



“BREXIT“ AS AN EXPRESSION OF THE DICHOTOMY “EUROSKEPTICS – EUROOPTIMISTS“

Abstract: In the article authors consider the process of Britain’s withdrawal from the European Union through the prism of the dichotomy “Eurosceptics - Euro-optimists“, which is defined as a natural component of domestic and foreign policy processes.

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British politicians have always systematically understood the place that the state occupies in the system of international relations and the circumstances in which the state needs to ensure its own existence. The empire – the “world leader“ – the great power of “the second tier state“ – the leader of the Commonwealth - the transatlantic “player“ – the “transatlantic bridge“ – the leader of the European Commonwealth, etc. – these are the positions held by the state since 1707. All of them were closely connected with the ideological foundations that were laid in the foreign policy of the state at a certain stage of existence. Another factor is a certain continuity of the foreign policy course since 1945. Outlining the “circles of influence“ and consolidating this concept as a basis, W. Churchill began the line of work of the British Foreign Office, which has not changed significantly for more than 70 years. [1]

Nevertheless, it is possible to state the existence of a “systemic error“ in the foreign policy of the state, which can be described as an “identity dilemma “. Attempts by the state’s political elites to find parity of vectors instead of understanding and providing a clear answer to the question: “Who are we?“ and “What do we want?“ - has led to the design of this problem as part of the foreign policy tradition of recent decades, which directly affects the effectiveness, quality and image of the British political course today. [2]

One example that illustrates this trend is the “European plot“ in British foreign policy from the end of World War II to the present day, as characterizing the conceptual foundations of British European policy should emphasize that the state’s position on the continent is traditionally considered special and unstable. Its main feature is the lack of a permanent long-term vision that would guide official London. This kind of “swing“ has led to the formation of two political traditions of “Euroscepticism“ and “Euro-optimism“, which have long competed with each other. The result of this

competition was the procedure for Britain's withdrawal from the EU (BREXIT) and the search for new models of cooperation. [3]

The aim of the paper is to investigate the place of BREXIT in the foreign policy course of Great Britain through the prism of the dichotomy "Eurosceptics - Euro-optimists".

Origin and development of the dichotomy "Eurosceptics - Euro-optimists" in British foreign policy

Numerous differences trace the origins of the United Kingdom's attitude to the rest of the continent, linking it to the historical past, that is, after the state adopted a constitutional monarchy, which placed it in opposition to absolutist regimes in other states. And as a result, a vision of the "other" in the form of a European continent was created. Although such an interpretation of the United Kingdom-Europe relationship is no longer relevant, this interpretation influenced the formation of British freedoms in the 1940s and 1950s at all levels of British consciousness. [4]

Another aspect that was particularly noteworthy was the British sense of pragmatism and empiricism: the difference between the unwritten constitution of London and the continental tradition of civil law. The theoretical and legal aspects that were introduced in the ECSC (European Coal and Steel Organization) in the 1950s – confirmed their alienation from Europe. E. Bevin explained this position by saying that "as soon as you open this Pandora's box - the Trojan horse will fly away" and added that this project is not attractive to Britain [5]

The geographical factor also played an important role: Britain was an island nation. De Gaulle's "veto" on the United Kingdom's first application in January 1963 was largely based on this factor. The politician considered the United Kingdom not European enough. On the other hand, many Britons were sympathetic, even in a 1951 pamphlet by the Labor Unit European Unity, stating that: "In every way but distance, we, Britain, are closer to our relatives in Australia and New Zealand on the far side of the world than we are in Europe." [6]

Britain's opposition to Europe has been strongly influenced by the belief that immigration must be controlled. [7] Immigration is an issue that was high on the United Kingdom's mind before the country joined the European project. Tensions between citizens and immigrants have been growing since the end of the twentieth century due to the arrival of the last of the former empires, when the negative attitude towards immigrants reached its peak. [8] Therefore, after decolonization in London, it was forbidden to form a national identity based on ethnicity or civic identity. [9]

This decision meant that the United Kingdom was unable to build an identity because, looking for a place in the international system after the collapse of the empire, there was a need to unite under one banner against "another". [10] The role of the "other" has been taken by Europe, and its perception is a British exception.

The doctrine of "three spheres of influence" by W. Churchill – has become another factor that is emphasized by observers of Anglo-European relations. On the one hand, the politician underline the role of Europe in the policy of the United Kingdom, emphasizing that the state cannot be separated from the continent. Even the most desperate Eurosceptics had to acknowledge and accept this thesis, but Churchill said that the UK was not ready to give up its global ambitions and aspirations to play a leading role in the world, rather than limit its capabilities within the regional player. [11]

This attitude could not go unnoticed. Anti-European attitude, refusal to join the European project – formed a negative attitude towards the rest of the world, except the Commonwealth and the United States. Never anti-European or Europhobic, these brutal but ultimately short-sighted calculations of British interests prompted British hesitation about Europe and reinforced its basic sense of Euroscepticism.

