

## Synergie – Brexit Edition.

**Chairman’s report:** It is, perhaps, apt that we should be at **Research & Results** in Munich, attending the first major European industry event following the referendum result in the UK. Although the United Kingdom still represents the largest Market for research in Europe, we can only wonder how much longer that might last! Research is a truly international business and it is therefore not surprising that by far the majority of researchers that I have spoken with, both from the UK and elsewhere, have expressed surprise and regret at the outcome of the vote.



Tony Dent, AIMRI  
Chairman

Sadly, the day of the referendum contained more than one disappointment for many AIMRI members because we had to cancel our proposed conference and AGM meeting **“Research for Results: Focus on the Sample”**.

Despite an excellent program, including a potentially interesting debate on the veracity and value of the opinion polls, the event was inadequately supported. However, it was relatively fortunate that we had made the decision to cancel, because that day in London started with heavy rain, wind and massive transport disruption – so the conference could not have started on time and many of those booked would have been unable to attend. The weather continued to be stormy all day, delaying journey’s home for many commuters and I for one am convinced that it affected the turnout and possibly the result.

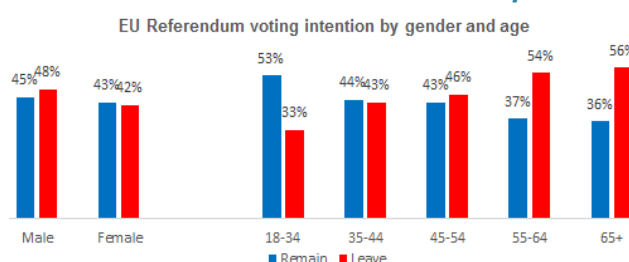
Cancelling the conference has demonstrated how difficult it is for AIMRI to continue to hold its own events against the background of the introduction of so many new events, such as MRMW and TMRE. This competition for members’ funds, together with the decline in membership, has highlighted the same problem facing many other organisations and I welcome council’s decision that AIMRI should apply to merge with the **Insights Association** shortly after its formation in January 2017. The Insights Association is to be formed from the merger of the Market Research Association (MRA) and the Council of American Research Organisations (CASRO) with Simon Chadwick as its chairman. Full details of the new association can be found on <http://insights.marketingresearch.org/> where their mission is explained to:

- Provide government advocacy through legislative, regulatory and judicial means.
- Care for and improve the industry’s image in the eyes of the media and public.
- Market the business case for the industry’s products and services to buyers and users.
- Set and enforce professional standards.
- Establish and reinforce best practices.
- Help members grow their businesses, their departments and themselves as research professionals.

So Brexit will have many unforeseen consequences, including consideration as to whether it would be appropriate for the UK to continue to host an International research association. Given the number of English researchers that I know who are applying for European passports, I truly doubt it!

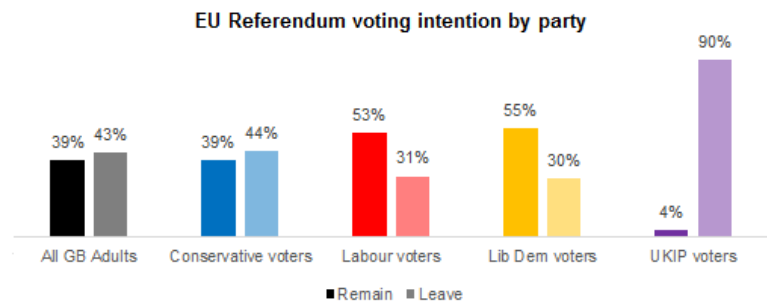
Anyway, details of council’s proposals for the merger are outlined on Page 3 of this newsletter, with the other articles mainly focussing on Brexit stories.

**AIMRI member Opinimum** was one of the very few polling organisations to ‘call’ the Brexit referendum vote accurately. Their final headline was **“Result too close to call with one-point lead for Leave”**



In fact many pollsters had observed the intention to ‘leave’ – it is simply that their polls were not believed. For example an early Opinium poll published in March under the heading *“Tory politicians dominate the Referendum debate”* reported that 43% of respondents had said they would vote to leave the European Union, while 39% would vote for the UK to remain a member.

