



The European Free Trade Association
and the European Economic Area

The Viable Alternatives to EU Membership

Which treaty would you prefer
for the UK between other
European countries?

EFTA/EEA EU/EEA

Tick 1 box

What/Who is EFTA and the EEA?

- EFTA is the European Free Trade Association
- www.efta.int
- EFTA is a simpler arrangement for trading with EU countries and countries around the world
- EEA = European Economic Area = free movement of goods, services, capital and people in EU countries
- EFTA countries include Norway, Switzerland, Iceland and Lichtenstein.
- Britain used to be in EFTA.

Benefits of the UK switching to EFTA/EEA membership

- EFTA countries run their own: agriculture, fisheries, home affairs, justice and more. For example, Norway is an EFTA/EEA member and only gets 350 new regulations a year while Britain, an EU/EEA member gets over 1000. A reduction in regulations, would be like tax cut for businesses – reducing costs and helping them be more competitive in world markets
- The EEA does not cover taxation, so Britain, as a member of EFTA/EEA would not be covered by EU taxes
- EEA acts in force = 4,600; EU acts in force = 15,000
The Estimated cost of EU regulations range from 3% to 5% of GDP

EFTA Agreements

- EFTA has a number of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and co-operation and negotiations with other countries, for example: Canada, Singapore, Mexico, South Korea, Chile, Turkey and South Africa.

Other EFTA Benefits

- Q.** What about financial contributions to the EU?
- A.** Switching from EU to EFTA would mean a reduction, from around £6bn a year to £3.9 bn. In addition the £9bn sent to Brussels, and returned and spent according to EU guidelines would be restored to UK spending priorities.
- Q.** What about Auditors signing off accounts?
- A.** The EU has not had it's accounts signed off by auditors for over 15 years. EFTA has their accounts signed off every year.

Unemployment rates

- EU/EEA member, Britain has 8% unemployment
- EFTA/EEA member, Norway has 3% unemployment
- A referendum could also be a choice of which unemployment rate you would prefer
- Britain needs jobs....lots of jobs

And more EFTA benefits

- Q.** Where are EFTA offices?
- A.** They also have offices in Brussels, and also Geneva and Luxembourg
- Q.** How many employees do the EU and EFTA have?
- A.** The EU has over 20,000. EFTA has around 90
- Q.** What about security?
- A.** Britain would still be a member of the NATO security alliance, just like Norway is.

EFTA working with the EU and the world

- Q.** How would Britain in EFTA work with the EU?
- A.** Fairly much the same as now. Norway goes to many of the same meetings that the UK goes to now, so British representatives would continue as usual. Britain would continue discussions with EU partners on events and ideas.
- Q.** What about influence in EEA regulations?
- A.** Britain would be involved in the consultation process and design, but not the voting. Britain would retain the right to veto any regulation – as Norway has done. However Britain is currently 1 of 27 countries, so less than 4% influence, and for years has been unable to stop the fishing quota system that results in fisherman throwing away fish, if they are the wrong sort of fish for their quota. Switching to EFTA would give 100% UK fishing control and ensure fish caught were landed and sold.
- Q.** How would Britain work with the world?
- A.** Similar to other free and prosperous countries, like Canada, Australia, Switzerland and Norway

EEA	350
EU	1000+

EEA	4,600
EU	15,000

EFTA countries

Q. Aren't Switzerland and Norway different to the UK?

A. Actually Norway's economy has more in common with the UK, and so does Switzerland, than the Norwegian and Swiss economies have in common with each other. What Norway and Switzerland have in common, is EFTA membership

Area	UK	Norway	Switzerland
Agriculture	Yes	Yes	
Fisheries	Yes	Yes	
Oil and Gas	Yes	Yes	
Engineering	Yes		Yes
Finance	Yes		Yes
Pharmaceuticals	Yes		Yes
Chemicals	Yes		Yes
Agreement	EU/EEA	EFTA/EEA	EFTA/Bi-lateral
Unemployment	8%	3%	3%

EFTA/EEA and EFTA/bilateral

Q. What is the benefit of switching to EFTA/EEA, which Norway has, than EFTA/bi-lateral, which Switzerland has?

A. Since Britain is already in the EEA, switching can be done in weeks of a referendum. Switzerland negotiated a bilateral agreement with the EU, between 1992 and 2002 – 10 years. Britain needs EFTA benefits now preferably, not a possible 10 years from now.

