

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria  
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research  
Hamma Lakhdar University of El-Oued  
Faculty of Arts and Languages  
Department of Arts and English Language



**Post-Brexit Identity Crisis: The African-Asian Communities**

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
Master's Degree in Literature and Civilization

**Submitted by:**

KHELIEL Souheila

ATTIK Sekoura

**Supervised by:**

Dr. CHOUCHANI ABIDI Mohammed

**Board of Examiners:**

**Mr. YOUMBAI Mohammed Yacine**

**President**

University of El-Oued

**Dr. CHOUCHANI ABIDI Mohammed**

**Supervisor**

University of El-Oued

**Dr. YOUCEF Kouider**

**Examiner**

University of El-Oued

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## **Dedication**

*With great honour, this humble work is dedicated to:*

*Our parents for their encouragement and moral support.*

*Our husbands for their patience and endless support.*

*Our children; Lidia, Samir Ghiles and Sirine, Djana, Djouri and Djoudi.*

*Our brothers and sisters.*

*Our supervisor for his valuable help.*

*All our classmates.*

*To everyone who respect us.*

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Notwithstanding all of the above support for this project, any errors are solely our responsibility.

## **Abstract**

The dissertation investigates the most prominent event the UK witnessed namely Brexit, its driving forces and its impact on the UK in general. In deeper, the study investigates some of the challenges brought by Brexit and how these obstacles alongside Britain's legacy of racism have contributed to creating an identity crisis for the African-Asian communities. Thus, the study tries to answer the question of how Brexit has affected the African-Asian sense of identity. To come up with an appropriate answer to the research questions the study adopted a qualitative approach and used the analytical historical method and descriptive analytical method as well in collecting and analysing data from scholarly and newspaper articles and books. The study reveals that the European Union referendum's contribution to the rise of racism and hate crimes against immigrants was just a reminder of Britain's history with racism and inequality. It also shows that Brexit has brought many challenges that negatively affected African-Asian identity.

**Keywords:** African-Asian communities, Brexit, European Union Referendum, Identity crisis, Immigrants.

## **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

<b>BAME:</b>	Black Asian Minority Ethnic
<b>BBC:</b>	British Broadcasting Corporation
<b>BME:</b>	Black and Minority Ethnic
<b>BN:</b>	British Nation
<b>Brexit:</b>	Britain Exit from the European Union
<b>CFSP:</b>	Common Foreign and Security Policy
<b>CSDP:</b>	Common Security and Defence Policy
<b>DISP:</b>	The Defence and International Security Partnership
<b>ETP:</b>	The Enhanced Trade Partnership
<b>EU:</b>	European union
<b>GDP:</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>IR:</b>	Integrated Review
<b>MAMA:</b>	Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks
<b>NATO:</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
<b>NRPF:</b>	No Record to Public Fund
<b>OBR:</b>	Office for Budget Responsibility
<b>ONS:</b>	Office for National Statistics
<b>SES:</b>	Socioeconomic Status
<b>UK:</b>	United Kingdom
<b>UN:</b>	United Nations
<b>USA:</b>	United States of America

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## **General introduction**

# **General introduction**

## **1. Background of the Study**

Historians consider migration to be one of the important characteristics of Britain throughout history, from the incoming of the Celts, Romans, and Anglo-Saxons to that of the Normans. In the post-Second World War Britain experienced an increase in the rate of immigration from all over the world. This phenomenon gave British society a prominent feature, which is cultural and social diversity.

British sentiments towards diversity and immigrants change through time. Whilst a majority of them support multiculturalism, others express their dissatisfaction about the effects of immigrants and diversity on Britain and British culture as well. The varied structure of race and ethnicity in UK society made immigration a sensitive issue and made immigrants subject to racism and inequality throughout Britain's history; the Windrush scandal (1948-2018), a river of blood (1968), and hostile environment policy (2012) as well are good examples. Throughout British history, ethnic minorities have suffered from racism and discrimination and were judged based on their colour and race.

In recent years, a greater part of the British expresses their refusal of overt racism, however, a large number of them recognize that there is always a tautness between national identity and diversity. Questions about the place of diversity and minority groups' identity in British society have become an emergency, especially during the campaign for the Brexit vote. Throughout this period, the British public adopted hostile attitudes towards immigrants and blamed them for the UK public services problem.

The decision to split did not come in vain, Britain justified it by the struggles that it encountered inside the union and considered national sovereignty and taking back control of its borders and immigration more important than economic and political cooperation within the EU. Brexit vote had contributed to the rising of violence and racially motivated hate crimes against minority groups, prompting fears that Brexit will give new license to racism and discrimination.

Immigrants from different backgrounds expressed their concerns about Brexit's impacts on their identity and status. Questions about their place, identity and belonging to the British society rose. In other words, starting from the EU referendum in 2016 Africans-Asians experienced an identity crisis.

## **2. Statement of the Problem**

The campaign to split from the block changed the attitudes of the British making them hostile toward immigrants, and opposed cultural diversity. The Brexit vote has brought a negative impact on the socioeconomic status of African and Asian immigrants who faced many challenges in their daily lives. The combination of cultural differences and inferior socioeconomic status alongside the British legacy of discriminatory attitudes and racism against out-group members has created an identity crisis for African and Asian communities.

## **3. Significance of the Study**

Our passion for the English language called us to be interested in the UK, its history, civilisation and events. In recent years, the most frequently mentioned word in the newspaper headlines was 'Brexit', an important political and economic change in Britain's history during the 21st century. One of the reasons behind it was immigration consequently; Brexit had an important impact on immigrants' status and identity. As Africans, this change in UK's history aroused our curiosity to know more about this event and to comprehend its impact on the African community and Asian one as well.

## **4. Aims of the Study**

The motivation behind this study is to shed light on the newest and most challenging event in UK "Brexit". It explains the main reasons behind it and its impact on the UK and minority groups. Accordingly, it seeks to uncover Brexit impact on the identity of African and

Asian communities. The study also attempts to bring light on some of the challenges Brexit has brought to these communities starting from the EU referendum in 2016.

## **5. Research Questions**

The study intends at answering the following questions:

- What were the main driving forces behind Brexit and how did the split impact the UK and minority groups?
- Did the EU referendum contribute to the rise of racism and hate crimes against immigrants?
- How did Brexit impact the African and Asians' sense of identity?

## **6. Research Hypotheses**

The hypotheses of our study are formulated as follows:

- Immigration, cultural identity and sovereignty were the main driving forces behind Brexit.
- The rise of racism, violence and hate crimes against immigrants after the Brexit vote was just a reminder of Britain's history with racism and inequality.
- Brexit has brought cultural and socioeconomic challenges to African and Asian communities that made them experience an identity crisis.

## **7. Research Methodology**

The present research adopts a qualitative approach. This approach is followed since it involves collecting and analysing non-numerical data such as texts, to understand concepts, opinions and experiences, etc. Hence, it is an appropriate approach to find adequate answers to the research questions. This dissertation uses a historical analytical method and descriptive analytical method as well. These methods are employed to find out the relationship and logical

connection between past events and present ones, which give us the possibility to comprehend the present in light of the past events and developments. The descriptive analytical method is used to examine the impact of Brexit on minority groups' identity while the historical analytical method is used to collect data and then evaluate and interpret them to find answers to the research questions. Moreover, the dissertation uses an analytical method in the practical part of the research to analyse a political speech to come up with findings that give us a better understanding of the topic under investigation. Furthermore, the analysis and manipulation of statistics, as a tool in the research, ensure us a better comprehension and provide us with rational support and explanations as well. Therefore, this approach permits us to understand Brexit and its impact on minority groups' identities.

## **8. Structure of the Study**

The study under investigation comprises two chapters as well as a general introduction and general conclusion. The first chapter entitled "Brexit: overview, causes and impacts" deals with general information about Brexit, its causes, procedures and impacts. Moreover, this chapter discusses how minority ethnic groups reacted to Brexit, and their attitudes and concerns.

The second chapter is entitled "post-Brexit identity crisis: African-Asian communities". It is about investigating Britain's history of racism and inequality toward ethnic minorities. This chapter focuses on the cultural, economic and social challenges Brexit has brought to immigrants that shape and affect their identity and the feeling of belonging that accompanies it. Finally, this section of the dissertation ends with an analysis of Theresa May's speech on immigration before the EU referendum.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **Brexit: Overview, Causes and Impacts**

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## **Introduction**

After nearly a half-century of cooperation economically and politically inside the EU, the UK decided to split from the bloc, the split known as Brexit. In 2013, Prime Minister David Cameron declared to call for a national referendum about whether to remain or leave the EU. Mr Cameron was certain that "remain" would gain victory easily.

To end the contention Britain discussed the membership's pros and cons. By the time of the vote, it emerged a refugee crisis making migration a political subject and public anger all over Europe, this event hardly influenced public opinion. In the UK, on Thursday 23 June 2016, 26.3 million people voted in a national plebiscite. The UK shocked the world by voting to exit the EU with the support of fifty-two (52) % of electors.

The UK left the EU on January 31, 2020, under the terms of a negotiated divorce deal (the Withdrawal Agreement), making term to 47 years of political and economic cooperation. The following chapter gives an overview of Brexit, which is necessary to understand this significant event in Britain during the 21st century. First, the chapter deals with the definition of Brexit and the main reasons that made the majority of British approve of the leave vote. Then it discusses the Brexit timeline and the withdrawal procedures that the UK parliament had followed to split from the EU. Moreover, this section uncovers some of Brexit's impacts on the UK and the future of British foreign policies. Besides, through this chapter, we will talk about ethnic groups' attitudes toward the EU referendum. Finally, the chapter ends by presenting minority ethnic groups' concerns after the Brexit vote

### **1.1 What is Brexit?**

In 2016, for the first time, the word Brexit was included in the Oxford English Dictionary, which denoted "The departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union". Brexit is an example of a portmanteau formed by fusing two words Britain and exit this term was

inspired by the possible Greek exit from the euro known as the Grexit (Greek exit) which can be traced to 2010 (Fontaine, 2017).

Brexit is considered shorthand for the proposal that Britain splits from the European Union and changes its relationship with it on migration, trade and security. In other words, it is an ongoing process not just a single event or merely about the UK's secession from the EU. Officially, Britain split from the bloc on January 1, 2021, opening a new chapter of its relationship with other countries. as alternatives to the EU markets, Prime Minister Boris Johnson speaks of creating a more agile "Global Britain," with stronger ties to the United States and other democracies, such as Australia, India and South Korea (Benjamin & Peter, 2021; Tim, 2018).

## **1.2 Causes of Brexit**

To explain the vote in favour of Brexit a set of factors were presented by observers and academics. The main arguments in favour of leaving the EU centre on economics, sovereignty and security, immigration and cultural values. Paul (2019) explains that the following factors are prominent in most explanations:

### **1.2.1 Sovereignty**

The most resonant slogan of the vote campaign was « take back control ». In its extended form, the slogan referred to taking back control of borders, monies and laws (Paul, 2019). According to Lord Ashcroft's polling team, nearly half of the Brexit supporters contended that the most important cause for wanting to leave the EU was the principle that decisions in the UK should be decided in the UK. According to them, the EU laws overrun the laws of countries and it denied them the power to take decisions. In recent years, the EU has managed to transfer a great sum of power from its countries' members to its central office in Brussels (Timothy, 2016).

Moreover, there was increasing disbelief in trade, multinational financial, and defence organisations formed after the Second World War such as NATO and EU. Many who oppose the EU believe these institutions no longer serve a purpose. Not only that, these organizations take control of individual nations (Paul, 2019).

