

European Union

The Perils of Perception

June 2016

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Ipsos MORI



In the run up to the EU referendum...

- ▶ ... this survey asks people to estimate what they think the “reality” is on a number of topics about the European Union and the UK’s membership
- ▶ Asks about key issues raised by both the Remain and the Leave camp – including the economy, immigration, EU budget and EU powers and asks the public to predict what would happen if the UK voted to leave the EU...
- ▶ Purpose is to understand reasons for misperceptions, their impact – in terms of voting intention as well as wider social impact – and to inform the debate before the referendum on 23rd June 2016
- ▶ Based on 1,000 interviews conducted online, 29th April-5th May 2016 and 1,083 interviews conducted online, 27th-30th May 2016, weighted to population profile
- ▶ Focus on results for the “average person” i.e. looking at median results...





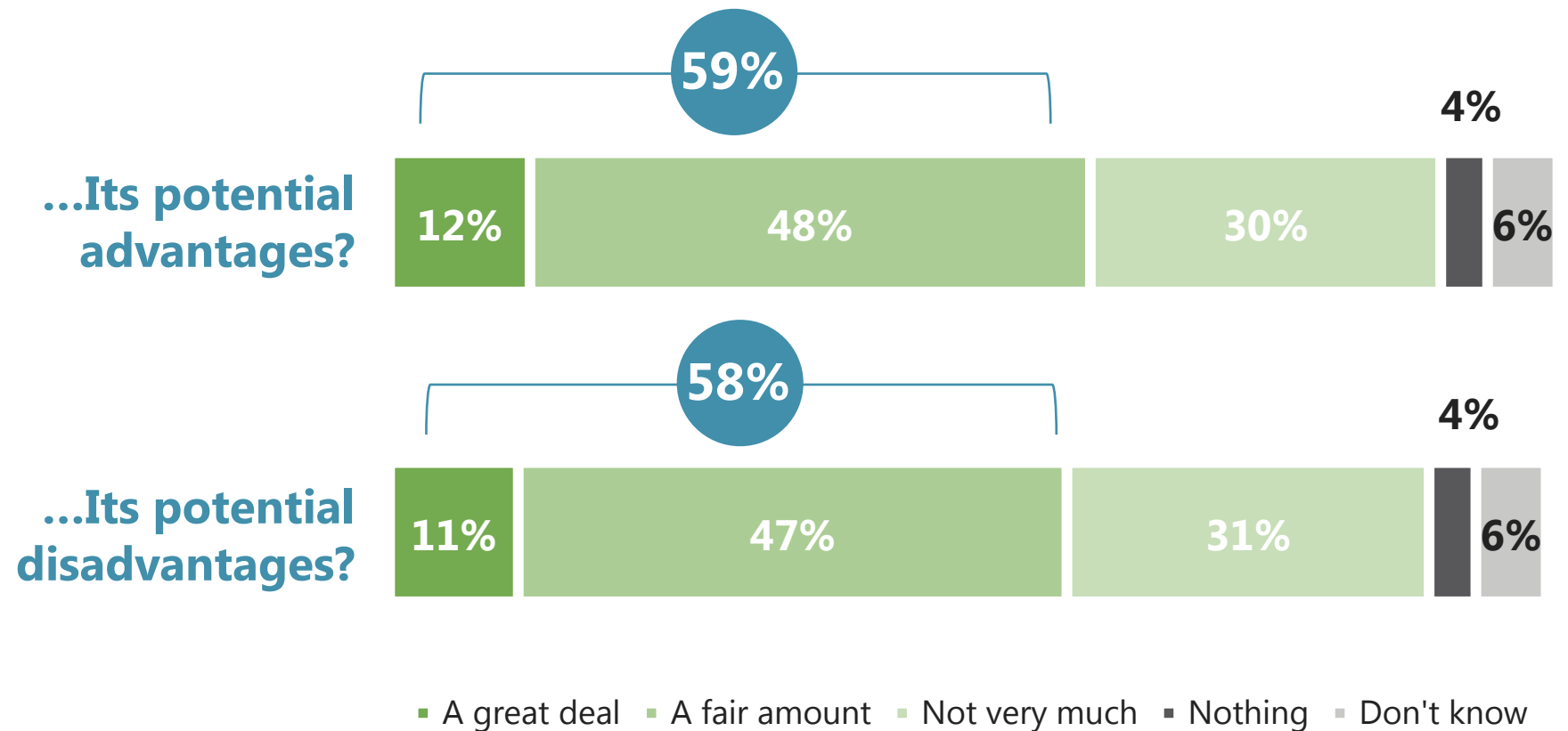
Most of us claim to have
at least some knowledge
of the advantages and
disadvantages of the EU

Q Thinking about Britain's membership of the EU, how much, if anything, would you say you know about...

More Remainers think they know about the advantages of EU membership than Brexiters (73% vs 57% respectively)....

But about the same proportion of both camps say they at least know a fair amount about the disadvantages (64% of Remainers and 66% of Brexiters)

Six in ten say they know about the advantages/disadvantages of Britain's EU membership but most say they know only a fair amount



Base: 1000 GB adults aged 18-75

...We generally know the UK pays in more
To the EU than we directly receive back – but...

- ▶ we think we're a top payer, when we're not
- ▶ and there are massive misperceptions of how different countries fare...

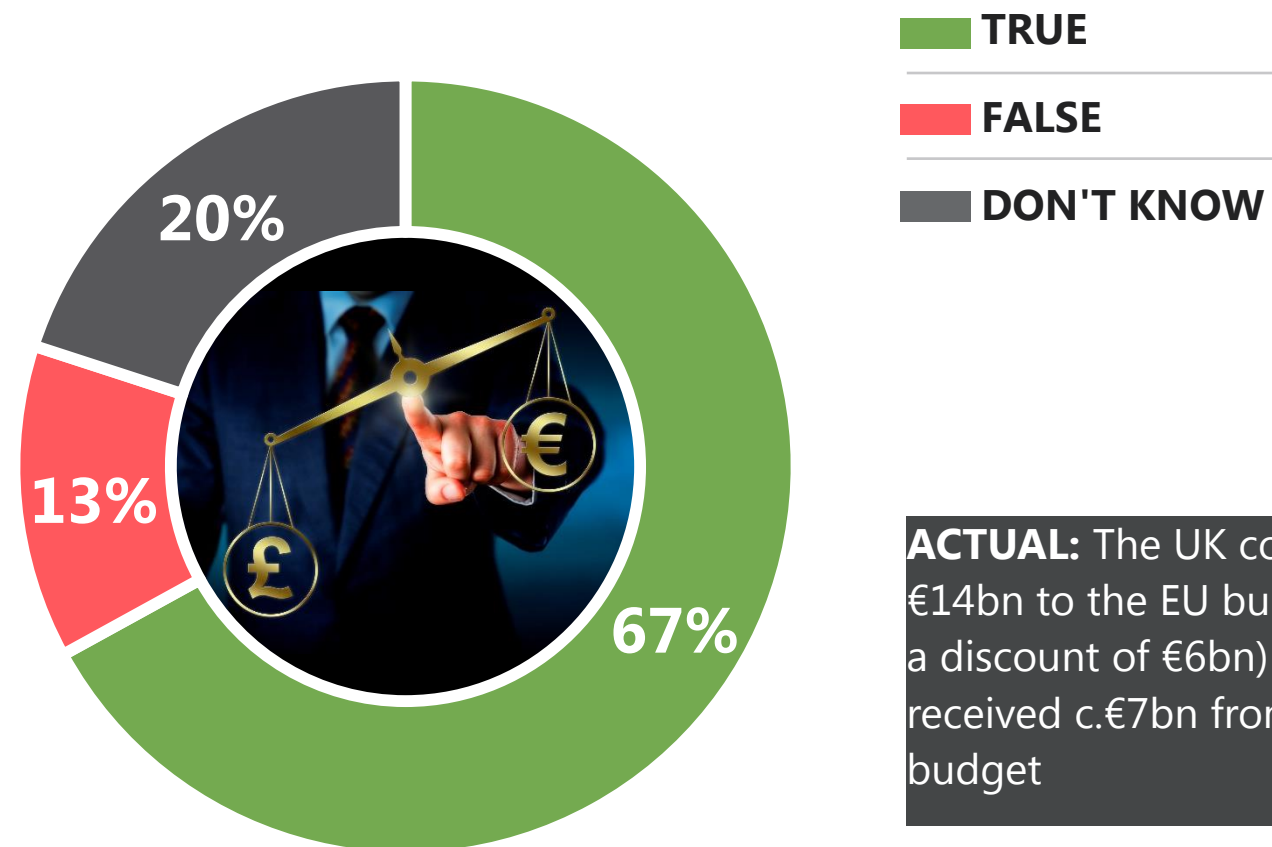


Q Please tell me whether you think the following statement is true or false:

The UK annually pays more into the EU's budget than it gets back

Brexiteers are more right than Remainers on this – 9 in 10 (89%) of Brexiteers get this right, while nearly a quarter of Remainers think this is false (23%)

Over two-thirds correctly identify the UK annually pays more into the EU's budget than it gets back...

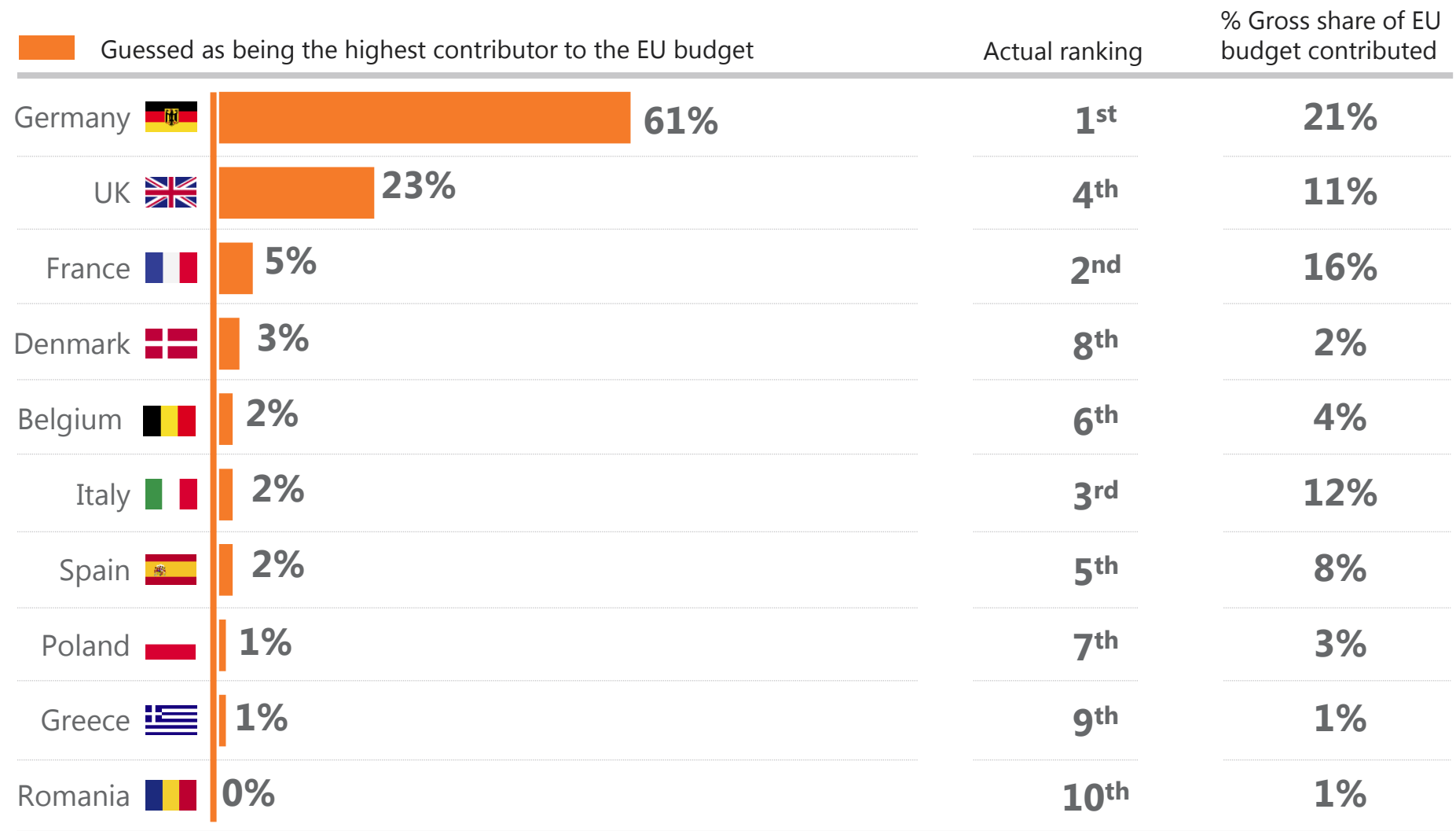


ACTUAL: The UK contributed €14bn to the EU budget (after a discount of €6bn) and received c.€7bn from the EU budget

Q In 2014, the total EU budget was about €140bn. Each member state contributes a share of the budget, although some contribute more than others.

To the best of your knowledge, out of the following member states, please identify the top 3 contributors to the EU budget in 2014, where 1 paid the most, 2 paid the second most and 3 paid the third most.

...but nearly a quarter (23%) think the UK pays in the most to the EU budget – when Germany, France and Italy contribute a larger share



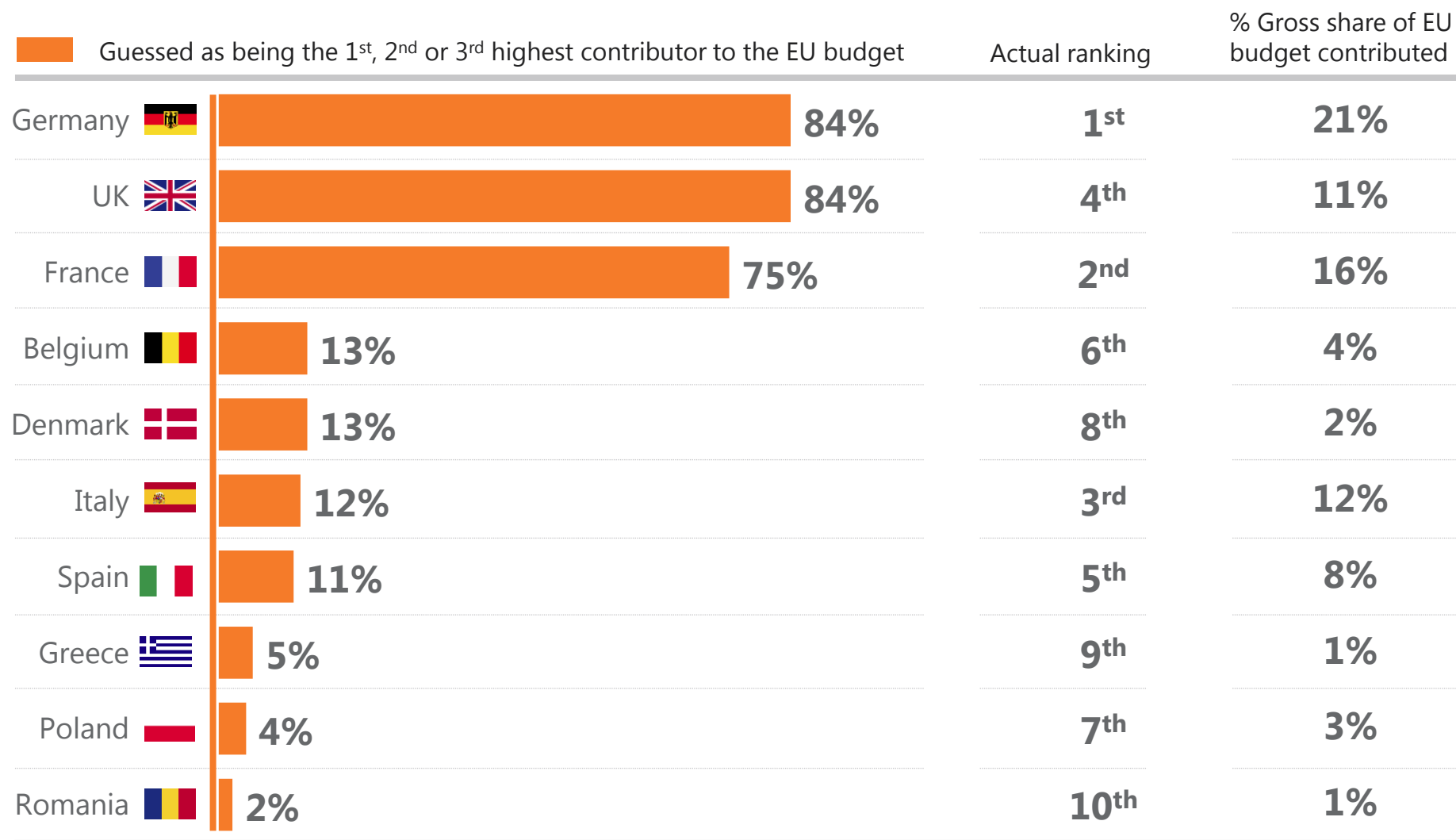
Base: 1000 GB adults aged 18-75

Source: HM Treasury 2014

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To the best of your knowledge, out of the following member states, please identify the top 3 contributors to the EU budget in 2014, where 1 paid the most, 2 paid the second most and 3 paid the third most.

