Negative Brief: UK FTA

By “Coach Vance” Trefethen

The AFF plan advocates completion of a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK, Great Britain).  
**Background on Britain, Brexit and Ireland**:  
In June 2016, British voters approved by 51.9% majority a referendum to exit the European Union. The vote sent shockwaves throughout the world, given the size of the British economy and the potential consequences on business, travel, immigration, foreign workers, and many other factors. Countries that join the EU spend years integrating their laws, trade policies, labor policies, and regulations into compliance with EU policies. Now, the entire process had to be undone, which would also take years to accomplish. The negotiations dragged on until a conclusion was reached that had Britain’s exit would be concluded on 31 December 2020. One question still to be resolved is how to (or whether to) reinstate the international border between the British territory of Northern Ireland and the rest of the island, which is the Republic of Ireland and still a member of the European Union. While Britain and Ireland were both EU members, the border didn’t matter for purposes of trade and travel, any more than the border between, for example, North and South Carolina. Now that the border officially does matter again (think of the changes that would happen at the NC/SC border if N. Carolina suddenly joined Canada), the integration between the two parts of the island is in limbo. Before Brexit, goods entering Ireland could travel to Northern Ireland and throughout Britain and the rest of the EU without any customs stops or taxes at borders. If the border between the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland were not reinstated, that free flow of trade could continue, which would circumvent and bypass one of the purposes of Brexit (separating the British economy and trade from the EU). If it is fully reinstated, some of the conflicts that historically have led to violence and terrorism over the division of Ireland could flare up again.  
 When Ireland was in process of gaining independence from Britain in the early 1920s, a majority of citizens in the northern counties of Ireland objected to being ruled by a Catholic majority in Dublin and insisted on remaining in union with Britain. Thus, the counties of "Northern Ireland" remain to this day part of Britain, while the rest of the island is the independent "Republic of Ireland." This solved some problems but created others. The Catholic minority in Northern Ireland now found itself on the wrong side of the border, wishing they could be part of the Irish Republic instead of stuck with Britain in a country where many of them felt discriminated against and mistreated. Those whose discontent reached the boiling point began supporting violent means to bring about change, and those who opposed them also resorted to violence to oppress and suppress dissent. Violent Catholic-supported groups favoring merger with Ireland (like the "Irish Republican Army, the IRA) and violent Protestant-supported groups (like the "Ulster Volunteer Force") favoring continued union with Britain often clashed or committed acts of terrorism. The British government in London sent in the Army in 1969 to quell the violence, but they too became caught up in the conflict, both as perpetrators and targets of attacks, and things got worse, not better.   
 The US helped mediate a resolution to "The Troubles," as the conflict was known after 1969, in the late 1990s, with a political settlement that enacted reforms to the Northern Ireland local government. This settlement is often referred to as the "Good Friday Agreement."   
 Thanks to the membership of Ireland in the EU, the Good Friday Agreement, and the ending of "The Troubles," the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland has been wide open for some time. But with Brexit, goods that pass between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland are technically entering or exiting different trade zones, with different regulations, taxes, etc. Britain and Ireland are still trying to figure out all the rules. And the disadvantage in this case says that if Britain joined an FTA with the US, they would have to create a "hard" border so that the EU would not be able to bypass all of its trade rules with the US by simply shipping everything to Ireland and then sending it right on into the UK across the open border.

Negative: UK FTA 3

SOURCE INDICTMENT 3

British Government. They will keep on saying they want an FTA for political reasons, even though they will never make the concessions needed, and it wouldn't benefit them much anyway 3

British Government has to keep hyping US/UK FTA for political reasons, even though it's not realistic 3

INHERENCY 4

1. Status Quo US/UK trade policies are adequate 4

US/Britain negotiations are making improvements and going in the right direction, even without FTA 4

2. WTO/MFN. Status Quo has almost-Free Trade already 4

US/UK trade occurs under World Trade Organization (WTO) and Most Favored Nation (MFN) rules without an FTA 4

WTO / MFN rules for US/UK trade mean there isn't much more an FTA could do beyond the Status Quo 4

MFN means very low tariffs / low trade barriers anyway 5

WTO means very low tariffs / low trade barriers anyway 5

US/UK tariffs are already low, so not much further reduction possible 5

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE 6

1. No benefit to the USA 6

US/UK trade deal would produce little US economic benefit because the numbers are so small 6

