

Northern Ireland is safer, stronger and better off in a reformed EU

ECONOMY & TRADE

- Easy, tariff-free access to the Single Market is particularly important in Northern Ireland. Over the last decade, around 60% of all goods exported from Northern Ireland have gone to the EU and the EU is a crucial market for a range of Northern Ireland industries. For example, 87% of food and drink exports (£1.2bn) go to the EU.
- Surveys among NI businesses consistently demonstrate strong support for remaining in the EU. Major NI employers such as Bombardier and Moy Park have also stressed the importance to their businesses of the UK remaining in the EU. Being part of the EU and offering access to a Single Market of 500m people is a major selling point in attracting investment to Northern Ireland.
- The Oxford Economics report, recently commissioned by the NI Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, concluded that economic output in NI would decrease under all possible post-Leave models. On average NI economic output would be 2.8% lower than otherwise by 2030, according to the OE report - well below the 1.8% projection for the UK as a whole. Manufacturing and construction would be hardest hit.

THE BORDER

- Customs controls at the border were removed when the UK and Ireland joined the Single Market. The absence of any cross-border restrictions has significantly encouraged cross-border cooperation and increased trade since then.
- Alternative models for a UK outside the EU suggest that the UK would be outside the EU Customs Union. This would mean trade across the border with Ireland would once again be subject to customs controls and complex rules on the origin of products. There are concerns that this would lead to delays, extra bureaucracy and costs for Northern Ireland businesses.
- It is also unclear if the Common Travel Area, which provides for the free movement of people across the border, could continue in the same way that it did before both countries joined the EU. The Common Travel Area relies on the UK and Ireland having similar immigration arrangements

SECURITY AND STABILITY

- Cooperation between law enforcement authorities across Europe is vital given the cross-border nature of security threats. Membership of the EU allows Northern Ireland law enforcement agencies to benefit from use of the European Arrest Warrant, EU watch-list and membership of Europol, the EU organisation that helps EU countries to fight serious crime and terrorism.
- Since 2009, thanks to the European Arrest Warrant, law enforcement agencies in Northern Ireland have brought back 34 people to face justice and extradited 190 people accused or convicted of crime to other EU countries.
- The EU has been supportive of the political progress that has been made in Northern Ireland. Around €2.26bn has been committed in Northern Ireland and the border areas of Ireland since 1995 as part of the PEACE programme and financial support through the EU structural funds has played a constructive role in the development of NI in the period since the end of the Troubles. The EU has committed €469m of PEACE and INTERREG structural funding for 2014-2020.