

## **THE GREAT EU DEBATE**

Thank you to all that voted in our Walker Begley EU referendum.

The result is:-

<b>Remain</b>	<b>39.44%</b>
<b>Leave</b>	<b>49.30%</b>
<b>Undecided</b>	<b>11.27%</b>

This is interesting and probably more in favour of the leave campaign than national polls would currently suggest. However 1 in 10 of our voters are undecided. If this is representative across the country could their final vote be crucial on June 23<sup>rd</sup>?

In order to help the undecided and maybe help those whose vote is only just in one direction we have put together a summary of the 12 key areas of debate, with the leave and remain views.

Reading through these areas and deciding issue by issue may help your final decision.

# 1 DEFENCE AND OUR GLOBAL ROLE

## The considerations:-

- The EU's role in foreign affairs has grown in recent years.
- Its foreign policy is led by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs who is assisted by the European External Action Service.
- Individual member states retain a veto on foreign policy proposals.

## Main views of the leave campaigners:-

- Membership of NATO and the UN Security Council are more important to than the EU.
- The EU interferes with defence procurement and would like its own army.
- Britain would have more influence on the world stage as an independent country.

## Main views of the remain campaigners:-

- UK needs to be in the EU helping to take the big decisions.
- Leaving the EU would diminish Britain's influence on the world stage.
- Working with our European neighbours over shared threats helps keep Britain safer.

## YOUR VIEW

## REMAIN/LEAVE

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# 2 CONSUMER AFFAIRS

## The considerations:-

- The EU legislates on consumer protection issues and regulates on trading standards.
- The stated aims of the single market are to stimulate competition and trade, improve efficiency, raise quality, and cut prices.
- Campaigners disagree about the overall effect on household costs.

## Main views of the leave campaigners:-

- EU red tape makes goods and services more expensive.
- The recent row over the "tampon tax" shows the EU has too much power, Britain should be able to set VAT rates itself.
- Consumer protection laws existed before the EU and would remain after Britain left.

## Main views of the remain campaigners:-

- People in Britain save an average of £450 a year because prices are lower as a result of EU membership.
- Flights and mobile phone charges are among the goods and services that are cheaper.
- The EU ensures that imported goods meet European quality standards.

## YOUR VIEW

## REMAIN/LEAVE

### **3 COST OF MEMBERSHIP**

#### **The considerations:-**

- The UK is a net contributor to the EU budget.
- The gross contribution in 2015 was £17.8bn but the UK rebate was worth £4.9bn.
- £4.4bn was also paid back to the UK government for farm subsidies and other programmes.

#### **Main views of the leave campaigners:-**

- The gross cost works out at £350m a week.
- If the UK left, billions of pounds would become available for other priorities.
- The UK would be able to decide how to spend the money that the EU transfers back to it.

#### **Main views of the remain campaigners:-**

- Economic benefits of EU membership easily outweigh the cost.
- Other countries contribute more per person than the UK does.
- On exit the UK would still have to contribute to the EU budget to retain access to the single market.

### **YOUR VIEW**

### **REMAIN/LEAVE**

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### **4 EDUCATION AND TECHNICAL/MEDICAL RESEARCH**

#### **The considerations:-**

- National governments are responsible for education but the EU promotes co-operation between member states.
- The EU plans to spend €80bn on research between 2014 and 2020 under the Horizon 2020 programme.

#### **Main views of the leave campaigners:-**

- Only 3% of total R&D spending in Britain is funded by the EU.
- The UK could increase funding to science if its not paying for EU membership.
- Britain could have an immigration policy which could fast track scientists and graduates.

#### **Main views of the remain campaigners:-**

- UK universities receive millions in research funding from the EU.
- Many of the UK's top scientists come from Europe with the help of EU grants.
- The Erasmus programme allows British students to study abroad.

### **YOUR VIEW**

### **REMAIN/LEAVE**

## 5 ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

### The considerations:-

- The EU is in the process of developing an integrated energy market.
- EU-wide policies to tackle climate change include the Emissions Trading Scheme.
- It also legislates on issues such as water quality and air pollution.

### Main views of the leave campaigners:-

- EU environmental regulation is a burden to businesses and increases energy prices.
- Other European countries would still want to sell their electricity to the UK after exit.
- Most of the UK's gas imports come from Norway – Britain is not dependent on Russia.

### Main views of the remain campaigners:-

- Leaving the EU would see energy bills rise by £500m.
- Energy security is stronger as part of the EU because it negotiates as a large bloc.
- There is cleaner water and air, and lower greenhouse gas emissions, due to EU action.

## YOUR VIEW

## REMAIN/LEAVE

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## 6 FARMING AND FISHING

### The considerations:-

- The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) remains the EU's biggest area of spending although its share of the budget is falling.
- EU subsidies account for 50% of British farm incomes.
- The EU's Common Fisheries Policy rules on the amount of fish each country's can catch.

### Main views of the leave campaigners:-

- Britain pays more for the CAP than it gets back so leaving the EU would make more money available for UK farmers.
- The CAP also wastes lots of money on bureaucracy.
- The Common Fisheries Policy has devastated the British fishing industry.

### Main views of the remain campaigners:-

- Many British farmers would go out of business without the support of the CAP.
- 73% of UK farming exports go to the EU.
- It was the EU that forced France and Germany to lift bans on British beef.
- Fisheries have to be managed to prevent over-fishing.

## YOUR VIEW

## REMAIN/LEAVE

## 7 IMMIGRATION

### The considerations:-

- Total net migration to the UK is running at over 300,000 a year despite the government's target of cutting it to under 100,000.
- Migration from the EU accounts for just over half the total.
- EU citizens have the right to live and work in any member state.

### Main views of the leave campaigners:-

- It is impossible to control immigration as a member of the EU.
- Public services are under strain because of the number of migrants.
- High immigration has driven down wages for British workers.
- The official figures underestimate the true level of migration.

### Main views of the remain campaigners:-

- Immigrants, especially those from the EU, pay more in taxes than they take out.
- Cameron's EU deal means in-work benefits for new EU migrant workers will be limited for the first four years.
- Outside the EU the UK would still have to accept free movement to gain full access to the single market.
- Immigration is good for the economy.

## YOUR VIEW

## REMAIN/LEAVE

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## 8 POLICING AND SECURITY

### The considerations:-

- Terror attacks in Paris and Brussels have brought security to the centre of the debate.
- The UK is not part of the Schengen borderless travel area but EU citizens have the right to free movement
- Entry to Britain can be blocked if public security is at stake.

### Main views of the leave campaigners:-

- Being in the EU makes it easier for terrorists to come to the UK.
- Supremacy of EU Courts makes it harder to deport violent criminals.
- On exit Britain would still co-operate with European countries as it does with the USA.

### Main views of the remain campaigners:-

- Britain does not have open borders because it is not in the Schengen area.
- Europol membership allows the UK to share intelligence and fight cross-border crime.
- The European Arrest Warrant has returned over 1,000 criminals to face justice in the UK.

## YOUR VIEW

## REMAIN/LEAVE

## 9 SOVEREIGNTY AND LAWS

### The considerations:-

- The UK has to apply EU directives and EU regulations are binding across member states.
- Most EU laws are proposed by the European Commission but must be agreed by national governments and the European Parliament.
- EU laws are enforced by the European Court of Justice (ECJ).

### Main views of the leave campaigners:-

- Most UK laws are made in Brussels.
- Other member states can force through decisions against the UK's wishes.
- The British government has repeatedly been defeated in cases brought to the ECJ.
- Leaving the EU is the only way to regain full sovereignty.

### Main views of the remain campaigners:-

- Only a minority of UK laws derive from the EU.
- Britain retains a veto in many important areas.
- Cameron's EU deal allows national parliaments to block legislation.
- Some sharing of sovereignty is crucial to enable fair trade across Europe.

## YOUR VIEW

## REMAIN/LEAVE

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## 10 TRADE AND THE ECONOMY

### The considerations:-

- About half of UK trade is conducted with the EU.
- The EU single market allows the free movement of goods, services, capital and workers.
- Trade negotiations with other parts of the world are conducted by the EU, not individual member states.

### Main views of the leave campaigners:-

- UK companies would be freed from the burden of EU regulation.
- Trade with the EU would continue. We import more from them than we export to them.
- Britain would be able to negotiate its own trade deals with other countries

### Main views of the leave campaigners:-

- Brexit would cause an economic shock and growth would be slower.
- As a share of exports Britain is more dependent on the rest of the EU than they are on us.
- The UK would still have to apply EU rules to retain access to the single market.

## YOUR VIEW

## REMAIN/LEAVE

## 11 TRAVEL AND LIVING ABROAD

This issue covers travel for leisure or work, and living in other EU countries.

### The considerations:-

- Over a million Britons live in other EU countries and millions more visit each year.
- Membership of the EU allows citizens to live and work where they like.
- The EU also makes rules which affect tourists travelling around Europe.

### Main views of the leave campaigners:-

- There is no reason that leaving the EU would make it harder to go on holiday in Europe.
- International law means current expats could not be forced to return to the UK.
- The UK has deals with lots of other countries to help Britons living abroad.

### Main views of the remain campaigners:

- Flights to Europe and using mobile phones on holiday are cheaper thanks to the EU.
- British tourists enjoy free or cheaper healthcare in other EU countries.
- There is no guarantee that expats in the EU would be able to stay after Brexit.

## YOUR VIEW

## REMAIN/LEAVE

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## 12 WORK AND PAY

### The considerations:-

- Unemployment is over 10% in the EU, almost double the rate in the UK.
- Some workers' rights are guaranteed by EU laws but tax rates, benefits and the minimum wage are down to UK government decisions.

### Main views of the leave campaigners:-

- Less regulation in the workplace would create more jobs.
- Maternity leave and holiday pay would only change if the British people decided to change them.
- The UK could get more investment from countries outside the EU.
- Lower migration would push wages up.

### Main views of the leave campaigners:-

- Three million jobs in the UK are linked to trade with the EU.
- The EU has delivered guaranteed holiday pay, paid maternity leave, and increased protection in the workplace.
- The UK gets £66m investment every day from the EU.

## YOUR VIEW

## REMAIN/LEAVE