

‘Brexit’ and the MPA: reflections and opportunities



As you will already know, on Thursday 23 June, the UK voted in a referendum to leave the European Union. As an MPA offer holder, you may have questions and feel some uncertainty. As someone fascinated by the interaction of the law and policy-making, I was lucky enough to be able to follow Thursday night’s breaking news by the minute, since I was chairing the **LSE Referendum Night debate**. For five hours without a break, colleagues and outside experts looked beyond the headlines of the debate and analysed the results as they came in.

As a passionate pro-European, and as an Irishman resident in London for over three decades, I will not hide my dismay at the result. At this time of change, let me offer the following reflections:

1. London and the LSE are fully open. All students are emphatically welcome here, and the city will not close its doors to the people who are its life-blood! **The MPA will remain one of most internationally diverse degrees of its kind.** Our newly elected London Mayor, **Sadiq Khan**, who has been unequivocal about the city being open for business. As Sadiq has written in the **Financial Times**, “*our cities are places where everyone, whatever their background, can feel at home*”
2. Nothing will be changing for now: All politicians and commentators have suggested nothing will change for at least the next two years, probably much longer. And even then, many of those competing to be the next Prime Minister support Britain remaining a member of the Single Market: we are not shutting ourselves off from the world.
3. London is now the place to witness the policy-making process, and the LSE can bring it to you. Being in London over the next few years will provide a remarkable insight into policy-making. New deals will be negotiated on economic policy, legislative politics or the interactions of political institutions and voters. It will all be happening here, and we will all become students of public policy over the next few years.
4. A group of faculty has already formed to ensure the LSE will host the most influential speakers in politics, academia and beyond to share their thoughts and insights through our **public lecture series**. **We hope to bring many of these speakers to speak privately with MPA students.** The next few years, although uncertain, will also be *very* exciting.
5. LSE remains at the centre of the global debate. We were founded in 1895, and from the outset championed inclusivity (such as Votes for Women in the 1900s), diversity (such as the anti-apartheid in

the 1980s and 1990s). Our scholarship has always been global, not just British or European. **The MPA, with its wonderfully diverse student body and its global lens, continues the LSE’s finest traditions.** *And* the current drop in value of the Pound Sterling might just have made your studies more affordable.

So the right response from us here at the LSE – and the right personal response – is to ‘wait and see’. **We have a great programme, great faculty and we live in – in my view – the greatest city in the world.** We cannot predict everything that will happen as a consequence of ‘Brexit’ but if you have any queries about the programme we are here to help at mpa@lse.ac.uk

I hope you are looking forward to coming as much as I am looking forward to meeting you.



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