

Jacob – Unexpurgated and Uncut – An exclusive video interview with ‘The Moggster’

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This report has been co-published with our affiliated organisation, Brexit Facts4EU.Org.

The Rt Hon Jacob Rees-Mogg MP gives us his frank views on 10 topics of the day

A CIBUK.Org summary of what Jacob said, plus the 30-minute video

There are few politicians in the world who are known and recognised by their Christian name alone. We couldn't get Boris, but we were fortunate enough to be granted a full video interview by another icon: ‘Jacob’ – the Rt Hon Jacob Rees-Mogg MP.

In our Chairman's exclusive interview with him, Mr Rees-Mogg gives full and frank answers to some of the most important issues of the day. Below we present selected highlights from the interview as well as a link to the complete 30-minute video on YouTube.

From Brexit, to immigration and the ECHR, to the cost of living crisis, to lockdowns and many other subjects, we are sure readers will be very interested in what Jacob had to say.



[CIBUK.Org readers can watch the video interview on YouTube here.](#)

**Jacob answers 10 questions in 30 minutes.
We feel sure you will find it interesting!**

Summary

‘The Moggster interview’ – selected highlights

Jacob Rees-Mogg needs no introduction to our UK-based audience, but for the benefit of our overseas viewers he has been a Member of Parliament for the constituency of North East Somerset since 2010, serving as leader of the House of Commons, Lord President of the Council, Minister of State for Brexit Opportunities and Government Efficiency and then Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

When it comes to Brexit, he’s a former chairman of the Eurosceptic ERG, the European Research Group of MPs. He’s a staunch supporter and advocate of an independent and sovereign United Kingdom. He now sits on the backbenches, and is what might be termed a traditional Conservative and a conviction politician.



Jacob in Committee in Parliament.

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On behalf of CIBUK and Facts4EU, we're delighted to give our audience the opportunity to hear his views on the matters of the day.

Q1 : BREXIT

What is your overall view on where we are with Brexit? What have we achieved, what are the benefits so far, and what more needs to be done?

"Well, a huge amount needs to be done, because Brexit was a means to an end, not an end in itself. And that's really important – some people think we did Brexit and that's it. But what Brexit was about was the restoration of democratic controls to the people of the United Kingdom. And, therefore we have as much to do on a daily basis, monthly, yearly basis as any democracy always has to do. But it's now under our control.

"So, what are the issues of the day? There [is] economic growth. How do you get economic growth? Well, you want lower taxes and you want less regulation. Now we're outside the EU, we are free to change Value Added Tax organisation rules, even rates, even the whole basis of VAT if we wanted to. And we're free to deregulate. So, it's about using the freedom Brexit provides within democratic control, to make the country

stronger and more competitive.”

Brexit successes – Vaccines, Ukraine, starting deregulation

“What have we done so far? Well, one of the early successes was the vaccine rollout: that we did it without being part of the EU scheme and we were faster than anybody else.

“If you look at what’s happened in relation to Ukraine, I think it’s fundamental that we weren’t part of the ‘sincere cooperation’ that ties the EU into working together. And if you look back to where we were in February and what the position of the French, and particularly the Germans was, if we’d been tied into that, Zelenskyy would not have got the strong support that he has had from the UK, and I very much doubt the West would have led as effectively as it has, to back its own values. So, you’ve got a really big foreign policy issue that would have been very different without Brexit. You’ve got a major domestic issue on the vaccine, and then you’ve got the things that happen routinely.

*“So, we’ve had the gene editing bill, we’ve had the second reading just earlier – the third reading, sorry – in the House of Commons earlier this week on a financial services bill, which potentially will reform financial services in this country and take away the dead hand of EU regulation. Now, there’s a risk it will be replaced by the dead hand of our own regulators, and that’s a real problem, and we need to make sure that they’re held democratically accountable and that they deregulate properly. And the obstructionism from the PRA, the Prudential Regulatory Authority to dealing with Solvency II has been pretty awful. But **we now have the chance to do it, and there’s nobody to blame other than ourselves.**”*

Q2 : IMMIGRATION AND THE ECHR

If you were Prime Minister, what would you do to tackle both legal and illegal immigration in practical terms?