2. No benefit to the UK 6

UK negotiators won't be able to make a deal that benefits Britain 6

SOLVENCY 6

1. Already tried & failed 6

US & Britain already tried 5 times to negotiate an FTA and couldn't reach an agreement 6

AFF cannot do more than Status Quo 7

2. Irreconcilable Differences 7

British government will not compromise on key issues. Comprehensive US/UK trade deal isn't possible 7

UK government won't/can't compromise on non-tariff barrier reductions (like standards & regulations) 7

US/UK FTA agreement can't be reached due to irreconcilable differences, and wouldn't be beneficial even if it happened 8

3. More study needed 8

US/UK FTA might be an irrelevant waste of time - we need to take our time and study it more 8

US government should stop and rethink FTA with UK. We need more study to make sure we do it right 9

4. No room for UK to negotiate 9

Britain can't negotiate FTA rules with the US because they must conform to EU standards to maintain trade with Europe 9

5. No US federal jurisdiction over key issues 10

Most of the potential benefit to the UK would be in services sectors. But US regulations in those sectors are done at the state level, not the federal government 10

DISADVANTAGES 10

1. Distracts us from more productive policies 10

Negotiating an FTA with UK, when it has so little benefit, would be bad because it would distract us from FTA's that actually would bring benefits 10

2. Closing the Irish border 11

Link: FTA with Britain physically won't work unless Britain closes the border between the Republic of Ireland (which is still in the EU) and British Northern Ireland 11

Brink: Northern Ireland peace settlement is close to breaking 11

Impacts: Closing the Irish border = Reduced economic well-being and increased risk of terrorism in Ireland 11

3. British health care costs 12

US/UK FTA would significantly increase health care costs in Britain 12

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British Government. They will keep on saying they want an FTA for political reasons, even though they will never make the concessions needed, and it wouldn't benefit them much anyway

Peter Sands, Ed Balls, Mehek Sethi, Eleanor Hallam, Sebastian Leape, Nyasha Weinberg 2018 (Balls - Research Fellow - Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business & Government - Harvard Kennedy School and Visiting Professor, King’s College, London. Sands - Research Fellow - Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business & Government - Harvard Kennedy School. Hallam - PhD Candidate - King’s College London. Leape - Masters in Public Policy (MPP) Candidate - Harvard Kennedy School. Sethi - MPP Candidate - Harvard Kennedy School. Weinberg - MPP - Harvard Kennedy School Alumni) May 2018 " On the Rebound: Prospects for a US-UK Free Trade Agreement" (accessed 14 Sept 2022) https://www.hks.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/centers/mrcbg/working.papers/USUK%20FTA%20516%20FINAL.pdf

We can summarise the prospects and potential benefits of a US-UK FTA across five dimensions – strategic interest; timeline and capacity; tariffs; non-tariff barriers and regulations; and politics and negotiability – as in Table 1 below. The conclusion is clear: a US-UK FTA is only going to happen if the UK makes concessions that are unlikely to be politically acceptable and in any case, promises relatively limited upside for UK business. However, the importance of such a deal to the overall Brexit narrative (and specifically, to the case for leaving the Customs Union) means that the Government is likely to continue to behave as if negotiating an attractive deal with the US remains a realistic possibility.

British Government has to keep hyping US/UK FTA for political reasons, even though it's not realistic

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Former Senior Official in the European Commission: “The UK desperately needs this deal, but the US couldn’t care less. The Brexiteers need a political win at the moment.” The Government has therefore consistently talked up the prospect and potential benefits of such a trade deal. Failure to deliver such a deal could therefore be seen as a significant political setback. Even acknowledgement that such a deal is an unlikely prospect would contribute to growing concern about the UK’s economic prospects.

