

## TOP TEN REBUTTALS TO VOTE LEAVE CLAIMS

### 1. Claim: “We send £350 million to the EU every week”

#### Reality:

- The IFS say our net contribution was £5.7 billion a year – equivalent to £214 per household per year, or 24p per person per day. This takes into account the UK rebate, which does not leave the UK, and the money which comes back to us for regional and agricultural funding.  
*The Institute for Fiscal Studies, The budget of the European Union, 6 April 2016, [link](#)*
- The head of the UK Statistics Authority has said Vote Leave’s use of the figure is “potentially misleading”  
*Sir Andrew Dilnot, Letter to Norman Lamb, 21 April 2016, [link](#)*
- The benefits of being in clearly outweigh the costs. We pay £5.7bn to be a member of the world’s largest free trade zone, but the CBI has shown that the net benefit of being in the EU is worth £91bn to our economy. If we were to leave, this would have a £36bn blackhole in the public finances.  
*CBI, CBI Literature review of the impact of EU membership on the UK economy, [link](#); HM Treasury analysis, April 2016, [link](#);*

### 2. Claim: “If we Vote Leave and invest more in the NHS [or other public sector priorities]”

#### Reality:

- Leaving would damage our economy. Just as we saw with the last recession, that would mean there would be less money available to spend on our vital public services. As the Treasury has shown, if we were to leave, this would have a £36bn blackhole in the public finances, so we would far more than Vote Leave claim we would save.  
*HM Treasury analysis, April 2016, [link](#); Oxford Economics, Assessing the economic implications of Brexit, [link](#)*

### 3. Claim: “We have lost control of our borders” / “Being in the EU makes it easier for terrorists to come to Britain”

#### Reality:

- Those who want to pull us out of Europe and end free movement should be careful what they wish for. We would lose our access to the world’s largest free trade area, the single market, costing us jobs and pushing up prices. Damaging our economy is no way to control immigration.
- We have passport checks at our borders because we stayed out of the Schengen border-free zone. We can and do stop EU nationals from entering the UK on security grounds. We are safer in Europe because we get all the benefits of information-sharing through measures like the European Arrest Warrant, which would be lost if we left.
- The threat is if we leave – which could mean UK border checks would have to move back from Calais to Dover. As the French Interior Minister himself made clear “it is obvious that leaving the EU will always result in countermeasures.” The French President himself has said there would be “consequences”.  
*Bernard Cazeneuve, French interior minister, 21 Oct 2015, [link](#); Francois Hollande, French President, 3 March 2016, [link](#)*
- It is untrue that refugees will be granted European passports and be allowed to come to the UK. Qualification for German citizenship, for example, takes eight years.  
*Library of Congress, [link](#)*

# BRITAIN STRONGER IN EUROPE

## 4. Claim: “The EU needs a trade deal with us more than we need a trade deal with them”

### Reality:

- This is not true. The EU will not give us a better deal than they have themselves – by giving us all the benefits of being a member of the EU without any of its obligations.
- We send 44% of our exports to the EU, but the EU only sends less than 8% of its exports to Britain. So it is clear who has the negotiating advantage.  
*Treasury, long term economic impact of EU membership and the alternatives, April 2016, [link](#)*
- In trade negotiations size matters. The UK is a nation of 65m whereas the EU is a trading bloc of 500m – almost ten times our size. Who would have the upper hand in negotiations?
- We have a deficit overall in trade with the EU but we have a surplus in services - of £20.9 billion in 2015, or 1.1% of GDP. Services account for 36% of our exports to the EU and 79% of our economy. In services, it's us who needs them more than they need us. Maintaining our access to the EU market in services is critical to our economy.

## 5. Claim: “If we Vote Leave we will be able to strike our own trade deals with global powers easily.”

### Reality:

- As US President Obama has said, negotiating a bilateral trade deal with the UK would not be a priority for the US and could take as long as 10 years.  
*BBC News, 24 April 2016, [link](#)*
- We would lose the benefits of existing European trade deals, which cover over 50 countries, and the deals which are currently being negotiated with the US, Canada, Australia, and Japan. These would all have to be started again from scratch.  
*European Commission, Trade Agreements, [link](#)*
- By negotiating as a large group of countries we are able to get better terms on trade deals – because other countries will go further to gain free access to a market of more than 500 million consumers than they will for one of 65 million. Non-EU European countries that have negotiated their own deals with major economies have got poor terms.