Ipsos MORI a market research company located in London conducted research immediately before the referendum, which showed that a vast majority of Britons who were asked to state the most important matters in the UK have ranked the EU as the third issue facing the UK government. For them, the fear of losing control made Brexit a logical solution.

### **1.2.2 Immigration**

The Brexit vote took place in a refugee crisis context in Europe. Caused by the series of coups, riots, protests, demonstrations and civil wars that began in 2010 across the Middle East and North Africa (Paul, 2019). This event was named later "the Arab Spring" which caused creating a new wave of immigration to the UK. The University of Oxford's The Migration Observatory stated that immigration to the UK peaked at 56% in September 2015 and declared that immigration is the most prominent issue facing the country.

Many British voters found that not only the UK government mishandled this problem but also the European Commission. Speaking to the BBC, Iain Duncan Smith, one of the cabinet ministers campaigning for Brexit, said:

"There is another concern and risk: the migration issue, in meltdown around the EU, with the EU almost incapable, it seems, of handling this massive wave of migration coming in from, not just by the way Syria. We hear today about Pakistanis and others coming into Hungary and having a problem. You see various people from different parts of Iran coming in. It is s not just from one country" (Rowena, 2016).

Moreover, Brexit supporters seemed to be opponents of non-EU immigration more than those of EU ones (Simon, Eric, Thomas,2017).

To Brexit supporters, the prospect of leaving the block was considered a promise to put an end to the freedom of movement of people into the UK and to reduce the number of people moving there. They were anxious about the impact of immigration on the economy and national culture.

### **1.2.3 Positive Economic Opportunities**

A great part of UK citizens claimed that the EU regulation has become burdensome and unreasonable, holding back the British economy. They believed that after Brexit, the UK will have the freedom to set its standards and regulation which give Britain the chance to negotiate new trade agreements with countries outside the EU. Compounding the economic argument is that the UK's contribution to the EU is claimed to be unjustified by the corresponding benefits it receives and that it could be used elsewhere and saved on Brexit (Paul, 2019).

It is also argued that divorced from the EU, Britain would be autonomous to subsidise and support industries in a way that was restricted by the EU state and rules. Some also, argued that the low economic growth of the EU and the elevated unemployment impeded the economic development of the UK. Thus, the British insisted on the fact that Brexit is their opportunity to achieve an economic boom (Paul, 2019).

### **1.2.4 Cultural Values and National Identity Reasons**

Quite apart from material conditions, there is also a subjective dimension to Brexit. This narrative speaks to cultural issues and national identity (Tak, Morag, Maria, Juta, 2020). Under this view, Brexit was driven by the resurgence of English nationalism and the resistance to absorption into European identity.

Mass migration has inflamed cultural anxiety and provoked a feeling of cultural loss. The scare of the 'Other' was a focal reason for Brexit (Liav, 2016). Consequently, for brexiteers, Brexit is a form of 'cultural defence policy'.

### ➤ **Brexit and Britishness**

The UK matches a nation in search of meaning, and Brexit is just another step in the trip toward for searching an identity. Over the last decade, the contention over the sense of being British has been a focal feature in British politics. A loyalty oath, a citizenship test, a core curriculum, and a preamble were all measures taken by the British government, to promote attachment to British values, foster community cohesion and express shared values as well. In 2015, a year before the EU referendum the House of Commons Political and Constitutional Reform Committee held a popular contest to find a preface for a written UK Constitution (Liav, 2016).

### **1.2.5 National Security**

Brexiteers argued that Brexit would make a term to people's freedom of movement to Britain, thus the UK could establish an immigration policy that meets its goals. This policy will allow it to decrease national security concerns due to criminal immigrants by a large factor. Iain Duncan Smith, a former work and pension secretary, in his campaign for Brexit had expressed his concerns about this matter, he suggested that unlocked borders risk Britain's security. He said: " The UK will be more exposed to Paris-style terror attacks if it stays in the EU" (Rowena, 2016).

### **1.2.6 Campaign Factors: The Leave Camp's Dual Campaign**

There was an advantage for the departure campaign; the ability to crowd two types of electors, with an official campaign and a less formal grassroots operation (dual campaign). The

Leave campaign was divided into the formal campaign driven by Boris Johnson that motivate the part of the voter who saw themselves as honourable and conservative people and the more informal grassroots campaign driven by Nigel Farage. The informal campaign appeared to push those that felt left behind (the working class, the less educated and the older people), giving way to the populist movement. Usually, a departure camp weakens the operation; this time it served it well; The referendum of June 2016 approved leaving the block. On the other hand, a campaign to stay an EU member was weak and failed to convince Britons to vote against Brexit (Paul, 2019).

### **1.3 Brexit Process (The Withdrawal Procedures)**

The Brexit process is the withdrawal procedure that the UK parliament followed to split from the EU. Article 50 treaty of the EU guarantees the legality of each member to leave the bloc, it refers to arrangements for the withdrawal and the possible future relations with the bloc (EUR-Lex, 2012). This article states that:

1. Any Member State may decide to withdraw from the Union in accordance with its constitutional requirements.
2. A Member State which decides to withdraw shall notify the European Council of its intention. In the light of the guidelines provided by the European Council, the Union shall negotiate and agree with that State, setting out the arrangements for its withdrawal, taking into account the framework for its future relationship with the Union. That agreement shall be negotiated in accordance with Article 218(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. It shall be concluded on behalf of the Union by the Council, acting by a qualified majority, after obtaining the consent of the European Parliament.

3. The Treaties shall cease to apply to the State in question from the date of entry into force of the withdrawal agreement or, failing that, two years after the notification referred to in paragraph 2, unless the European Council, in agreement with the Member State concerned, unanimously decides to extend this period.
4. For the purposes of paragraphs 2 and 3, the member of the European Council or the Council representing the withdrawing Member State shall not participate in the discussions 26 of the European Council or Council or decisions concerning it. A qualified majority shall be defined in accordance with Article 238(3)(b) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.
5. If a State, which has withdrawn from the Union asks to re-join, its request shall be subject to the procedure referred to in Article 49.

Nigel (2021) states that the departure from the EU has passed through three phases. The first phase is the pre-referendum which extended from 23 January 2013 to 22 June 2016. The second is the post-referendum which is divided into two stages, exit negotiation from 29 March 2017 to 31 January 2020 and transition period from 1 February 2020 to 31 December 2020. The third phase is the UK after Brexit which started on 31 January 2021. These phases are shown in the table below

**Table 1.1 *Brexit Phases and Timeline***

Phase		Time
Pre referendum		23/1/2013-22/6/2016
Post-referendum	Exit negotiation	29/3/2017-31/1/2020
	Transition period	1/2/2020-31/12/2020
The UK after Brexit		From 31/1/2021

*Note.* Adapted from (House of Commons library, 2021).

### **1.3.1 Phase 1: Pre-Referendum**

In 2013, At the London headquarters of Bloomberg, Prime Minister David Cameron a leader of the conservative party delivered a speech in which he explained the strong relationship that ties the UK with the EU (GOV.UK, 2013).

He also mentioned significant points that had always been a subject of tension between them such as immigration, different political system, and the budget of EU spending. Subsequently, he promised the British people to renegotiate the relationship with the EU and to seek an in/out referendum if the conservative party win the next election. Cameron's speech played a turning point in the referendum happening. At the end of his speech Cameron insisted to fulfil his promise, he said:

“Over the coming weeks, months, and years, I will not rest until this debate is won. For the future of my country. For the success of the European Union. And for the prosperity of our peoples for generations to come” (GOV.UK, EU Speech at Bloomberg, 2013).

It was not until 2015 that the first step toward the referendum came true when David Cameron won the election. The conservative party promised real changes in the relationship with the EU and pledged an in/out ballot before the end of 2017. In June 2015, the Prime Minister informed Donald Tusk, the President of the European Council, that he sought a renegotiation relationship with the bloc in the field of social benefits, sovereignty, freedom of movement, economic governance, and competitiveness (Tim, 2018).

After months of negotiation, in December 2015, the EU Referendum act got Royal Approval concerning the UK's future membership referendum. Two months later, in February 2016, David Cameron announced the EU Referendum date on 23 June 2016 (Nigel, 2021).

➤ **The Result of The June 2016 Referendum**

When the day 23 June finally arrived, the British people voted on the referendum on membership. The result of the referendum appeared out of anticipation in favour of leaving the bloc in which the British people voted 51.89 % to leave, and 48.11 % voted to remain (Ahmoua, Gasmi & Ghilani, 2020).

**Table 1.2 United Kingdom European Union Membership Referendum 2016:  
Total Number Result**

<b>Options</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Leave</b>	17,410,742	51.89%
<b>Remain</b>	16,141,241	48.11%
<b>Total vote</b>	33,577,342	100.00%

*Note.* Adapted from (Statista Research Department, 2016).

The table below elucidates the referendum result according to the UK nations. England and Wales played a significant role in deciding to leave the EU, in which it secured 53.4 % and 52.5 % successively. In contrast with Scotland and Northern Ireland, both voted in favour to remain, in which it secured 55.8 % and 62.0 % successively.

**Table 1.3 United Kingdom European Union Membership Referendum 2016:  
The UK's National Result**

	<b>Remain</b>	<b>Leave</b>
<b>England</b>	46.6%	53.4%
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	55.8%	44.2%
<b>Scotland</b>	62.0%	38.0%
<b>Wales</b>	47.5%	52.5%

*Note.* Adapted from (BBC. EU Referendum Results, 2016).

The immediate consequence after announcing the result of the EU referendum within a few hours was the resignation of David Cameron. In July Theresa May became the new Prime Minister of the UK (Tim, 2018).

The first step toward handling Brexit surrounded defining the Brexit narrative which means what will and will not need change. The most challenge that faced May and her government was uncertainty about what leaving would mean; Therefore, Theresa May tried to determine the areas of negotiations. In her conference speech party in October, she declared a Great repeal Bill which asserted that before the end of March 2017, Article 50 will be activated she said: "It is not up to the House of Commons to invoke Article 50, and it is not up to the House of Lords. It is up to the Government to trigger Article 50 and the Government alone" (Nigel,2021, p.8).

### **1.3.2 Phase 2: Post-Referendum**

Before moving to the real split from the European Union, Britain needs to renegotiate its relationship with the block in many areas and to pass through the transition period to reach the sort of country that it wants to be in terms of relationship and policies with the EU and the rest of the world as well.

#### **1.3.2.1 Exit Negotiation**

The negotiation between the UK and EU had been led by David Davis and Michel Barnier. The first phase of negotiation began by triggering Article 50 on 29 March 2017.

##### **❖ Areas of negotiation**

According to Tim (2018), the areas of negotiation are summarized as follows:

- **The budget**

The European Union sets its budget for seven years, and the actual one runs from 2014 to 2020; Therefore, each member should pay his contribution to the budget. The UK participated in the EU projects such as research or transport infrastructure. Subsequently; The

question about money is concerned with how much the UK might owe to the EU, and how much the EU might owe in return.

- **North Ireland**

Concerning North Ireland, negotiation had faced challenges in finding a solution to several problems such as freedom of movement between Northern Ireland and Ireland, citizen's rights, and the economic needs of the region. All sides wished to avoid a hard border.