The experience of World War II had the greatest impact on British thinking, which still plays a significant role today. Britain's participation in the war, its role and contribution was revealed in the media, and especially in television by a heroic act and a 100% victory. This factor, as well as the

“imperial vision “, the Commonwealth and the “special relationship “with the United States, only complemented the global image of the United Kingdom in its own interpretation. [11]

The British W. Gladson noted: “It is part of our heritage: being born with us, it dies with us; it is the first thing we learn in life, and it is invariably present in all our thoughts and actions. It is part of our national essence.“. [12] This is one of the most important factors influencing its foreign policy – historical memory, in which the “status of the empire“ becomes part of the national and social consciousness. Reflections on Britain’s highest mission, its purpose to bring order, peace and civilization to the whole world are the same age as the British Empire itself. [13]

The empire was a key factor not only in the external but also in the internal life of the metropolis, which maintained social peace in it, forcing members of all sections of the population to feel like members of a large nation of the elect. Becoming a symbol of greatness for the British, their pride, an integral part of national self-knowledge, the empire was at the same time perceived as something routine, original, a natural state of affairs. [14]

When the British Empire reached the “peak“ of its power, then in the self-consciousness of most Britons of that period formed an attitude to their empire as a phenomenon of eternal and inevitable. The imperial mentality, that is, thinking in global terms, is to some extent assigned to them to this day, even though the British Empire has ceased to exist. We can trace this trend in the policy of the British establishment, but it is worth noting that there was little difference in the views of politicians on the status of the United Kingdom:

- E. Bevin (Foreign Ministry from 1945-1951): the idea of a “third force“, an attempt to preserve the triumphant place in the world order, despite the connection “USSR-USA“; [15]
- G. Wilson (Prime Minister from 1964-1970) in 1964 (during the Suez Crisis, which became a symbol separated from the hope of a global role from the real state of affairs in Britain) declared: “We are a world power or nothing!” and even despite the fact that in the 1970s the United Kingdom had large loans from the International Monetary Fund; [16]
- M. Thatcher (Prime Minister from 1979-1990), although more critical of the situation in the country than his predecessors, but also sought to “recreate the past glory“ of the state. [17]

The United Kingdom was part of the “big three“, which participated in shaping the vision of the postwar world order, which argues the influence of the state in the international arena. At the same time, Great Britain received an invitation to join the ECSC (European Coal and Steel Organization), but the Labor government, which came to power in 1951, rejected the invitation. This decision was vividly argued by the Prime Minister (1945-1951), K. Attlee: “We are not going to join the group of states, four of which we have just saved from the other two, “ [18] automatically becoming an observer, and emphasizing that Britain was victorious in World War II.

The state played an important role as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, a nuclear country and a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, including the former British colonies and dominions.

However, World War II forced the British political elite to focus on the problem of Britain’s future development. Due to serious problems, primarily the state’s economy, the United Kingdom had to turn to the United States for help to solve them and to ensure national security against the background of a revived Germany and hostile Russia.

It is in this difficult period for the state, the ideologue of the foreign policy of the state during the war and the postwar decade can be confidently recognized W. Churchill. A special role in the development of Britain was played by the doctrine of the policy of “three spheres of influence“, in which he outlined the existence of three circles, namely independent nations and democracies: the first circle – the British Commonwealth and Empire, the second – English-speaking world: Britain, British dominions, Canada and the United States, which plays an important role, and a united Europe. [19] The fact that “United Europe“ was last on the list was symbolic, especially given the politician’s statements, which emphasized the need for close British ties with the United States and outlined the

importance of the empire. However, before presenting this doctrine, Churchill praised the principle of European integration, emphasizing that there is no need to choose between a united Europe and a united empire, because they are vital.

The period of 1950-1960 was a turning point for the state. The process of decolonization began in the world and most countries of the empire gained their independence. Of course, this situation could not leave Britain without consequences, as most of them relied on their own colonies, especially in the establishment of trade relations, which were one of the factors in the development of the country's economy. The 1956 Suez Crisis also had a significant impact on the decline of the United Kingdom.

The Suez failure has become a symbol of hope for a global role from the real state of Britain. The United Kingdom, without the support of the United States, proved incapable of conducting even such local operations as the triple intervention. [20] During this period British political elites faced the need to accept the country's transition to a regional state. Therefore, in the late 1950s there was a reorientation to the European direction among the political elites in the foreign policy of the state due to the lack of alternatives to further foreign policy. This is due to the realization of the loss of the leading role of the United Kingdom in the international arena and the assignment of the status of "second tier state". [21] British society, in turn, supported this idea and believed that European integration was historically inevitable. [22] It is important that the public and the political establishment have synonymous with the concepts of "common market" and "European integration".

But with accession to the EEC, we can observe the greatest period of hesitation and doubt of Great Britain about membership. [23] This is especially true of the Conservative policies led by Thatcher in the 1980s, as the vision of "imperial" Britain and the perception of Europe as achieving economic dividends and political benefits is restored. However, it should be noted that the politician never stressed the need for the state to leave the EEC. This was the reason for its failure, as the Labor Party is currently intensifying its domestic political struggle over the foreign policy course, most of which supported the Conservatives' position and even called for withdrawal from the EEC. [24]

Practically such tactics of "advantage of" special relations "and as" additional lever " – cooperation with Europe" – we can observe to this day, because over the next few years, starting from the 1990s, each subsequent government tried to restore the "global" role states, while maintaining ties with the EU.

The origins and ideological foundations of British Euroscepticism

What is Euroscepticism? It is not easy to make a clear definition, but it is mostly associated with the British politician M. Thatcher, who in 1986 in "the Times" stated that: a politician who is very "skeptical about the expected benefits of growing cooperation with members of the European Union, especially one who strongly opposes increasing political and economic integration. " [25]

Who are the representatives of British Euroscepticism?

