

Who has got an upside from Brexit?

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This [comment](#) was posted on the blog yesterday:

Dear Richard,

I have read a certain amount of your articles and you seem to speak with a certain amount of knowledge and authority, and therefore I wish to pose a direct question to you. Who does benefit from Brexit?, it seems clear who the losers will be but who are the likely winners?

I thought that a fascinating question, so I am offering a blog post response.

First, let's be clear that most elites very clearly did not want Brexit. Don't be confused by those business people who backed it. Wetherspoons, Timpsons and others owned by those supporting Brexit are not multinationals and nor are they at the centre of the economy. Nor are their owners part of the normal business elites. So right now it cannot be said that the elite (however they are defined) planned a Brexit win.

Nor did most unions.

Or a majority in most political parties, whatever is happening now.

And let's be quite clear that just about no one in the EU, whoever they might be, wanted it.

So who did, and why? I think it safe to say three groups wanted it. The first were dogmatic nationalists. These have always been found in the Conservative Party, but did of course provide the foundations for UKIP. Nationalism is not rational. It is not dogmatic. The gain they secure will not be economic. Whether in that case the national pride they think has been wounded by EU membership will be healed is open to doubt.

Second there are those quite obviously left behind by society in the last thirty or so years. These are people whose skills, and the whole sectors they worked in, have been made redundant in that time. In many cases their whole communities have suffered

with them. Tending to be older and more male than female on average, many have not adapted well to their loss of the status they once had. This has fuelled resentment, not least of those in any employment. They think, or at least hope, that Brexit might restore their fortunes or that of their communities. It is not clear how this might happen.

And then, thirdly there were those who more generally felt that this was an opportunity to reject what most establishment politicians wanted on the grounds that neoliberal politicians have chosen to represent themselves and the whole political process as incompetent in the face of market forces. Many sent a rejection message as a result. I find this group, if anything, the most baffling. What gain they thought they would make from Brexit I do not know, but feel sure they will be disappointed.

So who will gain? Only the ideologues as far as I can see.

Plus those who are mobile, who always tend to be those with wealth, because they can quit and move elsewhere.

For everyone else the only tally will be of the losses. Try as I might I can't yet see an upside.