

What will Brexit mean for boating?

We take a look at what the outcome of the EU referendum is likely to mean for UK boaters travelling in European waters

It is an issue that's divided the UK, dominated the news and prompted debate from the Houses of Parliament to the high street, but what does the UK's vote in June to leave the EU mean for boat users?

Many of the regulatory challenges currently faced by British recreational boaters have an EU dimension – such as red diesel, border controls, invasive non-native species, biocides and European marine protected areas. While the British exit from the EU might have an impact on all of these issues, the nature and extent of that impact remains unclear.

There is also a wide range of issues affecting boating that do not currently have an EU dimension. For example, the requirement for qualifications when you go overseas is generally specified in national legislation, and is nothing to do with the EU.

Domestic UK issues such as national Marine Protected Areas (including Marine Conservation Zones), offshore renewable energy installations, carriage and disposal of flares, lifejackets, light dues, and alcohol limits are unlikely to be affected by the outcome of the referendum.

Important role

The RYA has an important role to play in lobbying European institutions to ensure that boaters face the minimum of regulatory interference.



We will continue to engage with the relevant Government departments in an effort to minimise any impact on recreational boaters. It's worth noting in this context that the European Boating Association is a Europe-wide (not an EU-wide) organisation, as is the UN Economic Commission for Europe, which created the International Certificate of Competence.

Whatever the UK's future relationship with Europe, we will work hard to ensure that recreational boating is as unfettered as possible. During the forthcoming negotiations and transition period, we will keep members updated and advise them on how their boating activities may be affected.

We will also continue to ensure that legislators, regulators and other authorities understand, and take account of, recreational boating activity.

MORE INFORMATION

If you have any questions about boating abroad, please feel free to get in touch on **023 8060 4232**.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- **Article 50** of the Treaty on European Union establishes the procedures for a member state to withdraw from the EU. Once that is invoked, Britain will have a two-year window in which to negotiate a new treaty to replace the terms of EU membership.
- The UK must first notify the European Council of its intention to withdraw. The Council will then be required to provide guidelines for the conclusion of an agreement setting out the arrangements for the UK's withdrawal.
- The agreement will be negotiated, taking into account the UK's future relationship with the EU. The agreement will be concluded on behalf of the EU by the Council, having obtained the European Parliament's consent.
- It is important to note that there will not be a change to legislation or trading arrangements for at least two years. We will not know how significant the decision to leave the EU will be until we have a clearer idea of the terms the UK negotiates for its continued relationship with the EU.
- In the meantime, UK citizens remain EU citizens, the UK remains in the EU for VAT and customs purposes and there should be little noticeable difference when sailing between the UK and other EU countries.