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No longer felt like a religious holiday, Easter rather has become a welcome opportunity to travel. The usual traffic jams during holiday times are exacerbated at the borders to the Schengen area because of systematic and more rigorous checks of travel documents against wanted-lists. EU ministers of the interior had agreed to such controls already in November 2015 after the terror attacks in Paris. A foretaste of obstacles travelers would have to put up with crossing intra-European borders once the European Union should break apart.

Nevertheless: Wishes for a Blessed Easter from

Oliver Schuster

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Support in Orange: Participants in a demonstration called »Pulse of Europe« in Wiesbaden (picture) and many other European cities wanted to express their solidarity with the Dutch people three days before their parliamentary elections (on 15th March this year) letting them know their support: »**Blijf bij ons!**« (»Stay with us!«). Orange is the national color of the Netherlands. The outcome of the elections showed that it might have helped. As there are more elections at the local and national level in one or the other European Union country coming up in the near future, these Sunday demonstrations are continuing.

Like Being A Stranger in One's Own Land

When Suddenly
Plans For One's Life
Are On Knife Edge



**European Central Bank
(ECB) in Frankfurt,
Germany.** Number of
employees: approx 2 300.
Constructed 2008 - 2014.

Architect: Wolf D. Prix;
Bureau: Coop Himmelb(l)au,
Vienna, Austria.

So far, this profession of plumber is still the domain of Polish craftsmen, so much so that »Polish plumber« has become proverbial, and not always in a positive sense, in the U.K.; now, with Brexit looming, there might not be too many Polish plumbers left. They have been known to skillfully repair the most intricate plumbing systems of



centuries old houses in the English countryside. How many of the bankers-turned-plumbers will be able to handle that will be open to question. Polish craftsmen, like craftsmen from all the other nine Middle and Eastern European countries of the EU were granted immediate freedom of movement and trade in the U.K., at the time of their countries' being admitted to the European Union on 1 May 2004. As a side note: Germany being apprehensive of opening its doors to low-wage workers followed suit only seven years later. One can say that the unrestrained movement of workers from the newly admitted countries right from the beginning really was of the U.K.'s own making and they can't blame anyone but themselves.

Remain or Leave

Once the results of the referendum to »Remain« in, or »Leave« the European Union were in, it wasn't only the Poles who started to worry about their future in the island nation but also – irrespective of their nationality – particularly the directors, managers, employees in the fields of finance. For Britain to continue have easy access to the European market will require that finance institutions move their physical presence to the »continent«. Frankfurt, Germany, already the seat of the European Central Bank (ECB), has already high hopes to become the location of choice for banks planning to move out of the City of London's Finance Center.

Most, if not all non-British EU citizens in Britain are unsettled. Having planned their life around living in their adopted country, they had to realize that their future has become uncertain. Over a million of non-British EU citizens have made

London their home. London's mayor, Sadiq Khan, himself a descendant of immigrants from the subcontinent, is painfully aware of the problem: on 28 March 2017, the day before the official announcement of Britain's exit from the European Union, he went to Brussels to declare his supporting residence of non-British EU citizens in the country. He demanded from the British Government to guarantee irrevocable right to stay in Britain, as well as unconditional protection under the laws of Great Britain. Simultaneously, British citizens living in a European Union country should be given similar rights.

How to get assurances of that kind is anyone's guess, since Great Britain's exit will also entail leaving the European judicial system. One can't expect that Britain will give assurances at an early stage of the negotiations; assumptions are that Prime Minister Theresa May will use EU citizens residing in Britain as bargaining chips to squeeze as many concessions as possible from the EU in her negotiations with them. Whether she will be successful using the EU citizens in Britain as pawns in her political strategies remains to be seen.

Europe – Adopted Home

Uncertainties can be seen already in kindergarden. Asking one of the little ones where they come from, one can expect to hear something like: »I'm from Portugal«, »France«, »Italy«, rather than: »I am a British citizen«. The largest contingent of non-British EU citizens are the Poles who also encounter a great amount of hostilities. Should they now return to a country their children have never been to? What would be the impact on their children moving from their birth- and

Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?

- Remain a member of the European Union.
- Leave the European Union.

	Votes	Remain	Leave	Turnout
England	28.477.586.....	47%...53%.....	74,5%	
N'Ireland	790.523.....	56%...56%.....	62,7%	
Scotland.....	2.681.179.....	62%...38%.....	67,2%	
Wales	1.628.054.....	47%...53%.....	71,7%	
total.....	33.577.342.....	48%...52%.....	72,2%	

Results of the Referendum of 23 June 2016

living place to the home country of their parents?

After so many years having had the choice to live and work in any EU country, many EU citizens may have to rethink where to stay now.

It was upsetting for me to see how practically no one in Great Britain tried to counter the vitriolic tirades about the EU of the leader of the UK Independence Party (UKIP), Nigel Farage. To the contrary, all kind of arguments against the EU bureaucrats found wide distribution. E.g., in their shortsightedness fishermen in Britain were of the erroneous belief that after the Brexit, fishing quotas would be a thing of the past. One is tempted to counter: »Go ahead and deplete your fish stocks close to your shores; then you will see.«

The other crafty piper was Boris Johnson, previously Mayor of London who seemingly wanted to continue from their study times his feud with Prime Minister Cameron, and delighted a sizable section of frus-

trated voters with his slapstick and shenanigans. The majority of voters followed these two with eyes wide shut into the Brexit. The younger generation slept away the referendum. A very good friend of mine in England, living close to the border with Scotland wrote me: »I can't see whereto our world is going – first this Brexit, then the election of Trump in the United States. The voices against 'globalization' are getting louder and louder, and even the Scots are flexing their muscles. As it will most likely take years till we see any changes resulting from these upheavals, it won't affect very much us older people. But what will the coming generation cope with it?« I'd rather think that the effect won't take long to be felt. □