However, 18% didn’t know how they would vote. Opinium also commented that *“Unsurprisingly, nine in ten UKIP voters (90%) say they will vote to leave, while more than half of Labour and Lib Dem voters say they will opt to stay (53% and 55% respectively).”*



Subsequently, Opinium have conducted a more recent *Post-Brexit* survey for the **Global Business Research Network**, sponsored and published by **Dapresy**. The survey was conducted on-line and completed by 2,000 respondents forming a nationally representative sample of GB voters

The headline results indicated a *“Steep decline in Trust of Government Post-Brexit Vote”*



**Key Finding: Departure from EU to impact sales of cars, UK homes, vacations in Europe**

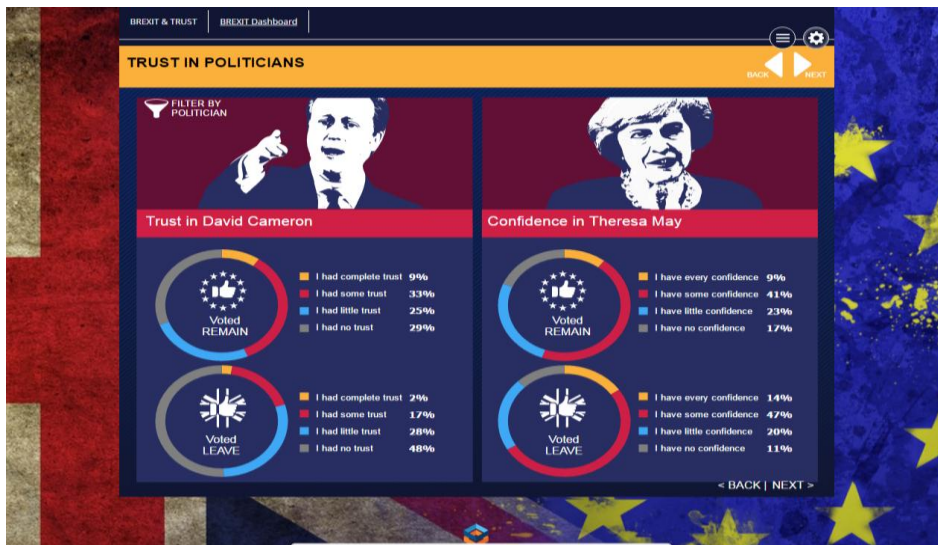
Some 10% of participants said the vote had decreased the likelihood of them making home purchases in the next 12 months, with the largest declines amongst those voting to remain (15%). Amongst 18-34 year olds voting to remain in the EU, 19% stated they are now less likely to buy a house in the UK. Other major purchases impacted included large ticket items such as cars (12% less likely to buy) and vacations in Europe (12% less likely to take one).

**Key Finding: More participants voting “leave” said they made well informed decision vs. “remain”.** Despite the amount of coverage of the referendum, as many as 39% of participants in this survey stated that only to a limited extent did they feel well informed/knowledgeable about both sides of the argument. While the media reports stated that “leave” votes were emotionally based while “remain” voters were better informed, this survey found the opposite to be true. Some 69% of participants voting “leave” reported they had been well informed, while only 59% of those voting “remain” reported the same.

**Key Finding: Steep declines in trust of government and other institutions**

Since the vote, participants reported deep declines in trust overall amongst a variety of institutions, including of the British government, with the net trust index\* in the British government decreasing from -11 to -21. The proportion of people having a very low level of trust in the British government increased from 25% to 31%.

Those who voted to leave the EU have a much higher distrust in the British government (a net trust index of -25 compared to -15 amongst those voting to remain). Meanwhile, those who did not feel well informed about the issues during the referendum have a very low level of trust in the British government (-29 net trust index).



According to **Andrew Cannon, GRBN executive director**, *“This survey shows that trust in many types of institutions, including government, the police and secret services, has decreased dramatically in the UK post-Brexit. This sharp decline in trust needs to be taken very seriously by those in power within these institutions.”* (Andrew can be contacted on [andrew.cannon@grbn.org](mailto:andrew.cannon@grbn.org))

The Opinium/GRBN Research report is available for download at <https://dapresy.com/brexit-news/>.

