

# **BREXIT - What is going on and WHEN will BREXIT actually happen?**

**“I feel ashamed that I don’t know more about this topic.”**

To feel ashamed is quite wrong; you should be PROUD to be interested, and this IS a matter of interest for the whole of Europe and indeed the world. And EVERYONE is ignorant of so much, and nobody can know everything. We can all only hope to be better informed tomorrow than we are today. The only people who should be ashamed are those who do not want to inform themselves; as I said: “Politics decides everything.”!

The current BREXIT situation (as I understand it) is as follows, but it is quite complicated!

- 1. Mr David Cameron, the previous Prime Minister before Theresa May, said before the referendum vote on June 24th 2016 that he would invoke (= start/make active) Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty immediately if LEAVE won the referendum. Article 50 is the one in the Lisbon Treaty outlining the mechanism for leaving the EU. Invoking that launches a process of negotiation that is supposed to last TWO YEARS.**
- 2. Cameron was absolutely convinced that REMAIN would win (as were most people actually), and never thought he would HAVE to invoke this article. As it happens, he did NOT do what he had said he would (ANOTHER LIE) and he resigned on July 13th, with Theresa May becoming Prime Minister.**
- 3. SHE had been in the REMAIN camp and ALSO did not invoke this article. Instead, she said she would do it by the end of March 2017. It was said that the process was "complicated" and that "negotiations and arrangements have to be made" before the LEAVE process could be officially launched. That was true enough to satisfy many people, but ....**
- 4. .... people in the LEAVE camp were (are?) VERY suspicious about her motives (She was a REMAINER, though not a fanatical one like some people.) IF article 50 is invoked by the end of March 2017 it will have been about NINE MONTHS since the referendum. NOBODY in the LEAVE camp can really understand why we have had to wait nine months even to START the two-year process. Many suspect that she (and the British and European political establishment) are hoping that something will happen to allow them to delay or even REVERSE the vote.**
- 5. Such things have happened before. In 2006, the French people had a referendum on the "European Constitution", which continued the process of "ever-closer union" towards federation. The referendum was LOST; the French people voted to REJECT this "Constitution". The latter was then withdrawn and modified with some cosmetic changes and then PASSED by the French Parliament WITHOUT any further sanction by the people. In other words, the French political elite IGNORED the French people's vote and PASSED the renamed "Lisbon Treaty" ANYWAY.**
- 6. Ireland also voted "NO" to the Lisbon Treaty, and in their case immense pressure was brought to bear on the Irish government and eventually a SECOND referendum was held in which THIS time the Irish voted "YES". (See this link: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-eu-referendum-ignore-lisbon-treaty-nice-treaty-ireland-greece-france-netherlands-a7105261.html>)**
- 7. The LATEST example of the EU ignoring referendums is the Dutch vote in April 2016 on closer links with Ukraine. They voted "NO", but their government has PASSED the EU law ANYWAY.**

8. This disregard for the people's wishes is one of my (and many other Brits') reasons for wanting to LEAVE. The CPE (Continental Political Elite) are SO obsessed with their federation project that they are willing to ignore referendums - which they HATE, and were very angry with Cameron for promising one to the Brits. As I said, he was SURE he could NEVER lose the vote - but he was wrong. Basically, the politicians are CONVINCED that THEY know BEST. I, however, am convinced that the PEOPLE know best ..... HOWEVER, the British pleb is one that you ignore at your peril, and the British government would NOT in my opinion be able to get away with reversing the vote to LEAVE (or even holding a second referendum, which has been another demand of the REMAINERS - or "REMOANERS" as they are usually called!); the people's anger would be VERY great and cause the government a LOT of problems (including getting voted in again at the next election).

OK - so where are we exactly now? It seems that LEAVERS have cause for optimism .....

9. Despite her procrastination (= delaying tactics) and her previous stance (= position/attitude) as a REMAINER, PM Theresa May has been VERY firm in her statements about the UK exiting the EU. It now seems inconceivable that we should NOT BREXIT, even though the REMAIN camp has tried many tactics to overthrow or water down the vote, including legal applications to the Supreme Court. AT THIS VERY MOMENT, the British House of Lords is debating the issue.

10. Now, the HOL is NOT an elected body like European senates. It comprises A) hereditary Lords (a relic from feudal times) and B) Lords who have been APPOINTED by the government - basically retired politicians and crony friends of successive governments. I believe there are currently around 900 of these senile parasites (sorry, reputable senior citizens).

11. Many Brits are DISGUSTED by the continuing existence of the House of Lords as it is currently constituted. I remind you that NONE OF THE 900 LORDS ARE ELECTED. They do NOT have the power to PREVENT the House of Commons (which has elected MPs) from passing the BREXIT bills (laws), but they can DELAY the process, and there is ferocious argument going on about whether they have the right to do this. Many people think that if these unelected Lords do try to delay BREXIT then immense pressure will be put by the people on the government to abolish or radically reform the Lords - something which should have been done years ago, but we are a bit stupid about "tradition". We don't even HAVE a written constitution for example; it is mostly based on precedent (= what has been decided and done before).

