenario presented to participants, hence the reference to this in Fig. 12 below.

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imagine they were considering a real piece of legislation, albeit in a more accessible format. In practice, participants referred primarily to the 'deal' or 'agreement' in question, rather than focusing on specific section, therefore we have referred to 'deal' or 'agreement' in the text. Participants were asked to imagine they were an MP in parliament and assess whether they thought it was better to accept or reject the deal, giving consideration to what they thought was best for the UK as a whole as well as their constituents.

To support them to make a decision, participants were given a series of high-level for and against arguments made by parliamentarians, businesses, and charities. The views shown in these points included concerns from those with long-term health conditions about relatives' claims for life insurance being turned down due to the sharing of health data. Human rights organisations had concerns that some people who are vulnerable if their data is shared will interact less with health services as a result. Consumer groups had concerns that the shared data could be used for commercial purposes, in profiling and advertising to consumers.

At the same time, some with loved ones with particular illnesses supported the deal as they thought it could lead to insights that can help them, while insurance agents argued data sharing would lead to better and more complete understanding of people's claims. Healthcare and research organisations argued it would support their efforts to find better treatments and it would give the NHS information it needs to make services more effective. Some parliamentarians argued it would allow the UK to be a leader in health services and would improve treatments, though others argued it would create further commercial priorities that are at odds with the NHS.

They were also provided with information, presented as coming from the House of Commons library, that acted as an independent forecast of the economic and non-economic outcomes associated with the deal:

- **Leadership in research:**
  - The evidence suggests that the change would make the UK a world leader in the use of data to improve health services and treatments.
  
- **The impact on jobs**
  - The change could result in an increase in UK jobs in public health research and pharmaceutical companies.
  - However, it may also benefit pharmaceutical companies abroad, which might result in job losses in the UK from lost business.
  
- **The impact on health**
  - Medical experts say the resulting research benefits could speed up a cure for major conditions, like Alzheimer's, by 10 years.
  - Other scientists have not committed to similar estimates, as they say it is too difficult to say what the effects might be.

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After being presented with information in plenary, participants then voted privately on whether they thought the UK should accept this deal before discussing their reasoning at their tables. To understand the extent to which the benefits to medical research influenced people's votes, they were asked to vote on an altered scenario - imagining that all details of the deal remained the same except that personal health data sharing significantly raised the benefits to medical research, rather than only marginally. They then discussed their reasoning for this altered scenario.

This chapter draws on participants' voting forms and facilitators' notes to identify the key findings in this trade-off.

## 5.1 Key findings

**Assessing the risk of sharing data underpinned participants decision to accept or reject this deal.** Most of those accepting the deal did so on the assumption that the data would be anonymous and/or aggregated, as there was little appetite for the risks associated with the sharing of personal, identifiable data.

Regardless of how they voted, participants **wanted to support medical research, but also wanted reassurances around the protection and security of their personal health data**, to avoid it being used in ways that they perceived to be harmful or morally wrong (e.g., to discriminate against people or for commercial gain). Those that did accept or reject the deal therefore did so based on having **more or less appetite for risk in relation to data privacy, rather than having more or less desire for medical advancement**. Support for the agreement increased in the second vote, which suggests that some participants began to feel that the benefits to medicine could outweigh their concerns around data privacy.

**The possibility of advancements in medical research was prioritised over privacy** by almost half of participants in the first vote, reflecting mixed views on whether the UK should use data sharing agreements to support medical research and improve health services and treatments.

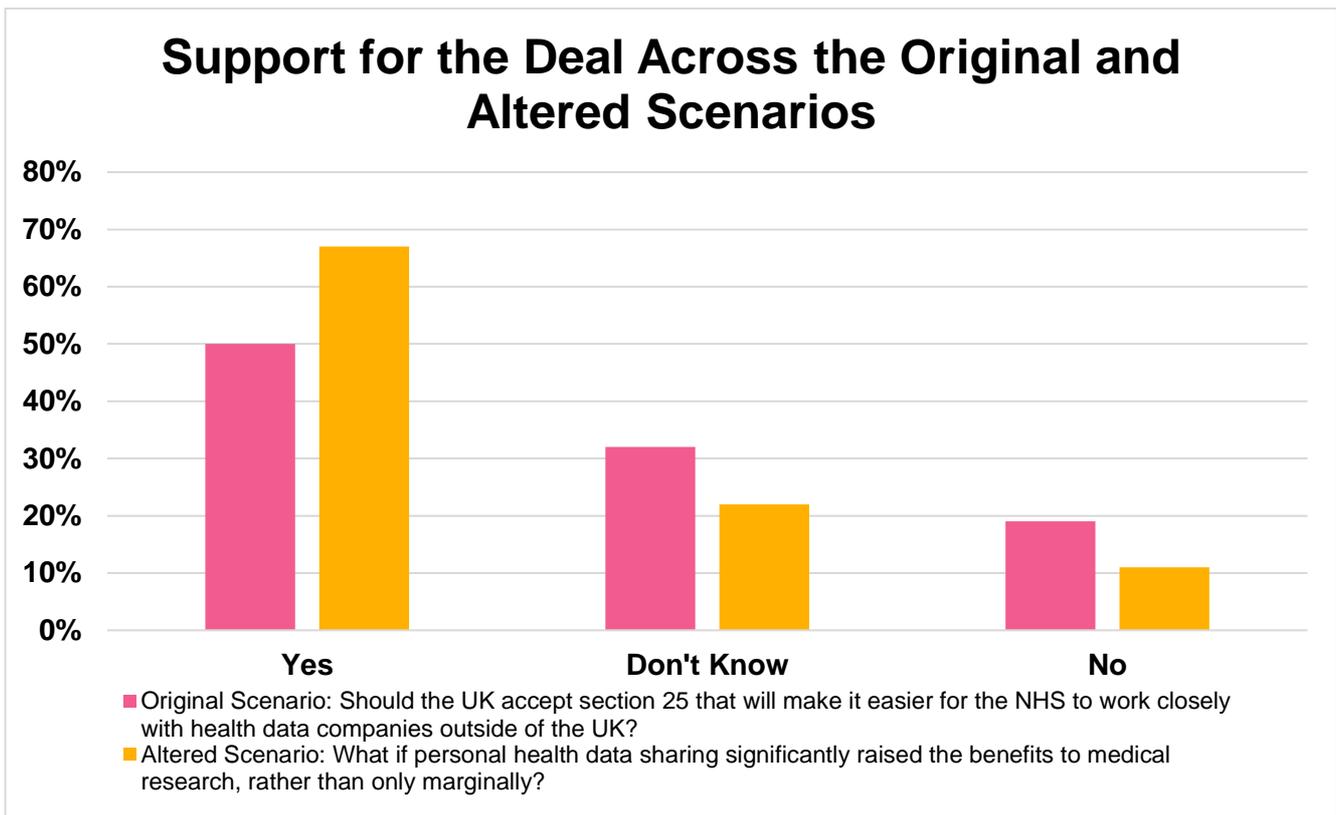


Figure 11. Support for the Deal Across the Original and Altered Versions of the Scenario.

