

RESEARCH REPORT

Issue: Ensuring the EU remains a unity after the Brexit
Forum: European Council
Position: Deputy Chair
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Introduction

For over the past years, the European Union has endured several political, economic and humanitarian issues. These include the migration crisis, caused by the ongoing war in the Middle-East, as well as the Greek economic crisis, the instable economies of Mediterranean member states and acts of terrorism. These problems seem to have stimulated the continent-wide rise of Euroscepticism, mostly being supported in countries as Greece, Spain and the United Kingdom.

In order to draw more public for his party, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom David Cameron promised to organise a referendum concerning the UK membership of the European Union. In a speech to the House of Commons on 22 February 2016, Cameron announced a referendum date of 23 June 2016 and commented on the renegotiation settlement. Cameron spoke of an intention to trigger the Article 50 process immediately following a leave vote and of the "two-year time period to negotiate the arrangements for exit." The non-binding referendum resulted in 51.9% of voters voting in favour of leaving the European Union, on a national turnout of 72%. As a result, the preparations for leaving the EU began, leaving the EU stunned by the outcome of this referendum.

Definition of Key Terms

Brexit

Brexit, a portmanteau of "British" and "exit", is a term that has become synonymous with the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union.

Euroscepticism

Euroscepticism literally means criticism of the European Union. Some observers though prefer to understand opposition to and total rejection of the EU as 'Euroscepticism'

European Council

The European Council, charged with defining the European Union's overall political direction and priorities, is the institution of the EU that comprises the head of state or government of the member states, along with the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission, presently performed by Donald Tusk and Jean-Claude Juncker respectively.

General Overview

The European Council faces the complicated matter of retrieving the trust of European citizens in order to ensure the EU remains a unity, as the Brexit notably expressed the continent-wide rise of Euroscepticism.

How come people are Eurosceptic?

Modern day Euroscepticism is primarily caused by the several issues the EU has faced for over the past years. Fear is often the incitement for their beliefs and immigration has seemed to be the main motive. People are scared their lives will change and question the country's safety. The number of terrorist attacks in Western Europe in the years of 2015 and 2016 stimulated this European fear.

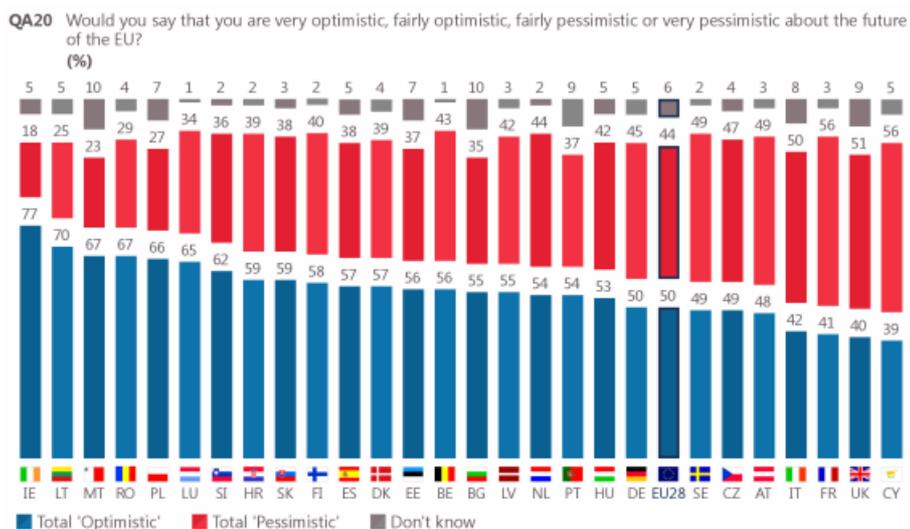


The 28 member states of the EU as since 2013 - Wikipedia

Moreover, some motives concern the sovereignty of the member states' government, as the EU is said to impose an enormous amount of laws. Lastly, member states as the UK, Germany and France tend to spend more money on the EU opposed to the anticipated benefits

