

# SPEECH TO THE BRUGES GROUP BY HUGO VAN RANDWYCK

You've heard a lot today about an EU referendum, I'd like to talk about an EFTA referendum; in other words what we want, not what we don't want.



I'd like to talk also about how we can move from 7.8% unemployment to 3.7% or lower. Jobs are what's key on people's mind, let's talk about the language that people really want to do something about.

Also about how we can implement EFTA within weeks of a successful referendum and how we can have that referendum in May and we could be in EFTA by June next year and I believe it's possible.

The approach that I'm taking is I've worked a lot in businesses, I've done projects with companies, improvement projects within three months, in six months increases of

100% in productivity, customer service, quality you name it, it is doable.

A lot of people do this all the time and I know that up and down the country we've got thousands and thousands of people that would like to distribute leaflets and make this happen. I honestly believe that because I've actually been one of those people and I've met them.

So what are the three options? Well we've got the kind of what I call lets just leave, completely renegotiate from scratch, let's just start with a fresh sheet of paper that is one option. The other one is the EFTA bilateral which Switzerland has and then there is also the other one which is the EFTA/EEA which I'm going to talk about. That's the one I'm really going to talk about which I believe we can implement within weeks.

The issue I see also is like it's not just about winning the referendum, it's about winning it resoundingly. 52% of 48%, it's a win but it's not enough. We need 60%+, it's really got to be the direction has been wrong, the media got it wrong, the politicians got it wrong this is the direction we want to go from now on. So it's a 60%+ option that we need to go for.

Now when it comes to the referendum, and people have asked this question before, we could lose it if you go for the complete renegotiation because there's no other large country in Europe which has actually renegotiated from scratch and also these things can years. If you're in the business of the EU and you're getting £6 billion a year from Britain the last thing you're going to do is fast track a renegotiation.

Switzerland had a referendum and they did not decide to join the EEA at the time, they got a bilateral agreement. Now they started negotiating in 1992 and it was agreed in 2002, it was implemented in 2002. So that tells you how long it will take if you actually go for the EFTA bilateral and imagine if you just go for the complete

renegotiation. Does anybody here want to wait ten years after referendum, I don't think so.

There's a lot of distress in the country, people want jobs, they want job security, they want to pay off their mortgages you name it; we need to give them something positive.

So why EFTA or why EFTA/EEA? Well let's have a look. The EEA is about the four freedoms, freedom of goods movement, freedom of services, capital and people.

This is a direct copy from the website, if you want to go on the EFTA website there are PowerPoint presentations. In fact every six months they have an EEA seminar and if anybody wants to I'm sure you can trawl through all the MP's and MEP's expenses to see if any of them have actually used it to go and attend one of these. I doubt any of them have because I've contacted some of the most Eurosceptics and even they haven't actually gone to these.

So I know some people have reservations about the free movement of people, I do understand that. Some people feel that the Eastern European could have been phased slightly differently or that it ought to be a bilateral affair, but this is off-the-shelf.

Britain is in the EEA already. Norway, an EFTA/EEA country is in the EEA as well. So we're in a situation where we can say to people we're not leaving, we're just going to change our relationship, we're having all the free trade, we're having all that kind of thing but we're not going to be run by them.

What is actually different then because this looks like a lot to some people. This is what's different, this is what's not covered by the EEA, its no longer a customs union, you run your own agriculture, you run your own fisheries, in other words we'll be exactly the same as Norway. All the EU regional policy we don't get involved in in terms of at the moment we send £15 billion, that's the plan for this year, £15 billion to Brussels, £9 billion comes back dictated by how the EU says we can spend our own money if that makes any sense to anybody, £6 billion they keep.

No common trade policy, you can actually go out and actually organise your own free trade agreements with other countries. This is what EFTA has done already, no economic monetary union of course. Justice and Home Affairs we've heard about that a lot today, that is then the preserve of Britain. No longer can anybody say we can hoick somebody from Britain and taken them to Bulgaria on a whim or anything like that. Also no common foreign security and defence policy. That means no need to spend money and divert troops to having an EU army.

So in these two slides you can say to people at the moment we have this slide and the one before. If we want to we can simply just have the one before and not have this.

