

The Impact of Brexit upon Identity and Unity in Post-Brexit UK: A Multi-dimensional Account

Seddiki Mohamed Cherif

University of Amar Thilidji Laghouat, Algeria

eslcherif@gmail.com

Submission date: 04/09/2023 Acceptance date: 27/09/2023 Publication date: 01/10/2023

Abstract:

The UK's decision to depart from the European Union has significantly impacted on every aspect of life, particularly identity and national unity within the UK. No one can ignore how divisive the referendum campaign was. This vote led to a resurgence of English nationalism and questioning of the nature of Britishness. Therefore, this study explores the intricate relationship between Brexit and the evolving notions of identity and national unity within the United Kingdom. It seeks to determine if Brexit has exacerbated tensions and contradictions within British society, UK's politics and its place in the wider world. Brexit has redefined concepts if not created stiff challenges for national cohesion. In this context, it is imperative to engage in further discourse on the potential long-term consequences of Brexit for British identity and unity. Exploring diverse academic disciplines, such as political science and cultural studies, this study employs a mixture of approaches to find out the ways in which Brexit has influenced individual and collective identities, as well as its repercussions on the broader fabric of national unity. Through an examination of qualitative data via surveys and media discourse analysis, this attempt is significant in that it uncovers the complexities of identity renegotiation and division highlighting the dynamics that have emerged following the UK's decision to leave the European Union.

Keywords: *Brexit- Disintegration- Europhiles- Euroscepticism- Identity- Social Cohesion- Unity*

Introduction:

Brexit has had a significant impact on the national identity of the United Kingdom, particularly England. A recent report reveals that English citizens were strongly for the departure of the UK, a fact that turned life in England upside down ⁽¹⁾. This shift in national identity has been heavily plagued by growing inequalities within the UK, deep concerns about EU membership costs, trade, bilateral collaborations and even immigration issues. Trust in both elites and the media has also

eroded, giving birth to an environment for populist leaders. Brexit has not only exposed how hollow British identity becomes, but has also raised the possibility of Irish unification and Scottish separation. Additionally, it deepened the divide between those with stronger national identities (Eurosceptics) and those with stronger European identities (Europhiles). It is worth mentioning that European integration has historically struggled to replace national identities, and Brexit further exacerbated this division if it did not widen the gap between the two parties ⁽²⁾. Brexit damaged European integration while empowering Eurosceptics. The future of the UK in the post-Brexit era remains uncertain, with divisions within society and political parties struggling to find remedies. Overall, it has brought a new understanding of European identity if not permanently reshaped the UK's place in the world, with its long-term impact on national identity still developing ⁽³⁾.

Exploring the impact of Brexit on national identity and unity is crucial. It is needed to understand or rather get over what might go wrong as far as the UK is concerned. No one can ignore the significant impact of Brexit on identity and national unity, both in Europe and the United Kingdom. It has deeply influenced both the Eurosceptic and Europhile views of the EU, extending to European integration and the sense of belonging to Europe ⁽⁴⁾. Brexit has highlighted issues, such as devolution inequalities, immigration, mobility of individuals, living and working, and EU membership costs. Identity is a complex term that takes into account multiple components, and it is handled differently in Europe and the UK. Some can accept being both British and European at the same time, while others believe that the UK is another geographical and cultural entity different from Europe ⁽⁵⁾. Brexit has brought to the fore the citizens' sense of belonging to their nations, particularly in England, where political discourse addressed English national identity to shape politics and attitudes towards European integration in the UK. Would Brexit forget about the European roots that date back to long before 1066 AD? Would components such as immigration and trade widen the cultural gap between the two parties? Can British and European identity coexist? In this context, studying the impact of Brexit on national identity and unity is important to understand the dynamics of the day. The relationship between Europe and the UK is at stake due to the future consequences of Brexit, which may extend beyond national borders with repercussions for future unity and national identity.

1. The Review of Literature

The United Kingdom's decision to depart from the European Union has significantly impacted various facets of life, with particular emphasis on identity and national unity within the UK and its relationship with the wider world. Issues such as nationalism, identity, unity, and citizens' sense of belonging within both the UK and Europe are not exception. In the UK, the Brexit campaign capitalised on anti-EU sentiment and created a perception that leaving the European Union would protect national identity and sovereignty. Many who voted in favour of Brexit saw their national identity as under threat due to large-scale immigration, and preserving national identity became a priority, even if it came at the expense of societal wealth⁽⁶⁾. This sense of identity and sovereignty played a crucial role in the pro-Brexit outcomes.