## 5.2 Themes in participants' reasoning

Participants provided a number of different reasons in their voting forms for why they accepted or rejected the deal. We have grouped these reasons into themes and reported below along with quotes.

### 5.2.1 Assessing the risk of sharing data

The decision to accept or reject the deal was driven by each participant's assessment of the risk that sharing data posed. Many struggled with this assessment because the scenario did not provide specific information on the type of data that would be shared (although the nature of medical data had been explained by CITP in the responses to the questions from the third online workshop – see appendix 4), and so many participants struggled to decide whether the risk was worth the reward of speeding up cures for major conditions. The key piece of information participants needed was whether the data would be anonymised, and/or aggregated data or would be personal data. Many were more willing to accept the risk if the data were anonymised and/or aggregated as their key concern was that individuals would not be identifiable in the data.

In addition to this caveat, many who voted 'yes' wanted only a minimal amount of data to be shared and wanted data sharing between countries to have agreed global standards. A less common caveat was that any financial gain resulting from the agreement should go to the NHS. Even where participants shifted from voting against the

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deal or voting 'don't know', to supporting it in the altered scenario (based on the increased benefits to medicine), they maintained their previous concerns and stipulations around data privacy and security.

*"The benefits outweigh the risks. Effort should be concentrated on reducing risk. Perhaps 'global' standards could be agreed." (Doncaster)*

Those rejecting the agreement felt that the potential outcomes of sharing medical data for particular groups in society was not worth the potential gain in medical advancements. These outcomes included the risk of data being used by pharmaceutical companies for monetary gain, or the risk of it being used to people's detriment, such as through discrimination in life insurance and mortgage provision. Others cited risks to individuals' employment through the accessibility of their medical records by potential or current employers. Some simply referred to a general sense that your personal information could be used 'against you' in some way or another. Some thought that certain people - domestic violence victims or refugees, for example - may have greater concerns about others accessing their personal information and so may not use services if they know that their data could then be shared. Others emphasised risks emerging from international data flows, concerned in particular that data protection standards abroad would be lower than those in the UK.

*"I would not agree to any of my medical data being shared, the information could be used against you. Also, it could fall in the wrong hands." (Belfast)*

Participants who rejected the agreement in the second vote continued to put this view down to uncertainty about the risks posed by data sharing. This demonstrates that some participants had less appetite for privacy risks, as opposed to less appetite for medical advancement.

*"We still wouldn't know what data was being used, where and for why!" (Bridgend)*

Those supporting either deal tolerated data privacy risks because some felt that a lot of our data is already shared and available to different sources, so the agreement wouldn't result in a huge, problematic change to people's lives. Support for some was connected to their trust in the motivations of institutions, for example seeing the NHS as trusted to use our data to improve healthcare.

### **5.2.2 Prioritising medical research**

Participants who supported the original agreement prioritized potential advances in medical research and improving health services over any risks to privacy. Some also mentioned wider benefits, such as being able to respond to future pandemics, and a belief that the agreement would encourage better cooperation between countries' medical researchers. Support for the deal rose overall when the scenario was altered so that the agreement significantly raised the benefits to medical research, rather than only marginally. Participants felt that more people would benefit in terms of health services and treatments as a result.

*"It would help to cross share information to protect and gather information for future pandemics/health generally." (Reading)*

However, there were also participants who rejected the deal in both the first and second votes, on the basis that the impacts on medical research and treatments were unclear.

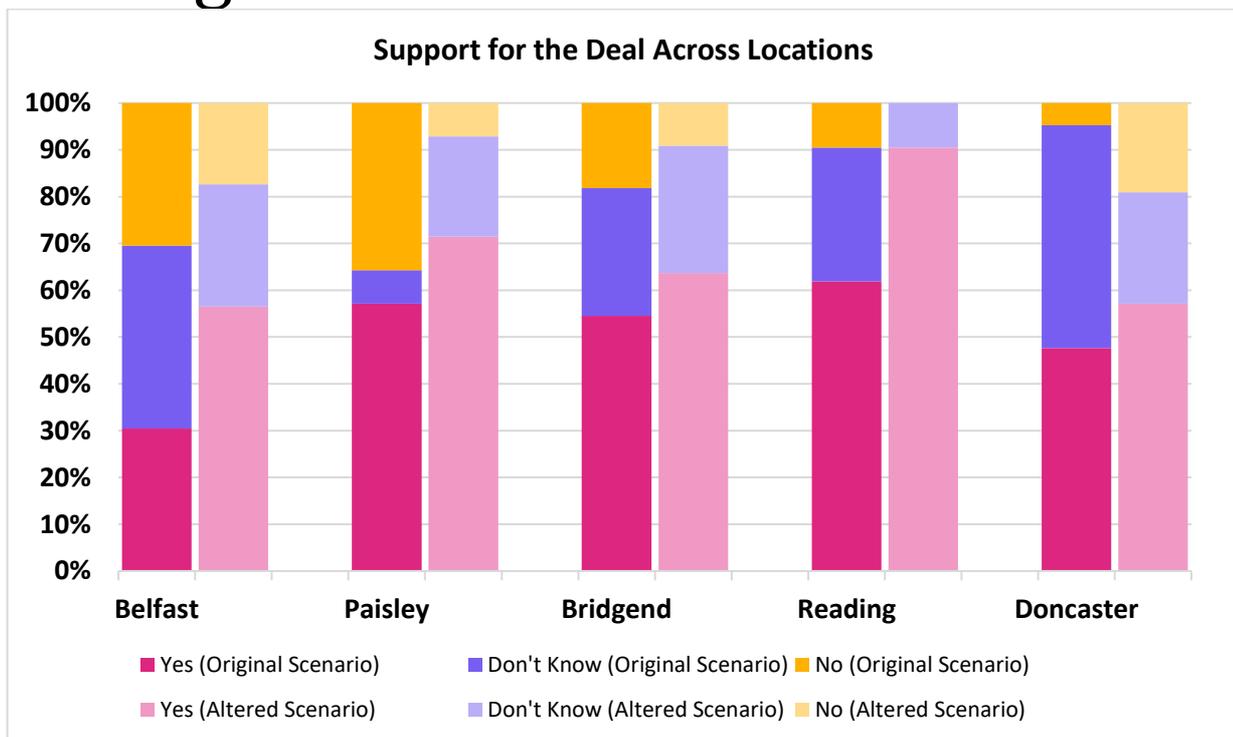
*“Ongoing research for so many years has not produced cures for so many diseases. Not convinced sharing of personal data could have such a strong benefit. (Belfast)”*

### 5.2.3 Benefits beyond health

Some participants identified benefits of the agreement beyond medical research and healthcare. This focused on the economy, with participants pointing to job creation and generation of income. A small minority also mentioned the benefits of enabling the UK to become a world leader in this area of research. Conversely, some voted ‘don’t know’ on the basis that there was not enough proof of the benefits to research and job creation, or at least not enough provided in the scenario.

