

1 **Splendid isolation of the Tories**

2 *(Original at*

3 http://www.economist.com/opinion/displaystory.cfm?story_id=15816736)

4 The soon-to-begin British election campaign will barely mention Europe,
5 but it could well produce a Conservative government with the rare
6 distinction of being both the most Eurosceptic in the EU's history and the
7 least loved in mainland Europe.

8 British Euroscepticism can, at its best, set a good example. Think, for
9 instance, of the rushed way in which Greece, Portugal and Spain adopted
10 Europe's single currency, the euro. Britain has a better record than most
11 of applying the EU's rules, whereas many others sign up for commitments
12 that they then gaily flout. There are also understandable geographical and
13 historical explanations for British attitude towards Europe. But there is
14 something else, too: a suspicion of the entire European project that has
15 sunk especially deeply into today's Conservative Party.

16 40% of Tory candidates favour either "fundamental" renegotiation of
17 Britain's membership or withdrawal from the EU, and Tory press is often
18 xenophobic. Add to that Mr Cameron's intention to gain opt-outs from EU
19 legislation and it is not hard to see why the prospect of a conservative
20 British government raises some eyebrows.

21 In truth, both the EU and the Tories should do more to accommodate each
22 other. But Mr Cameron, is the one who has to do the most thinking. Mr
23 Cameron cannot take back his talk about negotiating more opt-outs for
24 Britain, but should not make too much of a failure to gain them. A more
25 valuable victory would be an exception for the City from the proposed
26 European financial rules. Mr Cameron should also focus on the areas
27 where even the Tories consider that Europe can add value. These include
28 a more coherent EU approach to foreign policy and greater co-operation in
29 defence.

Questions

- 1) Are relations with the EU a topic in the UK's election campaign?
- 2) What are the three traditional sources of British Euroscepticism?
- 3) What are the three symptoms of its current Tory form?
- 4) What does 'raises some eyebrows' (line 20) mean and why are eyebrows raised in Europe over a possible British conservative government?
- 5) What should the Conservatives do to counter European fears according to the article?
- 6) Name the areas where even the Conservatives consider EU contribution worthy.
- 7) An 'opt-out' (line 18) is a specific EU term denoting a legal situation (or a provision leading to such a situation) in which a Member State is not obliged to conform to EU legislation. The text also uses a much simpler synonym to express the same concept. Which one?
- 8) What does the word 'City' (line 25) refer to?
- 9) What is your opinion on the upcoming British election? Do you think that Britain's specific relationship with the EU is justified? Why? Does the relationship to the EU play a role in the Czech election campaign?

Vocabulary

Have a record of (line 10) – have a history of; to have done something in the past

sign up for something (line 11) – to agree to do something; to accept an obligation; to take on a commitment, to subscribe to something

failure to (do st.) (line 24) – nonperformance of something due, required or expected

add value (line 27) – make a positive difference, constitute an improvement

You can find additional explanation and more examples to help you understand and use English words and phrases at <http://dictionary.reference.com>, <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>, or <http://www.merriam-webster.com/>

Přejeme Vám mnoho studijních úspěchů.

Tým jazykové skupiny Spěváček: