

# Brexit 2



# Brexit (Part 2 Of 2)

## Purpose

To understand the difficulties about trying to achieve a Brexit Agreement including The Irish Backstop; border checks; changes of leadership; a 'no deal' Brexit; and the deadlines.

## Entrance of Pupils

*A thought provoking slideshow introducing the concept of 'Brexit' for the pupils to enter assembly to (10 minutes)*

## Leaving the EU

After the 2016 referendum, the government spent several months preparing and planning. On 29th March 2017, the Prime Minister was called Theresa May made an official announcement that the UK would be leaving the EU - following the big vote - exactly two years later on 29th March 2019.

From that time - the government had a period of two years to have lots of talks with the EU and sort out how the EU and UK would get along after the UK left the EU. This was a very important job.

The talks - called **negotiations** - were much trickier than anyone had expected. They took a long time.

There were many difficult things that needed to be sorted out.



## The Brexit Withdrawal Agreement

In November 2018, after many months of talks and negotiations, Teresa May and the EU managed to get an agreement of how life would be after Brexit.

This was commonly called the Brexit Withdrawal Agreement. It didn't include everything that she had hoped for - but she hoped it would be enough to satisfy MPs.

This was Part 1 of what was needed to actually complete Brexit - the next job was to get agreement for a new law in the UK Parliament. To do that - sufficient people in Parliament had to agree with the Brexit Withdrawal Agreement and vote for it to become law.

It had already been very difficult to this point - but then it got really tricky.

It became very obvious that, in Parliament, there were different views about what should happen next.

Lots of MPs were in favour of one or more of these views - but there weren't sufficient people in favour of any one individual view to make it become law.

## Different Views

The main views that MPs had were as follows:

- UK should leave with a deal - a **Withdrawal Agreement**.
- UK should leave without a deal, often called a **No - Deal Brexit**
- Some felt that the original big vote had been too simple and that voters might have changed their minds since - so they wanted a second big vote, a second **Referendum**
- Others didn't like the idea of Brexit at all and wanted to vote to **cancel**

## Brexit



In other words:

- Deal
- No deal
- Vote again
- Cancel

It was Teresa May's job to persuade MPs that the Brexit Withdrawal Agreement was the right thing for the country. She tried to get the Members of Parliament - or at least sufficient of them - to agree with her.

To do that - the government sets up big discussions that go on in the Houses of Parliament and often last a long time. These are called **Debates**.

She tried three different times to get the law passed - but each time it went to a vote - there weren't sufficient people in agreement.

Why were there so many people against the Brexit Withdrawal Agreement?

There were a few reasons - but the main reason involved a really important part of the United Kingdom—**Northern Ireland**.

### **Explanation of the Northern Ireland Problem**

Part of the UK, as you know, is Northern Ireland. It sits at the top of the island of Ireland very close to Great Britain. It's the only area in the UK where, after Brexit, there would be a place where the UK met the Republic of Ireland - which is part of the EU.

According to the EU - it was always possible for easy movement for the members of one part of the EU to travel between one part and another part and vice versa.



The place where one country meets another country is called a **Border**. This is one example of a border currently between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Remember , they're both still in the EU.



Look again - closely - you can hardly notice any difference from one part to the next.

At the moment its very easy to travel between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland because both are part of the EU. People can live in Northern Ireland - travel to work in the Republic each day and then come home again at the end of the day. People in the Republic of Ireland can easily travel to Northern Ireland and go shopping and return home within an hour or so.

The big problem comes because the rules for the European Union- rules which cannot change, they say - currently say that where there is a border between a EU country and a country which isn't in the EU —there would need to be **Border Checks**.



## What are Border Checks?

Look at these border checks in the United States. These checks are between US and Canada. They are both places that are very friendly towards each other - but they still have to have checks at the border to make sure that people aren't bringing bad things in and to make sure they have the right to travel in the other country.



It can take a long time to travel across the border checks - sometimes on one trip people can get held up for hours.

It would be very difficult if something like that happened between Northern Ireland the Republic.

Northern Ireland also had troubles going back more than 30 years or so, which were eased when the borders between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland became more open and free and easy.

Nobody had been able to think of a way to manage this - so part of Teresa May's deal was to agree that –until a solution could be found - UK would agree to EU rules continuing. This would then mean that there would be no need to have border checks - and Northern Ireland and the Republic could still go about their peaceful lives.

This became known as the **“Irish Backstop.”**



It was one of the main reasons Teresa May wasn't able to get MPs to agree the deal with Europe. People who wanted to leave the EU felt that the UK wouldn't have properly left - since we would still have to abide by EU rules and wouldn't be able to set up new **Trade Agreements** with other countries such as America, Canada and Australia.

There was no final date agreed by which the Irish Backstop would come to an end - so the **Brexiteers** (who wanted to leave the EU) felt that the UK could be trapped forever with EU rules.

That was a really tricky problem.

### **The Extension—March 29th 2019 to October 31st 2019**

Since Teresa May had been unable to get agreement in Parliament, she was forced to ask for an extension to the date at which the UK left the EU. This was agreed with the new date set as **October 31st 2019**.

