The BREXIT Debate
The United Kingdom and the European Union
A guide to information sources

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Latest revision: April 2016
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The BREXIT Debate
The United Kingdom and the European Union

The Cardiff EDC can help you find information from all points of view on this important topic.

Click on the images in this guide to link into a range of information sources.

To find further information search in ESO.
The United Kingdom and the European Union

The EU deal

3 November 2015

Britain may not need the EU, but the EU needs Britain

By Leopold Taggart

The United Kingdom and the European Union

The EU deal

The BREXIT / BREMAIN Debate: Let the debate begin…
The United Kingdom and the European Union

The BREXIT Debate: Background

The government is working with allies to reform the European Union to make it more open, competitive, flexible and democratically accountable, for the benefit of the UK and the whole of Europe.

The review of the balance of competences will be an audit of what the EU does and how it affects the UK.
The United Kingdom and the European Union

The Review of the Balance of Competences between the UK and the EU

House of Lords report finds allegations of EU interference unfounded

The European Union Committee’s House of Lords has accepted the government’s attempt to “bury” the results of a report on the UK’s relationship with the EU after it found no evidence of excessive interference from Brussels.

The Review of the Balance of Competences

Background

Against the backdrop of continuing and often intense political debate in the United Kingdom about its relationship with the rest of the European Union (EU), the Coalition Agreement of May 2010, underpinning the 2010-2015 Conservative-Liberal Democrat government, stated that the new administration would "review the balance of the EU’s existing competences, in the context of an overall government commitment to ensure that there is no further transfer of sovereignty or powers to the EU during the five-year parliamentary term."

This process was taken forward in a formal Review of the Balance of Competences between the UK and the EU, which was launched in July 2012 and concluded in December 2014.

The UK government’s official communication to the House of Commons and House of Lords to launch the Balance of Competences Review (Command Paper 8441) used a broad definition of EU competence, covering "everything deriving from EU law that affects what happens in the UK." The review was to seek to examine all the areas where the treaties gave the EU competence to act (see box below), and to avoid what the EU did and how this affected the UK. The whole process would be "comprehensive, well-informed and analytical," gathering evidence to help inform public debate. While the review would be government-led, it would also involve outside experts, organisations and individuals who wished to feed in their views on the issues covered.

The Review of the Balance of Competences

The Treaty of Lisbon amended the Treaty on European Union and created a "list of competences" (competences not covered by the Lisbon Treaty have been maintained) comprising three main types of EU competence:

- Exclusive competence (Article 3 TUEC): The EU alone is able to legislate and adopt binding acts in these fields. The Member States’ role is therefore limited to applying these acts, unless the Union authorises them to adopt certain acts themselves.
- Shared competence (Article 4 TUEC): The EU and Member States are authorised to adopt binding acts in these fields. However, Member States may exercise their competence only if so far as the EU has not exercised, or has decided not to exercise, its own competence.
- Supplementing competence (Article 6 TUEC): The EU can only intervene to support, coordinate or complement the action of Member States.

The review has been described as a "high-decibel" exercise, with the government and the EU both seeking to influence the debate. It has been seen as an opportunity for the UK and the EU to address concerns about the balance of powers and to make the EU more transparent and accountable.

Find more information via ESO on the Review of the Balance of Competences

The BREXIT Debate: Review of the Balance of Competences
The United Kingdom and the European Union

United Kingdom: Referendum on EU membership: Background
The UK Government has stated that membership of the European Union is in the national interest, but the Prime Minister David Cameron would like to reform the EU and renegotiate the UK’s relationship with it, before holding an in/out referendum in 2017 if a Conservative government is elected in May 2015. The UK’s new relationship with the EU would be put to the electorate, who would decide whether the UK should remain in the EU under new terms or be the first Member State to leave the EU.

David Cameron identified areas for reform in his ‘Bloomberg speech’ on 23 January 2013. His five principles for a European Union “fit for the 21st Century” were: competitiveness, flexibility, repatriating powers to Member States, democratic accountability and fairness. In March 2014 he set out proposals for reform:

- Powers flowing away from Brussels, not always to it;
- National parliaments able to work together to block unwanted EU legislation;
- Businesses liberated from red tape;
- UK police forces and justice systems able to protect British citizens, without interference from the European institutions;
- Free movement to take up work, not free benefits;
- Removing the concept of “ever closer union”.

