

# The United Kingdom in the World with the European Union

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The fall in the value of the £ pound sterling has consequences. When the Worthing twinned towns' representatives visit, they will find their euros go further. When we go to them, our exchange rate has moved against us (the history of the twinning is well described on the website at <http://www.worthingtwinningassociation.org/index.html>).

Twinning documents were signed and exchanged by Worthing with the Black Forest towns of Elzach, Gutach, Simonswald, Waldkirch in 1997 and the Twinning Charter with *Chateau d'Olonne, Olonne Sur Mer, Les Sables d'Olonne - Le Pays des Olonnes* on the French Atlantic coast - was signed at Worthing Town Hall in 1998. Mayor Herbie Golds was involved. Rustington twinned in 2002 with Kunzell, Germany.

As we settle our future outside the EU, after the decision of the referendum, we do so in a spirit of realistic friendship with our geographic neighbours in the EU 27 and with arrangements with the rest of the world that make sense, without useless tariffs, bureaucracy and delays. Lamb and sheep meat from the United Kingdom should not be penalised by EU import duties of 40%. Delays are not wanted for the 5,000-plus articulated lorries at the port of Dover each day.

The customers of our wholesalers and supermarkets depend on imports. Producers in the UK, food and farming products together with manufactured goods, depend on exporting. Local factories in Arun and Worthing need to be able to trade without delays and without extra costs. Debates in our parliament and in the national assemblies of our neighbours must be based on the interests of those we represent and their concerns as producers and as consumers.

Governments in the United States, in China and around the world will want trade in services and goods with us that are not too different from their agreements with the EU27.

In Norway outside the EU or in France, do not expect much noticeable difference except in language, currencies or perhaps rainfall and temperature. The modern sophisticated world society is accessible to all – except where bad government, impractical economic systems built on failures from the past and where unnecessary civil and international war wreck the lives of populations.

It can be fun now to travel through the southeast Asian countries of Thailand, Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia. Students study the histories of the killing fields of Cambodia and the Vietnam wars; the World Wars that started in Europe in the 20<sup>th</sup> century are in their text books or more likely on their websites.

Many have not needed to know, at least yet, the patterns of common technical standards that make us safe in our cars, protected by the safety of our shared medicines and by the advances that come from the networks of academics who are cooperating in finding how to reduce avoidable disadvantage, distress and handicap and how to improve well-being: a mixture of wealth and welfare, including advances made possible by modern medical practice.

It is not good that the value of our currency goes down too far, even if it helps bring in tourists and students to Worthing and district who come to improve their English: each matters to our West Sussex economy. The lowered exchange rate gives either extra profit or greater volumes of sales in export markets. It harms those who import or who must travel abroad (except in Turkey where government and political uncertainty have affected the value their currency).