84% think the UK is in the top 3 contributors (the same proportion that pick out Germany), when we're actually 4th



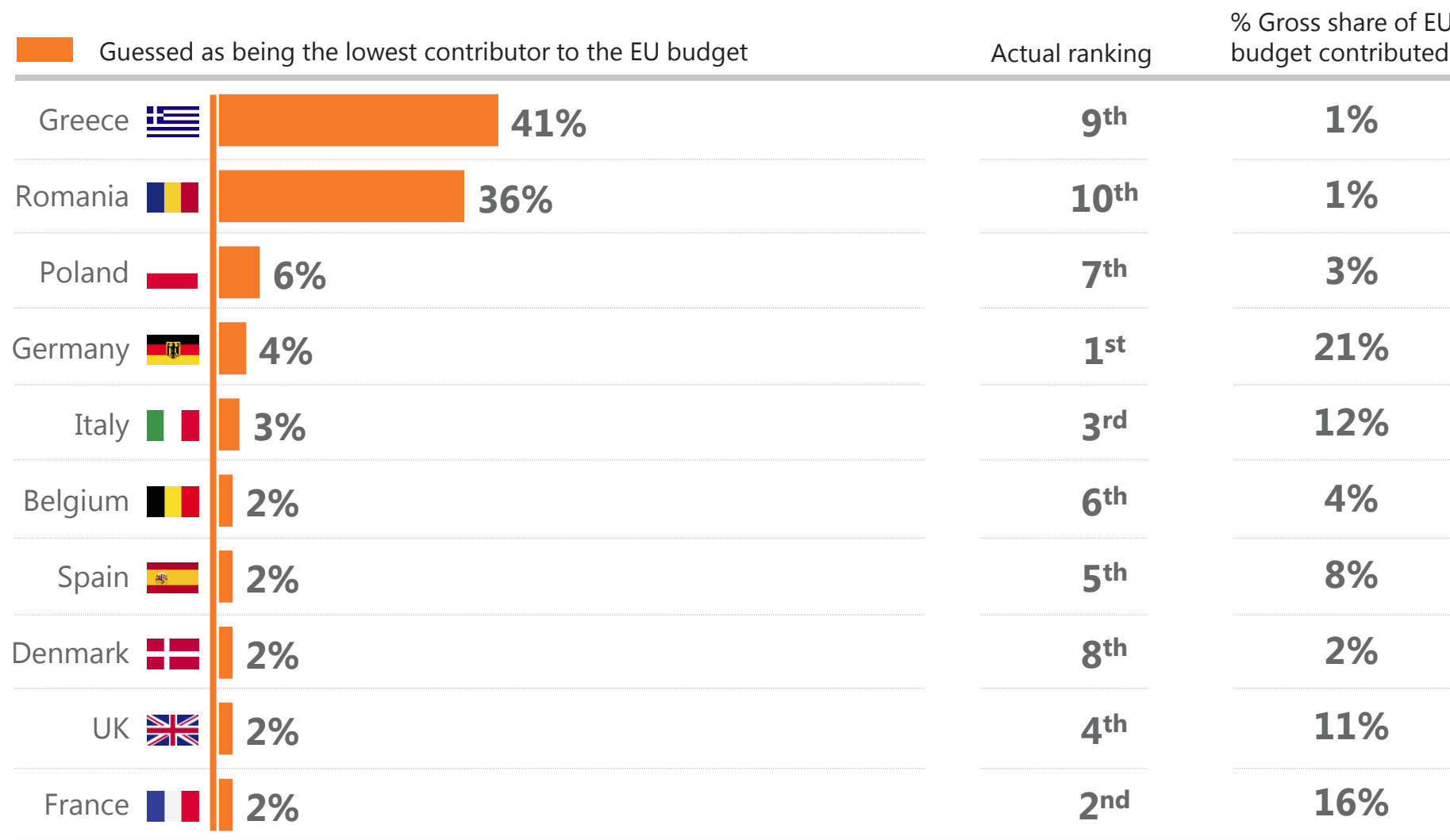
Base: 1000 GB adults aged 18-75

Source: HM Treasury 2014

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To the best of your knowledge, out of the following member states, please identify the bottom 3 contributors to the EU budget in 2014, where 1 paid the least, 2 paid the second least and 3 paid the third least.

We're fairly good at picking out the lowest contributors – Romania and Greece...



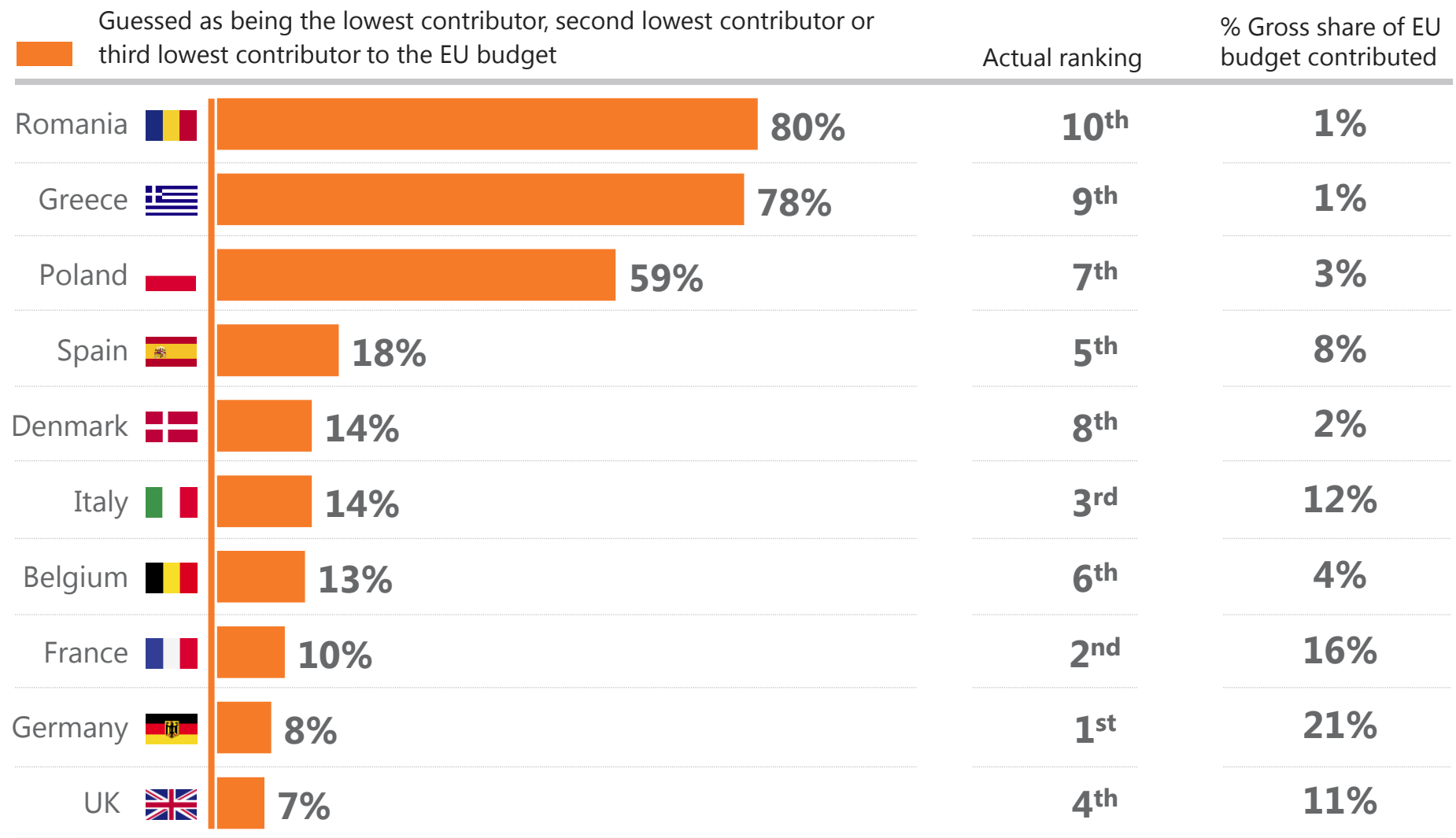
Base: 1000 GB adults aged 18-75

Source: HM Treasury 2014

Q In 2014, the total EU budget was about €140bn. Each member state contributes a share of the budget, although some contribute more than others.

To the best of your knowledge, out of the following member states, please identify the bottom 3 contributors to the EU budget in 2014, where 1 paid the least, 2 paid the second least and 3 paid the third least.

And hardly anyone thinks the UK is one of the lowest contributors – the UK is least likely to be picked out



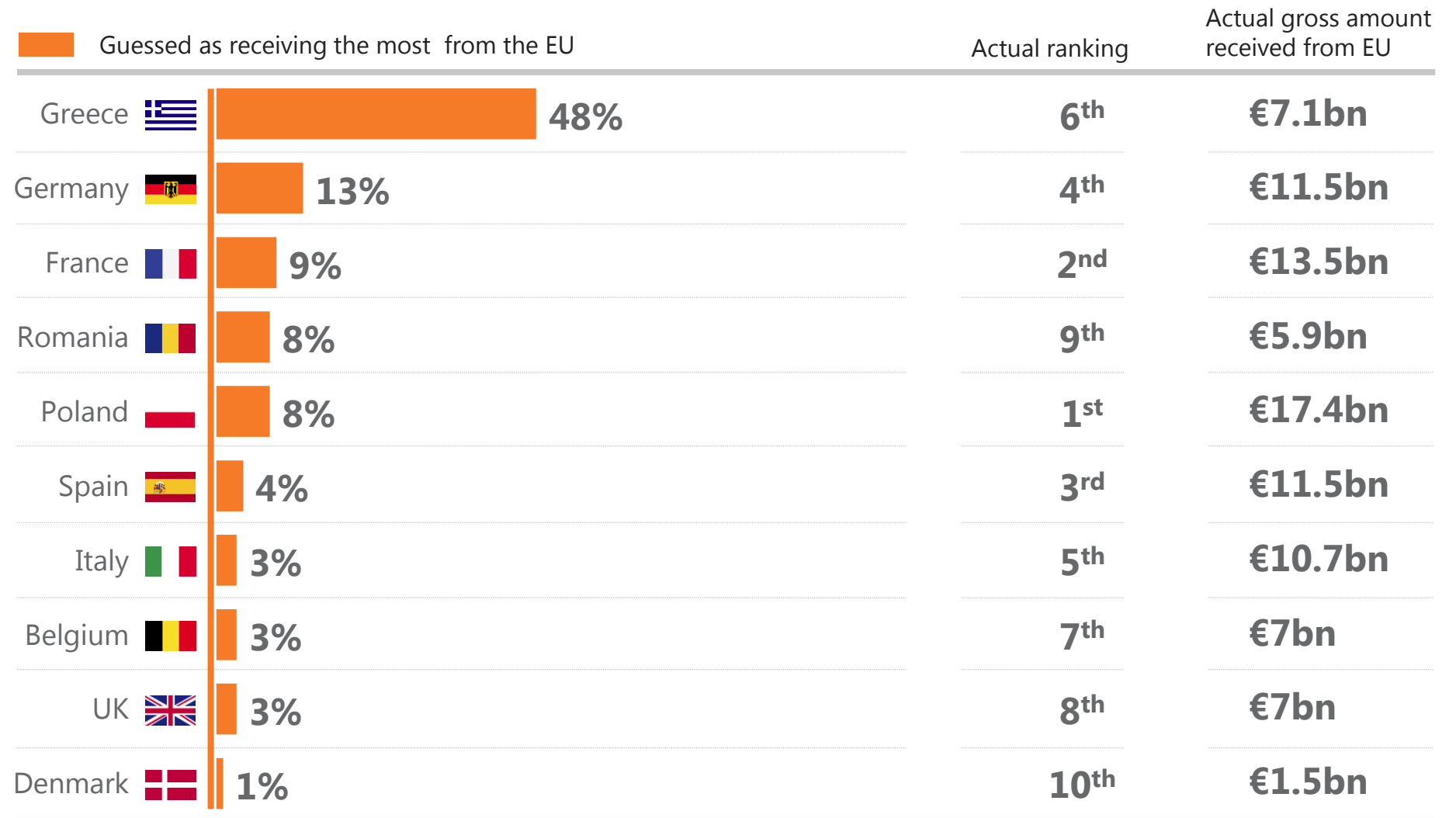
Base: 1000 GB adults aged 18-75

Source: HM Treasury 2014

Q The EU spends much of its annual budget within its member states on various funds and programmes, although it spends more in some member states than others.

To the best of your knowledge, from the following member states, please identity the three which received the most from the EU in 2014, where 1 received the most, 2 received the second most and 3 received the third most.

In terms of gross receipts, nearly half of us think Greece receives the most when they are 6th in the list and Poland is top by some distance



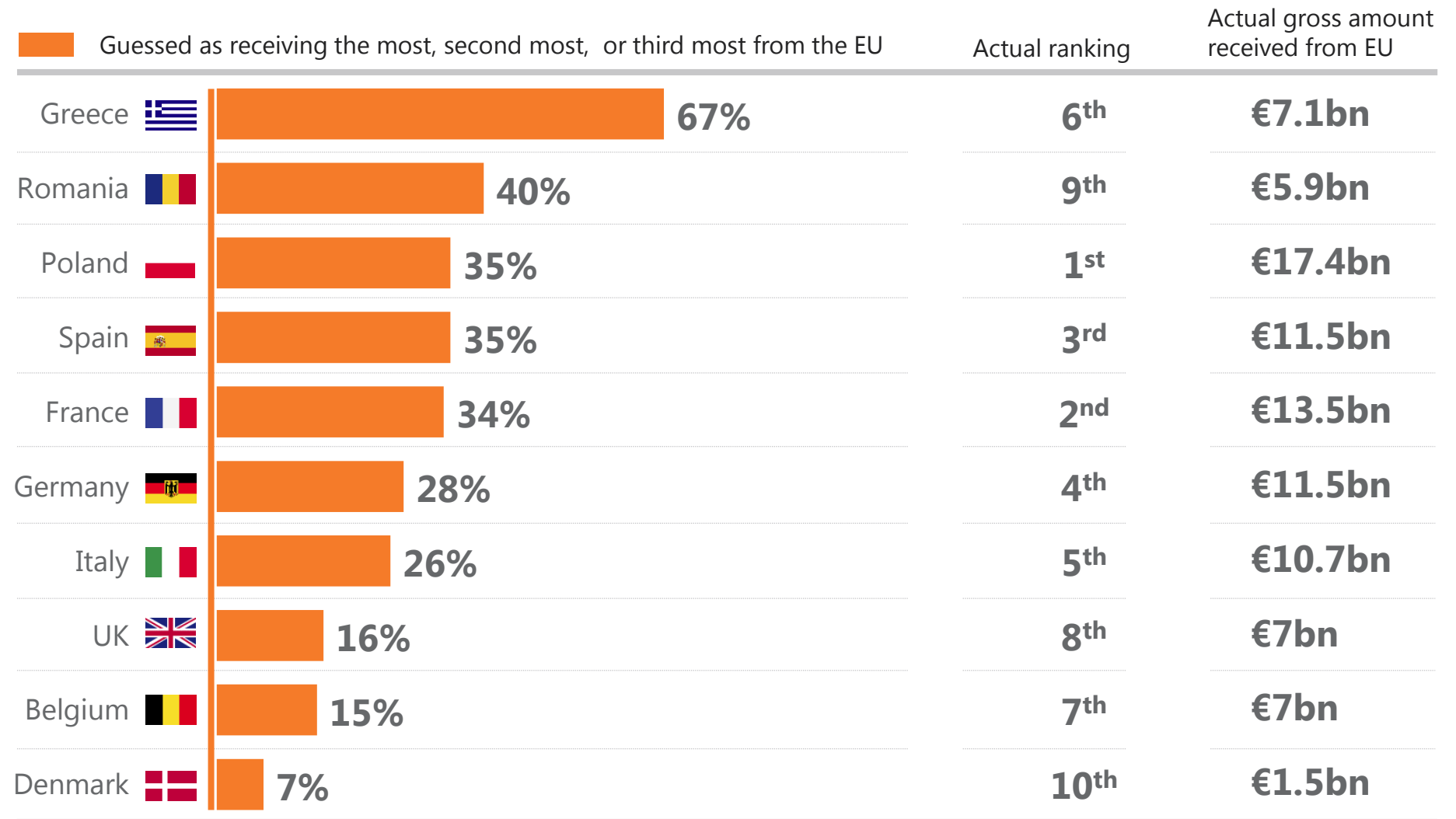
Base: 1000 GB adults aged 18-75

Source: European Commission 2014

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To the best of your knowledge, from the following member states, please identity the three which received the most from the EU in 2014, where 1 received the most, 2 received the second most and 3 received the third most.