This Note looks at what the Government is doing to tackle some of the perceived weaknesses of EU policy and procedures and looks at prospects for future reform.
The United Kingdom and the European Union

Judy Dempsey's Strategic Europe

And Britain Voted for . . .

Posted by: JUDY DEMPSEY

Friday, May 8, 2015

EU Law Analysis

Expert insight into EU law developments

Friday, 8 May 2015

Is Brexit inevitable? The UK’s EU membership after the General Election

#ElectionEconomics: The research evidence on key issues for voters in the 2015 UK General Election

UK general election May 2015 ... and aftermath
The United Kingdom and the European Union

UK Government 2015 – 2016: The EU Referendum Bill / Act
The United Kingdom and the European Union

What is happening with the negotiations autumn 2015

- **Cameron targets Brussels over Brexit**, Sept 2015
- **Renegotiation Scorecard**, Sept 2015
- **UK to set out EU reform demands in November letter to EU President**, Oct 2015

EU Select Committee

Visions of EU reform inquiry

**Inquiry status:** open - accepting written submissions

Call for evidence published.

**Scope of the Inquiry**

The inquiry is exploring the vision for the future of the EU that the UK Government is seeking to realise through its current reform proposals, ahead of the referendum on UK membership to be held by the end of 2017. The Committee is assessing the extent to which there is consensus on the long-term direction of the EU, within the UK, the EU institutions and across the 28 EU Member States.
What is happening with the negotiations Nov 2015 – Jan 2016

- **David Cameron sends European Council President Donald Tusk further details of UK calls for EU reform**, 10 November 2015
- **Letter from European Council President Tusk to EU governments on the UK negotiations**, Dec 2015
- **Find more information in ESO**

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**EU Law Analysis**

Expert insight into EU law developments

**Cameron’s Chatham House speech: Full speed ahead for the renegotiation of the UK’s EU membership?**

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**EU reform - UK negotiates with EU and other Member States 2015/16**
The United Kingdom and the European Union

The referendum on UK membership of the EU: assessing the reform process

Referendum on membership of the European Union
Assessment of the Electoral Commission on the proposed referendum question
September 2015

United Kingdom: Referendum on EU membership
United Kingdom and the European Union

EU referendum: Prime Minister's minute to ministers, January 2016
Speech by David Cameron at the World Economic Forum, Davos, 21 January 2016

The Prime Minister

TO ALL MINISTERIAL COLLEAGUES
EU REFERENDUM

In my Statement to Parliament on Tuesday, I announced that there will be a clear government position after the conclusion of the EU negotiation and I also explained that, from that point, there will be a special arrangement to permit individual Ministers to take a different personal position from the official position of the Government. Having consulted the Cabinet Secretary, this letter sets out in more detail what this means in practice.

First, this arrangement will come into effect following a Cabinet discussion, after the negotiations have concluded with our EU partners. Until that point – when it will become clear whether a deal can be negotiated that delivers the objectives I have set out – all Ministers should continue to support the position set out in our Manifesto and say or do nothing that will undermine the Government’s negotiating position. The Government’s policy, explained in our Manifesto and discussed at Cabinet, is to negotiate a new settlement for Britain in the EU and then ask the British people in a referendum whether they want to stay in the EU on this reformed basis or not. As I have said many times, if the renegotiation is successful, the Government’s position will be in favour of Britain remaining in a reformed EU. If the renegotiation is unsuccessful, then we rule nothing out. This referendum must take place by the end of 2017. I am grateful to all colleagues for the support provided to date.

Second, this wholly exceptional arrangement will apply only to the question of whether we should remain in the EU or leave. All other EU or EU-related business, including negotiations in or with all EU institutions and other Member States, and debates and votes in Parliament here on EU business will continue to be subject to the normal rules of collective responsibility and party discipline. This also of course applies to policy discussions within government. The existing machinery of government for making policy on EU business will continue to function in the normal way. In Parliament, the rules state that Ministers speak from the Front Bench, and when they do so they support government policy.

Electoral Commission to open registration for EU Referendum campaigners

News release published: 26-01-2016
The United Kingdom and the European Union

**EU reform - UK negotiates with EU and other Member States 2016**

- UK PM David Cameron has **meetings** with Presidents of the European Commission and European Parliament, 29 January 2016, and **meeting** with President of the European Council, 31 January 2016
- President of European Council, Donald Tusk, circulates **details** of a draft settlement to EU Member States, 2 February 2016
The United Kingdom and the European Union

UK negotiates with EU and other Member States – European Council, 18-19 February 2016

EU countries react to the Tusk proposals for a new settlement for the UK within the EU, February 2016

+ European Council, Brussels, 18-19 February 2016

Find more information in ESO on the lead-up, negotiations at, and implications of the decisions relating to the EU settlement with the UK at the European Council, 18-19 February 2016
David Cameron announces the date of the EU referendum – the campaign begins

+ UK Prime Minister David Cameron holds special Cabinet meeting, 20 February 2016 to report back on outcome of the European Council, 18-19 February 2016. 23 June 2016 is announced as the date of the EU referendum.