*“I think it further enables the UK to be a world leader in research. Treatments and cures developed faster is important.” (Reading)*

## Voting trends across locations



**Figure 12. Support for the Deal Across Locations**

Voting patterns varied slightly between locations. Belfast in particular showed less support for the agreement in the first vote. However, support for the deal increased across every location in the second vote, with Belfast and Reading seeing the biggest increases, and Reading having the most votes in favour of the deal overall. This increase in support for the deal was based on the increased benefits for medical research and cures, but still often came with caveats around what data could be shared and how it should be protected. Doncaster was the only location in which the number of participants who voted against the agreement increased in the second vote,

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on the basis that they wanted to know what data would be shared and how secure it was before supporting the deal.

*“Provided basic GDPR protected ideally a sub-data set each time rather than 'everything' [...] I believe there is potentially a great benefit to science and medical research etc.” (Reading)*

*“If cure for high profile conditions such as diabetes, cancer could be found quicker than even with some sacrifices (e.g., data breaches), this move will be worthy.” (Reading)*

# 6. Food and environmental standards

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This chapter outlines participants' views towards changes in food and environmental standards that result from trade agreements. It focusses on participants views towards the following specific trade-off question that was posed to participants in the final workshop: **‘are the potential health risks associated with importing food into the UK which potentially contain pesticides which are banned in the UK, worth the benefits such as lower prices and greater choice?’**

Prior to attending the final workshop participants had already been introduced to many of the key debates related to the effects of trade policy on agriculture and the environment through a two and a half hour online workshop. In the fourth online workshop the CITP presented information to participants about the agricultural products the UK imports and exports, the relevance of trade policy for environmental standards and challenges posed, such as animal welfare, food safety, climate change, and deforestation. The example given for participants to focus on in their discussions during the online workshop was pesticides. They learnt about how and why pesticides are used in agriculture, how their use in food production impacts health, the environment, and economies, and differing views from environmental NGOs and the agricultural industry on what should be acceptable when it comes to the importing and exporting of foods treated with pesticides. Participants then had space in small breakout rooms of six-to-eight people from their local area to vote on related trade-offs and discuss the information presented.

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# The trade-off

In the final face-to-face workshop, participants were presented with key summary information related to a hypothetical trade deal that would result in a decrease in the price of imported food and a greater choice for consumers, while increasing the potential of these imports to contain pesticides banned in UK food production.<sup>18</sup> To help focus on the specific trade-off in question, as explained in chapter three participants were presented with a single section of the deal (in this chapter “Section 25”). It was explained that this was not how trade agreements were actually packaged, but it supported participants to imagine they were considering a real piece of legislation, albeit in a more accessible format. In practice, participants referred primarily to the ‘deal’ or ‘agreement’ in question, rather than focusing on specific section, therefore we have referred to ‘deal’ or ‘agreement’ in the text. Participants were asked to imagine they were an MP in parliament and assess whether they thought it was better to accept or reject the deal, giving consideration to what they thought was best for the UK as a whole as well as their constituents.

To support them in making a decision, participants were given a series of high-level ‘for’ and ‘against’ arguments that might be made by parliamentarians, businesses and charities. The views shown in these points included concerns from UK food producers who are worried about new imports creating unfair competition for them, and environmental groups who are worried that greater competition will make it harder to improve environmental standards for farming in the UK. Farmers unions and environmental campaigners worried that limited testing on food imports would make it likely that more imports will not meet UK pesticide standards. Food suppliers, however, argued it will help their businesses and business groups argued the risks are low as the UK good industry is already well-regulated. Some parliamentarians argued that the UK should prioritise reducing the cost of food given the cost-of-living crisis while others felt UK farmers should be protected, and that the potential impact and environmental damage should be considered.

- **The financial impact:**
  - There will be a reduction in food prices for consumers due to cheaper products imported from places like Australia.
  - At the same time, there is an estimated financial loss for UK farmers from closer agricultural trade with Australia.
  
- **The impact on jobs**
  - Certain types of farming are likely to be more affected: e.g., Wales is a big lamb producer. Australian imports with lower animal welfare standards could create direct competition for local production.
  
- **The impact on health**

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<sup>18</sup> This was referred to as ‘Section 25’ in the hypothetical scenario presented to participants, hence the reference to this in figure 13 below.

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- Malathion, an insecticide used on apples, is found at a higher level in Australian food production than that found in international and UK production. Malathion is a known human carcinogen (it can cause cancer).
  - **The impact on the environment**
    - 2018 beef imports from Australia to the UK have a land footprint equivalent to half the size of Northern Ireland, meaning it has a knock-on effect on deforestation.
    - Beef imports from Australia are quite small currently (most of UK beef imports come from Ireland).

After being presented with information in plenary, participants then voted privately on whether they thought the UK should accept this deal before discussing their reasoning at their tables. To understand the extent to which the changes in import pesticide standards influenced peoples' votes, participants were asked to vote a second time. This time, they imagined that all details of the deal remained the same except for a regional adjustment: food imports would match English and Welsh standards but would consequently be lower than current Northern Irish and Scottish standards (it was explained that food standards can be a devolved matter). Participants then discussed their reasoning for this second vote with others at their tables.

This chapter draws on participants' voting forms and facilitators' notes to identify the key findings in this trade-off.

## 6.1 Key findings

**Perceptions of public health risks and trust in national food safety standards drove participant decision-making in this scenario. Long and short-term financial impact, fairness, and individual choice were also factors.**

Aversion to the risk of increased pesticide levels in food imports **led most to reject the first version of the agreement**. Those who accepted the initial scenario were sceptical that the health risks were significant. Risk assessment was linked to trust in food standards with those accepting the deal trusting Australian standards to be safe enough. The **increase in support for the second iteration of the deal** reflects trust in English and Welsh standards and an assumption there would not be much divergence between UK nations.

Others accepted the deal because of its short-term gains and fairness to the poorest, particularly from food cost reductions that they thought could counter the rising cost-of-living. Some rejected the deal for its long-term implications, such as increasing dependency on food prices set abroad and the cost to the NHS from public health risks.