And we generally underestimate how much Western European countries (e.g. France and Spain) receive from the EU



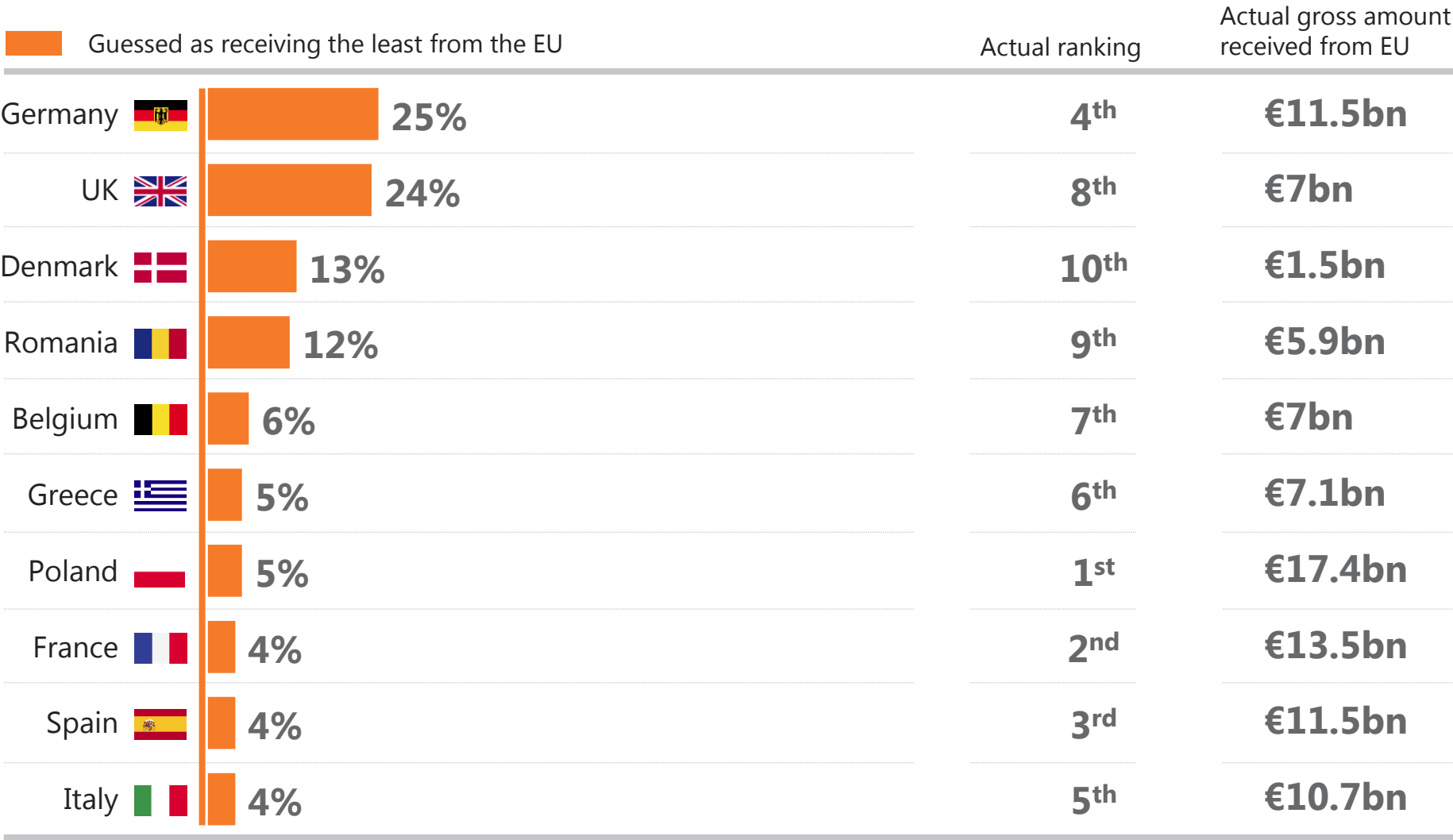
Base: 1000 GB adults aged 18-75

Source: European Commission 2014

Q The EU spends much of its annual budget within its member states on various funds and programmes, although it spends more in some member states than others.

To the best of your knowledge, from the following member states, please identity the three which received the least from the EU in 2014, where 1 received the least, 2 received the second least and 3 received the third least.

We are most likely to think Germany receives least, when actually it ranks 4th, receiving more than Italy who very few pick out...



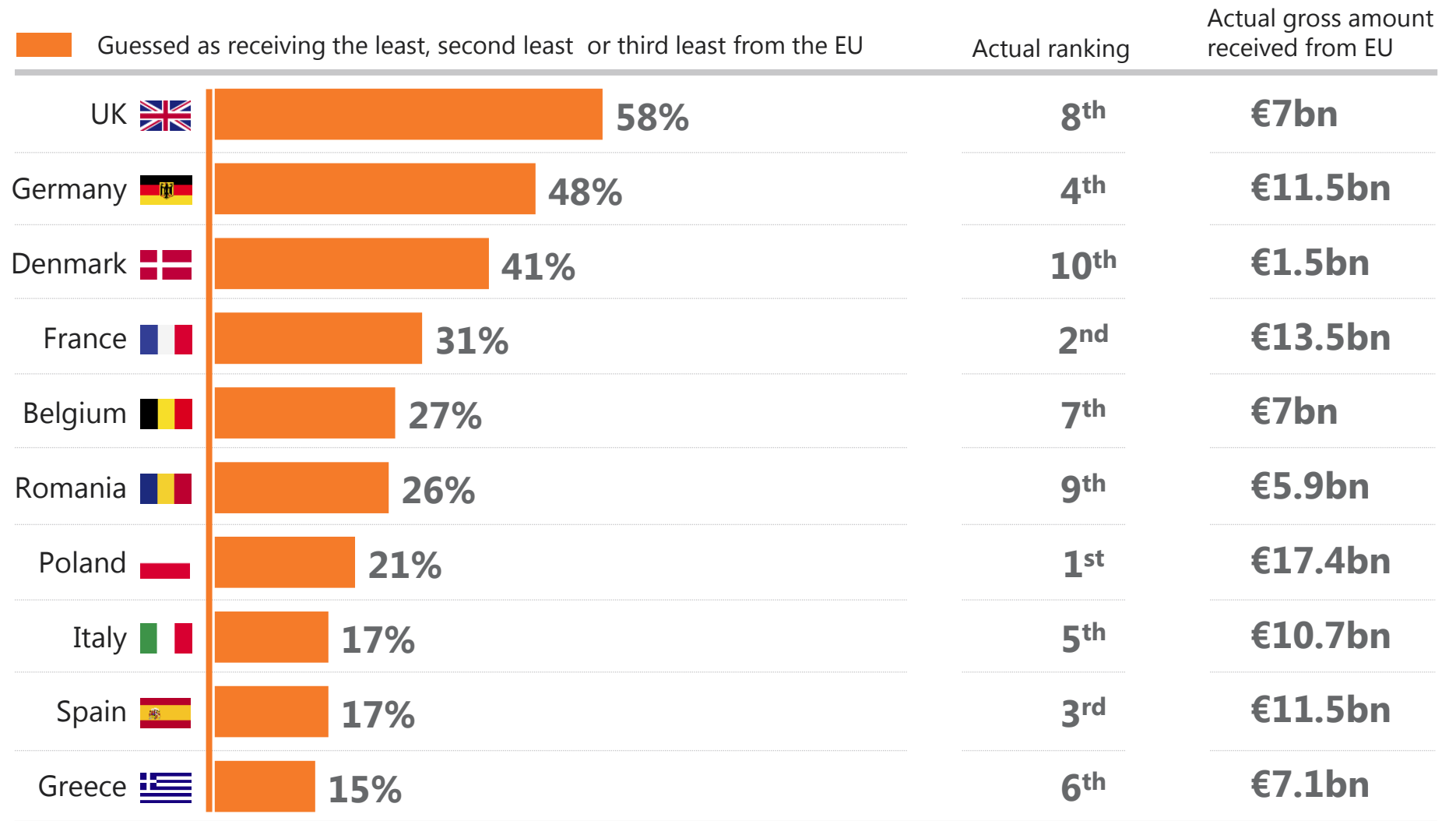
Base: 1000 GB adults aged 18-75

Source: European Commission 2014

Q The EU spends much of its annual budget within its member states on various funds and programmes, although it spends more in some member states than others.

To the best of your knowledge, from the following member states, please identity the three which received the least from the EU in 2014, where 1 received the least, 2 received the second least and 3 received the third least.

We're most likely to say UK is in bottom 3 on receipts, which is correct - only Romania and Denmark received less from the options given



Base: 1000 GB adults aged 18-75

Source: European Commission 2014

We think the EU spends
way more on admin
than it actually does...

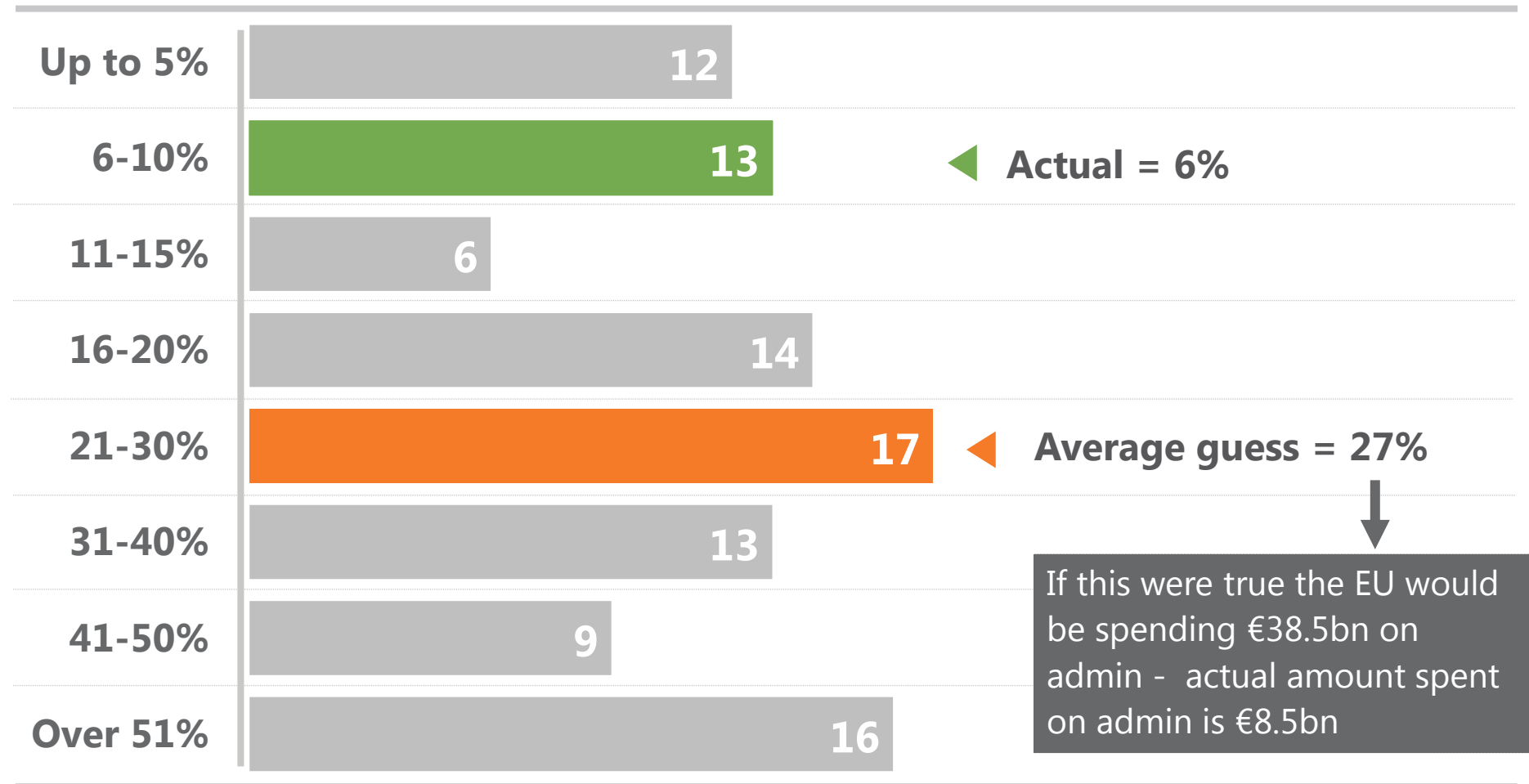
... but underestimate the
number of civil servants
employed by the EU



Q In 2014, the EU budget was around €140bn. To the best of your knowledge, what share of this budget do you think was spent on staff, administration and maintenance of buildings?

Both Brexiters and Remainers massively overestimate the EU's admin spend but Brexiters slightly less so— the average Brexiter thinks the EU spends 30% on admin and the average Remainer thinks the EU spends 20%

On average we think nearly 30% is spent on admin - when it's only 6% ...



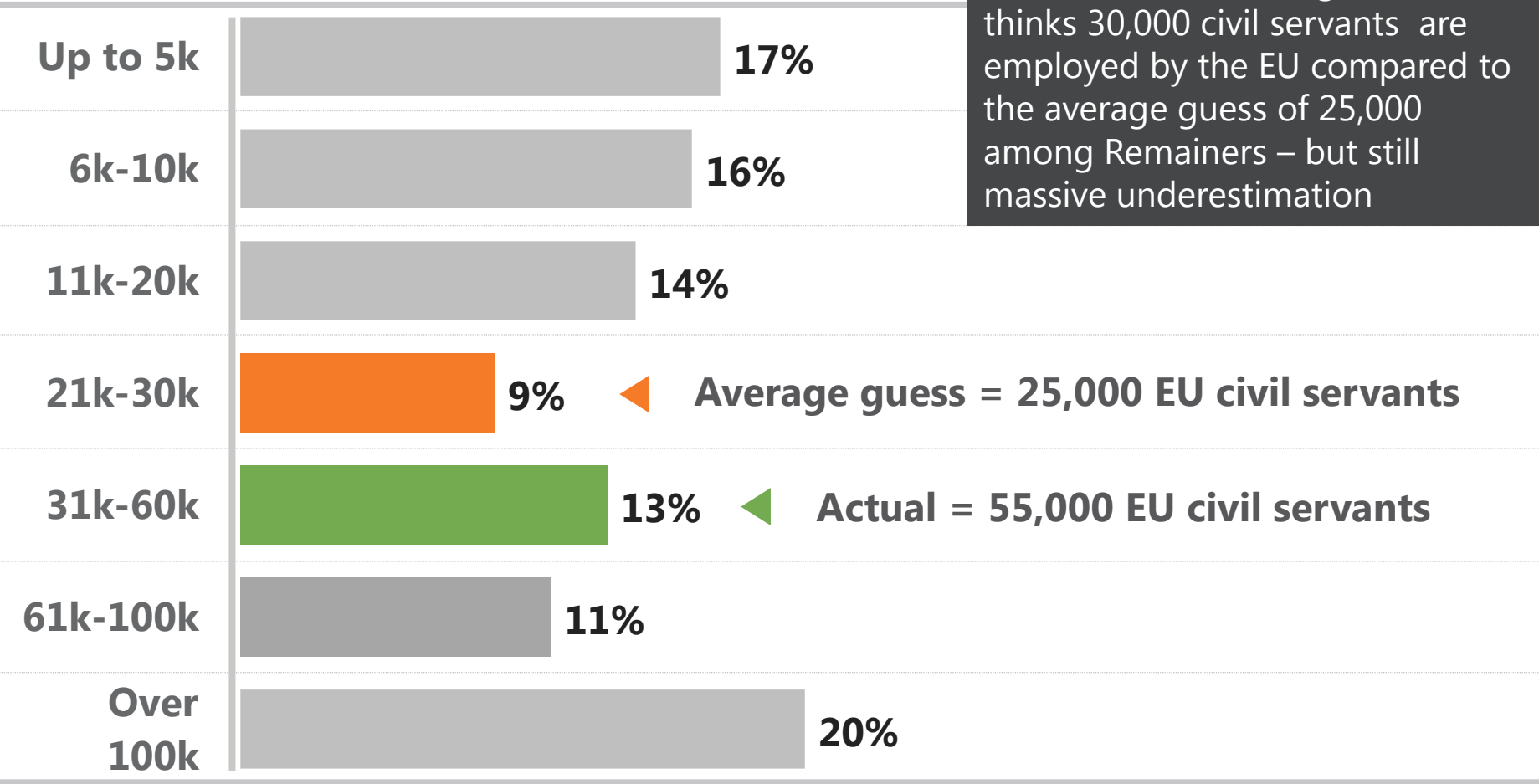
Base: 1000 GB adults aged 18-75

Source: European Union figures 2014

Q To the nearest 1,000 people, how many civil servants do you think are employed by the EU?