+ UK Govt publish a series of Policy Papers in March-April 2016

+ Find more information in ESO
UK Government campaigns to ‘remain’ in the EU

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Websites from the UK Government arguing the case to remain in the EU
The United Kingdom and the European Union

Information sources from UK Parliament: Library

House of Commons Library is producing many informative sources on the EU referendum and the Brexit debate.
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What is the SNP’s position on the EU?

The SNP believes that membership of the European Union is in Scotland’s best interests. There are a huge number of benefits for Scotland from EU membership including that the EU is the main destination for Scotland’s international exports and as citizens of the EU we are able to travel freely throughout Europe – for work, study or travel – without the need for visas. The SNP doesn’t believe the EU is perfect and agree that it needs reform but the SNP wants Scotland to have a louder voice in Europe - an increased contribution to EU policy making and an opportunity to be part of discussions about reform, rather than becoming even more distant by removing ourselves altogether.

Information sources from the UK political parties

[Splinter groups are listed on the Remain and Leave pages]
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Vote Leave, take control

Britain Stronger in Europe

Information sources from the ‘lead’ campaign groups
The United Kingdom and the European Union

Campaigning to remain in the EU...
Campaigning to remain in the EU...
The United Kingdom and the European Union

Campaigning to leave the EU...
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Campaigning to leave the EU...
Stakeholders and interests: The UK should stay in the EU
Stakeholders and interests: The UK should stay in the EU
Leaving EU poses “very significant risks” to UK’s future. TheCityUK reports provide critical analysis of the Economic case for UK’s EU membership and Legal implications of alternatives.

Published 27/04/2014

Two new reports commissioned by TheCityUK show that leaving the EU poses very significant risks to the UK’s future, undermining economic well-being and the ability of business to grow and compete in world markets. The research also reveals that the EU has a positive impact on driving UK trade, high productivity and growth.

May 2014

The consequences of Brexit for the City of London
By John Springford and Philip Whyte

THE EUROPE REPORT: A WIN-WIN SITUATION
AUGUST 2014

Brexit and the City
Take the City out of Europe and there won't be much left of its current global luster, warn London-based bankers and financiers.

by PIERRE BRIANCION | 10/6/15, 5:30 AM CET | Updated 10/6/15, 6:47 AM CET

LONDON — It’s a strange world when you can’t trust a conservative UK government to defend the global interests of the City of London.

And that’s why the financial industry isn’t bothering to wait for talks between Prime Minister David Cameron and his European partners to state clearly on which side it will stand on a referendum on the UK’s European Union membership: a resounding, unqualified “yes” for staying in, whatever the outcome of London’s attempt to reform the way Europe works.
The United Kingdom and the European Union

Stakeholders and interests: Business and Labour
The United Kingdom and the European Union

Stakeholders and interests: The UK should leave the EU
The United Kingdom and the European Union

Stakeholders and interests: The UK should leave the EU
The United Kingdom and the European Union

EU Law Analysis

Expert insight into EU law developments

The EU or the Commonwealth: a dilemma for the UK – or a false choice?

Steve Peers

The United Kingdom has its finger in many pies: the EU, NATO, the United Nations Security Council and the Commonwealth, to name just a few. Of these, the Commonwealth – which has just finished its latest summit meeting – obviously has the closest specific link to British culture and history, since it’s mainly comprised of our former colonies. (A few Commonwealth members are not former colonies, and some obscure ex-colonies like the USA choose not to join. For a full list of members, see here.)
The United Kingdom and the European Union

Stakeholders and interests: The debate continues...
A future in the EU? Reconciling the ‘Brexit’ debate with a more modern EU

The future of the EU membership has become one of the most pressing concerns for the UK, although member states will try – within limits – to accommodate British demands. Prime Minister Cameron’s ambivalent strategy leaves many open questions.