So what's the big difference in terms of how will it affect business? We will move from having over 1,000 new regulations a year to only 300. That's a 70% reduction. And as you know some people have done estimates on this, about 5% of our GDP is thanks to the EU regulations. So a cut in regulations is like a tax cut to business. When you can cut taxes you can redeploy your resources in another way to create

jobs, to train people to speak Mandarin or Brazilian or Hindu whatever it is, go and get more business from other countries and increase the way you do business.

Also it reduces the cost in Government as well because they don't need to comply with these regulations. So that's an immediate way of creating jobs, simple.

Also you don't see a lot of managers trying to decipher the latest regulations from Brussels, they're actually trying to train people and grow the business.

I've worked a lot in manufacturing, I've seen the look on faces, whether its in the maintenance department or whatever it is, this takes up a lot of energy of businesses and I've actually helped in other areas reduce paperwork and an amazing increase in moral and performance in businesses.



So what will the difference be in terms of savings, in terms of financial contributions to the EU? At the moment it's planned this year at £6 billion, it's going to go up as it usually does. If we use the per person amount that Norway does it will drop to £3.9 billion. I'm using 1.1 to the pound in terms of Euro conversion. Obviously if the pound gets stronger it will actually drop.

So you think well okay that is a sizeable reduction, it's a positive step

so you can sell that if you want to the public and say this is what we do immediately and we make a saving. Also the other £9 billion we no longer send it to them and they send it back, we decide how that's going to be spent as well. So we have that if you want in the kitty in terms of if somebody wanted to say well we need to cut our defence forces, we need to cut our police and somebody tries to tell you that's a very good thing. We say well okay we've found a way to generate the savings to actually do that.

But I actually feel there are other things which can make a big difference as well which are not so obvious in this. I don't know if any of you have ever worked in the public sector for a long time recently but what I've noticed is that people copy how things are done at the very top. And at the moment Britain sends, if you want, there's one voice out of 25. So if somebody actually from this country amongst the whole table, these are laws are made they get imposed here. Now what I've noticed in the public sector is a lot of people at the top who have never actually worked in that organisation, they come from outside, they go to the top, they have no idea how things work at the frontline, they spend a lot of their time actually going outside of the organisation, they just mimic exactly what happens in the EU.

You know I've actually recently worked in there and it's almost like you're making new episodes for The Office. I mean some of the emails and suggestions that come through, you think these people don't understand what's going on. They are nice people, they're well intentioned but that's what actually happens.

The other thing also is that if you reduce regulations our MPs will have another positive, they'll be able to listen to us. If over 50% of new regulations that actually come out into the country are from Westminster and we change that to more like sort of only 15% come from EU and 85% here, that means they're listening to us. If there's a problem we can fix it earlier, we can create more jobs; we can get the prosperity going that sort of thing.

Now that's a big plus which is not very clear, you know if people just look at the financial side of things. So there will be an improvement if you want in the management of the public sector which is over £400 billion a year and there's also going to be the other side where the MPs are actually going to be doing the jobs that we pay them to do.

So let's have a look at some of the differences. New regulations here from 1,000 to 300, you drop the amount there. Also, which is nice, the accounts have actually been signed off for every year with EFTA. The auditors actually sign them off. Which one would you like to be if you're actually trying to persuade somebody of this. So we've got the positive as I say on the left and the negative on the right. They've only got 90 employees, can you believe it, instead of the 10,000 plus which the EU has.

Something else which is also not on there is when you work in the EFTA office, and I visited them in Brussels and had a presentation, you have a maximum of a six year contract, its non-renewable, you work there and after six years you go somewhere else. Its not a career as in you know feather bedding and lets expand it and lets do this and that and you know all that kind of thing, not at all. Very efficient, very positive, I'm there for six years, this is what I do then I move somewhere else.

As we've talked about also responsibility for the UK fishery, home affairs and justice.

Also EFTA has an office in Brussels; it's very simple to get to. In fact I was looking on Google Maps and some of the EU offices, they're only about a mile away from the EFTA offices and so I cannot understand why MPs haven't visited it. I mean really it is as simple as that.

A member of NATO because the question comes up, oh we'll lose our security if we leave the EU, its like it's all tied up, it's like... well you hear these arguments. It's very clever how they do this but it's just not true at all. So that takes care of that argument.

