
CITIZENS'
ASSEMBLY
ON BREXIT

TRADE WITH
COUNTRIES
OUTSIDE THE EU

OPTIONS

OPTION A

Stay in the
EU's Customs
Union

OPTION B

Agree a
special
customs deal
with the EU

OPTION C

Agree no
customs deal
with the EU

OPTION A: CUSTOMS UNION

WHAT IT MEANS

Closest to what we have today – maintains the same rules for how we trade with countries outside the EU

UK would apply EU tariffs to imports from outside the EU

UK would take part in free trade deals agreed by the EU

No customs checks on the UK/EU border



OPTION A: CUSTOMS UNION IMPLICATIONS

- **Some people think the EU can negotiate the best trade deals – its size brings power**
- **Others think the UK could do better: it could be quicker and tailor deals to our needs**
- **This option prevents the UK from choosing its own tariffs for non-EU imports**
- **No problem in maintaining the customs-free UK/EU border**

OPTION B: SPECIAL CUSTOMS DEAL WHAT IT MEANS

A deal allowing the UK to decide how to trade with countries outside the EU without harming trade with the EU

UK would decide its own tariffs for non-EU imports

UK would be able to strike its own free trade deals outside the EU

The goal is to keep customs checks on the UK/EU border minimal



OPTION B: SPECIAL CUSTOMS DEAL IMPLICATIONS

- **The best of both worlds? The UK could tailor non-EU trade policy to suit the UK without hindering trade with the EU**
- **Not everyone agrees. Maybe the EU can do better trade deals. What kind of trade deals would the UK agree?**
- **This option allows the UK to choose its own tariffs for non-EU imports**
- **But is a ‘frictionless border’ actually possible?**

OPTION C: NO CUSTOMS DEAL

WHAT IT MEANS

UK would
decide its own
tariffs for non-
EU imports

UK would be
able to strike
its own free
trade deals
outside the EU

Customs
checks on the
UK/EU border



OPTION C: NO CUSTOMS DEAL IMPLICATIONS

- **Some people think the EU can negotiate the best trade deals – its size brings power**
- **Others think the UK could do better: it could be quicker and tailor deals to our needs**
- **Under this option, the UK can choose its own tariffs for non-EU imports**
- **But customs checks required on the UK/EU border, costing time and money and causing particular concerns in Northern Ireland.**