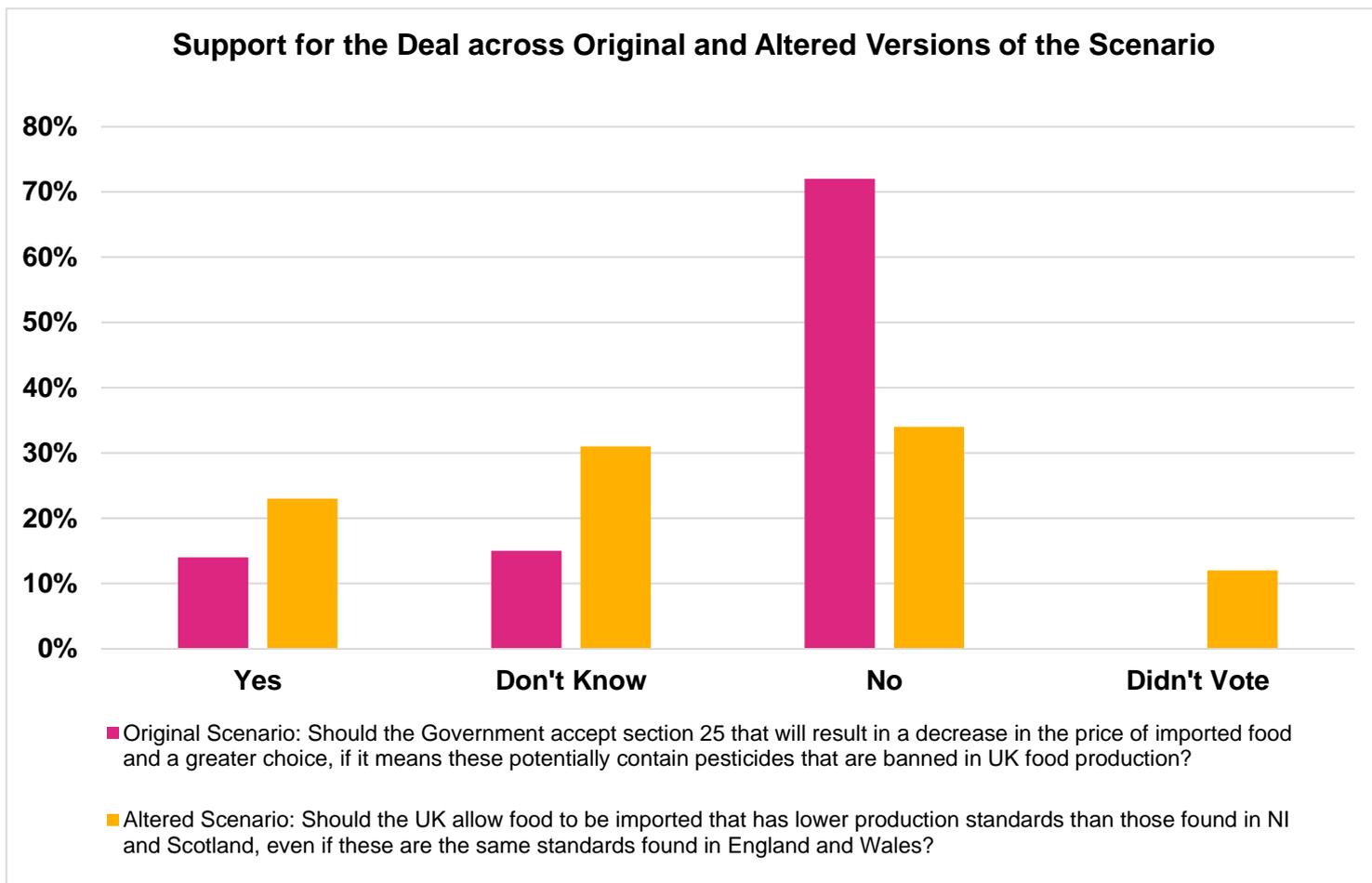


Figure 13. Support for the Deal Across the Original and Altered Versions of the Scenario.

## 6.2 Themes in participants’ reasoning

Participants provided a number of different reasons in their voting forms for why they accepted or rejected the deal. We have grouped these reasons into themes and reported below along with quotes.

### 6.2.1 Assessing public health risks

Both risks to public health and the environment were presented to participants at the start of the discussion, but it was the health risks that dominated table discussions and voting forms. Many rejecting the deal were unwilling to accept any risk to public health in return for decreased food prices and greater choice, especially if the health risk related to cancer. This reason remained for many of those who rejected the deal on the altered scenario.

*“The health of the public compared to the price of a food should be more important.” (Belfast)*

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Some of those in favour of the deal expressed a different calculation of public health risk. They stated that they believed the risk to health was minimal, and so the benefits of food prices and choice outweighed the potential health risks. Some participants went further to label the risks of cancer in the information as ‘scaremongering’, though they did not elaborate in their voting forms as to why they considered this so. Analysis of the transcripts will reveal more here about participants’ rationales for viewing this information in this way.

*“I believe there is more scaremongering than the actual fact.” (Doncaster)*

### **6.2.2 Trust in national standards**

Confidence and trust in food standards was an inter-related theme with assessment of risk. Some of those who accepted the initial deal described UK standards as ‘too high’ or Australian standards as ‘good enough’, which indicates that people judged the health risks posed by food meeting Australian standards as low. Others who rejected or were uncertain about the deals proposed felt that variation in standards was itself the issue and wanted a set of global standards.

*“UK consumers want cheap prices. Risks are limited, but relevant- it is ok to suffer food poisoning, but not death via cancer... Why not have "world" standards agreed. I am sure Australia has 'adequate' controls.” (Paisley)*

Those rejecting the deal often expressed trust and confidence in UK standards, prioritising ‘quality over quantity’. They felt the benefits to health and the quality of produce from maintaining UK food import standards outweighed the cost reduction and greater product variety that comes from importing from Australia. Participants expressed a high level of trust in current UK minimum standards for food, and many said they were willing to pay more for these to be upheld.

*“The benefits pointed out do not outweigh the negatives. Why do we want to accept lower standards from others when we won't accept them from our own suppliers? Quality at times is better than quantity.” (Belfast)*

Trust in UK standards was evident in the second vote where there was a 50% drop on participants rejecting the deal and slight rise in those accepting. Those who moved to accept the deal in the second vote trusted that English and Welsh food standards would be high enough to present minimal risks to health, even if these were below the standards in Northern Ireland and Scotland.

*“We have high standards already that we know are safe and therefore feel it is fair. It's the middle agreement between low standards and extra high standards.” (Doncaster)*

Those that moved to ‘don’t know’ in the altered scenario struggled to accept the idea that standards could differ across nations on an issue such as pesticides, and some wished to know more about the existing differences in standards between nations before they could decide.