In Europe, the Brexit vote has implications for the sense of unity and identity. Initially, there were concerns that Brexit could lead to a devastating effect, with other Eurosceptic forces in countries such as Denmark, Austria, and Sweden demanding their own referenda, potentially leading to Union's disintegration. However, the Brexit vote has the opposite effect. It united the remaining European Union member states and increased support for the European Union among other member states. The economic and political instability faced by the UK after the Brexit vote served as a cautionary scenario for other countries considering leaving the EU. The EU's favourability among member states increased, and mainstream political parties in Western Europe remained staunch supporters of the EU. The Brexit vote, therefore, did not lead to a fragmentation of the EU, but rather strengthened the sense of unity and support for the EU among member states.

Exploring the literature on Brexit effects has been both conflicting and worth doing due to the variety of resources, differences in attitudes and views, and more importantly, potential scenarios. The impact of Brexit on identity and national unity in the post-Brexit UK has been extensively explored, but this attempt is to further analyze and examine what has been unfolded. Several scholarly papers and chapters have delved into this topic, providing a multidimensional account of its implications. The number of resources on this topic indicates the significance and interest it holds within the research community.

Many scholars have explored the effects of Brexit on various aspects of identity and unity, including changes in the sense of belonging to both the UK and Europe. The literature explores how Brexit has influenced perceptions of national identity, with some arguing that it has led to a

redefinition and reassessment of what it means to be British. Others have examined what would happen next, particularly in relation to immigrants and minority groups, highlighting the potential challenges they face in the post-Brexit UK. The depth of the literature is evident from the multitude of perspectives offered by various authors. Scholars have approached the topic from different disciplinary perspectives, including political science, sociology, psychology, and cultural studies. This interdisciplinary approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of Brexit's various effects on identity and unity.

In his paper entitled: "Post-Brexit Scenario: The European Union under Threat", Shahroo discusses the implications of Brexit on the European Union and the challenges it faces. This study asserts that Brexit was driven by factors such as threats to national identity and sovereignty, rising Euroskepticism, and economic insecurity. While Brexit has increased support for the EU in other member states, there has also been a rise in populism and Eurosceptic parties across Europe. However, the EU's favourability has increased in the 10 largest EU countries, indicating unity rather than division. The UK will face economic and political instability after Brexit, potentially discouraging other member states from leaving the EU. The EU will experience a shift in power and the formation of new alliances with France and Germany coming together again. On the other hand, the UK will lose influence in shaping EU policies and become more dependent on the US. The paper suggests that the UK's economy will be worse off outside the EU and that the EU needs institutional reforms to address member states' concerns and prevent further exits. This paper emphasizes the need for flexibility, addressing economic and social exclusion, and building deeper cooperation in areas such as border control and counter-terrorism. It then concludes that while the EU faces challenges, it is unlikely to disintegrate if it implements the necessary reforms.

However, this study does not provide a comprehensive analysis of the economic implications of Brexit in the UK and EU. While it mentions that the UK's economy will be worse off outside the EU, it does not delve into the specific economic challenges and consequences that both the UK and the EU will face. It does not thoroughly explore the potential political consequences of Brexit in the EU. While it mentions a shift in power and the formation of new alliances, it does not provide a detailed analysis of how Brexit will impact the dynamics of decision making and policy formation within the EU. This undermines the analysis of Brexit's social

and cultural implications in the EU. While it briefly mentions threats to national identity and rising Euroskepticism, it does not explore the broader social and cultural factors that may have contributed to Brexit or how these factors may impact the EU's cohesion and unity. In other words, this study could benefit from a more comprehensive analysis of the economic, political, and social implications of Brexit on the EU and its member states, considering the potential long-term effects, and provide specific recommendations for addressing the challenges posed by Brexit.

In their report entitled "On Brexit: Why Britain Voted Out and What Happens Next," the authors reported on their interview with Denis MacShane, former British MP, and Minister of State for Europe. They pointed out MacShane's belief in British vote for Brexit. Macshane believes that the British decided to leave the EU due to a long-standing campaign against the EU, immigration concerns, and the spread of false information during the campaign. He also discussed the economic impact of Brexit, the possibility of Scottish independence, and the rise of right-wing parties in the EU ⁽⁷⁾. MacShane suggested that the EU needs to improve its communication and undergo reforms to address the issues raised by Brexit. The author suggests that the future relationship between the EU and the UK depends on the outcome of Brexit. They propose that the UK may leave the political institutions of the EU, but still abide by EU rules with economic access, such as Norway. However, they anticipate difficulties and strained relations unless public opinion changes. The authors Tony Blair for their lack of effective opposition to Brexit, and argue that business and economic actors should speak out against Brexit and support campaigns that expose false information. Again, it is worth noting that the study does not provide a comprehensive analysis of the economic impact of Brexit or the specific reforms that the EU needs to undergo, mainly for Germany, been their country of origin. Additionally, the paper does not examine the extent to which the Scottish cause influences the outcome of Brexit, and thus national unity in the UK. In other words, it does not explore the potential consequences of Scottish independence or provide a detailed analysis of the rise of right-wing parties in the EU.