### Council’s Proposal to Seek Merger with Insights Association (I.A.):

Tony Dent (TD) reported on his recent meeting with David Almy and Howard Feinberg, respectively CEO and Chief Counsel of the MRA, one of the two organisations about to form the new association (the other being CASRO, as noted in the Chairman’s report on Page 1). They had indicated that an application from AIMRI to become the nucleus of an International Chapter of the I.A. was likely to be favourably received. It was noted however, that no negotiations on the terms could be considered until I.A. formally comes into being in January 2017.

Council therefore decided to ballot members on the question of whether we should seek negotiations with I.A. in the New Year, with a view to becoming merged as their International Chapter. The expectation is that ballot papers will be issued to AIMRI members in November, with a request for their return no later than the end of the year. Assuming the proposal is accepted by members then we will formally apply for AIMRI to merge with the I.A. in January, subject to agreement on terms. We would then assume that some negotiations will take place and assuming the terms are satisfactory to Council, we would set forth a second ballot to confirm members’ acceptance of the terms. It is difficult to set any deadline for these discussions but it is intended that progress will be reported at next year’s *Insight Show* in the UK on March 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> (see comment on P4).

Meanwhile Council will continue to make other plans for 2017 in case the merger does not succeed and we would welcome comments and suggestions from members accordingly. In particular annual membership renewal invoices will be issued in December and it is expected that such membership will be recognised as sufficient for the International Chapter of I.A. (at least that will be our negotiating position)



**AIMRI member  
opens new  
London Office**



MARKET RESEARCH  
**simplified**



Bernard Witt of 2x4 Solutions in Germany says “*although we are not happy with the Brexit, we opened an office in London recently. This gives us the chance to support all UK based customers in the best way and also to be independent of Euro /Pound exchange rate. The company name in London is 2x4 Holding Ltd. and Syri Kullashi is managing everything there as Business Development Director.*”

**AIMRI publishes special Response Rate Report** illustrating some of the key problems market research now experiences, whatever the mode of data collection. They are summarised as:

- **Competition** - from other research, from direct marketing and other demands on people’s time
- **Doubts as to the bona fides of the interview** - concerns about security, identity theft, and breaches of privacy
- **Value** - people have little relationship with the results and often doubt the accuracy, because of exaggerated opinion polling errors

To download the full report go to <http://www.aimri.net/upload/Response%20Rate%20Report.pdf>

**Research Club News:** This year the Research Club is celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> year and has been to every continent across the world, with events in London, New York, Hamburg, Madrid and now the biggest event in our calendar the **Research & Results** show in Munich. These are just a few of the locations where we have brought MR people together to explore new business opportunities and forge new relationships.



Now the Research Club is launching a new type of event in November hosting the first **corporate dinner** with a guest speaker. This will be in London and will feature “**Eddie the Eagle**” the British skier who became the first competitor to represent Great Britain in Olympic ski jumping. Attendees will find out what happens behind the scenes at the Olympics, his trials and tribulations, overcoming challenges and life experiences. Now, Eddie aged 52 and still bubbling with optimism and enthusiasm, is famous all over again thanks to the movie Eddie the Eagle. Finally, the club will round off the year with the annual Christmas party in the heart of London’s West End.



**SAMPLE ANSWERS**

**Sample Answers and H2Data settle legal dispute:** Just eight months after joining Sample Answers as Managing Director, **Phil Bird**, has successfully forged a legal resolution to the dispute between **Neil Whelpton** of H2Data Ltd and Sample Answers Ltd. The resulting agreement offers strength and new initiatives for both parties, as H2Data will now promote and sell Sample Answers products to the marketplace.

Based in Darlington, Neil Whelpton, owner of H2Data Ltd, which continues as a separate company to Sample Answers, aims to bring greater value to sampling and targeting by combining single entity views with multi-point connectivity.

Phil Bird, has overall responsibility for the management and provision of Sample Answers’ sampling and operational services to the international Market Research industry, trading through offices in London, Amsterdam, North America and Colombia.

**Phil comments** “*With the resolution of these issues, I am looking forward to working closely with Neil Whelpton to develop a strategy that will position Sample Answers for growth and success. I am grateful for the opportunities that H2Data present and together, we share a commitment to build a united future*”.