- **Citizens' rights**

Freedom of movement is a right for EU members. People can move without obstacles; this explains why there are an estimated 3.2 million EU citizens living in the UK and 1.2 million British people living elsewhere in the EU. Therefore; Negotiating citizens' rights means discussing the rights for education, employment, resident healthcare, and pensions for those people. Furthermore; Immigration was a driving reason that led many British people to call for Brexit which was also an integral part of the negotiation.

No-deal Brexit and reverse Brexit are two possible scenarios that need to be negotiated in case the two sides did not reach an agreement. Initially; no deal or chaotic Brexit might happen when the EU- UK negotiation ended without an exit deal or a deal over the new relationship. Secondly; reverse Brexit is the opposite of no-deal Brexit which is the UK's possibility to remain in the EU. (BBC, 2020).

### **1.3.2.2 Brexit Transition**

Officially, on 23 July 2019, Boris Johnson won the conservative party leadership and became the prime Minister. In 2019, both sides concurred on the withdrawal agreement in which they determined a transition period from 1 February 2020 until 31 December 2020. During the transition period, the UK continue applying the EU rules and principles (Nigel, 2021).

The UK also remains a member of the EU Single Market and Customs Union during this period, and it responds to the European court. The idea behind the transition period also called the implementation period, is to give space to the continued negotiations that take place between the UK and EU. In this period the core negotiation centred on the possible trade deal with the block and other countries such as Australia and USA. Transition Discussion was not limited to trade deals because other areas need to be decided (Tom, 2020), among them:

- Law enforcement, data sharing and security
- Aviation standards and safety
- Access to fishing waters
- Supplies of electricity and gas
- Licensing and regulation of medicines
- Northern Ireland protocol, protocols on Gibraltar
- Sovereign Base areas.

According to Alasdair (2022), the Brexit transition period finished on 31 December 2020 with concluding results agreed upon them by the two sides on the issues

- The UK leaves the EU single market and customs union
- the EU law is no longer applicable to the UK.
- agreement on the Northern Ireland and Gibraltar Protocols
- Agreement on Sovereign Base areas.
- Freedom of movement will end at 11 pm on 31 December 2020.

The agreement also involved the rights of EU citizens living in the UK, and UK citizens living in the EU, to access the public services and continue living, working, and studying the same way as they did before.

### **1.3.3 Phase 3: The UK after Brexit**

On 31 January 2021, the UK exited formally the EU under the terms of an arranged divorce agreement, giving licence to new relations chapters. EU rules are mostly no longer applicable to the UK. The broad message under Brexit is taking back control, thus The UK wanted to retrieve its right to decide and control its border, money, and laws. It is the time of what is called Brexit in practice.

The British government has faced challenges in moving to real Brexit, the first step was to introduce its policies concerning trade, the UK's departure from the Single Market and Customs Union disrupted trade, particularly the exports to the EU. The UK become free to look for alternative trade deals with countries with which they did not have trade deals before such as the third countries and the United States. President Trump has declared the prospect of a future "tremendous" agreement with Britain characterised to be "far bigger and more lucrative" than any deal with the block (Alasdair, 2022; CBI Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2021).

The government has adopted a new points-based immigration system in which rules for moving from and to the UK changed. EU nationals need registration and document to reside legally. Under this system, immigrant employees need to succeed in an English test to have a job. The new system has caused severe labour shortages in several sectors since immigration was restricted and many European returned to their home countries (. Jasmine, 2022; NHS Employers, 2022).

EU Fishing rights in UK waters was a sensitive area in negotiation, both sides have tried to get their right for fair competition. with the implementation of the new rules, the EU access to the UK water has decreased, and the British quotas have increased, the UK is still in need of the EU markets because most of its fish sells there. The struggle between France and UK

has appeared because dozens of French boats were denied to access England's coasts (BBC,2021; Daniel, 2021).

Concerning scientific cooperation and education, the UK has kept its membership with the EU's Horizon Europe program, the nuclear energy organization Euratom and the EU's Earth observation program Copernicus. Britain exited the EU's Erasmus student exchange program, and it established a novel UK international study and training program, the Turing Scheme. The UK also remains in the European Convention on Human Rights with the exclusion of number policies areas (Alasdair, 2022. UNIVERSITY of BIRMINGHAM, 2021).

#### **1.4 Brexit Impact on the UK**

The UK has already suffered from Brexit. Here are some of its impacts on UK sovereignty, growth, jobs, trade, immigration system and its impact on ethnic minority groups as well.

##### **1.4.1 Taking back Control**

The EU referendum was in favour of the divorce from the block. The most prominent slogan during the Brexit campaign was "take back control of borders, money, and laws" incarnated in reality by voters. Now the UK is outside the EU, and it is free from its rules (Alasdair, 2022). The vote made a term to 47 years of relationships, which strengthened the domination of EU regulation in different domains, and whose "freedom of movement" policy led to a significant rise in the number of immigrants, moving to the UK.

##### **1.4.2 Growth**

The UK government estimated that Brexit would lower the UK's growth by up to 6.7% over 15 years (Kimberly, 2022). Given how nearly the UK's split from the block was followed by the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is difficult to determine the direct effect of Brexit on the economy. The UK-based Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) declared that

Brexit's long-term impact would be worse for the UK economy than Covid-19. The OBR estimates that Brexit will decrease the UK's potential GDP (Gross Domestic Product) by 4% and the Covid by a further 2% (BBC, 2021).

### **1.4.3 Jobs**

Brexit hurts Britain's workers, employers are having a harder time finding applicants. One reason is the loss of European Union workers after Brexit, which is felt ever more keenly (Kimberly, 2022). This has hit the low-skilled and medium-skilled occupations the most. According to the UK Office for National Statistics (ONS), there were more than 1.1 million job vacancies from July through September 2021. It is a startling spike, made more dramatic by the Covid-19 pandemic that preceded it, but sizable even without it (Phillip, 2021).

### **1.4.4 Trade**

For Brexit, the transition period ended on 31 December 2020. The UK and EU concurred on a trade deal. This agreement is important for the fruit and vegetable supply between the two sides (BBC, 2021). The UK's exit from the EU's Single Market and Customs Union has led to important disruptions in trade, due to new border rules. New UK customs procedures and inspections slow down trade from and via the rest of Europe. This makes trade and re-export via the EU less attractive for fresh produce suppliers.

Trade routes are changing too, The UK used to be a land bridge between the EU and Ireland. Now, to reach the Irish market, European suppliers will need to look for more direct transport options. It will take time for the UK to resolve trade issues and improve procedures. As of 1 January 2021, EU trade agreements no longer apply to the UK. The UK has made new trade agreements with non-EU countries such as South Africa, Egypt, Colombia, Peru, Kenya, Central America, and Morocco (GOV.UK, 2020).

### **1.4.5 Immigration System**

One of the significant consequences of Brexit is the implementation of the new immigration system. From the start of January 2021, the freedom movement came to an end and EU citizens coming for work or living in the UK will require to request a visa (GOV.UK, 2021). The new immigration system will allow the UK to set its immigration policy and to control all its aspects in a way that was not possible because of the supremacy of the EU law (free movement policy).

The task of handling immigration will be complicated, the Government should make a balance between the Brexiteers' claims to restrict immigration and the demands of businesses. It should also take into consideration the impact of restricting immigration on the economy.

### **1.5 The Future of British Foreign Policies**

The independence of the UK from the European Union has brought significant changes in the context of foreign policies. Britain has restored its sovereignty, control, and autonomy over its international relations and has become free and open to cooperating with the world outside the block.

Under what politicians called global Britain, a new chapter of economic opportunities opened when prime minister Boris Johnson said "We have the newly recaptured powers, we know where we want to go, and that is out into the world" (GOV.UK,2020). Brexit will allow the UK to boost its trade with the US, Australia, and Asia.

On March 16, 2021, the UK government released its Integrated Review of Security, Defense, Development, and Foreign Policy in which it stated the foreign policy objectives. The statement of the integrated review provides the international strategy toward deeper engagement in the Indo-Pacific region in which it highlighted the importance of Indian location and the maritime domain of the region. A particular definition of the Indo-Pacific region does not exist

but in general, this region includes the zone between the east coast of Africa and the west coast of the Americas (Shireen, p. 9).

### **1.5.1 The European Union**

The UK has adopted a new shape of foreign policies toward the European Union. For Boris Johnson's government, Global Britain means looking beyond Europe, although he promised to cooperate with the EU whenever the situation needed (Amelia & Nicholas, 2021).

Any possible relationship between them now will be ruled by the Withdrawal Agreement and the trade and cooperation agreement. The issue of Northern Ireland, border management addition to the fisheries, and vaccine procurement have remained a core aspect of their foreign policy relationship (Richard & Whitman, 2021).

Furthermore, there still have been fundamental areas of cooperation that are considered global interest, such as climate change, counter-terrorism, and cyber security. In the document of the Integrated Review (IR) of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy a notable feature of the foreign bilateral relation is the absence of reference to the collaboration in terms of Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), which prioritize the cooperation with Indo-Pacific countries (Amelia & Nicholas, 2021; Richard & Whitman, 2021).

The actual collaboration with the EU has taken mini-laterally form with a select number of European states members such as France and Germany E3 diplomatic cooperation or larger member states arrangement such as NATO (Stefan, 2021).

### **1.5.2 China**

Brexit has pushed the UK government to rethink its global rule and place in the world, in which its foreign policy should be in favour of an idealistic view of Britain's history. This becomes more obvious when Boris Johnson said:

"But this is the moment for us to think of our past and go up a gear again, to recapture the spirit of those seafaring ancestors immortalized above us whose exploits brought not just riches but something even more important than that – and that was a global perspective" (GOV.UK,2020).

The Global Britain idea has given light to the UK-China possible relation and cooperation, which it has considered as a reference to distinguish between post-Brexit foreign policies and those during the EU membership. In an article called Global Britain leading the world, The foreign secretary Dominic Raab spoke about the new foreign policies and the enormous opportunities with the cooperation with Hong Kong and Iran (Nemo, n.d).

In 2020, Chinese activists people chose the UK as a destination for seeking asylum to escape from oppression. Under the British Nation policy (BN), the UK government announced grant status for those people, containing the right to work and settlement status application. On 31 January 2021, around 7,000 people sought settlement using this arrangement (Nemo, n.d). This policy sought to protect the Chinese people from suppressive behaviour in which the government justified this arrangement under the core beliefs of 'the force of good' and 'the ties of history' which reflect Global Britain's perspectives (Magnus, n.d).

The other possible area of cooperation between the UK and China is the responsibility for global security. As both countries have nuclear weapons under the non-proliferation treaty, and both have the permanent membership in the UN Security Council subsequently; a bilateral relationship may take place in the field of the global security and nuclear power project. Another potential cooperation may take place in areas of climate change and global health, especially during the Corona Virus pandemic (Nemo, n.d. Rana, 2021).

### **1.5.3 India**

On one hand, in the global Britain aspiration, the importance of the historical ties becomes visible when it gave preference to the shared history between the UK and other countries in terms of priority cooperation and economic relationship. On the other hand, the emergence of India on the international stage has shown its significance to the world. Therefore, British foreign policy took India as a partnership priority and is trying to boost its collaboration with it (Shireen, n.d).

Before Brexit, there were common areas of cooperation between the UK and India. The huge presence of Indian people in the UK has pushed the two countries to create mutual links to strengthen people-to-people ties. Also, both agreed on the view against terrorism (Shireen, n.d).

In addition, they collaborated in the area of defence technology and research in which India bought some defence supplies from the UK. The two countries have cooperated in some areas, such as the Defence and International Security Partnership (DISP), and joint military exercises. Furthermore, during the Corona Virus crisis, India provided the UK with medical supplies and face masks (Avinash, 2020; Shireen, n.d.).