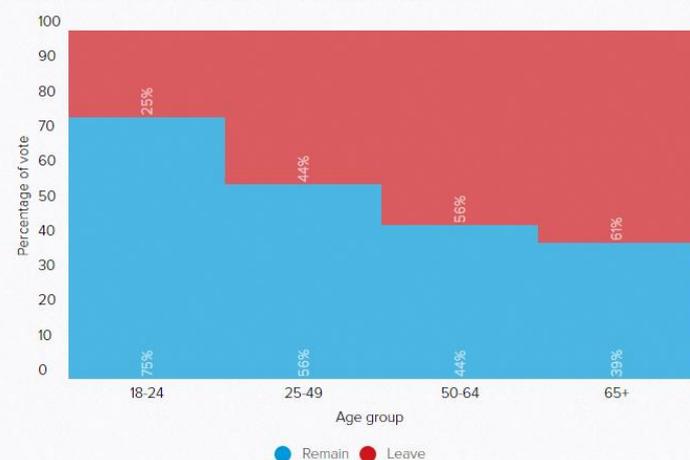
Which and how many people are favourable of the EU?

Since 1973, the European Commission has been monitoring the evolution of public opinion in the Member States and publishes the results in the so called Eurobarometer. The attached graphic shows the average opinion on the future of the EU of all 27 member states. Ireland, Lithuania, Malta and Romania tend to be optimistic opposed to states such as Greece, Cyprus, France, Italy and obviously the UK.



Results of a ques

EU REFERENDUM VOTE BY AGE GROUPS



In addition to these graphic, the following chart shows the division of age groups in the results of the Brexit. Younger people tend to be more

favourable of a globalised world opposed to the older electors. The European Council thus should acknowledge this group of people who are, on an average, open for a future of international cooperation.

Major Parties involved

Germany

The Brexit result by age group – Politico Europe

Germany, being one of the major economies of the European Union, has always had strong economic and political relations with other European powerhouses as the UK, France and the Netherlands. The Brexit brings Germany in an even more prominent position in the EU and will also face the corresponding disadvantages. However, Germany still remains one of the strongest states in Europe and tries to keep believing in a European future.

France

France will also be affected by the Brexit, being one of the major European economies. France has been suffering from the harrowing terrorist attacks and the ongoing social challenges, resulting in the growing amount of followers of 'Le Front National', the extreme right-wing party of Marine Le Pen, primarily being in disfavour of the Islam and Europe. The presidential election of 2017 expectedly will determine the French future in the European Union.

United Kingdom

Theresa May, new Prime Minister of the United Kingdom since July 2016, is in charge of the procedure of the UK leaving the EU. The UK will have to set out its new future, with or without Europe, in order to remain a strong economy. May has emphasised the UK to leave the EU, not the continent of Europe, and thus will try to maintain the current economic relations with Germany, France and others.

Timeline of Key Events

23 June 2016	The UK holds a membership referendum and votes to leave the EU
2013	Accession of Croatia
2009	Lisbon Treaty
2007	Accession of Bulgaria and Romania
2004	Accession of ten countries
2002	The euro replaces twelve national currencies
1995	Accession of Austria, Finland and Sweden
1992	The formation of the European Union in Maastricht, the Netherlands
1989	The fall of the Iron Curtain in Eastern Europe
1986	Accession of Portugal and Spain; flag adopted

1981	Accession of Greece
1973	Accession of Denmark, Ireland and the UK
1967	ECSC, EEC and Euratom merged
1963	Charles de Gaulle vetoes UK entry
1957	Formation of the EEC in Rome, Italy
1951	Formation of the Coal and Steel Community in Paris, France
1945	The end of World War II

Possible Solutions

Primarily, the European Council has got to acknowledge the critics of the European citizen and do their utmost best to improve the democracy of the EU by diminishing the bureaucracy. Furthermore, the European Council should encourage all the organs of the European Union to retrieve the faith of the citizens, by raising awareness of the advantages of the EU for every civilian as well as showing the possible consequences of leaving the association. If the EU will succeed in preventing a possible Brexit, Frexit or Italeave to become reality, the EU might see the continent to a future of prosperity, safety and freedom, as it did in the past 66 years.

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