EUROPE IS WORKING FOR BRIGHTON & HOVE

How the European Union is an essential tool for promoting prosperity, opportunity, security and the environment in our city

An analysis from the Brighton and Hove Liberal Democrats
Looking at Europe from a local perspective

When talking to residents about the EU referendum, people often say that there are too many competing statistics, claims and counterclaims being thrown around and that this makes it hard to know who or what to believe. To address this gap, the Liberal Democrats have conducted research into the impact the EU has on Brighton and Hove. Our hope is that by making these issues more concrete and local, we can help residents make sense of the national arguments.

We have presented our findings in this report, which highlights the benefits of prosperity, opportunity, security and environmental protection the EU brings to our city. As part of our research we’ve spoken with businesses, charities, universities, students and other residents to understand how the EU and its programmes make an impact on their lives. We’ve also conducted interviews and submitted Freedom of Information requests which show how Europe is working in Brighton and Hove.

We believe that too much of the national discussion has been centred on migration and the myths must be addressed. According to our government’s own official figures, there are 2.3 million EU citizens in the UK compared to 2.2 million Britons who live full time or part-time in the rest of Europe.

Behind these numbers are stories of people from all across Europe, including the UK, pursuing opportunities to learn and grow through travel, study, work and life experience. Immigration is a good thing for us culturally and economically. It brings opportunities for our children and grandchildren to build their skills, work and develop in other countries.

Particularly unfair is the unfounded link between our EU membership and the refugee crisis. Were we to withdraw from Europe tomorrow the humanitarian disaster would continue, but Britain would have fewer mechanisms available to work together and help solve the crisis, such as the £108,000 grant from the EU Refugee Fund to support integration in secondary schools in Brighton.
Whatever the challenges presented by a changing and more global economy, we cannot simply cry ‘Stop the world; we want to get off’. Isolating ourselves will not mean escaping change. On the contrary, our membership of the European Union makes it easier than ever to work together to solve problems. And indeed there are many problems in the world now – let’s not contribute another crisis through leaving the EU.

Michael Wilbur
CHAIR, BRIGHTON AND HOVE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS
Europe works for Brighton and Hove. Our city is stronger and better off trading and working with Europe. We are part of the world’s largest single market, allowing local businesses to grow and prosper.

The UK’s EU membership works for us by helping boost international investment in the city, providing open markets for our financial and digital sectors, boosting our tourist industries and our education sector. It also helps protect workers’ rights including equal opportunities, offers protection against discrimination and has supported workers at risk of redundancy.

**EU membership and tourism**

Europe boosts tourism. The single market results in cheaper flights and increased mobility. Combined with new EU protections which have brought falling mobile phone and data roaming charges across all EU countries, travelling across Europe has never been easier or more accessible.

This is great news for a city reliant upon tourism, and it’s why easyJet told us “Aviation is a good example of the benefits of the EU – it gives airlines freedom to fly across Europe and as a result passengers can fly to more places with lower fares than ever before.”

According to a study carried out for the year 2012 by Tourism South East called *The Economic Impact of Tourism: Brighton and Hove*, our 8.5 million annual visitors are worth £753 million a year to the local economy, and tourism generates over 19,000 jobs.
Our research has also flagged opportunities where the EU could do more to support our tourism industry. Responding to our survey, Jeremy Ogden, Chair of the Brighton & Hove Hoteliers Association, suggested tourists will always want to come to the UK, but he called for more cross EU action on tourism. “First, we pay a much higher rate of VAT than most EU countries, which pay nearer 5%. So we are disadvantaged. Secondly, rate parity clauses allow online travel agents to distort the market and prevent consumers from getting the best deal. Some European countries are addressing this and a common approach would be better and more effective than a piecemeal country by country one.”

**International investment and business**

An overwhelming majority of businesses believe the European Union is good for the UK economy, enabling fair access to European markets and a single common set of regulations.

Access to markets is key to our dynamic gaming and digital industries, and our many small manufacturers and service providers. According to the 2014 Greater Brighton and West Sussex Business Survey, 21% of businesses in the Greater Brighton area said they sold some products or services internationally; 10% said their main market was primarily international; and 11% said they were primarily dependent on international suppliers to produce their goods or services. As well as access to the European market, these companies benefit from Europe’s ability to negotiate international trade deals on behalf of all its members.