The UK's post-Brexit partnership with India started obviously when the foreign secretary Dominic Raab visited India in December 2020, when he discussed the Enhanced Trade Partnership (ETP) and the structure for a tariff which set the roadmap for the bilateral cooperation in the next ten years. The discussion also covered cooperation strategies in the issues of defence and security relationships, counter-terrorism and climate change, and the Indian offer for the harvest framework. In this context, the Indian newspapers considered this official visit a declaration of the immediate and long terms cooperation between the two countries (Avinash, 2020; Shireen, n.d).

Another evidence of the emergence of the Indian-British bilateral collaboration is embodied in the invitation of prime minister Boris Johnson on India's republic day in January 2021 which was cancelled due to the strain of the pandemic (Avinash, 2020).

Shireen (n.d) states that in the context of the post-Brexit deal, The prime minister has sought a trade deal with India with large access to Indian markets for the UK firms. The collaboration in the global governance is from their mutual interest when the UK has supported India to get a permanent seat at the United Nations.

#### **1.5.4 United States**

After leaving the European Union, the UK's government seeks to reaffirm its global rule as a leading country in issues of global concern and to establish strong ties with the United States in diplomatic, security, as well as economic cooperation.

The bilateral relationship between the USA and the UK is not new, which started during the second world war and continued in the cold war when both countries worked together to fight the threat of the Soviet Union under NATO. The UK played an ally role for the US in the first Gulf War in the early 1990s and the invasion of Iraq in 2003, and it was a contributor to the NATO mission in Afghanistan (Derek, 2021).

Trump, the former president of the USA, expressed his support for the UK-US trade deal after Brexit. During his presidency, both countries achieved close cooperation in the issues of counterterrorism and combating Islam. Despite that, the two countries had diverged in political views on issues, such as the Iran nuclear deal and when the US troops withdrew in advance of Turkey's military operation on northern Syria (Azeem, 2020; Derek, 2021).

According to Azeem (2020), the new relationship under Biden Administration took a new direction in which the focus was on international issues like climate change and combating

the COVID 19 pandemic. The decision of the Biden Administration to re-join the Paris Agreement seems like an opportunity to boost the US-UK cooperation.

The US has agreed on the view that the UK has one of the most trained and well-organized forces which make Security and defence relation one of the possible future collaborations between them. Both countries share similar outlooks on issues of the role of the NATO, developing the military use and capability as well as the global and regional security challenges. Counterterrorism and intelligence cooperation are among the converging point between them, the US has a positive view toward the UK in terms of partnership against terrorism which described counterterrorism cooperation with the UK as excellent (Derek, 2021).

To conclude, in the post-Brexit era the UK's foreign relations with many countries such as India, China and the United States showed the hostile tendency it pursues towards Islam and Muslims, which will complicate further their lives in the UK.

### **1.6 Minority Ethnic Attitudes toward the 2016 EU Referendum**

The attitudes of Britain's ethnic minorities toward the membership referendum were mixed. While People from Indian backgrounds were almost twice as likely to support Leaving the block, Chinese, Black African, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Black Caribbean ethnic groups were supportive of continued EU membership. (Neema, 2018).

The motivation of people who voted in favour of the split was only that they felt the EU was controlling Britain. They were less likely to benefit from the advantages offered by the EU membership such as the free movement and were more likely to be male and older. On the other, ethnic minority remain voters were younger, in more professional careers and tended to be female. They were more likely to be positive about the EU membership (Neema,2018).

A study carried out by Neema (2018) with BAME Brexiteers and BAME Remainers revealed that the Brexit referendum had led to an alerting rise in racially motivated hate crimes and violence against minority ethnic groups. Accordingly, many BAME Brexiteers questioned their place in British society and regretted voting in favour of Brexit.

### **1.7 Brexit Vote Impact on Ethnic Minority Communities in the UK**

The exit vote was a 'big bang' instant for the immigrants from different backgrounds (Ola, n.d). During the Brexit campaign, ethnic minority groups experienced motivated hate crimes, racism, violence and discrimination. These circumstances alongside the lack of representation of these categories of citizens and the lack of detailed assessment of the Brexit impact on them (Farhan,2019), increased sensations of fear and insecurity for those communities who found themselves a bargaining chip in the Brexit negotiations (Ola, n.d).

Ethnic minority groups' concerns about Brexit impact compromise ambiguity about the costs entangled in ensuring their status and uncertainty around family reunion as well. They were also unsure about the ability to stay in the UK (fear of expulsion). Furthermore, Ethnic minorities were afraid that Brexit will restrict their access to public services (health services, employment, landlords, social security, education), and will negatively impact their career progression; research revealed that 52% of ethnic minorities felt that Brexit will damage their occupation advancement, these worries raise from the perceived discrimination from the major (Bonnie, 2019).

Moreover, Brexit ends the freedom movement of people consequently ethnic groups had concerns about losing the ability to travel across Europe freely. Finally, the Brexit campaign raised questions about racism, Britishness and identity; ethnic minority groups were worried that the Brexit debate will lead to a change in behaviour towards them and will give a licence for racism, violence and discrimination against them and thus their identities are menaced.

## **Conclusion**

The UK and EU economic and political union since 1973 changed with Prime Minister David Cameron's declaration in February 2016 that there would be polling to decide whether the UK and the EU would continue their coalition and cooperation or make a term for them. The decision to split from the block was the result of a public vote. The vote was 17.4 million favouring the exit versus 16.1 million who voted to stay a member of the EU. The UK left the block on January 31, 2020, under a negotiated divorce.

The majority of pro-Brexit voters found that the EU is the most important issue facing their country and threatens its sovereignty, thus Brexit offers the UK the chance to take back control of its affairs. By the time of the vote on June 23, 2016, a refugee crisis had made migration a subject of public anger across the UK. This issue constituted a major reason for the exit campaign. For them, Brexit would control the flow of immigrants to the UK from different parts of the world. They claimed that immigrants and refugees from poorer countries were taking jobs and benefits from Britain citizens and those immigrants are a source of the terrorist threat to the nation.

Moreover, for Brexit opponents, the rise of ethnic groups in the UK constituted a menace to their national culture and identity and saw the divorce from the EU as an opportunity to set a policy that protects their identity. Some Brexit supporters also concurred that exiting the EU would permit the UK to achieve an economic boom by establishing new regulations and negotiating new trade deals with other states outside the block. The reasons behind the Brexit varied amongst voters but what was certain was that the leaving campaign played a crucial role in convincing the British to vote in favour of exiting the EU by embracing the different categories of people (educated and less educated, working class, old people...).

Brexit has changed the nature of the UK-EU relationships and the UK's relations with the rest of the world as well. It throws the political identity of Britain into question. It creates new trade agreements between the UK and the rest of the world and new restrictions on trade agreements with EU countries. Brexit also ended the free movement of people from the EU to the UK and created a new immigrant system, which finally would allow the British parliament to control immigration. These are some of the Brexit impacts on the UK in addition to another economic impact, which is still unclear because of the COVID-19 pandemic; the full impact has to unfold.

Britain's ethnic group communities appeared as a decisive elective battleground during the 2016 referendum. The Brexit contention questioned issues of race, immigration, equality and identity. The stance of these groups toward Brexit varied between supporters and opponents. However, the rise of violence, hate crimes and racism during the leaving campaign along with the absence of presentation of this category's concerns and lack of clarity from the government made those people feel insecure and that their place and identities were questioned in the UK. The fear of the future and the unknown destination made the majority of these ethnic groups unsure about Brexit consequences.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Post-Brexit Identity Crisis: African-Asian Communities**

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## **Introduction**

Migration in the UK is frequently demonstrated and discussed as a post-war phenomenon, triggered by the incoming of Commonwealth immigrants. However, migration has always been an important characteristic of UK history. Migration was a decisive issue in the Brexit vote. The principal reason that made the majority of British vote in favour of leaving the block was the claim that the supremacy of the EU laws over the UK laws should end, and the belief that the divorce allowed the UK to get back control of its borders and migration system.

Any political or economic change will benefit some individuals while harming others. The decision of the UK to quit the block is no exception. Brexit is seemingly to influence all people in Britain, due to the social and economic changes in the legal framework of rights in the UK. However, Britain's exit will have an immense effect on particular sectors that do not have privilege and power in society. In other words, those who already encounter obstacles to inclusion, as well as racism and discrimination. Minority groups such as African- Asian communities are a good example.

The following chapter is devoted to one of the most significant outcomes of Brexit: the post-Brexit identity crisis of the Asian - African communities since the 2016 referendum. While a majority of Britons reject overt discriminatory attitudes, immigrants still experience discrimination and racism. This chapter explores those challenges with a particular reference to cultural dissimilarities, patterns of inequality and belonging. It opens by defining concepts of identity and immigration, which are necessary to understand what an identity crisis is. Then, it moves on to explain how immigration affects the immigrant's sense of identity.

Moreover, the chapter deals with Britain's history with racism and inequality toward ethnic minorities across time. Through this chapter, we will also discuss some of the African-

Asian communities' challenges with particular focus on the cultural, economic and social forces that shape and affect their identity and the feelings of belonging that accompany it. Besides, we will discuss Brexit impact on Muslims and asylum seekers. Finally, the chapter ends with a practical part where we will analyse Theresa May's speech on immigration.

## **2.1. What is an Identity Crisis?**

### **2.1.1. Identity**

The developmental psychologist Erik Erikson explains that identity is a fundamental organizing principle, which develops continuously throughout the lifespan. Identity engages the beliefs, relationships, experiences, memories and values that construct a person's subjective sense of self. This helps produce an uninterrupted self-image that continues to be constant even as new facets of the self are improved or strengthened through time (Kendra, 2021).

Identity is the concept of who we believe ourselves to be. It is personal (how you see yourself) and social (how others see you). A sense of identity aid individuals to build relationships and interact with the outside world. A firm identity may decrease anxiety and confusion, foster meaningful self-esteem and direct a person's choices (Zawn, 2022).

### **2.1.2. Immigration**

In the Oxford Languages dictionary, immigration is defined as the action of coming to live permanently in a foreign country.

Immigration refers to the process by which persons become permanent citizens of the host state. Historically, migration has been of significant economic, social and cultural advantage to countries. Immigration as a long and varied experience contributed significantly to developing multicultural societies. Many contemporary countries are defined by their diversity of ethnicities and cultures that have progressed from prior periods of migration (Sarah, n.d).

After the Second World War, immigration was mainly the outcome of the refugee movement pursuing that war. In the period between the 1950s - 1960s, Asian and African colonies gained their independence. As a result, former imperial centres such as Britain had experienced a significant increase in the number of immigrants.

An Immigrant in his journey to settle in a new country passes through three stages: pre-immigration, immigration and post-immigration (Dinesh & Matthew, 2005). The first stage refers to the moment when the individual decides to try a new experience by leaving his mother country and settling in another one. The second stage involves the person moving from his country of origin to the received one (physical relocation). The last phase; post-immigration starts when the immigrant arrives in the target country. This phase is defined as the absorption of the immigrant within the social and cultural framework of the new society (Dinesh & Matthew, 2005). It is considered the most difficult stage due to the challenges, problems and difficulties that individuals may face to adapt to the new social and cultural rules of the host state. These problems range from social, cultural and economic problems that may influence negatively the immigrant's identity.

