

DNL / BREXIT

WORK TO DO :

1/ Read the text.

2/ Highlight in the text and the documents all the words or parts you do not understand.

3/ Rank the documents from the most interesting to the least interesting for you.

4/ Say why the first document you chose is the most interesting.

5/ Write 4 clear reasons why some British people wanted to leave the EU, and 4 clear reasons why others wanted to stay.

6/ Choose one of the following characters. You will play this character, and then debate with another student who plays a different character. One will be for Brexit, the other against. Use real arguments from the documents to support your opinion.

1. Tom – *The Dock Worker (Pro-Brexit)* Tom is 48 years old. He works in a port in the north of England. He feels that the UK lost control of its borders and laws by being in the EU. He believes Brexit can protect British jobs and stop cheap labor from Europe. He wants his country to decide for itself.

2. Maria – *The Immigrant (Anti-Brexit)* Maria is 32 years old. She came from Poland to the UK in 2010. She works in a hospital as a nurse and has a family in England. She feels sad and worried after Brexit. She thinks immigrants help the UK, and the EU gave people many opportunities.

3. James – *The Businessman in the City (Anti-Brexit)* James is 45 years old. He is the director of a finance company in London. He thinks the EU made trade and business easier and faster. After Brexit, his company lost some international clients. He believes Brexit made the UK less attractive for global business.

4. Margaret – *The Retired Villager (Pro-Brexit)* Margaret is 75 years old. She lives in a small village in the countryside. She remembers life before the EU and thinks the UK was better then. She believes Brexit will bring back national identity and independence. She doesn't trust the EU and thinks it takes too many decisions for the UK

The United Kingdom joined the European Economic Community in 1973. This was the group that later became the European Union (EU). From the beginning, many people in the UK were not completely happy about being part of the EU. They were afraid of losing control over their own laws. Some also thought the UK was paying too much money to the EU and didn't like that people from other EU countries could move freely to live and work in Britain.

Over the years, more people became critical of the EU. In 2016, the British government organized a referendum: people could vote to stay in the EU or to leave. The "Leave" campaign said that the UK would have more control over immigration, money, and laws if it left the EU. Many people believed these promises and were unhappy with the EU. In the end, 52% voted to leave.

After the vote, there were many problems. The government changed, politicians argued, and it took a long time to decide how to leave. Finally, the UK officially left the EU on January 31, 2020. A new trade agreement with the EU was made at the end of that year.

Since Brexit, the UK has had some difficulties. Trading with the EU has become more complicated and expensive. Some businesses lost money, and exports became harder. There are fewer workers in important sectors like farming, transport, and healthcare because of new immigration rules. Prices have gone up, and many families are struggling with the cost of living.

Today, in 2024/2025, the UK economy is weaker than before. Some people still believe Brexit was a good idea, but others think it made life harder. The country is trying to make new trade deals and improve its economy, but the results are not clear yet. Brexit is still a big topic in British politics, and opinions are divided.



Left: Prime Minister Theresa May (in office July 2016-July 2019). Center: Prime Minister Boris Johnson (in office July 2019-present). Right: Nigel Farage, leader of the Brexit Party.

Left: UK Government (CC BY-SA 4.0). Center: UK Prime Minister (CC BY-SA 4.0). Right: Gage Soderme (CC BY-SA 4.0).



UK industry and the EU

Industry	Jobs	Share of exports going to EU
Aerospace	110,000	47%
Chemicals and pharmaceuticals	136,000	54%
Financial services	1,069,000	41%
Food manufacturing	373,000	53%
IT and telecoms	1,364,000	46%
Transport	1,065,000	44%

Britain and the EU*: By the Numbers



EU BUDGET

£8.5 billion: 2015 UK contribution to EU budget
1%: EU contributions as share of total UK budget



TRADE

45%: UK exports going to the EU
53%: UK imports coming from the EU
60%: Trade in the overall UK economy



FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT

48%: Foreign investment coming from the EU
40%: British foreign investment going to the EU



FINANCIAL SERVICES

10%: Financial services in the overall economy
40%: Financial services exports going to the EU



JOBS

3 million: UK jobs associated with EU trade
10%: Trade-related jobs in the overall UK workforce



MIGRATION

1.2 million: British citizens living in the EU
3 million: EU citizens living in the UK