In addition to our local businesses, American Express, which has based its European headquarters in Brighton, is our biggest private sector employer. *The New Encyclopædia of Brighton* has noted that Amex is responsible for 7% of the city’s economy. How would renegotiating market access with the EU post-Brexit affect Amex’s ability to maintain Brighton as their European base?
£100 million EFL industry depends on Europe

Closing our doors to Europe would also threaten our dynamic £100 million a year EFL (English as a Foreign Language) industry, which has grown to match the increase in EU students coming due to free movement.

Lawrence Eke, who runs the Intensive School of English (ISE) schools based in Brighton and Hove, told us:

“There are over 30 EFL Schools in Brighton and Hove, employing hundreds of staff and putting millions into supplier businesses and households of local families through homestay accommodation.

The Government has already introduced major changes for non-EU students, which has effectively caused students from Russia, Japan and South Korea to go elsewhere. Now this referendum threatens the ability of EU students to come here. This important sector of the local economy depends on free movement of European students keen to learn English.

A vote to leave the EU would cause the closures of most EFL schools and substantially reduce the income they inject into the local economy. Moreover our EU membership and the opportunities it creates is an important motivation for our students to learn English in the first place.”

EU funding directly supports our city’s residents

In addition to the jobs the EU has helped to create, EU funding of projects has given Brighton and Hove’s residents a vital lifeline during times of recession and austerity.

According to information obtained via a Freedom of Information request, between 2006 and 2014 the EU provided £9,194,853 for projects run or supported by Brighton & Hove City Council, in such varied areas as job retraining, educational programmes in over 30 local schools, the environment, and support for the most vulnerable.
In the depths of the global economic recession in 2012, City College was provided with £1.5 million in EU funding to give free training to those at risk of redundancy, along with apprenticeship grants and unemployment provision.

These figures show how essential EU funding has been to our city’s ability to cope throughout the economic crisis. Those who want us to leave the EU need to explain how we would fill this gap. Leaving the EU would not escape the challenges of change and globalisation but simply limit our ability to respond.

The broader benefits of tourism to local businesses

Brighton and Hove has more restaurants and bars pro rata than anywhere else in the UK, with the exception of central London. This thriving food and drinks sector is heavily supported by our uniquely cosmopolitan combination, which includes a large tourist population. Adding in the jobs generated through local tourist attractions, hotels, conferencing, and those in all the support and supplier businesses, this amounts to a vast network of people.

Toby Peirce, a former Sussex CCC cricketer who runs the award-winning Quaff wine merchants on the Portland Road, said:

“Even if you as a small Brighton-based business do not take your income directly from EU-related business, you will still be reliant at the first remove. As some or all of your customers’ livings will be directly dependent, ergo, you are also dependent upon our link with the marketplace, customers and the funding bodies of the EU.

In Brighton our connection with Europe is inextricable, through the tourism industry, through the EFL schools, through the presence of American Express’ EU HQ in the City, and through the proximity of Gatwick as a huge local employment and business hub. Why jeopardise all of this by voluntarily leaving the EU?”
Local residents have more opportunities to work, travel and learn than ever before. Staying in Europe gives our children and grandchildren greater prospects to learn and succeed. EU membership has helped our schools and helped our workers. It has helped put our universities on the map.

**The chance to work, travel and learn abroad**

We have already talked about how Europe brings tourists to our city, but it also gives us the chance to travel more cheaply and with fewer immigration queues.

EU membership allows Brighton’s students to study across Europe without paying expensive overseas student rates. Many students choose to do their whole degree in another European country, with others choosing to take a year to gain valuable life experiences and learn new languages. This is now easier to do than ever before, and each year nearly 70 students from University of Brighton and over 145 from the University of Sussex take advantage of the ERASMUS (European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) scheme.

Thanks to the European Health Insurance Card, if you fall ill or need routine care for a pre-existing medical condition while visiting another EU country you can access state-provided healthcare at a reduced cost or, in many cases, for free. Without EU membership UK residents will need comprehensive medical insurance for travelling to the rest of Europe, or risk being landed with a hefty bill.

Of course, many Brightonians take advantage of the opportunity to work or retire abroad as well. This freedom of movement is part of our European identity and we need to think very carefully before putting it at risk.

