

A new UK trade agreement with Pacific countries can prevent Britain from rejoining the EU

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Introduction to the CPTPP Agreement

Though British broadcasters focused on news from Murrayfield that Humza Yousaf had been chosen as SNP leader and would be sworn in as First Minister of Scotland, a far more significant statement of greater strategic significance was about to be made in Westminster.

The United Kingdom Joins the CPTPP

Since political forecasters prepared to scrutinise Yousaf's ministerial targets, the UK became a signatory to the CPTPP (Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership) through the trading bloc's eleven founding signatories: Canada, Mexico, Peru, Chile, Australia, New Zealand, Australia, Vietnam, Singapore and Malaysia, and Japan. The event demonstrates that trade does not require immediate vicinity to be valuable.

Economic Opportunities for British Industries

Our high-quality executive vehicle exports, aero engines, exceptional foods and beverages, software creation, and financial services are just a few of the UK economic sectors that are likely to gain tremendously.

Growth Beyond the European Union

The CPTPP is significant because the real economic growth from which the UK may profit is found outside of the economically stagnant EU, especially in the trade nations of Southern Asia and the Pacific.

Comparison with EU Membership

Of course, there have been critics who argue that membership in the CPTPP is unimportant in comparison to full membership in the European Union. However, it is far preferable to the alternative.

The essence of the argument is that the CPTPP is merely a trading agreement that benefits its members significantly; it is not a political agenda and does not attempt to limit our ability to make the best democratic choices for us and our fellow citizens.

Trade Cooperation Without Political Union

The CPTPP stands apart from the EU in that it is all about trade; it is not a political union, so it doesn't come with a vast deadweight of costs and the government, nor does it seek to tell all of its member nations precisely what labelling their goods should have, how much meat should be in a banger, or precisely how curved (or straight) any specific vegetable should be. This liberal attitude partially clarifies why such countries have faster development than the EU; the other part is their commitment to free trade rather than creating trade obstacles.

Palm Oil Tariffs and Environmental Criticism

For example, the UK is willing to abolish existing import levies of up to 12% on [palm oil](#) (Read more here) imported from Malaysia. At the same time, the EU aims to construct higher barriers to similar trade.

According to the critics, Oil Palm plantations promote deforestation but don't acknowledge that it is superior to cultivating Soybeans, Sunflowers, or Rapeseed because the higher yield of the Oil Palm requires less area to be cleared for cultivation. Second, Malaysia is a country that encourages ecological Palm Oil production to avoid deforestation, so it makes sense for us to honour its farmers with our trade.

CPTPP Sovereignty and Governance

The CPTPP, unlike the European Union, is not a political union and does not call for a Parliament because it doesn't enact laws or levy taxes on its members. There is no CPTPP army or border force commanding our armed forces or police. There is no CPTPP single currency that we will be compelled to implement in the future, no CPTPP central bank that sets interest rates that do not meet our economic needs, no democratic movement for citizens of CPTPP member states, no need for an anthem, a capital, or a flag – or any desire to merge into a single superstate or ambitions to become a superpower.

Independent Agriculture and Fisheries Policies

There is no common fisheries or agriculture policy among CPTPP members; we can set our standards and agree on our own tariffs, quotas, and rules of origin. The UK does not need to pay tens of billions

of dollars into common funds because no vast bureaucracy oversees a huge and growing regulatory morass. After all, the CPTPP's goal is mutual trade to make poorer countries richer, not the transfer of subsidies to frail economies that only keep them weak.

Access to European and Pacific Markets

Critics of entering the CPTPP argue that it is not as good as joining the EU for access to its single market, as if it is an either/or situation. They conveniently forget that we have a trade agreement with the EU that allows us access to the single market while allowing us to establish additional relationships across the world without the EU's baggage or cost. According to Facts4EU.org, the UK now has more [free trade agreements](#) (94) than the EU (79).

Debate Over Economic Impact

Critics also attempt to make outlandish assertions about the insignificant economic damage compared to the oft-quoted 4% loss of GDP from leaving the EU. This figure is not a concrete fact but rather a modelled projection predicated on a drop in immigration numbers – when, in fact, the level of net migration is at an all-time high. There will be no “hit,” no loss of 4% GDP as a result of quitting the EU.

Recent United Kingdom Trade Performance

Additionally, the most recent trade data examined by British-Australian economist Catherine McBride revealed that declines in UK trade in 2020-21 were caused by the impact of pandemic lockdowns rather than Brexit. These included semi-conductor shortages and a freeze on aircraft engine orders; both are currently rectifying themselves. Since then, UK trade has recovered, with UK exports reaching all-time highs in 2022.

Strategic Implications for Rejoining the EU

Another reason the CPTPP is significant is that it has the actual potential to be a poison pill by reorienting the UK's strategic objectives as genuinely global rather than constrained to the EU's fortress Europe. Rejoining the EU will necessitate the cancellation of CPTPP benefits and the implementation of a significantly harsher EU regime that bears little similarity to the one we left.