

How 8 Papers Covered the Brexit Vote

Take a look at newspapers published on June 24, 2016.

Keep in mind: British voters went to the polls on Thursday, June 23. Although partial results increasingly showed support for leaving the EU, official results were not announced until 5 a.m. London time the next morning. Newspapers generally go to press during the night. Stories, photos, graphics, layouts and headlines must be done by the early hours so the pages can be sent to the printer and distributed before the sun rises. Examine the editors' choices of story angle, images and words in the headline, and how much space is devoted to the breaking news event.

All images are from the Newseum's Today's Front Pages exhibit (neweum.org/todaysfrontpages/).

India

This paper in Hyderabad is located 5 1/2 hours ahead of London; it would have gotten final Brexit poll results at 10:30 a.m. on Friday, June 24.



The editors of the *Deccan Chronicle* chose to cover the Brexit polling on their front page, calling it a Hamletian dilemma ("to leave or not to leave …"). As India is 5 1/2 hours ahead of England, the editors did not have results when the paper was sent to the printer. India and England share a long history; this might have affected the editors' decisions about whether and how prominently to cover Brexit. The story is on the front page but is surrounded by local stories as well as other international news. The image features nuns exiting a polling station, suggesting the diversity of those who participated in voting on the referendum.

Germany

This paper is located one hour ahead of London; poll results arrived at 6 a.m. on Friday, June 24.



The title of this article can be translated as "Serve the Brits Brexit for Breakfast," a play on the comment by a British official that the results would be ready around breakfast time. The subject is relevant to Germany because Germany is a prominent and powerful member of the EU. Brexit's likely impact on German citizens makes it important news for a German newspaper to cover. The image of a cup of tea with a Union Jack symbol is eye-catching and easy to understand when paired with the headline.

Ireland

This paper is located in the same time zone as London. It received poll results at 5 a.m. on Friday, June 24.



Ireland, a part of the UK and a member of the EU, is a country that would have great interest in the Brexit vote. *The Irish Times* kept its readership in mind when designing this front page, which gives a lot of attention to Brexit while still leaving room for local stories. Considering the tumultuous history with Britain, the editors may have felt it was inappropriate to fill the entire front page with a story about England. Nevertheless, the story featured most prominently is the one about the possibility of Prime Minister David Cameron's resignation.

England

This paper is located in the UK. It received poll results at 5 a.m. on Friday, June 24.

Glastonbury



In England, Brexit coverage naturally took center stage. However, because the paper had to go to print before the results were announced, it does not include the outcome. Instead, the article focuses primarily on the events of Thursday, June 23, providing information on turnout and the movements of politicians.

USA

This paper is located five hours behind London; poll results arrived at midnight on Thursday, June 23.



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Covering Brexit was an easy choice for the *Boston Herald*, according to Editor-in-Chief Joe Sciacca. "There was no doubt this news would be the buzz at breakfast tables and coffee shops in the morning as our paper hit the street," he said. "There are so many important questions about how this will play out economically and politically not only in Britain and Europe but here in the United States." Being five hours behind England allowed the paper to report the results of the referendum in its morning edition. This front page was not the original planned for this edition, but because the results came out a mere hour and a half before the paper's final deadline, the journalists were able to pull it off.

"Page One Editor Diane Broderick cleared the front page of the local story and began collaborating by phone with Executive Editor John Strahinich and me, texting us possible presentations as Deputy Photo Editor Ted Ancher combed the wire services to find just the right image — an AP photo of backers of the 'Leave' side waving a giant Union Jack," said Sciacca. "We hit deadline — and of course tweeted out the page immediately." Even though this was an international story, the editors of the *Boston Herald* felt it was too important not to cover: "While international in scope, Brexit's impact was a local story as well in some respects," Sciacca said.

Canada

This paper is located seven hours behind London. It received poll results at 10 p.m. Thursday, June 23.



The editors of the *Calgary Sun* took the many Canadians of European descent into account when deciding to put the Brexit story on their front page. "Brexit vote was a huge, historic international story but it impacts so many people of European descent in Canada," said Managing Editor Martin Hudson. The *Calgary Sun* journalists were fortunate that in their time zone, the story deadline coincided with the announcement. They decided that this story was more significant than anything else in the paper, so they led with it. As for the headline, "OUT!" was chosen because it was a "simple word for a simple story," Hudson said.

USA

This paper is located eight hours behind London; poll results arrived at 9 p.m. Thursday, June 23.



The San Francisco Chronicle journalists knew their readership would want to know about this story, according to Digital Managing Editor Kristen Go. "We talked about wanting the story about the vote in our topos [promos above the nameplate] at the morning meeting," said Go. "When we met in the afternoon to solidify the lineup, we discussed keeping the vote outcome in the topos, even though we did not yet know the outcome." The time zone meant they got vote results before deadline, giving them time to adjust their front page to reflect the news. The staff even had time to send out reporters to write stories with stronger local connections: "Friday morning we launched two reporters to write followup stories, one about [President Barack] Obama's take on Brexit when he visited Stanford and another about the implications for Silicon Valley."

USA

Star * Advertiser

This paper is located 11 hours behind London; poll results arrived at 6 p.m. Thursday, June 23.



The editors of Honolulu's *Star Advertiser* had a 4 p.m. meeting on Thursday, June 23, to discuss the cover story. At that point they believed the movement to leave the EU would fail, so they did not feel the story needed big play on the front page. When they received the surprising Brexit news around 6 p.m., however, they decided to move it to the lead position because it was suddenly very important, said Managing Editor Michael Rovner. The editors considered the worldwide implications, including the effect on tourism, which Hawaii depends on. The page came together in about 30 minutes, and the "Brexit!" logo headed the paper's coverage of the vote. The decision to go with an international front page was unusual, Rovner said. "We normally go local, local on the front page," he said, but this story was too important.