This is the fourth in a series of Constitution Unit briefing papers on the constitutional consequences of Brexit. The papers are intended to inform debate ahead of the UK referendum on EU membership on 23 June. They do not take sides in that debate.

The paper is based on a Constitution Unit seminar on the impact of Brexit on other EU member states. Remarks made by our panellists   ˝ ®ɟ̦ª ˙# ˏ «ª ª ¡ ˙˙˙ ˙) Ž ˙Consultant Director of the British Irish Chamber of Commerce, Sara Hagemann, Assistant Professor at the LSE European Institute, ˙ £š°š˙fi« ¯°µë ¯§š-Jakubowska, Research Fellow at the Centre for European Reform, and Alan Posener, Correspondent on Politics and Society for *Die Welt*   have contributed significantly to the paper. Given «±®¬šª ¡ ˙˙¥°¯ ˙backgrounds, we draw primarily on examples from Ireland, Denmark, Poland and Germany.

There are many ways in which Brexit would affect other member states. This paper focuses on the political and constitutional implications of Brexit, rather than the economic and social impact. The evidence indicates that:

> The stances that states would adopt in Brexit negotiations would be influenced both by domestic politics and by economic considerations. Some states would treat the UK more favourably than others.
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> Brexit could embolden Eurosceptic movements in countries such as Denmark and Austria. This could lead to calls for similar referendums, and, in the extreme, perhaps even to the unravelling of the EU.
>
> Brexit would alter member states ˙relative strength within the EU. States that previously drew on UK support would be weakened, whereas Germany could be strengthened.
>
> Ireland would be particularly affected by Brexit. Beyond the economic impact, the peace process could be undermined and border controls between the Republic and the North might need to be re-established.

A recent EU-wide poll commissioned by Lord Ashcroft shows that 60 per cent of the public in the 27 other member states want the UK to remain in the EU; only 10 percent want it to leave. Support for UK membership
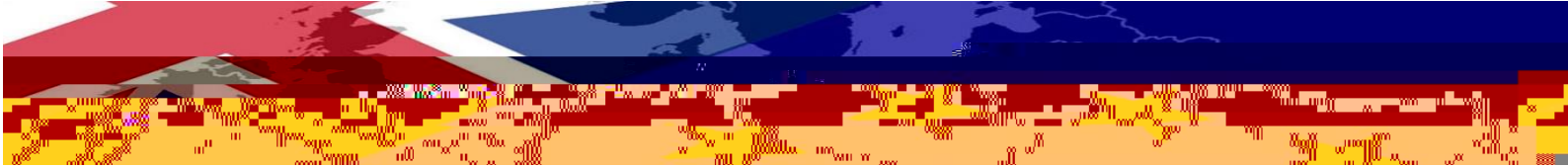
A vote for Brexit would lead to complex withdrawal negotiations between the UK and the EU. The withdrawal process set out in Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty accords each member state a veto
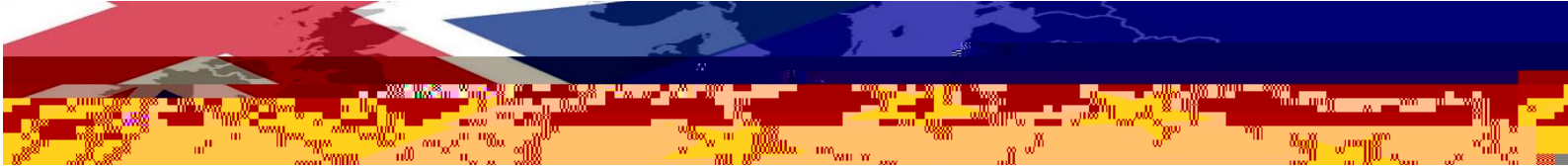
Alan Posener argued that Brexit would put Germany in an undesirable position: leading a union of dependent states. He noted °¤š°ı ±®¬¡ ¯'«°¤¡ ®©š¦«®¬«³¡® France, Spain and Italy are either in decline or in political turmoil, and that Germany needs the UK to help it lead the EU. Brexit might require Germany to assume a position of even greater leadership and authority something that very few Germans want. Some analysts have also noted that, without the UK, Germany would be expected to contribute more to European defence and security.

Brexit could weaken those states within the EU that benefit from UK support:

> Free trade is a key policy area where Brexit ¯¥©¬šœŝwould be felt. In our previous briefing paper, we argued that Brexit could make the EU more protectionist: the states with protectionist inclinations (e.g., France, Italy, Spain, Greece, Portugal and Cyprus) would have a blocking minority in the Council, whereas the liberally inclined states would not. Brexit could undermine the non-Eurozone member states. Tim Oliver argues that the Eurozone might ®¬¨šœ°¤¡ ¯¥£¡ ©š®§¡°š¯°¤¡ı) ¯ˀœ®ˀ Roderick Parkes suggests that non-Eurozone countries like Poland would be able to protect their interests only by articulating their firm commitment to joining3.35 Tm(s)9998 re1 534.72 7g Tm 1 306.1 506.gt ave

Levels of trade between the UK and Ireland are extremely high, worth between [£800m and £1bn per week](#). Ireland imports more from the UK than from any other country and is the) Ž ¯ [fifth largest](#) export market. Brexit would undoubtedly have an impact on this trade. Whichever type of trade deal is negotiated, there would be new barriers to trade. Even without tariffs, customs checks would be needed. This could [damage](#) Ir¡ ¨šª Ÿ ¯ economy.

No one is certain what the border between the Republic and the North would look like. Brian # ¸ «ª ª ¡ ¨¨¯ ¬«¥ °¯ ˙ «±°˙ °¤š°˙ ˝ ® ´¥ would give the UK government a right to tighten border controls. He sees it as unlikely that the current Common Travel Area between Ireland and the UK could survive, as Ireland would then be the ı) ¯˙ › šo§Ÿ««®˙ ¥ °«˙ °¤¡ ˙) Ž ˙ Theresa Villiers, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, argues that the border debate is a red herring, and that after Brexit it would be [perfectly possible to](#) maintain free movement with Irish citizens ˙But hers is not a mainstream opinion. Former Irish Prime Minister [Bertie Ahern](#), in common with many experts, thinks some form of border   whether a customs border or a passport border   would be required. This could have a significant political, economic and symbolic impact and be [highly disruptive](#) ₵ ®¬¡ « ¬¨¡ ¯¨¥¡ ¯˙We explore these issues further in a [previous briem10c. sym](#)