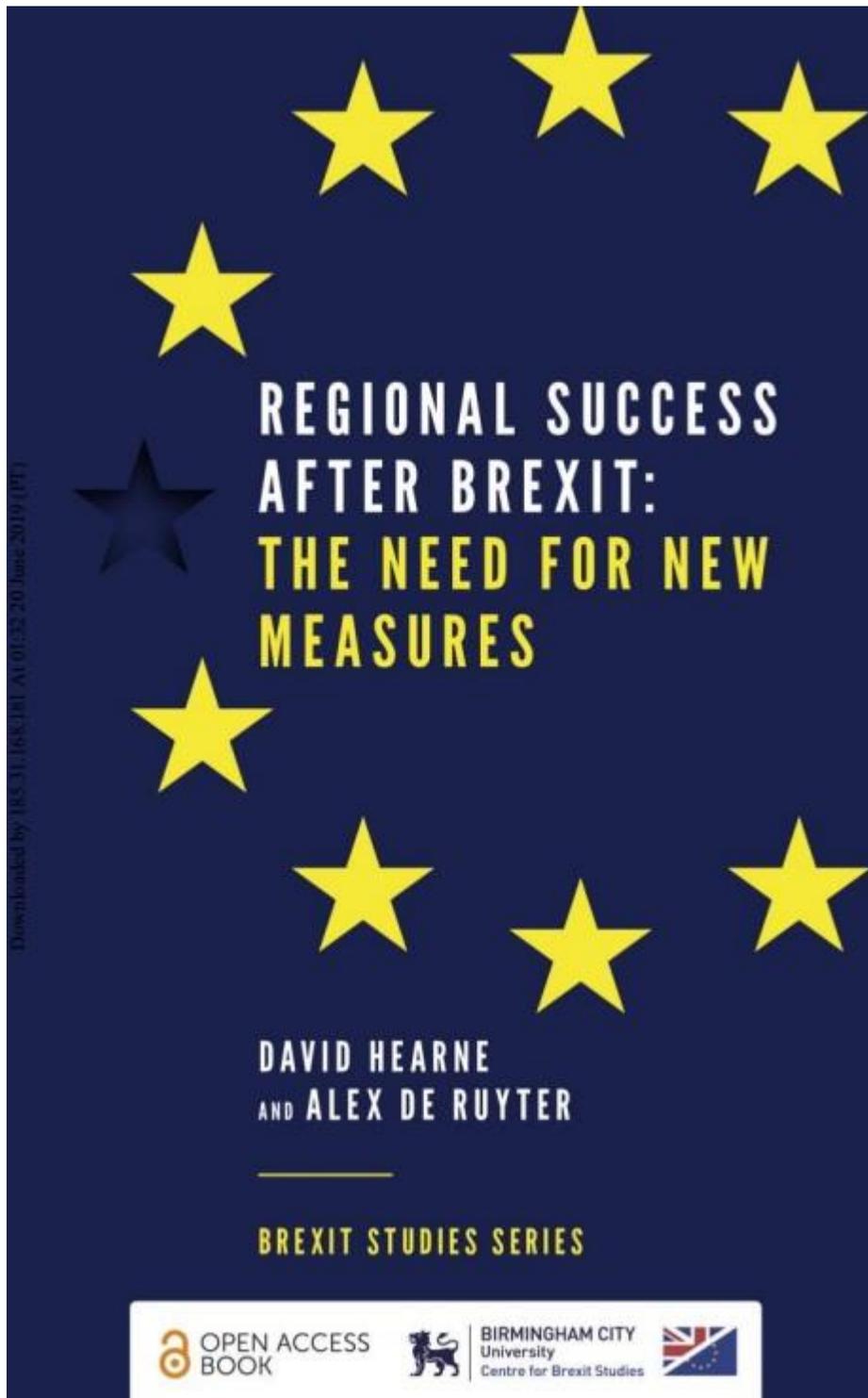


# Another sneak peek at Centre for Brexit Studies new book 'Regional Success After Brexit: The Need for New Measures'

Two academics from the Centre for Brexit Studies at Birmingham City University have published a book focusing on the regional success after Brexit and why there is such a need for new measures.

Titled "Regional Success After Brexit: The Need for New Measures", the book has been written and edited by Centre for Brexit Studies Director Professor Alex de Ruyter and Researcher David Hearne, as part of Emerald Publishing's Brexit Studies Series, which is bringing together a wide range of the Centre's academics.

'Regional Success After Brexit: The Need for New Measures' includes chapters focused on real living standards, real labour productivity and defining the problem. You can take a look at the first sneak peek [here](#). Scroll down for another sneak peek at the book...