INHERENCY

1. Status Quo US/UK trade policies are adequate

US/Britain negotiations are making improvements and going in the right direction, even without FTA

Marley Morris 2022 (associate director for migration, trade, and communities at Institute for Public Policy Research, a UK think tank) TRADING UP- PROPOSALS FOR A PROGRESSIVE US-UK TRADE PARTNERSHIP PROPOSALS FOR A PROGRESSIVE US-UK TRADE PARTNERSHIP, Aug 2022 (accessed 14 Sept 2022) https://www.ippr.org/files/2022-08/trading-up-august-22.pdf

In our view, the US and the UK should take the opportunity from their current talks to develop a new progressive partnership on trade policy, combining the UK’s focus on deepening trade ties with the US’s interest in worker-centred and sustainable trade. While the prospects of a US-UK free trade agreement are low in the short run, there is scope for the US and the UK to form a new kind of trade partnership which makes concrete progress in tying trade policy to a broader social and environmental policy agenda. This partnership could signal the start of a fresh progressive consensus on trade and globalisation, which helps to establish and embed new norms on the pursuit of ethical, sustainable trade. There are already signs that the US and the UK are heading in this direction. Earlier in 2022, UK trade secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan and US trade representative Katherine Tai met for two US-UK dialogues on the future of Atlantic trade held in Baltimore and Aberdeen. There are now plans to develop a roadmap covering several policy areas, including digital trade, supply chains, and food security, as well as worker-centred trade and environmental and climate action. The landing zone for a trade partnership appears to be focussed on how to combine the traditional approach of trade policy – aimed at expanding trade and investment – with a broader agenda focussed on workers’ rights, sustainability, and climate action.

2. WTO/MFN. Status Quo has almost-Free Trade already

US/UK trade occurs under World Trade Organization (WTO) and Most Favored Nation (MFN) rules without an FTA

Gregory Jason Bell 2020 (Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Czech Republic; Briefing Paper Commissioned by the Czech Parliament) 10 February 2020 (accessed 14 Sept 2022) Mixed Prospects: Post-Brexit Anglo-American Economic Relations https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339177917\_Mixed\_Prospects\_Post-Brexit\_Anglo-American\_Economic\_Relations/link/5e42b8f6299bf1cdb91f9905/download

Such bilateral political posturing aside, and despite the repeatedly-mentioned “special relationship” between the two Anglophone nations, the odds of doing what Trump referred to as “a very big trade deal” are, in reality, slim to none. Instead, for the foreseeable future, the United States and the United Kingdom will most likely continue to trade with each other under World Trade Organization (WTO) Most Favored Nation (MFN) status, which dictates “fair” and “equal” trade, but thanks to the imposition of tariffs, not free trade.

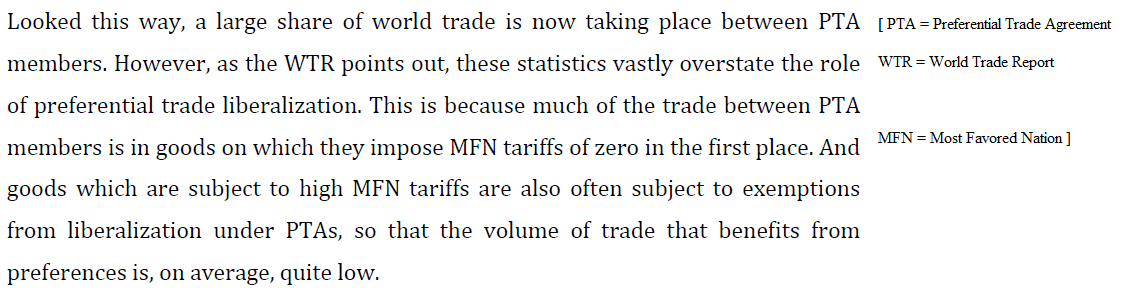
WTO / MFN rules for US/UK trade mean there isn't much more an FTA could do beyond the Status Quo

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For many Americans, the two countries already have an adequate trade deal in place. Currently, trade is conducted under WTO-MFN rules, “which includes the imposition of tariffs,” but at this point, 50 percent of U.K. exports to the United States meet with zero tariffs, while the vast majority of the remainder face tariffs that are “quite low, about 3 %,” chemicals and agriculture being exceptions. Certainly, tariffs have not damaged trade between the two nations, which has reportedly been “brisk.” Because such “open and strong” bilateral trade relations already exist, noted one U.S. trade negotiator, “it is unclear how much more there is realistically to gain.”