*“What are Scot and NI standards? Why are we not a United Kingdom when it comes to trade?” (Bridgend)*

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### 6.2.3 Long-term versus short-term financial impact

Although participants were not presented with any information on the long or short-term financial impact, as with other topics, many interpreted key information as having long- and short-term implications.

A minority who rejected the deals did so because they did not want the UK to become reliant on food imports, with some of these participants concerned about the costs of these imports rising over time. Others focused on a wider range of negative impacts they believed would occur over time and were motivated by a desire to a shift to more local, seasonal food consumption.

*“We need to look after and protect our future generations and local produce. To maintain high standards and safer produce far outweighs [sic] bringing in produce from elsewhere that don't meet our expectations. We need to shop more seasonally.” (Doncaster)*

This desire to avoid the UK becoming (more) dependent on food imports resonates with the prioritising of national interest discussed elsewhere in this report, as well as participants' arguments for investing in agriculture discussed in the previous chapter. Among those who chose 'don't know' across the votes, some wanted to know how great the savings for UK consumers over time would be before they could decide. Without analysis of the transcripts, we cannot be certain what concerns are motivating this response. It may stem from a concern that gains could be short-lived, albeit with less emphasis on rejecting imports for reasons of national interest or seasonality, or it could be that these participants are particularly interested in long-term consumer gains.

Others believed the potential future economic and social pressures of increased pesticides in food would lead to greater costs to the NHS, outweighing any immediate financial benefit from cheaper imports.

*“I think the long-term potential impact on public health outweighs the benefit of decreased imported food and greater choice (health issues may only become evident years later, e.g., increased incidence of cancers).” (Belfast)*

Lower prices were understood as a short-term gain, and many of those accepting the deal felt this should be prioritised to help with the rising cost-of-living in the UK. Some of these participants gave attention to the health risks but suggested that public health challenges around food are unavoidable, but this option at least had immediate gains.

*“Yes - because of people today are struggling with money and food is expensive. And I'm fully aware of the health risks in it.” (Bridgend)*

### 6.2.4 Fairness

Many participants were concerned with the fairness of the deal. Some rejected the original scenario because they argued it was unfair to have increased carcinogens in food that would be consumed mainly by people who couldn't afford healthier alternatives. Conversely, others supported the deal because they felt pesticides have already, historically, benefited the poorest by lowering food prices, and so this simply continued that trend.

*“Pesticides have benefited humanity massively, lifting billions out of poverty. Risks are small compared to benefits. People need lower food prices. Life expectancy has gone up.” (Reading)*

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Others focused on regional fairness, rejecting the deals because they felt they would impact the constituent nations of the UK, and their food producers, differently, with rural locations' agriculture negatively impacted by increased competition from abroad. Some participants also referenced wanting to protect UK farmers from this competition as they associated the agricultural sector with their own identity. The second vote saw some participants express concern that differing standards would be unfair to Scotland and Northern Ireland and could cause conflict within the UK.

*“The economic argument interested me more in this issue. It looks like Irish beef may suffer versus Aussie imports. This could affect NI as well as Aberdeen angus meat.” (Belfast)*

### 6.2.5 Individual choice

A minority of participants focused on individual consumers' right to choose, with some arguing that changing food standards was acceptable as long as the risks were clearly communicated to consumers. This would allow people to make their own decisions about taking a risk with food grown using certain pesticides not currently permitted in the UK. Some drew parallels here to consumers' rights to consume harmful products, for example, cigarettes, as long as they are informed of the risks. Others focused on consumer choice but were more tentative, emphasising the precautions that would need to be taken to ensure people were well-informed. These participants hoped that such steps might actually encourage people not to purchase imported food.

*“Yes, but as long as the public are informed. People have a choice what they buy, so if they have knowledge on pesticides used they could choose to buy local.” (Belfast)*

## Voting trends across locations

Looking across locations, the initial vote saw a consistent majority reject the agreement. In the second vote, there is less uniformity. Belfast's participants' 'don't know' votes jumped from 13% to 57%. These participants felt the proposed changes to Northern Irish food standards would be difficult to implement given the ongoing challenge of the Northern Irish assembly not sitting at the time of the workshop. Many of these participants were reluctant to engage with the premise of the second vote and this could be because it relates to a contentious political issue of devolved government in Northern Ireland.

There was an increase in those not voting in Bridgend and Reading in the second vote. For the larger number in Bridgend who didn't vote, the recording indicates that while these participants briefly paused to fill in their voting forms as in the previous stages of the workshop, they quickly moved onto discussing the alteration, which explains why some did not note down their position. Nonetheless, in the recording many here expressed 'don't know' positions, as they felt they needed more information on the safety of English and Welsh food standards. Others continued to reject the agreement as they had in the first vote, since they did not want to introduce greater risks to health. Doncaster's participants diverged in the second vote through their majority support for the deal, more than double the support found in most locations. Most of these participants had previously rejected the agreement. Voting forms suggest this change came either from participants feeling this deal was a necessary compromise to access the benefits, or from judging that English and Welsh standards are acceptable, meaning there is no cost to Scotland and Northern Ireland from reduced standards.



Figure 14. Support for the deal across locations

# 7. Informing and Making Decisions

This chapter explores participants' views on who they think should inform and make UK trade-policy decisions.

During the final workshop, participants were presented with information about how trade deals in the UK are made to ensure they were aware that the UK Government rather than parliament makes decisions about trade policy, and how these decisions are typically informed by confidential consultation with experts and interested groups. Participants were also told that devolved administrations have no formal decision-making power in relation to trade policy but can influence trade-policy decisions through consultation with the Government.

Throughout the jury process participants were asked to consider who they would like to *inform* trade-policy decisions. In the pre-/post-survey, and after each online workshop, participants were asked which groups and bodies they would like the UK Government to consider the views of when making trade-policy decisions. At the

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start of the final workshop participants generated a list of organisations and groups who they trusted to inform trade policy. Each time participants had voted and deliberated on a scenario, facilitators gave them sticky dots and asked them to select one organisation or group from the list that they would like to inform the particular decision being discussed. This prioritisation exercise was done publicly with the lead facilitator reporting trends to the room as they emerged throughout the day, highlighting any changes in what mattered to participants.

Participants were also asked about who they trust to *make* trade-policy decisions in the final workshop. They were presented with a list of options at the start of the workshop: international organisations, national government, devolved government, local government, as well as the general public. Participants then completed the same public voting process of sticking a dot against the body that they would trust to make the trade-policy decision in each of the four scenarios.

This chapter draws on data from the surveys, facilitator notes, and activities from across the workshops to identify key themes in who participants would like to inform and make trade-policy decisions on behalf of the UK.

