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# London: The Past, Present, and Future of the Seat of Constitutional Monarchy

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### Abstract

London is the capital city of the United Kingdom. This unitary state is composed of four constituent nations under the ‘devolution’ arrangements, that may be regarded as ‘asymmetric federalism’. This unorthodox constitutional structure results from the centuries of development from separate feudal autocracies, through imperial expansion, and into a modern constitutional monarchy. The last decade has seen these arrangements challenged by the irruptions caused by ‘Brexit’, the United Kingdom’s withdrawal from the European Union. This article traces the past, present, and potential future of London’s role as the geographic and symbolic seat of power in the United Kingdom’s hybrid aristocratic-democratic constitutional system.

### Key-words

United Kingdom; Constitutional Monarchy; London; Devolution; Brexit:  
Globalisation



## 1. Introduction

*‘London calling to the imitation zone/Forget it, brother, you can go it alone.’*

John Graham Mellor (A.K.A ‘Joe Strummer’), 1979.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a unitary state. The very name of this state, however, indicates that it is a composite of four different nations. The present ‘devolution’ arrangements, whereby the UK’s Parliament in Westminster, London has transferred power to the devolved capitals of Edinburgh, Cardiff, and (Stormont, just outside of) Belfast has resulted in territorial arrangements that have been termed ‘asymmetric federalism’ (McGarry 2007; Zuber 2011).<sup>II</sup> However, it should be noted that this distribution of power to the constituent nations is becoming increasingly symmetrical. Before devolution, these regions and nations remained represented only by their Westminster MPs. Devolution may have challenged the material claim to dominance of England within the arrangements that govern life on the British and Irish isles. Legally, however, constitutional orthodoxy – as supported by dicta of the UK apex court<sup>III</sup> – holds that Westminster retains the ultimate decision-making authority over whether devolution continues. And Westminster Palace, the geographical residence for the UK’s Parliament’s two chambers of the House of Commons and the House of Lords, is perhaps the most recognisable geographical landmark in the capital of the United Kingdom – London.

This article considers London’s significance to and within the UK’s unwritten and flexible constitution. The first section provides a brief historical overview of how the city named by the Romans as ‘Londinium’ came to be the central seat of the United Kingdom’s constitutional monarchy. The next section delineates the modern volta towards ‘devolution’, following the gradual creation of the United Kingdom through domestic (material and legal) acts leading to union from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Section III considers the ‘regionalist’ (Stanton and Craig, 2022) aspect of devolution, focusing prominently upon the creation of a political figurehead for the governance of London itself. The penultimate section reflects upon the future for London and considers the extent to which there is now a *Dis*united Kingdom. The final section concludes. London was an ancient colonial outpost which, over the course of a millennium, become a global imperial capital. It is and will continue to be a global modern city, but with a power based upon culture and diplomacy rather than military



force. The questions remain, however, of whether the dialectic challenges generated by London's globalist modernity, the tense accommodation of the Kingdom's four other national capitals, and the state capital's status as the primary geographical seat of a constitutional monarchy that derives its legitimacy from ancient sanctity (Godolphin 2025) may be a creative and constructive tension, or a destructive and deconstructive one (Agamben and Wakefield 2014; Patberg 2020; Garner 2025).

## 2. History: From 'Londinium' to the 'Global(isation) Capital'

'Londinium' constituted one of the Roman Empire's more far-flung outpost citadels. The conquest of Celtic Britain remains a testament to the formidable military strategic power of Ancient Rome, as evidenced by the (claimed) inability for any other foreign power to conquer the territory of the British isles for 959 years (Tombs 2022).<sup>IV</sup> The dynamics precipitated by successful defences of the territory from the Spanish and French empires in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries respectively greatly accelerated Britain's own ascent to global imperial dominion in the 'long 19<sup>th</sup> century' (Hobsbawm 1962). The most recent such defences, mounted from 1914-1918 and 1940-45 against the second and third *Deutsche Reiche* during what certain historians term a 'European Civil War' (Payne 2011) in turn disturbed the equilibrium of Empire, leading to a slow and incremental process of de-imperialisation, a wave of independences, and efforts to reorganise into a 'Commonwealth', through the transitional phase of 'Dominions'.<sup>V</sup>

Empire also greatly impacted the internal dynamics of the development of the constitutional order, and London's place therewithin; however, it would be reductive to look only to such international dynamics for the causes of these processes. Instead, quotidian domestic and local issues played a driving role.