- EFTA/EEA is an off-the-shelf working alternative.

Why Switch to EFTA?

Q. Why choose EFTA/EEA vs EU/EEA as referendum question?

A. number of reasons:

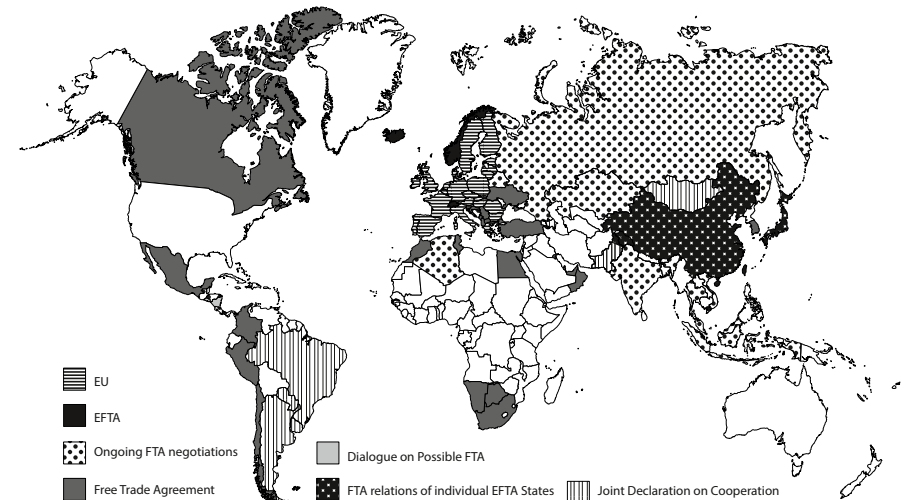
- EFTA/EEA is a working alternative
- EFTA/EEA is a successful alternative
- People can make easy comparisons between EFTA/EEA and EU/EEA
- Best chance of winning a referendum

- Best chance of getting the most votes compared to other alternatives, i.e. Most democratic
- Easiest alternative for creating jobs fast
- Easiest alternative to implement
- European treaties are dynamic, so if the public wanted even more simpler relations with the EU in future, the door is open for more referendums.
- Joining EFTA and staying in the EEA, which guarantees the free movement of goods, services and capital is the most likely to get the support of business
- A referendum on switching from the EU to EFTA/EEA can be won

What about opinion polls?

- YouGov Opinion polls have been made, showing some of the comparisons, while leaving out comparisons between: new regulations per year, accounts sign off, office in Brussels, unemployment rates, and others. Yet the results are positive, also for EFTA/EEA option.
- Which ONE would you prefer Britain to be in?
- 2010 opinion poll: EU 36%, EFTA 39%, Don't Know 25%
- 2012 opinion poll: EU/EEA 21%, EFTA/EEA 44%, Don't Know 35%

EFTA's preferential trade relations with partners worldwide.



One Page Comparisons

What are the differences for the UK being a member of EFTA/EEA or EU/EEA?		
	EFTA/EEA	EU/EEA
New regulations per year	350	1000
Financial contributions to the EU each year	£3.9bn	£6bn
Accounts signed off by auditors	Every year	Not for 15 years
Employees	90	30,000+
Control over fisheries	UK	EU
Control over agriculture	UK	EU
Responsibility for Home Affairs	UK	EU
Responsibility for Justice	UK	EU
Free movement of Goods in EU	Yes	Yes
Free movement of Services in EU	Yes	Yes
Free movement of Capital in EU	Yes	Yes
Free movement of People in EU	Yes	Yes
Member of the European Economic Area (EEA)	Yes	Yes
Office in Brussels	Yes	Yes
Member of NATO security alliance	Yes	Yes
Ability to make bi-lateral free trade agreements with any other country, e.g. Canada	Yes	No
Key legal document	Convention	Treaty
Pages in legal document	30	200+
Countries currently	Norway	UK
Time to switch from EU/EEA to EFTA/EEA	Weeks	N/A