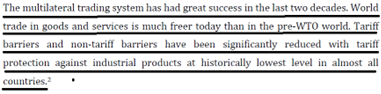
MFN means very low tariffs / low trade barriers anyway

Dr. Jagdish Bhagwati, Dr. Pravin Krishna and Dr. Arvind Panagariya 2014 (Bhagwati – PhD; prof. of economics at Columbia Univ. Krishna – PhD; Professor of International Economics and Business, Johns Hopkins Univ. Panagariya – PhD; prof. of economics at Columbia Univ.) 3 May 2014 “The World Trade System: Trends and Challenges” <https://www.sais-jhu.edu/sites/default/files/JB-PK-AP-SIPA-SAIS%20Draft.pdf> (accessed 26 June 2022) (brackets added)



WTO means very low tariffs / low trade barriers anyway

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US/UK tariffs are already low, so not much further reduction possible

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Tariffs between the US and EU (including the UK) are already relatively low, averaging under 3% in most sectors, so there are relatively limited benefits from further reductions. On average, existing EU (and thus UK) tariffs are higher than current US tariffs, so the UK will have more to give.

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

1. No benefit to the USA

US/UK trade deal would produce little US economic benefit because the numbers are so small

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For example, the United States “accounts for around 15 percent of U.K. exports,” while the United Kingdom “accounts for just over 3 percent of U.S. exports,” amounting to only 0.7 percent of U.S. GDP. Thus, Britain is a relatively small trading partner, and the macroeconomic benefits of doing a trade deal with the British would also be “small” for the United States. Simply, the United States does not have much to gain from a trade deal with the United Kingdom unless it can use its size and power to strongarm the British into making valuable concessions.

2. No benefit to the UK

UK negotiators won't be able to make a deal that benefits Britain

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Playing into U.S. hands in this regard, the United Kingdom also “lacks institutional capacity and experience in trade negotiations” because such negotiations were “outsourced” to the European Union “for the last several decades.” The United Kingdom’s “relatively inexperienced negotiators in the newly formed Department of International Trade” will probably be outmatched by the highly experienced U.S. Trade Representative “sharks.” Moreover, trade deals are games of bullying, and the biggest bully “typically gets their way.” U.S. officials see Britain as “unusually vulnerable” and feel able to “treat the U.K. with a new disdain,” facts illustrated by the U.S. commerce secretary’s assertion that Brexit is a “God-given opportunity” to take business from the United Kingdom while it is in a “period of confusion,” and by a U.S. trade representative’s observation that “it is now time for a more aggressive approach.” For its part, the White House views Brexit “as an opportunity to renegotiate the relationship in its favor: a chance to boost American jobs and economic growth.” Clearly, the “Anglosphere” and the “special relationship” will not alter the “hard-nosed reality of trade negotiations,” and British officials who might be relying on such sentimentalities “are in for a rude awakening.”

SOLVENCY

1. Already tried & failed

US & Britain already tried 5 times to negotiate an FTA and couldn't reach an agreement

Congressional Research Service 2022 (non-partisan research agency of Congress; written by Shayerah I. Akhtar, Specialist in International Trade and Finance) updated 17 Feb 2022 U.S.-UK Trade Relations (accessed 14 Sept 2022) https://sgp.fas.org/crs/row/IF11123.pdf

Brexit opened up the possibility of a U.S.-UK free trade agreement (FTA). The Biden Administration has been reviewing the bilateral trade negotiations that occurred during the Trump Administration under the latest Trade Promotion Authority (TPA, which expired in 2021). The two countries held five negotiation rounds in 2020, but did not reach a final FTA.

AFF cannot do more than Status Quo

Affirmative team cannot fiat that Britain accepts the US position or that all problems magically go away. The Status Quo has already tried to do exactly what the AFF is proposing: Offer the UK a Free Trade Agreement. If it's not possible, then it's not possible and we ought to give up, vote Negative, and find something else to work on. If it is possible, then the Status Quo will work it out on its own, and we don't need this resolution or this plan to make it happen.

