

# Acknowledgements

The British Election Study (BES) is one of the longest running election studies worldwide and the longest running social science survey in the UK. It has made a major contribution to the understanding of political attitudes and behaviour over nearly sixty years. Surveys have taken place immediately after every general election since 1964. The first study conducted by David Butler and Donald Stokes in 1964 transformed the study of electoral behaviour in the UK. Since then the BES has provided data to help researchers understand changing patterns of party support and election outcomes.

The BES has been almost continuously supported by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) since its inception as the Social Science Research Council in 1965. In 2013 the funding for the 2015 British Election Study was awarded to a consortium of the Universities of Manchester, Oxford, and Nottingham (grant number ES/K005294/). The scientific leadership team was made up of Professors Fieldhouse, Green, Evans, Schmitt, and van der Eijk, who were later joined by Drs Mellon and Prosser. The project was further supported by funding from the Future of the UK and Scotland programme chaired by Charlie Jeffrey (grant number ES/L005166), and later extended to include the 2016 EU referendum (in collaboration with Anand Menon and UK in a Changing Europe) and the 2017 General Election (grant number ES/P001734/1). The team gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the ESRC, without which the BES would not exist. We would like to thank all those at the ESRC who have supported the BES team and responded to changing political circumstances—and hence the need for more data—with an admiral degree of speed and flexibility. We are especially grateful to Samantha McGregor, Paul Meller, Alison Weir, and Doug Walton for their help and support over the last five years.

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ITN and ITV News—as well as other leading broadcasters—have recognized and valued the BES for its unique scope and possibilities for analysis. ITN and ITV News have been open, imaginative, creative, and ambitious in their use of BES data to lead analysis of the 2015 General Election, 2016 EU referendum, and 2017 General Election. We are especially grateful to Emma Hoskyns, Alex Chandler, Jon Roberts, Tom Bradby, and Julie Etchingham—and also to Professor Colin Rallings—for giving us the opportunity to learn how to use BES analysis in real time and communicate it during election night coverage.

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We are grateful to Sage Publishing and Elsevier for permission to reproduce parts of two articles that feature in chapters of this book. Chapter 4 draws on an article by Evan and Mellon (2019) in *Party Politics* titled ‘Immigration, Euroscepticism and the Rise and Fall of UKIP’. The 2015 portion of Chapter 7 draws heavily on the article ‘The limits of partisan loyalty: How the Scottish

independence referendum cost Labour’ by Fieldhouse and Prosser which appeared in *Electoral Studies* (2018).

### **A note on the data used in this book**

As might be expected in a book from the BES team, most of the data analysed in this book comes from the BES past and present. The 2015–17 BES included two major components: a post-election in person address based probability survey following the general elections in 2015 and 2017 (Fieldhouse et al. 2015; Fieldhouse et al. 2017) and an internet panel study with thirteen waves between February 2014 and June 2017 (Fieldhouse et al. 2018) both of which are drawn on heavily in this book.

The 2015 face-to-face survey was an address-based random probability sample of eligible voters living in 600 wards in 300 Parliamentary Constituencies in England, Scotland, and Wales, completed by 2,987 people. The fieldwork for the survey was conducted between 8 May 2015 and 13 September 2015 and achieved an overall response rate of 55.9 per cent.

The 2017 face-to-face survey is an address-based random probability sample of eligible voters living in 468 wards in 234 Parliamentary Constituencies in England, Scotland, and Wales, completed by 2,194 people. The fieldwork for the survey was conducted between 26 June 2017 and 1 October 2017 and achieved an overall response rate of 46.2 per cent.

Fieldwork for the 2015 face-to-face survey was conducted by GfK NOP Limited (now part of Ipsos MORI) and fieldwork for the 2017 face-to-face survey was led by GfK NOP in consortium with Kantar and NatCen. We are grateful to all those who worked on the survey, especially the field interviewing team who did a fantastic job in helping secure an impressive response rate, and to Claire Bhaumik and Adam Green who managed the 2015 and 2017 operations respectively. A special thank you also goes to Nick Moon and Richard Glendinning who oversaw the project at various points and helped ensure a highly successful operation.

The thirteen-wave 2014–17 internet panel is a non-probability survey of approximately 30,000 respondents per wave. Fieldwork for the BES internet panel was carried out by YouGov and we are enormously grateful to Joe Twyman and to Adam McDonnell who, over the last five years, have been incredibly accommodating and helpful in ensuring the ongoing success of the panel study despite many last-minute deadlines and unexpected events.

We also draw on the following historical BES surveys extensively in the book.

- Political Change in Britain 1963–1970 (Butler and Stokes 1969a)
- British Election Study 1969–1974 (Crewe, Robertson, and Sarlvik 1976)
- British Election Study 1974–1979 (Sarlvik, Robertson, and Crewe 1981)

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- British Election Study Panel, 1983, 1986, 1987 (A. Heath, Jowell, and Curtice 1999)
- British General Election Panel Study 1987–1992 (A. Heath et al. 1993)
- British Election Panel Study 1992–1997 (A. Heath, Jowell, and Curtice 1998)
- British Election Panel Study 1997–2001 (A. Heath, Jowell, and Curtice 2002)
- British Election Study Internet Panel 2005–2010 (Clarke et al. 2014)
- British Election Study 2001 Cross-section (Sanders et al. 2002)
- British Election Study 2005 Cross-section (Clarke et al. 2006)
- British Election Study 2010 Cross-section (Sanders and Whiteley 2014a)

We also make use of the British Social Attitudes surveys running yearly since 1983 (NatCen Social Research and Social and Community Planning Research 2017).