**Neil Whelpton commented** “*I believe this agreement will give both H2Data and Sample Answers the best opportunity to develop a smooth evolution into the future*”.

**John Mackay Comments on Brexit:** This year the UK has seen a referendum to decide our future with our neighbours in Europe. We were asked to vote on whether to remain in or to leave the EU, with all the consequences (foreseen or unforeseen) this decision would entail. Right up to the big day the “smart money” was on **“remain”** and all Europe was shocked when the results came in by a relatively narrow majority (4%) for the UK to **“leave”** the EU and all the institutions it has built over the past 40 years.



It has to be said that had this referendum been conducted in other EU countries they may well have seen similar outcomes; such is the widespread disaffection with the political classes and large governmental bodies across Europe in particular Germany, France, and the Netherlands mostly due to mass migration into Europe caused by events outside Europe. Historically there can be no doubt that European Economies have prospered from immigration; we are all descendants of immigrants from somewhere or other it just depends on how far you want to go back in time. Currently it is the scale of migration from the warring factions in the Middle East and other parts of the world which has “freaked out” voters in Europe leading them wanting to pull up the drawbridge. The difficulty is that this migration is not going away any time soon, as long as these conflicts sustain and potential fresh ones start up. Who can blame anyone in the face of death and destruction from wanting to seek a life elsewhere; people have always done so, this is nothing new. Today, Economics is a complex global activity and just when you think you have a handle on it something else will rear its head and confound your hypothesis! We look for illusive economic certainty where none actually exists and the best we can hope to do is to fragment the markets and make “deals” as we have always done, one “deal” at a time. This all takes time with each side wanting to get the best advantage to impress their respective constituents and “stake-holders”. This is certainly an opportunity for the MR industry to make “hay” but I see no evidence of it; polling has also been discredited (not me I hear you cry!) and it is often seen as an arm of the untrusted establishment. Meanwhile, we are distracted and beguiled by “new” technology solutions and “Big data”. Nobody really knows where we are heading now.

In conclusion, it seems to me that we will be going through the same processes that we have been through in previous times. History has the unfortunate habit of repeating itself: for example the League of Nations turned into the United Nations following each of the two world wars; they were similar bodies with similar aims; so the idea had to be re-invented. Is it going to be the same with the EU? It could be that in the years to come the EU will break up and go back to individual nation states or fragment even further with all the attendant jostling for position; there are several regions across Europe within nation states that are pressing for autonomy. We are slaves to democracy and the will of the people. In extreme this would certainly return the restoration of capital punishment it has popular support but nobody is proposing it – yet! Consensus by majority or “mob rule” must be tempered by common sense and reasoned argument.

The basic question is between those of us who think we will be able to manage on our own and those who believe in unity. We frequently hear the mantra **“stronger together”** which may sound cliché but like most clichés has some truth in it. On the other hand we hear that we should **“take back control”** as if we could actually do this, given the global economy we all live in. Harold McMillan once said when asked what his greatest fear was - **“events dear boy, events”**. We cannot escape the actuality of events it is how we respond that matters.

**Tony Dent comments:** Personally I fear that the UK politicians just don’t understand the amount of anger and distress this decision has caused across Europe. John is right that the EU might break up in the coming years, creating more turmoil for millions of lives. If that should happen – who will get the blame? I feel a deep sense of shame for the decision we have supposedly taken and the resulting distress it will cause to, not only many of our own citizens, but also those of our neighbours. That the decision was encouraged by lies from politicians who should have known better, merely adds to a sense of loss. I think few UK politicians understand that the EU is **more** than an economic convenience – it represents a genuine safety net for peoples who have lived under tyranny within our lifetime. It seems as if the politicians in the UK don’t care about that.

Synergie sponsored by Sample Answers who also offer free mouse mat for 2017:



If you are unable to visit us at the show then please email

[client.services@Sampleanswers.com](mailto:client.services@Sampleanswers.com)

to obtain your free copy of the mouse mat.

Alternatively visit us at the Insight Show, March 8/9<sup>th</sup> 2017, Olympia London.

<http://www.insightshow.co.uk/>

# INSIGHT '17

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