Key legal documents of convention, it's not a treaty and its only 30 pages long you'll be happy to know. And so 200+ which seems to grow every time there's a new treaty.

And this is all downloadable from their website, it is there. Its off-the-shelf, it's a working alternative, we don't need to invent anything, we stay with the EEA part and we just say you know what, we're not having anything to do with the rest of it, we'll run all that ourselves, very simple.

I say to people we move from over 1,000 regulations a year to 300. 70% of something is better than 100% of nothing.

17 years after Maastricht, we still haven't had a referendum so what we need to do is say well okay what do we want, which referendum do we want and focus on that, talk about the positive. Whenever somebody mentions the EU what's EFTA like and when somebody in the EU comes up with some new harebrained plan which is going to cost us more money and be bad for regulation, instead of throwing up our hands and going oh its terrible, oh my god it's a disaster, we go no, let's have a look at this. Which industries does it affect, let's talk to them, let's email them and let's get them on EFTA, let's get them on side with EFTA.

Just as in a business, if somebody is actually giving somebody else poor customer service you think about it exactly like that. Let's grow our market share if you want in terms of going for the alternative. Especially since it's tangible, you can feel it and also we've been in it before.

So here we've got a map. Again this is all on the website too. There you can see Norway, Iceland, you've got Switzerland there and you've got Liechtenstein, which is incredibly tiny but its there as well, they're also in this, so its four countries, some of the wealthiest countries in the whole EEA group.

EFTA has a free trade agreement with Canada because I know that some people are keen on rejoining if you want the Commonwealth and getting those free trade agreements going again, its already been done. Mexico is up and running, free trade agreement, all the greens are free trade agreements, the red ones are sort of all about cooperation and the other ones they are in the middle of talks and things like how we can actually go for it.

So what we have here is a very lightly regulated alternative – and you can understand why Britain set this up – its outlook is the world, its there and it's actually also continued to expand in terms of free trade agreements.

Something else I would like to say, some people say that we have free trade with the EU; actually I 100% disagree with it. We have free movement of goods with the EU but we don't have free trade. If we need to pay £6 billion a year to trade with them, in my book that's a tariff and every year this tariff goes up.

To give you an example of how high it is, we actually exported in goods £120 billion to the EU last year. £6 billion is a 5% tariff. That's expensive. And somebody says to me, well we might lose influence. It's like that's a very expensive influence to have 7.8% unemployment instead of 3% and we've got to pay £6 billion for it, it doesn't sound like a good deal to me so let's go for the positive one.

The other thing I feel is also important is our language. Somebody mentioned by getting more young people involved and that kind of thing. We need to be asking ourselves are we using the right language, is there another way that we can actually get the message across. This is why I'm talking about say an EFTA referendum instead of the EU referendum. Where do we want to go forward, where is the forward path, where is the easy path.

And so I'm talking about things like instead of being called a Eurosceptic how about a Euromoderate? We're moderate, we're a democracy, we listen to what's the majority opinion, that's got to be the moderate opinion I would say in pretty much all cases. So maybe we want to call ourselves Euromoderate instead because I'm not sceptical,

I'm really positive about growing jobs and using an alternative. This is a media thing we can actually get moved into that.

And instead of saying things like we're withdrawing, we're leaving, give me my money back, I've had enough, go away; all that kind of thing, there might be another way of doing it. Instead of saying that we can say well instead of withdrawing what we want to do is we want to switch. We've got a number of options and we've tried that one and actually it doesn't work so well, we're going to go for the other one instead. That's more positive.

You know instead of like – I don't mean to say anything to Robert – but he's talked about an exit strategy, how about an export strategy, a job strategy that's what it's about. We ought to be talking in that kind of positive language. We're going to move from a complicated EU model which exports jobs to an EFTA/EEA model which is going to create jobs and that's what we can do. Let's sell that.

So I organised an opinion poll with YouGov, and there's a bit of a story about this. So here we are 17 years after Maastricht, 95% of the population have heard of the EU – so it does make you wonder what the other 5% are doing but that's okay – 37% have heard of EFTA, how is that possible. Something which is much better than the EU, the majority of the population want something different but only 37% have heard about it. Because maybe we've been going on the wrong track in some way, we've been spending too much energy on what we don't want but we need to focus more and more on what we do want.