Empire accelerated into the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and the engine-room could be found not in the public constitutional halls of power, but instead in the (*hybrid public-)*private hands of the East India Company.<sup>VI</sup> Young ambitious '*nabobs*' (Dalrymple 2019) travelled from the regions of the United Kingdom on to the sub-continent, via the capital nerve centre of the various London-centric docks and ports, to make their fortune – via trade, and exploitation (Sanghera 2021; Sanghera 2025). The irony of empire in the sub-continent is that the seat of constitutional authority, the Crown, only officially took material territorial



control following the abject failure of private preferences to ensure order – the British Raj was established as late as 1858 under Queen Victoria, who thus styled herself ‘Empress of India’ from 1876, and so lasted for less than a century until the social and physical disintegration wreaked by the haste of British withdrawal and ‘partition’ into India and Pakistan directly following the end of World War II (Khan 2017).<sup>VII</sup>

As Empire expanded and mutated abroad (Douglas Scott 2023), London and the executive and legislative arms of power contained therewithin would be the steering wheel for the vehicle of the Industrial Revolution that would literally drive through the geography of the land, and metaphorically drive through the settled socio-economic dynamics of the nation’s cities, towns, villages, and hamlets (Blake 1886).<sup>VIII</sup> Labour and capital drained to the imperial centre of London from the peripheral regions.<sup>IX</sup> Parliaments in Westminster extended the electoral franchise, incrementally, so that within two centuries those eligible to vote expanded from land owning men to (nearly) all individuals over the age of 18<sup>X</sup> – including women, following the protest activities of the Suffragette and Suffragist movements including the infamous suicide of Emily Davison at the 1913 Epsom Derby. Constitutionally, the Westminster Parliament took control over the executive following the upheaval of the Glorious Revolution of 1688, and the longer-term legacy of Parliamentary and Royalist conflict that drove the English Civil War, resulting in the *interregnum* of Cromwell,<sup>XI</sup> and the Restoration. Parliamentary Sovereignty would evolve, arguably, into the ‘*grundnorm*’ (Kelsen 2024); ‘rule of recognition’ (Hart 2012), and ‘meta-master-principle’ (Dworkin 1986) of the United Kingdom Constitution.

Imperial wars *inter alia* in Crimea and present-day South Africa in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were followed by World Wars in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and post-colonial Cold War proxy conflicts *inter alia* in Singapore, Korea, and (arguably) the Falkland Islands (Mercau 2019).<sup>XII</sup> London remained the seat of executive governance by which these wars were prosecuted, the use of the armed forces remaining a ‘prerogative power’ of the Crown to be exercised by His or Her Majesty’s Government rather than being a power that had been placed into ‘abeyance’ by the decision by Parliament to overwrite it and take the power for itself.<sup>XIII</sup> Pre- and inter-war dynamics were dominated by various economic crises, contractions, and expansions leading to what has been termed as ‘political nightmares’ (Tinline 2022) at various *volte*. Fears of inflation and growing unemployment in the 1930s following the Weimar socioeconomic, political, constitutional, and moral collapse in Germany prompted decisions with great



import for the macroeconomic material constitution; similar dynamics would replicate themselves following the decision to join the European Economic Communities in 1973, leading through ‘Black Friday’ crashes and reversals of decisions to join European monetary constructions, through the ‘wait and see’ and ‘prepare and decide’ policies of the Major and Blair/Brown administrations respectively in relation to adoption of the Euro, and eventually decisions to engage in ‘big bang’ deregulation of the City of London by the New Labour government – in continuation of Thatcher’s Hayekian globalist pursuit of ‘comparative advantage’ by making the UK the ‘service provider’ to the world, and thus the dismantlement by (literal and metaphorical) force of the country’s primary and secondary industry in the 1980s (Bolick 1995). Gordon Brown’s decision whilst Chancellor of the Exchequer to engage in further deregulation regarding financial services did not cause the Global Financial Crash of 2008, but it arguably did leave the United Kingdom’s economy, and specifically financial and banking sector greatly exposed, as certain providers collapsed whilst others were nationalised (Mackintosh 2015).