In her personal reflection upon Brexit, entitled: "B for Brexit or belonging?" Lorena Georgiadou spoke about her experiences during the Brexit process. She discusses the impact of Brexit on her sense of belonging and research practice, particularly in the field of multiculturalism and intercultural practice in higher education. This personal report highlights the decrease in EU nationals' desire to stay in

the UK and the negative effects on the inclusive and multicultural climate. Despite doubts about the future of her research, the author focuses on the emotional and psychological impact of Brexit on the affected populations. She emphasizes the importance of qualitative researchers in promoting inclusivity and unity in society ⁽⁸⁾. She concluded that qualitative researchers can play a role in welcoming others and facilitating a sense of belonging, and they should continue to engage with their communities in response to political developments. However, this literature lacks empirical data and specific examples to support her claims and experience. While this paper provides a valuable personal perspective, it would benefit from incorporating additional evidence or research findings to strengthen her arguments. Additionally, the study focuses primarily on the author's own experience as an EU national in the UK; it does not explore the perspectives of other individuals or communities affected by Brexit. This limits a broader understanding of the impact of Brexit on a diverse range of people.

In their chapter entitled: "The UK post-Brexit", Andrew Hammond and Tim Oliver discuss the political uncertainty and debates surrounding Brexit, as well as the potential changes to the UK's unity, constitution, identity, political economy, and place in the world. This paper examines the negotiations and debates taking place in Westminster and Whitehall, as well as the constitutional implications of Brexit for Northern Ireland, Scotland, and England. The report emphasizes the challenges and uncertainties that lie ahead of the UK post-Brexit. The chapter focuses upon the fact that the UK's politics, society, economics, constitution, unity, and place in the world remain contested leading to a "constraining dissensus." In fact, the Brexit debate triggered debates and changes that should not be overlooked. It additionally highlights that the final form of the UK's departure from the EU is still uncertain, and there is a possibility of a disorderly exit. It ends with a call to rebalance the UK's economy, and addressing imbalances have been key debates in the Brexit process ⁽⁹⁾. Although they provided a long chapter on the UK in the post-Brexit era, their chapter offers a limited discussion of the role of public opinion and societal divisions in shaping the Brexit process and its outcomes. This attempt does not provide an in-depth analysis of the role of media and political communication in shaping public perceptions and debates surrounding Brexit. More importantly, there is a lack of discussion on the potential impact of Brexit on the rights and protection of UK citizens, particularly in areas such as worker rights, environmental regulations,

and consumer rights.

The collective body of literature examining the impact of Brexit on identity and national unity in the post-Brexit UK provides valuable insights into the consequences of this decision on the country's social fabric. This attempt sheds light on the ways in which Brexit has both challenged and reshaped individuals' sense of identity and perceptions of national unity. It highlights the complexities encountered in the process of negotiating a new national identity in the aftermath of a major political event. One area of focus is the impact of Brexit on individual and collective identity. Numerous studies have explored how Brexit influences individuals' sense of belonging, including their national, European, and regional identity. Researchers have found that the Brexit process has resulted in a sense of ambivalence among individuals, who may find themselves torn between their various identities. Another important aspect addressed was the impact of Brexit on broader social cohesion and national unity. Studies have examined how Brexit has affected intergroup relations, including the dynamics between different regions of the UK, between the UK and the European Union, and between diverse ethnic and cultural groups within the UK. The findings indicate that Brexit has led to heightened divisions and tensions as well as the creation of alliances and allegiances.

The long-term implications and potential trajectories for identity and national unity in the post-Brexit UK emphasize the need for ongoing research. This will help to monitor and understand the evolving dynamics of identity formation and group dynamics in the aftermath of this decision. It is essential to continue to study the impact of Brexit on various aspects of society, such as education, employment, and public opinion, to inform policies and interventions that foster social cohesion and unity. Further research would certainly benefit from comparative studies that examine how other countries or regions have navigated similar processes of political change and identity. International case studies can additionally develop a more comprehensive understanding of the possible outcomes and strategies for managing identity and national unity in post-Brexit UK.

2. Methods

To explore the extent to which Brexit has influenced identity and unity in the post-Brexit UK, this document employs a historical analytical approach to analyze the changes, if not all, in the components that formed new attitudes, experiences, and appellations. The impact of Brexit on national identity and unity is examined across various disciplines, such as institutional relations, political economy, law and justice, foreign affairs,

democratic governance, and the idea of Britain away from Europe. While there may be different predictions for the future of Europe after Brexit, scholars agree that careful analysis is needed to understand its implications for the EU. Therefore, exploring data from political science and cultural studies is inevitable.

