

DR CHRISTOPHER BICKERTON

THE BREXIT ICEBERG



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CHAIR: DR NICOLE SCICLUNA (HKU)
RESPONDENT: DR TOBIAS THEILER (UCD DUBLIN)

Two popular narratives around Brexit present it as a peculiarly British phenomenon, of limited relevance to the wider process of European integration. One is to view Brexit as proof that the UK has never really been a “proper” member state of the European Union and leaving the EU is to return to a more natural state of affairs for the UK. Another is to think of the EU as always having been held back by the UK, implying that once the UK has left the EU can enter into a new and glorious phase of ‘ever closer union’. This talk will challenge these narratives. It will argue that Brexit is of great relevance to the wider EU in at least three ways: in terms of the nature of political contestation across Europe; in terms of tensions between common rules of economic integration and the diversity of national capitalisms in Europe; and in terms of what it means to be a state in contemporary Europe.



Christopher Bickerton is a Reader in Modern European Politics at Cambridge University and a Fellow at Queens’ College, Cambridge. His publications include *European Union Foreign Policy: From Effectiveness to Functionality* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), *European Integration: From Nation-States to Member States* (OUP, 2012) and numerous articles. His 2012 book was awarded the Best Book prize by the University Association of Contemporary European Studies. Most recently, he published the best-selling *The European Union: A Citizen’s Guide* (Penguin, 2016). Beyond academic publishing, he has written articles for the *Financial Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *The Guardian*, *New York Times*, *Foreign Policy* and *Foreign Affairs*.

