Brexit : huge consequences for everyday life in the UK!

Let's talk about Brexit! Brexit is the name of the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union, it's a compound word composed of "Britain" (which includes: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland") and "exit". The European Union is an economic and political partnership involving 28 countries. Since January 1st, 1973, the United Kingdom was a member of the European Economic Community, which then became the European Union. It was never really fully integrated into this union because it voluntarily remained outside the eurozone and the Schengen area.

On June 23, 2016, a referendum was organized by former Prime Minister David Cameron to decide whether to stay or leave this union. The majority of the votes were for the UK to leave the EU (51.9%). And it was on the 1st of January 2021 that the UK officially left the EU.

As the United Kingdom is separating from the European Union, what do the British think? What are their feelings? What problems the British exit will cause, in particular for travelling?

These are the questions we've asked to our British penfriends from John Kyrle High School in Ross-on-Wye before the official exit. Indeed, we've created a survey, mixing our two languages, about Brexit and its consequences on the students' lives. Here are their answers: we are going to speak about how they are living the British exit, the relations between the European Union and the United Kingdom, what changes for the people, for work, for traveling... and the personal opinion of the students. Let's see what they think!

Parlons du Brexit ! Le Brexit est le nom donné à la sortie du Royaume-Uni de l'Union Européenne, c'est un mot composé de " Britain" (qui inclut : Angleterre, Ecosse, Pays de Galle et Irlande du Nord) et "exit" qui signifie "sortie ". L'Union Européenne est un partenariat économique et politique impliquant 28 pays. Le 1er janvier 1973, le Royaume-Uni était un membre de la Communauté Économique Européenne, qui est devenue l'Union Européenne. Ils n'ont jamais été totalement intégrés dans cette union car ils sont volontairement restés en dehors de la zone euro et de l'espace Schengen. Le 23 juin 2016, un référendum a été organisé par l'ancien premier ministre David Cameron pour décider s'ils quittaient ou restaient dans cette union. La majorité des votes étaient pour que le Royaume-Uni quitte l'Union Européenne (51,99%). Et c'est le 1er janvier 2021 que le Royaume a officiellement quitté l'Union Européenne.
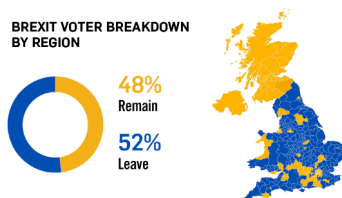
Alors que le Royaume-Uni se sépare de l'Union Européenne, qu'est-ce que les britanniques en pensent ? Quels sont leurs sentiments ? Quels problèmes la sortie britannique provoquera-t-elle, en particulier pour voyager ?

Ce sont les questions que nous avons posées à nos correspondants britanniques de l'école de John Kyrle à Ross-on-Wye, avant la sortie officielle. En effet, nous avons fait un sondage, mélangeant nos deux langues, sur le Brexit et ses conséquences sur la vie des étudiants. Voici leurs réponses : nous allons parler de comment ils vivent la sortie britannique, de la relation entre l'Union Européenne et le Royaume-Uni, qu'est-ce qui change pour les gens, pour le travail, pour voyager... et l'opinion personnelle des étudiants. Voyons voir ce qu'ils pensent !

RELATIONSHIPS

The relation between the European Union and England was not decided by the governments of EU countries and England yet.This decision should have already been taken but the two parties were still in the process of making agreements. One of the main agreements concerns the right to fish in English waters. We've asked 21 English students from Ross if they thought that Britain would keep good relations with European countries. Half of students think that the relationship will remain good. Only 23.8% think that this agreement will be broken. Some students don't know if it will change or

not, accurately 28.6%. The majority of students, around 52.4%, are not anxious about that. But 33,3% of them are anxious and 23.8% are uncertain. They told us about those worries.

Some of them think it's a crazy time. Others are a little more worried. For example, some students are worried about their future because they would like to be able to work abroad, they find that it can have an impact on business and exchanges between countries, they think it will be more difficult to travel in neighbouring countries... Others say that the European countries are their closest neighbours so it is necessary to preserve peace, understanding and mutual aid between them. Finally some think of the economic disadvantages, they say that their country has interest in keeping making money in Europe.

TRAVELLING

We've also asked them if they had planned to travel to France or Europe in the future and if they thought it'll be as easy as before?

We notice that 31.8% of them (7 people) think that, for the moment, it hasn't changed anything. 7 other people answered that they had no plans to travel. But a third of them answered 'Yes, I had plans but it's more complicated now'. Here are some of their claims:

"Whereas travelling used to be free and quick, you now have to apply for and buy a visa, and as someone who's main goal is to travel, it's a bit worrying."

 "I'm not sure of the visa or cost of it too. My french partner needs to get a passport to travel, or will his French ID.card still be OK ?"