This includes civil servants of the European Commission, staff in the general secretariat and in the political groups of the European Parliament and in the general secretariat of the Council of the European Union

But we underestimate the number of civil servants employed by the EU...



Brexiteers are slightly closer to the mark – the average Brexiter thinks 30,000 civil servants are employed by the EU compared to the average guess of 25,000 among Remainers – but still massive underestimation

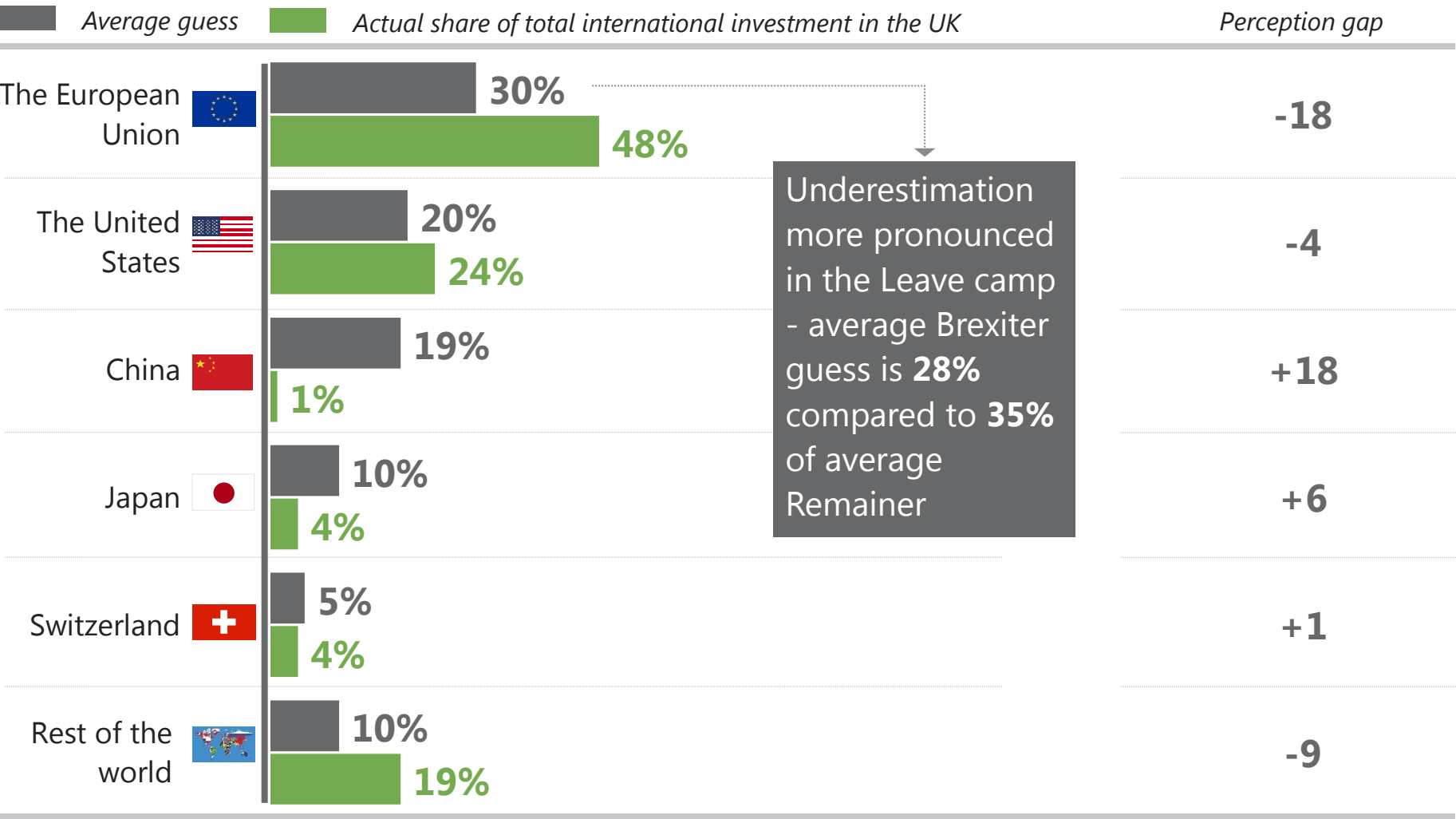
We massively underestimate the
EU's importance to investment
in the UK...

... but are pretty good on exports



Q In 2014, international investment in the UK was £1,034bn. To the best of your knowledge, what share of this total amount do you think comes from the following?

We massively underestimate investment into the UK by the EU – overplaying investment by China in particular

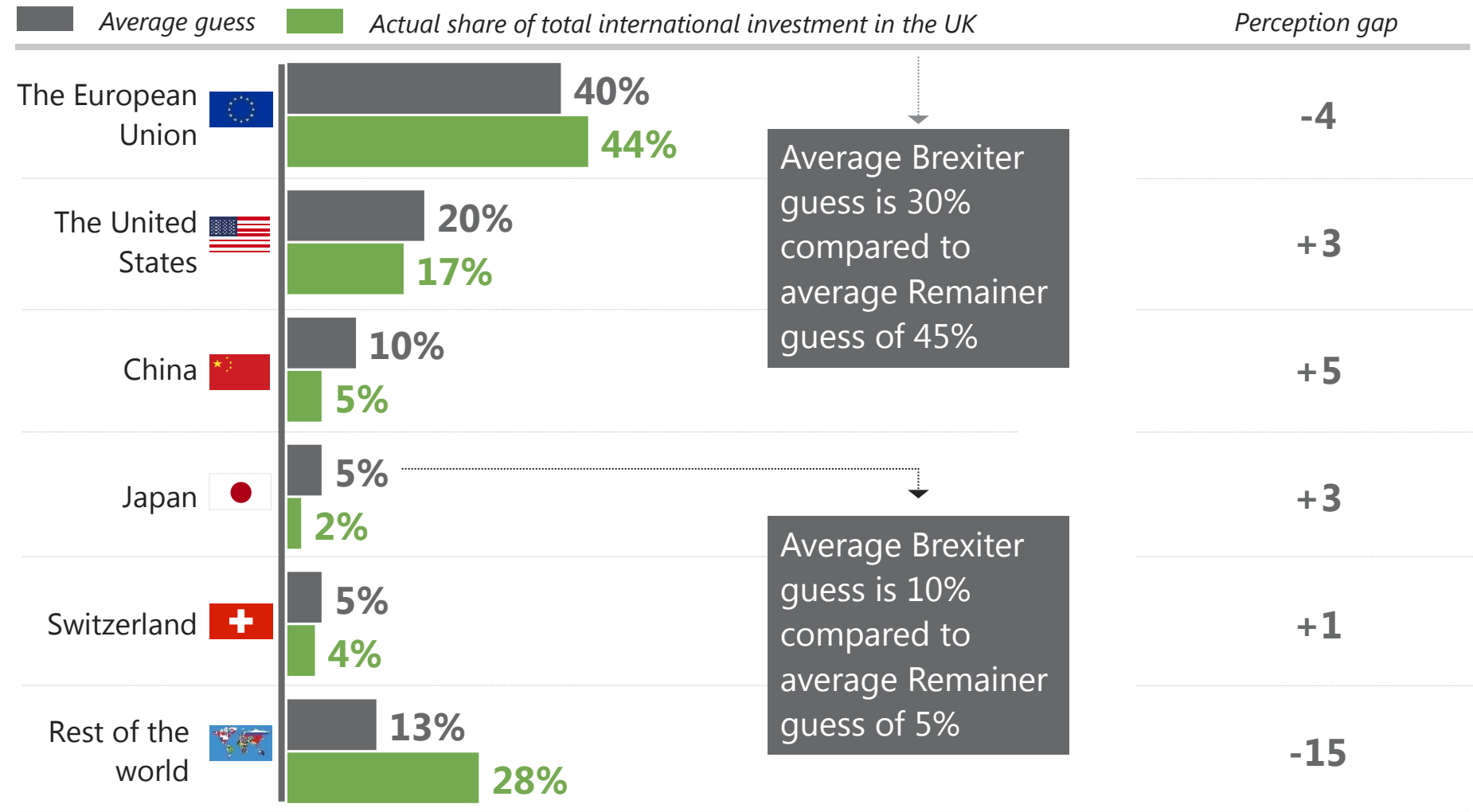


Base: 1000 GB adults 18-75

Source: ONS 2015

Q In 2014, the UK exported a total of £515.2bn in goods and services. To the best of your knowledge, what share of the total UK exports do you think were sold to each of the following?

Although we're more clued up on the share of total UK exports sold to EU countries – particularly among Remainers...



Base: 1000 GB adults 16-75

Source: ONS Pink Book 2015

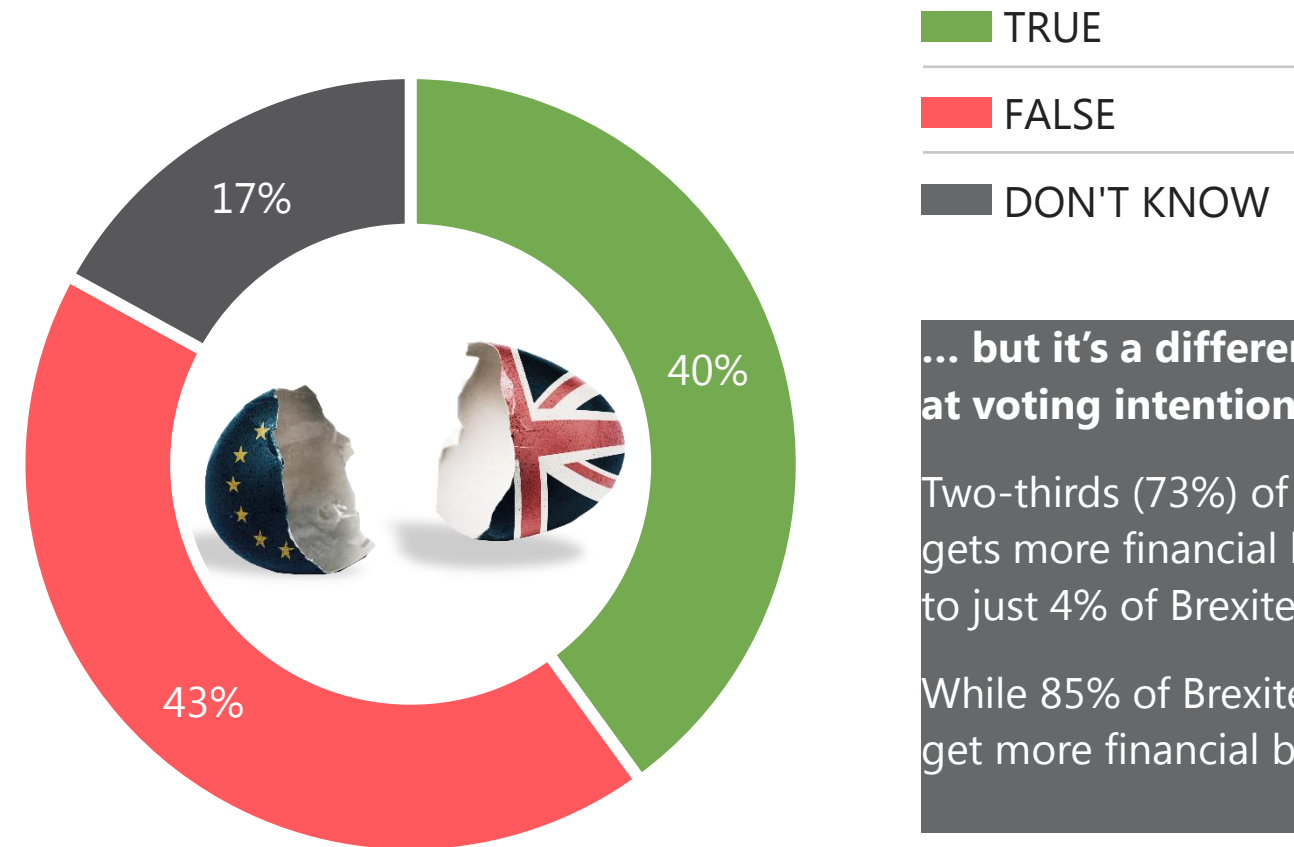
Overall, we're evenly split
on the financial impact
of the EU on the UK...



Q Please tell me whether you think the following statement is true or false:

Overall, the UK gets more financial benefit from being a member of the EU than it does disadvantages

The negative view of our net receipts of money from the EU vs our reliance on investment/trade with the EU, balances out with a fairly even overall assessment of the financial impact of membership...



... but it's a different story when looking at voting intention:

Two-thirds (73%) of Remainers think the UK gets more financial benefit overall compared to just 4% of Brexiter

While 85% of Brexiter think the UK doesn't get more financial benefit overall

Base: Split sample of 502 GB adults aged 18-75

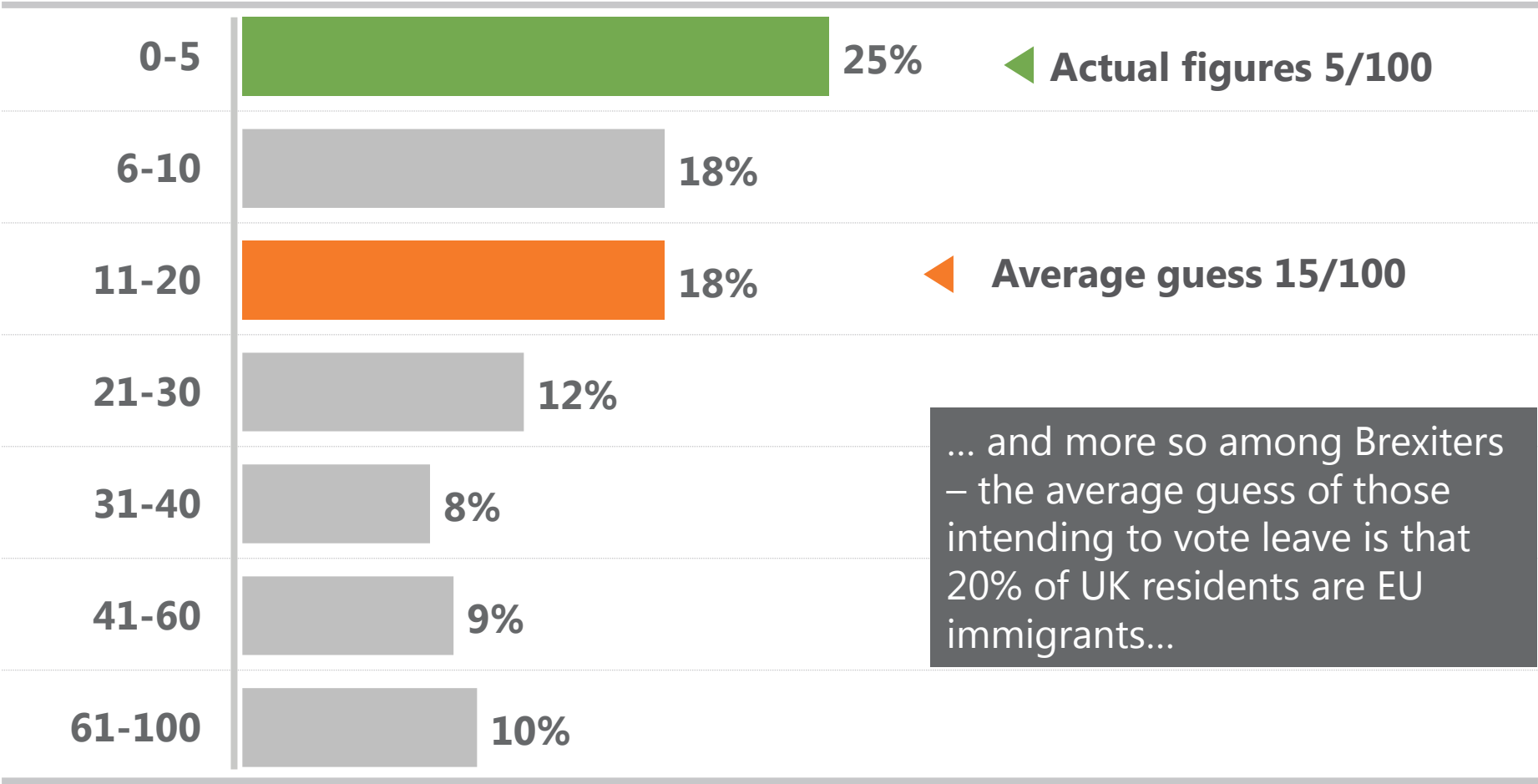
We overestimate EU immigration
by a factor of 3...

