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Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Mohammed Kheider University of Biskra
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of Foreign Languages
Division of English



University of Biskra

**The Impacts of UK's Brexit on Northern
Ireland's Border with the EU**

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Submitted by: *Zeribi Choukri*

Supervised by: *Mrs. Zerigui Naima*

Board of Examiners

Chairperson: Mrs. Amri Chenini Bouthaina

University of Biskra.

Supervisor: Mrs. Zerigui Naima

University of Biskra.

Examiner: Mr. Smati Saïd

University of Biskra.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, who have been a source of encouragement and support during the challenges of my whole college life, thank you for every single sacrifice, thank you for the unconditional love that you provided me with. To my sister Nihal, thank you for your encouragement and kind words. to my friends, I am truly grateful for your presence.

Thank you to Hazar, who supported me through the making of this modest work. I also

dedicate this work to my teachers and colleagues.

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Abstract

The United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union, commonly known as Brexit, has caused a seismic shift in the political and social status quo of the Irish island. This can be corroborated by the literature of scholars such as Kevin O'Rourke and Colin Murray. The present dissertation aims to explain the negotiations and how each scenario can affect Northern Ireland in general and the Irish border in particular. Moreover, this dissertation involves the historical side of the border before and after the partition, which provides the reader with the background necessary to fully understand the significance of this topic in the Brexit discussion. This study relies on critical data analyses of primary and secondary sources and employs the qualitative, historical and analytical approaches. Findings in this comprehensive study suggest that the Irish border is a key and moving element in the negotiations. This is illustrated through the extensive procedures required to reach an agreement that passes through parliament. The conclusions are that Brexit will bring about a lot of changes to the Irish border. Recommendations entail the UK negotiating a good Brexit deal that will guarantee peace and social stability in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland.

Keywords: Brexit, Northern Ireland, Ireland, the European Union, the United Kingdom

List of Acronyms

| | |
|--------------|---|
| CLMC | Combined Loyalist Military Command |
| DUP | Democratic Unionist Party |
| EC | European Community |
| ECSC | European Coal and Steel Community |
| EEC | European Economic Community |
| EFTA | European Free Trade Association |
| EMU | Economic and Monetary Union |
| ERM | Exchange rate mechanism |
| EU | European Union |
| GFA | Good Friday Agreement |
| IRA | Irish Republican Army |
| IVF | Irish Volunteers Force |
| NI | Northern Ireland |
| NICRA | Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association |

| | |
|-------------|------------------------------------|
| PIRA | Provisional Irish Republican Army |
| PM | Prime Minister |
| RIC | Royal Irish Constabulary |
| SDLP | Social Democratic and Labour Party |
| SEA | Single European Act |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| UKIP | UK Independence Party |
| UVF | Ulster Volunteers Force |

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ملخص

General Introduction

General Introduction

Introduction

Over the centuries, Anglo-Irish relations have been defined by insurrection, conflict, and active diplomacy. Despite geographical proximity and many cultural and social ties, the situation has remained unstable. In the twentieth century, relations have witnessed a remarkable development. From the Irish War of Independence in 1919 to the Good Friday agreement in 1999, the twentieth century left a political legacy for Ireland and the United Kingdom (UK).

During the second half of the twentieth century, the European Union began its journey as we know it. States came together to create economic and political stability to ensure long-term peace in Europe. The United Kingdom and Ireland joined the European Economic Community in 1973, and their current economic and political relationship depends mostly on their EU membership. In 2016, the United Kingdom held a referendum on whether to stay in the European Union or leave: 51,9% of the United Kingdom population voted to leave, and the UK government has initiated a process of withdrawal from the European Union.

Outside of the UK, the Republic of Ireland is most affected by Britain's exit from the European Union, known as Brexit (Symington 2017). Given the high degree of economic integration between Ireland and the United Kingdom, the future of the UK–EU trade partnership is of fundamental significance to both parts of the Irish island economies.

Research Problem and Questions

The researcher in this study focuses on the Northern Ireland (NI) border and its role in the negotiations between the UK and the EU. It also investigates possible scenarios through the analysis of plans proposed by Theresa May and Boris Johnson. It examines the historical Anglo-

Irish relationship and links it to the impact that this phenomenon could produce. Furthermore, this work intends to investigate some specific research questions on that subject:

- How was the border formed, and why is it the key issue in the negotiations?
- What are the socio-political outcomes of Brexit in both NI and the UK?
- What is the political climate during the Brexit negotiations?
- Why is the UK's Brexit affecting the Republic of Ireland the most?
- How could the post-Brexit relationship between NI and Britain change?
- How did European integration prompt the UK's decision to leave the EU?

Research Aims

The primary purpose of the research is to articulate the following aims objectively:

- Evaluate the socio-political impacts of the new Brexit borders on both the UK and Ireland.
- Assess the relationship between Britain, Northern Ireland and the EU.
- Explain the negotiations and how each plan can affect Northern Ireland.

Research Significance

Brexit has not only marked legal amendments in Britain but also has caused a significant rupture in the EU (Shipman, Fall Out, chap. 1). It is essential to concentrate on this political phenomenon because it helps students and scholars comprehend Britain and the EU's current scenario. The economic and geopolitical balance of power is expected to alter drastically over the next 15 or 20 years, which will be essential for students to understand for future research. The ambiguities concerning the negotiations and future relations between the UK and the EU are also evident.

Literature Review

Brexit is defined as the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union. The situation remains unstable because no one anticipated the results of such an event. Tony Connelly (chap.1) notes, "No one knew how deep the impact of the Brexit meteor would be-. The impact of the referendum result was felt further afield, too, mainly in the Republic of Ireland". Outside of the UK, the Republic of Ireland is the country that is most affected by Britain's exit from the EU (Symington). This should not have been a surprise, after all, since Ireland was a part of the UK.

Therefore, sections in this dissertation will be dedicated to describing a specific conceptual and historical framework by looking closely at events and concepts that are linked to the literature. The concepts that will be under investigation include Euroscepticism and European integration.

1. Euroscepticism

Tim Shipman notes that Euroscepticism is the biggest challenge the UK has faced since joining the EU. He also states (chap. 1) that "the demons were the forces of Euroscepticism that had been growing in the Conservative Party for three decades." The world press often describes this phenomenon concerning national protectionism. Furthermore, it is defined this way: "Euroscepticism is just another label or something else, such as populism or anti-politics or nationalism. While neglecting to see that, while it contains aspects of these, it is not defined in fundamental terms by them" (de Mars et al. 10). In sum, any public activity that involves expressing a sense of contempt for the entities and policies of the EU can be considered Eurosceptic.

Kevin O'Rourke suggests that this concept is linked to the influx of voters across Europe who are rejecting or condemning the idea of globalisation and that it is essential to mention the

feeling that globalisation, which scholars refer to as an elitist ideology, does not represent the public as a whole (chap.2).

2. European Integration

This term came to prominence in the 1950s as a representation of the changes occurring within Europe's political and economic systems. Martin Griffiths and Terry O'Callaghan (158) believe that integration is best described as a process involving:

- A gradual movement towards increased international cooperation.
- The gradual ceding of political and economic autonomy to supranational institutions.
- The homogenisation of values.
- The creation of a global civil society.

Anthony Pagden adds that integration is accomplished when several states agree to participate in creating a federal political and economic union (15). This definition was embodied in the European Union of Western European states when they decided to work cooperatively in different ways, including a single market to foreign policy. Further integration has been facilitated by several vital treaties, including the following:

- The Treaty of Rome (1958)
- The Single European Act (1987)
- The Maastricht Treaty (1996)

In the context of regional integration, the British partnership with the EU can be described as controversial. Using the expression "European reluctant," Kevin O'Rourke (chap. 1) describes

the UK's lack of enthusiasm for the European experiment. Moreover, several examples throughout the dissertation illustrate the UK's lack of willingness to be fully integrated into the Union.

Methodology

The study uses the historical, analytical and qualitative approaches during the research. Furthermore, the present research relies on a variety of primary and secondary sources. The primary sources are mainly in the form of statements taken from previous high officials, historians and witnesses from those eras. On the other hand, the secondary sources are books and articles written by different scholars on the research's subject matter. The present research incorporates critical data analysis methods that go from general to specific through this combination of sources. Through an analysis of the Irish question's historical roots, the present research provides a thorough understanding of the factors that have led to the emergence of the Irish backstop in the current negotiations. The present research follows the eighth edition of the Modern Language Association (MLA) Style Manual, and it uses footnotes to clarify terms.

The Structure

The present research paper is divided into three chapters. The first two chapters constitute a historical and theoretical framework that tackles essential concepts and events related to the research paper. The third chapter is solely devoted to analysing the different Brexit scenarios and how they could affect the border.

The first chapter, **The Irish Question: A Historical Background**, provides a historical overview of Ireland and the UK's relationship during the twentieth century. This chapter also explains how Ireland ended the Union with the UK and highlights several historical incidents such as the Easter Rising, the Troubles, and the Good Friday Agreement.

The second chapter, **The Genesis of The European Union and Brexit**, explains the factors that led to the creation of the European Union and how Brexit developed throughout a specific timeline. It also explains how Ireland benefited from the European Union and why it is the most vulnerable to Brexit.

The third chapter, **The Irish Border and Brexit: Negations' Framework**, analyses the plans that Prime Ministers Theresa May and Boris Johnson made to the European Union. In particular, this chapter analyses each proposal regarding the Irish border to explore how each proposal could shape a new relationship between the UK and Northern Ireland, in particular, and with the Republic of Ireland and the EU in general.

Chapter One:

**The Irish Question: A Historical
Background**

1.1. Introduction

The twentieth century constituted a period of momentous and unexpected change in British-Irish history. In the first decades, Ireland nurtured a variety of cliques, intrigues, and rivalries as new cultural and political groups competed for power and influence. Furthermore, the Changing mindsets and political environments in that period raised ambiguity and scepticism, establishing a community full of tension in one of the most electrifying phases in modern Irish history. "In the century since the Easter Rising in 1916, Anglo-Irish relations have oscillated between harmony and hope and murderous violence" (Ferriter).

This chapter is an attempt to explain the current context between Ireland and the United Kingdom. With a historical approach, this chapter goes through significant events and moments in the history of Anglo-Irish relations which marked the twentieth century, from the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 and the civil war to the peace process in the nineties, which ended with the so-called Good Friday Agreement (GFA).

1.2. The End of Union

The 20th century's first two decades witnessed a period of profound change and increasing political activity in Ireland. With the emergence of Sinn Féin and the introduction of the third Home Rule Bill, Ireland was about to enter a new era with the UK.

1.2.1. The New Nationalism: Sinn Féin

Early twentieth century Ireland experienced increasingly unorthodox activism. It was new and sometimes mirrored Irish politics' radicalisation. The Boer Wars between the British Empire

and the two Boer states, greatly influenced such activism¹. Such pro-Boer sentiment was more than symbolic; it strengthened ideas about the use of physical power and helped to shape several small organisations and individuals into a loose but increasingly identifiable political grouping. Many of these entities' members served in a series of primarily ad hoc organisations as apprentices before finally becoming the core of what was to become Sinn Féin.

Sinn Féin is an Irish political and cultural society founded around 1905, by Arthur Griffith to promote political and economic independence from Britain and advocate for Ireland's complete political separation from Great Britain, a unified Ireland, and the renewal of Irish culture. Furthermore, Sinn Féin was considered as the new party opposite the Home Rule party, "It was a Republican party and was vehemently against Home Rule, which is regarded as falling too short of what was needed" (*History of Ireland 1893 – 1914*). The new Republican party remained marginal at first, attracting few members only due to its rather unusual nature and the limited appeal of most of its membership.

1.2.2. Home Rule Revived and Denied

Home Rule was the name given to the bill that could enable Ireland to have more control over how it was ruled. In 1909, when the Liberals and the Conservatives won precisely 272 seats, there was a hung parliament. It was an ideal situation for John Redmond, the leader of the Home Rule party. As Nick Pelling put it, "All of a sudden, he found himself holding the balance of power between the Conservatives and the Liberals" (58). Redmond, as the leader of eighty-four valuable

¹ Conflicts between the British Empire and the Boers, Dutch farmers, of the Transvaal and Orange Free State, who resented South Africa's anglicization and British anti-slavery policies (Coogan).

seats, could now get whatever he wanted. Both parties needed his party's support to form a government, so he could negotiate for almost everything he wanted.

Diminishing the House of Lords' powers was the only solution to the hung parliament's dilemma. The Liberals launched the Parliament Act as a solution to the problem, but it needed more than 272 votes to guarantee its passage. Redmond promised to support the Liberals' Parliament Act in return for a Home Rule Bill. The act was passed, and the powers of the lords were reduced—and the absence of the Lords' veto made it obvious that the bill would certainly succeed this time (Coogan).

The Liberals were more hesitant than they had been in the past because the Conservatives had more support from the Unionists. They saw Home Rule as "Rome Rule" because an Irish parliament would have a Catholic majority. Alfred Dennis claimed that the Parliament Act was the start of the Irish question. He noted, "throughout this controversy, the question was entangled with that of the Irish Home Rule. From an early stage and hostile as well as friendly sources, the country learned that the House of Lords question involved other significant matters, and the Irish question stands in the front rank" (Dennis 406).

The Conservatives strongly advocated for the separate classification of the Unionist, northeast part of Ireland, mainly Ulster, from the rest of the island, as the bill was being debated. "The idea that Ulster was different and might be treated slightly differently was established in that very period" (Pelling 58).

