



Bildung und Sport

Brexit – what next?



This unit is designed to give an overview of the aftermath of the UK's EU Referendum (as of Sunday 26th June). As with the previous post – ***Brexit or Bremain: that is the question*** –, the topic is also a very good way to introduce and revise political vocabulary as well as *if*-clauses!

Once again, there is an overwhelming amount of material on the aftermath and everything is in constant flux. I have chosen materials that represent the most “historic” events and that are key to understanding how things continue to unfold in the coming weeks and months.

- **Task 1** begins with the 24th June and a **cartoon** showing the shock the result occasioned and **maps** and **charts** showing the **results**
- **Task 2** covers the **speeches** made by the Prime Minister David Cameron (including his resignation), a muted speech by the “victor” Boris Johnson, and one by the Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, in which she says she will endeavour to have Scotland’s decision recognised.
- **Task 3** looks at how the result was reported in the **British press** and how the **front pages** reflected the newspapers’ views on the referendum.
- **Task 4** focuses on how people reacted to the result. An **article** in the *Independent* shows young people’s reactions, both on the streets and on social media. **Hashtags** opposing the result give an insight into people’s feelings mentioned in the article (opposing the result) to find out what young people were saying.
- **Task 5** looks at an **online petition** with 3 million signatures (and counting) asking Parliament to hold a second referendum.
- **Task 6** is a creative task in which the students produce a short presentation explaining why a second referendum should be allowed.

There is an **alternative final research task**, included at the end of the background information.

Background information

24th June cartoon

The students might need to look up the definition of the phrase “[to ride, walk off] into the sunset”, meaning that someone is beginning a new, happy life at the end of a story.

In this case, Cameron is walking into the sunset with his suitcase – with EU and UK flags on it – to begin a new era, his EU worries behind him. (This was indeed the case – according to newspaper reports, he was confident of victory.) However, the next morning a new reality awaits him. The sun is now rising and it is the dawn of a new era: the era of Boris Johnson and Brexit.

The results of the referendum

This task is designed to get the students to look for specific information when looking at the maps and charts on the bbc website. The answers are summarised below.

Of the twelve regions and nations in the UK, how many chose to remain in the EU?	1 region (London), 2 nations (Scotland and Northern Ireland)
Citizens in which British Overseas Territory were allowed to vote? How did the overwhelming majority vote?	Gibraltar, 95.9 % voted to remain
Which region cast the largest number of votes for Leave? Which region had the highest percentage of Leave votes?	South East with almost 5 million votes West Midlands with 59.3 %
What percentage of the electorate voted? What is interesting about this number?	72%; more people voted than in the general election last year.
How did the different age groups vote? Explain.	73% of voters in the youngest bracket voted to remain, the percentages voting for remain decrease the older the voters become
Which two factors aside from age influenced how people voted?	educational background; national identity

The speeches

Depending on your students, you might decide to give them the questions at the end of this teaching tip to help them focus on key parts of the speeches. They are intended to support, not test, comprehension.

The speeches by David Cameron and Boris Johnson are seven minutes in length, the one by Nicola Sturgeon is longer – a little over ten minutes. The students should stop after Sturgeon’s speech, they do not have to address the press questions.

You can find the transcripts of the speeches here: [David Cameron](#), [Boris Johnson](#), [Nicola Sturgeon](#).

The cartoon “[Britain closes its doors](#)” by Chapatte, which was published the day before the referendum, was a taste of things to come.

The newspaper front pages

The website given shows the before and after front pages of various newspapers. In the end, the *Daily Mail*’s front page was actually the same as the final page for the *Scottish Daily Mail*, thus using the same headline as the *Daily Mirror* “We’re out”. However, the two papers used it with different meanings: the *Mail* had supported the Leave campaign, the *Mirror* the Remain campaign.

Other papers that supported leave were *The Sun*, *Daily Telegraph*, the *Daily Express* and the *Scottish Daily Mail*.

The Times, *The Guardian* and *The Independent*, the *Financial Times* and the *i* backed remain.

If you have more time, the students could look at the political implications within the major political parties:

Political disaster

The Conservative Party has been torn apart during the campaign and now the race is on to find a new leader. Although Boris Johnson is the current favourite to succeed David Cameron, Theresa May (Home Secretary) is emerging as the favourite for the “Stop Boris” campaign amongst Conservative MPs who are looking for somebody to unify the party.

The Labour Party is now also calling for Jeremy Corbyn to resign. On Saturday night he sacked Hilary Benn, who had criticised Corbyn following the referendum saying that MPs had “no confidence in our ability to win the election” under his leadership. Following this move, a number of Labour MPs resigned from the Shadow Cabinet in protest, both at Corbyn’s handling of the referendum and his decision to sack Benn.