But we're closer on what proportion
of immigrants are made up of EU
citizens: this suggests it's
immigration in general that
we have trouble estimating
and massively overstate



Q Out of every 100 residents in the UK, about how many do you think were born in an EU member state other than the UK?

We overestimate number of EU immigrants – on average we think 15% of UK residents were born in another EU country, three times the actual...



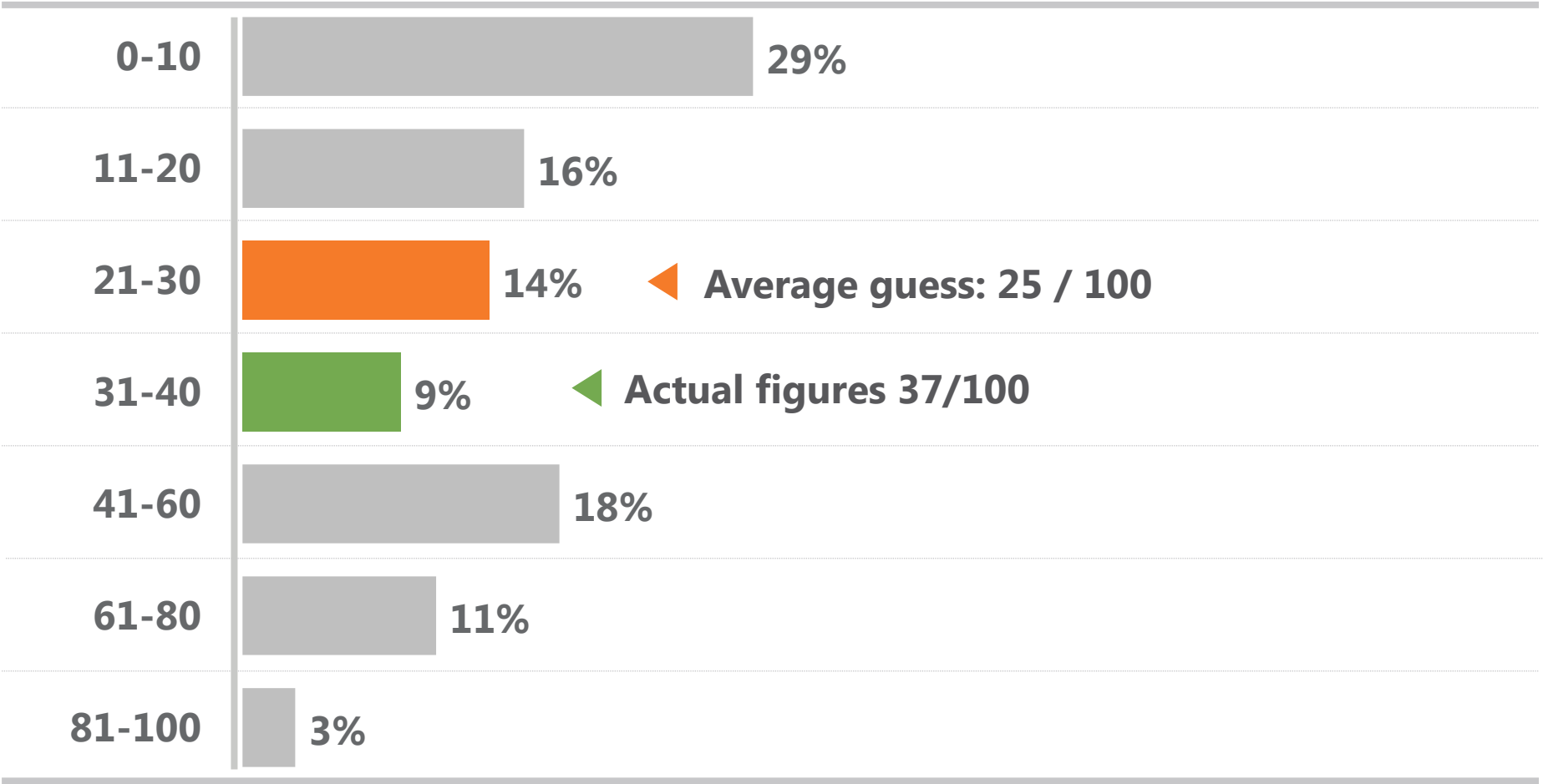
Base: 1000 GB adults aged 18-75

Source: ONS 2015

Q In total, there are about 8.3 million people living in the UK who were born in a country other than the UK

Out of every 100 of these people born in a different country, about how many do you think were born in another EU member state?

But in contrast we then underestimate the proportion of all immigrants to the UK that are migrants from the EU



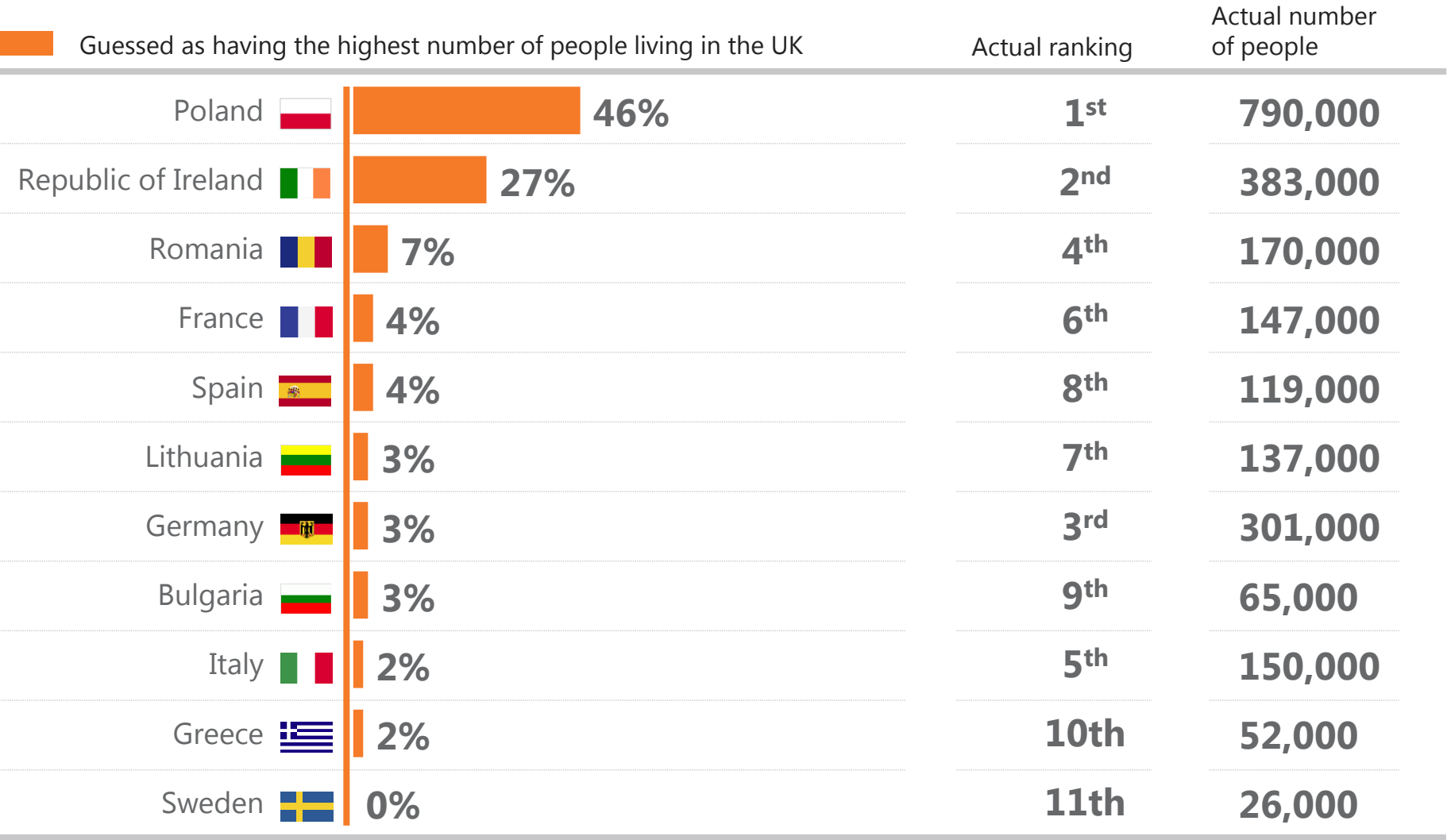
Base: 1000 GB adults 18-75

Source: ONS 2015

Q The following EU countries are where some of the overseas-born people living in the UK are born.

From the following, please identify the three member states you think the most overseas people living in the UK were born, where 1 is the highest number of people, 2 is the second highest and 3 is the third highest.

We correctly identify Poland and Ireland as the most significant contributors to immigration...



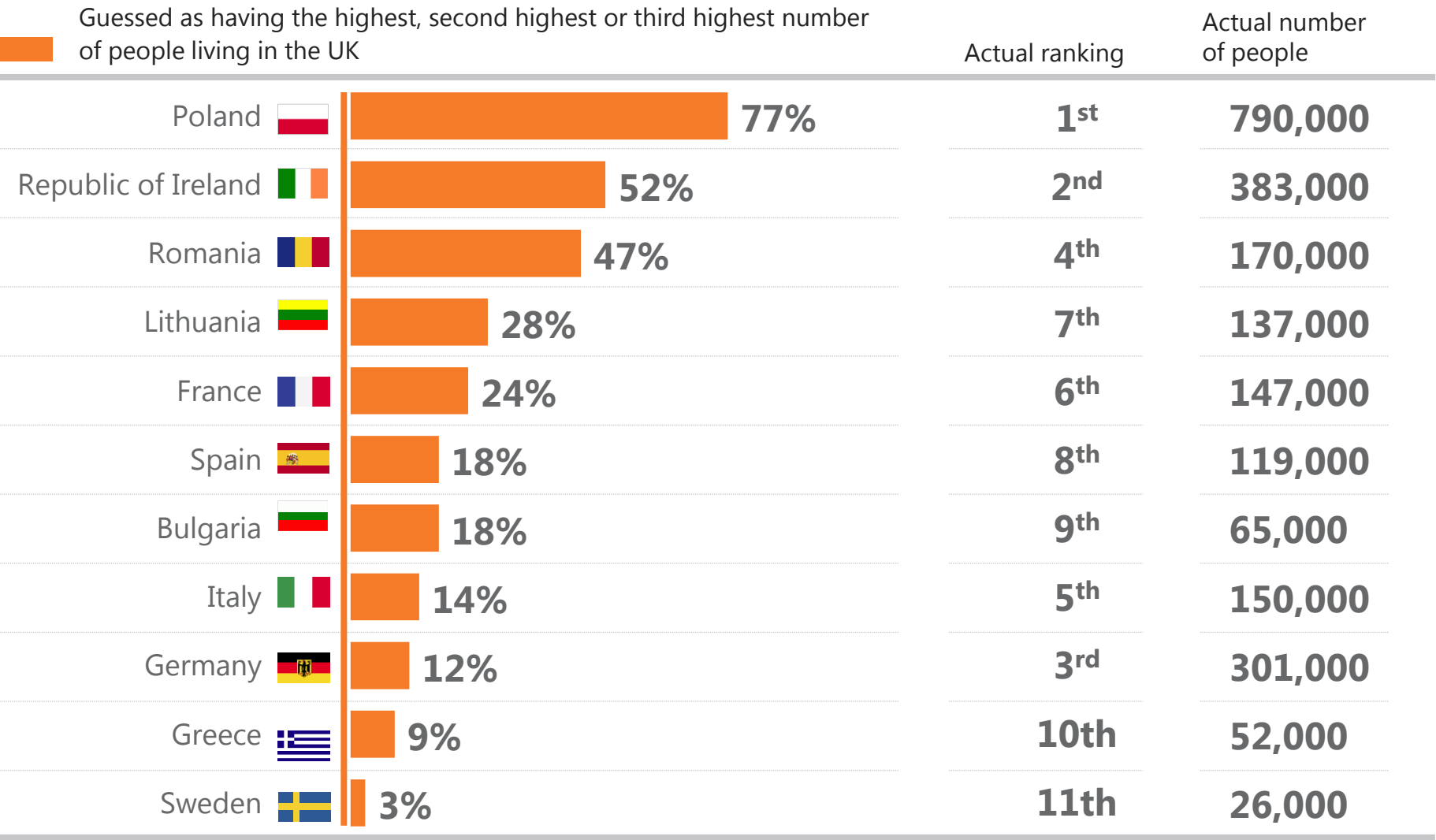
Base: 1000 GB adults aged 18-75

Source: ONS 2015

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From the following, please identify the three member states you think the most overseas people living in the UK were born, where 1 is the highest number of people, 2 is the second highest and 3 is the third highest.

But we massively underestimate the significance of German immigration, and generally numbers coming in from western Europe














Base: 1000 GB adults aged 18-75

Source: ONS 2015

Q The following EU countries are where some of the overseas-born people living in the UK are born.

From the following, please identify the three member states you think the least overseas people living in the UK were born, where 1 is the lowest number of people, 2 is the second lowest and 3 is the third lowest.

And we correctly pick Sweden out as the least significant source of immigrants

Gussed as having the smallest number of people living in the UK			Actual ranking	Actual number of people
Sweden		33%	<input type="radio"/> 11 th	26,000
Germany		13%	<input type="radio"/> 3 rd	301,000
Lithuania		12%	<input type="radio"/> 7 th	137,000
Bulgaria		8%	<input type="radio"/> 9 th	65,000
France		6%	<input type="radio"/> 6 th	147,000
Poland		6%	<input type="radio"/> 1 st	790,000
Italy		6%	<input type="radio"/> 5 th	150,000
Spain		5%	<input type="radio"/> 8 th	119,000
Republic of Ireland		5%	<input type="radio"/> 2 nd	383,000
Romania		4%	<input type="radio"/> 4 th	170,000
Greece		4%	<input type="radio"/> 10 th	52,000

Base: 1000 GB adults aged 18-75

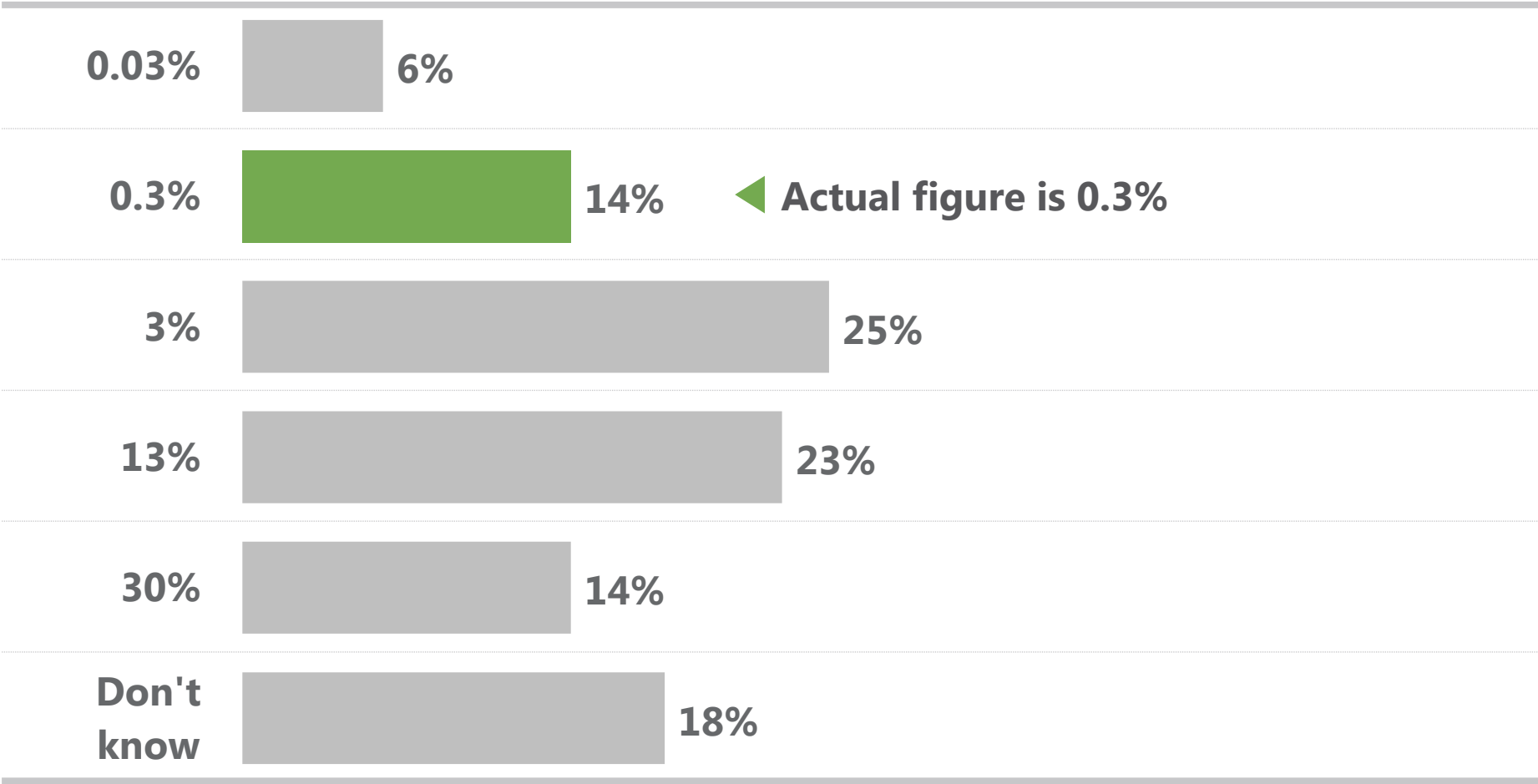
Source: ONS 2015

And many of us are massively
wrong on the scale of
Child Benefit payments
to children in
other countries...



