

Brexit: Causes and Consequences.

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EU Member States



The European Union

- The Treaty of Rome (1957): peace, prosperity, and democracy in Europe.
- The first enlargement (1973): United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark.
- The second enlargement (1981): Greece.
- Third enlargement (1986): Spain and Portugal.
- Treaty on the European Union (1992, Maastricht): freedom of movement for people, goods, services and capital.
- The common currency (Euro, 1999) with some exceptions.

The European Union

- The fifth enlargement (2004): Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Malta, Cyprus.
- Failure of the European Constitution project (2005).
- The sixth enlargement (2007): Romania and Bulgaria.
- The financial crisis (2008).
- The migration crisis (2010-...)
- The seventh enlargement (2013): Croatia.
- The Brexit crisis!

The United Kingdom: a Multinational State.



The United Kingdom

- England.
- Wales: 1535.
- Scotland: 1707.
- Ireland: 1800.
- Northern Ireland (only): 1921
- The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
- The principle of parliamentary sovereignty.
- Liberalism stronger than socialism.

The UK-EU relationship.

- The 1960s and General de Gaulle's veto: the UK too 'atlanticist'.
- The 1980s and 1990s: the British exceptions (social charter, euro, rebate).
- Thatcherism and the EU.
- The Conservative Party divided on the EU.
- Labour and the Liberal-Democrats in support of the EU.

Brexit: Background and Causes

- The United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP)
- The promise of Prime Minister David Cameron: 2013.
- The Conservative victory at the 2015 elections.
- The referendum (2016): 'Leave' and 'Remain.'
- The UK Conservative government supports 'Remain'.
- The arguments for 'Leave': the EU's democratic deficit; bureaucracy and the EU; immigration and border control.

Brexit: Background and Causes

- The arguments for 'Remain': the economic benefits of the European single market (and thus the economic risks of Brexit: job losses and economic slowdowns); arguments supported by the business sector; loss of influence for the UK in the world. The result: 51.89% for 'Leave'.
- The result in the nations of the UK:
 - England: 53.38% for 'Leave.'
 - Wales: 52.53% for 'Leave.'
 - Northern Ireland: 55.78% for 'Remain'
 - Scotland: 62% for 'Remain'

The Consequences of the vote for Brexit

- Brexit with or without a deal?
 - March 2017: the UK government invokes article 50 of the Treaty of Lisbon on the exit of a member state from the EU.
 - A general election is called by Prime Minister Theresa May. The Conservatives lose their majority.
 - The UK government and the EU negotiate an exit agreement, which the UK Parliament refuses to approve (3 times).

The Consequences of the vote for Brexit

- The most controversial element of these deals was the 'Irish backdrop,' which would keep Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland (thus the UK and the EU) border-free.
- New Prime Minister Boris Johnson announces he will prorogue Parliament (in the hope that the UK leaves the EU with or without a deal).
- Several Conservative MPs leave the caucus.
- Parliament adopts a law stipulating the UK government should ask for another extension from the EU in case there is no exit agreement.
- The UK Supreme Court rules prorogation is illegal.

The consequences of the vote for Brexit

- The Irish question: is peace in danger?
- The Scottish question: another independence referendum?
- The British political system.
- The British party system.
- The future of the UK outside of the EU.
- The future of the EU without the UK.