## 7.1 Key findings

**Participants' wanted trade-policy decisions to be *informed* by a wide range of perspectives, but placed special emphasis on 'expert' input.** Expertise was understood by participants to encompass those with 'on the ground' experience relevant to a trade-policy decision who can offer 'real world' experience, as well as independent specialists who provide trusted data on risks and benefits. **Participants jointly prioritised two institutions to *make* trade-policy decisions: international organisations and the UK Government.**

International organisations offered assurance that safe and consistent standards would be upheld. Although participants expressed distrust towards politicians, the fact that trade deals impact the whole of the UK and the reality that in the current system, the UK Government decide trade policy, likely drove a preference for the UK Government making trade-policy decisions. Throughout the jury process participants felt it was important that the UK Government listen to a range of stakeholders and experts however, which may reflect a desire for **trade policymaking to be more closely tied to expert input – be that from specialists or directly affected members of the public.**

## 7.2 Informing trade-policy decisions

Participants wanted the UK government to consult broadly as well as seek specialist expert advice to inform trade-policy decisions, themes we explore below in detail.

### 7.2.1 Breadth of consultation

Analysis of the pre-/post-surveys and the list of organisations identified by participants at the start of the workshop shows that participants wanted the UK Government to consult a wide range of groups and bodies when making decisions about trade policy.

Figure 15 below shows that both before and after taking part, the vast majority of participants (over 90%) felt it was either important or very important to involve business leaders and the UK public in trade-policy consultation. Civil society organisations and trade unions were also important for the majority of participants, although the importance of the latter declined after the jury process. Although most participants initially saw it as comparatively less important to consider the views of elected MPs at Westminster and devolved administrations, there was an increase in their importance after the workshops. This may be due to participants being more informed about how decisions are made by the UK Government and not parliament or devolved administrations, and so it may reflect a desire from some participants for these elected officials to have more influence.

Analysis of participants' voting forms from the online workshops supports this interpretation of the value people placed on devolved administrations. Across these earlier votes, devolved administrations were consistently people's third choice of who is considered important for the UK Government to consult on trade-policy decisions. Their first and second choices varied more often but the public and businesses were the most frequent choices in that order. This preference included on deals where a sub-national dimension is less relevant, such as deals that result in the sharing of personal health data, or the sharing of software intellectual property. The other options given were the public, trade unions, charities, businesses, local councils, and Westminster MPs. When we analysed just the public and the local to national levels of governance, the public were always ranked as most important for the Government to consult. This was followed consistently by local and devolved government in varying combinations of close or joint importance, and finally Westminster MPs. Analysis of the final workshop discussion transcripts is necessary to better understand participants' rationales for these prioritisations, but facilitator notes suggest that participants wanted to bring the consultation process on trade policy closer to the public and their local area where possible.

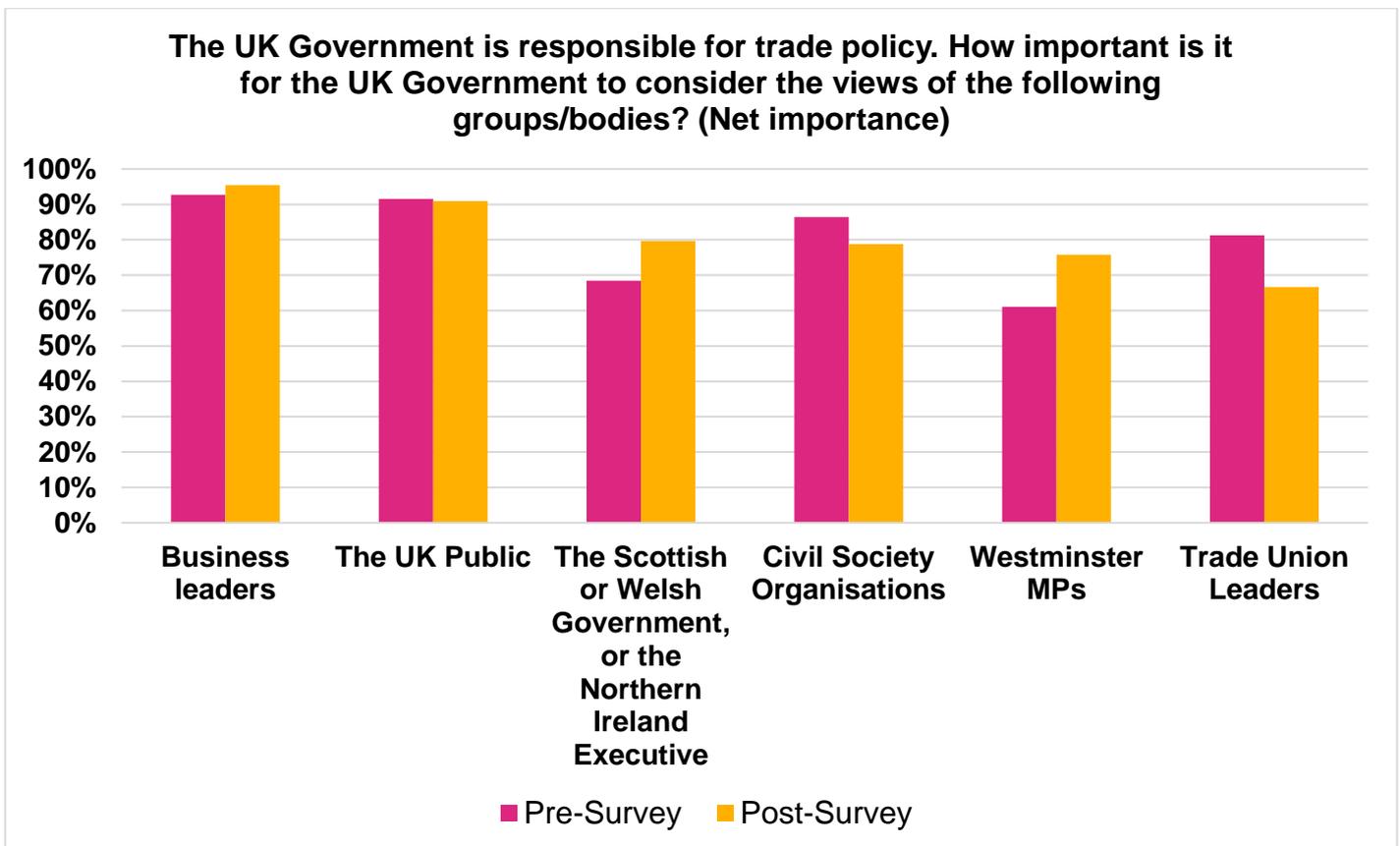
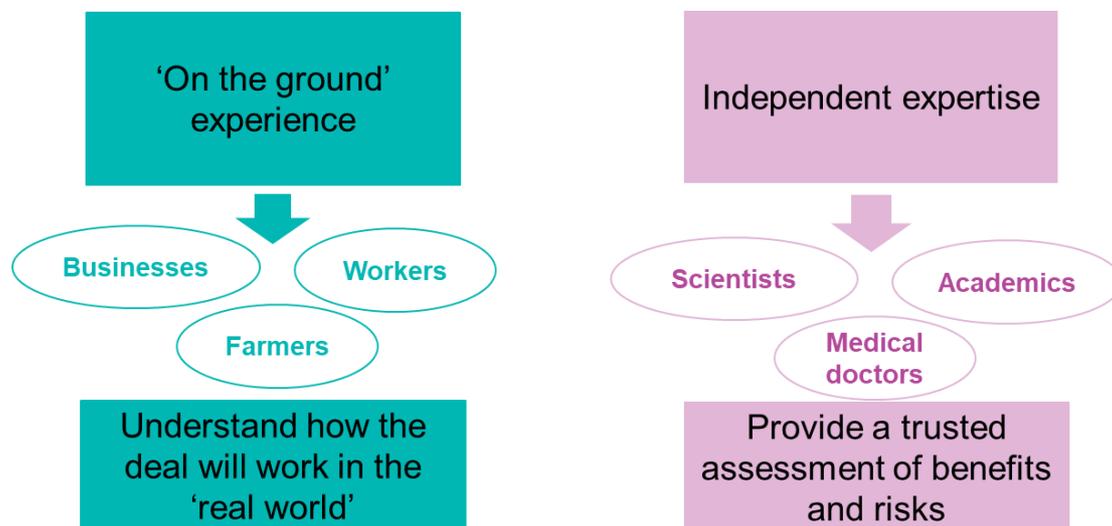


