

Adapting to a post-Brexit international relations: Identity, Status and Role in UK Foreign Policy

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Brexit—the UK’s withdrawal from the European Union—is at the same time historic, controversial and of enduring significance. That description applies to both the UK’s domestic politics and (the focus here) its external relations. This roundtable introduces the forthcoming special issue of the journal *International Politics* ‘Adapting to Brexit: Identity, Status and Role in UK Foreign Policy’. It suggests that Brexit has had a dual character—being a source of both anxiety and opportunity for the UK—and, in consequence, can be usefully analysed through the concept of role adaptation. A focus on national ‘roles’ is a well-established way to think about what drives foreign policy. But role only makes sense when linked to the parallel concepts of status and identity. Insofar as Brexit has challenged (or, for some, has boosted), the status and identity of the UK, then so role adaptation becomes necessary. The roundtable explores all three concepts—role, identity and status—placing them at the service of an analysis of Brexit’s effects on British foreign policy through different cases introduced by each of the roundtable participants encompassing diplomacy, security and other international policies.

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