The influence of Brexit on national identity cannot only be seen away from political and cultural developments. The Brexit referendum revealed the divide between those with a stronger connection to their national identity and those with a stronger European identity. European identity should be seen in the context of European integration, which has been affected by a lack of attachment to the EU among many European citizens, particularly Western countries. Social divisions between different social groups have led to clashes between "global identities" and "local identities." British attitudes towards the EU and European identity have been influenced by historical factors, such as the long tradition of Euroscepticism rooted in national identity. Multiple regional identities within Britain make it challenging for individuals to identify within the European framework. Additionally, media discourse, political schemes, and education have played a decisive role in shaping attitudes towards European disintegration and national identity⁽¹⁰⁾. Overall, there has been a myriad of political and cultural dimensions that typify Brexit.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1. The Influence of Brexit on Individual Identities

One of the notable consequences of Brexit is that it has deeply influenced individuals' sense of belonging, particularly in the UK. The 2016 referendum results have shaped both Eurosceptic and Europhile views of the European Union, which transformed the European identity itself⁽¹¹⁾. The divide between these two groups reflects a lack of attachment to either the EU or European identity. However, it is important to note that multiple identities can coexist and complement one another. National identity plays a crucial role in understanding how Brexit affects individuals in the UK. The diverse range of identities within the country, such as Wales, Scotland, England, Cornwall, Yorkshire, and Northern Ireland, makes it challenging for people to identify themselves within a European framework. This diversity leads many individuals to view a continental foreign identity with suspicion⁽¹²⁾.

European integration, as a process, itself exacerbates the impact of Brexit on identity in both sites. While European integration requires a certain level of identification with Europe, Euroscepticism undermines

further integration and appreciation of European identity. This did not only damage British identity but also weakened the collective idea of European identity within Great Britain. Another significant change brought about by Brexit was the emergence of a new national identity in English. Within this new identity, there is strong support for Brexit but also a sense of threat to their own identity due to factors such as devolution inequalities, EU membership costs and terms, and immigration concerns. Without any doubt, these developments have reshaped English national identity ⁽¹³⁾. In other words, the new attitudes on local identity align with nationalist sentiments and an anti-EU stance.

Brexit also fuelled the re-emergence of British nationalism, with factors such as immigration and foreign workers becoming the driving forces behind intensifying nationalist sentiments. This has led to an increase in nationalist attitudes, the rise of nationalist parties, the implementation of nationalist policies, and even the outbreak of nationalist violence and hate crimes. Media discourse also had its part in bringing nationalist attitudes to the fore, if not highlighted, divisions between groups like Britain and Europe, as well as Brexit voters and non-Brexit voters. The representation of Brexit in newspapers profoundly impacted British national identity ⁽¹⁴⁾. The construction of national identities is central to understanding Brexit as it taps into people's sense of belonging to a nation with its own traditions, culture, and language.

3.2. Shifting Attitudes towards Identities

Attitudes towards European and British identities have been seriously affected. The Brexit referendum played a crucial role in shaping both positive and negative attitudes. Euroskepticism across Europe has highlighted a lack of attachment to the European Union and European identity, while Europhilism emphasizes a high appreciation for them. Having multiple identities is not conflicting but rather inclusive. Pro-European individuals champion European identity, while Eurosceptics prioritize national identity. On the other hand, the weak sense of European identity among Britons was a significant factor that contributed to the Brexit vote. Many groups felt marginalized and left behind by globalization, leading them to perceive their primary British identity as lost without feeling a connection to European identity. This weak sense of European identity was unique to the UK compared to other EU member states. In addition, the complex patchwork of identities within the UK further complicates the development of cohesive European identity ⁽¹⁵⁾. The heterogeneity of identities within different regions makes it difficult for many British people to identify within a European framework. In brief,

Brexit challenges the concept of European integration and unity. Many Brits blamed Europe for various issues within their country, leading them to reject European integration and question its legitimacy.