All of these decisions were taken in London. Before devolution, those regions and nations who were most greatly affected by these executive choices – including the North East, Wales, and the North West<sup>XIV</sup> – remained represented only by their Westminster MPs. The New Labour socioeconomic irritations saw a nascent representation for the devolved nations, but greater *regional* devolution and the creation of local mayors in ‘powerhouse’ regions would come only during the Conservative governments of the mid-2010s.<sup>XV</sup> Regional equalisation was a driving policy of the Boris Johnson administrations, with its flagship slogan and agenda of ‘levelling up’ (Martin et al 2022). It may be debated whether the true objective behind ‘levelling up’ was a return to autarky and self-sufficiency by reconstructing primary and secondary industry within the United Kingdom as part of Johnson’s Svengali Dominic Cumming’s ‘super-forecasting’ (Tetlock and Gardner 2016) of the long-term threats to the country.

Attempts by the David Cameron-George Osborne regime to empower the UK’s regions through the ‘Northern Powerhouse’ scheme have not come to fruition, as evidenced by the eventual scrapping of plans for High Speed Railway to connect London to the North by Rishi Sunak in 2023. The Cameron-Osborne policies of ‘austerity’ over public spending (Keegan 2014) – with an attendant nebulous commitment to the ‘Big Society’ as a form of quasi-governmental solidarity rebalancing (Norman 2010) – have been criticised by



economists as unnecessary economically and incredibly negatively consequential societally (Deleidi and Mazzucato 2019). London experienced these frissons viscerally, as broken promises from the junior Liberal Democrat coalition party regarding abolishing student fees, with a referendum on ‘alternative voting’ instead being held unsuccessfully in an apparent example of their leader Nick Clegg putting ‘party above country’, led to youth-driven riots and looting in the capital and beyond in 2011 (Briggs 2012).

The Cameron majority regime established following the 2015 election would come to a premature end before breakfast.<sup>xvi</sup> His fate was sealed by the decision to open up to the country in a popular plebiscite the question of whether constituent power that had been delegated to Brussels and Strasbourg should be repatriated to London.<sup>xvii</sup> After succeeding in a similar *internal* constituent gamble regarding whether popular constituent power should be repatriated to Edinburgh through ‘independence’ thus reversing the Acts of Union of 1707, Cameron failed in his wager in favour of continuing adherence to *supranational* delegation. The Conservative political gambler who, *au contraire*, succeeded in his own gambit as a result was Boris Johnson. In the first example of a leader parlaying the Mayoralty of London into the position of Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Johnson took over from the troubled transitional caretaker regime of former Home Secretary Theresa May upon her resignation in 2019 after multiple landslide defeats in Parliament for her administration’s attempts to secure approval for the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement (Shipman 2024a).

The sequel to the 2016 ‘Take Back Control’ slogan in the snap December 2019 election – ‘Get Brexit Done’ – would become totemic for Boris Johnson’s landslide victory (Shipman 2024b). ‘London’, as the diplomatic metonym for the UK’s exercise of sovereign authority in international law, sought to challenge and redraft the terms of withdrawal and future relations from the EU under the stewardship of Lord Frost. Meanwhile, London as the internal metonym for executive and parliamentary authority, and specifically ‘Whitehall’ therewithin as the metonym for executive power, pursued the socioeconomic policy of ‘Levelling Up’. The language of ‘gamification’ (Werbach and Hunter 2020) obscured, for many commentators who did not have eyes to see, the objectives behind this policy. One may interpret the agenda as part of a *revanchist* anti-globalist, anti-neoliberal Johnsonian neo-Victorian, neo-One Nation(alist) drive to reupholster the fabric of the society and economy that had been torn asunder under Thatcher’s radical Hayekism, a socioeconomic approach that was continued under the New Labour governments (Jenkins 2007). An underlying