In doing so, they hoped to stop the implementation of Home Rule, which they believed would result in a separated Ireland with two national identities. As the bill was being debated, another suggestion was put forth: that four counties with a Unionist majority – Antrim, Down,

Londonderry, and Armah – be left out of the framework of Home Rule. This suggestion was offered as a solution to each side's threat to use power if the other party got its way. Political division and hostilities between the Nationalists and Unionists peaked as each formed their own militias and threatened to use coercive means. "That solution was opposed by the Ulster Unionists, who had formed their militia, the Ulster Volunteers Force (UVF), to reject Irish self-government. The Irish Nationalists, in response, formed a rival militia, the Irish Volunteers Force (IVF), to guarantee Home Rule would pass" (Dorney, chap.1).

By 1913, the Nationalists knew that the Liberal government was likely to agree with the Conservative Party and take most of Ulster out of Home Rule. Many were shocked as they felt that the Irish nation could only be established with the whole island included in Home Rule. In March 1914, in order to avoid a civil war, the government announced a new plan. This new solution was labelled the "County Choice Scheme." Under it, every county in Ireland would vote on whether to join Home Rule. If a county said no, it would be outside Home Rule for six years. Accordingly, Ulster's four eastern counties were left out of Home Rule.

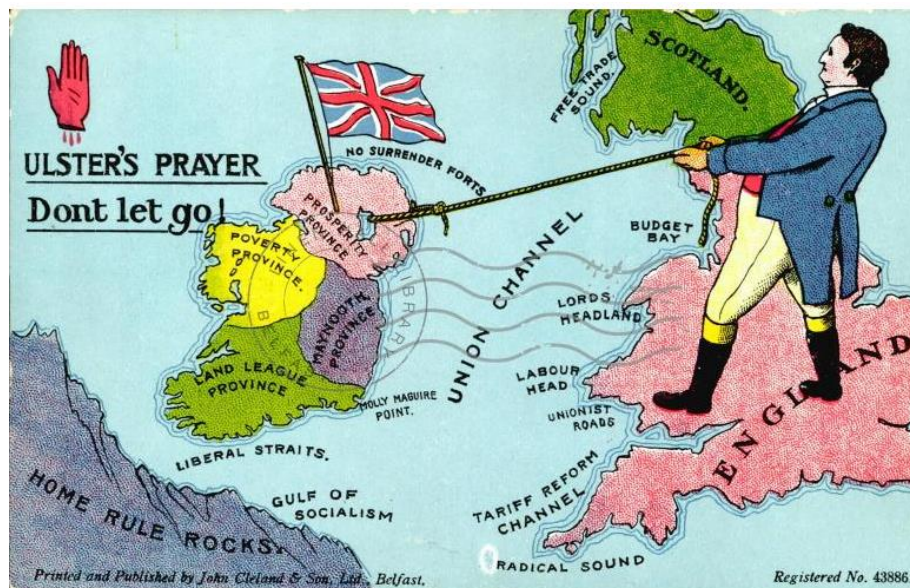


Figure. 1. A 1912 unionist postcard emphasizing unionist panic over the potential loss of economic and political ties between the UK and ulster, www.postcardsireland.com.

1.2.3. Ireland and the First World War

In August 1914, when the First World War began, the UK went to war with Germany. The United Kingdom decided to delay the Third Home Rule Bill until after the war in order to concentrate on the war effort. This left the Nationalists and Unionists wondering what action would be healthiest for them. Each group believed the Irish would have a better chance of negotiating for their future if they fought along with the British in the war (Boyce 48). Unionists and Nationalists alike assumed Britain would not forget its promise; however, in case "England forgot," as one Unionist pointed out, "our men will be thoroughly trained to fight for our liberties later on" (Boyce 48).

More than 200,000 Irishmen volunteered for the British Army and became the British Army's 10th and 16th divisions, partly in response to the campaign slogans of politicians but mostly due to their mutual disapproval of German aggression. Most of the Nationalists went to war with the British. Nevertheless, a small group disagreed with this strategy of supporting the British and stayed home. As John Dorney suggests, the First World War is considered the starting point of the Easter Rising. He notes, a more radical Irish nationalist element in the Irish Volunteers, primarily directed by the Irish Republican Brotherhood, unhappy with support for Britain in the war and believing that Home Rule fell too far short of Irish independence, launched an insurrection known as the Easter Rising in Dublin (chap.1).

1.2.4. The Repercussions of the Easter Rising

When the war began in 1914, the government told the troops that they would go back home by Christmas. In 1916, the war was still ongoing, and Nationalists started to realise that it would continue for a long time (*History of Ireland 1914 - 1919*). Therefore, the Irish Brotherhood and the splinter Nationalists planned a massive rebellion in order to expel the British from Ireland,

relying on the fact that the British had few troops to spare. Even though the British captured the Irish's weapons, the rebellion went ahead on Easter Monday, 24th April 1916. More than 1,500 rebels took over Dublin Post office and other critical buildings in the city. The rebels and the British went on to fight fiercely. After five days, 450 Irishmen were killed, the insurgents withdrew on 29th April, and vast areas of Dublin were in ruins.

The British falsely accused Sinn Féin of instigating the uprising, which contributed significantly to the loss of the Home Rule Party and the success of Sinn Féin in the next elections. The Irish Home Rule movement was affected by the radical Nationalists' revolt in 1916, as it created a new political campaign calling for complete separation from the United Kingdom instead of Home Rule (Mohr). In addition, the once-dominant Irish Parliamentary Party was reduced to six humiliating seats out of a possible 105 in the 1918 general election (Bardon, ep. 221).

The popularity of Sinn Féin increased in Ireland, as Jonathan Bardon notes: "Thousands of Nationalists, particularly young people, clamoured to join the new Sinn Féin. By July 1917, the police reported, 336 Sinn Féin clubs flourished across the island" (ep 221). Éamon de Valera, the leader of the party since 1917, stood in the 1918 elections and publicly declared his belief in the independent Irish Republic. He won comfortably but declined his Westminster seat as part of Sinn Féin's abstention rule. Instead, he and Sinn Féin members sat in their own Irish Parliament and declared Ireland's independence, making de Valera the president (Pašeta 82).

1.2.5. The Irish War of Independence

With Sinn Féin declaring independence, the IVF decided that it had waited long enough, as the Home Rule Bill had been in debate for more than seven years. They also felt that, by becoming a strong military force, they could pressure the government to bring full independence

rather than the proposed Home Rule resolution. Therefore, the IVF became the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in 1919, which signified a new chapter in Anglo-Irish history. The IRA sought to use military force to make British rule in Ireland unsustainable and to help achieve the higher goal of an independent Ireland. In that sense, Senia Pašeta adds the following:

The first engagement in the Anglo-Irish War was the murder at Soloheadbeg, County Tipperary, of two members of the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) in January 1919. Some volunteer units began to call themselves the IRA, but coordination remained patchy as individual units staged uncoordinated raids on policemen and barracks, burned big houses, and harassed public officials (82).

The war was still underway in 1920, but the IRA concluded that they needed to intensify their war efforts to achieve their desired goals. As a result, eleven British officers were shot dead on 21 November 1920. In response to that, a group of Black and Tans, a special armed police force sent to Ireland by the British government, killed twelve civilians at a Gaelic football match. Ten days later, the IRA struck again and killed seventeen British soldiers in County Cork. Moreover, the IRA maintained its guerrilla warfare tactics and killed more British police officers and soldiers. As a result, Britain was forced to reduce the number of troops in Ireland due to public outrage (Pašeta 83).

Despite the war, the United Kingdom decided to continue the Home Rule and passed the Ireland Act in 1920, which gave Ireland two parliaments, one for the Unionists in the north and one for the Nationalists in the south. However, both parliaments were kept attached to London and the United Kingdom as a whole. Moreover, Sinn Féin refused to recognise the new parliament and

instead continued to meet in Dáil Éireann². Senia Pašeta acknowledges the role of the Dáil and the IRA in the Anglo-Irish War, noting that both of them disrupted the normal functioning of the government, which gave them more popularity with Irish Nationalists (83).

According to Brian O'Neill, "The IRA continued the campaign to establish a republic with the Irish War of Independence, and by the middle of 1921, both sides were exhausted, and a truce was called on the ninth of June" (*The Anglo-Irish Treaty (1921)*). The British side objected the idea of negotiating with terrorists and implicitly admitting they had legitimate power. However, because of the outraged public in Ireland and Britain, the United Kingdom found itself forced to negotiate with the IRA. On the other hand, Michael Collins³ knew that his army could not hold out anymore. Thus, a truce was finally agreed upon and began in July 1921.

1.2.6. The Treaty

Sinn Féin sent an Irish delegation to London in autumn to negotiate the terms of the treaty. Pašeta reveals, "a tortuous series of negotiations preceded the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty in December 1921. These deliberations, and the subsequent Republican split over the treaty, represent one of the most controversial and dramatic events in modern Irish history" (84). Three key issues came up during the negotiations that led up to the treaty: Ireland's sovereignty, its degree of independence, and the future of Anglo-Irish relations. These three crucial questions had been

² Sinn Féin took 124 seats out of 128 with the remaining four being taken by Unionist candidates. However, Sinn Féin refused to participate in the Parliament and instead continued to meet in their independent assembly known as Dail Éireann. Southern Ireland's new Parliament was dissolved the following year, as only 4 MPs remained (*History of Ireland 1919 - 1921*).

³ Irish nationalist and Sinn Fein leader who served as the head of the Irish Republican Army during the War of Independence. He was killed during the Irish Civil War by antitreaty forces (Pašeta 80).

mostly shelved since both sides agreed on division; however, they did not decide on the boundary, agreeing to discuss it in the future. Finally, the Irish delegation signed the treaty on 6th December 1921 under heavy pressure from the British government.

The Irish people seemed to accept the treaty, or at least to support an arrangement that would ensure the ceasefire, but the Dáil denounced the signers as "traitors" to the "Republican ideals" (Pašeta 85). However, the Irish delegation insisted that this treaty was the best compromise that they could reach. According to Pašeta, Michael Collins, a member of the delegation, argued, "the Treaty 'gives us the freedom, not the ultimate freedom that all nations desire and develop to, but the freedom to achieve it,' but his eloquent plea fell on many deaf ears" (85).

Collins believed that NI would eventually join the South because it would fall politically and economically. However, de Valera had a different view for the treaty, stating: " I am against this treaty... I wanted, and the cabinet wanted to get a document we could stand by... That document makes British authority our masters in Ireland... If the representatives of the republic should ask the people of Ireland to do that which is inconsistent with the republic, I say they are subverting the republic" (Bardon, ep. 229). Finally, the union officially ended on 15th January 1922, when the Provisional Government of Ireland signed the treaty. Accordingly, the UK was renamed "The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland" to reflect the change.

1.3. Independent Ireland

The Anglo-Irish Treaty did not put an end to the violence in Ireland. The treaty effectively indicated the partition of Ireland, having established the Free State of Ireland in the South, while Ulster continues to be a part of the United Kingdom. Many nationalists rejected the treaty on the

basis that Ireland should be united. This point shaped the divisions which were to characterise Irish politics for the next decades (Pašeta 86).

1.3.1. The Irish Free State: the Aftermath

Immediately after the treaty was signed, a debate began over its validity, leading to a division in Sinn Féin. The treaty only covered twenty-six counties, falling short of the thirty-two-county republic for which the IRA and Sinn Féin fought, and other parties did not recognise it (Donnchadha). Furthermore, the pro-treaty faction, led by Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith, argued that the treaty was a step toward full independence, while the anti-treaty faction, led by de Valera, argued that an independent Ireland must cover all thirty-two counties. The gap between the pro- and anti-treaty parties was so big that Sinn Féin decided to vote in the Dáil (Maye). The vote was sixty-four to fifty-seven in favour of the treaty, which caused de Valera and a large number of Sinn Féin members to leave in protest. Subsequently, Griffith replaced de Valera as Prime Minister (PM).

The IRA also split into two sides: the Free State Army and the Irregulars. The commander-in-chief of the Free State Army was Michael Collins, while several individuals, including Rory O'Connor and Éamon de Valera, commanded the Irregulars (Pašeta 87). In April 1922, the anti-treaty IRA assumed possession of Dublin Four Courts and other central facilities. The situation escalated as the revolutionary Irish government sought to mediate with the IRA. Pašeta adds: "The desire for peace probably motivated more constituents than ideological considerations, but an unquestionable majority had spoken. A public mandate was not, however, enough to convince the dissidents, who remained entrenched in the Four Courts" (87). Nevertheless, the government soon lost its patience and directed the Irish Army to attack the Four Courts in June.

The civil war went on for about a year; it was primarily a guerrilla war, with sniper attacks, ambushes, and bombings. The Free State Army slowly but steadily drove the Irregulars into the mountains. Eventually, the Irregular forces had to accept defeat. Not only had they been forced to fight a much better armed, brutal Free State Army, but the rest of the ordinary citizens were willing to lend their support to the Provisional Government. De Valera released a call for the laying down of arms on 24 May 1923 (Donnchadha). Since he was the head of the anti-treaty side, Éamon de Valera was imprisoned and released in 1924. In 1926, he decided to split from Sinn Féin and establish the new Fianna Fáil party.

1.3.2. Fianna Fáil and Irish Sovereignty

Éamon de Valera was on the sidelines after the civil war; the head of the Republicans' anti-treaty section had always been against Irish MPs pledging loyalty to the King of England and the Free State becoming part of the British Commonwealth. Understanding that no party was willing to stand for his perspective, de Valera took members from Sinn Féin and formed a new political party called Fianna Fáil, which participated in the 1927 election. The party won 42 Dáil seats compared to the forty-seven won by Cumann na nGaedheal (the moderate ruling party). However, William Thomas Cosgrave, Cumann na nGaedheal's leader, managed to balance power with a coalition government. Éamon de Valera and Fianna Fáil began an incredible rise to power; and as in 1922, they treated the oath in a dismissive manner (Pašeta 91).