Imagine what would happen is 95% of the population knew about EFTA, imagine if they went on the website, imagine if they downloaded the PowerPoints and had a good look at those sorts of things.

So then I asked the question also which would you prefer. Now 95% are EU but only 36% actually wanted it. EFTA was 37% and 39% but don't know was 25%. So there's an opportunity there.

I do want to say also that when I asked for the opinion poll to be made, I believe there's a lot of pressure sometimes on people who make opinion polls because when I first said well this is how much the EU contribution is, when we switch to EFTA it could be this. When I saw the draft when it came back it didn't have the EU costs in it, it only had the EFTA costs in it and I thought no, no you've got to put both in so people can compare. They didn't want to put in also that there were 300 regulations a year with EFTA and 1,000 with the EU. I don't know why, I feel that's one of the big things that always comes up in the newspapers but they didn't want to put that in, so I feel that EFTA would have been a lot higher. In the fact the more that people know about it I feel they would prefer it, that's my feeling.

So how do you track EU law? If you go on the EU website you will find all of these areas which are covered, absolutely masses and I know its getting a bit maybe technical for some people, I don't mean it to be like that but if you just bear with me its actually very, very simple.

These are the areas; you click in one of those you'll get a whole list of what's called celex numbers. They will tell you all the different regulations, the years they were

made and everything like that; you can track it all through. So the question is how do we separate them out? This looks like an absolutely massive job, it's really easy.

When you track EU and EFTA regulations, I've used the competition one – funnily enough we were talking about competition regulations earlier this morning – there's something you look for, you see here text with EEA relevance, this is the giveaway. Anything to do with the EEA, which is in the EU law, has that on there, so all you've got to do is separate these two out. The EU laws, we're not happy with those anymore, EEA we're keeping those. It really is as simple as that.

Now I've had some discussions and meetings with the Office of Public Sector Information because what I wanted to do is separate them out and so we can just press print on the computer so you get your EEA pile and your EU pile and that kind of thing and they have done some work on it but really it's not enough and I've had no support from any of the MPs, none of them at all.

You'd like to think that in the freedom of information age you would like to go on the OPSI website and you could have something which says UK legislation, EEA legislation and EU legislation. They haven't done it. But actually I feel it is easy to do because they've got these regulations in each department so there's no excuse, no excuse at all.

So we can separate them out, it is easy to do starting at that site.

As I've said, I've actually talked to setting up an all party group. I don't know if you know much about all party groups, Parliamentary groups, there are quite a lot of them on the internet site if you have a look at Parliament. There is one for the European Union surprise surprise. And I've had a good look through them and pretty much every single one of them gets affected by EU regulations so they will not be able to perform to what they are capable of while the EU regulations are holding them down.

Then I started to look at some of the other ones. Maybe it's because they're very busy the MPs are absolutely flat out, they've got all these things to do.

They feel these are more important than have an EFTA group because there's no EFTA Parliamentary group on there. These are some that they felt were more important: advertising, there's a betting and gaming all Parliamentary Group, there's one for bridge, there's one for greyhound, there's one for hockey and there's one for philately.

So we're getting to the stage where you know we've tried for 17 years to have this referendum, we tried to get an all Parliamentary group for EFTA to get this sort of thing, they're not going to do it.

Ladies and gentlemen, I'm sure a lot of you have figured it out; our MPs are not going to give us this referendum. And the other thing also is when you come to a referendum there are three things which can happen with a referendum: 1. is the alternative; 2. is how you word it and 3. when are you actually going to hold that referendum.

Now ask yourself, if you're in favour of the EU and your party has been doing this for decades, are you going to choose an alternative which can be implemented within weeks of a referendum or are you going to say no, we're going to go for the one which will take ten years to renegotiate and everything like that.

They are not going to give us the referendum that we would like. If they actually said they were going to do it they would choose the one they want, they would choose the wording that they want so they can win and they're going to choose the timing so they can win as well. Because what else are they going to do.

I believe that unemployment over the last 30 years has been between 500,000 and a million higher than it would have been if we'd been in EFTA, it's as simple as that, you take away the regulations unemployment will drop, the economy will boom.

A similar sort of thing happened in the early 90s when we got rid of the ERM. You know drop the regulations, things start to move.

