

# United kingdom's european withdrawal agreement bill challenges



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The United Kingdom's European Withdrawal Agreement Bill, also known as Brexit, was a public vote that had culminated after about half a century of tension between Britain and the European Union (EU)(Pruitt). Brexit will officially remove the United Kingdom(UK) from the EU leaving it as an independent nation. Many different factors led to the passing of Brexit by public vote, but now Brexit is being looked at because of problems that could arise from it. After the public vote held for this bill, it passed because of Britain's economic status and identity, but a new Brexit deal is trying to be reached to avoid possible consequences.

Britain's exit of the European Union was the result of support for the Conservative party in the United Kingdom and the growing support for the United Kingdom Independence party (UKIP) during the early 2010s (Pruitt). One of the major draws to the UKIP was that its party's platform consisted of policies that aimed to control immigration, cut taxes for the middle class, and namely leave the European Union (Hunt). While support for the UKIP was growing Conservative candidate David Cameron, who served as prime minister from 2010 to 2016, promised to renegotiate the United Kingdom's membership with the European Union if his party won the majority in the 2015 election (Kellner)(Pruitt). The referendum that came about because of Cameron's promise was voted on by more than 30 million people and just barely passed with 51. 9% voting for the United Kingdom to leave the European Union and 48. 1% voting against the United Kingdom leaving the EU(Pruitt). Although the vote passed in favor of Brexit, British Prime Minister, Theresa May, had her Brexit deal rejected by a margin of 230 votes by British lawmakers on January 15, 2019 (Perrigo 12). Now lawmakers must

agree on a new deal before the deadline, March 29, or the UK will leave the EU with no agreement put in place (Frazee).

One of the biggest reasons why many British citizens voted to “leave” was the economic stagnation that arose from the global financial crisis of 2008 (Friedman). This global financial crisis according to the Reserve Bank of Australia was “the period of extreme stress in global financial markets and banking systems between mid 2007 and early 2009” (“The Global Financial...”). While the crisis started in the United States Britain soon started to feel the effects of it as the British bank Northern Rock collapsed in 2007 (“The Global Financial...”) (“UK economy: The...”). Unemployment skyrocketed not long after the collapse of Northern Rock leaving 2.6 million people without jobs, which was the highest unemployment rate in the United Kingdom since 1996 (“UK economy: The...”). This unemployment which was still felt around the time the vote was taken, with up to 6.8% unemployment in the North East of the UK during 2016, was one of the largest factors as to why citizens voted to leave the European Union, as the authors of the article “The mismatch between local voting and the local economic consequences of Brexit” published in *Regional Studies* reported, “Regions with larger shares of lower-skilled or manual employment, a greater historical role in manufacturing, and higher levels of unemployment were all more likely to vote leave (Becker et al., 2016)” (Los et al. 788)(Friedman)(Watson). One reason why “leave voters”, those who voted to leave the EU, thought that leaving the EU would improve Britain's economic status was that the EU has sovereignty over the UK's ability to create financial ties. (Ferozhar 19). This is important because as George Friedman, an expert in intelligence and

international geopolitics, wrote “ The European Union didn't create the existing financial relationships” (Friedman). The UK has financial relationships that were preexisting before joining the EU, for example, “ buying 20% of the output of German car companies” (Feroohar 19). Greg Hands, the 2016 through 2018 Minister of State in the Department for International Trade, also stated in a speech, “ Germany accounts for 13% of total UK imports,” and “ around 240, 000 people in Germany work for British companies based here [Germany]” (Hands)(“ The Rt Hon...”). Also, as Rana Feroohar, a global economics analyst, wrote, “ the E. U. lagged behind in forging modern trade ties with emerging economies,” because the EU had not been creating any more economic ties for the UK while it was under the EU's sovereignty (Feroohar 19)(“ Rana Feroohar”). This is why when it came to staying in the EU or leaving it, Friedman reported, “ staying in a stagnated organization to solve British problems seemed shortsighted and made little sense to opponents [of staying in the EU]” (Friedman). Many proponents of Brexit also believed once outside of the EU economic opportunity would improve as Feroohar said, “ Outside it, we can finally do free trade deals with countries in Asia, the Americas and the Commonwealth, and open up new opportunities for business” (Feroohar 19). While all of the economic stress from the global finance crisis was still being felt by the British along with their suppression of trade opportunity by the EU, citizens decided to vote to leave the EU as the authors of “ The mismatch between...” concluded:

Economic conditions were the single most important factor driving the pattern of voting, interacting with the characteristics of the individuals making up that locality (Becker et al., 2016). Regions with larger shares of

lower-skilled or manual employment, a greater historical role in manufacturing, and higher levels of unemployment were all more likely to vote leave (Becker et al., 2016). As such, the regions and localities that were perceived to have most benefited from globalization (Coyle, 2016; Field, 2016; The Economist, 2016a, 2016b), immigration and trade tended to vote remain, while those regions and localities that were perceived to feel most threatened by these phenomena voted leave (Zoega, 2016). (Los et al. 788)

These authors additionally explained how “ The geography of deprivation and prosperity” both helped to explain the reason as to why many voters ended up favoring the decision to leave the European Union (Los et al. 788).