In 1930, the Free State united with two Commonwealth nations, Canada and South Africa, and succeeded in pressuring the United Kingdom into introducing legislation that would allow them to revoke any law that the United Kingdom enacted before independence. In theory, the government of the Free State could now revoke the Anglo-Irish Treaty and become entirely independent, but Cosgrave was not willing to do so (Pašeta 91). The IRA had regrouped and

resumed campaigning for a fully independent Irish Republic. Violence within the Free State increased; and by passing specific laws to fight the IRA, Cumann na nGaedheal managed only to become less popular. In the following years, it became clear that Fianna Fáil was going to win. Jonathan Bardon adds, "The government lost the election. Éamon de Valera took office, forming a Fianna Fáil administration with the support of the Labour deputies" (ep. 237).

Fianna Fáil came to power in the Irish Free State in the 1932 general election, and Éamon de Valera became Prime Minister. As expected, he immediately started to cut ties with the United Kingdom. In April 1932, de Valera dropped the constitutional pledge of loyalty to the Crown. Then, in July, he removed the land annuities, which were repayments by farmers on loans they had obtained from previous British governments to purchase their land (Bardon, ep. 237). The land annuities caused the most disputes between Ireland and the United Kingdom. The British reacted by imposing a 20% tariff on two-thirds of Irish products. In response, de Valera struck back by placing heavy import taxes on British goods and erecting a significant tariff barrier, which triggered, as Jonathan Bardon puts it, an "Economic War" between the two.

A new constitution was created in 1937, replacing the one negotiated after the establishment of the Free State. This constitution dealt with a variety of issues, and it is regarded as a critical point in Anglo-Irish politics during the twentieth century. The constitution recognised Irish as the country's first language, replaced the governor-generalship with a presidency, and switched the country's name to Éire. Senia Pašeta highlights other prominent points, "This was nowhere better and more simply expressed than in articles two and three of the 1937 constitution, Bunreacht Na HÉireann. Article two claimed 'the national territory consists of the whole island of Ireland,' and article three stated that the constitution would only apply to the twenty-six counties 'pending the reintegration of the national territory" (93).

In addition, the disastrous trade conflict with Britain was concluded in the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1938. Because Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain was worried about the Central European developments, he was willing to resolve any conflicts with the Free State. De Valera saw this as a victory since Britain ended the retaliatory duties by offering an Irish lump-sum settlement of ten million pounds, which ended the land annuity conflict (Biege).

1.3.3. The Irish Republic

In the 1948 general election, de Valera was defeated by John Costello's⁴ coalition. Costello declared his plan to withdraw Éire from the British Commonwealth, rendering it a fully independent country. The United Kingdom, run by a Labour government at that time, was deeply distressed because it did not want the Commonwealth to crumble. The 1948 Republic of Ireland Act proclaimed the Irish Republic and granted Ireland's President freedom to exercise the state's executive authority in its foreign affairs (Biege). While Britain recognised Ireland as an independent country, it also passed the Ireland Act in 1949, declaring citizens of the republic as non-alien under British nationality law.

In Northern Ireland, the government voiced concern that Éire might consider an aggressive campaign for United Ireland. Its worries intensified when the Anti-Partition League, a radical nationalist party from NI, rose quickly and gained Éire's support. The Irish government advised Basil Brooke, Northern Ireland's Prime Minister, that if it negotiated with a united Ireland, it would give Unionists "every reasonable constitutional guarantee" (Pašeta 95). Brooke refused the offer

⁴ "Fine Gael's John A. Costello, a compromise candidate, became prime minister. His greatest moment came in 1948 when he declared at an Ottawa press conference that Ireland would become a republic " (Pašeta 91)

and turned to Britain, which promised him that Northern Ireland's status would not change without the authorisation of its parliament (*History of Ireland 1945–1963*).

1.4. Northern Ireland's Troubles

The 1920 government of Ireland Bill established the new state of Northern Ireland from its six counties of Antrim, Londonderry, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Down, and Armagh. For decades, the fundamental problem was that Ulster remained dependent on British government politically and economically. Furthermore, the Northern Ireland position was in favour of remaining as a part of the UK, and the government rejected any attempt by the south or the nationalists to unite the island (Pašeta 102).

1.4.1. O'Neill's Era

In 1963, the Ulster Unionist leader Terence O'Neill became Northern Ireland's Prime Minister. He hoped to develop an economy in NI and promote unity between the Unionists and the Nationalists in the province; he wanted to change both sides. He proclaimed the UVF illegal in 1966 and created Ulster University, a new, nonsectarian university. Also, improving relationships with the Republic of Ireland was an essential part of this process. Moreover, O'Neill's efforts did not stop there; he exchanged visits with Irish Prime Minister, which was a bold move since the Constitution of the Republic contained an assertion of sovereignty over the whole island (Wallenfeldt).

The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) was established in 1967. Their members came from both sects, although mostly from nationalist Catholics who were oppressed

under the Stormont⁵ regime. The main conditions of the NICRA were to have a democratic voting system to avoid voter fraud, bring an end to religious discrimination, dismantle the second-class system, and achieve equality for all Northern Irish citizens. "The turning point is generally agreed to have been a civil rights march held in Derry in October 1968. Police turned brutality on protesters" (Pašeta 111). Because of international pressure, O'Neill finally relented and accepted some of the demands. Pašeta adds: "It included most of the protesters' demands, but not the crucial 'one man one vote' in local government elections" (112).

NICRA organised a Derry-Belfast march in January 1969. Near Derry, at the Burntollet River crossing, loyalists and off-duty policemen ambushed them. The marchers were stoned and battered, and the on-duty police made no attempt to protect them. The scenes shocked O'Neill, who declared an investigation amid resistance from his government. O'Neill's deputy Prime Minister resigned, arguing that these investigations could only make the situation worse. Furthermore, "Twelve Unionist MPs met to ask for O'Neill's resignation to keep the party united. In response, the Prime Minister announced the dissolution of Parliament and called for a General Election" (Darrab 96).

1.4.2. Faulkner's Era

William Faulkner was seen as the most talented Unionist politician to fill the position of Prime Minister at that time; he won by defeating William Craig, the previous Prime Minister, twenty-six votes to four, in March 1971. He was seen as the hope that would save the Stormont framework; however, violence exploded in the streets within a few weeks. Faulkner strongly

⁵ "The parliament, known as Stormont from 1932 when it moved to Stormont Castle outside Belfast was in reality an elaborate system of local government" (Pašeta 102)

pressured London to issue instructions to the military to act decisively, which he reported in Stormont on 25th May 1971. In response, the provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA)⁶ committed many murders that summer, and by July, 55 people had died. Pašeta writes that Faulkner's reaction was to order a large number of arrests, exclusively targeting Catholics, in August (114).

Faulkner's actions subsequently triggered a horrific outbreak of violence, and in the next four months, more than 100 people were killed. "The denouement finally came on 'Bloody Sunday', 30 January 1972, when paratroops fired 108 rounds of ammunition on anti-internment marchers in Derry, killing thirteen unarmed civilians" (Pašeta 114). As anarchy began to set in, Britain proclaimed direct rule over NI. The pressure from the Republic and Britain continued to rise, which put Faulkner in a difficult position, as his own party was split over Britain's decision. Consequently, he was unable to cope and resigned in January 1974 after losing a vote of confidence.

1.4.3. . The Peace Process

Attempts to forge peace in Northern Ireland have a clear timeline, and some historical context is called for (McKittrick and McVea 160). The most visible foundation for an effort to end the Northern Ireland conflict can be seen in the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement. Since then, many attempts have been made by the British and Irish governments, which ended with the Good Friday Agreement of 1999.

⁶ IRA split into two factions, "official" in the south and "provisional" in the north. Although both groups were committed to a united Irish republic, the officials preferred peaceful methods and avoided violence after 1972, while the Provisionals argued that violence was a necessary part of the process to free Ireland of the British (Pašeta 114).

1.4.3.1 The Anglo-Irish Agreement 1985

Both the terror unleashed by the PIRA and the loyalists' reactions continued throughout the rest of the 1970s. More than 1,000 people were killed by shootings, sniper attacks, and bombs between 1975 and 1980. At the same time, Sinn Féin was relaunched in Northern Ireland's national eye, and its political mandate expanded steadily. In November 1983, Gerry Adams became its president and returned it to mainstream politics. "As a result, they transformed Sinn Féin from little more than a flag of convenience for the IRA into a political organisation with a life of its own" (McKittrick and McVea 160). The UK government was anxious that the radical Republican ideas of Sinn Féin would steal votes from the more moderate nationalist party, which was the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP)

On 12 October 1984, PIRA bombed the Grand Hotel in Brighton, where British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and her cabinet were attending a conference for the Conservative Party. Part of the hotel fell, and five people died. Thatcher was very lucky to survive. "A chilling IRA statement addressed to Thatcher said: 'Today we were unlucky, but remember, we have only to be lucky once. You will have to be lucky always. Give Ireland peace and there will be no war'" (McKittrick and McVea 165).

The United Kingdom knew that the troubles in Northern Ireland would not end until a resolution could be found. Thus, in early 1985, the UK started secret meetings with the Irish government to find a way to work together. They managed to find a middle ground, and on 15th November 1985, both sides released what they agreed on. Senia Pašeta discusses the agreement's most important point: "A permanent joint secretariat was established at Maryfield, outside Belfast, thus recognising the Irish government's right to be consulted and heard (but not to impose policy), especially on issues concerning the Catholic minority" (120).

The Unionist public's reactions were those of outrage, great surprise, and a sense of betrayal. From the public's point of view, it was shocking that their own government could allow a foreign nation to have a say in Northern Ireland affairs without involving Northern Ireland MPs. Ulster Unionist President Jim Molyneaux said Northern Ireland was delivered "from nation to nation." The outrage manifested in different shapes. W. Harvey Cox illustrates some of it: "After Hillsborough, the scene centre-stage was dominated by the unequivocal rejection of the agreement by Unionists, as shown in the street demonstrations, in Parliament and in the mini-referendum of 23 January 1986. The opinion polls illustrate the extent of this rejection" (338).

1.4.3.2 The First Ceasefire 1994-1996

The Anglo-Irish Agreement did not lead to major changes; most Unionists gave up hope of repealing it, knowing that their attempts would fail. Violence continued between 1985 and 1990, including nearly 300 murders by PIRA. One of the deadliest attacks occurred on 6 November 1987, when PIRA planted a bomb at Ennis Killen's war memorial as local people crowded to attend a Remembrance Day parade. Pašeta adds, "Controversial talks between SDLP leader John Hume and Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams in 1988 produced no tangible results, but the scene was set for further discussions as always; each party had to convince its constituents that its fundamental objectives were not compromised by these talks" (124).

The British and Irish governments looked at the situation in late 1993, realising that the circumstances were appropriate to initiate a new peace process. In 1994, the United Kingdom stated that Sinn Féin and fringe loyalists could join the talks if they "laid down their arms" (Pašeta 124). Moreover, US President Bill Clinton then asked the PIRA to call a truce. Eventually, after 25 years of conflict, on 31 August 1994, the Provisional IRA declared a full cessation of military operations. The 1994 ceasefire declarations seemed to promise so much more. Then, in October,

the Combined Loyalist Military Command (CLMC) responded by announcing that they would end all operational hostilities (Rowan).

Although negotiations began by mid-1995, neither Sinn Féin nor the radical loyalists were expected to participate. The primary factor was that British Prime Minister John Major said that the terrorists needed to decommission their arms to show that their cessations were irreversible before their political branches could be invited to the negotiations. Sinn Féin was frustrated at this, saying that when the PIRA declared its truce, the decommissioning had not been on the plan. Because of those demands, the 1994 ceasefire collapsed in February 1996 when a huge PIRA bomb exploded in Canary Wharf, London (Kearney).

1.4.3.3 The Second Ceasefire and the Good Friday Agreement

A general election was held in 1997, and the new UK Prime Minister, Tony Blair, was eager to get the cycle going again. He announced the launch of all-party negotiations regardless of Sinn Féin's presence. The PIRA understood that if the talks continued irrespective of Sinn Féin's attendance, then it would be best to be there to ensure they had a voice. The PIRA announced a new ceasefire on 20 July 1997. Moreover, The ceasefire statement indicated some desire for peace: "We want a permanent peace, and therefore, we are prepared to enhance the search for a democratic peace settlement" (Simpson).

Despite initial qualms, the Unionist parties decided to initiate talks on 7th October. Progress was made, albeit slowly. Chairman George Mitchell, United States Special Envoy for NI, stated on 25th March that the process needed a boost and declared that a consensus would be reached before Thursday, 9 April 1998. The talks went into a full session as deals were made at an incredible pace. Mitchell issued a draft agreement for the parties on 6 April. Three days after, the

talks entered a 24-hour session that aimed to achieve the midnight deadline while the world's eyes followed Stormont. The agreement provided for the transition of authority from Westminster to a newly established assembly in Belfast over certain areas of policy and paved the way for paramilitary groups to drop their arms and participate in the political process.

At last, after 29 years, the Loyalists and Nationalists in Northern Ireland reached a peace treaty on 10 April, Good Friday. A referendum was declared on 22 May 1998. The outcome of that referendum was a massive majority: 71% voted yes. Moreover, the evidence showed that the Unionist community had voted yes by a slim margin, while in the Nationalist community, approximately 95% had voted yes (Pašeta 123). Pašeta adds: "There is no doubt that Catholics and Protestants voted for different interpretations of the agreement. The marketability of the agreement depended on its ability to appeal to the majority of both communities"(124).

