
THE SUCCESS OF BREXIT BRITAIN WILL DEPEND ON HOW WELL IT CAN STICK TO ITS PRINCIPLES

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04.02.2020

EuroNews (3 February 2020)

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When the United Kingdom left the European Union last Friday evening, it marked the biggest shift in Europes political geography since 2004 when 10 former Eastern Bloc countries simultaneously joined the EU.

Brexit has already impacted the UK and the EU in several different ways. It has reminded people on both sides of the channel of Europes shared values and purpose. It has been a catalyst for ugly xenophobia and racism in parts of the UK, and at times severely strained the countrys democratic institutions. And the UKs departure deprives the bloc of a champion of EU enlargement, a process that helps promote human rights and the rule of law (however imperfectly), and of a voice against authoritarianism.

A key risk of Brexit is that it could divide and weaken the EU and the UK at a time when Europe should be a positive force in the world on human rights, climate change and much else besides.

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