

The case for the interim solution

Whatever your thoughts on how best to exit the EU, this helpful paper is well worth reading. Although published by the Adam Smith Institute, it is a collaborative effort, also involving Dr Kristian Niemitz, poverty research fellow at the Institute for Economic Affairs, the country's oldest free-market think tank, and Roland Smith, who is a widely-read blogger as well as a fellow at the ASI.

The principal argument of the paper can be summarised as follows:-

- **Re-joining EFTA to access the EEA is only a short-term compromise**
- It does, however, allow us to make a quicker departure from the EU than a bespoke arrangement
- We would immediately be outside the political EU project, with a relationship based on trade only
- We would not be required to join the Schengen area (*a myth which I had to counter a couple of times in referendum debates*)
- It would keep business happy – some of whom voted to stay in the EU because they wanted access to the Single Market but who may not have supported the political aspects of the EU project
- We would have power to reduce migration from the EU
- Parliament would regain power over, among other things, agriculture, fisheries, foreign policy, law & order and VAT
- We could conclude our own trade deals with non-EU countries
- We would regain our seat on those global bodies which increasingly determine the rules for world trade
- We could choose to participate in EU projects which may

- be of benefit, such as the Erasmus student exchange system, but not in those which were not in our interest
- We could move on and leave the EEA at any future point of our own choosing

Above all, as the authors point out, it would help heal the wounds caused by the Brexit vote. It won't satisfy everyone but would help the country move forward together.