Those who voted to leave the EU were also hoping to gain back the identity of their nation that they felt was being taken away by immigration and the EU's sovereignty over the UK (Scruton). As was mentioned earlier the European Union has taken control away from the United Kingdom in affairs such as trading arrangements (Foroohar). The reason why this drove citizens to vote to leave the EU was not so much that the laws and regulations that the EU had were oppressive but they were “ imposed without consideration for either their local impact or their demand on the taxpayer” (Scruton).

Philosopher and writer Roger Scruton provided examples such as:

Laws that radically affect our businesses and activities are sprung on us without reference to parliament—laws like the Temporary Agency Work Directive, which gives full employment rights to temporary workers, or the health and safety directives that closed our local abattoirs in 1993, thus ensuring the spread of Foot and Mouth disease across the country as farmers

drove their cattle to the only permitted places of slaughter, or the directive that abolished our traditional weights and measures and so changed the face of Britain. (" Roger Scruton")(Scruton)

These types of laws are what pulled the " leave voters" together because they felt as though they were being bossed around by those who they had no say in electing (Scruton). Another aspect that drove voters to choose to leave the EU was its regulations about migration inside of the EU which became an issue around 2004 (" Now, finally, we..."). After eight former Soviet Bloc nations joined the European union a flood of immigrants came to the UK, mainly poles, because of their relative indigence (" Now, finally, we..."). This however, has leveled off and the new immigrants that are coming into the United Kingdom are from Spain, France, and Italy because of economic chaos (" Now, finally, we..."). The problem that voters had with the newer immigration was that they decreased the availability of housing and public services (" Now, finally, we..."). Immigration in this sense made leaving the EU a valid solution as it would help control the amount of immigration to the country, which was played up as families who were, in the words of Nic Robertson, an international diplomatic editor, " forced to miss out on their rightful and paid-for state support, edged out by newly arrived migrants hungry for handouts and everything free" (Robertson)(" Nic Robertson"). For these reasons the " leave vote" decided that they wanted to bring back self-government and sovereignty, and the way to do that was to leave the European Union (Scruton).

After the rejection of Theresa May's Brexit deal the United Kingdom has been left in a position where they are in no way prepared to leave the EU (Nawaz). <https://assignbuster.com/united-kingdoms-european-withdrawal-agreement-bill-challenges/>

Nicola Sturgeon, Scotland's first minister, in an interview by Amna Nawaz, a national PBS correspondent, said, "if there's not a deal, and it looks like the U. K. could leave without a deal, that would be catastrophic" (Nawaz). The catastrophe that Sturgeon was referring to had everything to do with the fact that once out of the European Union, "all of the rules and regulations that govern how we trade and interact with the European Union cease to have any effect" (Nawaz). What this means is that, the United Kingdom would have to trade by the World Trade Organization rules, which would lead to tariffs that put in place a 10% tax on automobiles and over 35% tariffs on dairy products (Frazee). Along with the tariffs Sturgeon pointed out that the removal of the borders would impact the UK in a myriad of ways when she said, "Across almost every aspect of life, it would be very difficult for us to get goods to market. It would be difficult for in the short term for us to import goods. That's why there are lots of concerns in the U. K. about potential food shortages if there is no deal, medicine shortages..." (Nawaz). While the inability to import enough food and medicine has already hard pressed lawmakers into forming a new Brexit deal, if no new deal is created the lack of goods being exported could thrust the UK into what Billy Perrigo, a reporter for Time, described as, "a recession worse than 2008's financial crisis" (Perrigo)("Billy Perrigo"). This loss of trade and business was predicted to, over two years, drop the United Kingdom's gross domestic product by 3% (Frazee). In order to avoid the catastrophic consequences that could occur, British lawmakers are pushing increasingly for a new deal to ease the transition out of the European Union.

Although the United Kingdom's European Withdrawal Agreement Bill passed by public vote because of the United Kingdom's economic status and identity, British lawmakers are working on a new Brexit deal because of the catastrophe that will be felt by British citizens and businesses if there is no deal. The passing of Brexit through public vote was not only attributed to the unemployment in the United Kingdom during the vote and trade opportunities that would open up if the UK were to separate from the EU, but the fact that the European Union has sovereignty over the UK and open borders which has allowed migrants from all over Europe to enter the UK, had also contributed a great deal to the "leave" vote. Now currently under revision the UK's Brexit deal was rejected and will have to be replaced by another plan to help ease the separation between the United Kingdom and the European Union, or Britain could receive detrimental repercussions to the way the country currently operates.

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