The EU-British relationship has always been one of special character but a number of recent developments have led to a ‘Brexit’ gaining momentum. The UK’s vote on the Fiscal Compact, Cameron’s promise to hold a referendum on EU membership and the success of the eurosceptic UKIP party in the European elections, have further accelerated tensions. Growing euro scepticism in the UK but also elsewhere in Europe, the political reality requires a targeted and joint European action.

Some of the British demands are legitimate calls for an EU reform. There is broad agreement on the necessity of an EU agenda for growth, competitiveness and fairness. Completing the Single Market and opening the EU to global competition are British priorities which mirror with the European mainstream. Anyway, common ground among member states also exists on the necessity of cutting “EU red tape” and on reassessing EU competition.

Yet a broader tug-of-war will emerge around those British reform demands which target the EU’s basic principles as its core. There will be little room for manoeuvre in policy areas which destabilize the institutional interplay and fundamental principles such as the free movement of people.

Only the UK itself will be able to rationalize the domestic debate on EU membership. Although EU member states are favourable to some reform demands, possible concessions will not suffice to appease British eurosceptic hardliners. For a constructive EU reform, the UK government needs to detail its reform suggestions and engage in a more pan-European rhetoric.

Genuinely, Britain and the EU are irreconcilably divided. Reliable estimates predict losses in the range of 1 to 3% of British GDP in case of a Brexit. Likewise, the Single Market would store by 1%. Thus, it would be in the EU member states’ own interest to demonstrate political will to address the British concerns. The German government repeatedly pointed to the valuable British influence in the EU. Despite Britain being a difficult partner, they share common values and remain indispensable partners.

SUMMARY

In an address given on 23 January 2015, David Cameron undertook to organise a referendum by the end of 2017 to decide whether the UK should remain within or withdraw from the European Union. He should remain the British Prime Minister after the general election on 7 May 2015.

Due to this public commitment, the general election of 7 May 2015 will take on a scale that, going beyond the importance of domestic politics, will directly affect the European Union (EU) and all of the United Kingdom’s twenty-seven partners.

Through this promise, the Prime Minister mainly strive to stop or slow the rise of UKIP (United Kingdom Independence Party) which:

- champions a UK exit from the EU,
- has recorded steadily rising electoral results,
- and which polls credit with some 10% of voting intentions.

On the assumption that a referendum is held, Cameron intends to campaign to keep the UK within the EU, provided that he can first obtain a modification to the European treaties which would confer a special status on the United Kingdom. The negotiation that he intends to launch in this respect will focus in particular on:
- the free movement of people in Europe, and specifically migrants’ entitlement to benefits,
- relations between Member States which have not adopted the Euro and members of the Euro area,
- and the removal of the objective stated in the treaties of an “ever closer union between the peoples of Europe”.

While he may hope to find some allies on some of the points he raises, the negotiation will be difficult, even perilous for Cameron. By his own admission, the changes that he calls for would require a modification of the existing treaties. To do this, he would need the unanimous agreement of all twenty-eight Member States. A seemingly impossible challenge.

A Conservative victory on 7 May 2015 is not guaranteed. For it from the Labour party is currently neck and neck with the Conservatives in the polls, even slightly above. In addition, UKIP’s progression, which takes voters away from both major parties, is likely to make the difference.

Should Labour win, a referendum will not be held. Labour leader Ed Miliband has said that he has no intention to hold one, unless there were further transfers of power within the Union. Cameron, however, will not be able to back out should he stay at 10 Downing Street. Should he try, UKIP would do its utmost to prevent him. Yet the unions are high in the political gamble that he is preparing to take while they want the UK to remain within the Union, his partners are not willing to make major concessions. Cameron also faces explicit misgivings from Washington.

Brexit – the contraction of British exit – is not a foregone conclusion. Yet it is a possibility. This is a crucial issue for Europe.
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Stakeholders and interests: The debate continues …
Stakeholders and interests: The debate continues...
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Stakeholders and interests: The debate continues …
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Stakeholders and interests: The debate continues …
The United Kingdom and the European Union

Find more information in ESO on this topic

The origin of UK law – what % from the EU?
The United Kingdom and the European Union

7. Wales and Europe

The European Union has a major impact on the lives of people in Wales and plays an important role in our nation’s prosperity.

The EU makes decisions and passes laws that affect Welsh policy interests such as business and trade, agriculture and rural development, regional development, transport and the environment.