So, a lot of questions remained about the visa only a couple of weeks before the actual exit. We can expect to have more paperwork when we want to enter the UK now. There are also more security measures than before.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND'S SPECIAL STATUS (this part was done in French)

Nous leur avons également demandé si pour voyager en République d'Irlande, cela était pareil que pour voyager dans les autres pays de l'Union Européenne. A cette question, la majorité des élèves ont répondu qu'ils ne savaient pas (71,4%) tandis que 19% disent que oui et seulement 9,5% des élèves pensent que non. Les différences, comparé aux autres pays de l'Union Européenne sont que l'Irlande n'a pas de frontière territoriale avec la République d'Irlande et que le République d'Irlande a toujours eu le droit au libre mouvement au sein du Royaume-Uni. Ainsi, d'après eux, ce sera plus facile de voyager en République d'Irlande que dans les autres pays de l'Union européenne.
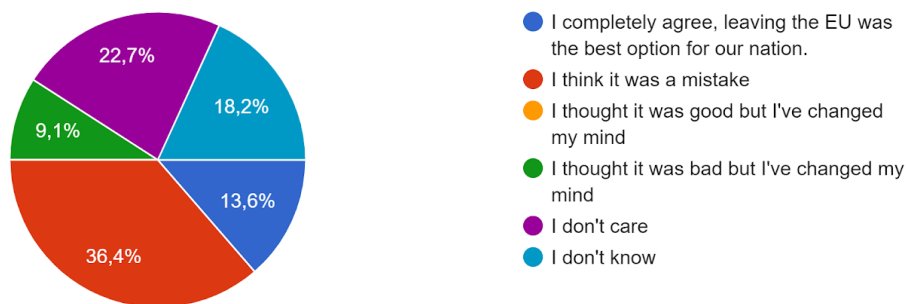
EVERYDAY LIFE

We also asked them how Brexit was perceived by the people who live in the UK but work in the EU, or vice versa? 14 students from Ross-on-Wye said it's now more complicated to live in the UK and work in the EU and vice versa. 13 students also said that life was more expensive, but 4 students said they didn't know if life in the UK was now more expensive or not.

STUDENTS' PERSONAL OPINIONS

What's your personal opinion on your country's choice?
22 réponses

- 🔵 I completely agree, leaving the EU was the best option for our nation.
- 🔴 I think it was a mistake
- 🟠 I thought it was good but I've changed my mind
- 🟢 I thought it was bad but I've changed my mind
- 🟣 I don't care
- 🔵 I don't know

36,4% des élèves anglais pensent que le Brexit est une erreur tandis que 13,6 % pensent que c'était la meilleure chose à faire et 9,1% disent avoir changé d'avis; en effet, ils pensaient que le Brexit était une mauvaise idée mais finalement trouvent que cela est bien pour leur pays. A noter que 22,7% des élèves interrogés ne se sentent pas concernés et 18,2% ne savent pas quoi en penser. Vous trouverez leurs commentaires ci-dessous, certains ont répondu en anglais, d'autres en français.

7 students said they had no opinion on the matter, as they're not interested in politics but here are some comments the others gave us in favor of Brexit: "Our country saves money, more strict rules about who can enter are applied" or "Because too much of our own money is going to the EU", but most of them disagree: "In the future I would like to travel, therefore if we stayed in the EU it would be easier to move between countries within it", "I think that it limits my future as working in EU countries won't be as accessible and easy. I think leaving the EU will have a negative impact

on the younger generations and on the UK's economy as trade will be more expensive", "It was a decision made by old people who it won't affect. And we had no choice in the matter and it will negatively impact our entire future", " Affects young generations who want to work or live abroad. The decision was made by older people who wouldn't live with the consequences" and "The EU was our safety net but now we are alone and can't do anything since we don't have support". Finally, some have mixed feelings about it:"I would like to be able to trade truly fairly with less developed countries and poorer nations so there is more equality, but I would like to remain being able to travel easily", "Je ne sais pas vraiment car être dans l'UE apporte beaucoup de côtés bénéfiques comme la puissance militaire et les alliances militaire des pays voisins, et au contraire d'autre moins positifs, comme l'Euro qui a une valeur différente des livres", "Le vote était trop proche pour prendre une décision claire car les gens ne se sont pas renseignés sur la situation."

So, as you can see, opinions are very divided!

When asked if they wanted to add anything, two students replied: "I wish Brexit would end" and "I don't feel like the UK had enough time to learn about it all before we voted".

As a conclusion, we can say that our British penfriends from John Kyrle High School in Ross-on-Wye think that it will be more complicated for them to travel in Europe, and so for us to visit them!

Pour conclure, nous pouvons dire que nos correspondants anglais du Lycée John Kyrle à Ross-on-Wye pensent que cela sera plus compliqué pour eux de voyager en Europe, et donc, pour nous, de leur rendre visite!

Students from 1ère Euro in Charles Tellier high school,

Condé-en-Normandie.

(Work driven by Ms Hélène Labiche, Lycée Charles Tellier, with the help of Ms Liz Colclough, John Kyrle high school and her students, our pen friends who kindly took the time to answer our survey, thank you!!)