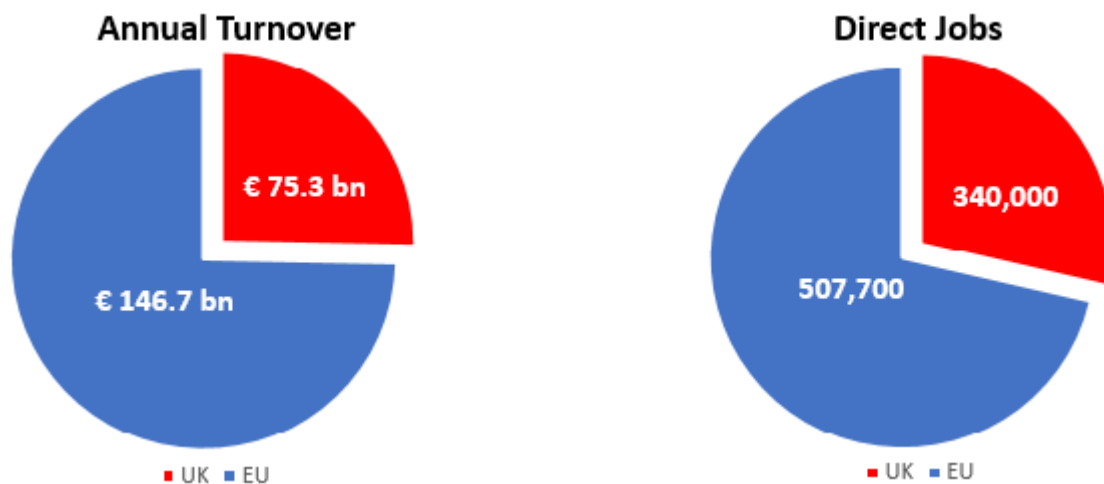


Impact of Brexit on the Aerospace Sector

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It has been widely argued that Brexit will come at a cost. In particular, the aerospace sector, in the UK and the remaining EU27, stands to lose out due to its interconnected nature, which will now be called into question during the Brexit negotiations. Brexit is not only a British concern but will instead impact the EU as a whole as the aerospace sector is truly integrated. Any changes that affect competitiveness will only benefit global competitors.



IndustriAll Europe and its British affiliates UNITE The Union, Community and GMB have campaigned against the United Kingdom leaving the European Union. This campaign has unfortunately, by a narrow margin, been unsuccessful and the British vote to leave has turned the UK’s political landscape on its head and its impact is sending shockwaves to Europe and beyond. This decision with all its consequences poses dramatic challenges for the European aerospace sector which is tightly inter-linked across Europe. IndustriAll Europe’s focus is now to safeguard employment and the competitiveness of the European aerospace sector. The UK is a major pillar for this sector, a leader in R&D, providing more than 340,000 direct jobs and supporting many more.

The triggering of Article 50 is reason for great concern for workers on both sides of the Channel. The outcome of the negotiations is entirely unpredictable and a source of insecurity. The threat of the UK becoming a tax haven in the event of a “hard Brexit” poses a threat to the Social-Economic model within the UK but could have serious implications across the EU. A race to the bottom in order to attract inward investment at the expense of workers’ wages, and terms and conditions, needs to be avoided.

Currently, many UK rights are derived from EU Directives covering Health and Safety legislation, Part Time Workers, Anti-Discrimination rights, Equal Pay, Maternity/Paternity rights, Parental Leave, European Works Councils (TICE Directive) and Collective Redundancies, which stand to be weakened when transferred to British law. However, it is the potential changes to or the straight-out abolition of the Working Time Directive, Temporary Agency Workers Directive and Acquired Rights Directive,

(TUPE) that pose the greatest risk to workers. IndustriAll Europe therefore insists that these provisions be upheld.

Moreover, the European aerospace sector, with its international focus, stands to suffer tremendous consequences from Brexit, should British access to European bodies, the Single Market or international research efforts not be continued after the conclusion of the negotiations. Over a million items are annually sent across the British Channel during the construction of aircraft engines, satellites, wings or the final assembly of an aircraft. A “hard Brexit”, which would see the UK not only leave the Single Market but also give up membership of the customs union, would paralyse established value and supply chains and seriously harm competitiveness of the sector in the UK and the EU27.

The suspension of freedom of movement would also mean more hurdles for the sector to contract highly-skilled personnel from Europe or other parts of the world and could quickly lead to a tremendous skills shortage and put research programmes and technological improvement into severe danger. The rise of racism and open discrimination of immigrant workers that has increased sharply after the Brexit vote is absolutely unacceptable and needs to be tackled more robustly by the British government!

In the process of the Brexit negotiations many quality jobs will be put at risk unnecessarily. IndustriAll Europe’s affiliates demand that the following conditions be met in order to avoid harming this cutting-edge sector:

- First and foremost, all employment legislation to be transcribed into British law needs to be upheld or improved
- Maintain UK membership in European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and the European Space Agency (ESA)
- UK temporary agency workers need to continue to be afforded the principles of equal treatment after 12 week’s continuous employment
- Maintain British membership in the Single Market and customs union with all rights and obligations
- Uphold the freedom of movement for skilled workers, transfer of undertakings (protection of employees) and working time regulation principles
- Maintain UK participation in joint R&D programmes, European Works Councils and Social Dialogue Committees
- Continue the fight against racism and xenophobia

Agreements upholding all these condition have been struck between the EU and other non-Member States. IndustriAll Europe calls on both negotiation partners to strive for an agreement that provides continuation for the European aerospace sector and allows it to continue to function in its current form, which has enabled it to rise to a position of global leadership.