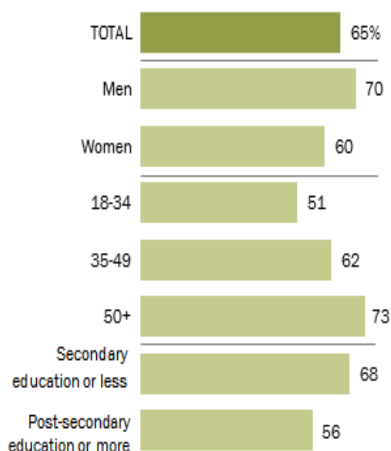
Education plays an essential role in shaping an individual's identity. Eurosceptics often display a lack of attachment to the European Union and European identity, while Europhiles have a strong affinity for both. Those who favor identity exclusivity see European identity as incompatible with British identity, but it is possible for individuals to coexist with multiple identities. Academic discourse and awareness play crucial roles in shaping these attitudes. Through the dynamic interplay of knowledge acquisition, social interaction, and cultural exploration, education moulds individuals into informed, empathetic, and socially conscious beings. In other words, the educational journeys played a pivotal role in navigating the landscape of identities, forging not only a new view but also a path towards personal growth, societal progress, and a different world.

3.3. The Effects of Brexit on Collective Identities

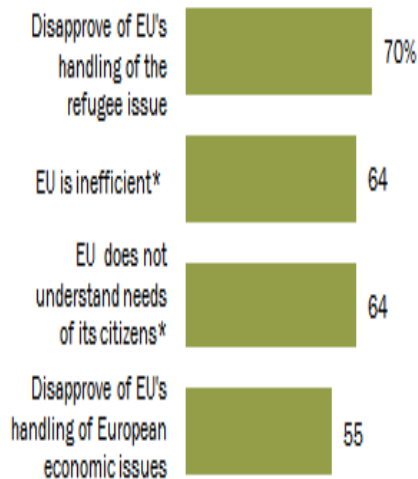
*The impact of Brexit extends to collective identities as well, and there have been so many factors that have indeed contributed to the cultural breach between Europe and the UK. As mentioned previously, education played a prominent role in transforming notions of identity and unity via several tools and strategies. Research has shown that individuals who are more educated about the European Union tend to have a stronger sense of European identity. However, in the UK, there has been a lack of education about the union's structure and affairs, leading to a high level of Euroscepticism. This, in fact, weakened European identity among British citizens. This lack of knowledge was evident during the 2016 referendum campaign, when many British citizens lacked a basic understanding of the European Union (See **Graph 1**). Furthermore, the rise of populism has its share in the weakening of collective identities, particularly European ones. Populist groups and movements tend to emphasise individual national identity over collective European identity. This trend has further undermined the development of a shared European identity between the UK and Europe.*

Men, older and less educated Brits more likely to favor weakening EU

% saying some powers should be returned to national governments



British have little faith in EU



Source: Spring 2016 Global Attitudes Survey, REW Research Center, <https://www.pewresearch.org> , USA

Sovereignty and identity have always been part of the major concerns deeply rooted in the hearts and minds of British communities, and they were not immune to Brexit effects. The decision to leave the European Union was also driven by issues concerning the loss of national sovereignty and identity. Many Brits felt that their primary British identity was threatened by membership in the European Union. The referendum results showed that most British voters had a weak sense of European identity compared to their strong national self-identity⁽¹⁶⁾. The consequences of Brexit on national identity are not limited to the UK alone, as Brexit has also had negative repercussions for the construction of a European identity. The nostalgia for past greatness and concerns over the loss of sovereignty led to a rejection of the European integration process and damaged the development of a shared European identity, especially in the UK. Figures and surveys revealed clear correlations between Euroscepticism and national identity preference: those who identify strongly with their national identity are more likely to be Eurosceptic, while those with weaker national identities may be more Europhile. The division of attitudes and sentiments has seriously weakened the concept of European and British identities.

Brexit strongly consolidated locals' awareness of their own regions

and communities. Regional differences helped the rise of new dimensions in forming identity, with a long tradition of Euroscepticism rooted in the historical prejudices of Great Britain. For instance, in Northern Ireland, Brexit has had a profound impact on identity, exacerbating the liminality between Britishness and Irishness. However, this newfound European identity coexists with national identities and does not replace them. Brexit exposed the failure of European elites to construct a narrative supported by ordinary citizens. Overall, the impact is so notable and global that it is still necessary to explore regions to understand the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for the UK in the post-Brexit era.

