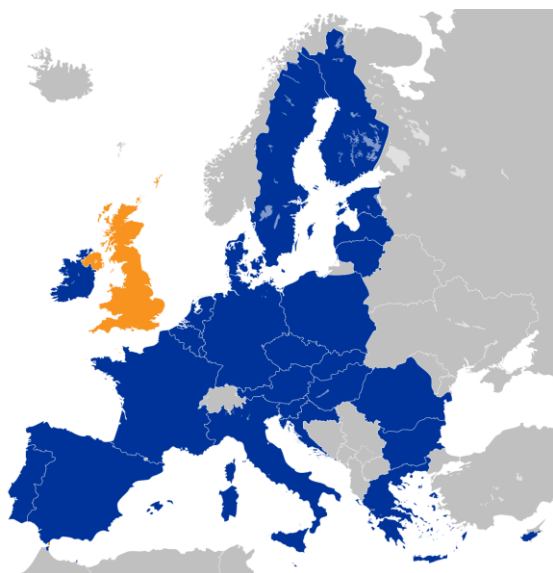


BREXIT; A NEW BORDER

The wake of World War 2 left most of Europe in economic ruins. The population was struggling to survive, with economic depression, and mass unemployment rampant.

In 1957, a handful of countries consisting of Luxembourg, France, West Germany, Belgium, Netherlands and Italy, banded together, to form the very first European Community. This was done to establish a common European market, set-up a European social fund, to improve people's living standards after the war, and allow free movement of workers in Europe. It was believed that if countries worked together and with each other, there was less chance of them fighting each other.

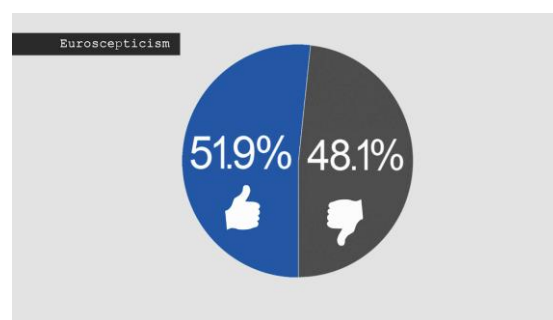
Gradually, more countries became a part of the EC, and became what is now the European Union.



However the recent wars and conflict of Syria, Libya and neighbouring countries, resulted in the 2015 European Refugee Crises. This saw thousands leaving their home countries and economies, which were being ravaged by war. This then

caused one of the largest waves of immigration to hit Europe and the UK in recent history. This also then gave prominence and support to Euroscepticism, and various right-winged parties, who saw mass or uncontrolled immigration to the UK as threat to their national identity. To curb the mass immigration to the UK, the Eurosceptics and the right-wing lobbied hard for the UK to no longer be a part of the EU.

And eventually in June '16, a national referendum was passed, where a 51% of the UK public voted to leave the European Union.



The key players in the Brexit process are: the European Commission negotiator; *Michel Barnier* – representing and negotiating on behalf of the European Union. The UK's Brexit Secretary; *David Davis* - working on behalf of the UK with Michel Barnier over the UK's Brexit process. And *Theresa May* – The UK's prime minister, leading the Conservative Party.

On the 23rd of June 2016, a national-vote was held, asking UK voters whether the UK should continue being a part of the EU, or leave. 29th March 2017 – UK's PM Theresa May announces "Article 50" in Parliament, which allows any member state to leave the EU. May '17 – October '18 – Is the time-frame for the Brexit negotiations between the EU and

UK. March '19 – UK officially leaves the EU.

There are a variety of issues plaguing the Brexit process at the moment, however one of the main issues to arise out of Brexit, is the border between The Republic of Ireland, and Northern Ireland.



After Brexit, a hard-border would be created between the EU and the UK. The standard set of border-checks that would be in-place between two countries, would then be in place between the UK and EU.

However the island of Ireland has always been split. With Northern Ireland a part of Great Britain, and South or the Republic of Ireland an independent estate. The Good Friday Agreement of 1998, ensured that despite Northern Ireland being a part of Great Britain, no hard-border or separation existed between North and South.

This also created a Common Travel Area between Ireland and the UK, and allowed trade, people and resources to freely flow between the two countries.

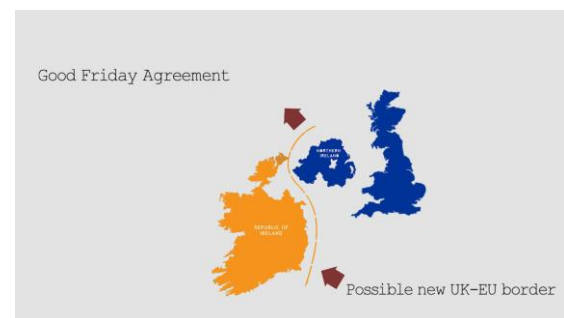
However Post Brexit, most of Ireland would continue to be a part of the EU. However the debate is now on how Northern Ireland should be treated.

If Northern Ireland was detached from the EU, and treated as part of Great Britain, the new EU-UK border would be where The Republic of Ireland ends, and North Ireland begins. However, separating South and North Ireland

would then violate the existing Good Friday Agreement, which was an important peace-treaty between North and the rest of Ireland.

If after Brexit, Northern Ireland detaches from the UK, and treated as part of EU, along with the rest of Ireland, then the new EU-UK border would be placed in the Irish Sea, which sits between Ireland and Great Britain.

However this would then upset the British constitution, which has ensured Northern Ireland is a part of the UK since 1801. And if the existing soft-border is continued between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, then there would be no clear border or separation between the EU and the UK after Brexit.



This could then create an indirect or back-door access to the single EU market for the UK, once it's left the EU. And would also contradict the sovereignty of other EU countries, who are all playing by the rules to remain in the EU, and continue be a part of the single EU market.

As the delegates of each of the interest-groups continue to grapple to come to an agreement, the issue of the Irish-border for Brexit to be a success, would be a difficult one, with so many conflicting views.

This can potentially further delay the official targeted Brexit date of March 2019.