

There is nothing 'hard' about Brexit

Written by Jayne Adye on 23 November 2016



There is nothing 'hard' about Brexit, argues Get Britain Out chief | *Photo credit: European Parliament audiovisual*

Brexit will allow the UK to look globally in terms of trade, while simultaneously being good neighbours with the EU, writes Jayne Adye.

Since the 23 June referendum, we have heard many terms to describe the possible Brexit deal - 'hard Brexit', 'soft Brexit' even 'clean Brexit' (as opposed to 'dirty Brexit' presumably).

However, none of these terms are particularly descriptive. They do not convey any sensible message either to the public, officials or politicians about the terms of a UK-EU deal post-Brexit. As terms, they masquerade as informing people about the UK's stance, but in reality they are as meaningless as David Cameron's so-called EU renegotiations.

Far more important are the terms 'single market membership' and 'single market access'. Single market membership is used to denote membership of the European Economic Area (EEA) ('soft Brexit'). Single market access is a free trade agreement (FTA) between the UK and the EU ('hard

Brexit' - on the softer end).

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There is also another option, for the UK to leave the EU without concluding any trading arrangement and relying on World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules ('hard Brexit' - on the harder end).

The WTO option is the ultimate deregulatory approach, which would allow the UK to engage in global trade.

However, it would be achieved by having zero or close to zero tariffs. This would be unquestionably beneficial for both consumers and producers who import goods, but due to the imposition of tariffs on UK products it would almost certainly result in the destruction of UK industry.

Therefore, Get Britain Out is of the view that the UK government must rule out this option, unless the EU is completely unreasonable in its negotiating position.

Membership of the single market must also be ruled out. As an option, it is completely incompatible with the Brexit vote. The people of the UK voted 'Leave' because they wanted to regain control over their laws, money and borders - all of which were handed over to Brussels back in 1973.

If the UK remains inside the single market, all the rules and regulations pertaining to the single market will continue to have force in the UK. Free movement of people will continue and budgetary contributions will still be demanded. None of the Brexit objectives would have been fulfilled - as this option is EU membership by the backdoor.

Get Britain Out is unrelenting in its belief the UK should leave the single market and agree a trade deal with the EU. This outcome would fulfil the objectives of the 'Leave' vote, as the UK would no longer be subject to single market rules created by unelected European Commissioners. We would not be subject to the free movement of people principle and would not be required to contribute to the EU budget.

It is important to remember 'single market access' is not a fixed position. It's more of a sliding scale - the greater the access to EU markets, the more EU rules a country has to accept. We would like to see as much access as possible, but retaining the fundamental control mentioned earlier.

We hope this piece makes it clear leaving the single market is not necessarily anti-business. Rather, it can be a celebration of business. By also leaving the EU's Customs Union the UK can once again begin to trade with the world rather than having a solely Eurocentric focus. Brexit allows the UK to look globally in terms of trade, while simultaneously being friendly neighbours of the EU.

Only six per cent of UK businesses export to the EU, yet all UK companies are subject to EU rules. These are rules devised to benefit large multinational companies due to their lobbyists' fingers being in a whole manner of EU pies. Once Brexit occurs, regulations can be tailored to the needs of

domestic companies rather than to rules tailored to Europe as a whole.

There is nothing 'hard' about leaving the single market or the Customs Union. It would be good for business, good for democracy and good for the people of the United Kingdom.

About the author

Jayne Adye is the Director of Get Britain Out

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