

# Citizens' views on the EU and food issues

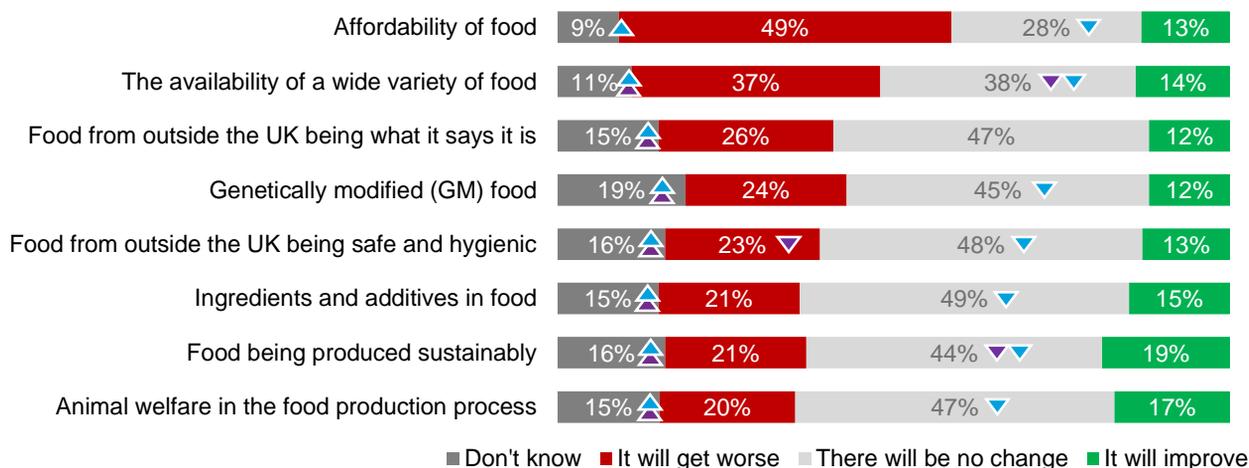
## Summary of findings – July 2018



This headline note pulls out key findings from the seventh wave of online quarterly tracking on citizens' attitudes to food and regulation within the context of leaving the EU, with a focus on areas where views have changed over time (significant changes indicated with symbols - see key below). The tracker moved from a quarterly basis to bi-annual after January 2018.

### Key findings:

- 1 The trend continues that citizens are more likely to think that the vote to leave the EU will have a **negative** (40%) **rather than positive** (24%) **effect on food** over the next 2-3 years.
- 2 Nearly two thirds of citizens (**62%**) **think that food will become more expensive** as a result of leaving the EU; this proportion has remained fairly consistent since April 2017.
- 3 **Citizens are more likely to think that food issues will get worse than improve.** For a number of issues, the proportion of respondents stating 'there will be no change' has fallen, and the proportion stating 'don't know' has increased, suggesting a broad decrease in clarity of citizens views.



(Q8. What impact if any, do you think there might be on the following food issues, now that the UK has voted to leave the European Union?)

- 4 **Over half (53%) of citizens favour more regulation over less regulation.** Around a third (30%) believe that there will be more regulation as a result of the UK voting to leave the EU and feel that this is a good thing. The proportion of respondents who feel they don't know what will happen increased notably this wave, from 17% in January 2018 to 26% in July 2018.
- 5 Citizens feel that a **wide range of food related issues should be prioritised by the government** in the context of leaving the EU, particularly affordability (73%) and food being safe and hygienic both from outside the UK (73%) and produced in the UK (69%). For the majority of issues there has been an increase in 'don't know' answers, again suggesting lack of clarity among citizens.

### QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

Findings from the latest EU Exit qualitative research (Jan/Feb 2018) suggest that:

- **Food regulation tends not to be top of mind** when it comes thinking about leaving the EU, and in many cases questions about future expectations are initially met with silence / confusion
- There is a general sense that **'if it ain't broke, don't fix it'** – people think that current food standards should be kept the same
- Consumers identify the following areas as important after leaving the EU: maintaining **safety standards** (inc. hygiene, ingredients, provenance, and animal welfare), maintaining (or improving) the **quality** of food, better / clear **labelling** of food, keeping food **prices** affordable, **supporting farmers** and reducing waste