Summary

- Switching to EFTA/EEA from EU/EEA
- Pro-jobs
- Pro-democracy
- From a complicated treaty that exports jobs, to a simpler treaty that helps create jobs
- MPs will have more time to listen to the public and work on UK priorities
- Easy to implement
- REFERENDUM: EFTA/EEA or EU/EEA?

For more information

- EFTA website: www.efta.int
- EFTA/EEA powerpoint presentations
 - - open www.efta.int
 - - cursor on EEA, on drop down menu, click 'seminars'
 - - choose a seminar, click on top of 5 or 6 powerpoint presentations for main EEA powerpoint
- www.brugesgroup.com click on 'Alternatives to EU', paper 'EFTA or EU' page 20 has comparisons
- Contact the Bruges Group info@brugesgroup.com
- Tel 020 7287 4414

Actions

- Spread the ideas
- Contact news media
- Comment on online news media
- Ask your MP if they support a referendum EFTA/EEA or EU/EEA?
- Ask people at elections if they support a referendum

For further information contact: Robert Oulds, Director

The Bruges Group, 214 Linen Hall, 162-168 Regent St., London W1B 5TB, UK

Tel: 020 7287 4414 E-mail: info@brugesgroup.com or visit: www.brugesgroup.com

Follow us on twitter [@brugesgroup](https://twitter.com/brugesgroup) Find our facebook group: [The Bruges Group](https://www.facebook.com/brugesgroup)

The Bruges Group

The Bruges Group is an independent all-party think tank. Set up in February 1989, its aim was to promote the idea of a less centralised European structure than that emerging in Brussels. Its inspiration was Margaret Thatcher's Bruges speech in September 1988, in which she remarked that "We have not successfully rolled back the frontiers of the state in Britain, only to see them re-imposed at a European level...". The Bruges Group has had a major effect on public opinion and forged links with Members of Parliament as well as with similarly minded groups in other countries. The Bruges Group spearheads the intellectual battle against the notion of "ever-closer Union" in Europe. Through its ground-breaking publications and wide-ranging discussions it will continue its fight against further integration and, above all, against British involvement in a single European state.

Who we are

Honorary President: The Rt. Hon the Baroness Thatcher of Kesteven, LG OM FRS

Vice-President: The Rt. Hon the Lord Lamont of Lerwick

Chairman: Barry Legg

Director: Robert Oulds MA

Head of Research: Dr Helen Szamuely

Washington D.C.

Representative: John O'Sullivan, CBE

Founder Chairman:

Lord Harris of High Cross

Former Chairmen:

Dr Brian Hindley, Dr Martin Holmes & Professor Kenneth Minogue

Academic Advisory Council:

Professor Tim Congdon

Professor Kenneth Minogue

Professor Christie Davies

Professor Norman Stone

Dr Richard Howarth

Professor Patrick Minford

Ruth Lea

Andrew Roberts

Martin Howe, QC

John O'Sullivan, CBE

Sponsors and Patrons:

E P Gardner

Dryden Gilling-Smith

Lord Kalms

David Caldow

Andrew Cook

Lord Howard

Brian Kingham

Lord Pearson of Rannoch

Eddie Addison

Ian Butler

Thomas Griffin

Lord Young of Graffham

Michael Fisher

Oliver Marriott

Hon. Sir Rocco Forte

Graham Hale

W J Edwards

Michael Freeman

Richard E.L. Smith



www.brugesgroup.com

Contact us

For more information about the Bruges Group please contact:

Robert Oulds, Director

The Bruges Group, 214 Linen Hall, 162-168 Regent Street, London W1B 5TB

Tel: +44 (0)20 7287 4414 **Email:** info@brugesgroup.com