### **2.1.3. Identity Crisis**

Oxford Languages dictionary defines an identity crisis as a period of uncertainty and confusion in which a person's sense of identity becomes insecure, typically due to a change in their expected aims or role in society.

Erikson defines an identity crisis as a developmental event that involves a person questioning his sense of self or place in the world. The formation of identity is one of the most important conflicts that people face. According to Erikson, an identity crisis arises when the acceptance of one's identity is questioned or rejected by oneself or others. The formation and growth of one identity are not confined to a specific period in the individual life only. Instead,

identity is something that shifts and changes throughout life as people confront new challenges and encounter different experiences. Thus, an identity crisis can occur at any age (Kendra, 2022). Immigration is one of those new experiences that affect identity.

In the case of immigrants, identity crisis arises mostly in the third stage of immigration (post-immigration) when they face different challenges ranging from cultural, social and economic difficulties in the process of adapting to their new environment.

According to Erikson as cited in Zawn (2022), identity aids individuals to reject incongruent self-judgment. For instance, an individual who has a firm identity deals more effectively with bullying by ignoring or rejecting it.

Moreover, Erikson states that an identity crisis may cause mental health problems like for example bipolar disorder, depression, and anxiety (Zawn, 2022).

## **2.2. How Does Immigration Affect Identity?**

According to Erikson, an identity crisis arises from persistent uncertainty about one's gender, religious, racial, ethnic, or sexual identity. It refers to the person's incapability to solve a personal challenge of great depth when he faces it (Rey & Groza, 2009). It is well known that individuals who migrate during the process of adjustment to the new social and cultural rules of the host country endure many stresses and challenges that may affect their identities, involving the deprivation of religious customs, cultural norms, and social support networks.

Dissimilarities between the immigrants 'culture and the culture of the received country, loss of linguistic and social support networks, workplace discrimination, limited access to health and public services, low socioeconomic status (SES), religious diversity and unacceptability by the dominant culture all affect immigrant's identity. If an immigrant thinks that, he is marginalised or rejected from his culture and unaccepted and/or unrepresented by the

dominant culture, he develops sentiments of exclusion, detachment, and inferior self-esteem and thus identity crisis takes place in his life.

### **2.2.1. Immigrants and the Feeling of Belonging**

The human being in his nature is a social creature. Being human is not confined to being an individual, instead includes belonging to a specific group of persons. Our sense of identity is based on social interactions that demonstrate our attachment and membership to particular groups via shared ethnicity, practices or values, beliefs, and from our religious regards (Peter, Simon, Carole, Patrick & Roger, 2007). Individuals identify with respect to social groups and relationships with people and places; this identification is called social identity or feeling of belonging.

The individual's identity is always accompanied by the feeling of belonging. If he is rejected from his group, his feeling of belonging is ruptured; as a result, he may experience an episode of an identity crisis since he has no group to identify with (no social identity). Farhan (2019) asserts that developing a sense of attachment is a continuous process shaped and affected by the experience of everyday life. Such experiences are mostly the result of the economic and social powers. Acceptance by the dominant culture, the socioeconomic status, access to public service, and treatment by the governmental institutions, all these factors perform a crucial role in forming and developing the immigrant's feeling of belonging. More immigrant develops a strong feeling of belonging to a particular community, more he develops a positive sense of identity and avoids identity crisis.

### **2.3. History of Britain with Racism and Inequality**

Britain has a long history of social diversity, from the incoming of the Celts, Romans, Anglo-Saxons, and Normans to that of the African slaves. After the Second World

War, Britain became a destination for people who looked for a better life. People from Africa and Asia, who suffered from the wars, found Britain a suitable place for living peacefully.

As the number of immigrants significantly increased, immigration became a public concern. Britons called for preserving their own culture and tradition. Ethnic minorities throughout UK's history have suffered from racism, discrimination, and violence; they are treated unequally and judged based on their colour and race. These new arrivals struggled to access private-sector employment or find houses (Farhan, 2019, p.15).

### **2.3.1. The Windrush Scandal 1948- 2018**

During the 1950s, as a result of the Second World War, the UK suffered from a struggling economy and labour shortage. To cover this problem, the government called for overseas workers from its colonies as a solution, and it gave them the grant for the right to stay and work. The new workers contradicted the existing labour force, which resulted in riots for over a week, and their homes were plundered and attacked by the British people (THE JOINT COUNCIL FOR THE WELFARE OF IMMIGRANTS, n.d).

During this period, natives called for immigrants' restriction and control, this claim led to the establishment of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act in 1962. This act limited immigrants from both colonies and Commonwealth countries. In 1968, the Britain Government issued another Commonwealth Immigrants Act, which further limited immigration.

Meanwhile, many colonies gained independence from British colonialism. People who belong to these countries even those who were born in the UK or had parents or grandparents who were born in the UK suddenly lost their citizenship and they were required to apply for 'naturalisation' to correct their status. But many were unaware of these changes (Farhan, 2019).

It is not until 2018 that the Windrush Scandal emerged when the Home Office asked immigrants to prove their citizenship status. The government demanded official papers that

prove their legal status. Most of those people arrived in the UK as children, and it was difficult for them to find evidence to prove their situation. Most of them had denied getting their legal rights for housing and healthcare, and in at least 83 cases were wrongly deported to their home countries. This scandal was named Windrush in reference to the ship 'Empire Windrush' that brought one of the first groups of West Indian migrants (THE JOINT COUNCIL FOR THE WELFARE OF IMMIGRANTS, n.d. BBC, 2021).

### **2.3.2. The River of Blood 1968**

The continued growth of immigrant numbers made public anxiety concerning opportunities for jobs and houses. Enoch Powell, a British Member of Parliament, delivered a speech in 1968 in which he strongly criticized immigration to the UK; he predicted that the British people would become foreigners in their country in the near future. He drew a painting of a white Briton who was incapable to live freely and who was unable to access education and healthcare services. The speech was called later "River of Blood" (Crines, Heppell & Hill, 2016; Farhan, 2019.)

The river of blood speech caused a social and political storm, which further rose public anxiety concerning immigrants; politicians found it a chance to adopt widely anti-immigrant rhetoric. Strikes took place in London when protestors claimed to carry placards which said "Don't knock Enoch" and "Back Britain, not Black Britain". Later, violent assaults against British Pakistanis and other British Asians emerged frequently during the 1970s and 1980s, and the speech had been blamed for that (Crines, Heppell & Hill, 2016; Farhan, 2019).

### **2.3.3. Hostile Environment Policy 2012**

In 2012 Theresa May a UK home secretary issued the hostile environment policy when she was home secretary, this policy referred to the immigrant cruel approach that contains a series of measures aimed at making life difficult for immigrants living in the UK. This policy

excludes people who do not have the correct documents that prove their status from basic necessities, including employment, housing, public funds, free healthcare, and financial services (Amelia, 2017).

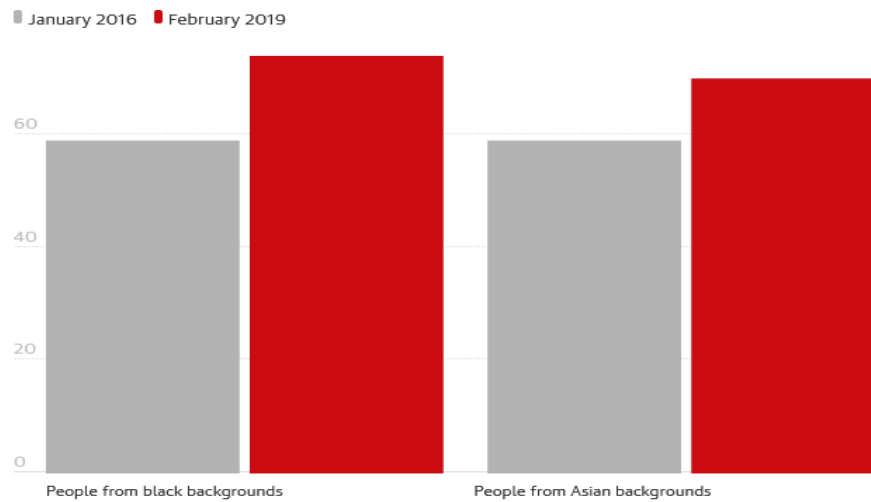
Theresa's idea was designed to be a deterrent in order to control immigrants to the UK especially illegal ones, and to oblige them to leave the country when she said: "The aim is to create, here in Britain, a really hostile environment for illegal immigrants" (Amelia, 2017). The approach has created a hostile environment, which encouraged discrimination toward ethnic minorities by calling them illegal and preventing them from their basic needs when others enjoyed all their rights. May's idea translated into government policy in the immigration acts of 2014 and 2016, which has created a deeply unequal and divided society (Amelia, 2017).

#### **2.3.4. Brexit Campaign**

The history of Britain has kept recording Racist abuse against minorities which was embodied in the claims of controlling and restricting immigration. In the wake of the Brexit referendum, ethnic minorities have increasingly continued facing racial and discrimination verbal or physical abuse.

Since the EU referendum people from Asian and black backgrounds reported growing racial discrimination and hate-motivated crimes. According to BBC Radio Cymru Manylu's program, the police of North Wales declared 416 motivated hate crimes in 2014, growing to 476 in 2016 and 858 in 2017. Police of South Wales also declared 879 incidents in the period between 2013-2014, growing to 1,102 in 2014-2015, and reported 1,232 incidents in 2015-2016 and 1,244 in 2017- 2018 (BBC, 2019).

**Graph 2.1 The Percentages of People from Black and Asian Backgrounds Reporting Racial Discrimination**



*Note.* Adapted from (The Guardian newspaper, 2019).

To conclude, Britain's long history of racism and inequality has shown the disparities between the reality and what is said toward the ethnic minorities living in the UK and has revealed its real unwelcomed attitudes and policies toward immigrants.

#### **2.4. The African-Asian Communities**

African and Asian communities living in Diaspora are always facing challenges in everyday life in terms of cultural differences, socioeconomic status, employment, access to public services as well as housing. All these factors strongly influence people's identity, in addition to the uncertainty about the split consequences, they have felt doubtful and insecure about their citizenship and identity.

Those minorities are always a sensitive issue as they are more vulnerable to racism, inequality, and discrimination. In May 2019, the UN Human Rights Council wrote a report where they described the present situation in Britain as grim in terms of racism and xenophobia.

The UK has continued to be a hostile environment for immigrants when it preferred a sovereignty-first Brexit and prioritised autonomy regulations over EU ones. New policies have been adopted in terms of housing, health care, job and access to public services.

### **2.4.1. Cultural Identity Crisis**

Culture is a significant factor in the ability constitution to form and shape one's identity. Cultural identity is a part of a person's identity, or their self-conception and self-perception, elements such as generation, religion, nationality, social class, ethnicity, or any social group with a distinctive culture are all related to cultural identity. Therefore, cultural identity is the combination of individuals' characteristics and a culturally similar group of individuals with the same cultural identity (Krischa, Emily, Jennifer & Maricela 2021).

According to Dinesh and Matthew (2005), identity will differ with the personal and social development of immigrants along with migration and the process of adaption to the prevailing culture. Immigrants experience significant cultural challenges. Once arriving in the new country of residence, cultural differences are the first thing immigrants notice. Dissimilarities between the native culture and the culture of the host country range from simple social customs such as greeting, shaking hands, how to seat, what we wear, and how we wear it to the most significant matters such as language, religion, arts, music, and food.

