



August 2022

BREXIT Twenty Months On

So, let us list the benefits and positive changes that have occurred since the United Kingdom left the European Union.

First, we have and then also? Okay, let us look at the negatives:

- Chaos at the ports for exporting and importing goods due to increased paperwork, health & safety checks, etc., etc. resulting in delays and increased costs thus prompting some companies to abandon exporting to Europe.
- Massive lorry queues at Dover with the expense of a special lorry park to handle the volume of traffic.
- Political disruption in Ulster due to the 'border' in the Irish Sea that the Government said would not happen. Many European countries now ship directly to Eire rather than via the United Kingdom. The 'power-sharing' government collapsed.
- Labour shortages in the United Kingdom resulting in increased costs and the deterioration of services. Examples include – lorry drivers, health and care workers, farm labour and hospitality staff.
- Increased immigration. What? I thought the object was to decrease it!!!! Although European workers no longer wish to come, most of the immigrants are refugees from despotic regimes.
- New travel regulations: visas, medical cover, mobile phone charges, travelling with pets.
- Loss of funding for scientific research and exclusion from some major European projects.
- Exodus of some companies and reduced foreign investment in the United Kingdom.
- An estimated 6% increase in the cost of food and a decrease in the United Kingdom's GDP.

Six years since the vote, we have got rid of an incompetent Prime Minister but sadly still have an incompetent government. At the time of writing we are waiting for Boris Johnson's successor to continue the process of governing 'on-the-fly'

January 2021

Reflections on BREXIT

Well, Boris Johnson negotiated a 'fantastic' deal by yielding to most of the European Union demands at the last minute on 24th December 2020 to avoid a potentially very damaging 'no deal' BEXIT. A key point of Johnson's stand was to be no border between Great Britain and Northern Island – well, there is one. Then there is the immigration issue: the UK will control immigration using a 'points' system based on qualifications and earnings. Unfortunately, lower paid immigrants are required to help in care homes, as an example; exceptions will need to be considered.

As expected, there was a lot of confusion from 1st January 2021 due to the government being unprepared and offering little help to business. Delays at ports ensued and Companies were faced with mountains of extra paperwork. Now more problems are coming to light. With Scotland and Northern Island voting to remain in the European Union one can now envisage Scottish independence and a united Ireland. So the 'United Kingdom' will become just England & Wales or perhaps 'New Britain'. Sadly, most of the English (like the UK's BREXIT government) don't care.

So, what have other impacts have there been?

- Buying some goods from Europe will incur vat (20%) and import charges.
- The UK has withdrawn from the student exchange scheme thus not providing the opportunity for students to broaden their knowledge and help their language skills.
- Musicians and artists touring the continent "will be required to check domestic immigration and visitor rules for each member state in which they intend to tour". This may require them to have multiple visas or work permits, which some industry experts say will be expensive and potentially prohibitive - especially for musicians at the start of their careers.
- Plans are to scrap the EU's labour laws, which could be detrimental to the UK's workforce.
- The financial industry is now losing out in that over 7,000 city jobs have been lost to the EU with more to come.
- Travelling to Europe on holiday will become more onerous without the freedom to travel between member countries so easily.

Oh, and let's not forget that the UK still has to pay the EU £25bn!

Maybe things will not be as bad as predicted, but it still remains unfortunate that we have distanced ourselves from our historically close neighbours. It is also sad that we have a government that was pally with the United States' worst president in history – and is now trying to distance themselves from him! When can we get rid of this incompetent bunch!

December 2018

BREXIT

(BRitain Exhibits Xenophobic and Insular Tendencies)

(An Opinion)

Throughout its history Britain has been closely involved with the European mainland and strongly integrated into its political and trading relationships. It has been invaded by Romans, Vikings and

more importantly Normans. It has taken part in many European wars, in both defence of its own territory and in aid of its European allies which culminated in the Second World War. Most of these wars were conducted during the era of Nation States. In the aftermath of the Second World War with its loss of over 60 million people European nations decided to forge a unity block designed to prevent future wars and move away from the Nation State mentality. Thus was formed the European Coal and Steel Community an organization of six European countries created after World War II to regulate their industrial production under a centralised authority. It was formally established in 1951 by the Treaty of Paris, signed by Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany. The ECSC was the first international organisation to be based on the principles of supra-nationalism, and started the process of formal integration which ultimately led to the European Union (EU).

What has been the impact of the EU?

- Elimination of conflicts between nations that might have led to war.
- The spread of democracy and democratic values throughout Europe.
- Resolution of disputes via a common European body.
- Adoption of trading and other standards across Europe.
- The ability of Europeans to settle and work anywhere within the European area.
- Exposure of all Europeans to different cultures.
- Easy of travel for both business and pleasure.
- Ease of moving goods (tariff-free trading) between members of the bloc.

Granted, each nation must pay into a European budget to fund not only the organisation but to help increase the living standards of poorer members. Spreading such wealth across Europe in this way encourages local entrepreneurs and development and minimises the need for masses of poorer citizens to seek employment in wealthier member states.

Unfortunately, when the referendum on BREXIT was held neither 'Brexiters' nor 'Remainers' clearly presented the benefits and economic impact of leaving or remaining in the EU. In particular, the Brexiters appeared to have no plan as to how the UK would leave the EU and their campaign was based on three claims:

1. Reducing immigration
2. Taking back control
3. Eliminating our payments into the EU

Most of those who voted for Brexit interpreted these claims as follows:

Reducing Immigration

All immigration, not realising that it really meant only European immigrants, from whom the UK actually benefits economically.

Taking Back Control

Frustration at being 'told what to do' by Brussels.

Many if not most of EU rules were devised in collaboration with the UK and isn't it progress when nations agree to common rules and regulations? Although in the EU we –

- Control our own budgets and taxation
- Control our own military services
- Are not a member of the ECU group

- Are not part of the Schengen area

Eliminating our payments into the EU

We will save at least £350 million each week.

Well, this outlandish claim ignored the fact that we receive substantial financial inflows (EU grants) and what is wrong with spreading wealth and prosperity to guarantee peace and harmony between nations.

Those who thought it would be easy for us to leave the EU did not appreciate that the EU 'holds all the cards' and, in the interest of European Unity, would never make it easy for the UK to leave.

Sadly, the impact of the 'leave vote' has been two years of political chaos and hundreds of thousands of pounds spent on travel, meetings, luncheons & dinners and paperwork.

What a sad day for Britain!

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