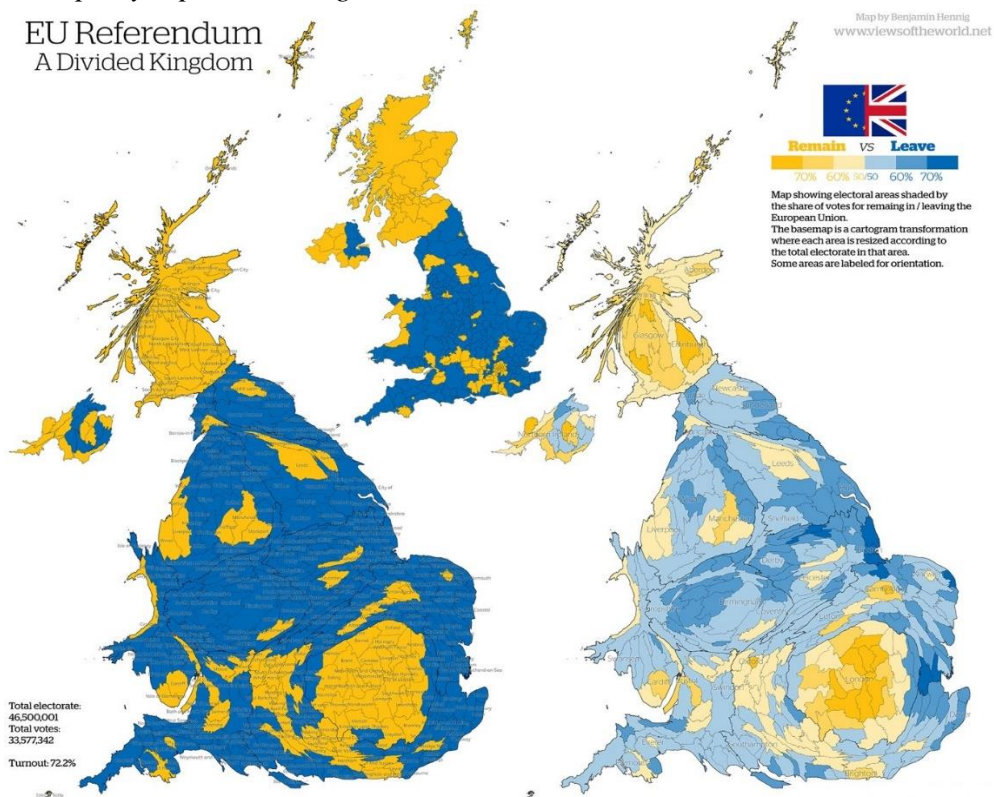
3.4. Brexit Repercussions on National Unity and Political Stability

Brexit arrangements and developments have furthered the impact on national unity and political stability. The divisions among groups and communities have affected political unionism in Northern Ireland, with pressure to secure its position within the UK. There has always been a sense of Euroscepticism in Great Britain, and the referendum has highlighted this divide based on perceptions of national identity. Brexit empowered Eurosceptics while damaging integration and cohesion within the European Union. Recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has shaped the political discourse around Brexit, with the UK's successful vaccination campaign used to justify leaving the European Union. This has accelerated shifts in relation to Brexit, and future research should explore how these shifts become normalized in the UK political discourse ⁽¹⁷⁾. Brexit brought together questions of identity, unity, political economy, and international relations. It has already had significant effects on the country's constitution and place in the wider world. As Brexit unfolds, it will continue to shape the country's future trajectory and its relationship with Europe.

*The discourse used in many reputed newspapers surrounding Brexit issues threatens social cohesion and stability in many cases. It focuses on the role of lower-class voters and their concerns about the effect of immigration on national identity. Newspapers such as *The Guardian* and *The Times* construct negative narratives around Brexit, highlighting its implications for Europe's future and the rise of Eurosceptic parties. While *The Times* emphasizes British national interests, *The Guardian* sees Britain as part of Europe ⁽¹⁸⁾. In fact, this is the beginning of social fraction in society. In other words, the representation of Brexit in these articles creates divisions between different groups, such as Britain-Europe and Brexit voters-non-Brexit voters. *The Guardian* is more innovative in*

avoiding prejudiced presentations of Brexit and its voters than The Times, which openly reproduces negative attitudes.