1.5. Conclusion

The twentieth century Anglo-Irish relations can be characterised as close but tortuous. This phenomenon is combined with Ireland's radical and moderate nationalism. Furthermore, the first half of the 20th century can be outlined in the Irish War of Independence, which erupted in the wake of the 1916 Easter Rising, the division of the Irish island and the establishment of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland as two separate sovereign entities.

On the other hand, the second half brought forth a social movement that had a far-reaching impact but led to a massive conflict. On the surface, Northern Ireland's Troubles is the result of a religious dispute, since it was described as a war between protestants and Catholics. Nevertheless, the historical roots between the UK and Ireland run much more profound. Moreover, the crisis highlighted the fragility of the social status quo at that time in Northern Ireland. However, the

1990s peace process underlined the tremendous groundswell of public support for stability. The ceasefires in Northern Ireland have created a reduction in friction and promoted peaceful coexistence. In conclusion, the twentieth century has been a long journey full of events for the Irish island.

Chapter Two:

The Genesis of The European Union and

Brexit

2.1. Introduction

The modern European Union (EU) is the crown jewel of a European century filled with wars and conflicts. The driving force behind this union is the deterrence of any potentially destructive wars on the continent following the Second World War. The ideology of uniting nations and building tighter economic and political collaboration is one of the key elements discussed in this chapter. Kevin O'Rourke states, "The EU is not a supranational state, but its twenty-eight member states have agreed to pool some (but not all) of their sovereignty in a uniquely structured and institutionalised manner" (O'Rourke, chap.1)

Included in this paper is a section explaining how EU membership has changed the dynamic of relations between the UK and Ireland. Moreover, a small Irish section follows the story of how EU membership has improved the Irish economy and played a significant role in restoring peace in Northern Ireland. Hopefully, this should explain why the Irish border has been such a key topic in the Brexit talks. There are also definitions, a contextual explanation, and historical background for the British vote to leave the EU in 2016 and its consequences. However, before discussing British attitudes towards Europe, it is necessary to understand why European integration took the form it did.

2.2. Origins of the European Union

The European Union is an integration of European states incorporating diverse cultures, structures, political systems, and economies (Pagden 15). The EU already comprises the twenty-seven Member States and a total population of more than 500 million. This union took many shapes throughout the 20th century, which was possible due to several agreements and events that also helped in creating the EU as we know today.

2.2.1. The European Coal and Steel Community

With the aim of achieving peace, the leaders of Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany met in Paris. They signed a treaty that later became known as the Treaty of Paris (1951). That treaty founded the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). Anthony Pagden suggests that this step was crucial in Europe's contemporary history and a vital element in the integration phenomena. He notes, "For the first time, the European states had created a supranational entity whose independent *sui juris* and *sui generis* institutions had the power to bind the ECSC's constituent states" (Pagden 234).

Because the Treaty of Paris created a supranational body to manage it, the ECSC was not just an international forum. It had the Council of Ministers to pass laws, the Common Assembly to develop policies, and the Court to evaluate and settle associated disputes. Anthony Pagden claims that the ECSC's explicit aim was to constitute a framework for greater European integration, as the treaty was not limited to combining coal and steel production (234). By becoming the first supranational treaty organisation in history, the ECSC is considered a landmark in foreign policy.

2.2.2. The European Economic Community

Despite significant reluctance, on 25 March 1957, the six members of the ECSC signed the Treaty of Rome, leading to the formation of the European Economic Community (EEC). Additionally, the EEC established a Common Market abolishing most barriers to the movement of goods, services, capital, and Labour. According to Urwin, in addition to the Common Market, the EEC was designed for several purposes, including "to promote throughout the community a harmonious development of economic activities, a continuous and balanced expansion, an increase in stability, an accelerated raising of the standard of living, and closer relations between the States belonging to it" (Urwin, chap.6)

2.2.3. The Merger Treaty

In 1965, the Merger Treaty—or, the Brussels Treaty—was signed. It unified the institutions of three major Western European communities: the ECSC, the European Economic Community, and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom). Subsequently, these communities were identified as the European Communities. This agreement is significant because it was the first treaty that managed to bring together the ECSC, EEC, and Euratom executive bodies to create a single council and commission (Luenendonk).

2.2.4. The European Free Trade Association

Britain and six European nations—Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Austria, Norway, and Portugal—rejected the idea of joining the Common Market and created the smaller European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1960 as a reaction to the EEC. The EFTA Treaty of 1960 called for eliminating customs barriers when it came to trading. Furthermore, the treaty managed to include a substantial measure of mutual trade liberalisation without establishing regulatory bodies, unlike the EEC. Various factors have contributed to the creation of the EFTA, such as traditional neutrality in the case of Sweden and Switzerland or resistance to the dilution of national sovereignty in the case of the United Kingdom, as Anthony Pagden suggests (238).

According to the British perspective, the primary aim of establishing the EFTA was not for it to serve as a lasting alternative to the EEC but as a temporary bridge to it. Hugo Young adds, "On the one hand, the British hoped that by presenting a united front, the 'Other Six' might maintain some cohesion, and avoid being eaten up, one by one, by the Six" (Young 76). Thus, the EFTA was designed as a new approach to meet the British ambition of a free trade area across Europe.

2.2.5. The Rise of The European Economic Community

During the 1960s, Western European countries were split up into two trade groups: the six founding members of the EEC, who created the Common Market, and the seven EFTA members (Pagden 238). Nevertheless, there were indications of strong economic growth in the Common Market nations, which made Britain change its foreign policy and apply for membership. The Common Market steadily increased its membership and scope in the 1970s and 1980s, during which time six new members were accepted—the United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark, Greece, Spain, and Portugal.

The Single European Act (SEA) came into effect on the first of July, 1987, and significantly extended the framework of the Common Market, calling for a more active foreign policy through cooperation. This treaty was the EEC's first comprehensive and far-reaching institutional change since the 1950s. The SEA adopted laws that created a stable internal market and a single political position among its members. The SEA was also very significant in legislation: "The decision-making process of the community was changed with the introduction of a 'cooperation procedure' whereby the parliament was to be consulted prior to the adoption of new legislation by the European Community" (Pagden 243).

2.2.6. The Maastricht Treaty

The European Union was established by the Treaty of Maastricht, which was signed on the seventh of February, 1992. Some of the Western European countries opposed and debated the treaty before agreeing to its terms. These included "a small majority in France, the United Kingdom, Denmark (where two national referendums were required), and Germany (where the Federal Supreme Court overruled the constitutional challenge)" (Pagden 245). Eventually, on the first of November, 1993, an improved form of the treaty officially went into effect.

The EEC was renamed the European Community (EC), after the treaty, and then became a central component of the European Union. The agreement granted the EC a greater degree of control, which included direct management in the education sector, public health, and consumer protection policies of the union. This improved socioeconomic stability and technological innovation. According to Pagden, the treaty was based on three pillars: "The first was the European Community itself—the obligations, rights, and common activities contained in the EC Treaties. The second and third pillars fell outside the scope of the EC Treaties altogether: interstate cooperation on a "common foreign and security policy" and "justice and home affairs" (247).

2.2.7.Economic and Monetary Union

The Maastricht Treaty set a framework for integrating monetary policy into the EC, and it codified plans to substitute national currencies with a single European currency controlled by supranational financial institutions. Moreover, the treaty identified a set of "convergence requirements" that outlined the conditions under which a member would qualify for the common currency (Gabel). At last, eleven countries were able to join: Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain adopted the new currency on January 1, 1999 (Gabel).

2.2.8.Enlargements After the Maastricht Treaty

After the Maastricht Treaty was ratified, the European Union accepted more members because political and economic success had strengthened its international position. On the first day of 1995, Austria, Sweden, and Finland became members of the EU, leaving Norway, Iceland, and Switzerland as the only significant Western European countries outside the union. Pagden adds, "The Union now included countries with not only a wide variety of cultures (Scandinavian,

Northern European, and the Mediterranean) but also an equally wide range of economic strengths (Portugal compared to Sweden, Greece compared to Germany)" (Pagden 245).

2004 brought the most significant enlargement in EU history, that is the Eastern Enlargement. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Southern Cyprus, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, and the Czech Republic joined the European Union, and all but Southern Cyprus and Malta were former communist states. After more than five decades, Europe was finally unified (Sedelmeier 1). Romania and Bulgaria were able to join in 2007, and discussions on Turkey's membership application began in 2005, but it has undergone several complexities.

2.3. Britain and Europe

Membership of the European Union has reached almost every field of national life in the United Kingdom over the past four decades. It divided the Labour Party in the 1970s, the Conservative Party in the 1990s, and led the most successful modern insurgent party, the United Kingdom Independence Party (Ellison and Saunders 3). From Harold Wilson to Boris Johnson, the European question was dealt with differently by each prime minister.

2.3.1. Harold Wilson and the First EC Referendum

On January 1, 1973, after twelve years and two vetoes by Charles de Gaulle⁷ (since the initiation of the first entry bid), the United Kingdom finally joined the European Communities. Many of the UK's politicians had been uncomfortable with this decision despite what they had known of its long term impacts. A referendum on whether the country should leave the EC was

⁷ "Politically, de Gaulle was not anxious to see French influence within the EEC diminished in favour of Britain. He also shared Macmillan's view that the UK might serve as a Trojan horse representing US interests" (O'Rourke, chap.4).

held two years later. The ruling Labour Party, then led by Harold Wilson, campaigned against the European organisation for multiple reasons. Kevin O'Rourke suggests the following:

The EEC, and before it the ECSC, were seen as capitalist institutions, membership of which would make it difficult or impossible to pursue socialist policies in Britain... The protectionist policies of the EEC were damaging to the interests of developing countries, and there were Labour politicians such as Anthony Wedgwood Benn, who was worried about losing sovereignty (chap. 4).

The referendum's question was clear and straightforward: "Do you think that the United Kingdom should stay in the EC?" It allowed an answer of YES or NO. Furthermore, the results were a majority win for the YES campaign. Over two-thirds of the voters, in a 67.2 per cent turnout, chose to stay in the EC. Generally, it can be said that almost every part of the UK voted for membership in the organisation. Moreover, the YES campaign had the advantage of portraying the NO supporters as extremists and racists since Enoch Powell, known for his racist views on immigration, was the most prominent NO campaigner (O'Rourke, chap.4).

2.3.2. Margaret Thatcher and the Rise of Euroscepticism

Although Margaret Thatcher campaigned for the EEC in 1975, four years before becoming Prime Minister, and signed the Single European Act in 1986, she came to despair of the European organisation. Thatcher's most flagrant criticism of the European project came in September 1988, when she gave a speech to the College of Europe, later known as "The Bruges Speech." In it, she said, "And we have not embarked on the business of throwing back the frontiers of the state at home, only to see them re-imposed at a European level, with a new European super-state exercising a new dominance from Brussels" (*Speech to the College of Europe*).

Thatcher went on to argue that European development would neglect each member's national identity at its own peril: "Europe will be stronger precisely because it has France as France, Spain as Spain, Britain as Britain, each with its customs, traditions, and identity. It would be folly to try to fit them into some sort of identikit European personality" (*Speech to the College of Europe*). That is why it is safe to say that this speech deserves a name-defining moment in British history. This speech started the transition in which the Conservatives ceased to be the Party of Europe in British politics and shifted to the contemporary Conservatives' position on criticising the EU and European integration, or, in other words, Euroscepticism (*The Bruges Speech, 20 September 1988 / Margaret Thatcher Foundation*).

In the following years, Thatcher continued to criticise the organisation as she condemned the single currency, the policies of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), and the empowerment of Brussels. In 1990, Thatcher presented to the House of Commons a report dedicated to the European Council meeting, which was primarily devoted to the EMU. In a question-and-answer session following her address in the parliament, Thatcher stated the following: "As for Jacques Delors, he said at a press conference the other day that he wanted the European Parliament to be the democratic body of the community, he wanted the commission to be the Executive, and he wanted the Council of Ministers to be the Senate. No. No. No" (*Euro Moments*).

Thatcher scaled up her opposition against Brussels' so-called federalists, going beyond the economic concerns which had characterised her early years in office. However, not everyone in her party at the time was as vexed as 'Maggie' over European topics. Her increasing animosity towards Europe caused her foreign secretary to resign in 1990. Hugo Young wrote the following about the Conservative Party's division and shift at the time: "In 1998, it was utterly jarring to

recall that the prime cause of Mrs. Thatcher's removal was that Conservative Members of Parliament were unable any longer to trust her hostile conduct of British relations with Europe" (Young 369).

2.3.3. John Major and Black Wednesday

The European organisation initiated the exchange rate mechanism (ERM) in 1979 to control exchange rate fluctuations and regulate monetary policy around the union. This was an attempt to create a single European currency based on previous lessons and failures. Every government was responsible for monitoring its currency but had to maintain its value within a specified range of other European currencies. In other words, currencies could fluctuate, but only to some degree. To do so, members needed to sell stronger currencies and purchase the weakest currencies to match theirs (Warner).

Across the British political spectrum, there was massive support for joining the ERM. Still, Thatcher stood firmly against it; several cabinet members urged her to peg the pound under the European system, but Thatcher refused these requests for over a decade. After Thatcher's resignation in November 1990, John Major was elected, and he centred his agenda around the ERM. Within months, Britain joined the European system. Major was in a challenging situation because he had inherited several economic problems from the previous administration, including high inflation rates and unemployment. Major was able to secure the right for the United Kingdom to opt-out of any European policy; the United Kingdom has the power to withdraw from any legislation made by the European Union (O'Rourke, chap.8).

