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1°ESS1

## BREXIT

### Introduction: **Why did I choose this topic?**

My topic is about the “Brexit” which lately seems to have overtaken the entire business world. I think it’s a very important issue in our history that will shape the future of the country and of the European Union for generations. It can be ordered in several notions: “Ideas of progress”, “Forms and places of power” or “Spaces and exchanges”.

### First: **What is Brexit about?**

Brexit actually stands for Britain plus Exit, meaning Britain’s exit from the European Union. The European Union is a political and economic union of 28 member states which has developed the international single market (guarantee the free movement of goods, capital, services, and people called the "four freedoms") in 1992. The United Kingdom was one of its founding members. Brexit was held at Polling Stations on Thursday 23rd June, 2016 through a Referendum in which all the citizens who live in the United Kingdom were eligible to vote yes or no to the question: “Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?”

### Then: **The debate and its key arguments**

On the one hand, Britain should stay within the European Union because together they are stronger. An exit would reduce Britain’s INFLUENCE in Europe and isolate Britain from Europe in terms of economy, security and environment. Outside the European Union, Britain will need to pay to access the European Union's SINGLE MARKET and being in the EU means lower prices in U.K. shops. The European Union is Britain’s largest trading partner, worth more than £400 billion a year and more than 3 million jobs in the U.K. are linked to trade with the European Union. Europe is Britain’s most important export market and union membership has been crucial to establishing London as a global financial center. Brexit would damage British TRADE with the EU and British companies will be less competitive in the EU marketplace. Furthermore, United Kingdom GROWTH and development is dependent on high levels of European migration, without it UK industries will suffer. As a result the ability to travel, live and work in the EU is likely to become more difficult if Britain leaves the EU.

The former Prime Minister David Cameron was a noted opponent of Brexit and warned through his campaign that leaving would be disastrous for the British economy. He said “After six years of sacrifice, when risks to our economy are still high, wouldn’t the gravest risk be walking out of the biggest single market in the world?”

On the other hand, without the European Union, Britain would be free to decide its own destiny in the world: The United Kingdom will be able to regain CONTROL and INDEPENDENCE. Britain wouldn’t need to contribute to the EU BUDGET (in 2015 the UK government paid £13 billion to the EU). Brexit doesn’t necessary mean UNCERTAINTY: Switzerland is a good example of a country that is outside of the EU doing well. The United Kingdom could also be powerful without the EU trade through organisations such as the World Trade Organisation. Britain doesn’t gain any global influence through EU membership; Britain is already a global economic power and also part of NATO for example. If Britain

leaves the EU, the UK would control its own borders resulting in less EU migrants, allowing for more jobs in the UK.

One of the supporters of the “Leave” Campaign was Nigel Farage, a politician who has been the leader of the U.K. Independence Party, or UKIP (Euro-scepticism: criticism of and strong opposition to the European Union). His message is simple: control immigration and bring back jobs and prosperity to the U.K.

### Finally: Results of the referendum

Britain has been a member of the European Union since 1973. The last vote on whether to stay or leave Europe was in 1975, and of course the social, political and economic climate in Europe has changed dramatically since then because of a series of crisis which have shaken British confidence in the European Union. Consequently the citizens of United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union. The “Leave” Campaign won by 52% to 48% with more than 30 million people voting.

### As an opening: Consequences of the vote

The impact of Brexit in the long term will depend on the relationship between the United Kingdom and the European Union. The government has not made any plans yet how to begin such a new process in the country. But positive and negative consequences have already been noticed: The EU referendum campaign was marked by a lot of claims about what would or wouldn't happen after the vote. The most important change was David Cameron, who announced his resignation as Prime Minister the day after the referendum. He was replaced by Theresa May. Nigel Farage announced too, he was resigning as the leader of the UK Independence Party, saying Britain was "in a good position" and that his political ambition had been achieved. The value of the Pound has also changed and has gone 13% down (from \$1.50 to \$1.30), which makes exports more competitive. The negative point is that the referendum result made everyday racism more noticeable to the media and the public. Reported hate crime rose by 57% in the four days after the referendum. Even more significantly, the EU will be under pressure to develop a closer integration with European countries because Brexit is going to harm the EU's international reputation.

At last lots of people were happy that their vote was taken into account but some others regretted their choice the very next day. As a result of which a new word was born: Regrexit, a slang word that stands for regret plus exit.

What is clear is that the decision to leave the Union will have far-reaching consequences for all areas of British society and the economy for years to come. So there is still one question left: How will Brexit progress and develop itself in the future?

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