“**easyJet is proud to connect people and businesses across Europe and believes that the UK is better off as part of the EU.**”

— EASYJET SPOKESPERSON
Europe provides opportunities to people from Brighton and Hove

“Free movement within the EU works both ways. As a freelance travel writer, being able to travel without restrictions to various European countries is vital, and being able to work with brands and companies all over the continent has been hugely beneficial in establishing and growing my business.

“But free movement isn’t just about the ease of going abroad and travelling, it’s about the free movement of skills and talent. Meeting and working with numerous great people and brands during my time in Spain and other countries has shown me what a wealth of knowledge, experience, and talent people all over Europe have. Being able to tap into these assets easily and learn from others’ stories and experiences can only be a good thing.”

– Lizzie Davey, Brightonian and award-winning writer

“I undertook my ERASMUS exchange at the University of Warsaw, Poland. Having never lived outside of UK before, the programme represented an unprecedented opportunity to immerse myself in another culture and learn to live in a foreign environment. As a student of Politics and Languages, it also presented the chance to substantially diversify my studies and to learn a third language.

“Importantly, the European Commission offers funding to all ERASMUS students for the duration of their exchange programme. Coming from a single-parent family, this was invaluable help to me in making the opportunities financially viable. This is huge asset for social and international mobility and means that the possibilities of studying abroad are more accessible now than ever before.

“Having returned to the UK after living in Poland for a whole year, I can confirm that the wealth of knowledge and experience I accumulated is unparalleled by anything I had previously undertaken.”

– Adam Ahmet, University of Sussex student
EU support for education

The European Union not only makes it easier for Brighton and Hove’s students to learn abroad, it also directly supports our education system.

Nowhere is this clearer than in the realm of science. This area of research is notoriously expensive and the UK receives more EU science funding than any other member state.

The University of Brighton has been put in charge of a €7.88 million EU funded cultural heritage programme called EPOCH (Excellence in Processing Open Cultural Heritage). As many artefacts are damaged through excavation, this project helps understand how to record and measure artefacts and data during the excavation process so that learning can still be extracted if items are damaged when moved. This programme has put our city at the centre of a global network used by 130 countries.

Figures obtained by the Liberal Democrats through Freedom of Information requests show that EU membership also directly boosts the University of Sussex. EU funding contributes to their research income each year, accounting for 20% of the total in the financial year 2014/15. EU-funded projects cover a wide range of subjects with the primary focus on research and innovation. There are currently eleven Biological Sciences projects receiving total EU funding of £5,845,000; and six Geography, Environmental Studies and Archaeology projects receiving total EU funding of £2,030,000.

As well as financial backing, the freedom to work and study across the member states directly benefits our universities, ensuring that nationality is
no barrier to learning and that staff can be selected from a wide pool of talent. The University of Sussex confirmed that 10.8% of its researchers are from non-UK EU member states.

The university’s own survey has shown overwhelming support from both students and staff of continued EU membership, with 82% believing the UK should remain a member of the EU.

More than 30 of our primary and secondary schools as well as colleges have benefited from direct EU funding. These monies were allocated to help students learn new languages, train our teachers, and to help integrate refugees.

Local schools supported by EU funding include ...

- Hove Park School
- Patcham Junior School
- St John the Baptist Catholic Primary School
- Bevendean Junior School
- Moulsecoomb Primary School
- BHCC CYRPT learning centre, Moulsecoomb
- Rudyard Kipling Primary School
- Saltdean Primary School
- Somerhill Junior School
- St Andrew’s C of E Primary School
- Southdown Junior School
- Dorothy Stringer High School
- St Mary Magdalene RC Primary School
- St Nicolas CE Primary School
- Falmer High School
- Blatchington Mill School & Sixth Form College
- Peter Gladwin Primary School
- Elm Grove Primary School
- Fairlight Primary and Nursery School
- St Paul’s Primary and Nursery CE School
- City Academy Whitehawk
- Balfour Primary School
SECURITY AND PEACE

Nationally, the EU helps us work together to fight crime and share intelligence on terrorism. Border patrols can prevent dangerous people from entering Britain before they land at the ferry crossing in Newhaven. Despite myths to the contrary, free movement of people does not infringe on our rights to refuse entry to people we believe to be dangerous. We’ve also benefited from the European Arrest Warrant (EAW), which replaces separate extradition arrangements between EU member states.

