

SCG Legal International Meeting

# Can the EU be saved - Brexit

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# The basics

What is Brexit?

**Britain + Exit** from the EU = **Brexit**

23 June: Referendum on whether the United Kingdom should remain a member of the European Union or whether it should leave.

# A little history – late to the party

1957 – UK declines to join the EEC on its formation

1961 – changes its mind and asks to join

1963 – de Gaulle says “NON” – “l’Angleterre, ce n’est plus grand chose”

1967 – de Gaulle says “NON”, again

1973 – finally joins (de Gaulle having died in 1970)

1975 – Referendum – 67% Remain

# Some philosophy

- Europe: us or them?
- Closer to USA, Canada, Australia, NZ and South Africa?
- Euro-enthusiasm is vary rare – shades of Euroscepticism
- Consensus: free trade, good; political union, bad
- You never see the European flag

# Why we are doing this?

- 2015 General Election. David Cameron promised to “negotiate a new settlement for Britain in the EU” followed by an in-out referendum. He said that if he didn’t get a new settlement, he would campaign to leave.
- What he got in February:
  - Commitment that the UK would not be part of “ever closer union”
  - Safeguard against non-Eurozone countries being disadvantaged and no UK contribution to Eurozone bailouts.
  - Limitations on welfare benefits payable to EU citizens in the UK
  - Commitment to try and cut red tape and increase competitiveness

# Politics

- Conservative Government split. Most ministers for Remain, MPs 50/50, most Conservative voters for Leave
- Labour – mostly for Remain, hard left for Leave
- UKIP – Leave
- Liberal Democrats – Remain
- Scottish and Welsh Nationalists – Remain
- Big Business – Remain
- Small Business – split
- Obama: Cameron writes the script

By the way, nobody wants the €

# The arguments

## Remain

- It's about the Economy, stupid
  - We are better off In
  - 45% exports to EU
- Single market
- Strong bargaining position with the rest of the world
- Free movement of people
- Joint security
- Keeps the peace

**“PROJECT FEAR”: LEAP INTO THE DARK**

# The arguments

## Leave

- It's NOT about the Economy, stupid; it's about Democracy and Sovereignty
- Fear of Political Union
- Immigration
- Insecurity from open borders/EU Human rights
- Red tape
- Cost and corruption – net contributor
- Better to negotiate own free trade treaties with EU, USA, China...
- NATO keeps the peace, not EU



# What will happen?

- Latest opinion polls: 50/50 split, 15%-20% undecided
- Old – Leave
- Young – Remain

Too tight to call, but...

# If we vote to leave

- Immediate application to leave
- No renegotiation of membership: OUT
- Process takes two years
- Negotiation of new trade deals with EU, US, China etc will take far longer
- Could Cameron stay?
- Would Conservative Party split?
- Would Scotland break away?
- Would other countries in the EU follow?

# thank you



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