After Teresa May had repeatedly been unable to get agreement in Parliament - she resigned as the Leader of the Conservative Party - her group - and as a result she had, in effect, also resigned as the Prime Minister.

### **A New Conservative Leader and Prime Minister**

The Conservative Party would need to have a fresh vote to decide who their new leader would be. When elected - that person would automatically become Prime Minister as head of the party with the greatest number of MPs.

A number of people put their name forward to be the new leader. Members of the Conservative Party voted and as a result one person, Boris Johnson, was made Leader of the Conservative Party and therefore at the same time he was also made the new Prime Minister of the United Kingdom on 24th July 2019.





It's now his job to get the very difficult job of Brexit finished.

Boris Johnson has repeatedly said he would like to get a new deal with the EU - a deal which manages the Irish Backstop - which he would expect to be able to pass through parliament successfully.

He has also repeatedly said that even if we don't have a deal - he would still allow the UK to stop being members of the EU by allowing the 31st October 2019 deadline for a deal to come and go.

This would be a **'No Deal' Brexit.**

### **No Deal Brexit**

Many think that leaving without a deal would make it much harder for trade between the UK and the EU.

For example - lorries carrying fresh food such as fruit and vegetables to the UK from EU - something which has been easy for a long time - would suddenly be much harder and possibly much slower. Perhaps that fresh food would not be as fresh when it arrived.

There were sufficient people in parliament who were so bothered that No Deal Brexit would be bad for us, they agreed to a new law that requires Boris Johnson as Prime Minister to request another extension if a deal hasn't been



done by a late period in October 2019 and is supposed to prevent him from allowing the UK to leave without a deal, something they feared greatly. Although Mr. Johnson has said he will obey the law - he has also repeatedly said that the UK will leave the EU on 31st October 2019—whether there was a deal or no deal.

Time will tell whether Mr. Johnson gets a deal before 31st October 2019 - or if not what would happen next.

### **General Election**

Some people feel the only way to get this sorted now is by having a new General Election - to see if there are sufficient people who become MPs who would then to agree to one of the ideas. Others feel that having a Second Brexit Vote would solve the problem.

Things should be much clearer as we get closer to the 31st October 2019.

The whole process of Brexit however, has been much more difficult to solve than almost anyone ever thought.

It's also taken up a lot of the government's time - and many feel that other important things which the government needs to get sorted such as improving education, improving the health service and making law and order issues better are suffering as a result.

### **What Do You Think?**

What do you think about Brexit? Would you prefer to leave the European Union—or would you prefer to remain?

Do you have your own reasons for believing this or do you just go with someone that you trust?



## **The Bible Says:**

The New Testament speaks very clearly about the law of the land:

‘Obey the government for God is the one who has put it there.

There is no government anywhere that God has not placed in power. So those who refuse to obey the law of the land are refusing to obey God.’

### **Romans 13: 1-2**

## **Let’s Pray:**

Dear God

Let us pray for our politicians to have clear and wise minds and hearts.

Help them to find the ability to bend and compromise when ideas are not exactly the same as their own so that an agreement can finally be reached

Amen

## **Putting it into Practice:**

Learn the spelling and the meaning of the following important words from our Brexit assemblies:

Government / Parliament / Referendum / Election / Treaty / Border / Debate

Conservative / Labour / Liberal Democrat / Brexiteer / Prime Minister

European Union / United Kingdom / Northern Ireland /

## **Exit of Pupils**

*A thought provoking slideshow reminding pupils of the key issues raised in the assembly about the concept of ‘Brexit’ for the pupils to exit assembly to (10 minutes)*



## Collective Worship and Putting it into Practice for the Rest of the Week

### Day 2

Dear God

Let us remember the issues that are being overlooked because of the concentration on Brexit. Today we pray for our teachers and staff in schools across the country. Give them the strength and wisdom to carry on doing their best for the vocation and profession of education.

Amen

**Split into four groups. Each group is to find out more about their aspect:**

- Deal
- No deal
- Vote again—a second referendum
- Cancel the first vote

### Day 3

Dear God

Let us remember the issues that are being overlooked because of the concentration on Brexit. Thank you for the nurses, doctors and staff that run our hospitals and health services. In these times of severe cutbacks and great need for more funding, we are grateful that they continue to offer a dedicated service to us when we are ill or hurt.

Amen

**In the groups from yesterday, debate the four points of view. Remember that it is good practice to learn to support a view that is not necessarily your own.**



## Day 4

Dear God

Let us remember the issues that are being overlooked because of the concentration on Brexit.

Please support and keep safe all of those who work to ensure the laws of the land are kept: our police service; our armed forces; and our Justice System.

Amen

Discuss what happens at a Border Crossing. Why are they necessary? What might happen if there were no borders and people could come and go freely across the world? Is this a good thing or a bad thing overall?

## Day 5

Dear God

Let us remember the issues that are being overlooked because of the concentration on Brexit.

Let us think today about those who care for us in the emergency services and in social care. Help keep them safe and positive whilst they work in difficult and often dangerous professions.

Amen

Research more about 'The Troubles' in Northern Ireland approximately 30 years ago. See if you can find out about the 'Good Friday Agreement'.



