



BREXIT, WTO, TRADE, AND THE IRISH BORDER



A ONE-PAGE BREXIT FACTS4EU.ORG SUMMARY PAPER

1. BACKGROUND

- A border already exists - for tax, VAT, currency, excise duties and security, with no disruption
- The Irish government weaponised the border issue in its desire to create a united Ireland
- The EU used this issue to delay real Brexit negotiations until March 2018
- On 07 Mar 2018, EU Council President Donald Tusk offered the UK a zero tariffs trade deal
- However this offer would have made Northern Ireland effectively part of the EU for customs and laws
- Mrs May allowed this to dominate her unwanted Withdrawal Agreement with the EU
- Northern Ireland sales to the Republic account for only 0.2% of UK GDP
- HMRC, Irish Revenue, and EU Parliament's report all said no border infrastructure was required

2. SOLUTION

- **The technology is already being used, and is tried and tested**
- Solution would use existing processes, existing procedures, within existing EU customs laws
- No requirement for 'a hard border' – unwanted by UK, EU, and Republic of Ireland anyway
- Improvements can be made to efficiency, with goodwill on both sides
- Exit on WTO terms, then negotiate trade deal with EU
- Invoke Article 24 of GATT agreement, allowing zero tariffs while UK and EU are negotiating

3. WHAT THE INDUSTRY SAYS

CLECAT is the **European Association For Forwarding, Transport, Logistics And Customs Services**. Based in Brussels it represents more than 19,000 companies employing in excess of 1 million staff in logistics, freight forwarding and customs services. Here is what they say about Brexit:-

"Being outside of the Customs Union and the Single Market does not mean that trade will become impossible and is also not a new situation.

"Modern Customs legislation and technology provides for numerous simplifications and facilitations through which goods can move across borders unhindered, while at the same time Customs and other border inspection services can ensure safety and security and proper tax and duty collection.

"Therefore, all the ingredients to ensure an orderly exit process of the UK from the EU are already available."

4. CONCLUSION

This non-issue has always been an absurd diversion over a tiny matter which would have been resolved a year ago by the respective customs authorities of the UK and the Republic of Ireland, if the EU and the Irish government hadn't stopped them talking last year.