- W. Churchill – stayed away from the EEC, explaining it by previously established factors; the newly created European project was considered protectionist, which did not meet the needs of the state; [26]
- The above-mentioned M. Thatcher – the "spiritual mother" of Euroscepticism, which radicalized him; [27]
- T. May – headed the government during the preparations for leaving the EU; BREXIT will provide an opportunity to demonstrate all the strength and power of the state that seems to have eclipsed the EU all these years; [28]
- B. Johnson – was able to agree with Europe on an agreement and on February 1, 2020 to withdraw from the regional project. [28]

British Euroscepticism is a rather complex phenomenon, and its formation and development dates back to the past, due to geographical, national and historical reasons, and a sense of self-

importance plays a significant role. And although Euroscepticism has existed for more than 60 years, relied on the same factors and had practically one goal, BREXIT, we can see its transformation due to political changes in the international arena and the changing nature of the problems in the EU with the collapse of the bipolar world and till today

Formation and development of British Euro-optimism

But against the background of heightened Euroscepticism, a new phenomenon is emerging as “Euro-optimism“, which is completely opposite in its content, namely: the desire not only to remain in the European project, but also to actively cooperate with it.

What caused this phenomenon?

- a new situation in the international arena: the transformation of the United Kingdom from a “great power“ to a “second tier state“, which undermined the imperial ambitions, which manifested itself in the transformed doctrines of English conservatism through the provisions of traditional liberalism; [29]
- London’s economic crisis against the background of the success of European integration and economic recovery on the continent.; [29]
- Decolonization; [29]
- The Suez Crisis of 1956 (which called into question Britain’s close relations with the United States); [29]
- Change of world order – the formation of bipolarity; [29]

All these features forced politicians to look at the EEC from another angle, which was becoming more and more successful at that time. Accession to the EEC - came to the fore.

Who represented and supported the ideas of Euro-optimism?

- G. Macmillan – although he was not so much a supporter of this idea, but in 1961 he applied for membership in the EEC, trying to stabilize the situation in the country only by participating in a European project [30]
- E. Heath – “We are part of Europe: geographically, historically, culturally, traditionally and civilizationaly. And I told my colleagues: they should not be afraid. We in Britain are not going to turn our backs on mainland Europe or the nations of the community.“ 1973 – The Six signed a treaty on the accession of Great Britain to the EEC; [31]
- J. Major – was not an open Euro-optimist, but at the same time emphasized that: “England must play a central and positive role in Europe“; [32]
- T. Blair – another representative of the British Euro-optimist. In its relations with the EU, the Labor Party, unlike its predecessors, was ready to sacrifice part of its national sovereignty and to a greater extent accept the doctrine of interdependence in the field of international relations; [33]
- G. Brown. After being elected prime minister, the politician planned to travel to the United States: while he was to demonstrate the advantage of a “special relationship“ with America, he was also to inform Washington of the importance of London’s ties to the EU. Brown gave a special place to EU reform to give the union more “flexibility“ in tackling global challenges.[34]
- D. Cameron is the brightest representative of Euro-optimism, which led to the beginning of the BREXIT process. Although he agreed to hold a referendum on participation in the European project, the politician understood the importance of the EU for Britain, so he tried to convince British society in various ways, namely to try to agree on better terms with the EU to meet British demands; [35]

Thus, Euro-optimism is one of the most difficult processes in British foreign policy, observing since the country’s accession to the EEC. We can observe that if Euroscepticism did not change its stable position, then there was a constant “fear of deepening Britain’s Europe“ in the faces of Euro-optimists. And as soon as there was considerable emotion from optimistic politicians, in the end

politicians constantly had to make a choice: in favor of the Anglo-American or the European Union. In the end, Euro-optimists took a special interest in the specifics of this project and continued to cooperate, despite significant intrusions by Eurosceptic forces.

Thus, in fact, with the end of World War II, we can observe the formation of British “Euroscepticism“, which was opposed by a new phenomenon as “Euro-optimism“. These two phenomena have consistently shown differences and constant variability in decision-making about America and Europe in accordance with the views of one or another politician who came to power. This had a significant effect on London’s foreign policy and divided the parties into two warring fronts. And while some are fighting for the restoration of lost opportunities through the EEC (EU), others are defending the right of the state to be part of Europe and to represent their interests in this project. The long struggle, which has been going on for more than 60 years, has formed into the foreign policy tradition of the state. And the consequence of this struggle, ambiguity, embodied mistakes of both representatives is BREXIT.