Before entering the ERM, the British pound was one of the scheme's weakest currencies alongside the Spanish peseta and Italian lira. After two years of being a part of the ERM and high

levels of inflation, the sterling pound struggled to stay within the specified range and fell by 6 per cent against the stronger Deutsche mark. Speculators, such as George Soros, started betting against the British pound. On 16 September 1992 (Black Wednesday), after several attempts by the government, the currency was pulled out of the ERM. This failure was a fatal blow to Major's administration since the focus for the past two years was maintaining the sterling within the ERM scheme (O'Rourke, chap.8).

The 1992 Maastricht Treaty was seen as a considerable achievement for Prime Minister John Major. Journalist Boris Johnson described it as "a copybooks triumph" (Young 433). However, the Maastricht Treaty was a crucial strengthening of European integration. With its three "pillars," this treaty formed the European Union, an organisation surpassing its members' economic status. Indeed, the treaty was proof for Thatcher's claims about creating a federal Europe.

Furthermore, the number of Conservative MPs ready to revolt against Major's government increased. Although the treaty ratification was ultimately obtained, it was only after a long, tough road. Since then, the British Conservative Party has been divided about Europe (O'Rourke, chap.8).

2.3.4. Tony Blair and the Golden Era

Kevin O'Rourke reveals, "When the Labour Party had seemed unelectable, in the 1980s, this had prompted a shift to the political centre, and the replacement of the party's traditional Euroscepticism with a much more positive approach to Europe" (chap.8). Major persisted for a couple more years as Prime Minister, his party's disputes regarding Europe overshadowed his premiership. It was not shocking when Tony Blair and his Progressive Labour Party came to power in 1997. Indeed, Blair was a liberal internationalist who insisted on the importance of collaboration

to overcome social problems, pledged to lead a committed British government to the EU and also considered entering the Euro-Zone under the proper conditions (Helm).

The 1997 Labour Government was more pro-European in its views than its predecessors. Its modernising agenda seemed to place Europe at the centre of the British political spectrum. Furthermore, born in 1953, Blair was the first Prime Minister from the post-war era. In other words, he was not a member of a generation that grew up defending Britain from wicked Germans and disliking the French: "The new government was built on respect for German social policy and French economic success. He spoke French well and had already established some good relationships on the continent" (Berlaymont).

According to Kevin O'Rourke, "In retrospect, the early Blair years seem like a golden age, and in many respects, they were. Nevertheless, that was not always so evident at the time" (chap.8). The Iraq War was a devastating blow to Blair and the Labour Party's legitimacy. Additionally, in 2008, a year after his resignation, the global financial crisis erupted, leading to the Euro-Zone crisis. This was the last nail in the coffin, guaranteeing a Labour defeat in the subsequent general elections. Nevertheless, Blair's was a successful premiership in other areas; and during this period, the Conservative Party often appeared to be unelectable.

2.3.5. David Cameron and the Brexit Referendum

After becoming the Tories' leader in 2005, David Cameron tried to make his party more progressive by adopting liberal positions on such social matters as gay marriage and immigration. Still, there was no positive shift toward Europe. On the other hand, Cameron did not want to start a war with Europe, and he avoided this topic as much as possible. In his first address as the party leader, he acknowledged that the European conservative divisions over Europe had severely hurt

the party: "Instead of talking about the things that most people care about, we talked about what we cared about most. While parents worried about childcare, getting the kids to school, balancing work and family life—we were banging on about Europe" (Webber).

Cameron won the general election in 2010 and became the head of a coalition government, along with the Liberals. Nothing changed with the recently elected Conservative Party, which was seventeen months into the coalition government, and Cameron had already endured over twenty rebellions, involving sixty MPs in Europe (Shipman, *All Out War*, chap.1). A much larger rebellion came in October 2011, when eighty-one Tory MPs did not follow orders and voted for a referendum on EU membership. This incident was a turning point for David Cameron. According to Tim Shipman:

One of Cameron's closest aides said, 'For me, the pivotal moment was the eighty-one rebellion. It was clear after that that the parliamentary party would not stand for anything but a referendum by the next election. I think the PM knew instinctively that was where he was going to end up.' It would be another nine months before Cameron accepted that logic, and fifteen before he did anything about it. (Shipman, *All Out War*, chap.1)

Cameron's troubles did not stop there. The UK Independence Party (UKIP), which was for the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU, turned into a real threat after Cameron described it as a group of "fruitcakes, loonies and closet racists." "UKIP now stormed from one electoral triumph to the next. It won 23 per cent of the total vote in the 2012 local elections, coming second and outdistancing the Conservatives" (Adam and Mertens 53). It was a huge deal since it was the first post-war political party to challenge the traditional establishment significantly.

For months, the Conservative leader had been under pressure from UKIP and several of his MPs to make a definite decision regarding a vote on EU membership. Indeed, Cameron promised that if he were reelected, he would renegotiate the UK's membership terms in the EU and hold a vote on whether to stay or leave under those new terms. He justified his decision to postpone the referendum until a new settlement was reached, saying: "It is not the right time to make such a momentous decision about the future of our country. How can we sensibly answer the question, 'in or out?' without being able to answer the most basic question, 'What is it exactly that we are choosing to be in or out of?' (Adam and Mertens 77). The 2015 general election went as expected: a majority win for the Conservatives, which meant a referendum and the possibility of Brexit.

After all of the success he had in 2014, particularly with the victory in the Scottish independence referendum, Cameron was confident; as Rudolf G. Adam and Gill Mertens put it, "Cameron felt he was sailing with strong, favourable winds" (70). Cameron saw this as a perfect opportunity to immortalise his name, with Adam and Mertens further claiming, "He would emerge as the Titan of Europe, having secured the unity of his country, the unity of his party, having improved the position of his country in the EU and healed the festering wound that Europe had left in the British body politic" (70). On the other hand, there was no excuse for the Tory leader not to his election promise since no Liberal Democrats could disrupt the referendum. In any given scenario, an EU vote was just what much of his political party desired.

As mentioned above, Cameron had announced that he would negotiate a new settlement with the EU before the referendum. Cameron said in a press conference following his win, "I will go to Brussels; I will not take no for an answer and—when it comes to free movement—I will get what Britain needs" (Shipman, *Fall Out*, chap.1). Moreover, Cameron was inspired by Margaret

Thatcher's effective securing of the so-called Rebate, a deal with the EU that reduced the UK's net contribution to the EU budget. Since then, the United Kingdom had slowly entered into a unique partnership with the EU. David Cameron felt he could do the same; after all, this strategy had worked for Thatcher.

However, UKIP won the most significant share in the 2014 European elections, and UKIP leader Nigel Farage did not want to negotiate a new free movement settlement just to appease the British Prime Minister. This was a serious obstacle, but Cameron chose to ignore it. Kevin O'Rourke argues that Cameron was doomed to fail because of that decision: "By claiming that he would achieve something that was, in fact, unachievable, Cameron had set himself up for failure. Moreover, by claiming that he would renegotiate free movement, he had conceded that UKIP et al hostile to the free movement were, in fact, right" (O'Rourke, chap.8) . On this basis, Cameron returned home and announced that he was going to support the Remain campaign in the 2016 EU referendum.

2.3.6. Theresa May's Deal

Fifty-two per cent of the population voted to withdraw from the EU. Against all odds, the "Leave" camp was victorious, and the Remainers failed to convince the populace to stay in the EU. O'Rourke argues that the Remain campaign lost due to two reasons: "The Remain camp was for the most part negative: beware of withdrawal because it will cost you money . . . And second, the campaign barely mentioned Ireland" (chap.8).

As mentioned, the Tory leader supported the Remain camp; he argued that the United Kingdom was more substantial inside the EU. Eventually, this was not only a loss for the Remain camp but for David Cameron as well, who resigned as Prime Minister immediately after his

country's decision. His resignation did not come as a surprise. O'Rourke states, "Kenneth Clarke had predicted that Cameron would not last 30 seconds if he lost the referendum and he was almost right: Cameron was gone an hour later" (O'Rourke, chap.10).

A party leadership race started, and Boris Johnson seemed in an excellent position to win. However, many pro-European conservative members were worried about this choice, and the party settled on Theresa May. Even though she supported the Remain campaign, May pledged to carry on the will of the British people. In her opening address as the new Prime Minister, May said: "Come on! The referendum result was clear. It was legitimate. It was the biggest vote for change this country has ever known. Brexit means Brexit – and we are going to make a success of it" (Shipman, *Fall Out*, chap.1).

In March 2017, Theresa May triggered Article 50, which started a formal and legal operation to leave the EU. May announced a surprising snap election a month later, which, as she claimed, would strengthen her position in Brexit negotiations, since she stated in 2017 that the Labour Party, the Scottish National Party and the Liberal Democratic Party would attempt to hinder and destabilise the process in Parliament (Rashica 33). Surprisingly, the party lost more seats, which led to a hung parliament⁸. "The Conservative Party lost its majority, and while May eventually formed a new government, this was only with the support of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)" (O'Rourke, chap.11). This loss would affect May's ability to get past the parliament.

In January 2019, May's deal was rejected by the parliament. The MPs argued that this compromise would not reflect the results of the referendum. The EU divorce deal was rejected for

⁸ It means that the largest party keeps control of the government, but cannot pass any major laws — a big deal when she's attempting to work out a complex Brexit deal with the European Union" (Beauchamp).

the second time in mid-March and again on the 29th of the same month, which was initially meant to be the day that the UK would leave the EU. The Tory leader kept introducing new deals with the EU, but they were all rejected, and she managed to lose the support of her own MPs, who would not back any of her deals (Charity).

It was clear that the Conservative Party did not want May as its leader anymore. Finally, May announced her resignation on the 7th of June of that year. "The Prime Minister emerged from Number 10 to announce that she will step down as party leader on Friday 7 June. Boris Johnson will take May's place as Prime Minister and work to deliver Brexit by the end of October" (Harris). After more than two years in office, it can be said that "Theresa May's real legacy is that her premiership exacerbated the political divides behind the ongoing breakdown of the Conservative-Labour duopoly of the party system" (Byrne et al.).

2.4. Ireland and Europe

European Union membership had a significant transformative impact on Ireland politically and economically. Kevin O'Rourke suggests that EU membership allowed Ireland to move out of the shadow of the United Kingdom and become fully independent (chap. 7). In other words, EU membership is considered to be a significant contributor to Irish sovereignty as well as national self-respect. Such political considerations help to explain why Irish views on the European Union differ significantly from those in Britain (chap. 7).

2.4.1. Economically

One significant aspect of the period from 1954 to 1973 is that Irish economic growth was quite similar to that of Northern Ireland and Wales (O'Rourke, chap. 7). Like those countries, Ireland was underperforming and falling behind major continental economies such as France and

Germany. O'Rourke argues that all three economies faced a common problem: heavy reliance on a sluggish British economy (chap.7).

The UK saw the EEC as a suitable solution for its economic problems and started applying for membership. "In the 1960s, when the UK was Ireland's biggest market, Ireland was all but obliged to follow the UK's efforts to join the European project" (de Mars et al. 5). Indeed, Ireland joined the EEC alongside Britain in 1973. That membership immediately had a significant impact on Ireland, and its economy started to proliferate. Joining the EEC is considered to be, without a doubt, one of the most crucial moments in the nation's contemporary history. "Almost every aspect of Irish life has improved, from how we work, travel and shop to the quality of our environment, our opportunities for learning and the way our businesses buy and sell their goods and services" (Galvin). Additionally, due to its presence in the Common Market, Ireland could now trade globally; this was not the case before 1973. Kevin O'Rourke reveals the following:

Virtually all Irish exports went to the UK before the Second World War, and the share was still 61 per cent on the eve of entry in 1972. It had declined to just 37 per cent in 1983, stood at 31 per cent in 1992 on the eve of the Single Market, and was only 14 per cent in 2015. EC membership led to a far more diversified Irish economy, less dependent on its immediate neighbour. (chap.7)

With the expansion of the Single Market and application of policies following the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, Ireland's economy boomed further. Kevin O'Rourke remarked, "During the 1990s, Ireland was an extraordinary overachiever" (chap.7). He also notes that EU membership and the Single Market programmes provided the necessary context for this small European country to perform well in a globalising economy, which also enabled Ireland to acquire the full economic benefits of its independence (chap.7).

2.4.2. Politically

The Common EU membership between Ireland and the United Kingdom has been a critical component in the positive transformation of Anglo-Irish relations over the past years because it laid the groundwork and helped in paving the way for the peace process (*Brexit: UK-Irish Relations - European Union Committee*). European integration helped Ireland and the UK economically and also created a context where peace was possible. Indeed, physical barriers to trade between Ireland and the UK existed even after they joined the EEC. However, these barriers were reduced with the implementation of the Single Market, and on 1 January 1993, all trade restrictions across Europe were eliminated.

According to the Irish prime minister at that time John Bruton, "The fact that we are both members of the European Union means that there is effectively no border in terms of a barrier within the island of Ireland." During the 1990s, formal talks took place regarding how to end the Troubles, which eventually resulted in the agreement signed on Good Friday of 1998. "The European Union did not solve the Northern Irish conflict . . . but the fact that both the UK and Ireland were members of the European Union was crucial in providing the context in which the conflict was eventually solved" (O'Rourke, chap.6).

In an interview with the BBC, US Senator George Mitchell, who played a leading role in negotiations for peace in Northern Ireland, acknowledged the role of the EU in the peace process, saying: "I do not think the European Union was essential in the [Good Friday Agreement] talks themselves, but I believe the talks would never have occurred had there not been a European Union" (EU 'central' to 1998 Belfast Agreement).