European Arrest Warrant (EAW) Case Study

In October 2014, Maltese Police arrested a Brighton man who had tried to escape justice. According to Sussex Police, following his conviction the person in question changed his name and left the UK. This was a breach of his court-imposed Registered Sex Offender requirement to notify probation and police of any proposed travel plans. He was located and arrested in Malta using a European Arrest Warrant. After this arrest, he appeared at a Maltese Court charged with importing and possessing indecent images of children which had been found on his computer.

On average, Sussex Police use the EAW to arrest 43 individuals a year wanted by other EU member states.

Under the EAW, 25 people wanted by Sussex Police have been arrested in other EU countries over the last three years.

The UK deported 1,097 individuals in 2014, compared with just 24 in 2004 before the EAW came into effect.

In addition, as part the effort “to prevent and combat violence against children, young people and women and to protect victims and groups at risk,” Brighton and Hove has received £80,000 from the EU to make our city’s streets safer for vulnerable people.
Did you know the European Union won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012?

The Norwegian Nobel Committee reflected that over a seventy-year period, Germany and France had fought three wars. “Today war between Germany and France is unthinkable. This shows how, through well-aimed efforts and by building up mutual confidence, historical enemies can become close partners.” The convenors of the award praised the EU’s contribution to the introduction of democracy in Greece, Spain and Portugal. They noted that the EU has pushed for progress on human rights in Turkey, strengthened democracy in Eastern Europe and is working to help the “process of reconciliation in the Balkans”.
The EU is a recognised global advocate for environmental protection and for responding to climate change.

By establishing a minimum baseline of environmental protection, the EU helps us to safeguard our environment without losing competitiveness to our European neighbours. It has also done excellent work to make our beaches cleaner. For example, Hove beach was ranked ‘poor’ by DEFRA in 1995 but is now ‘Excellent’ for water cleanliness thanks in large part to tough EU standards.

Our city has directly benefited from EU funding to address environmental changes. Freedom of Information requests have shown that the EU has provided thousands of pounds to local primary schools, including Moulsecoomb Primary School, St Nicolas CE Primary School, Aldrington CofE Primary School and Woodingdean Primary School, so that children can learn more about the environment.

Nearby the Ashdown forest benefits from both EU habitat protections and £550,000 in funding each year, without which the forest’s conservator says it would not be able to manage its upkeep and amenities.

The EU has contributed £10,000 to help Brighton and Hove combat noise pollution, and Brighton and Hove City Council along with Oxfam received £180,000 from the EU to “engage and inspire residents to take practical action and prepare for the impacts of climate change locally and globally”. The Brighton Peace and Environment Centre, a leading partner in delivering the work, said: “We’re delighted to receive the award and are excited to be able to develop our education programme to reach Brighton and Hove residents in recognising the common challenges we share in responding to climate change.”
Climate change is a serious challenge and can only be tackled together. Why would we want to put this joint action and localised funding at risk? The global carbon emission targets agreed in Paris in December 2015, imperfect though they may be, is a good example of where the EU played a unique international role to push for more ambitious targets. We can all enjoy cleaner air and get the full benefits of relaxing on the seafront or hiking in the Downs.
CONCLUSION

The Liberal Democrats believe that the data and examples presented in this report illustrate how continuing our membership of the European Union is in the interests of Brighton and Hove.

It makes the city more prosperous by
• encouraging tourism
• providing guaranteed access to the world’s biggest market for our businesses
• making it easy for international companies to base their European operations here
• ensuring our language schools and related industries can continue to attract students
• investing in job retraining and support for the unemployed

It provides more opportunities for our residents by
• making it easier and cheaper to live, travel and work abroad
• supporting our schools and universities

It makes this city more secure by
• making intelligence-sharing as seamless as possible
• enabling border patrols to vet visitors before they arrive in the UK
• funding crime prevention initiatives
• having the European Arrest Warrant so that Sussex Police can identify and apprehend dangerous individuals

It helps the environment of our city by
• providing opportunities for young people to learn about the environment
• supporting green charities to make our local environment better for all of us

When you consider how to vote on 23 June, we hope you’ll take into consideration how Europe works for Brighton and Hove.