Commitment for Europe

Using Our Imagination And Joy to Plan Our Future Together

In February 2017 was the 100th anniversary of my grandfather (my father's father) killed in action, World War I. He was a soldier in the Grand Duchy Hesse's Reserve



Infantry Regiment No. 118, and died in the battle zone of Flabas, near Verdun, France. His only great-grandson, now at the age

of 54, traveled to France to visit the German military cemetery there where the remains of his great-grandfather purportedly are buried. He came back from France deeply troubled. The last resting-place of his grandfather who was killed in action 1944, somewhere on the Eastern Front, is unknown to him. His mother was at that time only three years old.

Reconciliation Is Possible

It is close to a miracle that after the mutual carnages and humiliations the feeling of hate between the for-

mer enemies has been curtailed, and peace reigns in Europe. The ardent desire of the traumatized survivors was reconciliation across the graves. Konrad Adenauer, Winston Churchill, Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman are the well-known founders of what has now become the European Union. Never again war! Student exchanges, partnerships with foreign cities, travels to neighboring countries, all that led to a better understanding. But only once the people of Europe are ready and willing to confirm by treaty their desire to permanently stay together one can expect that peace, human rights and prosperity will be assured. 60 years ago, on 25 March 1957, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands laid the foundation for the European Union by signing the Treaty of Rome. Other European countries joined, such as Denmark and the United Kingdom, on 1 January 1973. Following the result of a referendum on 23 June 2016, the latter country is now leaving the EU.

German military cemetery near Verdun. To the right, a marker for a fallen Jewish officer. His and many other Jewish soldiers' sacrifice for his country during World War I did not spare their people from prosecution under the Nazi regime.



Though the British parliament was for its greater part pro-European it had to bow to the referendum majority; Prime Minister Theresa Mays repeated endlessly: »Brexit means Brexit.« Negotiations concerning the Brexit are thought to take two years but no one has an idea whereto it will lead.

The next shock for Europe was the election of Donald J. Trump for President of the United States. Then, there were fears that parliamentary elections in the Netherlands will bring the party of right-populist Geert Wilders to the forefront. »Is there no one left with a spark of excitement for Europe?«, two attorneys in Frankfurt, Daniel and Sabine Röder asked themselves. They started the citizens' initiative of »Pulse of Europe«, to show the world that hearts are still beating for Europe.

My Heart for Europe

The first public gathering started the first Sunday of advent, 2016 in Frankfurt. Daniel Röder spoke: „Primarily our endeavor is to motivate the silent supporters of Europe. At the same time, we also want to address those who are apprehensive, fearful of, and angry about European institutions.“

The movement has grown to the extent that there are now over 90 cities where people assemble one of the city's central locations, every Sunday at two P.M.; eight cities in France have also joined the movement, important because of the upcoming elections for President in France.

Should the independent candidate Emmanuel Macron and his newly created movement »En Marche!«, strong supporters of a continuing European Union not make it to the run-off [Note: Macron not only made it to the run-off but also won to become French

President], the outlook would be grim: both the extreme-right candidate Marine LePen, of Front National, and the extreme-left candidate Jean-Luc Mélenchon, of La France Insoumise (»Unfaltering France«) are in favor of nationalism and leaving the European Union. The thought that nationalism and concept of enemy nations could raise its ugly head again is perturbing.

Not surprisingly, it was very moving to see the many people gather at the »Pulse of Europe« get-together, waiv-



The Hessian state parliament building in Wiesbaden, in it's impressive neo-classical style forms the background of every Sunday's manifestation of »Pulse of Europe«.

ing the flag of the European Union. I myself went to the assembly in central Wiesbaden, dressed in orange as the organizers recommended. That was to show support for the then upcoming elections in Oranje (Orange) country, the Netherlands, together with the participants' refrain: »BLIJF BIJ ONS, NEDERLAND!« (»Stay with us, Netherlands«), meaning: Stay with Europe..., we like you, we need you!

The Wiesbaden organizer, Dirk Vielmeyer, found a young violinist from the Ukraine and pulled him to the microphone. The violinist intoned with much feeling the »Ode to Joy«. The people thanked him with long-lasting applause.



The »Pulse of Europe« manifestation in Berlin was acknowledged with much appreciation in Dutch media: *»Duitsers demonstreen tegen ,nexit': blijf bij ons! was de boodschap van Duitse betogers die vanmiddag op de Gendarmenmarkt in*

Berlijn stonden. De ruim 5000 pro-EU-demonstranten willen dat hun buurland ook na de verkiezingen lid blijft van de Europese Unie. Daarom hielden sommigen van hen oranje borden met Nederlandse teksten omhoog.» [quote in original Dutch].

The indefatigable organizer of the manifestation in Wiesbaden, Mr Dirk Vielmeyer, has always been successful in finding a street musician bringing him to the microphone at the venue Dernsches Gelände, to play the European anthem.

Using Friedrich Schiller's text »Ode to Joy«, with music by Ludwig van Beethoven, the anthem is not really sung in German (or any other language's text). The people of Wiesbaden use a text created by Heiderose Kesselring [text see German edition]; so that everybody can join, the text printed on yellow cardboard is distributed among the attendees.

The singing gave one a warm feeling of belonging to the community, in Wiesbaden, in Germany, in Europe. □

Impressum



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Photo by Maurice de Chlourigon

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