premise of this ideology – the irreversible march of globalisation – has arguably been catastrophically dispelled by the COVID-19 pandemic, the responses thereto, the attendant disruption to global trade flows, and the Trade War unleashed by the tariffs of the Trump 2.0/47<sup>th</sup> presidency, following the interregnum of the Biden/Harris 46<sup>th</sup> presidency of the United States of America. The potential success of the Johnson's premiership's policy to guarantee re- and upskilling for any adults who were willing to take up the offer of lifelong (re-)education and training could never be judged, for Johnson resigned due to his and others' (including future Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's) violation of pandemic restrictions (see Shipman 2024b).

Johnson's increasingly frenetic attempts to quell the scandal, which just so happened to coincide with Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and saw the Prime Minister pledging support unwaveringly and almost unconditionally in neo-Churchillian fashion, has created a pathway dependence for the UK's foreign policy in relation to the Western Eurasian conflict, following by the Truss, Sunak, and now Labour Starmer regimes, and culminating legally in 'London' and 'Kyiv' signing a 100 year security partnership agreement. The Johnsonian reported proposals for an Anglicisation of continental intergovernmental relations through a 'European Commonwealth',<sup>xviii</sup> that would also include resistant EU Member States most prominent amongst them Poland and Hungary,<sup>xix</sup> would not come to fruition. However, the French President Emmanuel Macron's proposal for a 'European Political Community' has arguably been subtly taken over by the UK government, as evidenced by the summer 2024 conference at Blenheim Palace, the birthplace and ancestral home of Winston Churchill. These international ruptures, developments, and irritations continue apace, conducted from Whitehall and discussed in Westminster, all while socioeconomic distress through the 'cost of living crisis' and physical violence through the gang knife-crime epidemic continue apace in the London that is currently governed from the Mayoral office of Sir Sadiq Khan.

### 3. Power to the Nations and Regions?

The constitutional, economic, and societal dominance of London may be compared to and contrasted with the capitals of its European neighbours. Paris is the seat of executive, legislative, judicial, historical, societal, and cultural power in the Republic of France;<sup>xx</sup> by contrast, in the Federal Republic of Germany, the federal legislature and executive remain in



the previous *Reichskapital* of Berlin, but apex *constitutional* adjudicative authority is ensconced within Karlsruhe,<sup>xxi</sup> with strong executive federalism through the *Ministerpräsidenten* of the sub-state *Lände* units.<sup>xxii</sup>

London remains the seat of monarchical, Prime Ministerial, parliamentary, regulatory, economic, and (cosmopolitan-)cultural power within the United Kingdom. However, the unfolding story of devolution since the New Labour governmental reforms following their general electoral victory in 1997 has carved out new sites of power and authority in the United Kingdom's devolved nations and regions, resulting in parliaments, assemblies, mayoralities, and more within Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and a choice selection of relevant English regions.<sup>xxiii</sup> The story has been one of gradually unfolding delegation of powers – symbolic, titular and linguistic,<sup>xxiv</sup> and functional – from the Sovereign Parliament in Westminster to these regions. The constitutional disintegration from supranationalism contained within the 'Brexit' process of EU withdrawal challenged this equilibrium. Responses thereto, from Labour Prime Ministers past and future-present, have sought refuge in the simpler and more easily digestible concepts of pure federalism, drawing also from the experience of a potential secession embodied in the Scottish independence referendum in 2015 (see Brown 2015). As the United Kingdom adjusts itself to a reality of a Parliament that has re-established material Sovereignty after four decades of delegation to the *supranational* level with regard to certain conferred competences, the effects upon delegation *down* to the *subnational* and -state level will continue to unfold, and all may be up for grabs for those with particular agenda regarding the independence or otherwise of these nations and regions. Arguably the United Kingdom's constitutional identity of 'hybrid aristocratic-democratic constitutional monarchy' would have been threatened if the House of Lords had indeed been replaced by an 'Assembly of the Nations and Regions', as proposed by the Labour party before their electoral victory in 2024.<sup>xxv</sup>