2. Irreconcilable Differences

British government will not compromise on key issues. Comprehensive US/UK trade deal isn't possible

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During the Brexit process, the Remain campaign used such American desires to stoke fear among the British populace, that food standards would be made “more lax” or slashed, and they would soon be ingesting “foreign bodies in food,” like chlorinated chicken, irradiated beef, growth hormones, dangerous pesticides, “rat hairs and maggots.” To reassure the public, which strongly opposes a reduction in standards, the U.K government has repeatedly stated that it “will not compromise” and “will not lower existing product safety, environmental and animal welfare standards” in order to achieve a U.K.-U.S. FTA. Nor, it said, will British healthcare, guaranteed by the “closely-guarded” National Health Service, be in any way compromised. Such protectionist statements by the British government, in light of assertions by U.S. officials, including Trump himself, that “everything” should be “on the table” when it comes to trade negotiations, seem to preclude a comprehensive trade deal between the United States and the United Kingdom.

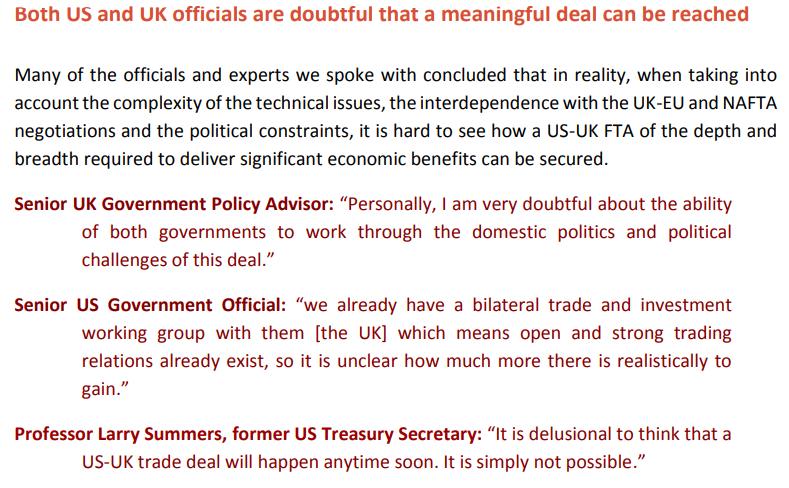
UK government won't/can't compromise on non-tariff barrier reductions (like standards & regulations)

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Senior UK Government Official: “The bulk of this deal is in standards and regulatory arrangements, which means that even discussing a US-UK deal is a waste of time. As seen in TTIP, there are many standards British citizens and the Government will never compromise on which leaves little room for negotiation.” Senior European Union Representative: “Non-tariff barriers is an issue that is more difficult than both governments admit - what is realistic is small gains.” Senior Official in the European Commission: “The US may seek market access in things like the treatment of public services, especially health services, which would be particularly politically sensitive [in the UK].”

US/UK FTA agreement can't be reached due to irreconcilable differences, and wouldn't be beneficial even if it happened

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3. More study needed

US/UK FTA might be an irrelevant waste of time - we need to take our time and study it more

[Eric Martin](https://www.bloomberg.com/authors/AOaOh6XkAJY/eric-martin) and [Alex Morales](https://www.bloomberg.com/authors/ADs4dGzOXuE/alex-morales) 2022 (journalists with Bloomberg News) March 22, 2022 (accessed 14 Sept 2022) U.S., U.K. Seek to Deepen Ties in Absence of Free-Trade Deal <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-03-22/u-s-u-k-seek-to-deepen-cooperation-without-free-trade-deal?leadSource=uverify%20wall> (brackets added)

A free-trade deal is “is a very 20th-century tool,” [U.S. Trade Representative Katherine] Tai said. “It has its place certainly in the toolbox,” Tai added, saying that she wants to make sure that the approach by the two nations is “maximally responsive, and that we don’t spend years and spend a lot of blood, sweat and tears working on something that isn’t going to be relevant to the needs of our people and our economy.”