Conservatives and Labor in the European integration processes of the state

The 2016 BREXIT referendum showed that British society was virtually divided into supporters and opponents of EU membership: with a 72% turnout against the EU, 52% were in favor and 48% were against. “The dividing lines ran between and within parties, between regions and between generation... Scotland in its Euro-optimism has become the direct opposite of England. Northern Ireland, though not by such a margin, also opposed itself to the latter. The stark contrast was that cosmopolitan London was immersed in the “English Sea“ of Euroscepticism. The majority of young people voted in favor of maintaining EU membership, and the main category of “exit“ was the elderly Britons. “[36]

British Conservatives have always seen European integration solely as a process of removing trade barriers between European countries, the aim of which is to create a single market, support for European integration by conservatives since London’s accession to the European project, which was based only on pragmatism and expectations United Kingdom European Community.[37]

Numerous leading conservative Eurosceptics, such as R. A. Butler, M. Aitken, G. Legge-Burke, and P. Walker, continued to express uncertainty and sometimes outright opposition to the EEC. The most outspoken voice of the conservative Eurosceptic voice was E. Powell, who challenged his party leader E. Heath, who was in favor of the state’s accession to the EEC. Powell made a sharp statement against the United Kingdom’s accession to the European project and the loss of sovereignty it would bring. However, the members of the conference voted 2474 votes in favor and 324 against joining the EEC.[38]

M. Thatcher played an important role in the Conservative Party. The former Prime Minister, who herself noted in her books: “... except for the United Kingdom, no one else has shown interest in transforming the Community into a Common Market...“. [39]

At the same time, Thatcher became more famous as a representative of Euroscepticism, who tried to do everything to prevent the EEC from becoming a Western European federal state, because the transfer of British sovereignty to the EEC was compared to “the surrender of Adolf Hitler. “. [40]

But not everyone in the party liked the ambiguous position of the politician: Thatcher was demanded to be more cruel and intransigent, which was sought in the party. As a result of the strengthening of Euro-optimistic forces on the part of Labor, the lack of Euroscepticism on the part of the Tories, M. Thatcher resigned, and the Conservatives lost the election.

When the Conservatives finally came to power in 2010 after a 13-year hiatus, forming a coalition government with the Liberal Democrats, some Tories realized that the European project had long gone beyond economic integration and needed to be addressed. At the time of the rise of Euroscepticism, there was a section among conservatives who preferred the pro-European agenda of their predecessors. The Conservative Party found itself divided over the issue of state membership.

The lack of unity on this issue was reflected in the political programs of the parties in 2010-2016, before the historic referendum on EU membership. [41]

In 2010, the Eurosceptic non-systemic Independence Party of the United Kingdom, which sought to leave the EU, gained popularity at the expense of the Conservative Party. [42]

Since 2013, there have been a significant increase in supporters of leaving the EU within the party. And it is not surprising that after D. Cameron's victory in 2015, he was forced to hold a referendum. But its results came as a shock to everyone – the British voted for BREXIT.

If up to this point the attitude of Eurosceptics and integrationists had been distributed almost equally and even the latter had a slight advantage (when the Conservatives had to choose a position in politics: 138 – openly supported Brexit, 185 – against) – none of the Conservatives called for membership. Therefore, integrationists should be considered “soft“ conservatives. The “tough“ fully supported the severance of ties with Brussels.[43]

The European issue for Labor has become one of the controversial aspects, constantly changing direction. And if the Conservatives have formed a more concrete vision and tried to adhere to it, then in the case of Labor we will be able to trace a sharp transition from categorically “hard“ Eurosceptics to more Euro-optimistic views, which was formed by raising the issue of BREXIT.

Meeting of the Heads of Government of the Commonwealth in September-October 1962, which became the most striking expression of opposition to membership in the EEC. A special role was played by Gateskell, who in his own speech put forward a number of different arguments against Britain's accession to the European project.

- with the accession of the state to the EEC there is a danger of rising prices for products, focusing on the economy; [44]
- wary attitude towards the political ambitions of the EEC to the “political union“, going beyond the “customs union“ by “step towards political integration“ into the “political federation“; [44]
- uncertainty for Britain, which it potentially subscribes to if it joins the EEC; [44]
- loss of sovereignty in an integrated Europe: a political federation was a clear goal for those who created the EEC; [44]
- the negative impact of EEC policy on the Commonwealth; [44]

Labor in the mid-1980s radically changed its attitude towards the EU – the 1987 program vigorously supported the active participation of Great Britain in the EU and projects to deepen integration. They realized that participation in the EU can be used to support Thatcherism policy in order to connect the state to the EU's social security system. At the Saint-Malo summit in 1998, Great Britain actively discussed the issue of joining the eurozone, but in the end it further divided the British and Labor themselves, forcing them to maneuver constantly, constantly promising a referendum on the euro.[45]

Reflecting on the main features of Brown's foreign policy, it should be borne in mind that the change of Labor leader and Prime Minister in mid-2007 created a new situation for British domestic policy.

This political castling was mostly with the differences in Labor rule that have accumulated since about 2003. Domestic political differences have been most closely linked to the failures of British policy, including the results of Britain's involvement in protracted US-led coalition military operations in Iraq and NATO in Afghanistan. As many international experts preferred, the new leadership in the face of Brown could begin major changes and take steps, albeit temporary, but “distancing itself from the United States and a slightly larger tilt toward Europe. “[46]

At the time the Conservatives came to power, Labor's position had not changed, they were more optimistic about the European project than their opponents. They believed that as a member of the EEC, the state would not only be able to preserve the labor market and workers' rights, but also to preserve investment and remain profitable on the environmental front. In addition, they tried to agree on new conditions with the EU to prevent exit from the EU.

But at the same time, there were BREXIT supporters who believed that staying in the EU was staying under the “carpet games“ of German Chancellor A. Merkel.