The European Union did not stop after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement; instead, it started playing an even larger role in promoting the peace process in Northern Ireland. Even after the Brexit vote, engagement with Europe continued. "The Union is committed to continuing to support peace, stability and reconciliation on the island of Ireland. Nothing in the agreement should undermine the objectives and commitments set out in the Good Friday Agreement in all its parts and its related implementing agreements" (de Mars et al. 152).

2.5. Unique Exposure: Brexit and the Irish Island

While Ireland has a unique economic, political and geographical relationship with the UK, it is safe to say that in comparison to the remaining 26 EU members, Ireland is significantly affected by Brexit. "Outside of the UK, the Republic of Ireland is the country that will be most affected by Britain's exit from the European Union, or Brexit" (Symington). Furthermore, that intense Anglo-Irish relationship between the UK and Ireland is what makes the Republic of Ireland so vulnerable to Brexit.

There are many other fundamental and economic reasons why the Republic has been linked to Brexit uniquely. One of those reasons is the deep integration between the Irish and British economies over generations, to the point that the UK and Ireland are often treated as one market (*Ireland & The Impacts of Brexit*). The UK is the second biggest customer for Irish goods, while Ireland, an EU member state, is the only country to share a land border with Britain (Symington). Therefore, losing a partner like the UK could cost the Republic billions of euros, and that would inevitably affect Ireland on the short and long term.

2.5.1. Secession

Brexit consequences can result in the breakup of the United Kingdom; a union formed 300 years ago. "Based on the results of the referendum, Scotland and Northern Ireland voted against leaving the EU, and the most dissatisfaction with Brexit was in Scotland" (Rashica 35). As mentioned before, in 2014, the people of Scotland held a referendum geared at determining their continued union with Britain in which Scotland voted to remain part of the UK. Viona Rashica revealed that Scotland chose to stay because an independent Scotland would be recognised as a new state and thus would have to apply for EU membership (35).

Scotland's Prime Minister, Nicola Ferguson Sturgeon, stated that the UK's departure from the EU could prompt a new referendum on Scotland's independence, as Brexit damages the Scots' economic future. Nonetheless, Theresa May objected to Scotland's secession plan until the Brexit talks are over so that the UK could get a better Brexit deal (Rashica 35).

Regarding the Brexit deal, the unknown also increased Northern Ireland's fear of dissolution of the UK after Brexit. "According to international law, states can be created in an original way, and also can be created in derivative form by force (uprising) or peacefully (by agreement), always respecting the international legal order" (35). In other words, if the UK leaves the European Union and Northern Ireland joins Ireland, it automatically becomes part of the EU. Furthermore, the DUP, as an ally for the conservative government, wants to be treated as part of the UK in the UK/EU deal; and if Westminster does not comply with this condition, its alliance with the conservative government could be in jeopardy (35). In the words of DUP deputy leader Nigel Dodds:

And, you know, for us there is the fact that if, as a result of the Brexit negotiations, for instance, there was to be any suggestion that Northern Ireland would be treated differently, in a way, for instance, that we were part of a customs union and a Single Market and the rest of the UK was not — if there was anything like the EU's definition of the backstop arrangements that was agreed in December — for us, that would be a red line, which we would vote against the government. (Gimson)

2.6. Conclusion

Since 1957, EU integration has made considerable strides in bringing Europe together, politically and economically. From its humble beginnings as three different organisations, the EU has helped many states, and Ireland is a prime example. Ireland relies heavily on the EU to establish its sovereignty from the United Kingdom.

On the other hand, there is no doubt that the relationship between Britain and the EU is a difficult one. There are numerous reasons which render British membership in the European Union problematic; one of them is the fact that the UK joined the community only for economic reasons and was not ready for any political integration. This argument was often used by the Conservative Party and Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s. Since then, domestic uncertainty towards the European Union has remained prevalent in Britain. Since the EU was at the top of each party's agenda in the UK, one can say that the EU has, indeed, impacted Britain's politics and foreign policy. Ultimately, the uncertainty resulted in the UK's decision to leave the EU in 2016, which marked a turning point in the history of Europe. Moreover, apart from the economic possibilities and Ireland's exclusive exposure in the UK's decision, Brexit would also cause critical political changes and could weaken the UK geopolitically.

Chapter Three:

The Irish Border and Brexit:

Negations' Framework

3.1. Introduction

The Irish border debate is a key topic that drives Brexit negotiations. Indeed, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland have benefited from the GFA, which enabled unseen borders and put an end to many years of hard borders. However, as Northern Ireland will also leave the EU with the Withdrawal Agreement, the common border with the Republic of Ireland will become an external EU border. "The 500 kilometre-long Irish border is famous irrational, which makes complete sense since it was never designed to be an international frontier in the first place" (O'Rourke, chap.11).

Most of the European Union guidelines for negotiating the Withdrawal Agreement were uncontroversial. Nevertheless, the Irish border raised more complicated issues. It took more time to hammer out a common position, mainly because the EU's negotiating objectives have remarkably been shaped around the interests of Ireland. In this chapter, we approach the Irish land border both historically and for what it could represent in the future. The core of this chapter is an analysis of both Theresa May's and Boris Johnson's plans regarding the Irish border. This will hopefully help to clarify why it is that the Irish border has become such a central issue in the Brexit negotiations.

3.2. The Irish Border: Historical Overview

Discussions about the challenges the Irish border poses for Brexit tend to size up the problem. Borders in Ireland operate on a deeper level as they were fostered because of the ideological disputes between the north and the south. Ireland's historical and geopolitical issues are explained and illustrated in chapter one. The sole focus of this section is to study and analyse of the different aspects the land boundary represented and could represent.

According to de Mars et al., the Irish border went through two stages during the twentieth century – bordering and de-bordering. Those stages did not follow a specific timeline because some elements of the border were hardened and others were softened. Notably, in a post-Brexit Ireland, re-bordering as a third stage is inevitable (de Mars et al. 11).

3.2.1. Bordering

This phase comes after the peace treaty with the British when Ireland was introduced to a new frontier. This new border profoundly impacted the Irish people and caused division and conflict between the South and the North.

3.2.1.1. Division

For centuries, the Irish Sea functioned as a clear legal border between the British and Irish islands. In the eighteenth century, however, the Act of Union removed that border; moreover, the act brought Ireland under Westminster's direct control, incorporating it into a single customs union with Britain (de Mars et al. 13). After the Irish War of Independence, the border changed once again, the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland becoming two separate entities. Furthermore, the former customs union laws between Ireland and the UK no longer applied to the newly independent Irish Free State.

Between the 1920s and 70s, partition was the prominent feature of the UK's relations with Ireland, with the land border as a focal point (de Mars et al. 13). When the Boundary Commission's attempts to adjust the borderline failed in the mid-1920s, authorised routes were classified as cross-border. This decision caused severe issues, especially for people living in those areas:

Train lines that crisscrossed the border soon closed, small businesses in border counties lost access to their suppliers or markets, and diverging laws on either side of the border

encouraged the smuggling of everything from white bread to condoms. On a deeper level, the "authoritarian and homogenising instincts" of both of Ireland's governments meant that the border became a means of looking inward in order to control their own populations. (de Mars et al. 14)

The Irish Constitution of 1937, in which Éire made a territorial claim across the island in Articles 2 and 3 and thereby denied Northern Ireland's sovereignty, intensified the situation between the two states. NI replied in 1956; the government released a paper entitled "Why the Border Must Be." This paper illustrated and defended the existence of the border, in which the south was crudely portrayed as a place of censorship and misery. De Mars et al. suggest that both Northern Ireland and Ireland were targeting each other intentionally, using the border as a tool to distract people from internal woes and economic failure (14).

3.2.1.2. Conflict

Partitions generated unsolvable political division across the island (de Mars et al. 15). Nevertheless, the border has also left a significant percentage of Nationalists in NI isolated from their majority in the south. Although centuries of British rule in the Irish island have led to divisions, the border has become an external symptom of an inner illness (Horgan 425). Years passed without even a single high-level contact between the administrations from either side of the border. However, when Prime Minister Seán Lemass of the Irish Republic and Terence O'Neill of Northern Ireland met in 1965, the opportunity was fragile, and the talks were insignificant (Patterson 146).

Given the high sensitivity between the two sides created by politicians in the north and south, the border gradually became the focal point for political violence. "Attacks on border posts

in the 1920s, 1930s and 1950s were part of an undercurrent of political violence in NI that, while not as intense as during the later conflict, was nonetheless considerable" (de Mars et al. 15). During the 1960s, the Nationalists' impatience over segregation prompted the Northern Ireland civil rights movement, which led to the conflict known as The Troubles. De Mars et al. illustrate how the border was affected: "As the conflict intensified and the UK armed forces were deployed in 1969, the border became intensely militarised, and the border counties became 'bandit country'. The division of Ireland became ringed with barbed wire and cast in concrete" (15).

3.2.2. De-bordering

This active phase of loosening the Irish border engaged de-emphasising the national sense of sovereignty and overcoming borders as barriers for communication. This was expressed in the creation of the common travel area, the Single Market, and the Good Friday Agreement.

3.2.2.1. The Common Travel Area

The status of Irish people in the UK has been exceptional since the creation of the Irish Free State. Both governments regard each other's people as citizens (de Mars et al. 15). Unrestricted movement between Ireland and the United Kingdom continued until the declaration of Ireland as a republic in 1949. The UK government formalised this unique relationship by ensuring that Ireland will not be considered a foreign country, although the new republic is no longer part of the Commonwealth. De Mars et al. suggest that this decision was because of the high complexity of establishing a clear physical border between Ireland and Northern Ireland (16).

In 1952, the United Kingdom and Ireland extended the scope of the common travel area. In the new agreement, the UK and Irish nationals are classified almost identically in both countries. Patrick Drudy suggests that this decision is significant because it helped to characterise a border

between the two nations, which was highly permeable to people and ideas (22). Drudy adds, "With the irony that with the conflict between the 1970s and 1990s, the sea border between Great Britain and Ireland was easier to cross than the extremely militarised land border with NI" (23).

3.2.2.2. The European Union

As mentioned in chapter two, Ireland and the UK worked together, as EU members, to resolve the conflict in Northern Ireland. By assigning the legislative task to EU bodies, the nationalism class dispute was removed in Northern Ireland. Furthermore, de Mars et al. suggest the following: "With the 'completion' of the EU's Single Market in 1993, physical manifestations of the border, such as the customs posts at Newry and Dundalk, were closed. Once the security architecture linked to the NI conflict was removed, an open border materialised" (17).

3.3. The Negotiations

After losing her parliamentary majority, Theresa May started the sequence of the existing EU by triggering Article 50, which means the United Kingdom began the official negotiations for its divorce. However, the EU wanted a specific sequence for the negotiations—divorce issues first and future EU-UK relationship second. The UK was not happy about this. In May 2017, the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, David Davis, asked, "How on earth do you resolve the issue of the border with Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland unless you know what our general border policy is, what the customs agreement is, what our trade agreement is?" He said, "It is wholly illogical" (O'Rourke, chap.11).

Nevertheless, when both sides met for the first time on 19 June 2017, the UK agreed on a timetable for the negotiations in the manner requested by the EU. In other words, It was now locked into a process that required it to make "sufficient progress" on the three key divorce

issues—citizens' rights, the financial settlement, and the Irish border—before talks could move on to discussing transitional arrangements as well as the future EU-UK relationship. (O'Rourke, chap.11)

3.3.1. Citizens' Rights

Securing the safety of both EU residents in the UK and British citizens in the EU was the European Council's priority. "There are more than 3 million EU citizens living in the UK, and they did not move there as immigrants but as European citizens exercising their right to move freely within the European Union" (O'Rourke, chap. 11). The EU wanted to ensure that these people and their families would enjoy the same legal protections they had before Brexit. Moreover, the EU demanded permanent residency after five years and the right to fair treatment (chap.11).

Despite many differences, the UK agreed with much of what the EU demanded, on the condition that British EU residents will be treated identically. Theresa May announced that "the agreement regarding citizens' rights would be incorporated into UK law and that EU citizens could have those rights enforced by UK courts. Nevertheless, those courts should, in turn, be able to take into account the judgements of the European Court of Justice" (chap. 11). Generally, this agreement proved relatively easy for negotiators to make quick progress on citizens' rights and the overall negotiations.

De Mars et al claim that EU citizens were often victims of racism, xenophobia and even violence in pre-Brexit Northern Ireland. They add, "recorded racist crimes against EU nationals in Northern Ireland rose by 48% between 2012 and 2017(de Mars et al. 59). However, EU nationals are protected by shared EU laws. By contrast, non-EU nationals are subject to a completely

different legal system in Northern Ireland. This suggests that before Brexit, there were two groups of rights holders in Northern Ireland: EU/UK/Irish citizens and non-EU citizens (60).

Because of the Anglo-Irish common travel area and Brexit, these two categories will multiply. Non-EU residents will not only be handled differently in Northern Ireland but may also have significant differences between many other categories of residents. De Mars et al claim that Northern Ireland's two broad categories of rights holders would multiply into nine distinct classes:

1. Irish citizen.
2. UK citizen.
3. Dual Irish–UK citizen (who has no Northern Ireland connection).
4. Dual Irish–UK citizen (who is part of the ‘people of Northern Ireland’).
5. Non-UK citizen who is entitled to Irish citizenship (e.g. a Canadian citizen).
6. Non-Irish EU national (e.g. a Polish citizen).
7. Non-EU, non-UK national (e.g. a Jamaican citizen).
8. ‘Worker’ in Ireland with EU/UK citizenship (e.g. who works in Dublin and lives in Belfast).
9. ‘Worker’ in the UK with EU/UK citizenship (e.g. who works in Armagh and lives in Dundalk) (60).