"Well, you touched on exactly the right issue and that is the ECHR and it is the Human Rights Act incorporated into UK law. [Previously] if you came from a country that was deemed to be safe and claimed asylum, you were returned. That is the sort of thing that we ought to return to, so that if you're coming from Albania, you get returned."

"In terms of the ECHR, there is not a majority in Parliament for withdrawing from the convention or withdrawing from the court, and therefore I think that you would be knocking your head against a brick wall if you started saying we should pull out of it. On the other hand, when previously there has been an issue where everyone in the country recognises that the ECHR has got it wrong, we have behaved differently and I'm thinking of the prisoners' voting rights issue."

"And I [think] that there is a majority in Parliament for dealing with the small boats, irrespective of the European Court on Human Rights and the Convention on Human Rights, as interpreted by that court. So, I wouldn't look to repeal our abiding by or the effectiveness of the Convention in UK law, I would simply look to tweak it, so that we make sure that it works and allows us to return people who come here illegally. And I think that's perfectly politically viable."

"Why haven't we sent people to Rwanda? Well, because an injunction was issued by the European Court. But it's not at all certain that the European Court has the power to issue injunctions. Those injunctions have been voluntarily accepted by UK governments. You can certainly legislate to stop doing that. That's a perfectly reasonable thing to do."

"Other countries don't follow them. And you look at other countries' success rates of returning people, particularly to Albania, they're much higher.... So, there are some aspects of the law, as it exists on an international basis, that we could simply apply and solve a significant part of the problem."

Q3 : DEREGULATION

The bonfire of EU laws – deregulation. You were Minister tasked with removing them, for a period. Can you tell our audience what you think needs to be done now about deregulation specifically, and in what time frame?

*"I prepared the bill for introduction... One of the things we did, which is quite useful, is we put a list online of 2,400 or so EU regulations, so people can look them up. And once you start looking them up, you can see what they cover and you can make a judgement for yourself whether you think they are useful regulations or not. And **I think there's a whole swathe you can cut through.**"*

"...we should not be penalising British industry and moving jobs and economic activity abroad for no reason. That is not strictly EU law anymore, but most of the regulations around it are derived from EU law. That should be changed.

"We should cut great swathes of the [EU] product regulations away, to allow people to sell products that pass a safety test..."

*"We should do this for financial services regulation I mentioned... We want to get back to where we used to be with our highly competitive City rather than one where... you have to provide over 60 pieces of information before placing a single trade, including your National Insurance number. **This is just wild bureaucracy. It doesn't help anybody.** It doesn't make the system more robust or less prone to risk."*

*"...Some fund managers... say "well, we've spent the money, we've done it, and it keeps competition out, so that's great". So again, **you need political leadership in the interests of consumers.** You've then got a degree of regulator capture. So, the PRA, on something like Solvency II, came before the*

Treasury Select Committee a few years ago and they said “well, it’s not what we wanted, but we got a lot of our points across and therefore it’s better than it would have been, and it’s quite tonally British, and we’re quite happy with it”. And there’s a sort of complacency really of regulators that like what they’ve created and don’t want it changed and challenged. And **the PRA is a particularly egregious example of this.**

“And then you’ve got the civil service – I don’t know what the polite term is... Let me give you the example at BEIS [Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Dept]. BEIS told me that for the 330 regulations in BEIS, it would require 370 civil servants to work for a year to reform them.”

“...But that was one full time civil servant per rule for a year, and then another 40 on top just to make up. I said it could probably all be done in a weekend by a couple of people. They’d just get rid of them all. And that was probably an oversimplification, but you definitely didn’t need this absurdly gold-plated bureaucratic approach to doing it. “Say “no, no, no, let’s deregulate”. Let’s get rid of the Working Time Directive. Let’s not replace it. Let’s allow employers and employees to make contracts with each other freely and fairly in a free market way, without thinking that their hand has to be held by a Government Department.”

Q4 : THE EU’S NORTHERN IRELAND PROTOCOL

I want to move on to another hot topic at the moment, which is Northern Ireland and the EU’s Protocol, which was inflicted on us under the Theresa May administration. What specifically would you do now?