One of the important events was the creation of the “Remain party“, but voters could not understand whether politicians wanted to leave or stay in the European Community. [47]

Thus, we can see that the position of the Labor Party during the existence of the “European question“ has undergone many changes: from a strongly Eurosceptic force, to a mediator between America and Europe and to a strong Euro-optimistic position. But, like the Conservatives, there were a number of Labor members who were skeptical of the EU’s role in the United Kingdom’s development and also sought its exit, which in turn created many problems within the party and led to a split.

In the end, all this proves that there was no unambiguity on the European question in either party, and as soon as the main position was determined, those who were not ready to support it always spoke. For the most part, this split only complicated the situation and dispelled doubts among the British.

BREXIT START: formation of political positions

Campaigns such as “Britain Stronger in Europe“ (led by one of the country’s best-known businessmen, Steward Rose) and “Vote Leave“ (key figures by Justice Minister Michael Gove) have since been launched and the former mayor of London - Conservative Boris Johnson).[48]

Key arguments put forward by the policies of both parties:

Eurosceptics "Vote for exit"	Euro-optimists "Britain is stronger in Europe"
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They demanded a refund of the money spent on EU membership for health and education. 2. If the country remains in the EU, the number of migrants in the country will soon increase. At the same time, Eurosceptics alerted voters to joining the EU - Turkey. 3. Eurosceptics also used well-known theses as a limitation of sovereignty and the fact that the EU “absorbs“ Britain, and at its expense tries to be in a winning position. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Britain spends £ 5.7 billion to be a member of the EU single market and earns £ 91 billion a year; 2.If the country leaves the EU, the cost to each British family will increase by £ 4.3,000 a year as food, fuel and electricity prices rise; 3. Maintaining membership will lead to the creation of an additional 790 thousand jobs by 2030, in the worst case - 950 thousand people will lose their jobs;

According to the BBC’s May 16, 2016, among politicians of the ruling Conservative Party, 164 members of the House of Commons and 23 members of the Cabinet supported the EU membership, 131 deputies and 7 members of the Cabinet - against.[48]

Among the Conservatives who supported the exit were House Leader Chris Grayling and Irish Secretary for State Affairs Theresa Wheelers. Cameron has renounced public disputes with party members. The majority of Labor MPs called for Britain to remain part of the EU. This is the opinion of three former prime ministers: Labor T. Blair, G. Brown, and Conservative J. Major.

The main political force fighting for the EU’s exit was the UKIP, led by Nigel Farage.

Opponents of Britain’s exit from the European Union won the referendum; they outscored opponents by 1.26 million. Now the process of signing documents on leaving the organization is envisaged, which, according to experts, may take two or three years. [49]

Thus, the second decade of the 21st century made some adjustments to British policy: Euroscepticism was growing, which could no longer be restrained on both sides, especially by the Conservative party, whose leaders were in power and decided to take advantage of this by holding a second referendum for Britain regarding membership. But as we have seen before, British politicians have so far been unable to find a common position and are divided in their desire to stay in the project and leave it as soon as possible. Such ambiguity created discord among British figures and created a division on two fronts.

After the 2016 referendum, many were in thought, and while the Conservatives celebrated their victory loudly, and Labor sought support and tried to understand what happened and what to do now – the population recovered and tried to understand what choice they made and what the consequences it carries.

BREXIT is a completely new phenomenon not only for Britain, but for the whole European continent, because the events could only be predicted. That is why everyone tried to understand the mood of the population, politicians and to form a certain behavior and position for a possible recurrence in the future.

After conducting research on the attitudes of the population and politicians after the referendum, the following conclusions were made:[50]

1. BREXIT divides the UK, but party affiliation and ideology are still key factors.

The political battle for BREXIT in the country lasted more than three years. The question of the European project divided British policy – to leave or stay in the EU? All this was in line with the attitude towards the EU, immigration and the culture of the state, but the traditional divisions along the party line and the left-right ideological spectrum. (Fig.1)

2. Eurosceptics and Euro-optimists are strongly divided in their views on the EU. (Fig.2)

Those who voted to remain in the EU were favorably assessed in the long run by the project, while those who voted against were negatively evaluated. Positive views were seen among those Britons who identified themselves with Labor or the Liberal Democrats, and although the negative view of the EU was consistent, sentiment fluctuated sharply. [51]

This split was obvious and perceived positively by some and negatively by others.

3. Concerns about immigration divide voters. (Fig.3)

57% of the British public said they supported more restrictions on entry into the UK. Those who voted “for exit“ were more opposed to migration than supporters of the project.

A large number of Conservatives similarly supported greater restrictions on immigration, but to a lesser extent than Eurosceptic Britons. 3/10 from the political left supported more restrictive migration, Labor supporters were evenly divided: 49% – for, 51% – no.[52]

4. “Opponents“ and “supporters“ differ less in their views on the future culture of the state than on other issues.

62% of Britons said they were optimistic about the country’s worldview. Supporters of Labor and Conservatives have almost agreed on their views, namely that they are optimistic about the culture of the state. But supporters of the “exit“ are more pessimistic about the culture of the state than those who voted to “stay. “ (Fig. 4)

Regarding the political system: in general, Eurosceptics are pessimistic, and only 23% of those who are “for“ the EU and 24% of those who are “against“ have expressed their positive attitude. There were greater differences among guerrillas, both left and right, than among those who were “for“ and “against“ entering the political system and other topics. These included relations with Europe, bridging the gap between rich and poor, having well-paid jobs and an education system in the United Kingdom.