In the process to adapt to the new social and economic rules of the host country, an immigrant's cultural identity may be lost. An immigrant should envisage getting competence in the frame of both cultures; his mother culture and the prevailing culture without having an identity with one over the other or missing his identity. One cannot change his culture of origin. Therefore, should try to be bicultural instead of making one culture dominate the other. By doing this, an immigrant not only can resolve profound personal challenges but also manages a cultural identity crisis, and gains a better understanding of two different cultures, which makes him perform better in his daily life.

Cultural identity crisis or identity crisis, in general, is worsen if immigrant experiences racism, hate crime, and/or exclusion from the majority culture. Among the cultural

differences that exist between UK national culture and Asian - African communities, we find, for instance, Islam. Islam is a foreign religion to the British community the Brexit vote campaign has given new licence to racism, islamophobia and xenophobia. Statistics show that the EU referendum was a catalyst for an unexampled rise in reports of hate crime. Police forces in England and Wales set record numbers in hate crimes in the period following the Brexit vote. They recorded more than 14,000 hate crimes between July and September 2016 (BBC, 2017).

Imran and Irene (2018) interviewed with twenty (20) non-Muslim individuals from different ethnic backgrounds who experienced hate crime after the Brexit referendum. All participants revealed that they were treated as terrorists because they looked like Muslims whether through their appearance, ethnicity or race. For instance, a white participant declared: "they treated me as a terrorist saying: You have killed innocent people, go back to Syria, you terrorist". A catholic immigrant from Pakistan said: "Slogans including 'Muzzies out' were painted across the exterior walls of my house. The graffiti was in large white letters. A week later, I received an anti-Muslim hate letter in the post". An Indian Sikh stated that his fifteen (15) year old son was verbally abused by a gang of youths. They shouted to his face: ' you are a terrorist. The incident took place following the Manchester terrorist bombings.

Islamophobic hate crimes had a deep impact on Asian and African communities' identity and behaviour. In order to prevent any future physical or verbal abuse, they were obliged to hide their religious identity by changing their appearance for instance (by shaving their beard and/or taking their turban off). Others left their work and changed their place of residence (Farhan, 2019).

To conclude, African-Asian communities started to lose confidence and feel vulnerable. Loss of income and employment, insecurity, the uncertainty of their future and the

rupture of their feelings of belonging, all these factors made them question their identity, and place in the UK, and began to have negative self-esteem.

#### **2.4.2. Cultural bereavement**

Cultural bereavement refers to the experience of the displacement of a person or group from its native environment, caused by the loss of cultural norms, social structures, and sense of identity, the person or group continues to live in the past. Suffers feelings of guilt over abandoning culture and homeland. feels pain if memories of the past begin to fade, but finds constant images of the past (including traumatic images) intruding into daily life, and feels stricken by anxieties, morbid thoughts, and anger that mar the ability to get on with daily life (Dinesh & Matthew, 2005).

Migration entails the loss of the familiar such as language, values, religious customs and support systems. According to Dinesh and Matthew (2005), grieving for this loss is a healthy reaction and a natural outcome of immigration; but if the symptoms persist for a particular period and lead to an important disorder or distress, medical intervention may be needed.

Social, cultural and economic factors influence the expression of cultural bereavement. A study of the palliative care experience of patients from Bangladesh revealed that Recent migration, language, religious convictions and economic issues influenced their ability to manage the grieving process (Dinesh &Matthew, 2005).

The migration process itself is stressful. Immigrants experience many stresses that can affect their psychological state, and issues such as cultural bereavement may occur. If not addressed correctly, cultural bereavement can get complicated to depression, bipolar disorder or schizophrenia. Therefore, a provision with correct diagnostic, appropriate healthcare and treatment are necessary to address this issue.

### **2.4.3. Language**

Language is one of the barriers Africans and Asians face once arriving in the UK. Language fluency is crucial in showing one's thoughts and feelings and in perceiving one's value. Every aspect of life in which we connect with people is influenced by our ability to communicate. Individuals who do not understand the English language might struggle to adjust to their new life in Britain. Immigrants from countries adopting other languages than English as a second language such as Algeria or Tunisia will struggle more to adapt to UK society. Cultural identity is heavily dependent on language. Culture is defined as a historically transmitted system of symbols, meanings, and norms. ("Language: The Essence of Culture", 2016), Knowing English automatically enables Africans and Asians to identify with British and other people from different backgrounds who speak it. This connection is important to achieve cultural exchange, adaptation and positive self-esteem, which gives them a sense of personal stability.

### **2.4.4. Housing**

All over the world Home is the first place for people where they can find comfort and build their personality and view on the self. Thus, the social and economic condition of the home and the difficulties people face will influence their view on self and identity.

Khem, Joseph and Darren (2021) state that the majority of African and Asian minorities are having lower incomes with insecure contracts. Moreover, due to the unequal and discriminatory system, some of them have come under the temporary migration status in which they are subject to "no record to public fund (NRPF)", this policy prevents them from accessing social housing and the social security system, these conditions have obliged them to spend the higher part of their incomes in housing.

While White British renters spend 30% of their total income on rent on average, Black African and Black Caribbean renters spend more than a third of their revenue. Arab renters spend nearly half of their income on rent. (GOV.UK, 2018).

It is well known that the UK construction sector relies on EU imports in terms of materials with an average of 60%, and 25% of EU construction workers (RICS, 2021). For housing, an even larger source of the material comes from Europe. The trade deals negotiation between The EU and UK revealed that there are no direct tariffs on construction material but there are administrative burdens that will add additional costs which in return will make an effect on the housing sector. As well as the application of visa costs for new workers is going to make an impact (RICS, 2021).

Another possible situation may happen when this sector will face a shortage in labour due to the return of EU workers to their countries, as a solution to this shortage, some employers train workers and this cost more compared to hiring EU workers before the split which in return will raise rent cost (PENNINGTONS MANCHES COOPER, 2021).

In addition to that, food prices are expected to rise after Brexit due to shipping costs and the new red tape. All these conditions are expected to rise householders' spending which further the life difficulties for those minorities. (Ipsos, 2021; RICS, 2021; Sarah & Graeme, 2021.)

#### **2.4.5. Employment**

Socioeconomic status (SES) may influence significantly the immigrant's identity. Poverty can influence every facet of the immigrant life (where people live, kind of education, kind of food). Immigrants in poverty experience a lack of adequate employment, inferior degrees of education, inadequate medical care, drug and alcohol addictions.

Living in an insecure financial situation is the key identity that shapes the behaviour of poor families (Autumn & al, 2012). For instance, poverty may affect the identity development of immigrant children since it is often associated with shame and embarrassment, which may result in negative self-esteem.

Economic stress due to poverty negatively impacts immigrants' adjustment to new life, which may lead to an increase in the risk for solitude, depression, unruly behaviour, and substance addiction.

In Britain, African and Asian minorities are facing difficulties in accessing jobs, they are found in insecure sectors with temporary and zero hours of contract work (Lyndon, 2019). Statics shows that unemployment rates for BAME people are higher than for white British people across the country.

**Table 2.1 Unemployment by Ethnicity and Region**

<b>Region</b>	<b>unemployment rate BAME population</b>	<b>Unemployment rate white British population</b>
<b>London</b>	9%	4%
<b>West Midlands</b>	11%	5%
<b>North West</b>	9%	5%

*Note.* Adapted from (GOV. UK, 2017).

With the uncertain outcomes after leaving the European Union, African and Asian communities are increasingly afraid that Brexit will negatively impact their social life and career progression. According to the Equality Group, while, more than half (52%) of BAME people fear that Brexit will harm their career advancement, only 16% of non-BAME people have the same fear about their career. Moreover, 62% of BAME with 35% non-BAME were pessimistic about Brexit's impact on UK society in general (Consultancy. UK, 2019).

In comparison with other countries in Europe, income inequality in the UK is the highest. With the recognition that Black and Asian Minorities Ethnic (BAME) and refugee seekers work under the third sector with the level of insecure work remains too high in the UK (Kimberly, Rabia & Irum, 2018).

Today the third sector organization is the only source for them to fill some of their needs, these organizations fill gaps in the public services. The poor governmental level of support to this organization and the impact of austerity entailed a decrease in essential employment and integration services before Brexit (Francesca, Tom & Simone, 2020).

With The majority of BAME workers working in restaurants, public sectors, hotels, retail, and textiles, with inferior salaries, these companies risk being damaged by Brexit. Black Caribbean workers are found in public sectors in administrative or secretarial occupations and large proportion work in health services, while Pakistani and Bangladeshi work in distribution, hotels, and restaurants (Kimberly et al, 2018).

Due to the higher representation in services sectors, Ethnic minorities will likely suffer more than others with Brexit. The health sector is expected to face a tighter budget and greater performance pressure on staff, which will make a negative impact on them. Also, with a large number of clothing industries exports are located in the block, south Asian workers are in danger of even lower pay or losing their jobs when the government adopts the new tariff regulation and it is expected a fall in such business (Kimberl et al, 2018; Kimberly & Irum, 2018).

A combination of COVID-19 and Brexit has made a negative impact on minorities, Before Brexit, EU citizens tend to spend their holidays in the UK freely without obstacles but now with the loss of ability to travel freely and the lockdown situation which resulted in a decrease in tourist numbers. These conditions have impacted restaurant and hotel industries negatively, especially BAME working in this sector. Furthermore, the Loss of freedom of

movement has caused a problem for refugee workers who cannot travel to see their families elsewhere in Europe ( Ipsos, 2021; Phillip, 2021).

However, Brexiteers especially some minorities, who voted to leave the block, have a positive view on restricting immigrants that will increase job opportunities for the British Minorities. In addition, due to the loss of the freedom of movement huge number of European workers left their jobs after the end of the transition period, this in return will raise the chance for the minorities to substitute for them (THE WEEK, 2022).

#### **2.4.6. Health**

Health status and identity are interrelated in that the socioeconomic situation can make an impact on people's access to health services which in turn can affect their views on self-identity. According to Rikuya and

Toshiki (2018), numerous studies on social inequalities and mental health proved that the low SES of families increases children's risk of developing mental health problem and influence their cognitive and behavioural development. These problems worsen if they do not receive an adequate health care

In Britain, during the COVID pandemic time, inequalities between ethnic minority and white groups in terms of health emergencies have been embodied when ethnic minority communities have experienced higher infection and mortality rates than the white population. A Public Health England (PHE) report showed that Africans and Asians in England are up to fifty %(50%) more likely to die due to the COVID-19 virus. The report demonstrates the disparities between white and BAME people when priority treatment has been given to the white (Veena & Jonathon, 2021).

Ethnic groups with lower income have long relied on public services, and with the uncertainty of Brexit, they feel Brexit will affect them the most. Public health and social services are in danger of post-Brexit cuts to public spending. Also, the two sectors have long relied on EU

workers, A significant number of EU workers left their jobs at the end of freedom of movement leading to staff shortages in public health, which in turn made access to this sector difficult for poor ethnic people. Also, public health is predicted to face a lack of drugs by the new red tape condition, which further difficulties for BAME minorities (Kimberly et al, 2018; Richard, 2021).

Following the referendum vote to leave the European Union, Britain has witnessed rising levels of racism, xenophobia, and intolerance in public rhetoric and hate crimes toward minorities, especially BAME communities. A nationwide survey by Opinium in May 2019 shows that 71% of individuals from different backgrounds suffered from racial discrimination in January 2016 and that online racism has doubled since 2016.