3.3.2. The Divorce Bill

The financial settlement – often called the "divorce bill" – outlines how the UK and the EU would settle each other's unresolved financial obligations. "The UK government viewed money as one of its main bargaining chips: if it were not to pay the money demanded by the EU, this would leave a sizeable hole in the EU budget" (O'Rourke, chap.11). The British wanted to use it as a

trump for a lucrative deal with the union. Nevertheless, the EU was determined to make the UK live up to its commitment because other budget contributors like Germany would have to pay more, or net beneficiaries such as Greece would have to get less.

In the EU's view, there must be a single agreement to address not only the UK's commitments but also its share of all EU liabilities because the British also complained about a share of EU assets that should be included when assessing the total net commitment (chap.11). Therefore, Europe's task was to specify a methodology for calculating the assets and liabilities to be taken into account and only then to determine the final number owed by the UK.

The UK took the first step when Theresa May assured in Florence that she recognises the financial settlement obligations. May urged other member states not to fear that they will need to pay more or receive less over the remainder of the current budget plan as a result of Brexit (O'Rourke, chap.11). The Prime Minister faced stiff opposition from the British MPs, who argued that the UK should not pay for EU Single Market access. However, Theresa May received an excellent piece of news from the EU. The initial hope had been that the European Council, due to meet that month, would be able to recommend that sufficient progress had been made on the divorce issues and that the talks could therefore proceed to the second phase in which transitional arrangements and the future trade relationship would be discussed. (O'Rourke, chap.11)

Europe did, however, stipulate reaching a settlement agreement before moving on to the next phase. The UK government and the European Commission issued an approved methodology for calculating the settlement on 8 December 2017 after several rounds of negotiations. "The Joint Report allowed the Commission to recommend to the European Council that sufficient progress has been made in the first phase of negotiations" (Keep 6). The European Council subsequently

concluded that sufficient progress had been achieved and that talks would move to the future EU-UK relationship.

3.3.3. The Joint Report

On 8 December 2017, the UK and the EU issued a Joint Report that included agreements between the two sides on all three divorce issues: "The proposals regarding citizens' rights and the financial settlement were largely uncontroversial. The provisions in relation to Northern Ireland proved very controversial" (McMahon, *Joint Declaration*). The Joint Report's Paragraph 49, on Ireland, claimed:

The United Kingdom remains committed to protecting North-South cooperation and to its guarantee of avoiding a hard border. Any future arrangements must be compatible with these overarching requirements. The United Kingdom's intention is to achieve these objectives through the overall EU-UK relationship. Should this not be possible, the United Kingdom will propose specific solutions to address the unique circumstances of the island of Ireland. In the absence of agreed solutions, the United Kingdom will maintain full alignment with those rules of the Single Market and the Customs Union⁹, which, now or in the future, support North-South cooperation, the all-island economy and the protection of the 1998 agreement. (*Joint Report*, para.49)

In other words, the United Kingdom wanted to solve the Irish border problem by securing a lucrative trade relationship with the EU in the future, which would remove any need for borders.

⁹ Customs union is defined as a common external tariff policy for all Member States. Since the Single Market ensures freedom of movement for people, services, capital and goods. The UK wants to leave it to curb freedom of movement of people and stay in customs union that allow only the freedom of movement of goods (O'Rourke, chap.2).

If things did not go according to plan, the UK should introduce a specific solution for Northern Ireland's dilemma. The British are also expected to ensure that all regulations needed to uphold not only North-South cooperation and the preservation of the GFA but also the all-Ireland economy, remain in line with those of the EU (O'Rourke, chap.11).

An earlier draft of the report was leaked on 4 December 2017, attracting an extremely hostile response from the DUP, on which the Conservative Party depended to retain its government. The DUP leader, Arlene Foster, made it quite clear that she and her party would not approve the proposed document. The initial text of the draft Withdrawal Agreement was postponed, and new provisions were added after several days of intense talks to resolve the DUP's concerns (McMahon, *Joint Declaration*). The final draft of the Joint Report contained the new Paragraph 50 that had been inserted after the insistence of the DUP:

In the absence of agreed solutions, as set out in the previous Paragraph, the United Kingdom will ensure that no new regulatory barriers develop between Northern Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom, unless, consistent with the 1998 agreement, the Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly agree that distinct arrangements are appropriate for Northern Ireland. In all circumstances, the United Kingdom will continue to ensure the same unfettered access for Northern Ireland's businesses to the whole of the United Kingdom internal market (*Joint Report*, para.50)

This was not an EU agreement with the United Kingdom, but a pledge made by the UK towards itself, or rather more precisely, the DUP. The EU consequently argued that it was up to the UK to determine whether or not it will its pledge with itself in Paragraph 50. "What mattered from an EU perspective was that it honours its Paragraph 49 commitment to the EU, which was in

the eyes of the latter to maintain regulatory alignment between Northern Ireland and the EU" (O'Rourke, chap.11)

The two paragraphs are taken together mean that Northern Ireland must remain effective in the customs union and the Single Market while closely keeping Britain associated with it. In other words, the UK as a whole should stay within the customs union and the Single Market. Kevin O'Rourke reveals that the Joint Report also appears to contradict Theresa May's Lancaster House Red Lines¹⁰ requiring that it would leave the customs union, the Single Market, and jurisdiction of the European courts. Furthermore, Paul McMahon suggests that the UK cornered itself against die-hard Brexiters¹¹: "Many ardent Brexit were furious at the apparent tying of the whole of the United Kingdom into a close relationship with the EU customs union and Single Market" (*Joint Declaration*).

The EU focuses on its pledge to Ireland, regardless of what the UK pledges in Paragraph 50. Given that, the UK was presented with a choice. It could decide to maintain its commitment to the DUP in Paragraph 50, so in that case, it would be forced to drop the Red Lines of the Lancaster House speech; or it could maintain those red lines, in which case it would be forced to drop its commitment to the DUP in Paragraph 50. However, the United Kingdom will not be able to honour both commitments at once without reneging on its commitment to Ireland and the EU in Paragraph 49. Kevin O'Rourke argues that the UK had cornered itself into a logically untenable position:

¹⁰ on a speech at Lancaster House in London, Prime Minister Theresa May outlined the Plan for Britain, and the 12 priorities, red lines, to be used by the government to negotiate Brexit. leaving the Single Market and customs union are at the top of those proprieties (O'Rourke, chap.11).

¹¹ A branch in the leavers voters for whom no option other than a no-deal Brexit is acceptable (Smith).

If the government reneged on Paragraph 50, there was the risk that the DUP would bring it down. If it reneged on the Lancaster House red lines, there was the risk that hard-line Tory Brexiteers would bring it down. And if it reneged on Paragraph 49, there was not merely the risk but, according to the EU, the certainty, that the UK would crash out of the EU in March 2019 without any deal at all. (chap.11)

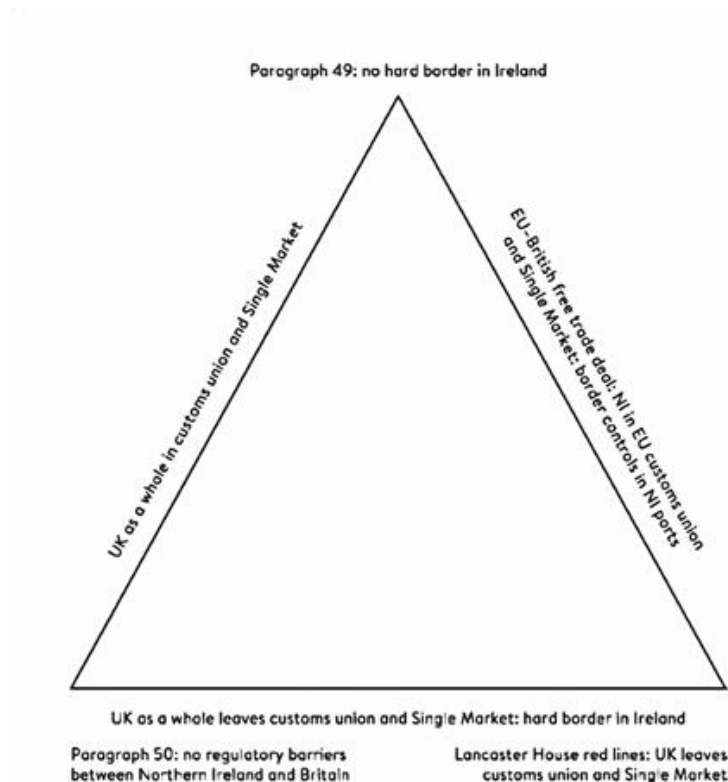


Figure. 2. The Coveney trilemma: "A Short History of Brexit: From Brentry to Backstop",2019, chap 11.

3.4. The Backstop

The second phase of the Brexit negotiations was approved by the European Union on 15 December 2017. In particular, it called on the negotiators from the EU and the UK to conclude their work, especially regarding the points not discussed in the first phase (O'Rourke, chap.11). Furthermore, a 119-page draft Withdrawal Agreement was issued by the European Commission

on 28 February 2018 to legalise the first phase results. Paul McMahon reveals that the text of the draft was colour-coded:

The bulk of the text, in green, represented the parts upon which agreement had been reached, in particular, those relating to citizens' rights and financial obligations. Yellow parts were those upon which the objectives were agreed, but the text had not been finalised. Parts that were not coloured presented proposals by the EU upon which agreement had not yet been reached. They related principally to the Northern Ireland Protocol (*The Second Phase of Negotiations*).

In terms of the transition period, the European Council noted the proposal submitted by the UK to extend the transition period to approximately one year. However, the United Kingdom, considered as a third country, could no longer participate in, appoint or elect members to the EU institutions, nor could it participate in the union's decision-making process (McMahon, *Joint Declaration*). Subsequently, it was concluded in March 2018 that the negotiating period would extend to March 2019 and the transitional period to the end of 2020.

3.4.1. The Chequers Plan and the Irish Backstop

It became abundantly evident that, between the objections of Brexiters, DUP, and the EU, a Withdrawal Agreement could not be achieved, with the outcome that the United Kingdom would crash out of the EU without any withdrawal or future relationship. Furthermore, the Lancaster House red lines of a trade deal outside the EU customs union and the Single Market appeared inconsistent with the Irish backstop. "The emerging proposal for a UK-wide customs union or relationship with the EU implied a much closer relationship than the original red lines allowed" (McMahon, *The Second Phase of Negotiations*). Acknowledging this point, Kevin O'Rourke adds,

"If she wanted the future relationship to be such as to avoid border controls between both Britain and Northern Ireland, she would need to relax her Lancaster House red lines even more" (chap.11).

In July, Theresa May called her cabinet members to the Prime Minister's country residence at Chequers to decide on white paper proposals for the UK's negotiating status in its future relationship with the EU. The cabinet acknowledged that the Single Market was based on a balance of rights and responsibilities and that the United Kingdom could not enjoy all the rewards of membership without obligations. Therefore, the cabinet announced its plan for an economic partnership that would include a free trade area without border friction. Paul McMahon adds, "There would be a common rulebook under the proposal whereby the UK would enact EU regulations in respect of goods necessary to maintain frictionless trade. The proposed new arrangements on services and investment had greater regulatory flexibility and reduced access to each other's markets" (*Chequers to Withdrawal Agreement*).

In other words, the backstop would require leaving Northern Ireland in certain parts of the Single Market before an alternate agreement between the EU and the UK is reached, while also calling for the UK as a whole to enter the customs union. This was an attempt to the commitment expressed by the UK and the EU in their Joint Report to avoid the so-called hard border. "It is an insurance policy that guarantees the status quo will remain at the Irish border after Brexit by keeping the UK inside 'a single EU-UK customs territory' until a trade deal can be struck" (Elbaum).

The Irish government and Northern Irish nationalists supported the Chequers' proposal, but it was widely denounced by those opposing Theresa May in general and the DUP in particular. Brexiteers noted that the UK would be left indefinitely in the EU orbit by adopting that proposal,

while the DUP's objection was the backstop arrangement provided for the differentiation of NI and the United Kingdom (McMahon, *Chequers to Withdrawal Agreement*).

David Davis and then Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson resigned after that. Johnson had repeatedly been against the plan, portraying it as a "suicide vest" for the British constitution. In an article in the *Daily Mail*, Johnson said:

we have opened ourselves to perpetual political blackmail. We have wrapped a suicide vest around the British Constitution – and handed the detonator to Michel Barnier ... We are now proposing our own version of the backstop: that if we can't find ways of solving the Irish border problem, then the whole of the UK must remain in the customs union and Single Market ... It means we can't do any real free trade deals. It means we are a vassal state. (Johnson, *Boris Johnson and Jeremy Hunt Debate the Chequers Deal*)

On 14 November 2018, a 585-page Withdrawal Agreement was published by the EU. The EU Council Summit and the British Cabinet soon accepted the withdrawal deal, even after the resignation of several junior ministers. However, the UK parliament and the EU parliament were both required to ratify the agreement. The Withdrawal Agreement included more guidelines on the backstop: "The EU rules in relation to goods which were to continue to apply to Northern Ireland were set out and listed. There were detailed provisions on level playing field rules that would apply in relation to Great Britain under the backstop" (McMahon, *Chequers to Withdrawal Agreement*).

Although the UK government pointed out the advantages for NI and that regulatory controls would apply only to trades from Great Britain to NI and not from NI to Great Britain, the DUP strongly opposed the agreement. On the other hand, hard-line Brexiters argued that this arrangement was worse than EU membership because it would entail no preemptive exit, and the

EU would have the last word concerning the backstop requirements (McMahon, *Chequers to Withdrawal Agreement*). Brexit Secretary Dominic Rob immediately resigned from the UK government, followed by many other senior and junior ministers. Moreover, the DUP made it clear that they would not be supporting this Withdrawal Agreement.