5. Views on the economy are closely linked to party affiliation.

The British public was roughly divided on their views on the economy: 49% said the economic situation in the UK was unsatisfactory, while 50% said it was fine. Positive views were concentrated among supporters of conservatism and to a lesser extent among supporters of Europe: 60% were in favor of “staying“, 60% were Labor supporters, and 69% were leftists. (Fig. 5)

6. During the battle for BREXIT, the British perceived democracy – negatively. (Fig.6)

A poll in the spring of 2019 showed that 69% of Britons are dissatisfied with the way democracy works. (In 2018, this figure was lower – 55%, and in 2017 – 47%).

Thus, the survey conducted in 2019 makes it possible to understand that even after BREXIT, politicians and the population do not have unanimity about what happened, and their split, which has formed since joining the EU, has persisted and affects the mood and decisions of the British in the state.

Development of contradictions within the Labor and Conservative parties of the United Kingdom in the context of BREXIT

For the domestic political picture of Britain – BREXIT is back a real cataclysm. It has already caused a severe crisis in the ruling Conservative Party, forcing it to draw historical parallels with difficult periods in the past of that state and the party itself.

For a political force that has taken full responsibility for such an important decision, it can have dire consequences. But the UK's political system is not limited to conservatives – it is bipartisan. And although there are more of them, as history shows, all government was carried out only by these two: conservatives and Labor.

The current rating of the Labor Party shows one thing: they managed to disappoint both sides equally. For a very long time, talking about “respect for the referendum“, “preventing isolationism“ and “finding a compromise solution“ – they pushed away everyone they could. Confirmation was the number of seats won: only 10 out of 64, losing significantly to the party “Brexit“ [53]

Ignoring the slight increase in the rating in April, it became clear in May that the situation had become more complicated. The party leaders lacked the political foresight to understand the extreme radicalization that a neutral position was not for nothing, but only to be removed. [54]

Within the party, this situation manifested itself no less. Many activists found themselves in a situation of “loyalty conflict“, when, categorically advocating or against “leaving the EU“, they automatically went against the general line of the party.

These conditions forced a more critical attitude to the situation and a clear position: the party changed its attitude to the issue. Party leader Jeremy Corbyn has decided to campaign for a second referendum. However, so far such a change of position has not helped the party much.

Labor's old and new policies on BREXIT have so far most obviously led to the party's own roots now desperately trying to bridge two internal divisions: 1. among the traditional voters of the party district (there are Labor constituencies with the largest rejection of BREXIT in the country, and on the other there are those who accept it, for example, South Wales); 2. A split within the party apparatus through the shadow cabinet and Labor leadership (in one camp, Labor should position itself more as an opponent of BREXIT, while in another it insists that Labor must “respect the referendum“, whether they like it or not). The party's problem is that Labor cannot choose the final position and is trying to “take two seats“.

The current “new course“ of Britain's Labor Party is the last attempt to somehow normalize the party's position.

The Conservative party that won the referendum was determined and even before the 2017 elections stressed that leaving the EU will definitely happen and the party is ready to implement BREXIT even if it fails to agree on an agreement with Brussels: “We continue to believe that the absence of a contract is better than the conclusion of a bad (for the UK) contract. [55] But at the same time, not paying attention to the fact that in official speeches and documents in 2016-2017, the Conservatives took a rather anti-European position, this does not mean that they all agreed with the course of T. May. Moreover, the party was still divided, and this split is even deeper.

When T. May presented to the parliament at the end of 2018 the agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union, he provoked fierce criticism among Europhobes in the Conservative Party, because the Tories assessed it as a departure from the key ideas of BREXIT.

The plan was a compromise: an end to freedom of movement for individuals and an opportunity for London to impose its duties on imported goods from non-EU countries, but the United Kingdom agrees to the partial jurisdiction of the European Court. T. May's softened position on BREXIT (compared to the 2017 election manifesto) led to the resignation in July of both key ministers in the board: Boris Johnson and David Davis, who considered the prime minister's actions a capitulation to European officials. However, the biggest controversy is the fact that due to the lack of agreement between Brussels and London on the format of relations after 2020, Northern Ireland will temporarily remain in the same economic space with the rest of the European Union, so the British Prime Minister agreed that one of the regions of the United Kingdoms can officially live by rules other than Switzerland, England or Wales.[56]

The first group of conservatives is for the annulment of the agreement proposed by T. May and for the fastest withdrawal of Great Britain from the EU, even if a new agreement cannot be concluded. B. Johnson, in turn, criticized the agreement and opposed the postponement of the agreement. The Prime Minister's plan is "betrayal".[57]

A second group of Conservatives, also unhappy with the May agreement, said Britain could get better terms than the prime minister agreed. But this group strongly opposed the state leaving the EU without an agreement.[58]

A third group of Conservatives supported the Prime Minister's BREXIT agreement and tried to pass it through the British Parliament. According to them, the agreement is generally in line with the promises made before the 2016 referendum by supporters of the "Vote for Exit" camp. And they also believed that leaving the European Union without an agreement would be much worse.[59]

However, another group of conservatives has formed – its representatives want to cross out the conclusions of the 2016 referendum and stop BREXIT, which they consider a huge mistake from an economic point of view, so they propose to hold a second referendum.