Membership of the EU brings significant benefits to Wales. EU Structural Funds are worth around £2.4bn to Wales over the period 2014-2020. This package, together with match funding, will drive a total investment of approximately £3.7bn and will help us deliver growth and jobs. This partnership also gives us access to the EU Research and Innovation programme with nearly £1bn of funding available between 2014 – 2020.

The EU remains Wales’ largest trading partner with a market of more than 500 million people, the world’s largest economy in G20 terms. Access to the Single Market also forms an essential part of the Welsh offer to foreign investment.

More than 500 firms in Wales export over £8bn annually to other EU Member States and some 130,000 jobs in Wales depend on that trade. In addition, more than 400 firms from other Member States also located in Wales, employing over 50,000 people.

The Welsh Government’s office in Brussels promotes and protects Welsh interests at the heart of the EU, an important platform for Vincent Evans in Brussels, the Secretary of State for International Trade, and the Welsh Assembly Government.

The office also acts as a platform for networking, growing our influence and raising the profile of Wales in the European Union.

EU membership provides significant benefits to Wales, and we must ensure that we retain our membership.

Scottish and Welsh nationalists pledge to stop the English leaving EU

Plaid Cymru leader Leanne Wood: 'The votes in each of the countries should be added up separately and we should only pull out of the EU if all four countries want to do that'
The United Kingdom and the European Union

England – Scotland – Wales – Northern Ireland
The United Kingdom and the European Union

The international perspective
The United Kingdom and the European Union

The international perspective
European views on the UK’s renegotiation, Sept-Oct 2015

- France, the Netherlands, Slovenia and Latvia
- Italy, Poland, Bulgaria and Malta
- Belgium, Luxembourg, Denmark and Romania
- Austria, Portugal, Croatia and Ireland
- Czech Republic, Hungary, Sweden and Lithuania
- Germany, Greece, Slovakia and the EU Institutions
- Other EU States
EU-India relations: Why Narendra Modi is likely to make the case against Brexit on his visit to the UK

Views on the UK’s renegotiation: Russia, Ukraine and Turkey

Beijing drops hint it would like UK to stay in EU

US warns Britain: If you leave EU you face barriers to trading with America

As your friend, let me say that the EU makes Britain even greater

The international perspective – Non-EU countries
The United Kingdom and the European Union

The EU deal to avoid Brexit: Take it or leave
Stefani Weiss and Steven Blockmans
No. 131 / February 2016

Abstract
Beyond the drama of the European Council summit of 18-19 February 2016, what became clear was the fundamental desire on the part of the leaders of all 28 EU member states to agree on a deal on the British government’s demands for a renegotiated settlement on the UK’s relationship within the European Union. The deal has provided David Cameron with the political capital he needed to call a date for the in/out referendum and to lead a campaign for the UK to stay in the EU. Yet, for all the technical reforms packed into it, the deal is neither a clear pleader nor a vote winner. It does, however, mark a watershed acknowledgement that EU integration is not a one-directional process of ever closer union. Different paths of integration are now open to member states that do not compel them towards a common destination. This deal will effectively lead to a legally binding recognition that the UK is not committed to further political integration in the EU. In this Special Report, Stefani Weiss and Steven Blockmans analyse the substance of the “Decision of the Heads of State or Government, meeting within the European Council, concerning a New Settlement for the United Kingdom within the European Union” and shed light on its legal character. They do so by contextualising this EU deal to avoid Brexit, and draw on the conclusions reached in a simulation of European Council negotiations between representatives of think tanks in the European Policy Institute Network (EPIN), conducted by CEPS and the Bertelsmann Stiftung in October 2015.

Post-Summit Commentary
Brexit averted through EU reform?
Fatih Kutug

Brexit: Strategic Consequences for Europe
A Scenario Study
Peter van Harn

The international perspective
The United Kingdom and the European Union

Public opinion

The YouGov view: Leave is ahead but fundamentals favour Remain

Polling on new EU Referendum question shows “leave” lead for first time since November 2014
Public opinion
The United Kingdom and the European Union

BREXIT - Blogs
The United Kingdom and the European Union

News sources: BREXIT / EU Referendum Tag Links
The United Kingdom and the European Union

News sources: BREXIT / Role of UK Media
The United Kingdom and the European Union

EUREFERENDUM.UK
SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE UK’S REFERENDUM ON MEMBERSHIP OF THE EU

The EU deal

IN FACTS

BREXIT – Further information sources
The Cardiff EDC provides a professional and neutral information service on the European Union and the wider Europe

Enquiry service – Publication of European Sources Online – Events

Further information: http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/insrv/edc/