#### 4. The future-present-past of the constitutional monarchical capital

London generates and regenerates as the United Kingdom recovers from and adapts to its new symbolic and material 'independence' from the supranationality of European integration. Constitutionally, the Westminster Parliament is free again to legislate in areas of competence that were previously 'conferred' to the EU institutions, and exercised thereby in



Brussels, Strasbourg, and Frankfurt with adjudication thereupon in Luxembourg. Legally, the previous Conservative governments from May to Johnson chose first to ‘retain’ the ‘overriding and binding domestic source’<sup>xxvi</sup> of EU law, before ‘assimilating’ it through a process of incremental stripping of its special features, and the creation of extensive ‘Henry VIII’ powers enabling modification thereof – albeit with very limited use in practice.<sup>xxvii</sup>

Macro-economically, attempts to ‘unleash’ growth in the UK economic through radical deregulation during Liz Truss’ short and ill-fated premiership led to global institutional revolt, and a restoration of (a semblance) of economic unorthodoxy under Rishi Sunak (see Shipman 2024b). Today, the Labour government of Sir Keir Starmer and his Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves must wrestle with the dynamics of ‘passive divergence’ as the EU moves forward in areas of competence such as product regulation, and assessments of compliance in key areas such as data protection loom large. The mechanisms created to address this phenomenon<sup>xxviii</sup> may be criticised for undermining principles of the Rule of Law – ironically, in the same vein as criticisms of executive power from previous Conservative governments in relation to what used to be EU law, albeit with a diametrically opposed policy purpose.

At the micro-economic and socio-individual level, those nationals of the EU Member States who previously had the right to move to and establish themselves freely, both for economic and democratic purposes (see Garner 2018), in the United Kingdom have been stripped of any such capacity.<sup>xxix</sup> Those who qualified under the transitional arrangements to enable gradual disintegration under the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement can now acquire ‘settled status’ – an ossified time-capsule of the free rights of movement that they previously enjoyed in relation to and within the British isles (albeit with the exception of the region of Northern Ireland with its de facto status within the EU’s internal market under the ‘Windsor Framework’ (see Fabbrini 2022). The locus of EU-UK relations has been transferred back to the geopolitical level of diplomatic relations conducted on the basis of the logic of intergovernmentalism, as evidenced by the EU-UK summit on 19 May 2025, in London. The subject-matter has been firmly dominated by the existential threat posed to Europe by Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and the attendant external security and defence cooperation between the nuclear power of the United Kingdom and the international organisation of which it used to be a member.



## 5. Conclusion

London has evolved from Roman backwater outpost at the farthest North Western regions of that Empire, to the seat of governance first of a formal global British Empire, before transitioning into a capital of the New Global(ised) Order post-war – an order that is now undergoing sustained challenge from *revanchist* autarky economically, and pre-Medieval anti-liberal pro-hierarchical movements constitutionally. It remains and will remain a global city despite – and perhaps even because – of Brexit. Perhaps the greatest challenge to the current constitutional identity of the United Kingdom as a hybrid aristocratic-democratic constitutional monarchy will not, however, come from without, but rather from within, as movements towards ‘modernisation’ in constitutional reform could drive the polity towards standardisation and the simpler conceptual norm of ‘federalism’. However, if any lessons have been learned from the decade of socio-economic, political, and legal irruption prompted by Brexit, then surely the most prominent amongst them is that society and the electorate *must* be taken along in any such grand plans for constitutional transformation – regardless of the support that may be expressed therefor from the cosmopolitan elites who are based within the M25 boundaries of the nation’s capital.