US government should stop and rethink FTA with UK. We need more study to make sure we do it right

**Nancy Rosen, Cameron Krause and Jenik Radon 2021. (Rosen - law student** *at William & Mary Law School. She graduated summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Goucher College with degrees in International Relations and French.* **Krause** *is a law student at William & Mary Law School. He recently graduated from Rutgers University, where he studied Accounting and Political* Science. Radon, adjunct Professor at the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia Univ) 24 Feb 2021 "US-UK Free Trade Agreement: Not So Fast" (accessed 15 Sept 2022) <https://comparativejurist.org/2021/02/24/us-uk-free-trade-agreement-not-so-fast/> (brackets and ellipses in original)

The disparity and conflict in regulations is concerning, in fact quite so. However, as President Biden has already made clear, his initial focus — rightly so — is going to be domestic, and on the pressing issue of COVID-19. This will give the Biden administration time to rethink the nature and real purpose of trade agreements, not just the UK agreement. The US can also take the time to learn from French President Macron’s approach. Macron adamantly advocated for climate change standards in the European Union–Mercosur free trade agreement. The Biden administration would do well to continue the vision of President Obama who wanted to have the Trans-Pacific Partnership set “‘a high-standard . . . trade deal that puts American workers first and makes sure we [the United States] write the rules of the road for trade in the 21st century.’”

4. No room for UK to negotiate

Britain can't negotiate FTA rules with the US because they must conform to EU standards to maintain trade with Europe

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Senior Official at the European Commission in the Directorate-General for Trade: “Most issues are “either-or” and put the UK in a corner to decide who to align with, especially when it comes to regulatory standards.” Senior US Government Trade Negotiator: “It’s not just about sovereignty, UK regulation needs to stay as close to Europe as possible, this means they might keep a lot of the same regulations in place anyway, which would limit the scope of a US-UK FTA.”

5. No US federal jurisdiction over key issues

Most of the potential benefit to the UK would be in services sectors. But US regulations in those sectors are done at the state level, not the federal government

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Most of the potential upside for UK business arises in service sectors where UK institutions have particular strengths, such as education, financial services and the creative industries. The UK will therefore seek reductions in non-tariff barriers in these sectors. However, significant concessions from the US in such areas look unlikely, partly because many of the critical regulations are set at state level rather than by the federal government, and partly because of the political salience of the issues. For example, in higher education, individual states control degree certifications and bar exams. [**END QUOTE**] Following the financial crisis, financial services regulation in the US has been the subject of intense political debate and legislative activity; since the US was reluctant to make any concessions on regulatory harmonisation during the TTIP negotiations, when the UK was playing a leading role on the EU side, it is unclear why the US would be prepared to concede more in a purely US-UK deal with more limited upside. [**THEY GO ON LATER IN THE CONTEXT WRITING QUOTE**:] Senior US Government Official: “This issue [financial services] is easier to support in theory but very hard to negotiate the details. It requires legislated cooperation between both countries’ central banks and institutions; in some cases, the US federal government doesn't have the jurisdiction to take such measures, and the executive branch often has its hands tied by Congress in many of these cases.”

DISADVANTAGES

1. Distracts us from more productive policies

Negotiating an FTA with UK, when it has so little benefit, would be bad because it would distract us from FTA's that actually would bring benefits

Gregory Jason Bell 2020 (Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Czech Republic; Briefing Paper Commissioned by the Czech Parliament) 10 February 2020 (accessed 14 Sept 2022) https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339177917\_Mixed\_Prospects\_Post-Brexit\_Anglo-American\_Economic\_Relations/link/5e42b8f6299bf1cdb91f9905/download

Why put so much time and energy into an FTA when the gains “might be slim?” Such effort would be better spent on the ongoing tariff negotiations with China, an FTA with Japan, and a wheat deal with the European Union. The United Kingdom might need a deal, but U.S. trade negotiators are feeling the pressure elsewhere. Furthermore, the United Kingdom might have little more to gain financially from an Anglo-American FTA than the United States. In fact, the U.K. Treasury estimates that such a deal would only increase U.K. GDP by .2 percent in the long term. If this is true, an FTA simply might not be worth it for either side.

2. Closing the Irish border

Link: FTA with Britain physically won't work unless Britain closes the border between the Republic of Ireland (which is still in the EU) and British Northern Ireland

**[Note: This is not an argument against Affirmative fiat. AFF can fiat that the US House of Representatives votes for their plan, notwithstanding Speaker Pelosi's concerns. The problem is that "IF" they go ahead and do that, one of two things will happen, either of which would justify a NEG ballot. Either 1) Disad. The Irish border would have to be closed, which will trigger a disadvantage. Or 2) Solvency. The Irish border would be left open, which makes it physically impossible to enforce a US/UK trade agreement because Ireland is still in the EU, not part of the UK.]**

