

## **Comments to James Hurley, Business Editor of The Times**

by

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### **Why is Dover important?**

What is good for Dover is good for Britain, what is bad for Dover is bad for Britain. Dover is a vital trade route that handles 17% of the UK's trade in goods.

### **How busy is the Port of Dover?**

Last year, 2.6 million lorries passed through the port, that's 50,000 a week. Nearly 12,000,000 passengers travelled through Dover along with over 2 million cars and 80,000 coaches.

### **Are you worried about a post-Brexit Dover?**

Dover and the whole of East Kent very much values its strong links with the European Union. We are the closest mainland of Britain to the EU and our trade accounts for a significant element in Western European commerce. But the EU should be more worried than the UK. In 2017, the UK bought £341 billion of goods and services from the EU but sold £274 billion. This represents a trade UK deficit of £67 billion or, if you prefer, an EU surplus of £67 billion. It is understandable why the EU is very worried about Brexit.

### **Do you expect blockages at the Port of Dover ?**

That very much depends on the actions of the EU and the French. I have seen no evidence of UK workers wanting to block our imports from the EU. Our interests are in promoting free-flowing trade with the EU and the rest of the world. You should really address that question to Emmanuel Macron, the French President, and Jean-Claude Juncker, the EU President.

### **In summary, what will happen to trade through Dover?**

That very much depends on the progress of current negotiations and any new arrangements that come into force on 29 March 2019. If EU goods are reclassified as 3<sup>rd</sup> party consignments, it will entail a large increase in documentation and processing. Business will cope as it always does, but it will cope better the more advance notice it receives. Business connectivity and market efficiency depend on free-flowing transport links through the Southern Corridor allowing easy road access to Dover, Eurotunnel, Portsmouth and Felixstowe. Companies like Martintrux, Heritage Transport, Mike Beer Transport, M & B (Felixstowe), Active Transport, C.G. Hibberts and of course DFDS Seaways have the skills and experience to manage anything that is thrown at them, but the sooner they know the arrangements in place, the smoother the transition will be.

### **Finally, did you vote to leave the EU or to stay?**

I never reveal my voting habits or express a public opinion for or against Brexit. I work to support East Kent companies in whatever conditions prevail. As the Chamber of Commerce organises and chairs public meetings at general elections and referendums, it is important that we are viewed as non-partisan in the debates. What I can say is that I hear every shade of opinion from "We must be mad to leave the EU" to "I can see France from Dover on a bad day". The Chamber can trace its origins to the year 1850. It is fair to state that there have been bigger issues than Brexit facing the area. I expect with some confidence that the companies, residents and workers of the Dover District will find a way through any difficulties with success and good humour as has been the case for the last 138 years.

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17 October 2018

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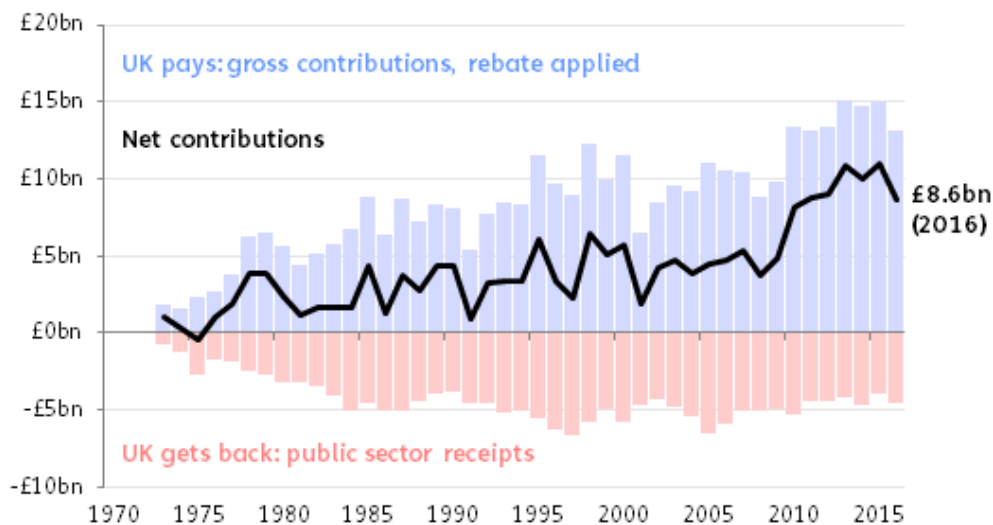
Period	Passengers	Tourist Cars	Coaches	Road Haulage Vehicles
2017	11,723,411	2,180,611	79,638	2,601,162
Per week	225,450	41,935	1,532	50,022
Per day	32,207	5,991	219	7,146

<https://www.doverport.co.uk/about/performance/>

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## UK payments to EU budget

Balance of UK contributions to and public sector receipts from the EU budget, inflation-adjusted in 2016 prices, calendar years



<https://fullfact.org/economy/our-eu-membership-fee-55-million/>

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## Trade with the EU matters a lot, but slightly less than it used to

About 44% of UK exports in goods and services went to other countries in the EU in 2017—£274 billion out of £616 billion total exports.

That share has generally been declining, since exports to other countries have increased at a faster rate.

...

In 2017, the rest of the EU sold about £67 billion more to us in goods and services than we sold to them, according to UK data—so the UK runs a “trade deficit” with the rest of the EU.

Exports of goods and services to other EU countries were worth £274 billion in 2017, while exports from the rest of the EU to the UK were worth about £341 billion.

<https://fullfact.org/europe/uk-eu-trade>