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<sup>II</sup> For the claim of growing symmetry, see discussion below of recent legislation pertaining to Northern Ireland, Wales, and Scotland.

<sup>III</sup> See *Reference by the Lord Advocate of devolution issues under paragraph 34 of Schedule 6 to the Scotland Act 1998* [2022] UKSC 31.

<sup>IV</sup> William ‘the Conqueror’ of Normandy defeated Harold Godwinson (‘Harold II’) to claim the throne in 1066. Debates may be held over whether the ‘Glorious Revolution’ through which William of Orange came to the throne may similarly be regarded as a ‘conquest’ by the then great power of the Netherlands. More flamboyant rhetorical claims abounded during the Brexit referendum process, and previously in academia, regarding the extent to which accession to the then-European Economic Communities in 1973 similarly constituted a ‘revolution’ through which the London Westminster Parliament ceded sovereignty to a ‘foreign’ supranational entity (see Wade 1996).

<sup>V</sup> The choice of the term ‘Commonwealth’ was auspicious, given that this was the moniker chosen by the ‘Lord Protector’ Oliver Cromwell for his regime following the English Civil War, one of the only periods in the last millennium in which constitutional monarchy was disrupted within the territory of the now-United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

<sup>VI</sup> The extent of this hybridity is evidenced by the fact that the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office retains furniture from the headquarters of the East India Company.

<sup>VII</sup> The last Viceroy of India who was ultimately responsible for partition, Louis Mountbatten, was assassinated by the Irish Republican Army on 29 August 1979 in Co Sligo, Eire.

<sup>VIII</sup> William Blake provides a literary account of these effects upon the psychospiritual-geography of the nation, which was later set to music by Sir Hubert Parry: “And was Jerusalem builded [sic] here,/Among these dark



Satanic Mills? (...) "I will not cease from Mental Fight,/Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand:/ Till we have built Jerusalem,/ In Englands green & pleasant Land" (Blake 1886).

<sup>IX</sup> For an example of the reflexive effects of Empire and the Industrial Revolution upon the cities of the UK, see how the Manchester cotton industry was disrupted by the colonial cotton industry established in India, and built upon quasi-slave labour, as gathered via oral history from an anonymous interlocutor on Piccadilly Square, Manchester, England, United Kingdom (c. 16 January 2025).

<sup>X</sup> For example, the Representation of the People Act 1832, also known as the first Reform Act or Great Reform Act.

<sup>XI</sup> Almost literally, as Cromwell mused about making himself King, in a historical hypothetical that may be compared to Napoleon Bonaparte crowning himself the Emperor of France in 1804 (see Lay 2020).

<sup>XII</sup> The Falklands War in 1982 may be regarded as a special case of the Cold War proxy conflicts, the most famous of which remains the USA's war in Vietnam, but which also includes engagements in which the USSR were the primary superpower protagonist, in Afghanistan. The dispute over the sovereignty of the Falklands/*Malvinas* may, instead, be regarded as an 'echo' conflict— ideologically as a struggle between democracy (with the caveats of the authoritarian trappings of the Thatcher years) and autocracy (the Argentinian *junta*), territorially as a post-colonial conflict over far-flung territory more akin to the Napoleonic Wars, and more materially a struggle between a formed 'Allied' power, and a power that had benefitted materially from the legacy of the primary 'Axis' power of *Das Dritte Reich*, in terms of capital and human resources (see Mercau 2019).

<sup>XIII</sup> See *inter alia* *Attorney General v De Keyser's Royal Hotel* (1920) AC 508, UKHL 1; *Laker Airways v Department of Trade* [1977] 2 All ER 182; and *R v Secretary of State for the Home Department, ex parte Fire Brigades Union* [1995] UKHL 3.

<sup>XIV</sup> For discussion of the impact upon Liverpool, the actions by that Council in the fact of bankruptcy under the influence of the *Militant* movement, and the reaction of the Labour leader Neil Kinnock, see Hayter 2022.