BME origins more they experience racism, the more they are subject to experience mental health issues (Opinium, 2016), the study suggested a link between racism and mental health problems, the more someone experiences abuse and discrimination, the more likely to develop a mental problem (Robert, 2019).

Brexit discrimination has driven Schizophrenia rates among minorities to rise. Furthermore, living in fear of violence in all its shapes leads to this mental illness. The uncertainty about their situation after Brexit has led to increased stress and anxiety among these minorities. Moreover, Refugees are among the highest to experience trauma and depression, especially after the end of freedom of movement when they were forbidden to a reunion with their families elsewhere in Europe (Andrew, 2019).

To conclude the negative consequences of Brexit on housing, employment, food prices, and the lack of access to public services have participated in the rising poverty level among minorities which is the biggest driver of mental health problems which in turn influence people's identity and belonging.

### **2.4.7. Hate Crimes**

Hate crime is defined as 'any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice towards someone based on a personal characteristic' (GOV.UK, 2021) Ethnic and religious minorities were always targeted to hate crimes in diasporas.

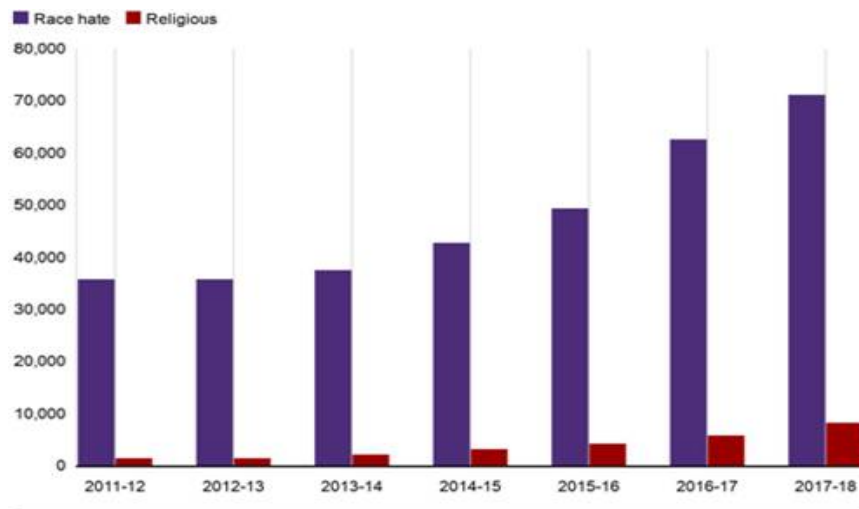
The Brexit campaign's xenophobic rhetoric and the claim for restricting immigration led to social changing in the public view toward immigrants and the spread of anti-immigrant sentiment across the UK. This change in social attitude could be explained by the racial and prejudices toward immigrants.

In the aftermath of the Brexit referendum, there had an alerting increase in the racially motivated hate crimes against immigrants and people from ethnic and religious minorities compared with previous years, especially in the areas that voted to remain in the block (Facundo, Jake, Silvia, 2021).

According to Police-recorded crime in England and Wales, 2017/18, Home Office, there was an increase of 17% in hate crimes compared with the previous year and since 2012/13 the number of hate crimes recorded has been more than doubled (William, Sloan, Burnap, Sutherland & Giannasi, 2021).

The Graph below shows the religious and race hate crimes reported to police from 2011 to 2018 in England and Wales. There was little increase from 2011 to 2015 and registered rising since 2016 to reach its highest in 2018.

**Graph 2.2 Hate Crimes Reported in Wales and England**



*Note.* Adapted from (BBC News, 2019).

According to Imran and Irene 2018, there was a rise in hate crimes toward people from different religious backgrounds, in particular Muslims, when they were targeted by Islamophobic hate crimes. Even non-Muslim people who look like Muslims suffered the same as Muslims when they were obliged to change their shape to look different from them. According to HateLab Analysis, race and religious hate crimes increased from a 112,000 annual average in 2015 to a 117,000 annual average in 2017 (William et al, 2021).

To conclude, the change in the public attitude toward ethnic and religious minorities led to the rise of hate crimes in the post-Brexit UK in which the political rhetoric strongly participated in this change.

#### **2.4.8. Brexit Impact on Equalities Groups**

Equalities groups describe key groups of people who are most likely to experience discrimination and inequality based on their personal characteristics like race and religion, and whose rights are protected under the Equality Act (2010). This Act was intended to protect

people from discrimination, harassment and victimisation (Eve,2020). Muslims and asylum seekers are two examples of these groups who face discrimination and social exclusion.

#### **2.4.8.1. Muslims**

In the early stage of the EU referendum, Brexit campaigners hardly mentioned the EU as a Muslim issue that in turn bring Muslims to the forefront of the problem (Salman, 2016). The negative impact of Brexit has also touched Muslim minorities as much as other minorities in employment, access to public services and housing in the UK.

Apart from the economic impact of Brexit, according to the British association Tell MAMA 2018 (Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks) Muslims have suffered from the rising level of Islamophobic hate crimes and attacks starting from the EU referendum vote. Also, there has been a sharp increase in verbal and physical abuse against Muslims online and on the streets which contain expression to go home (Sarah, 2018; Muslim Institute, n.d).

Muslim women have also encountered a rising level of verbal and physical abuse, particularly those who wear the hijab which leads to fear while travelling on public transport or even when going shopping (Salman, 2016).

Before Brexit, Britain has been one of the best countries for Muslims to practice their religion compared with other European countries, to what extent will Muslims maintain this freedom has become uncertain as the country has entered this hostile era.

#### **2.4.8.2. Asylum Seekers**

Arab Refugees and asylum seekers have long suffered to find a peaceful place to live a better life and Europe is one of their destinations. Their arrival has presented a complex issue in which they found difficult to integrate and live with dignity.

Rossella (2021) states that under the EU policies Dublin regulation provides asylum seekers with the right to basic needs such as housing, welfare and health care. This policy also

permits European countries to relocate asylum seekers to the European states that they have already passed through on their long trip.

The UK's exit from the European Union's refugee framework has freed them from its policies such as the Common European Asylum System, minimum standards for the treatment of asylum-seekers and the Dublin system. Brexit has born negative impacts on the region's asylum seekers who are already troubled by the hostile policies. Leaving the minimum standards for the treatment of asylum-seekers will cost the UK losing a billion pots of cash used to support asylum seekers (Lucy, 2016).

The new policies are expected to be more hostile as the UK did not welcome the increasing number of refugees and prevented them from accessing their basic needs to oblige their return on their own. Under the new laws refugees are in danger of deportation if the British authorities discovered an illegal coming from the EU, instead, it will refuse its asylum application and will try to send them back to the country that they came from or to a safe third country. Furthermore, the family reunion will be difficult for them by the end of free movement (Lucy, 2016; Rossella, 2021).

### ➤ **The UK-Rwanda Asylum Agreement**

Taking back control of its border and immigration was one of the main objectives of the UK's split from the European Union. And to achieve this goal, the UK government has started its first steps to reduce migrant flow by signing an agreement with Rwanda.

In Kigali Rwanda's capital on April 14, 2022, UK Home secretary Priti Patel announced the UK-Rwanda agreement at a conference with Rwanda's Minister of Foreign Affairs Vincent Biruta. Prime minister Boris Johnson depicted the agreement as an innovative approach to reducing the illegal coming through the English Channel (Radina, Sharon, Jorge, Sarah & Bethlehem, 2022).

The UK-Rwanda agreement is a deal to relocate people who seek asylum in the UK to Rwanda. Patel said in the conference the relocated people will enjoy up to five years the support embracing training, accommodation, integration, and health care (Radina et al, 2022).

The deal shocked the human rights organisation as Rwanda has an abysmal human rights record and it is one of the most crowded countries in terms of population density. The difficulties could face the Rwanda government to guarantee the right of thousands of refugees in such a situation (Chrispin,2022).

## **2.5. Analysis of Theresa May's Speech**

### **2.5.1. The Speech:**

On October 6, 2015, almost a year before the EU membership referendum, Home Secretary Theresa May gave a speech on immigration to the conservative party conference in Manchester.

Theresa May said:

"... Before I begin...our thoughts and prayers are with the family, friends and colleagues of the Police officer who was killed in the line of duty...Ten days ago I attended the National Police Memorial Day service where we remember all police officers who have died in service to the public. The police put themselves in harm's way to keep us all safe,.....We owe them all our gratitude..... economic migrants who simply want to live in a more prosperous society..... There are millions of people in poorer countries who would love to live in Britain, and there is a limit to the amount of immigration any country can and should take....., we must also have an immigration system that allows us to control who comes to our country....Because when immigration is too high....., it is impossible to build a cohesive society. It is difficult for schools and hospitals and core infrastructure like housing and transport to cope. .... But not all of the consequences can be managed, and doing so for many of them comes at a high price. We need to

build 210,000 new homes every year to deal with rising demand. We need to find 900,000 new school places by 2024. And there are thousands of people who have been forced out of the labour market, still unable to find a job... The evidence from the OECD, the House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee and many academics shows that at best the net economic and fiscal effect of high immigration is close to zero..... We rooted out abuse of the student visa system, and the numbers went down. We reformed family visas, and the numbers went down. We capped economic migration from outside the EU, and despite the growing economy, the numbers remained stable. Overall, after my first two years as Home Secretary, net migration which had reached 320,000 in 2005 fell to 154,000..... So reducing and controlling immigration is getting harder, but that is no reason to give up. As our manifesto said, 'we must work to control immigration and put Britain first'.

.....We have to do this for the sake of our society and our public services and for the sake of the people whose wages are cut, and whose job security is reduced when immigration is too high. We will also need to have more control of immigration overall. It is often said that Britain is by definition a country of immigrants..... but we need our immigration system to continue that British tradition of gradual, moderate, sensible change....." (INDEPENDENT, 2015).

### **2.5.2. Analysis**

Political discourse is one of the most important tools used by policymakers to change and orient public opinion. They use it to convince others of the benefits that arise from their leadership, to orient their attitude toward public issues, and to make them share their opinion and agree with their ideas. Studying language and taking into consideration all its functions, offer us a better understanding of how perceptions and convictions are influenced by language. In political discourse, ideas and ideologies are conveyed through language so that the receiver agrees with them. Concepts such as immigration, belonging and race when they are used in

political discourse, need specific meanings based on their use within this discourse. Multiple discourses can occur alongside. For instance, immigration, on one hand, can be seen as a source of strength in celebrating diversity, which entails that it is a beneficial phenomenon, and thus should be encouraged. On other hand, it can be identified as a source of threat, which means that immigration, and immigrants as well are risky for the society and thus should be strived.

The period preceding the EU referendum was characterised by immigration and refugee crises. During that period, politicians played a vital part in orienting and shaping public opinion towards immigration. Through their speeches, they made the majority of British adopt an anti-immigrant attitude toward non-British citizens, and vote in favour of Brexit, accordingly, racism and hate crimes against immigrants increased after the referendum.

In 2015, almost a year before the EU membership referendum, Theresa May Spoke on the third day of the conservative party conference in Manchester where she clearly showed her opinion and concerns about the increasing numbers of immigrants and attacked them for public services problems. At this conference, she called to establish a new independent system to restrict immigration, which was only achievable through Brexit.