The Liberal Democrats have [pledged to keep the UK in the EU](#) if they win the next election. How they intend to do so remains to be seen.

Additional task

In small groups, the students choose one of the following topics and follow what happens in the British press for a week. They then present key developments to the rest of the class, using different presentation techniques (i.e. not just a short speech). Topics:

- Petition for a second referendum
- Conservative party leadership challenge
- Labour party leadership challenge
- Developments in Scotland
- Developments in Northern Ireland
- Official steps to leave Europe

Task 1: The 24th June

1. Look at the [cartoon](#) that was published in the Daily Telegraph on 24th June. Describe what is happening. What is the cartoonist's message?
2. The result of the referendum came as a big surprise. Look at the maps and charts on the [bbc website](#) and note the answers to the following questions in the table below.

Of the twelve regions and nations in the UK, how many chose to remain in the EU?	
Citizens in which British Overseas Territory were allowed to vote? How did the overwhelming majority of them vote?	
Which region cast the largest number of votes for Leave? Which region had the highest percentage of Leave votes?	
What percentage of the electorate voted? What is interesting about this number?	
How did the different age groups vote? Explain.	
Which two factors aside from age influenced how people voted?	

Task 2: What the leaders had to say

Divide into small groups. Each group watches one of the speeches given by either [David Cameron](#), [Boris Johnson](#) or [Nicola Sturgeon](#) on 24th June. Take notes whilst viewing. Discuss your answers in the group, then summarise the main points. Present your summary to the rest of the class. At the end, say how convincing you found the speech, giving reasons for your answer.

Task 3: What the newspapers had to say

a) When the newspapers were preparing their front pages on the evening of the 23rd June, they believed (as did many people around the world) that the country would vote to remain in the EU. In the early hours of the morning, some newspapers then made frantic changes to reflect the real outcome.

In pairs, choose one of the newspapers and compare the two [different front pages](#). If the newspaper did not change the front page, say to what extent you think it fits both results, or not.

b) Discuss how did the newspaper viewed the result and what this tells us about the views of the paper regarding the referendum. Share your ideas in class.

Task 4: What (young) people had to say

1. Young people especially feel betrayed by the result of the referendum. Read this article in the [Independent](#) and note down the reasons they give. What other reasons can you think of why young people might feel upset?

2. Various hashtags opposing the result are mentioned in the article. Choose one of them and read through the tweets on Twitter. Find between three and five tweets that you think are particularly interesting and share them with the rest of the class.

Task 5: Can the result be overturned?

Opposition to the result has become so strong that people have been signing a parliamentary petition online asking for the government to annul the vote and to hold a second referendum. In just over three days, three million people had signed it. Read the [article](#) then answer the following questions:

- a) What is surprising about the reason behind the petition?
- b) What are its chances of success?
- c) Who else is calling for the result to be overturned, and why?

Task 6: Reasons for a second referendum

Parliament has to debate the issue laid down in the petition. Produce a short presentation, explaining why the British electorate should be allowed a second referendum. You have one minute to make your point. Think about the top three arguments you could use and how best to present them: either making a short film, a short presentation, recording a text or a series of tweets to be sent out via social media.

David Cameron on	
<i>why the referendum was so historic</i>	
<i>how the people voted</i>	
<i>making reassurances</i>	
<i>preparations for negotiations with the EU</i>	
<i>what he and the Conservatives have achieved over the past six years</i>	
<i>his position during the campaign</i>	
<i>his decision to step down as Prime Minister</i>	
<i>Britain's next steps regarding negotiations with the EU</i>	
<i>why Britain is a special country</i>	

Boris Johnson on	
<i>David Cameron</i>	
<i>why it was right to have a referendum</i>	
<i>what is wrong with the EU</i>	
<i>the process of Britain leaving the EU</i>	
<i>those who voted remain</i>	
<i>the British and Europe in the future</i>	
<i>why being part of Europe is no longer relevant for Britain</i>	
<i>Britain's "glorious opportunity"</i>	
<i>what Britain has given the continent</i>	

Nicola Sturgeon on	
<i>what Scotland voted for</i>	
<i>her message to EU citizens living in Scotland</i>	
<i>how the rest of the UK voted</i>	
<i>why the vote was not just about the EU</i>	
<i>how she views Scotland leaving the EU</i>	
<i>what the Scots were told about their membership of the EU in the Scottish Referendum</i>	
<i>her urgent job</i>	
<i>the steps she intends to take to get what the Scots voted for</i>	
<i>what she said to the Prime Minister about Scotland's role in negotiations</i>	
<i>how she will try to make Scotland's views clear in the EU</i>	
<i>on whether a second independence referendum for Scotland is possible</i>	
<i>her current responsibility</i>	
<i>how she views the rest of the UK</i>	
<i>how Scotland voted</i>	
<i>David Cameron</i>	