Thus, instead of two groups (Eurosceptics and integrationists) on the eve of Britain's exit from the EU, the Conservative Party found itself divided into four factions, three of which support BREXIT and in which half "reconciled" with the decision of the referendum, and the other half requires a second vote.

Thus, the study examines the split among British Conservatives and Labor over the issue of EU membership over the past four years. However, despite the split, BREXIT's opponents dominate the party.

But due to the lack of unity, both Labor and Conservatives on how to organize BREXIT – had a catastrophic effect on the party's ratings and led to the failure of the European Parliament elections in May 2019.

Many doubted that BREXIT in one form or another would take place, but despite the unstable leadership, there were no radical changes in the position of official London. The Labor Party failed to create a decent alternative, it was confused and disorganized. In 2019, T. May was replaced by Boris Johnson, who immediately declared: "It's time for Britain to come out" and the result did not take long – on December 20, 2019, Parliament supported the terms of the agreement. And on January 31, 2020 – Britain was the first European country - to officially leave the European Union. We can now observe the second phase of negotiations between Britain and the EU on a trade agreement.

Since the end of World War II, we have seen skepticism about the project from the British, explaining that this community is useful for security on the continent, but London avoided joining the state, because the imperial ambitions did not match the regional nature of the project. Almost all of these like-minded people belonged to the group of "Eurosceptics".

The formation of a new situation in the international arena, the establishment of bipolarity, the loss of state status of the “first tier“, political and economic shortcomings, which deepened against the background of European neighbors within the European Union, changed the views of politicians on membership. That is, since the decision of the United Kingdom, there has been the formation of “Euro-optimists“ who sought to join the EEC to stabilize the situation and establish hegemony not in the world, but at least on the continent.

But the accession process became one of the most difficult periods of state development. The United Kingdom tried three times to join the union, but its application was blocked by France. At the same time, it cannot be said that this situation did not please the Eurosceptics, who, despite the troubles in the country, did not see significant advantages in the European partner.

In 1973, London was able to join the EEC, and while many believed that this fact would force them to accept the situation, on the contrary, Euroscepticism increased, as evidenced by the desire to hold a referendum in 1975.

In the future, the situation worsened: the state’s policy was constantly transformed: Britain was an “inconvenient partner, “a “most skeptical member state, “ and a “friendly partner“. All this was due to the constant change of leaders who promoted their interests, whether Eurosceptic or Euro-optimistic. But at the same time, history shows many cases when politicians were forced to resign because their actions did not meet the aspirations of their party. In other words, any action aimed at improving relations with Brussels was blocked almost immediately. This is evidenced by the resignation and leader of the movement before joining E. Heath, Conservative leader M. Thatcher, the desire to move from the chair of J. Major as soon as he showed sympathy for the project, D. Cameron, who took a pro-European position in preparation for BREXIT generally withdrew from his party, T. May, who failed to satisfy the strong Eurosceptic sentiments in the party by concluding an agreement with Brussels.

But the positions differed both on the position of politics and on the strategic positioning of the state in Europe. All without exception in the government were Eurosceptic in the sense that they were absolutely opposed to the expansion of EU powers. There are still many opinions that “Britain’s Euro-optimism“ cannot be called Euro-optimism, because in the policy of every politician there is an assessment of the European Union as a reliable trading partner, not a political one. As integration into the European Union deepened, so did Eurosceptic sentiment in British society and in the political elite. Euroscepticism became “tougher“, there were more and more statements against the status quo and demanding either “weakening of the EU“ or the United Kingdom’s withdrawal from it. At the same time, Euro-optimistic forces, while adhering to the “special status“ of a state that favored other European members, indicating its display of Euroscepticism, nevertheless strongly opposed Britain’s withdrawal from the Union when the question of BREXIT arose. The political race caused by the choice of both conservatives and Labor of one of the positions “for“ or “against“ Europe as in the 1960s, with the accession of the state and its possibility of exit – split the parties and created a certain dissonance with the voter.

As many hoped that the accession of the state would stop this political struggle, so many believed that the exit would be the last point in this matter, but judging by recent events – it did not work again.

Britain has left the European Union, but in the end, the British choice cannot leave them alone, as evidenced by the desire of Labor to hold a second referendum. But the problem with this, as noted above, is the divergence of views within the party: neither conservative nor Labor has 100% Euro-optimism or Euroscepticism: this fact is repeated in history, when Euro-optimists enlisted support when joining the EEC other parties. The Conservatives have the same thing: only when the agreement with Brussels was agreed, the party split into four fronts, which led to the resignation of T. May. But the problem is not only in politicians, the British themselves are still recovering from what happened. After all, a new and unknown page in their history awaits Britain. Thus, it can be concluded that the

“dichotomy of Eurosceptics and Euro-optimists“ has been one of the key problems for the United Kingdom since the end of the Second World War.