## 6. Claim: “EU regulation costs UK businesses over £600 million every week”

### Reality:

- The Open Europe report this comes from also shows the benefit of these regulations comes to £58.6 billion - considerably greater than the £33.3 billion cost. Vote Leave were criticised by the Treasury Committee for just looking at costs and not the benefits.  
*Open Europe, 16 March 2016, [link](#); Treasury Select Committee, 20 April 2016, [link](#)*
- The two most expensive regulations were pushed for by the UK to 1) tackle climate change, and 2) ensure that banks have sufficient capital to be safe. Other regulations include protections against discrimination, consumer protection measures, and rules on animal welfare.  
*Open Europe, 16 March 2016, [link](#)*
- Dr Mark Carney, Governor of the Bank of England: “First, despite being a member of the European Union, the actual regulatory burden in the United Kingdom is remarkably low for an advanced economy.”  
*Mark Carney, The Select Committee on Economic Affairs, 19 April 2016, [link](#)*

# BRITAIN STRONGER IN EUROPE

- The UK is one of the most competitive economies in the world. The UK second-least regulated among developed countries, after the Netherlands, another EU member state  
*OECD Indicators of Product Market Regulation 2013, [link](#)*

## 7. **Claim: “Two thirds of laws are currently set by EU politicians” / “The UK has no influence in the EU”**

### Reality:

- Independent experts at the House of Commons Library put the figure at 13%<sup>1</sup>. In the last Parliament just 4 Acts of Parliament<sup>2</sup>, of a total of 121<sup>3</sup>, were exclusively to implement EU law  
*House of Commons library, EU obligations, 31 January 2015, [link](#); House of Commons Library, ‘EU obligations: UK implementing legislation since 1993’, 10 June 2015; Institute for Government, April 2015, [link](#)*
- The UK has influence in Europe. The UK has been on the winning side of 97% of votes in the EU Council in the last 12 years.  
*Vote Watch, 2016, [link](#)*
- As Business for Britain themselves said “national governments usually try and stop proposals that they don't like from ever reaching the Council of the European Union” – this means that looking at votes doesn't properly reflect the influence we exert.  
*Business for Britain, Measuring Britain's Influence in the Council of Ministers, [link](#)*

## 8. **Claim: Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania and Turkey are set to join the EU and their citizens will be able to come freely to the UK**

### Reality:

- This is not remotely on the cards. It will not happen for decades. We have a veto over any new country joining. If we do not want them to we can stop them.
- We will be able to limit free movement from any new countries that join. The EU has recognised our right to do so.
- Turkey will not join in the foreseeable future. We agree with Boris Johnson, who said:  
  
“I think the chances of the Turks readily acceding to the European Union are between, you know, nil and 20 per cent... Well, probably lower than that. I mean, it's not going to happen in the... foreseeable future.”  
*LBC, 15 March 2016*
- The Prime Minister has said:  
  
“I don't think the accession of Turkey to the European Union is remotely on the cards. I don't think it will happen for decades.”  
*David Cameron, Liaison Committee, 4 May 2016*

## 9. **Claim: The Five Presidents' Report puts the EU on a path to further political integration which will consume the UK**

### Reality:

- This report does not apply to the UK. It concerns the Eurozone Member States only. Furthermore, the Report is not a legally binding document or formal policy proposal. It says that it “reflects the personal deliberations and discussions of the five Presidents”.  
*The Five Presidents Report, [link](#)*

<sup>1</sup> House of Commons Library, ‘EU obligations: UK implementing legislation since 1993’, 10 June 2015

<sup>2</sup> House of Commons Library, ‘EU obligations: UK implementing legislation since 1993’, 10 June 2015

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/blog/11085/26-bills-later-legislation-during-the-zombie-parliament/>

# BRITAIN STRONGER **IN** EUROPE

- The UK has always been able to stay out of major integration steps in the EU that are not in our interest. We are not in the euro area or the passport-free Schengen area, and we cannot be made to join either of them. We have a unique special status exempt from 'ever-closer union'. We are also protected from taking part in any further Eurozone bailouts.

## 10. Claim: SMEs support Britain leaving Europe

### Reality:

- The overwhelming majority of SMEs favour Britain remaining in the EU. A 'poll of polls' covering seven surveys conducted among SMEs showed 81% of respondents in favour of the UK remaining in the EU (sources: FSB, Henderson Loggie, Goldman Sachs/Aston University, Moore Stephens, Tech London Advocates, FDF, COADEC)
  - A Grant Thornton poll showed 87% of senior UK medium-sized business leaders support continued EU membership
  - A Goldman Sachs/Aston University survey of 10,000 small businesses shows 75% of small businesses want to remain in the EU, compared to 6% who want to leave
- This stands to reason when you consider that 100,000 small businesses exported to the EU in 2014. Of all British small and medium-sized businesses that export, 88% do so to the EU  
*HMRC, FSB*
- Millions of small firms supply larger exporting companies, many of whom export to the EU. The knock-on effects of a vote to leave the EU would hurt these small businesses.