Theresa May, in full Theresa Mary May, born October 1, 1956, in England, was a British politician who became the second woman Prime Minister (2016-2019) of the UK in British history after replacing David Cameron as the leader of the Conservative Party. May began her political career in 1986 as a councillor in London. Then she held several positions in the UK government such as shadow secretary of state for education and employment (1999–2001), shadow leader of the House of Commons (2005–09), and secretary of the state home department (2010-2012) (Jef, 2016). If there is one stance that defines Theresa May, it is her hostility to immigration. As a Prime Minister, she had equivocated and hedged in other areas, but she remained resolute in her desire to curb newcomers (George, 2022). She issued different

decisions and policies to restrict immigration like the hostile environment policy (2012) which later lead to the Windrush scandal in 2018.

Theresa May began her speech with mercy on the soul of a deceased police officer who was killed in the line of duty. An action intended to reduce the distance between her and the audience, in order to make her appear less harsh and more humanistic because she was going to deal with the most controversial topic in that period, which was immigration. Then, she moved to express her gratitude towards the police, so as to remind the public of the government's efforts to make their life more comfortable and safer. This section of the speech denotes Theresa's attention to remind the audience what the country is doing for them and that all government's decisions were in their favour hence they should trust it.

Theresa May used persuasive strategies to convince people of her negative vision of immigration and to make them agree with her. She was clear and direct in expressing her opinion toward immigrants when she called them "economic immigrants", giving the sense that immigrants are opportunists and looking only for their interests. She also declared her attitude towards them when she said: " there is a limit to the amount of immigration any country can and should take". She also attacked them for public services problems saying that schools, hospitals and core infrastructures like housing and transport find it difficult to cope with their increasing number. Moreover, she blamed them for the problems in unemployment and high prices as well as increasing demand for housing. When declaring her point of view on immigration, Theresa relied on shreds of evidence and facts that supported her proposals. She started by listing the negative impacts of immigration. Then, she provided statistics (We need to build 210,000 new homes every year to deal with rising demand. We need to find 900,000 new school places by 2024), and she used data from the House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee which shows that the fiscal impact and net economic of high immigration is near to zero. Finally, Theresa used

the Britain manifesto 'we must work to control immigration and put Britain first' so that her discourse will reach and convince the majority of British citizens.

In political discourse, pronouns are interesting to look at as they are often the means by which relationships are signalled and groups are constructed. Theresa May was aware of this technique and used it in a way that served her aim. She used the personal pronoun "I" to refer to herself when talking about the police officer killed in the line of duty to show her humanity and sympathy in order to build a relationship with the audience. She also used the possessive pronoun "my" in "my two years as Home Secretary" to strengthen her image and to highlight her role in reducing net migration.

In this speech, we also find the plural pronoun "we" to refer first to the government and Theresa, and second to refer to a group (the entirety of Britain) When referring to herself and the government this signalled that the government shared the same attitude towards immigration as the conservative party presented by Theresa May. This was obvious when she talked about different policies taken by the government to decrease immigration "We rooted out abuse of the student visa system, we reformed family visas, we capped economic migration". And when the pronoun " we " referred to a group consisting of the government, the British people and herself. This was again intended to represent the entirety of Britain as unified behind her vision of immigration. Here the pronoun is used when Theresa managed to show that immigration affects everyone in the UK " We need to build 210,000 new homes, we need to find 900,000 new school places by 2024, thousands of people who have been forced out of the labour market, still unable to find a job ".

It was then used to mention that the issue of managing immigration is the task and the responsibility of everyone in Britain "We have to do this for the sake of our society and our public services, we will also need to have more control of immigration overall ". Finally, through

the use of the plural possessive pronoun " our", May worked to arouse the feeling of British and national identity in order to support her " our society, our public services, our country". In other words, Theresa May mastered the use of pronouns in her political speech in a way that her convictions would be shared by everyone in the UK.

The use of modal verbs in speeches plays an important role in the presentation of special meanings. In Theresa's speech, we find the modal verb "must" when she talked about managing immigration and controlling it " we must work to control immigration and put Britain first, we must also have an immigration system that allows us to control who comes to our country". This conveyed a sense of urgency and obligation; controlling immigration is an inevitable step for the welfare of Britain and its citizens. Here, Theresa called for an action to save the UK from the negative impact of uncontrolled immigration.

By examining Theresa's speech from the perspective of A Literary Linguistic Analysis of the features used in it, we can illuminate the effects of such strategies and techniques on public opinion and we can understand what Theresa May is aiming at and the meaning behind her rhetoric. The analysis shows that Theresa used multiple language strategies and techniques in her speech to convince and orient the public to support her opinion and ideas, in a way that they identify immigration and immigrants as risky for British society and thus immigration should be controlled and restricted. Theresa used personal pronouns to build relationships with the audience. She employed persuasive language to convince the audience of her negative vision of immigration. She also used modality to call the public to react and take measures against mass immigration.

This analysis shows the power of political speeches during the Brexit campaign and reveals how they contributed to changing the public opinion toward immigration .these discourses made the majority of British society adopt an anti-immigration attitude, and fuelled

racism and hate crimes against minority groups. This analysis also supports our research hypothesis. Firstly, it confirms that immigration was one of the main driving forces behind Brexit. Secondly, it shows that the rise of racism, violence and hate crimes against immigrants after the Brexit vote was just a reminder of Britain's history with racism and inequality, since Theresa May was only continuing what others have stated before, and was following their road of creating a hostile environment for a minority group.

## **Conclusion**

Brexit demands for taking back control and restricting immigration to the UK have created an identity crisis for African and Asian communities living in Britain. Immigrants from African and Asian backgrounds started to question their identity and belonging to UK society once they were not accepted or rejected by the majority population. As a result, they felt doubtful about their ethnic, gender, religious, sexual, or racial identity especially when they faced racism and discriminatory attitude.

Britain's history of social diversity from the early arrival to the recent immigrant escaping from wars has created a discriminatory and unequal system in which ethnic minorities had long suffered from racism and violence and were treated based on their colour and race which influenced their ability to access public services, employment and housing.

The African-Asian communities have encountered the most difficulties and challenges in everyday life, where their work, spending, health and mental health are influenced by Brexit change. Asylum seekers and religious minorities especially Muslims have suffered from the rise of Islamophobic hate crimes and the changes in social attitudes. Cultural differences along with the socioeconomic status of immigrants strongly influenced their identity and the feeling of belonging.

In the era of Brexit starting from the campaign till the real split from the European union, minorities have been affected the most by the changes in the political discourse in which the politician adopted an anti-immigrant stance which in return led to the rise in hate crime and public rage toward immigrants.

## **General Conclusion**

## **General conclusion**

The current study presents the most challenging event in the UK's history namely Brexit. As a matter of fact, Brexit has brought many challenges to the minority groups that affect their sense of identity and the feeling of belonging that accompanies it. The research sought to uncover the post-Brexit identity crisis of the African-Asian communities and investigated how it has affected their sense of identity. The significance of this study lies in paving the way to further studies in order to scrutinize the plights of minority groups after Brexit. It was noticed that there was a lack of representation of this category during the Brexit campaign in addition to the lack of studies related to Brexit's impact on them. This study employed a descriptive analytical method and historical analytical method as well in order to investigate how Brexit has affected African and Asian sense of identity.

The present research consists of two chapters. The first chapter entitled "Brexit: overview, cause and impacts" gives a generalised view of Brexit and discusses the main reasons behind it. Besides, it deals with the general impacts of Brexit on the UK. Moreover, it presents ethnic minority groups' attitudes and concerns about Brexit. Finally, the chapter tackles the future of British foreign policies.

The second chapter which is entitled "post-Brexit identity crisis: African and Asian communities" is devoted to investigating the UK's history with racism and inequality and discussing Brexit impact on minority groups' sense of identity in terms of cultural and socioeconomic challenges it has brought to them since the 2016 referendum. Finally, it presents an analysis of Theresa May's speech on immigration before the Brexit vote.

The main objective for Cameron to declare the EU referendum of 2016 was to renegotiate some areas of the UK-EU relationship but the result came out of expectation in favour of leaving the block. Sovereignty, economic boom and national security were the main

reasons behind the divorce. However, immigration played a crucial role and was one of the decisive issues that affected the Brexit vote. EU referendum took place in the context of a refugee crisis, which made migration a subject of political rage. The issue fed also into wider questions of national and cultural identity. Mass migration has inflamed cultural anxiety and provoked a feeling of cultural loss. In fact, it can be said that immigration was the emotional argument in the Brexit campaign as opposed to that of economy or sovereignty.

Brexit offered the UK a golden chance to take back control of its borders, money and laws and to put an end to the increasing flows of immigrants by establishing its immigration policy. Besides, it provided it with the possibility to decide about its policies and to look beyond the European Union economically and politically.

The Brexit vote has led to a change in public attitude toward minority ethnic groups. Political discourses played a crucial role in making the majority of British society adopt an anti-immigration attitude. They fuelled racism and hate crimes against minority groups with the rise of these phenomena, immigrants from different ethnic origins began to feel that their place in British society was being questioned, and expressed their fear and anxiety about their situation in the UK and their identity as well.

Early migrant groups faced discrimination, inequality and racism within their regions of settlement mostly based on race and religion. The Windrush generation is a good example. The rise of violence and motivated hate crimes against outgroup members during the Brexit campaign and after the EU referendum was just a revival of Britain's history of racism and inequality against immigrants.

Brexit has brought social and economic changes to the UK's legal framework of rights. These changes have created different challenges to particular communities, such as African- Asian communities which in turn made them experience an identity crisis. The socio-

economic status, treatment by the governmental institutions, access to public services and cultural differences alongside the hostile British attitudes all perform an important role in shaping the feelings of belonging of immigrants and influence their sense of identity. These challenges contributed to making Africans and Asians live an identity crisis after Brexit in which they questioned their place and identity in British society.

From our analysis, we can assume that UK's history has an important role in forming people's attitudes towards equality, race, and belonging. History is mostly invoked as a resource for visualising national identity and future orientations. Britain's past with racism and discrimination toward non-British citizens determined the British society's attitude toward them in the present and the future.

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## الملخص:

تسعى هذه المذكرة إلى البحث في الحدث الأبرز الذي شهدته المملكة المتحدة، وهو خروجها من الاتحاد الأوروبي، والدوافع التي أدت بها إلى الانشقاق عنه، وتأثيره عليها. كما تبحث بشكل أدق في بعض التحديات التي أثارها هذا الخروج، جنبًا إلى جنب مع إرث بريطانيا من العنصرية في خلق أزمة هوية للمجتمعات الأفريقية الآسيوية القاطنين فيها. ومن ثم تحاول الدراسة الإجابة على السؤال التالي: كيف أثر خروج بريطانيا من الاتحاد الأوروبي على الإحساس بالهوية لدى المجتمعات الأفريقية والآسيوية؟ وسعياً للتوصل إلى إجابة مناسبة لإشكالية البحث، تتبنى الدراسة المقاربة النوعية، وتستخدم المنهج التاريخي التحليلي، وكذلك المنهج الوصفي التحليلي في جمع وتحليل البيانات من المقالات العلمية والصحفية والكتب. وقد كشفت الدراسة أن مساهمة استفتاء الخروج من الاتحاد الأوروبي في تصاعد العنصرية وجرائم الكراهية ضد المهاجرين هو مجرد تذكير بتاريخ بريطانيا مع العنصرية وعدم المساواة. وأن خروجها قد جلب العديد من التحديات التي أثرت سلبيًا على الهوية الأفريقية الآسيوية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** أزمة الهوية، استفتاء الاتحاد الأوروبي، خروج بريطانيا من الاتحاد الأوروبي، المجتمعات الأفريقية الآسيوية، المهاجرين.