Figure 15. Net importance of the UK Government consulting different groups/organisations in trade policymaking.

Overall participants saw consultation of devolved administrations as important, though there were some differences between participants of different nations. The strongest agreement came from Reading, Belfast, and Paisley, where between 80-100% felt it was very or quite important that administrations were consulted. Bridgend and Doncaster, however, were tentative, with only 57% of the former's participants and 50% of the latter's seeing this as important.

### 7.2.1 The importance of expertise

In the final workshop participants across all locations consistently prioritised the input of 'experts' in making decisions about trade policy *across all scenarios*. The list of organisations created by participants at the start of the workshop suggests that expertise covered a range of types of organisation such as academics, scientists, business leaders, and trade bodies. Through analysis of facilitator notes and participant voting forms we have identified two types of expertise that offer different assurances to participants. The focus on experts was language chosen by participants themselves, rather than a category provided to them, and hence does not feature as a voting option in the data shown in Figure 15 above. Our initial analysis of what 'expert' meant to participants is set out in Figure 16 below, although we should note that the two types we identify may not be mutually exclusive and this is a point that would benefit from analysis of transcripts.



**Figure 16. Participant criteria for trade policymaking expertise.**

Those with 'on the ground experience' were important to provide assurances that a trade deal 'works' in the 'real world'. For example, facilitator reflections suggested participants wanted to see businesses inform the hypothetical trade deal considered between the UK and India, since they felt these organisations could understand the economic effects of the deal 'on the ground' in a way others - such as politicians or academics - couldn't.

Likewise, in the same scenario participants also wanted Indian workers to inform the deal, since they too would be directly impacted and so would understand the implications personally. Analysis of the final workshop transcripts is necessary to better understand these preferences. However, we hypothesise that people wanted these groups to inform the deals *not* just because they thought this was fair, given they would be affected. Rather, participants wanted these voices informing trade-policy decisions because they have knowledge that cannot be inferred by others.

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Facilitator reflections highlighted how independent specialists provided assurances that the benefits and risks associated with a deal are based on accurate and reliable information. For participants, independence was understood to mean someone does not stand to gain financially from a trade deal, which was important in participants trusting their advice. Participants wanted independent expertise to inform all four scenarios, but it was particularly pronounced when the scenario included the assessment of risk. For example, when participants were trying to assess the risk of pesticides causing cancer, or the impact of data privacy compromises on the UK public. In these scenarios, facilitators reported that participants frequently remarked in discussions that they felt that they needed guidance from an independent expert with the technical insight to assess the potential costs at play in the trade-offs.

The importance of independent experts is a common theme in public dialogues and deliberations that involve risk assessment. A recent Sciencewise dialogue delivered by the Centre for Deliberative Research highlighted a similar theme when the public were asked to consider the role of future biomass technologies.<sup>19</sup>

## 7.3 Making trade-policy decisions

The UK government and international organisations were prioritised by participants across all locations to make decisions on all four scenario deals. This section draws on facilitator reflections and prioritisation activities from across the workshops, to provide some commentary on why participants prioritised these two levels of government, with transcript analysis revealing further detail in due course.

### 7.3.1 The UK Government

In line with recent trends in UK public opinion research, participants expressed a lack of trust in politicians and government throughout the jury process.<sup>20</sup> When participants were asked in the final workshop prioritisation exercise who they trust to make decisions about trade policy many caveated their response with a view that they didn't trust any politicians. Despite this, the UK Government was frequently chosen as the preferred decision-maker across all locations. This most likely reflects the fact that the scenarios involved decisions about the UK and so for many participants the UK Government was the most appropriate level of governance to make these decisions, rather than an indication that participants especially trust this authority.

### 7.2.2 International organisations

In the final workshop prioritisation exercise, international organisations were frequently ranked highly as preferred decision makers. Facilitator reflections and participant voting forms suggest this was due to participants wanting safe, consistent standards applied across nations by an additional level of governance. Some participants felt that, without this further level of governance, countries the UK imported from would set their standards low, or companies would find it easier to evade minimum standards, leaving other countries and populations open to harm.

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<sup>19</sup> *The Role of Biomass in Achieving Net Zero* (awaiting publication)

<sup>20</sup> NatGen Social Research (2021) [British Social Attitudes 38 - Democracy](#)

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*“Difficult decision - but, on balance, think positively, [the trade agreement] benefits outweigh the risk factors. [The] 'World' should agree standards and seek to punish abusers” (Paisley)*

Nonetheless, the support for international organisations varied somewhat across location and scenario. In the human rights-based decision, and to some extent in discussion of the pesticide decisions, Doncaster and Paisley did not prioritise international bodies having a decision-making role. In contrast their involvement in the agricultural and business services trade agreement decision had high support except for in Belfast. In the personal data scenario, support for international involvement was low except for in Reading and Belfast. This variance across locations and scenarios suggests that participants weighed up the importance of national interests, individual choice, and international standards in relation to key issues such as workers’ rights and data privacy. Analysis of the transcripts will reveal the key reasoning for preferring international involvement in some deals over others.