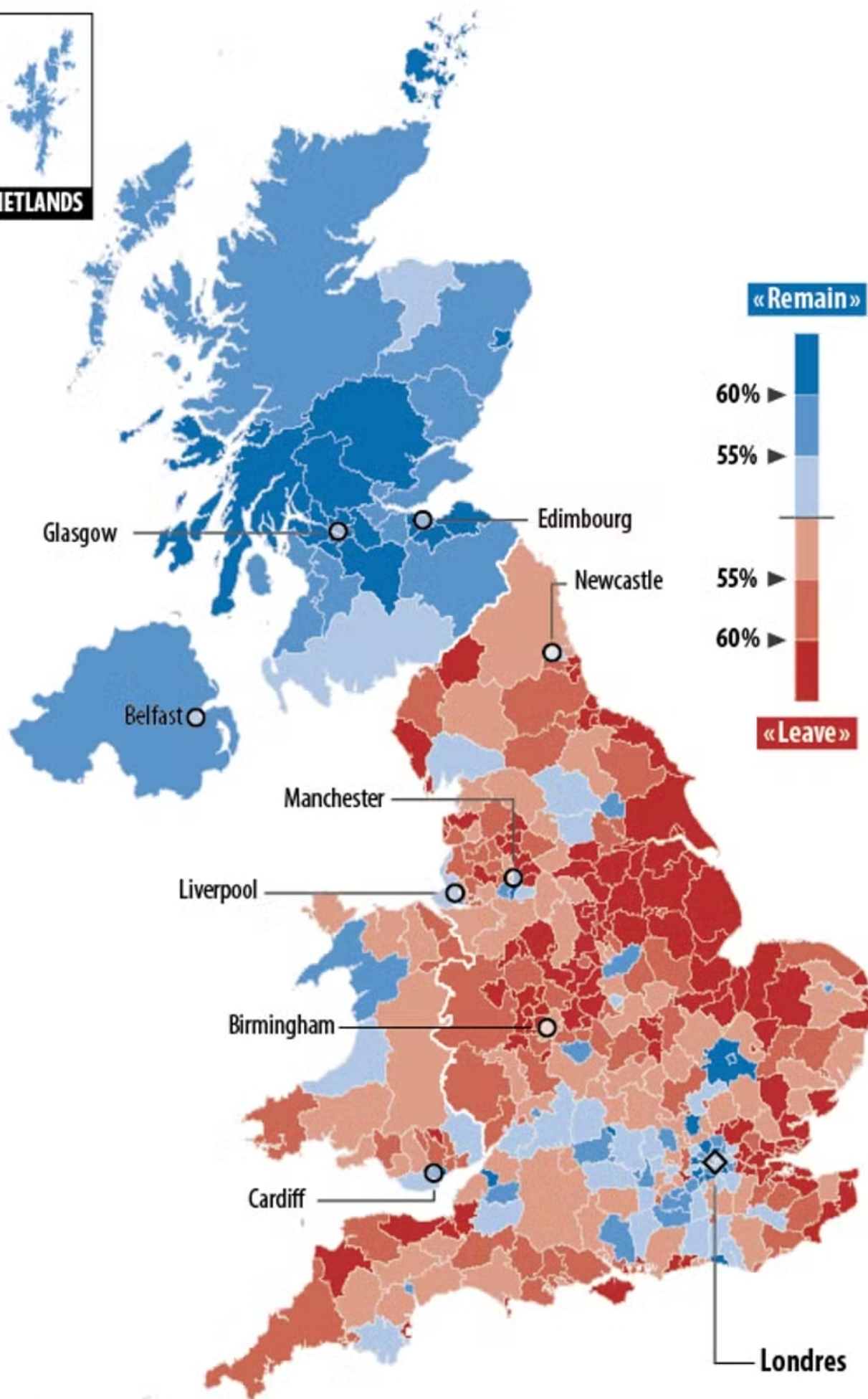


COUNCIL on
FOREIGN
RELATIONS

*Except for the UK Sources: UK Parliament, UK Treasury, UK Office for National Statistics, Centre for Economics and Business Research, FullFact.org, Bloomberg Credits: James McBride, David Foster



SHETLANDS



SOURCE : WALL STREET JOURNAL

The debate

Arguments for and against Brexit, according to the main campaigns

IN



TRADE



OUT

Britain avoids exporter tariffs and red tape, important as 45% of British exports go to the EU. As a member, Britain can obtain better trade terms because of the EU's size.



Britain will negotiate a new EU relationship without being bound by EU law. It can secure trade deals with other important countries such as China, India and America.

EU BUDGET

Britain pays the EU £340 a year per household, compared with an estimated £3,000 yearly benefit of membership. In or out, payment is needed to access the single market.



Britain can stop sending £350m, equivalent to half England's schools budget, to Brussels every week. This money could be spent on scientific research and new industries.

REGULATION

Most EU regulation collapses 28 national standards into one European standard, reducing red tape and benefiting business. In, Britain can fight for better regulation.



Leaving will return control over areas like employment law and health and safety, measures that a recent Business for Britain poll found businesses favoured.

IMMIGRATION

Leaving doesn't mean reduced immigration. Countries that trade with the EU from outside have higher rates of immigration, including from EU countries, than Britain.



Britain can change the "expensive and out-of-control" system that offers an open door to the EU and blocks non-EU immigrants who could contribute to the UK.

INFLUENCE

At international summits, Britain is represented twice – by the foreign secretary and the EU high representative. Co-operation has helped fight Ebola and piracy in Africa.



Britain has little influence within the EU. From outside, it can retake seats on international institutions and be a stronger influence for free trade and co-operation.

Sources: Britain Stronger in Europe; Vote Leave

Economist.com

The Brexit process