<sup>XV</sup> For example, see the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 for the creation of 'metro-mayors'.

<sup>XVI</sup> David Cameron resigned as Prime Minister on 24 June 2016, the morning of the EU referendum result, meaning that he was barely able to start let alone finish his second helping of 'Shredded Wheat', having stated in a 2015 BBC interview that 'terms [as Prime Minister] are like Shredded Wheat. Two are wonderful, but three might just be too many'.

<sup>XVII</sup> These (intellectual) concepts were not employed explicitly during the referendum campaign. However, the Machiavellian political genius of the 'Take Back Control' slogan was its ability to encompass both 'high' (for example see Wade 1996) and 'low' concerns over sovereignty and self-determination.

<sup>XVIII</sup> This plan was reported in the Italian press, see Federico Fubini, 'Il piano segreto di Boris Johnson per dividere l'Ucraina da Russia e Ue: il Commonwealth europeo' (*Corriere della Sera*, 26 May 2022) <[https://www.corriere.it/economia/finanza/22\\_maggio\\_26/piano-segreto-boris-johnson-dividere-l-ucraina-russia-ue-commonwealth-europeo-02d3b232-dc6b-11ec-b480-f783b433fe60.shtml](https://www.corriere.it/economia/finanza/22_maggio_26/piano-segreto-boris-johnson-dividere-l-ucraina-russia-ue-commonwealth-europeo-02d3b232-dc6b-11ec-b480-f783b433fe60.shtml)> accessed 9 May 2025; for an account in English see Alvis Armellini, 'UK wants to include Ukraine in 'European Commonwealth': Report' (*AA.com*, 27 May 2022) <<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/uk-wants-to-include-ukraine-in-european-commonwealth-report/2599081>> accessed 9 May 2025.

<sup>XIX</sup> For analysis of the constitutional 'resistance' of these states to the European Union, most prominently in relation to the EU's 'value' of the Rule of Law, within the context of Brexit see Garner 2024.

<sup>XX</sup> One may consider the interest inherent in the *ancien regime* in France before the revolution of 1789 being nested within the Versailles estate, functioning in all but name as a separate settlement (see Ferrari 2025).

<sup>XXI</sup> One may compare this to the structure of the (non-state) constitutional order of the European Union, with executive functions contained within Brussels, legislative functions spread between Brussels and Strasbourg, economic executive functions enshrined within Frankfurt, and judicial power seated in the 'fairyland Duchy of Luxembourg' (see Stein 1981).

<sup>XXII</sup> Deutscher Bundestag, 'Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany', 23 May 1949, last amended on 22 March 2025.

<sup>XXIII</sup> One may consider the historical significance of the regions that have had mayoral power devolved thereto from London, bearing in mind historico-constitutional developments (as captured in the 'history' plays of William Shakespeare including *Richard II*, *Henry IV Part I and II*, and *Henry V*), and present sporting-cultural domination (football teams from the North West of England have won 22 of the 31 English Premier League titles since the reorganisation of the top flight of English football in 1992).

<sup>XXIV</sup> For example, the Welsh Legislative Assembly has now become the Senedd (see the Wales Act 2017).

<sup>XXV</sup> See Labour, 'A New Britain: Renewing our Democracy and Rebuilding our Economy' Report of the Commission on the UK's Future, December 2022.



XXVI See *R(Miller) v Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union* [2017] UKSC 5.

XXVII See the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018, the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Act 2020, the European Union (Future Relationship) Act 2020, and the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023.

XXVIII See the Product Regulation and Metrology Bill [HL], Session 2024-25 and the Data (Use and Access) Bill [HL], Session 2024-25.

XXIX A vast number of such individuals chose London as the city in which they would so establish their lives – cite statistics. For a snapshot from 2019 see The Office of National Statistics, ‘The number of EU citizens living in London’ (Census 2021, 16 July 2019) <https://www.ons.gov.uk/aboutus/transparencyandgovernance/freedomofinformationfoi/thenumberofeuicitzenslivinginlondon> accessed 9 May 2025.

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