Q What proportion of all Child Benefit claims awarded in the UK do you think were for children living outside the UK in other countries in the European Economic Area (EEA)?

We significantly overstate the proportion of child benefit claims going to children living in Europe: nearly four in ten think it's at least 40x the actual amount of 0.3%



Base: 1000 GB adults 18-75

Source: HMRC 2013

Our engagement with the democratic elements of the EU is very low...

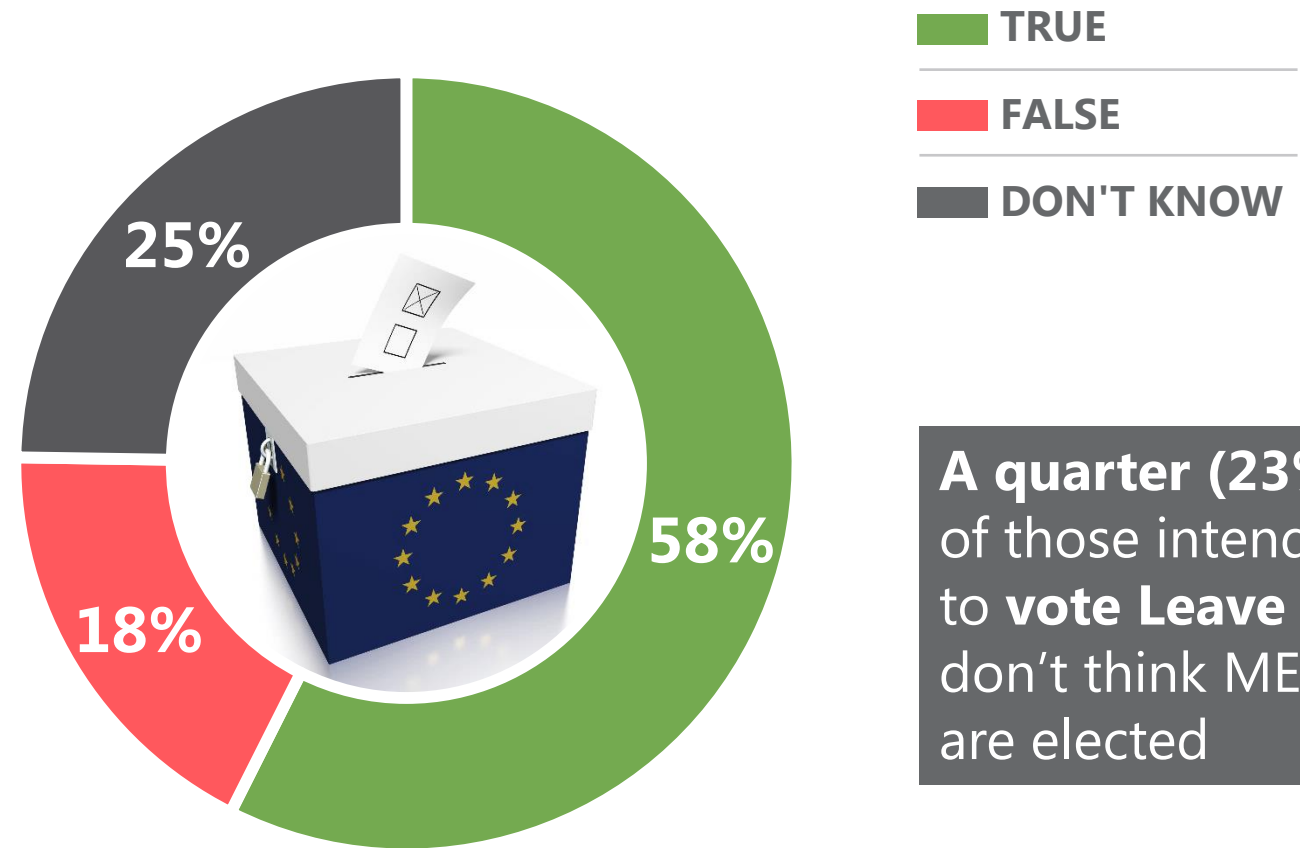
- ▶ many don't even know MEPs are elected
- ▶ hardly any of us can name our MEPs
- ▶ We can guess election turnout although underestimate slightly



Q Please tell me whether you think the following statement is true or false:

The members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are directly elected by the citizens of each member state

Four in ten don't know the European Parliament is a democratic institution – only 58% correctly think MEPs are directly elected by citizens in member states

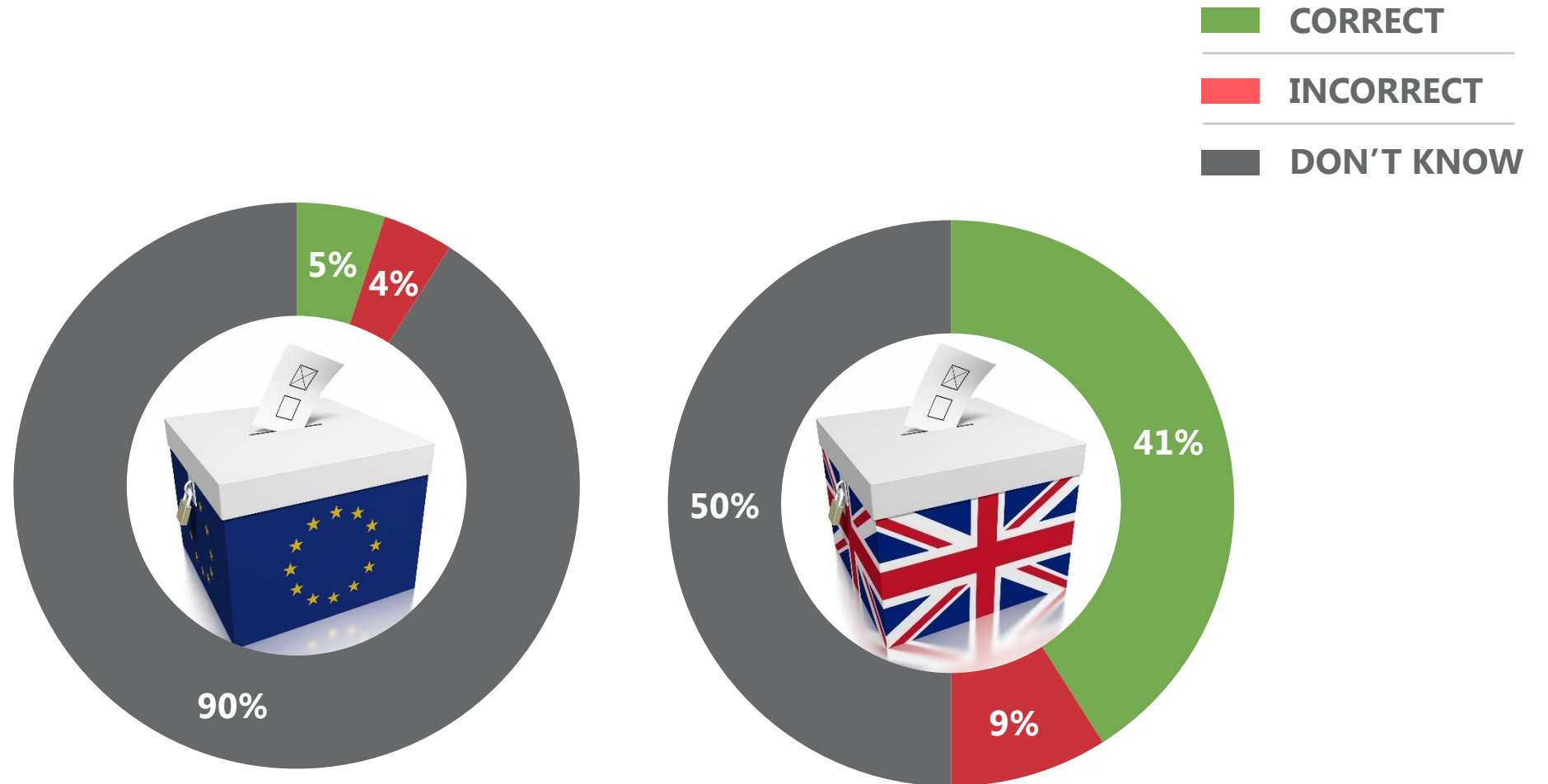


A quarter (23%) of those intending to **vote Leave don't think MEPs are elected**

Q The UK is divided into twelve electoral regions for the EU. Each region has between three and ten members of the European Parliament (MEP). What is the name of one of the MEPs representing your region?

What is the name of your Member of Parliament (MP)?

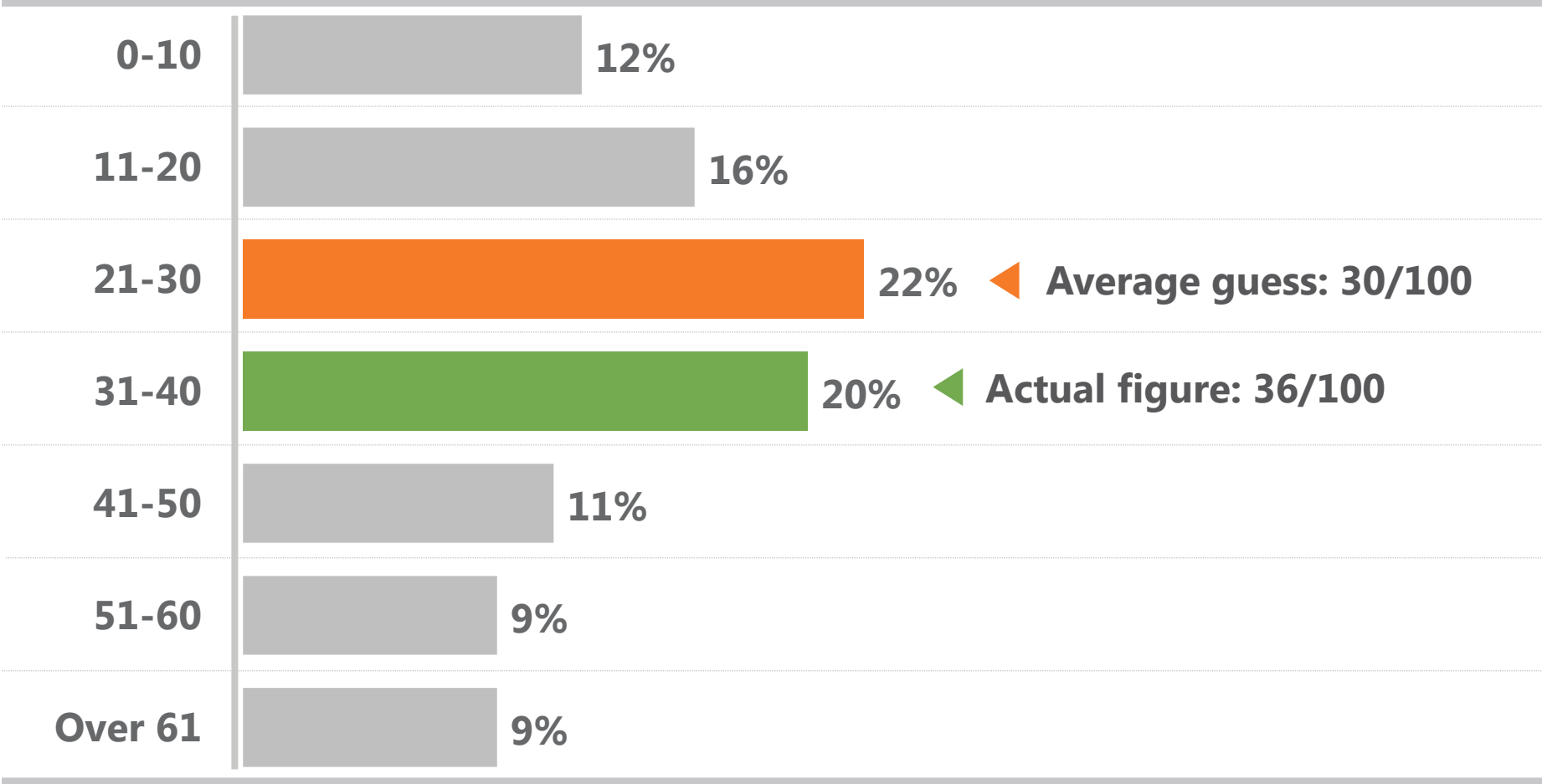
And general awareness of MEPs is very low - just 5% could name at least one of their MEPs, compared with 41% knowing the name of their local MP



Base: : 1000 GB adults aged 18-75

Q Out of every 100 eligible voters in Britain, about how many do you think voted in the last European Parliament elections in 2014?

But once told MEPs are elected, we're fairly good at estimating European parliament election turnout – we guess slightly low at 30%...



Base: 1000 GB adults 18-75

Source: European Parliament figures 2015

We can pick out some laws and regulations as originating from the EU...

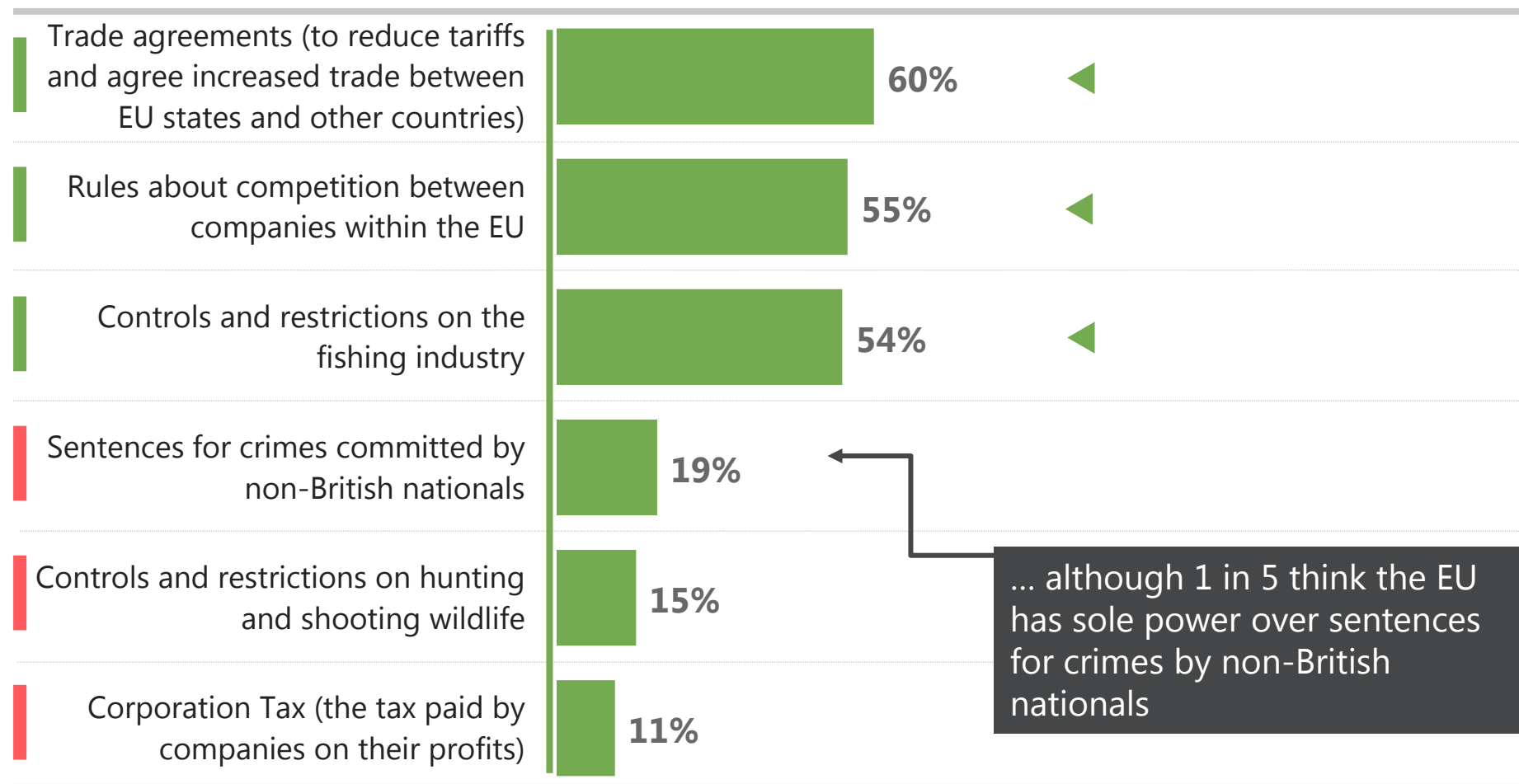
- ▶ ...but most of us do not link some key laws that came from the EU to the UK (e.g. caps on banker bonuses)
- ▶ ...and some are susceptible to believing media Euro-myths on more "barmy" EU laws...