### **7.3.3 The UK public**

Participants placed a strong emphasis on the UK public *informing* trade-policy decisions (see section 1.2.1), though tended not to prioritise the public as decision-makers in the final workshop prioritisation exercise. The main exception to this was the data privacy trade deal that would result in the sharing of personal health data, where more participants selected the public as trusted to make decisions here. Furthermore, participant voting forms brought out how some participants felt the public should have a say over this decision because it had a direct implication for all members of the public as everyone has health data. In contrast, the other deals participants considered may not necessarily impact all members of the public. In terms of location, participants in Bridgend were the exception, ranking the public as a trusted decision-maker first or second in each trade agreement scenario of the final workshop prioritisation exercise.

Participants were not presented with options around what public decision-making may look like (e.g., referenda or citizens assemblies), but analysis of transcripts may reveal what participants understood by public decision-making in this context.

### **7.3.4 Devolved and local government**

As reported above (section 1.2.1) the pre-/post-survey shows that the majority of participants wanted devolved administrations consulted on trade deals, and the final workshop prioritisation exercise showed some interest in devolved or local government being trusted with decision-making. The scenario covering benefit to business services while disadvantaging agricultural work saw Doncaster, Bridgend, and Paisley rank local government as the second most trusted to make decisions here, and in Paisley devolved government was ranked first or second for three of the four trade-off scenarios considered. Beyond these cases, the trend in the final workshop suggested a low appetite for decision-making moving to devolved or local government. It is possible that after receiving information in the final workshop that the UK Government makes trade-policy decisions unilaterally, people may have felt that local decision-making is in practice less viable.

## **7.4 Bringing expertise closer to decision-making**

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In exploring the ways participants wanted trade-policy decisions to be informed and made, a clear theme emerged expressing a desire to see experts have more influence on trade policymaking.

This is evident from the examples in participants' voting forms which show appetite for different levels of governance and sources of expertise to collaborate. For example, some wanted the UK Government to work in partnership with local government when it came to the trade agreement that would affect agricultural workers in particular regions.

*“We need to self-invest and keep some heritage. Local councils should be consulted on impacts of local people.”  
(Doncaster)*

Likewise, the final workshop prioritisation exercise highlighted how many participants wanted experts to inform the decisions being made, and both international organisations and the UK Government to make the subsequent decisions. We hypothesise participants have international bodies of experts in mind here, something supported by participants deferring in their voting forms to international decision-making bodies which consist of experts, though analysis of the recording transcripts is needed to explore this further.

*“[I’ve got] health concerns with the pesticides as it puts our agriculture industry at a disadvantage. Pesticides should be controlled by world health authority” (Reading)*

These examples suggest that participants wanted to cast the net wide, gathering a breadth of input and depth of expertise in decisions on trade policy, rather than leave these decisions largely in the hands of Government.

## 8. Conclusion

This report reflects preliminary findings from citizens' juries delivered across five locations in the UK. A total of 101 members of the public participated in 18 hours of deliberation: four online workshops, each lasting two and half hours, and one face-to-face all-day workshop. In the online workshops participants received evidence from CIP researchers on four different trade topics: Trade and human rights, balancing trade between regions and sectors of the economy, privacy and data-sharing, food, and the environment. Participants also completed a survey before and after the jury processes to help us understand how their views on trade policy evolved.

In the online workshops, participants were introduced to the key concepts of trade in each of these four areas as well as the main debates and trade-offs involved. This learning journey prepared them for the final workshop where NatCen facilitators used a series of hypothetical trade deal scenarios to understand the choices that participants make when faced with complex trade-offs. To ensure participants in each location were exposed to the same information CIP presented to all 101 participants online and did not attend any of the final face-to-face workshops.

The findings in this report draw upon the following sets of data: a pre-/post-survey, participant voting forms, facilitator reflections, and workshop activities, chiefly from the final workshop. The forms filled out by participants in the final workshop in response to hypothetical trade policy decisions, captured both their votes and the reasoning underlying these. The activities were group level prioritisation exercises that captured preferences

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over who people trust to inform and make these decisions. The CITP will build on these preliminary findings by analysing transcripts of the deliberation to understand in more detail peoples' reasoning, as well as what ideas or information may shape their decisions on complex trade policy.

Evidence from the pre/post survey and face to face workshops suggests that the balancing of economic and non-economic outcomes was at the heart of how people made decisions about trade. Trends from the pre-/post-survey show that participants valued economic growth as a general principle but often prioritised non-economic outcomes such as supporting human rights and combatting climate change when presented with specific trade-offs. Before and after the juries the idea of 'balanced growth' remained a priority for most participants.

The balancing of economic and non-economic outcomes was evident across the face-to-face workshops. The preliminary findings in this report highlight that when participants are given time and space to make complex decisions related to trade policy, they consider issues of fairness, national and regional interests as well as long-term outcomes. Themes of fairness, national and regional interest were introduced by the CITP during online evidence workshops, and participants clearly used them to make difficult choices between the importance of improving workers' rights abroad, distribution of jobs in the UK, the impact of sharing medical data on different populations, and the risks associated with accepting non-UK approved pesticide standards. The idea of long-term outcomes was not introduced by the CITP, but clearly emerged as a way participants navigated the information. Most made assumptions that economic outcomes such as changes in consumer prices were short-term and subject to fluctuation, whereas job creation and protecting pesticide standards were often interpreted as longer-term benefits. Often longer-term outcomes were prioritized over short-term.

The information provided to participants in the final workshop around the benefits, costs and outcomes of each deal reflected the uncertainty of trade - for example economic benefits were based on forecasts and advancements in medical research were not guaranteed by greater sharing of data. Participants reflected this back, with many voting 'don't know' in all four trade decisions. Uncertainty was partly related to assessing the risk of pesticides causing cancer or the sharing of medical data leading to compromised privacy, and partly assessing the certainty of achieving benefits such as economic growth or improvements in workers' rights. To navigate this uncertainty, participants across all locations wanted 'experts' to inform trade policy decisions. Our analysis suggests that people wanted two types of 'expert': people with 'on the ground' experience to provide assurances on how the deal with work in reality and independent experts to provide assurances on the impact and risks involved.

The transcripts will reveal more detail of participant reasoning, which is one of the primary benefits of deliberative processes such as citizens' juries. The findings in this report reflect that when given the time, space and information the public do consider a range of outcomes as important in relation to UK trade, and see a key role for 'experts' to navigate the complexity and uncertainty. The process of this research also illustrates how carefully curated process of deliberation can provide a robust, useful way for trade researchers and academics to work with the public, laying the groundwork for the CITP's mission to create a more inclusive conversation around trade policy.