EU Referendum
A Divided Kingdom



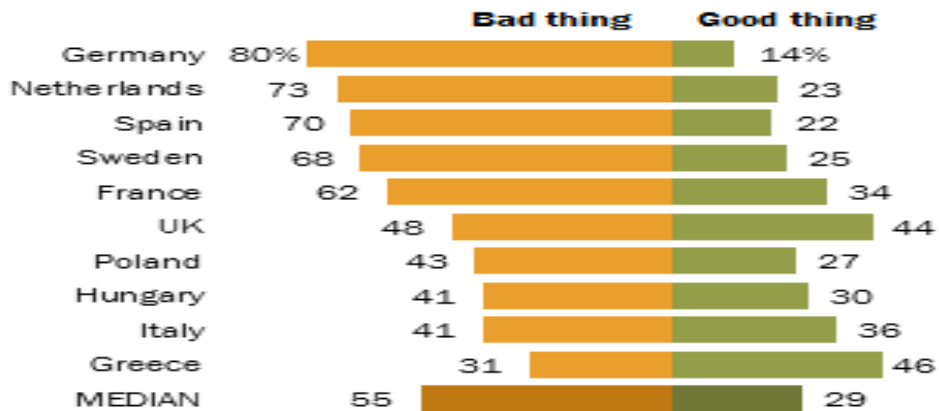
Source: UK Electoral Commission, 2016

Assessing the changes in identity after the Brexit vote required conducting a few surveys to determine the correlation between the departure of the European Union and the UK's cultural and political cohesion. Surveys, such as Eurobarometer surveys, have been used to reflect on Brexit and its challenges to European identity. The results indicate that while European citizenship and identity have been promoted by the European Union at an elite level, they have not been widely accepted by ordinary citizens, mainly in the UK. This highlights the success of the European elite, at least in constructing a narrative that supports European identity. More importantly, Brexit has led to the strengthening of European identity in other EU countries⁽¹⁹⁾. This may be because of the complexities of Brexit and the desire to maintain unity within the remaining member states. Another survey focused on British and European identities and their relationship to voting decisions in the EU referendum. The results showed that British identity predicted

increases in leave voting, whereas European identity predicted increases in Remain voting ⁽²⁰⁾. This indicates that national identity plays a significant role in determining voting choices.

Few Europeans think Brexit will be good for UK, but Brits are divided

The UK leaving the EU will be a ___ for the UK



Source : Spring 2017 Global Attitudes Survey, REW Research Center, <https://www.pewresearch.org> , USA

Broadly speaking, the surveys highlighted several perspectives in relation to the Brexit issue, and collectively contribute to a better understanding of Brexit's influence on national unity and identity and unity in the post-Brexit UK. Brexit demonstrated a notable clash between national and European identities. In the UK, European identity is seen as being against national identity rather than complementary to it. This perception has deep historical roots and has strengthened Euroskepticism within the country. In a different way, the results indicate that European identity has been weakened in the UK, while it has been strengthened in other EU countries. The clash between national and European identities has played a significant role in shaping voting decisions and attitudes towards EU membership, not forgetting education, psychology, and historical factors, which have equally influenced perceptions of identity and unity in both realms.

3.5. Media Discourse and the Narratives surrounding Brexit

In both newspapers, *The Times* and *The Guardian*, the narratives used in relation to Brexit have deeply transformed perceptions and attitudes in different contexts. The findings, particularly the language employed, revealed certain representations of Brexit, including its consistent

portrayal as a negative fact that signifies the rise of populism globally, threatens European unity, and stems from a breach of trust between institutions and people ⁽²¹⁾. The discourse employed in these newspapers was strongly connected to the legitimization of immigration control between Britain and the European Union, and this reveals the role media discourse played in the prominence of national identity in relation to Brexit. In many other cases, the discourse went further with the representation of racial and ethnic minorities. The media often portray minorities through a lens of difference. Again, in several instances, *The Times* and *The Guardian* exhibited a negative attitude towards Brexit's result. They have employed various linguistic strategies to reinforce this negative representation and support their respective ideological positions. The newspapers constructed discourses that depicted Brexit as an unavoidable fact with negative consequences for Britain and Europe. However, there were differences in the discursive strategies employed by *The Times* (a conservative wing) and *The Guardian* (a liberal wing). The former focused on British national interests and emphasized the importance of stability in Europe as Britain's closest neighbour, while the second, *The Guardian*, presented Britain as part of Europe. In other words, *The Guardian* was a liberal voice in favour of saving Europe as a common good. Undoubtedly, these differences highlighted linguistic features and discursive practices, which in return served to reproduce stereotypes and dominant ideologies ⁽²²⁾.

Conclusion

The departure of the UK from the European Union has brought about significant effects on national identity and unity in post-Brexit UK. While there have been elements of negotiations in discussions about the UK's identity and role in international relations, Brexit has created a critical juncture that is still unfolding. The Brexit process is ongoing, with various adjustments and adaptations. The British elite still hold onto their belief that the UK can play a leading role internationally, even if their decision leads to many challenges. Brexit has raised questions about the country's international role, identity, unity, and partnerships of all sorts, both inside and outside the UK.

For instance, Brexit has influenced Northern Ireland and Irish-UK relations. The European disintegration process poses challenges for Northern Ireland, threatening the core rationale of the Good Friday Agreement. Johnson Administration and its approach to Brexit will not comply with the provisions of the GFA, which might create contradictions and ambiguities in Northern Ireland's politics. In this case, the future of

Northern Ireland remains uncertain, with the risks of political instability and sectarianism being reawakened. Nationalism and Unionism are issues that face challenges in their relationships with other entities, such as the Republic of Ireland and England. Thus, rethinking and updating peace settlements become increasingly challenging as Brexit exacerbates identity conflicts.

