

HUSKYMUN

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History of the European Union

Following the conclusion of the Second World War, the nations of Europe took a vow to end the brutal and bloody fighting between their states. While this transition from enemies to allies did not immediately occur, in 1950, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) began to unite European countries economically and politically in order to secure lasting peace. There were six founding countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. Although the treaty primarily dealt with greater economic integration, it also required a new court system capable of settling disputes between member nations. This new court, the European Court of Justice, is one of the ECSC's most lasting institutions, acting as both the judiciary for the ECSC as well as later institutions within Europe.

Even through the Cold War in the 1950s, which fundamentally separated Eastern and West Europe, Europe continued to make leaps toward unity with the introduction of the Treaty of Rome in 1957. This pact created the European Economic Community (EEC), or 'Common Market'. This event marked a major step in the development of a fully integrated Europe. Although the membership of the EEC was equivalent to that of the ECSC, it greatly expanded economic ties between member states. The EEC established both a customs union and a common market among its members. The customs union established uniform external trade tariffs and effectively removed the power of any one member nation to negotiate their own trade deal. The EEC also is responsible for the creation of the 'Common Market' amongst its members, which was a free trade zone that allowed for the unfettered movement of goods, services, investments

and people across member states. These institutions worked towards the standardization of regulations and subsidies of industries throughout the EEC. The Common Market was a fundamental tenet of the EEC. However, change was gradual, as most of the organization's members were reluctant to initially trust this liberal practice.

As time progressed, so too did the union, but in an entirely new direction. Georges Pompidou, the president of France in 1969, focused less on the continual growth of the Common Market, but rather on increasing the size of the EEC. By the summer of 1970, four candidates, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark, and Norway, were carefully selected for EEC membership. Three of those four candidates, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Denmark, would join the EEC in 1973, but Norway, after a national referendum that opposed EEC membership, refused to join. While Norway was the only country to refuse enrollment, they were not the only nation with reservations, as the UK's Labour party strongly and vocally mounted an opposition.

The European Union, as we know presently, came to fruition in the 1980s. Resulting from the addition of a third uniting body, the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC), the group crafted the architecture of the modern bureaucracy; they split into five branches, all tasked with managing the collective European Community. These five branches were the Commission of the European Communities, the European Communities Chief Executive body, the European Council, a council made up of Europe's national leaders, the Council of the European Communities, a legislative body made up of ministers from member states, the European Parliament, which at this time was a relatively weak advisory body, and the European Court of

Justice, the Community's chief judiciary. All five of these institutions would eventually be integrated into the European Union. Furthermore, in 1986, the Single European act was signed. This treaty provided the basis for a vast six-year programme aimed at sorting out the problems with the free flow of trade across EU borders, creating a single European market. This was particularly important following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, as the concordat led the reunification of East and West Germany in the following year.

By the Spring of 1990, the European Council would propose an intergovernmental conference to discuss the introduction of a European Monetary Union, and in 1992 the efforts to implement a currency union came to fruition, through the Maastricht Treaty. The treaty not only established monetary unity, under the Euro, but it also officially established the European Union (EU). This new EU gave greater authority to the European Parliament and established the concept of European citizenship. With millions of citizens seamlessly participating within the various economies and cultures of Europe, and the technological rise of mobile phones and the Internet, Europe began to resemble a singular nation.

This singular European identity, however, was not as popular as anticipated. Following the Maastricht Treaty, public support for the European Union began to wane across the continent. The splintering was exemplified in 2004 British elections for European Parliament, as the previously fringe UK Independence Party (UKIP) managed to win 16% of the total vote share. The UKIP was originally established in the 1990s, following the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty, and its platform primarily consisted of removing the United Kingdom from

the European Union. Following its 2004 electoral success, the UKIP and euroscepticism only continued to grow in influence, attracting former Conservative party members disaffected by the Conservative Party's pro-EU positions. In 2010, just as UKIP was gaining influence in British politics, David Cameron, a moderate conservative and EU supporter, became Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and led a coalition government between the Conservative party and the Liberal Democrats.

The Current Situation: Brexit

By 2013, however, David Cameron's control over the Conservative party came into question as euroscepticism continued to grow in the United Kingdom. David Cameron promised to hold a referendum on the UK's membership in the EU following the 2015 elections, hoping to check the UKIP and assert himself as the leader of the Conservative party. Although David Cameron secured reelection, the timing of his proposed referendum could not have come at a more favorable time for UKIP. The European Migrant Crisis had just begun in Europe; while the UK took substantially less refugees than their counterparts, this simply enforced the long standing sentiment of euroscepticism.