“I think it needs to be pushed ahead with. It’s already gone on for too long. And this can be done within the terms of the protocol itself, because the protocol says quite clearly that

it is subsidiary to the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement. And the protocol has the effect of undermining the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement by changing the Constitution of Northern Ireland without the authority of both communities. And, therefore, we should reform it unilaterally by the Act of Parliament that has been proposed. "

"Protecting the [EU] Single Market is not the business of His Majesty's Government. That's a matter for the European Union."

What's your view, if this is going to drag out for another year?

"We have to operate within the law and within the Constitution. We can't do things that don't have a legal basis. There is a method of getting the House of Lords to agree if it refuses, and that involves the Parliament Act."



Jacob with his wife Helena and their six children: Peter, Mary, Thomas, Anselm, Alfred and Sixtus. © Jacob Rees-Mogg 2022 – click to enlarge and to access his website

Q5 : THE COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS

Can we move on to another pressing issue for a lot of voters who will be watching this? And that's the cost-of-living crisis. Something that, as you you will know, is going on right across Europe. This is not confined to the UK, despite

what you may read in the British press. Do you have any extra ideas for helping people, other than what the government is currently proposing?

"I think the cost-of-living crisis is a challenge to policy-making of a longer-term rather than a shorter-term kind. There is very little governments can do in the short term to help with the cost-of-living crisis without making it worse. The price controls don't work, spending more government money, more taxpayers' money could in itself be inflationary. Increasing salaries could equally be inflationary. So, the short-term measures tend to be doing things that are difficult rather than things that are easy.

*"...it's really looking at how you make monetary policy and what effects that has had, how that has helped create inflation and what you should be doing in future. And that **the central banks have made some very big mistakes in recent years.**"*

"The real engine of monetary policy is the US. It's very hard for a country not to follow the Fed, because with free capital flows you find that, if there is very loose policy in the US, the money obviously leaks out into the rest of the world and has effect on currencies and lending conditions abroad as well.

*"But **you're absolutely right to point out that inflation has been equally a problem on the continent, in some countries actually worse than in the UK. It has nothing to do with Brexit,** it's to do with monetary policy and COVID supply chain disruptions."*

Q6 : NET ZERO

I want to come on to Net Zero. Are you a fan?

"I think the issue is whether you can make net zero a workable

policy that ensures that people aren't just cold and poor. **And I think there's been a real problem with UK energy policy, which is that we have willed the end of Net Zero without working out how to get there.** And that's one of the reasons that the margin for error this winter is quite low, because we don't have the diversity of supply that we ought to have... So, gas supplies have been at risk because of Russia. The French nuclear fleet is not operating at full capacity because of corrosion in some of the fuel rods.

"That leaves us very exposed and very dependent on the wind blowing, and that isn't a sensible policy, so we need to ensure that we have a backup plan, to allow us to get from where we are to net zero, and to do that in a timely way. **I'm not convinced that getting rid of petrol cars by 2030 is realistic, for example. I think it will take longer than that. We've got a very big car industry. Will it all be battery by then? I'm not so sure. So, I think we need to work out how to do it, rather than simply saying this will happen.**"

"What I was arguing as Business Secretary and Business and Energy Secretary was for intelligent Net Zero. And what did I mean by that? Well, things like actually opening the coal mine that's been announced. Because, the extent that it is used domestically, that lowers emissions, because it's coal that would be used anyway. That's why I am in favour of fracking, because if you use onshore UK gas, it's economically beneficial. The revenue comes through to the UK.

"But also, in terms of emissions, **the Climate Change Committee are the high priests of the Beards and Sandals Brigade.** I mean they are at the extreme end of this argument. Even they have said that it reduces emissions by between 2 and 63 grammes per kWh if you use domestically fracked gas rather than LNG. So, **if you're a big green, you want fracking, and if you're somebody who wants free markets and wealth and prosperity, you should be in favour of fracking too.... I said I'd have it in my own garden if there were any shale gas to be fracked there.**

"You should pay communities for the inconvenience. And if people get money, they might suddenly feel that that was sufficient compensation, so it would be good for the country at large, but good for local communities as well."



Watch the full video interview on YouTube [here](#).