Q There are some areas where only the EU has power to pass laws. In these cases, EU Member States have given up the power to make their own rules.

Which of the following, if any, do you think are areas where only the EU has power to pass rules, and not individual EU countries?

We 're generally pretty good at picking out laws which are the sole jurisdiction of the EU...

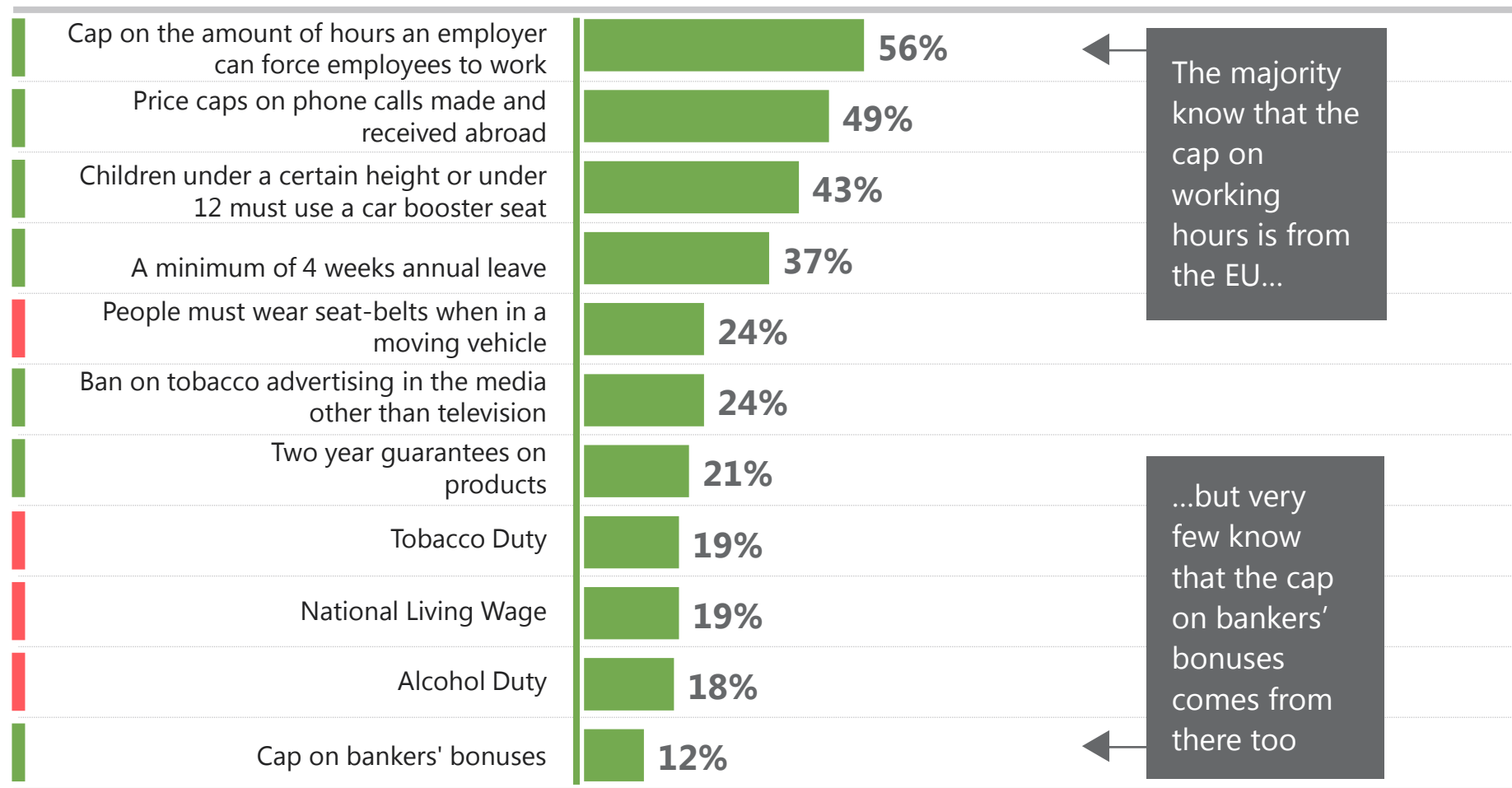


Base: 1000 GB adults 18-75

Q The European Parliament is the parliamentary institution of the EU and along with the European Commission and the European Council proposes and decides laws.

To the best of your knowledge, which of these laws or taxes in force in the UK are as a result of EU regulations?

Although less clarity when it comes to UK laws in force as a result of EU regulation...

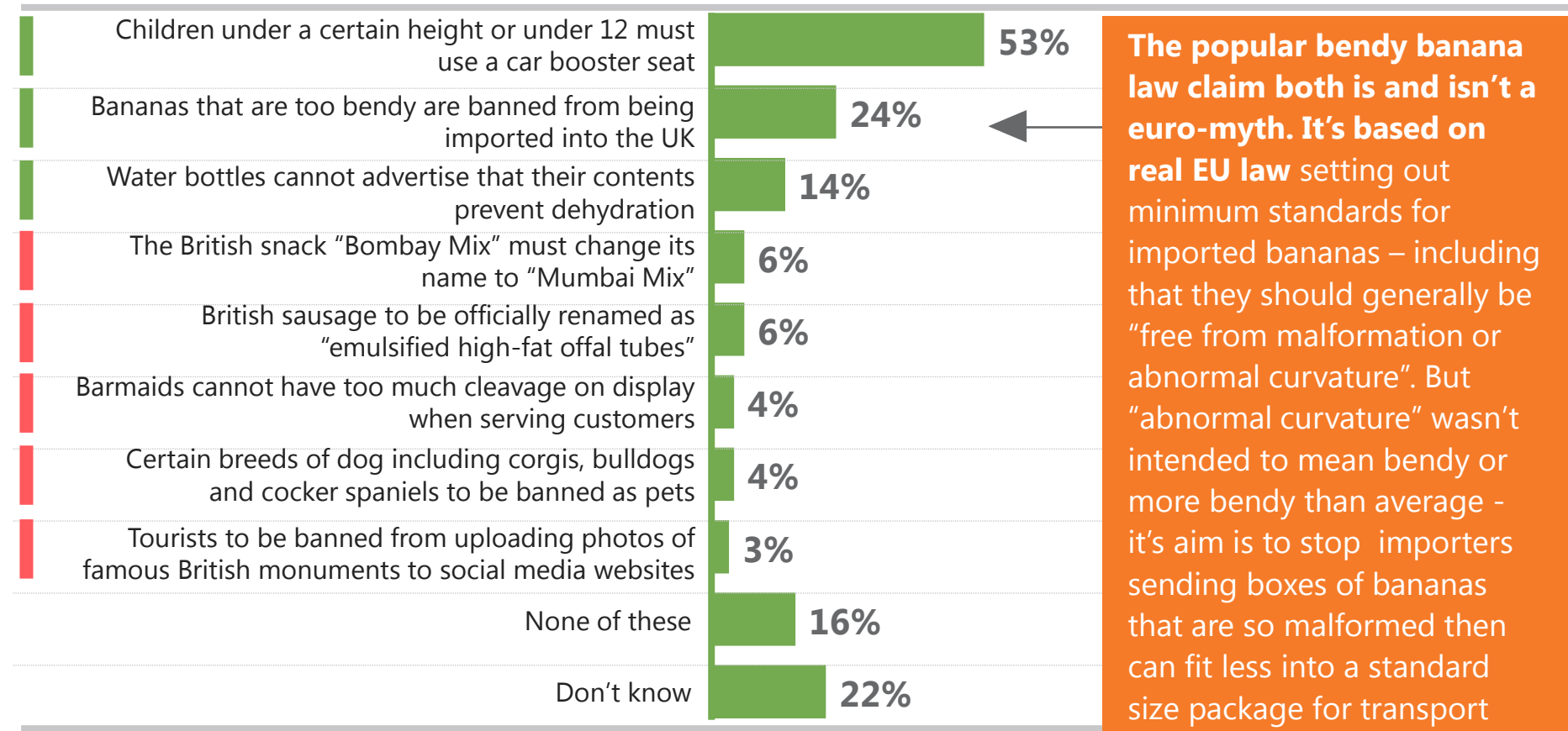


Base: 1000 GB adults 18-75

Q The following are a list of laws or restrictions that have been attributed to the EU, some of which are true, some false.

Which of the following, if any, are laws or restrictions that are in place, due to be put in place, or are suggested by the EU for implementation in the UK?

Although most of us can spot the more ridiculous false laws - some of us are susceptible to media claims –1 in 7 (15%) think at least one of the popular Euro-myth laws are true



Predictions:

we think we'll vote to remain...

it boils down to **economy** vs **immigration**:

many implications of Brexit are evenly split/neutral,
but leaving fairly clearly seen as good for immigration
control, bad for investment

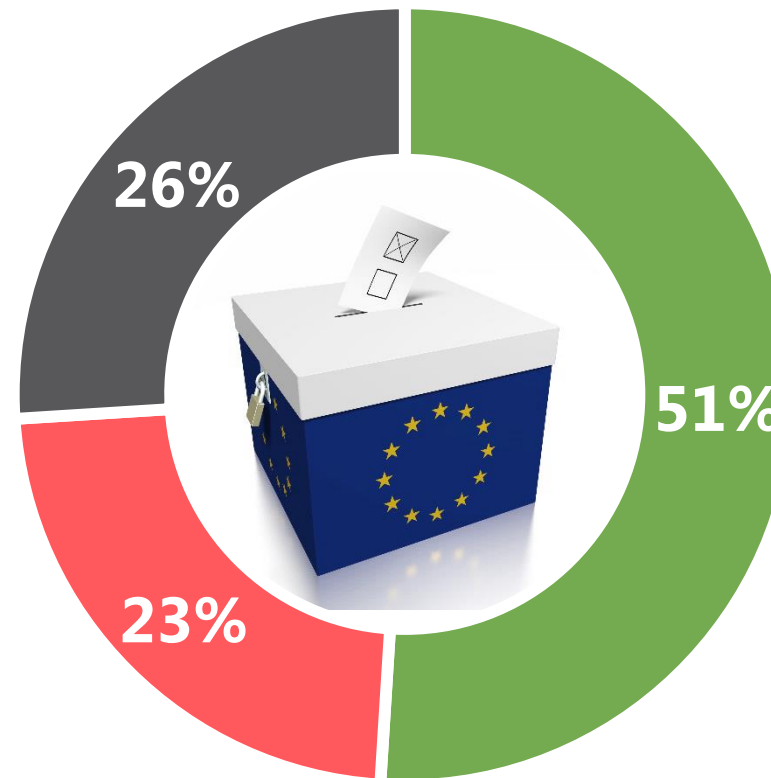


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Q And which of the following outcomes do you think is most likely to happen at the referendum in June?

People predict a remain victory – only 23% predict Brexit, including less than half of those planning to vote leave (46%)



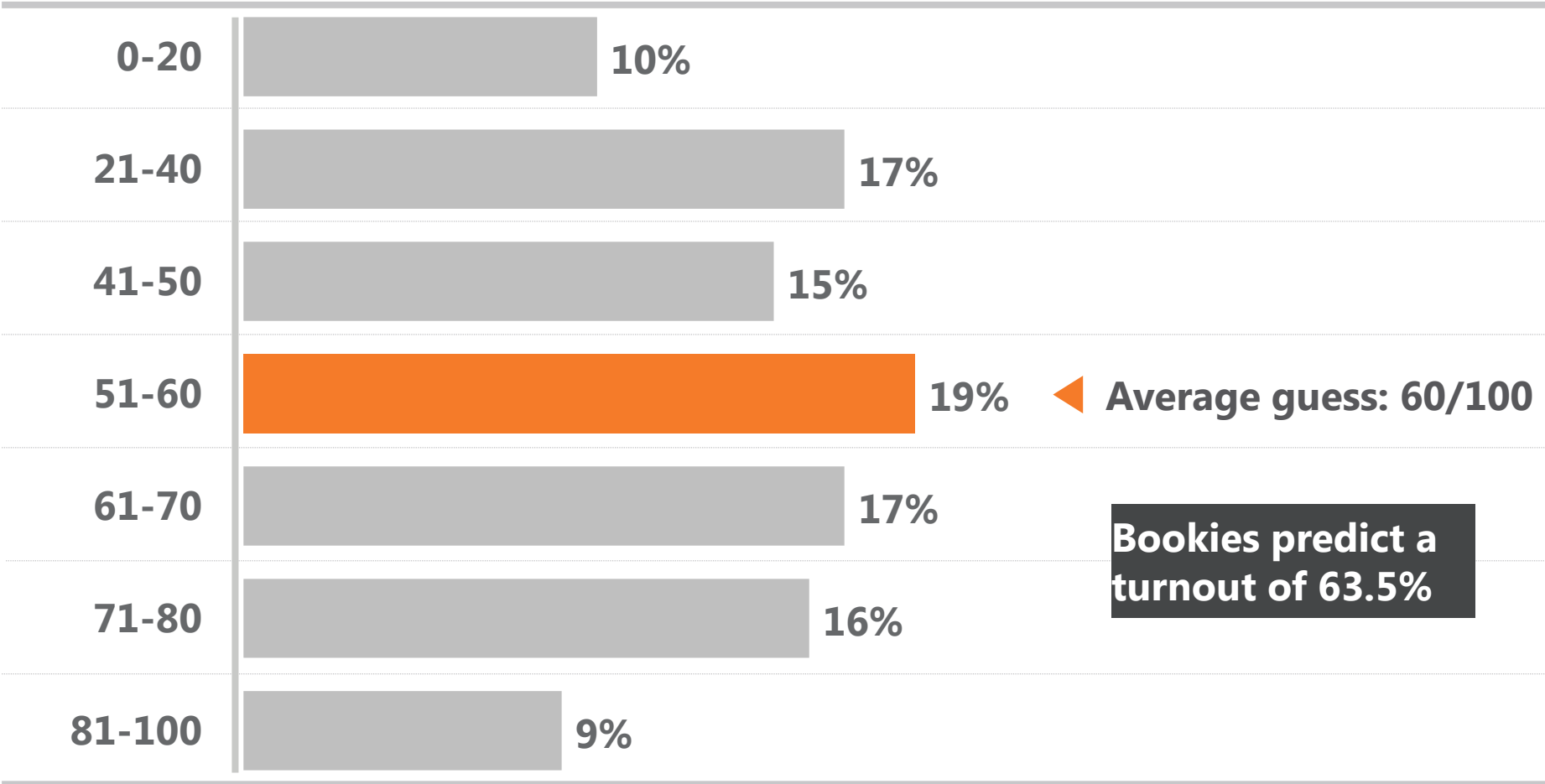
Remainers are more optimistic about getting the result they want - 74% think Britain will vote to remain

- Britain will vote to remain a member of the European Union
- Britain will vote to leave the European Union

Base: 1000 GB adults aged 18-75

Q Thinking ahead to the referendum on European Union membership in June, out of every 100 eligible voters in Britain, how many do you think will vote?