Brexit implications are still developing and affecting various aspects of international relations. Brexit has undoubtedly been a critical juncture for the UK, triggering a series of processes that have reshaped its identity, international relations, trading affairs, status and role in the world. However, it is important to note that Brexit is an ongoing process with many outcomes still unfolding. Brexit raises questions regarding European identification. While some respondents have maintained their strong European identity, others have recognized a shift in their identification with the EU. In terms of Britain's political polarisation and international relations, Brexit brought about some role adaptation but also significant disappointment. While there have been policies targeting a more isolated and limited role, British policymakers have not yet reassessed their desire to play a leading role in the world.

Overall, Brexit has created uncertainty and instability in various aspects of UK society and politics. The future connection to the EU remains unclear, as does its impact on national sovereignty and nationhood. It is crucial for policymakers to navigate these challenges carefully and find ways to address concerns about unity, identity, and the UK's place in the world while also ensuring that nationalism does not turn into isolationism.

References List

- 1- Ferdjani, Y. "Brexit and the emergence of a new English identity". *Observatoire de la société britannique*, 2022, pp. 47-65.
- 2- Stephen, G. "Britain: Anatomy of a Eurosceptic State". *Journal of European Integration*, 22(1), 2000, pp. 15-33.
- 3- Murray, L. "What does Brexit Tell Us about Our Understanding of European Identity?". *The Political Quarterly*. 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-923X.12734>
- 4- Schilde, Kaija E. "Who are the Europeans? European Identity Outside of European Integration". *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 52(3), 2014. pp. 650-667
- 5- Caporaso, J. "The Dual Nature of European Identity: Subjective Awareness and Coherence". *Journal of European Public Policy*, 16(1), 2019, pp. 19-42
- 6- Shahroo, Malik. "Post-Brexit Scenario: The European Union under Threat." *Strategic Studies*, 38(4), 2018. pp. 90-109

- 7- MacShane, D. "On Brexit: Why Britain Voted Out and What Happens Next". *Zeitschrift für Politikberatung*, 8(2), 2016. pp. 129-132
- 8- Georgiadou, Lorena. "B' for Brexit or for Belonging?" *International Review of Qualitative Research*, 12(1), 2019. pp. 27-35
- 9- Andrew, Hammond & Tim, Oliver. "The UK Post Brexit". *Getting Brexit Started: Prospects for a New EU-UK Partnership into the 2020s*. United Kingdom: LSE Ideas. 2020
- 10- Luhmann, Sybille. "A Multi-Level Approach to European Identity: Does Integration Foster Identity". *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 55(6), 2017. pp. 1360-1379
- 11- Carl, Noah. "European but not European enough: An explanation for Brexit". *European Union Politics*, 20(1), 2019. pp. 282-304
- 12- George, Stephen. "Britain: Anatomy of a Eurosceptic State". *Journal of European Integration*, 22(1), 2000. pp. 15-33
- 13- Wellings, Ben. "Brexit, Nationalism and Disintegration in the European Union and the United Kingdom". *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14782804.2020.1753664>. 2020
- 14- Brotman, Alexander. "Brexit and its Many Identities in the UK". <https://www.e-ir.info/2020/03/30/opinion-brexit-and-its-many-identities-in-the-uk> 30.03.2020
- 15- Hobolt, Sara. "The Brexit vote: a divided nation, a divided continent". *Journal of European Public Policy*, 23(9), 2016. pp. 1259-1277
- 16- McLaren, Lauren M. "Opposition to European Integration and Fear of Loss of National Identity: Debunking a Basic Assumption Regarding Hostility to the Integration Project". *European Journal of Political Research*, 43, 2004. pp. 895-911
- 17- Caliendo, G. "Vaccine Nationalism or 'Brexit Dividend'? Strategies of Legitimation in the EU-UK Post-Brexit Debate on COVID-19 Vaccination Campaigns". *Societies*. 12(2), 2022. <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc12020037>
- 18- Dorey, Peter. "Towards Exit from the EU: The Conservative Party's Increasing Euroscepticism since the 1980s". *Politics and Governance*, 5(2), 2017. pp. 27-40
- 19- European Parliament. "Brexit effect: Public opinion survey shows that EU is more appreciated than ever". *Eurobarometer Surveys*, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20181016IPR16213>. 2018
- 20- Stokes, B "Most Europeans judge Brexit as bad for EU and UK". *PEW Research Center*, <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2017/06/15/>. 2017
- 21- Wellings, Ben. "Brexit, Nationalism and Disintegration in the European Union and the United Kingdom". *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14782804.2020.1753664>. 2020
- 22- Martins, M. "News Media Representation on EU immigration before Brexit: the 'Euro-Ripper' case". *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*. 8(11), 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-020-00687-5>