



# EU IN BRUM

Positive about UK remaining in the EU



## Marking Article 50: Giving you hope and the power to campaign to Remain

The triggering of article 50 is a terrible event for anyone who believes in the UK as an international power and a developed country, but we can't afford to waste time feeling dejected or resigned. EU IN BRUM is marking this backwards step with a message of hope, revealing how and why we must oppose this and fight to protect our way of life and that of our future generations.

Theresa May will *trigger* Article 50 on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2017. This language is appropriate considering the carnage exit would cause to the UK and to people living in Birmingham and the West Midlands.

Pursuing UK exit is [already damaging us](#): with price rises, businesses planning to leave, UK expats across the EU and EU expats here left vulnerable, migrant workers leaving or no longer coming to work or study in UK as it seems unwelcoming, industry and services suffering, the rise in hate crime and a wide range of our rights and quality of life gravely threatened.

### Opportunities: why this is not the end

Triggering article 50 only expresses the UK's "intention" to leave the EU, ushering in a period of at least two years in which the government will try to negotiate the terms of any departure with the other 27 EU countries, each of which has an equal say in any "deal".

Lord Kerr, who wrote article 50, says the UK government can cancel it at any point in this period and remain a full member of the EU, a process exclusively under our control. Legal experts agree that article 50 can be revoked; the government may dispute this, but it resolutely resists any attempt to brake, or even question, its dash to exit, no matter what the consequences. London lawyer, Jolyon Maugham, currently has a case in the Irish courts and then the European Court of Justice to get a concrete ruling on article 50's revokability.

Furthermore, as the UK is a major partner in the EU and **any** exit would damage the EU as well as the UK severely and moreover, as officials in Brussels openly express their sadness about the idea of UK leaving, it seems likely that if Downing Street or a new UK government saw sense and wanted to Remain, the EU would welcome this.

### EU IN BRUM believes leaving the EU would make the UK smaller and poorer

EU IN BRUM believes that the best possible deal for the UK and for Birmingham is to remain in the EU.

All the promises of the Leave campaign have been exposed as false and recognition grows that the course the government is taking us on would make us smaller, poorer and less safe. Finally Theresa May's own White Paper admitted that the UK had never lost its sovereignty, *it just appeared that way*, kicking out the last plank of the Leave argument.

This means the basis on which this is being done has been removed and moreover the project is not in the national interest, including for further reasons outlined below.

This recognition will continue to grow over the next two years as we witness further economic and social declines, understand more fully how severely exit would impact our country and communities and as exit negotiations fall drastically short of government rhetoric.



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Stories casting doubt on government policy and whether this is really a sensible idea are [already appearing](#) in UK exit-supporting press and media and Theresa May herself stated 'No deal is better than a bad deal' and we must hold the government to account on its basic duty of acting in the best interest of our country and its people, rather than the opposite.

More and more people will question the destruction of UK exit and start speaking and calling for Remain. Be one of them.

## The government has no plan

EU IN BRUM notes that neither the government nor the Leave campaign has advanced a single plan or idea for leaving the EU in a way that maintains our current quality of life and stems the loss of control, security, wealth and status that we already see and exit would entail.

## We must not forget:

- The government is borrowing an extra £120 billion over 5 years to pay for UK exit, adding to the UK's national debt and deficit, with no plan or end in sight
- The government's attention and investment is focused on exit at the expense of public services, including our NHS which is being ignored despite its deeply worrying underfunding and consequent crisis
- The union of the UK and stability in Northern Ireland is seriously threatened if exit happens
- The weak pound means travel and holiday costs have increased significantly and rising prices at home are ramping up pressure on family/personal budgets and businesses
- The UK has slipped from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world, now lying behind France
- The government is not addressing the rise in hate crime and rightwing populism or issues in communities who feel marginalized and 'left out', yet disadvantaging and weakening the country through exit will only exacerbate these problems

## Our place in the EU

The EU's beginnings lie in a bold peace and rights project, championed by Winston Churchill, which unified European partners after two appalling world wars and has maintained peace, unity and prosperity in our continent for over 60 years.

We have the EU to thank for vital workers' rights, gender equality rights, LGBT rights and environmental protections, keeping our air and country healthy and our businesses sustainable. The government speaks often of deregulation and refuses to guarantee all these essential rights. Many are so commonplace that we take them for granted, yet they could easily be swept away via the exit process with dramatic impacts for our freedom and quality of life.

Furthermore, the EU costs us next to nothing, about 0.5 percent of our GDP, while NATO costs four times as much at two percent of GDP. Research suggests that we get back 5-6 percent of GDP in the boost provided by EU membership, including tariff-free access to the biggest, most powerful trading bloc in the world, the four freedoms allowing goods, finance, services and citizens to move freely, with massive benefits for our economy and population, European investment and research partnerships and our increased power as leaders in and through the EU. All of this has had direct benefits in Birmingham and helped grow [our city](#).

EU IN BRUM believes that the people of Birmingham do not want to lose all these incredible rights and benefits, or our place in the world. The people of Birmingham want the UK to be an open, tolerant, advanced and attractive place to live and do business. EU IN BRUM is certain and it's increasingly apparent that this can be best achieved by remaining in the EU.



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## What can we do?

Over these next two years, EU IN BRUM and the Remain movement will be concertedly making the case for our EU membership and winning people over. Our growing community of activists and network will strengthen further and make deeper inroads.

We must work hard in these two years to persuade both people and our politicians to protect the UK and all the citizens who live here and to continue to ensure a strong UK, leading in the EU and the world.

## Significant shift

EU IN BRUM believes that there has been a significant shift already in the views of people in Birmingham. The referendum margin in Birmingham was incredibly close and as exit realities are now hitting home and people's pockets, citizens are changing their minds and rejecting the government's direction.

## Spread the message

Article 50 being triggered is nowhere near the end and it's no time to give up or let the UK be dragged into ruin and break up or make us all poorer, for no purpose whatsoever.

EU IN BRUM emphasizes that it's time for resolve and action, not sadness or resignation. We want a bright, open future and we must share this vision and persuade others to join us for the best interest of the UK and all the people of the UK.

EU IN BRUM calls on supporters to spread this message everywhere: in person, on social media and by any other means. EU IN BRUM's growing community of activists are building networks throughout Birmingham and beyond as more and more people are looking to get involved in our campaign.

We hope this statement provides the beginnings of a toolkit for those who oppose UK exit and the false 'arguments' supporting it and gives you hope and confidence to speak for Remain, with a clear belief that it's best for the UK and our future – no matter what you're told or intimidated to accept. Please do speak out.

We will fight, build our networks, grow opposition and challenge politicians continuously to ensure they protect our future.

*Author: George Turvey, EU IN BRUM*

## We'd love to hear from you. Please let us know what you think and join our campaign



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### Join our positive campaign

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