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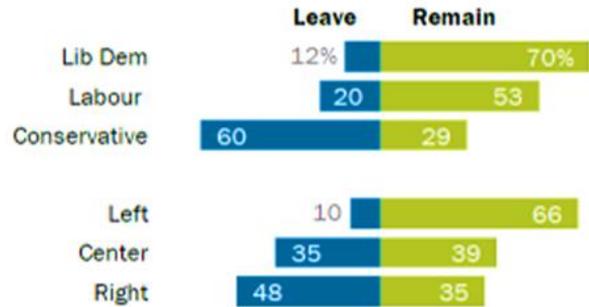
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“Conservatives and people on the political right more likely to have voted to leave the EU than to remain” (fig.1)

% of ___ identifiers who reported voting leave/remain

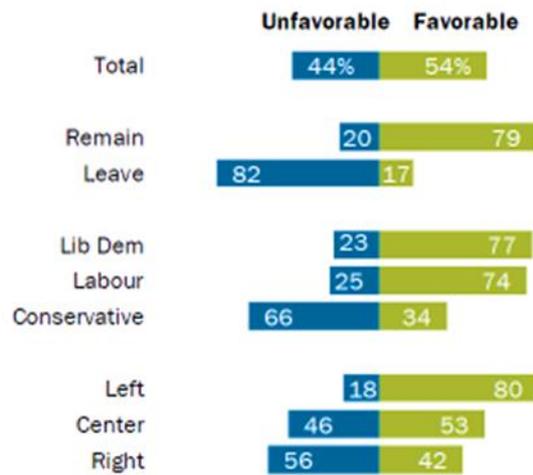


Note: Volunteered responses of “didn’t vote,” “too young to vote,” “don’t know” and “refused” not shown.
Source: Survey of UK adults conducted June 4-July 20, 2019. Q93UKa.

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View of EU more negative among leavers, Conservatives and those on the right of the ideological spectrum (fig.2)

% who say they have a ___ view of the EU

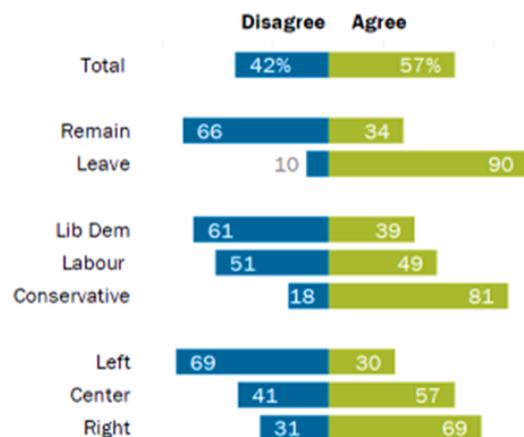


Note: “Remain” and “leave” are respondents’ reported vote in 201 EU referendum. Don’t know responses not shown.
Source: Survey of UK adults conducted June 4-July 20, 2019. Q8d.

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Remainers and leavers deeply divided over immigration (fig.3)

% who ___ that we should restrict and control entry into our country more than we do now



Note: “Remain” and “leave” are respondents’ reported vote in 2011 EU referendum. Don’t know responses not shown.
Source: Survey of UK adults conducted June 4-July 20, 2019. Q50g

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Leavers and remainers are not as divided as partisans on a variety of issues (fig.4)

Percentage point difference between shares of ___ who say they are optimistic about ...

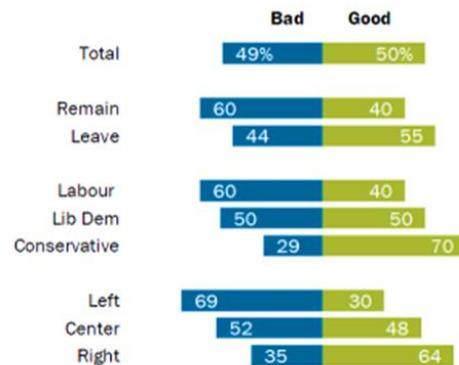
	The way our political system works	Their education system	Reducing the gap between rich and poor	The availability of well-paying jobs	Their relations w/other European countries	Their country's culture
Leave-Remain	+1	+2	+7	+8	+11	-14
Conservative-Labour	+21	+20	+27	+21	+24	+2
Right-Left	+15	+15	+18	+20	+19	+1

Note: Statistically significant differences shown in bold. "Leave" and "remain" are respondents' reported vote in 2016 EU referendum. Source: Survey of UK adults conducted June 4-July 20, 2019. Q12a-e.g.

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Economic views largely align along left-right and partisan divides (fig.5)

% who say the economic situation is ___ in the UK



Note: "Remain" and "leave" are respondents' reported vote in 2016 EU referendum. Don't know responses not shown.

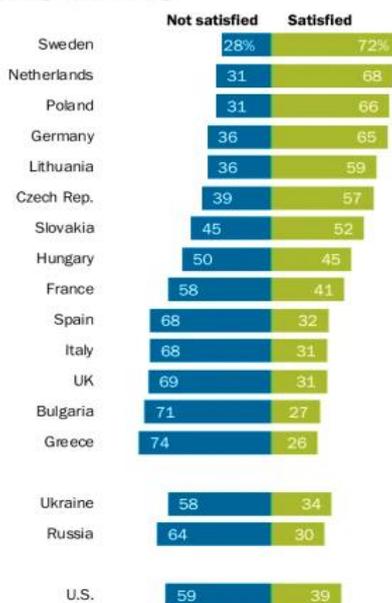
Source: Survey of UK adults conducted June 4-July 20, 2019. Q3.

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Dissatisfaction with democracy is common in Europe (fig.6)

Dissatisfaction with democracy is common in Europe

% who say they are ___ with the way democracy is working in their country



Note: Don't know responses not shown. Source: Spring 2019 Global Attitudes Survey. Q5.

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