The Prime Minister was faced with the enormous challenge of convincing Parliament to ratify the Withdrawal Agreement. The agreement was vehemently opposed by large groups of Remainers and Leavers. Almost everyone insisted that the agreement should be renegotiated, but the British government and the EU stressed that there was no alternative to the withdrawal deal, albeit for radically different reasons (McMahon, *Parliament Rejects Withdrawal Agreement*). In other words, Theresa May and the EU were saying that it was this deal or no deal, with the risk of the UK leaving with no deal on 29th March 2019.

After months of internal squabbling, in February 2019, May promised to continue seeking backstop changes with the EU Council, even though the EU Council was not willing to change the agreement it had recently ratified after almost two years of negotiations. Paul McMahon adds, "following further assurances, a vote was taken on the Withdrawal Agreement, which was rejected by 391 votes to 242. Supported by conservative rebels and Conservatives who had quit the party, members voted almost immediately to rule out in a no-deal exit, which was scheduled for twenty-nine of March 2019 and voted to delay Brexit" (*Parliament Rejects Withdrawal Agreement*)

On 27 March 2019, May declared that she would resign if Parliament accepted the Withdrawal Agreement. Two days later, she lost by 344 votes to 286. Many of the prominent Brexiteer rebels like Boris Johnson were once again against the Withdrawal Agreement. The Prime Minister requested a further extension. On 10 April, the EU Council agreed to extend the Brexit

date to 31 October 2019. May's troubles did not just stop there; Nigel Farage, the former leader of the UKIP, established the new Brexit Party and put candidates forward for the next month's EU parliamentary elections (McMahon, *Parliament Rejects Withdrawal Agreement*).

In May 2019, the Prime Minister proposed more plans aimed at appealing to the various branches of her own party and the DUP, but they were all rejected. The last nail in May's coffin came on 23 May 2019, when the Conservative Party came last in the EU parliamentary elections with only 9% of the votes (McMahon, *Parliament Rejects Withdrawal Agreement*). May announced her resignation as leader of the Conservative Party the following day.



Figure. 3. Caricature illustrates the difficult position of Theresa May in appeasing the Brexiters led by Boris Johnson and DUP led by Arlene Foster: Gary Barker political cartoons and business illustrations, www.garybarker.co.uk

3.4.2. Two Borders for Four Years

It was apparent from when May resigned that Boris Johnson enjoyed the support of most MPs. Indeed, on 23 July 2019, he won the vote of two-thirds of the members against foreign secretary Jeremy Hunt. "Boris Johnson immediately took a hard-line stance on Brexit. In his first speech as Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced that the United Kingdom would leave the EU on 31 October 2019 with or without a deal" (McMahon, *Johnson government*). As mentioned before, Johnson objected strongly about the Irish backstop and argued that he could use the no-deal scenario to pressure the EU.

During the summer of 2019, it seemed that there was an increasing chance of a no-deal Brexit. In July 2019, the Irish government stepped up its no-deal preparation on the premise that control measures at the Irish border would be necessary. Furthermore, in a letter to the President of the European Council, the Prime Minister expressed that the Withdrawal Agreement is "anti-democratic and inconsistent with the sovereignty of the United Kingdom" (Johnson, *PM Letter to Donald Tusk*).

The UK government released a new alternative plan for the Irish backstop on the 2nd day of October 2019. Under this proposal, "NI would remain part of the UK customs union with customs checks between Northern Ireland and Ireland. It proposed that the checks would take place on a decentralised basis, assisted by technology away from the border... This was to require the consent of the NI Assembly before it came into force" (McMahon, *Johnson government*).

The backstop was simply replaced by a full stop whereby Northern Ireland remains associated with the EU for at least four years after the completion of the transition agreement. This will include a customs border between the Republic and Northern Ireland, along with a regulatory

border between the north Ireland and Britain in the Irish Sea. A change will only happen if the Stormont assembly will vote for it after four years. "The north would be in a special customs union with the EU, aligned with whatever Single Market rules were necessary to avoid a hard Irish border. All checks would then take place in the Irish Sea, as goods entered the north from the UK" (Taylor).

Johnson's plan is similar to Theresa May's, but with the Irish border backstop and his own initiative, "two borders for four years" John Rentoul discusses the difference between this plan and the Chequers Plan: "The first difference is that it means a customs border in Ireland whereas May's deal kept the whole of the UK in the EU customs territory until a long term trade treaty was negotiated; Boris Johnson's plan is to take the whole of the UK out of it". Johnson's solution to prevent a physical presence at the border is to push back the customs checks to a buffer zone 5 or 10 miles away from the borders. John Rentoul adds:

The second big difference between May's plan and Johnson's proposal is that the new plan depends on the consent of the assembly and the executive of Northern Ireland whereas May's protocol on the Irish border could be ended only by agreement between the EU and the UK, giving the EU a veto over it. This draft protocol would last as long as the institutions of Northern Ireland agreed to it (*How Boris Johnson's Brexit proposal moves on from Theresa May*).

The UK and the EU settled on a revised withdrawal deal on 17 October 2019, with the fundamental change being the removal of the NI backstop. As mentioned above, the new protocol contained several significant differences with May's agreement, which has helped Johnson gain the support of a large number of Brexiteers. Paul McMahon adds:

The Northern Ireland Protocol was to be a permanent solution and status for Northern Ireland subject to the consent of the Northern Ireland assembly every four years after it commenced, by a simple majority and thereafter every four years. If a majority of unionists and Nationalists supported it, the period might continue for eight-year until further consent was required. (*Amended Withdrawal Agreement Passed*)

The House of Commons approved the legislation at second reading on 22 October 2019, without any vote, but Parliament opposed the accelerated timeline and introduced a motion to have legislation enacted by 31 October. Therefore, the Prime Minister sent a request to the EU for an extension of the exit day to 31 January 2020, which was approved by the EU. Paul McMahon adds:

The House of Commons passed the second reading of the Withdrawal Agreement Bill by a vote of 358–234 on 20 December 2019, following the victory of the Conservative Party in the 12 December elections . . . The bill passed the House of Lords in January 2020 and received Royal Assent after that. The agreement was approved on 29 January 2020, by the European Parliament. At 11 p.m. on 31 January 2020, the United Kingdom left the European Union, and the transition period under the Withdrawal Agreement started (*Amended Withdrawal Agreement Passed*).

In May 2020, the UK published a paper entitled *The UK's Approach to the Northern Ireland Protocol*. "Under the protocol, Northern Ireland remains part of the UK customs territory and can benefit from any trade deal struck by the British government after the Brexit transition period at the end of this year" (Foster et al.). The document also reveals that Northern Ireland will continue to follow EU agricultural and manufacturing laws in order to stay in the customs union, and that

no new legal documentation will be required for trade between NI and Britain. Finally, the government stated that the Northern Ireland Protocol would be applied in January, whether the UK

Rules and regulations

Boris Johnson's plan

Northern Ireland stays in the EU single market for goods



Customs

Boris Johnson's plan

Northern Ireland and rest of UK leave EU customs union

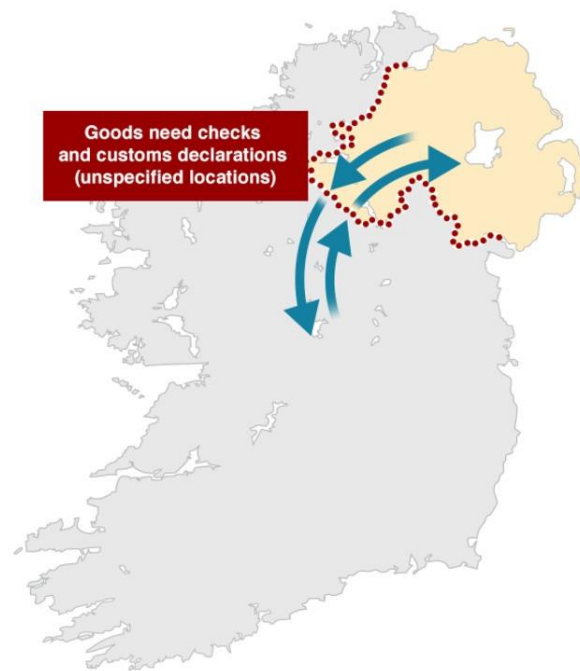


Figure 4. Boris Johnson's two borders in the new plan, www.bbc.com/news/uk

and the EU reach a trade deal or not, and the next vote will be in 2024 (Campbell).

3.6. Conclusion

The border went through an in-depth historical process which gave the issue a deeper dimension in the current negotiations and made it the crucial point in this process. On the other hand, the UK and EU had markedly opposed aims and objectives for Northern Ireland's border, which created conflicts between the two. Therefore, the border overthrew Theresa May as she was unable to secure a deal accepted by the EU and Westminster. Moreover, May's attempt to drive

away from the hard border burden in negotiations is considered to be puzzling by many scholars and viewers since the United Kingdom's position was incomprehensible.

After this, Boris came and was able to maintain the union with Northern Ireland. The new Prime Minister's insistence on rewriting the Withdrawal Agreement negotiated by May and replacing her backstop by two borders proved to be a successful strategy for him. Boris did what May was unable to do; he secured the support of the parliament, the Republic of Ireland, and the European Union at the same time. Nevertheless, NI remains uncomfortably squeezed between two unions, and EU and UK citizens wait for what will unfold.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

In the present time, no one knows for sure what the trade deal between the UK and the EU will look like. What may remain for the citizens of Northern Ireland would be the new protocol. The majority of Northern Irish citizens had already decided to stay in the EU in 2016. However, they had been overruled by a slight majority of citizens of the whole of Great Britain. Right now, they are represented by a party that has got only ten seats in the House of Commons. However, these seem to have the same power as three hundred MPs.

Taking into consideration the research undertaken and the information gathered, it would be appropriate to deduce that the impact of the Irish border may entail radical consequences for the trade deal negotiations with the EU. However, not acknowledging the effort made by the UK to solve this problem would be a massive injustice.

Unlike Scotland, which also voted to remain in the EU, the unique exposure of the Irish island is due to its historical ties with the United Kingdom. Moreover, the Irish island had experienced civil war throughout the twentieth century, which was the result of a long religious and political dispute. Unfortunately, the problem of terrorism is something the Irish island is familiar with, and while the times of civil war are over, they are not forgotten. The current situation may light the flame again.

The study also concludes that Brexit brings with it uncertainty and volatility in the socio-political environment of Northern Ireland. This can be confirmed by taking into consideration the aftermath of the Chequers plan, as the DUP rapidly refused the idea of treating Northern Ireland differently from the rest of the UK. This objection could be described as fear arising from the propaganda from the Republic to unite the Irish island. Kevin O'Rourke augments this line of

argument, saying, "Some in Ireland hoped that the DUP might push for a solution that avoided a hard border in Ireland, but it was also clear that it would oppose any solution that in its view undermined the union of Great Britain and Northern Ireland" (O'Rourke, chap.7).

Furthermore, the negotiation process has shaken Westminster politics to the core and facilitated unprecedented seismic changes to the frontlines of British politics. Through witnessing the demise of May and the rise of Johnson to the leadership of the Conservative Party, one can see the significance of the Irish border quite clearly. It has caused division in government, especially in the legislative structures, as each faction or sector views the border issue in a different light.

This study also describes the development of the situation concerning Northern Ireland and describes possible future scenarios. Since a member state leaving the EU is happening for the first time, no one can say exactly what will happen next. Bordering two unions proved to be a difficult operation, so only time will tell whose opinion was more or less correct. In either case, we are all spectators of history in the making.

Finally, the Irish border has proven to be an issue worthy of reckoning. The aftermath of the negotiations shook the domestic scene in the Irish island as it caused a shift from certainty to uncertainty. This new protocol may lead to undesirable repercussions and complications in Northern Ireland. However, the will of the citizens will be respected since they have the right to determine their destiny every four years.

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ملخص

تسبب قرار المملكة المتحدة المتمثل في الخروج من الاتحاد الأوروبي إلى تحول جوهري في الوضع السياسي والاجتماعي الراهن للجزيرة الأيرلندية. و يمكن تأكيد ذلك من خلال مؤلفات لمفكرين وكتاب مثل "كيفن أورورك" و "كولين موراي". تهدف الأطروحة الحالية إلى شرح المفاوضات وكيف يمكن لكل سيناريو أن يؤثر على أيرلندا الشمالية بشكل عام والحدود الأيرلندية بشكل خاص. علاوة على ذلك ، تتضمن هذه الرسالة الجانب التاريخي للحدود قبل التقسيم وبعده ، والذي يوفر للقارئ الخلفية اللازمة لفهم أهمية هذا الموضوع بشكل كامل في المفاوضات الحالية. كما تعتمد هذه الدراسة على تحليلات للبيانات الهامة للمصادر الأولية والثانوية. وتشير النتائج الواردة في هذه الدراسة الشاملة إلى أن الحدود الأيرلندية عنصر أساسي ومؤثر في المفاوضات. ويتضح ذلك من خلال الإجراءات المكثفة المطلوبة للتوصل إلى اتفاق يصادق عليه من طرف البرلمان. إن الاستنتاجات تؤكد أن خروج بريطانيا من الاتحاد الأوروبي سيحدث الكثير من التغييرات على الحدود الأيرلندية ويستلزم من المملكة المتحدة الحصول على صفقة جيدة تضمن السلام والاستقرار الاجتماعي في أيرلندا الشمالية وفي جمهورية أيرلندا.

الكلمات المفتاحية: خروج بريطانيا من الاتحاد الأوروبي ، أيرلندا الشمالية ، أيرلندا ، الاتحاد الأوروبي ، المملكة المتحدة