And predictions on voter turnout are in line with the bookies predictions ...



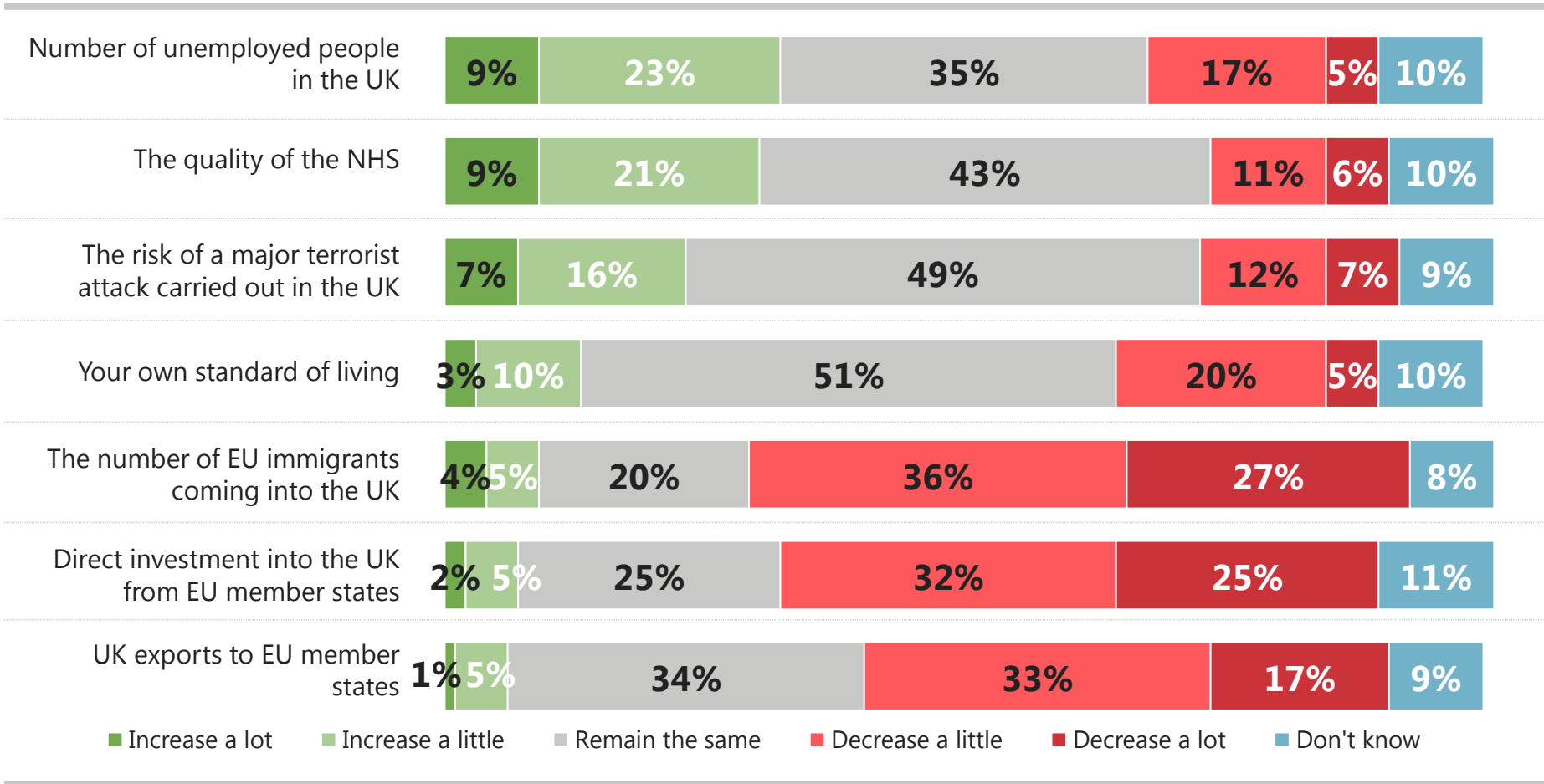
Base: 1000 GB adults 18-75

Source: Paddy Power odds w/c 30th May 2016

Q I'd now like to ask you some questions about what you think might happen as a result of Britain leaving the European Union

For each of the following, please tell me whether you think it would increase, decrease or stay the same over the next five years ...

Economy vs immigration: people fairly split on many aspects of impact of Brexit, but clear view that good for immigration control, bad for investment



Base: 1000 GB adults 18-75

So why are we so often wrong – and what does it mean for the campaigns?

▶ We overestimate what we fear...

- ▶ Misperceptions can be a direct indicator of what most concerns us - and it's a two-way street. We tend to overestimate what we worry about just as much as we worry about what we overestimate
- ▶ Therefore, a **key challenge for the Remain campaign** is that we overestimate EU immigration but underestimate our reliance on investment from EU countries

▶ Colourful stories 'stick'...

- ▶ We remember vivid stories much more than dry statistics – extreme euro-myths like bendy bananas and barmaid cleavages stick much more than figures on investment and trade– it's not just a media effect, it's how we're wired to think



And our predictions for what would happen if we did vote to leave suggest a major problem for Remain...

▶ ... 'Project fear' isn't sticking...

- ▶ Most of us are sure immigration will decline if we leave....
- ▶ And **we accept the macro-economic impact** – most are certain foreign investment from the EU will go down too...
- ▶ But **we don't connect that to our own lives** – only 25% expect to be worse off if we leave
- ▶ Remain camp's warnings about the economic uncertainties of leaving will be less effective if we think the risk only applies to other people....

Notes on the data

- Interviews were conducted using i:Omnibus – Ipsos MORI's online panel. All questions include all respondents unless otherwise states (1,000 GB adults aged 18-75)
- Where an amount is asked, respondents were asked to write an exact value (unless specified). The banding has been added at the analysis stage for ease of interpretation
- Where responses do not sum to 100, this is due to rounding
- Where specified, averages refer to the median value (that is, the response from the respondent in the middle of a ranked distribution). As the data includes some outliers, the median value was chosen over the mean as a representative of the centre of the data. Median values, unlike the mean, are unaffected by outlying measurements
- Sources were collated in partnership with Full Fact, the UK's independent factchecking charity, to establish the correct version of the actual or "truth" data used

Sources

Budget

- In 2014, the adopted EU budget was €142.6bn. The share of the gross contribution (after rebates) to this budget by the 10 listed member states are as follows: Germany (21.3%); France (16.3%); Italy (12.2%); UK (11%); Spain (8.1%); Belgium (4%); Poland (3.1%); Denmark (2%); Greece (1.3%); Romania (1.1%). Data are taken from the European Union Finances 2014 report by HM Treasury. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/388882/EU_finances_2014_final.pdf Figures for 2015 have also been released. However, 2014 figures have been used here in order to compare the contribution of EU member states with their receipts from the EU in the same year. As the EU expenditure figures for 2015 have yet to be released, 2014 figures for both member state contributions and EU expenditure in member states are used. The 2015 figures percentage gross share of the EU budget by the 10 member states listed are as follows: Germany (21.4%), France (15.7%), UK (12.6%), Italy (11.5%), Spain (8.1%), Belgium (4.1%), Poland (3%), Denmark (2%), Greece (1.3%), Romania (1.1%) https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/483344/EU_finances_2015_final_web_09122015.pdf
- In 2014, the EU expenditure in the 10 listed member states are as follows: Poland (€17.4bn); France (€13.5bn); Spain (€11.6bn); Germany (€11.5bn); Italy (€ 10.7bn); Greece (€7.1bn); Belgium (€7.0bn); UK (€7.0bn); Romania (€5.9bn); Denmark (€1.5bn). Data are taken from the European Commission figures for expenditure in 2014: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/figures/interactive/index_en.cfm
- In 2014, € 8.5 billion of the €142.5 billion EU budget was spent on administration – making up 6% of the total expenditure. Data are from the European Union breakdown of their budget in 2014: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/figures/interactive/index_en.cfm

- 55,000 civil servants employed by the EU – these include civil servants of the European Commission, staff in the general secretariat and in the political groups of the European Parliament and in the general secretariat of the Council of the European Union:
http://europa.eu/about-eu/facts-figures/administration/index_en.htm

Economy

- In 2014, the international investment into the UK was £1,034bn. This is the stock measure of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into the UK, which means it is the accumulated value of all past investments in the UK from international investors. The share of the 2014 stock FDI contributed by the listed trade partners or groups of trade partners are as follows: EU (48%); US (24%); Switzerland (4%); Japan (4%); China (including Hong Kong) (1%); Rest of the world (19%). Data are taken from the ONS data on Foreign Direct Investment Involving UK Companies for 2014, published in December 2015
<http://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/businessinnovation/datasets/foreigndirectinvestmentinvolvingukcompanies2013inwardtables>
- In 2014, the UK exported a total of £515.2bn in goods and services. The share of the total UK exports sold to the listed trade partners or groups of trade partners are as follows: EU (44%); US (17%); China (including Hong Kong) (5%); Switzerland (4%); Japan (2%); Rest of the world (28%). Data are taken from the ONS Pink Book, published October 2015:
<http://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/nationalaccounts/balanceofpayments/compendium/unitedkingdombalanceofpaymentsthepinkbook/2015-10-30/unitedkingdombalanceofpaymentsthepinkbook>

Immigration

- The estimated population of the UK in 2014 was 63.7 million and in the same year, 3.0 million of these were born in the EU. This means 5 in every 100 UK residents are born in the EU. Data are taken from the ONS population figures for 2014, published in August 2015:
<http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/articles/populationbycountryofbirthandnationalityreport/2015-09-27>
- In 2014, there were 8.3 million people resident in the UK born in another country - 3.0 million of these were born in the EU. This means 37 in every 100 UK residents born in another country were born in an EU member state. Data are taken from the ONS population figures for 2014, published August 2015:
<http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/articles/populationbycountryofbirthandnationalityreport/2015-09-27>
- In 2014, the number of people resident in the UK born in the 11 listed countries are as follows: Poland (790,000); Republic of Ireland (383,000); Germany (301,000); Romania (170,000); Italy (150,000); France (147,000); Lithuania (137,000); Spain (119,000); Bulgaria (65,000); Greece (52,000); Sweden (26,000). Data are taken from the ONS population figures for 2014, published August 2015:
<http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/articles/populationbycountryofbirthandnationalityreport/2015-09-27>
- In 2013, 20,400 ongoing Child Benefit awards were made to children living in other EEA countries and in total 7.55 million families received Child Benefit awards. This means 0.3% of Child Benefit awards cover children living in other EEA states. Data are from HMRC statistics as of December 2013 (the latest available statistics):
<http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06561#fullreport>

Laws and regulations

- EU law requires UK to guarantee a limit of working hours to 48 hours on average, including overtime
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=706&langId=en&intPageId=205>
- EU law requires workers are given paid annual leave for at least 4 weeks a year
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=706&langId=en&intPageId=205>
- EU law banning advertising that crosses national borders (press, radio or internet advertising) and the sponsorship on sport (2003)
http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/advertising/index_en.htm. Broadcasting act of 1990 and 1996 in UK banned tobacco advertising on television and radio
- EU 2 year guarantee requires a trader to repair, replace, reduce the price or give a customer a refund if goods purchased anywhere in the EU are faulty or do not work as advertised. http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/consumers/shopping/guarantees-returns/index_en.htm
- Under the EU's Capital Requirements Directive, bankers' variable pay, or bonuses, must not exceed 100% of their fixed remuneration or salary in any given year, or 200% with the agreement of shareholders. http://ec.europa.eu/finance/bank/regcapital/legislation-in-force/index_en.htm
- "Eurotariff" sets a maximum tariff for calls, texts and downloading data when travelling within the EU <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/roaming-tariffs>
- Children under 1.35m must use equipment appropriate to their size and weight when travelling in cars and lorries
http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/users/children/index_en.htm

Laws and regulations

- Rules about competition between companies within the EU; controls and restrictions on the fishing industry and trade agreements to reduce tariffs and agree increased trade between EU states and other countries are all EU competencies. Information compiled from the FAQ on EU competences and the European Commission powers: <http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/competences/faq>
- The claim that the EU has banned bendy bananas has come up in various media outlets. This both is and isn't a Euro-myth. The source of the claim is [Commission regulation 1333/2011](#) which sets out standards to ensure the EU market is supplied with bananas of a similar standard. It sets out three quality standards bananas should be classified into to ensure that importers know what quality of bananas they are buying (Extra Class, Class I and Class II). In terms of shape, Class I bananas should only have 'slight defects in shape' whereas Class II can have "defects of shape". However, there are minimum standards that apply to all bananas imported into the EU – including that they should be generally "free from malformation or abnormal curvature". "Abnormal curvature" does not mean bananas that have defects of shape (these would be Class II) and is not intended to refer to bananas that are bendier than average – it refers to quantities of bananas with such unusual shape that it would affect the number and weight that could fit into a standard size package for transport.
- The EU has not banned barmaids from having too much cleavage on display when serving customers. This comes from false claims in 2005 that the EU had ordered employers to get workers to cover up in order to prevent exposing skin to the sun and increasing risk of skin cancer. There was a draft Optical Radiation directive that didn't say anything about barmaid's cleavages specifically, but did mention that employers would be responsible for ensuring their staff did not suffer from over-exposure to the sun by using sun cream or covering up their skin as appropriate. A vote from in the European Parliament meant that sunshine was not included.
<https://osha.europa.eu/en/legislation/directives/directive-2006-25-ec-of-the-european-parliament-and-of-the-council-of-5-april-2006>

Laws and regulations

- Certain breeds of dog including corgis, bulldogs and cocker spaniels are not to be banned as pets by the EU. This is from a claim in the Daily Mail in 2002. A committee of animal protection experts drew up the European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals in 1987, which does condemn the breeding of some varieties of dogs as pets. However, it was drawn up under the Council of Europe – which is completely separate to the EU. The UK is a member of the Council of Europe, but has not signed up to this agreement (which is voluntary). Statement by European Commission: <http://blogs.ec.europa.eu/ECintheUK/corgis-to-be-banned-by-eu/>
- The British sausage is not to be renamed as “emulsified high-fat offal tube”. This is from BBC comedy *Yes Minister* where the European Commission was trying to re-name the British sausage as an “emulsified high-fat offal tube”.
- Tourists are not going to be banned from uploading photos of famous British monuments to social media websites by the EU. Numerous newspapers including the Express and the Sun ran with headlines along these lines in June/July 2015. There was a general review of EU copyright laws in 2015. Most member states, including the UK, currently apply “freedom of panorama” which means that anyone can publish, even for commercial ends, images of public places. Other member states, including France and Belgium don’t apply this. As part of the general review, a German MEP on a committee attempted to harmonise EU copyright laws and introduce the UK-style freedom of panorama across all member states. A counter-proposal was put forward to restrict “freedom of panorama” for *commercial* ends (i.e. not personal or “tourist snaps”). The European Parliament voted on the recommendations and rejected this proposal. EU article <http://blogs.ec.europa.eu/ECintheUK/europe-is-not-banning-tourist-photos-of-the-london-eye/>
- The EU has recommended that water bottles sold in the EU should not advertise that their contents prevent dehydration. It’s part of the EU system to insist advertisers provide evidence for claims they want to make about the health benefits of products. And scientists set out in EFSA Journal evidence that water does not lead to reduced risk of development of dehydration necessarily http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/scientific_output/files/main_documents/1982.pdf

- The EU is not stipulating that “Bombay Mix” change its name to “Mumbai Mix”. This is from a claim in the Sun in 2006 that the EU was planning on forcing a change of name as Bombay has been known as Mumbai since mid 1990s. This had never been discussed by the EU and the claim has been traced back to the Daily Telegraph’s Brussel’s correspondent at the time. Statement from EU: <http://blogs.ec.europa.eu/ECintheUK/euomyth-bombay-mix-to-be-renamed/>

Democracy

- Out of every 100 eligible voters in Britain, about 36 voted in the last European Parliament elections in 2014. Data are taken from the European Parliament voter turnout figures for the May 2014 elections: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/turnout.html>
- Out of every 100 eligible voters in Britain, 66 in every 100 voted in the last General Election in 2015. Data are taken from the UK parliament voter turnout figures for May 2015: <http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-7186>

For more information

Name: Bobby Duffy

Email: Bobby.duffy@ipsos.com

Twitter: @Bobbyipsosmori

Name: Hannah Shrimpton

Email: Hannah.shrimpton@ipsos.com

Twitter: @h_shrimpton



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