



Written by [James Heiser](#) on July 15, 2011

Poll: British People Overwhelmingly Ready to Leave EU

The people of Great Britain have had enough of the European Union and its growing financial difficulties. In fact, according to a recent poll, if they had a choice in the matter, the British would leave the EU as soon as possible.



The ongoing financial crisis in Europe has already resulted in plans for a costly bailout for Greece — and the staggering cost of Greek socialism appears to be simply one installment of a much more costly proposition of rebuilding the economies of several member states of the European Union. Now, the bailout's political cost is beginning to come due in Britain. [A July 13 story for the *Daily Mail*](#) reports that public opinion is decisively opposed to continued membership in the EU:

A poll released to the *Daily Mail* shows the public would vote by 50 to 33 per cent to abandon Brussels if a referendum were held tomorrow, a huge lead of 17 points.

The poll shows the euro crisis has turned conventional political wisdom on its head and will fuel demands for David Cameron to renegotiate Britain's relationship with Brussels. ...

The poll was conducted by YouGov@Cambridge for political news website Dods PoliticsHome.

It found that the majority in favour of withdrawing from the EU among the over 60s — the age group most likely to vote — is 61 per cent to 29 per cent, a margin of more than two to one.

Crucially, 34 per cent of voters say they are now more favourable to withdrawal because of the Greek financial crisis.

Of those 18 per cent, more than half said they were 'much more favourable' to withdrawal.

More than seven out of ten voters have concerns about the impact of the Greek meltdown on the UK. And 64 per cent blame the EU and the European Central Bank.

Advocates of a strong European Union have complained for decades that the British have been skeptical regarding many aspects of the planning and implementation of the union. As noted in [2007](#) for the newsletter of Politeia (which presents itself as a "Network for Citizenship and Democracy in Europe"):

In Britain Euroscepticism is by no means limited to the political domain of parties, campaigns or pressure groups. It is also clearly present in the press and public opinion. The Europe-wide polls conducted by Eurobarometer invariably show the British public as least satisfied with EU-membership. Hence it is not surprising that the British press, and the tabloids in particular, regularly plug anti-Brussels stories. ...

The fact that British public opinion is hostile towards EU membership may be explained with



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reference to the popular perception that the British are not “Europeans” in the first place. Eurobarometer surveys show that the British are not just critical of the EU, but of Europe as a whole. To be British does not necessarily coincide with being European. On the contrary, Europeans often figure as “the Other” against which true Britishness may be defined. The roots of this attitude are many, but go back at least to the time of the English reformation in the 16th century, when Henry VIII broke with Rome. The prolonged periods of warfare with Catholic “European” countries (Spain, France) did nothing to meliorate the popular image of Europeans as undemocratic, dishonest idolaters.

As the financial implosion of several EU member nations threatens to devastate economies throughout the union, British “eurocepticism” appears to have been well-founded — and not on the prejudicial basis that Politeia would allege, but on the basis of several facts: A single currency cannot make sound economies out of unsound ones, and the euro could not transform the fantasies of socialist thinking into a viable economic system. Italy did not magically become a viable economy by abandoning the lira for the euro; neither did the Greek economy rehabilitate itself by leaving behind the drachma for the euro. Instead, the weaker economies have been stabilized by relying on the vitality of stronger economies. Europhiles may have considered the financial cost of a unified Europe to be manageable when times were good and the euro was steadily gaining value. Now, however, the true cost of building the EU is beginning to be counted, and it is a high cost indeed.

As [Charles Scaliger wrote for *The New American*](#), Portugal and Ireland and, most recently, Italy, are all on the same path to ruin which led to the Greek bailout:

Italy’s outlook has already been lowered this year from stable to negative by Standard and Poor’s, and Moody’s may soon follow suit.

On July 4, yields on Italian 10-year government bonds began to soar, ultimately settling above the dangerous level of 5.7 percent. It would take very little added uncertainty to push the yields to unsustainable levels, just as Greece, Portugal, and Ireland have experienced.

Meanwhile, things have gone from bad to worse for Ireland, whose credit rating was lowered this week by Moody’s to junk bond status. Yield on Irish bonds soared to record levels in reaction, with 10-year bonds exceeding 14 percent. As one bond trader in Dublin said, “Until they sort something out in Europe, yields are just going to keep going up.” Meanwhile, it is almost universally expected that Ireland will require a second bailout but — as with Greece — a second bailout will only make matters worse in the long term.

Multiple bailouts of fundamentally unstable economies will not create European prosperity; it will simply export Greek and Italian poverty north of the Alps. The British have long been skeptical of the EU; now Germany — for years one of the strongest advocates of a united Europe — may join the “euroceptic” ranks. A growing number of Germans are pining for the stability of the old Deutschmark. [The Telegraph reported a year ago](#):

More than 51 per cent of Germans want to axe the euro after widespread fury that Germany’s taxpayers have been forced to come to the rescue of Greece and other high spending southern European countries.

Only three in 10 people in Europe’s largest economy now support the single currency, a flagship of EU integration and Germany’s European policy.

In other words, discontent with the euro was as high a year ago in Germany as it currently is in Britain



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— and for the same reason: Germans do not want to bear the burden of paying for the inability of other nations to fix their own self-inflicted economic problems. [According to Reuters](#), German discontent with the EU may finally pressure the government of Angela Merkel to take decisive action:

No local version of the nationalist True Finns or Dutchman Geert Wilders has made a breakthrough, partly because of taboos rooted in German history.

But resentment at funding bailouts for euro-zone partners poses a strategic challenge to Merkel's conservative coalition.

As Europe prepares a second bailout for Greece, on top of aid packages for Ireland, Portugal and potentially Italy, and draws up a permanent bailout mechanism for future debt crises in the currency zone, Germans are running out of patience.

The bad idea of a European Union is now coming to its logical conclusion, and it is no surprise that many Europeans are unwilling to impoverish themselves for an internationalist fantasy.



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