And please don't forget to 'Like' it and to 'Subscribe' to the channel!

Q7 : LOCKDOWNS

On to COVID lockdowns. Now that the consequences of these are becoming ever apparent, those of us who warned about this are perhaps being vindicated. Would you ever vote for another lockdown?

*"In my view, the first lockdown was justified **and the subsequent lockdowns were not**. I think the first lockdown we simply didn't know what was happening, and we had all those forecasts from people who have quite a habit of making wrong forecasts. But it was too uncertain. Beyond that, we shouldn't have locked down further and we shouldn't have closed schools."*

"Should we ever have stopped children comforting their grieving mothers when they were at the crematorium?"

*"Those sorts of issues must be looked at, because what underlies your question, I think, is right. **A lot of the lockdown went too far**. A lot of the detailed rules were far too intrusive. And as we saw when we didn't lock down over Christmas of last year, people made perfectly sensible rational decisions for themselves and we should have trusted people more."*

Q8 : CANCEL CULTURE AND NO-PLATFORMING

A great many voters are deeply concerned about this now. It's impacting the education of our young people, both at universities and in schools. It's also affecting the ability for all of us to have a broad, open debate on issues that we think are important. What would you do to change this culture that has been developing?

*"Actually, it's up to people like us. **We've just got to express our views and not be intimidated.** Cancel culture is much harder for people on the Left than it is for people on the Right. I can say pretty much what I like. I don't get cancelled because people on the Right don't get cancelled."*

"Now, cancel culture and no-platforming is slightly different. Those of us on the Right are at risk of no-platforming, but we can find other platforms. So, the cancel culture is particularly vicious for people on the Left who step slightly out of line. I mean, if you look at [the] treatment JK Rowling has had, who's been a major supporter of the Labour Party. She's not some fellow-travelling Tory. And yet, it's the Left who have been so hostile to her, the hard Left that have really gone for her and don't want her views to be expressed."

Would you legislate so that Ofsted had a duty, a legal duty to prevent no-platforming, for example in universities?

"There is law going through Parliament at the moment to enforce free speech in universities. But you need to look at it more than this. I'm a trustee of the parent body of the Oxford Union Society... the biggest problem we've had over the recent years since I've been a trustee isn't from the university, isn't from students, it's been from the Charity Commission. And the Charity Commission has made us set up a protocol for inviting speakers in case they're controversial."

But I think this is monstrous.

“It’s no business of the Charity Commission and the Oxford Union should invite whoever it feels like. ... You need to have some control of the state regulators who have limited accountability, either to Parliament or to ministers. And I think that is a problem.”

Q9 : GEO-POLITICS

Can we then finally turn to geopolitics? Russia, China, Iran. Which one is the biggest threat to the UK?

“They’re all a threat to the UK. Russia very directly through what it’s doing in Ukraine, and through what it’s done to energy prices. China is a major long-term threat that has entirely different values from ours, and Iran because of the issues of stability in the Middle East, I think. And its development of a nuclear weapon. So, each one of them is a significant threat.

*“The degree to which they are aligned is a combined threat. But, if I’m getting to the heart of your question, do I think Russia or China is the biggest long-term threat to the UK? **I think it’s China rather than Russia.** What Ukraine has shown is that the Russian military isn’t as good as we all thought and its economy is completely dependent on fossil fuels.*

“So, China is instrumental in so many areas whether it’s semiconductors or manufactured goods and so on. China has an enormous influence. Its influence in Africa, where it’s spending a great deal of money centrally, taking control of parts of industry in Africa, these are all things we should be concerned about.”

Q10 : HAVING THE LAST (AND LONGEST) WORD

I believe you still hold the parliamentary record for using the longest word in the English lexicon in a debate a few years ago now. Would you like to tell us what it was and what it means?

“That’s floccinaucinihilipilification, and it means the act or habit of estimating as worthless.”

Jacob Rees-Mogg, thanks so much for coming on and talking to us about so many different issues. You didn’t have advanced warning of the questions, but you gave some very interesting answers. And so, on behalf of CIBUK.org and Facts4EU.org, thank you for your time today.

It’s been an absolute pleasure. Thank you so much.

[Watch the full video interview on YouTube now](#)

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