So if we let them decide those sorts of things we will lose. So I feel we've got to take the initiative on this one, we've really got to say which is the one that we feel will get the most votes in a referendum, which is the one that's going to have a massive resounding victory and then put the wording in.

So some of you may have seen my ballot box at the back there and some of the leaflets where it clearly says which would you prefer for the UK, EFTA/EEA or EU/EEA. It's very clear; you don't need to mix any words or anything like that because that is actually what's available. Do you want to be like Norway or do you want to be where we are now, do you want 3.2% unemployment or do you want 7.8% unemployment. That is what it's about; let's convert it into the daily lives, the daily bread of what's happening for people.

So the next question is well okay Hugo so we've figured out something that you believe would get the most votes, great, we've got the wording everything like that but the MPs are not going to give us the referendum. Okay so let's look at things another way then. There have been referendums here in the UK, quite a few referendums. We're going to have a referendum AV so that's really about who is going to be rubber stamping the EU laws. As John said earlier is that really the top priority or Aston Villa or whatever you want to talk about.

Well there are other authorities, we have the two levels of politicians, we have the national level which aren't going to do it and we've got the local politicians. You've heard of referendums to have a mayor, other referendums that people have had, you know these are happening, they get respected and changes happen.

So I believe we've actually got to target two sets of political levels even if we need to do it local authority by local authority by local authority. The work that the EU Referendum Campaign is doing, they will have a picture as I said of the UK. Let's also then focus on the individual local authorities and get them to organise the referendums. If necessary we'll organise the fundraising as well.

I believe the referendum for the AVs is about £80 million, I don't know if anybody's got the figure, which is about sort of £2 per person.



So how do we do this? Very simply let's involve people in the solution and actually the implementation. We can have events, people speaking, EFTA talks at universities, organisations, we get conferences, we get organisations voting they want a referendum with EFTA/EAA.

We can get opinion polls which basically say this is what the EFTA/EAA is; if there was a General Election tomorrow and UKIP had this policy who would you vote for. Another opinion poll, if Labour had this as a policy who would you vote for, another opinion poll, if Conservatives had this as a policy would you vote for them, if the Liberal Democrats.

So you'd actually be able to show people that you will get more votes if you have this as one of your policies and oh by the way there's an election coming up, a local election coming up next year in May, so there's an incentive for people to choose something which is going to get them elected because that's why they're doing it.

Then you can actually organise something called awards. How about having awards to say what we really want, how about having awards to split out what are agricultural EAA regulations and EU regulations, what are going to be fishery regulations and things like that.

We could go to universities; we can get scholarships for universities. Somebody comes in and says I've got £2,000 what shall I do with it, okay £500 for Cambridge, £500 for Oxford, £500 for Kings of course, £500 for LSE, first prize or number of prizes for students who've actually come up with things to find out what the regulations are for the various different sectors. Let's democratise it, let's get it out there, let's get people motivated.

How can we do the campaign? If we actually start on day 1 with actually distributing leaflets all the way round the country, media releases, press conference, ads in paper – we'd obviously put them in the day before they come out – we'd coordinate it, YouTube video of EFTA.

Say the second day we have another leaflet which actually offers a local talk. I'm quite happy for any organisation that approaches me, I will train people up if they want to know how to do an EFTA presentation, how do you use the website everything like that. Fairly simple, train the trainer whatever you want, I can do this in weeks, very simple on the weekend, no problem at all, very easy.

Opinion poll release, launch the EFTA awards for tracking the EU legislation, student awards that kind of thing. So every day you'd actually announce something new which would get people motivated.

So ladies and gentlemen, to conclude, I believe there is a very simple alternative to the EU, it's a positive alternative, EFTA is that one. You've seen how simple it is, we are ready in the EEA, we won't leave that. If we want to make any further changes that is for subsequent referendums, we organise the approach at the national level and the local level. If its local authority by local authority it doesn't matter, we'll build it up as we go along.

But what we need to do is get that 37% up of people who know about EFTA to 95%, let them know how many more jobs would be created, let them know that low

unemployment is there if they want it and then ladies and gentlemen we will be in a freer country, our MPs will be able to listen to us and I believe, as James was talking about today, that the spirit of the United Kingdom will be able to flourish and expand again.

Thank you ladies and gentlemen.