

Academic opinion in 60 seconds? #LSEBrexitVote videos prove to be a powerful tool in a visual, time-poor world.

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Is it possible to air serious academic opinion in less than 60 seconds and find a captive audience? Given the results of the #LSEBrexitVote video series project, [Candy Gibson](#) finds the answer is an unqualified 'yes'. The widespread engagement with the videos reflects what many social media practitioners are saying: that videos are a powerful tool in a visual, time-poor world. On average, viewers watched 80 per cent of each video – double the benchmark time suggested by multimedia analysts.



For months leading up to the EU referendum, the UK was saturated with wall-to-wall coverage of the pros and cons of Brexit, with every conceivable expert in the country willing to air their views. LSE academics featured strongly in the debate, widely quoted across a range of media outlets and attracting global attention for their opinions.

This coverage was achieved in multiple ways – predominantly through the efforts of the LSE media relations office, responding to specific journalist requests relating to Brexit and linking them up with relevant academic experts. LSE public lectures, blog posts, press releases and additional School events tailored to media also helped feed the EU referendum appetite and inform a wider audience. But another project undertaken by the LSE media relations office demonstrated the immense potential of marrying social media with serious academic research.

#LSEBrexitVote video series

The #LSEBrexitVote video series was launched in mid-April, 10 weeks out from the EU referendum on 23 June. The concept was simple – a series of short video clips (under 60 seconds in length) with relevant LSE academics providing concise opinions to key issues surrounding Brexit. The media relations office worked in conjunction with LSE's European Institute, Film and Audio and a handful of academics from other departments to produce the videos.

Fifteen LSE staff were interviewed for the Brexit series – predominantly academics but also several students. The edited interviews resulted in 77 individual clips in total, allowing for a different video to be aired across the School's social media platforms every day for 10 weeks.



For the full playlist of videos in the #LSEBrexitVote, [see here](#).

A look at the stats

Any concerns about Brexit 'fatigue' and information overload were quickly laid to rest. The Brexit videos posted on LSE's corporate Facebook site alone attracted 259,000 views, with the accompanying tweets making 611,348 total impressions and 4584 engagements.

The #LSEBrexVote Youtube playlist also attracted 19,383 views – 10 times the average views for an LSE playlist, making the series the highest ever watched playlist in the School's history.

UK viewers represented more than 50 per cent of the audience, with 75 per cent watching the videos on a desktop computer and the remaining 25 per cent on a tablet or mobile. Once in the playlist, users watched an average of three videos.

On average, viewers also watched 80 per cent of each video – double the normal time that most viewers spend looking at a video clip, according to multimedia analysts. The finding, according to LSE social media manager Amy Mollett, provides a clear case for making 60 second videos standard practice across the School to ensure efficient use of resources. The statistics reflect what many social media practitioners are saying: that videos are a powerful communication tool in a visual, time-poor world.

#LSEBrexVote video series: Key Stats

- 259,000 Facebook views
- On average, viewers watched 80% of each video
- UK viewers more than 50% of the audience
- 75% viewed on desktop, 25% on tablet or mobile

- Candy Gibson (LSE)

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A first for LSE...but not the last

The Brexit project was a first for LSE – a social media experiment combining academic expertise with a strong news angle, public interest and visual appeal, and packaged to a one-minute formula. There were other beneficial spin-offs: the videos were promoted to national and international journalists who, in turn, cherry picked the content for potential follow up interviews. The Brexit videos also drove traffic to other areas of LSE, linking the videos with related blogs and news stories where appropriate.

Not only did the project showcase the most important issue facing the UK for decades, but it also aligned it with the School's strategic priorities – demonstrating strong research, encouraging diverse views, influencing government policy, providing solutions to key social challenges, cementing the LSE brand as a world leader in politics and social sciences, and demonstrating LSE's intellectual engagement with the wider world.

For any questions about the #LSEBrexVote video project, please contact Candy Gibson, LSE Senior Media Relations Officer, at c.gibson@lse.ac.uk or 0207 955 7440.

This piece originally appeared on the [LSE Communications blog](#).

Note: This article gives the views of the author, and not the position of the LSE Impact blog, nor of the London School of Economics. Please review our [Comments Policy](#) if you have any concerns on posting a comment below.

About the Author

Candy Gibson is Senior Media Relations Officer at the London School of Economics and Political Science. She has an extensive background as a journalist, editor and publisher in Australia and for the past decade has worked in the higher education sector in both Australia and the United Kingdom.

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