The internal divisions within the Conservative party, in conjunction with the Migrant Crisis, ultimately led to a victory for Brexit supporters. The victory was by a small majority, as a mere 52% of the United Kingdom citizens voted to leave. The bulk of those who supported the

withdrawal were located in England and Wales. In Northern Ireland a majority of voters chose to remain, and in Scotland support for the EU was overwhelming. Unfortunately for David Cameron, the support of the Scottish and those in Northern Ireland was simply not enough, and Cameron was forced to resign on June 24 of 2016.

This development has caused serious complications not just for the United Kingdom, but for the EU as a whole. Logistically, the process for withdrawal has become a mess for the island nation. The weak leadership of the UKIP took nearly a full year to officially trigger Article 50 of the Lisbon, to voluntarily withdrawal from the European Union, and even longer to revoke the 1972 European Communities Act. Now, the UK must make another crucial decision. On March 29th of 2019, the two-year negotiation period between London and Brussels comes to an end. If the negotiations are not to be extended, it can result in result in two options: a soft or hard Brexit. If Great Britain follows the footsteps of Norway, with a soft Brexit, they would leave the EU while still entitled to all the advantages of the European single market. On the other hand, London could choose to leave the EU and the single market for good. Before sealing its fate, a 21-month transition period will be implemented to adjust to the post-Brexit era before cutting all ties with the European Union. While this may cause a logistical headache, leaving the Union is not the sole dilemma.

Brexit has threatened the integrity of the United Kingdom at large. Following the vote, Nicola Sturgeon, the First Minister of Scotland, public denounced the election's result. While calling the result "democratically unacceptable" may seem unreasonable to some, it is founded

in a strong rationale, as nearly 2/3rds of the population of Scotland voted to remain in the Union. This contrast to the rest of the UK has resulted in the revival of the Scottish independence movement. However, the most urgent issue is the smallest member of the UK: Northern Ireland. Similar to Scotland, most of its population wanted to remain in the EU; unlike its Haggis eating neighbor, Northern Ireland shares a land border with the Republic of Ireland, an EU member, and their trade relationship has proven to be a critical issue for both parties. Currently, it is possible to move freely between the two entities. If a hard Brexit ensues, Northern Ireland might end up in a customs union with the EU, a serious threat to the constitutional integrity and overall sovereignty of the United Kingdom.

The biggest issue, notwithstanding, is not the logistics or politics of this disbandment, but rather the economic ramifications. There is little outline for future relations between the 'new' EU and the rest of world regarding trade, travel, and security. Moreover, it has not been disclosed how the EU divorce bill would be calculated, but the cost has been estimated to be in the range of £30 million to £50 million. Additionally, there is still a possibility for both parties to fail to agree on the terms of a deal before March 2019. In this case, the UK has to trade according to the WTO rules, ultimately hurting and diminishing the role of London as a major financial hub.

The Resurgence of Nationalism

Regardless of the multitude of impacts Brexit may have on the globe, the decision to withdraw follows a social trend that is growing worldwide: the resurgence of nationalism.

Over the past years, rising nationalism is seen everywhere and in everything. From the election of Donald Trump, to the nationalist policies of the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzō Abe, his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi and the Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and the success of far-right parties in Italian, German and Austrian elections in 2017 and 2018, nationalism appears to be on rise globally. News coverage of nationalism has been global, focusing on US elections, and British referendum, but also government policies in Philippines, China and India, as well as in South Africa. While debate should address the overall rise of nationalism, we should consider an increased affinity of the ideology found in Europe.

The European nationalism movement can trace their roots the former days of imperialism. Former global expansion was fostered, and justified, through the use of nationalistic tactics. However, there is a large differentiation between historical branches of nationalism and that of modern political parties. The former, classified by scholars as an "ethnic variety", was built on race, religion, and language. This stands in contrast to a "civic nationalism", in which rights are granted to all citizens, regardless of race, ethnicity, language, religion, or culture.

German nationalism is, for example, often condemned as ethnic and exclusive, whereas Anglo-French nationalism is seen to be civic and inclusive.

Across Europe, nevertheless, nationalist and far-right parties have made recently made significant electoral gains. Some have taken office, others have become the main opposition voice, and even those yet to gain a political foothold have forced adaptation by centerist leaders. This backlash, in part, can be attributed to the financial and migrant crisis, but the wave of discontent also taps into long-standing fears about globalisation and a dilution of national identity. Although platform diversity is found when examining each country's party for nationalism, some common themes include hostility to immigration, anti-Islamic rhetoric, and Euroscepticism. This not only poses a threat to a vast majority of minority groups, but also to the entire European Union. You, as a delegate, must assess how this resurgence of ideology has affected the European landscape, contributed to Brexit, and what this may mean for the future of not just the European Union, but the cohesiveness of the European continent.

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