Gregory Jason Bell 2020 (Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Czech Republic; Briefing Paper Commissioned by the Czech Parliament) 10 February 2020 (accessed 14 Sept 2022) Mixed Prospects: Post-Brexit Anglo-American Economic Relations https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339177917\_Mixed\_Prospects\_Post-Brexit\_Anglo-American\_Economic\_Relations/link/5e42b8f6299bf1cdb91f9905/download

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi said that if Brexit in any way “undermines the Good Friday Accord” by closing the Irish border, then there will be “no chance” of an FTA passing, an idea echoed by the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. However, if the Irish border “stays open,” as the politicians demand, then an Anglo-American FTA simply “won’t work,” because goods could then pass tariff-free via Ireland from the European Union to the United States.

Brink: Northern Ireland peace settlement is close to breaking

Tom McTague 2022 (staff writer at THE ATLANTIC, based in London) Europe’s Ireland Problem Is Here to Stay 19 May 2022 (accessed 14 Sept 2022) https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2022/05/eu-brexit-role-in-northern-ireland/629905/

In the run-up to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, Secretary of State Colin Powell introduced President George W. Bush to the “[Pottery Barn rule](https://www.nytimes.com/2004/10/17/magazine/if-you-break-it.html)”: “You break it, you own it.” Powell’s point was that military victory over Saddam Hussein would not be the end of America’s involvement, but the beginning. Something similar is true for Northern Ireland today, where the fragile peace settlement that has just about held for nearly a quarter century is [close to breaking](https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2022/05/sinn-fein-win-northern-ireland-election/629787/).

Impacts: Closing the Irish border = Reduced economic well-being and increased risk of terrorism in Ireland

Dan Haverty and Brendan Reaney 2018 (*Dan Haverty is an intern with the Atlantic Council’s Millennium Leadership Program. Brendan Reaney is an intern with the Atlantic Council’s Future Europe Initiative*) 10 Dec 2018 " Why the Irish border matters" (accessed 14 Sept 2022) https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/why-the-irish-border-matters/

The Irish government’s commitment to an open border is essentially threefold. First, it recognizes the importance of all-island trade to the economies of both countries (especially to the communities living along the border) and is committed to maintaining those relationships. Second, several [leading officials](https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/leo-varadkar-references-ira-customs-post-bombing-to-highlight-importance-of-border-issue-1-8673841) in Dublin fear that the re-imposition of physical infrastructure along the border would revive memories of Troubles-era security checkpoints, potentially inciting dormant terrorist groups like the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which regularly targeted border guards during the conflict.

3. British health care costs

US/UK FTA would significantly increase health care costs in Britain

**Nancy Rosen, Cameron Krause and Jenik Radon 2021. (Rosen - law student** *at William & Mary Law School. She graduated summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Goucher College with degrees in International Relations and French.* **Krause** *is a law student at William & Mary Law School. He recently graduated from Rutgers University, where he studied Accounting and Political Science.* **Radon***, adjunct Professor at the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia Univ., is an international lawyer who has lectured and worked in over 70 countries) 24 Feb 2021 "*US-UK Free Trade Agreement: Not So Fast*" (accessed 15 Sept 2022)* https://comparativejurist.org/2021/02/24/us-uk-free-trade-agreement-not-so-fast/

Kim Darroch, former British Ambassador to the US, mentioned that a trade agreement with the US would likely have to include a loosening of pricing regulations on American pharmaceuticals. Pharmaceutical prices are heavily regulated in the UK via a two-pronged system. The first prong is the Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicines Pricing and Access, an agreement between the UK Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), the National Health Service Commissioning Board (NHS England), and the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI); the agreement was signed in 2019 in order to implement price controls and spending caps on pharmaceuticals. As this prong is voluntary, the agreement is not binding, and constitutes a system that the US seeks to change through pressure. The second prong consists of statutory regulations on pharmaceutical prices, and applies to pharmaceutical companies that are not members of the aforementioned voluntary scheme. Changing this two-prong system would significantly, and negatively, impact the UK’s national healthcare system and increase the UK’s cost of health care. A study in the Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine estimated that the UK would have paid approximately £5.03 ($6.056) billion more for prescription drugs in 2018 had it paid the same amount as the US paid via Medicare.