12. As far as I understand from the news today, the Lords are demanding among other things that AFTER BREXIT any non-British EU citizens ALREADY living in Britain should have the right to STAY there after BREXIT, the most astonishing thing about THAT being that they want that rule to apply EVEN IF BRITISH EXPATS are NO LONGER given the right to reside on the continent. A VERY LARGE number of British live, for example, in Spain particularly, but also in France and Italy etc. Most are retired and self-financing, which is NOT the case for Continental foreigners living in Britain, many of whom have come from the poorest areas of Europe such as Roumania and Bulgaria to take advantage of our (ludicrously) generous benefits system.

We will know in the next week or so what the result of all these manoeuvres is ....

**SPECIAL NOTE:** One of the (pathetic) manoeuvres of the REMAIN camp to water down (or even get round) the BREXIT vote has been to try to create a distinction between "SOFT BREXIT" and "HARD BREXIT". By the former they mean negotiations which will somehow enable the UK to REMAIN in the "single market" (no tariffs and/or customs barriers between member countries). From the LEAVE point of view, this is nonsense. For us, LEAVE means LEAVE, or as has been seen again and again in the media "BREXIT is BREXIT". As I said, it has been an attempt to get us to REMAIN without actually CALLING it REMAIN.

This ploy (= tactic/trick) seems to have failed. In ANY case, for the EU, the single market is **FUNDAMENTAL** to their structure; a country **CANNOT** be in the EU without “the four freedoms of goods, capital, services, and people”. Likewise, you cannot be **OUTSIDE** the EU and still **ENJOY** any of these freedoms\*. That is a **RED LINE** for the EU (which is for the moment determined to do the UK no favours), so it has been absolutely pointless for the **REMAIN** camp to try to muddy the waters. It does therefore seem (but “A week is a long time in politics.”) that Mrs May **WILL** arrange a “**HARD BREXIT**”, whereby the UK will once again enjoy the same trading status with the EU as: the whole of Africa, North and South America, South and Central Asia, the Middle East, Australasia plus the two poles and countless islands scattered around the world!! Unless some surprising agreement is made during the two-year leaving negotiations (which would mean the UK giving up something considerable in return and thus watering down “**HARD BREXIT**”), we will **NOT** have any of the four freedoms that are integral to the EU - and most **LEAVERS** think that the advantages of **LEAVING** outweigh the four freedoms.

... which does not mean we are leaving the planet: we shall enjoy the same relations with the EU as all the rest of the world.

*\* There are exceptions: through the EEA Agreement, the three EFTA states Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein are equal partners in the EU internal market, on the same terms as the EU member states. This includes having access to the internal market's four freedoms: the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital.*

**NB:** The EU has made many **THREATS** about “**PUNISHING**” Britain for daring to leave (they want to “encourager les autres”!), but it is all very silly. The EU **SELLS** us **MORE** than **WE** sell **IT**. They **NEED** our markets. German manufacturers in particular have said that trading arrangements with the UK must **CONTINUE** after **BREXIT**. I believe that the UK (the **FIFTH** largest economy in the world) is the **BIGGEST** market for German cars for example. There is **NO WAY** that the EU can successfully punish Britain for being “a naughty boy”. But so much **DRIVEL** (= **ABSOLUTE NONSENSE**) is spoken by the **CPE** (and Brussels in particular) that much of it is now simply ignored and ridiculed by Brits - which is one of the reasons why we voted **LEAVE** in the first place. There has been an appalling lack of statesmanship by the **CPE**, including I must say Frau Merkel, who foist Juncker on us and gave us **NOTHING** in Cameron’s famous “renegotiation”. They offered nothing but threats, and we called their bluff ....

I may have forgotten something, but this is probably enough for the moment! The bottom line:

1. We will (presumably) have invoked Article 50 by the end of next March.
2. There are then **TWO FULL YEARS** during which negotiations take place on our relationship with the EU. In theory, we will not be **OUT** of the EU until April 2019 - but it could take longer .....
3. Imponderables include:
  - the status of foreign citizens already in the UK and of Brits living on the Continent
  - the arrangements re fishing (currently, the EU has 66% of our fishing rights which we want back!)
  - the unravelling of EU laws which currently apply to the UK, too
  - the financial arrangements for **LEAVING**: the EU will be **MASSIVELY** short of its usual funds once we **LEAVE** and at the moment are demanding we pay **FIFTY BILLION EUROS** to do so ..... the response of the British government to this demand could be interesting .....

Be prepared for further threats, shocks, disappointments, scandals and so on .... this is a gigantic soap opera that will run and run .....