### *Your sneak peek...*

The Brexit vote has shone a harsh light on something that academics and practitioners have known for years: regional differences matter. In the West Midlands, almost 60% of votes were to leave the EU. In London, almost 60% of votes were to remain. Indeed, some have argued that the vote should be seen as the ‘revenge of places that

don't matter' (RodríguezPose, 2018). This has occurred in spite of the fact that EU structural funding has been concentrated in many of these regions and that a number of them are particularly exposed to EU trade (Los, McCann, Springford, & Thissen, 2017).

One of the most interesting findings from our recent 'Brexit Roadshow' has been a pervasive sense of inequity and abandonment across a diverse range of communities. Comments such as 'they [London] get everything' (De Ruyter, Hearne, Guy, Semmens-Wheeler, & Goodwin, Forthcoming) and 'nobody cares' alongside disparaging remarks about the local area (De Ruyter et al., Forthcoming) illustrate communities that often seethe with resentment at perceived iniquities in the allocation of services.

Certainly, the extent of spatial inequality within the UK across some measures is striking (McCann, 2016). A man born in Blackpool can expect a lifespan shorter than his Albanian equivalent (Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2016a; World Health Organisation, 2016). A woman born in Kensington, in contrast, can expect to live past her 86th birthday, rivalling Japan for the world's longest life expectancy.

These differences are stark – if Blackpool could halve the gap between itself and Barnet in North London then the effects would be transformative. We also note that there is at least *prima facie* evidence of a link between some of them and the Brexit vote (Bell & Machin, 2016; Pidd, 2016).

This book makes a fundamental contribution to our understanding of these regional disparities in the light of Brexit, by introducing new measures that can help us further our understanding of those areas that have been 'leftbehind'. In doing so, it is necessary to tackle the fundamental issues in a systematic and logical way.

The first is the question is what policy makers and practitioners are ultimately seeking to answer. In order to do this, however, the latter two questions must be addressed. After all, the appropriate policy response is likely to be very different depending on the answer to the second question, and much academic ink has been spilled trying to resolve it. In many ways, however, it is the third question that is most fundamental of all. In order to judge potential policy actions, we need to understand what regional success and failure look like.

Although we know that regional imbalances in the UK span almost every domain, good policy requires more knowledge than this. In particular, it is necessary to quantify ‘success’ both in terms of living standards and the functional economic geography of an area. Existing measures fail to capture important aspects of both of these and the proposed ‘deflated’ measures can extend our understanding of these.

This book therefore builds upon official data and international best practice to develop a series of measures with which to assess regional living standards and economic performance before exploring the ramifications of these in light of the UK’s vote to leave the EU. We begin by critiquing what has become the de facto measure of regional economic performance – GVA per capita – and draw upon existing research to do so.

The main body of the book is concerned with deriving measures to best capture the true differences in both living standards and productivity across regions, particularly given that both academic evidence (Los et al., 2017) and a majority of experts believe that Brexit threatens to exacerbate these (De Ruyter, Hearne, & Tsiligiris, in prep.). Regional statistics in the UK do not take into account differences in the cost of living across the country.

This impacts a wide variety of measures including GVA, household incomes and wages. Happily, methodological developments over recent decades and the emergence of a greater variety of official data sources enable us to make an initial attempt to develop deflators to adjust for these issues.

Although some of the methodological distinctions between different deflators are subtle, the overall issue and direction of adjustment is clear. This is key to developing appropriate policy measures, both to mitigate the impact of Brexit on more vulnerable regions and household and to address many of the insecurities and inequalities that played a factor in the vote to leave the EU.

The final portion of the book therefore discusses the policy questions raised by these issues. Brexit affords an opportunity to reassess funding formulae and we argue that this must take the findings of this book into account. Particular attention needs to be paid to the likely evolution of regional policy and funding in the light of Brexit.

[Enjoy the full book now here.](#)

Emerald Publishing's Brexit Studies Series examines a wide range of topics related to Brexit, to examine the challenges withdrawal from the EU brings. The series promotes engagement with the many aspects of both the 'leave' and 'remain' perspectives in order to understand the consequences for the UK, and for its relationship with the wider world, and aims to suggest measures to counter the challenges faced.

### **Published Titles**

[Alex De Ruyter and Beverley Nielsen, Brexit Negotiations After Article 50: Assessing Process, Progress and Impact](#)

### **Forthcoming Titles**

Arantza Gomez Arana – Brexit and Gibraltar: The Negotiations of a Historically Contentious Region

Stefania Paladini and Ignazio Castellucci – European Security in a Post-Brexit World