

News from the Brexit Cliff Edge

6th Mar 2019

News Highlights

Welcome to the Brexit Cliff Edge

- Nissan Sunderland is considering cutting the number of shifts on the production line that makes the Qashqai and X-Trail SUVs from three to two - putting around 400 jobs at risk. It has already reversed plans to build the next generation X-Trail in the UK and Brexit is raising questions about long-term investment in the plant.
- A BMW board member, Peter Schwarzenbauer, said BMW would need to consider moving production from the UK because of Brexit due to the extra costs the company will now have to absorb. He said there is additional capacity in Austria for Mini and Rolls Royce production
- Ladbrokes owner, GVC Holdings is relocating all its servers to Ireland to end Brexit uncertainty. It also said the changes to the maximum stake on fixed odds betting terminals will see the closure of around 1,000 shops and loss of jobs
- Toyota`s European operations chief said a negative outcome from Brexit would put future investment in its UK factory near Derby at risk. If Brexit hurdles were too high, it would undermine the company`s competitiveness
- The PMI for the UK service sector showed it risks stalling or flatlining, with companies reporting job cuts for the first time in six years and new orders falling
- The Yorkshire Post reported a Kantar Worldwide retail survey which said one in ten shoppers have started stockpiling food due to Brexit uncertainty
- Foreign Policy magazine looked at the import/export of paper after Brexit. It quoted the director general of the Confederation of Paper Industries, who said toilet paper supplies could run low, with UK citizens using an unrivalled 110 rolls of toilet paper per year
- OFCOM is launching an inquiry into the impartiality and depth of the BBC`s coverage of Brexit, as it has come under heavy fire from both sides of the EU debate
- HMRC Northern Ireland chiefs told the UK Public Accounts Committee that businesses in the province do not have enough time to prepare for any would-be border in the event of a no-Deal Brexit
- A Republic of Ireland Freight Transport Association group said `a no deal Brexit would have a seismic impact on the UK`s trading environment and, in turn, freight distribution and logistics on both sides of the Irish sea`
- MPs in Westminster have been promised a vote to `protect workers rights` after Brexit by Theresa May, in her efforts to persuade the Labour Party waverers to back her deal. The TUC attacked her proposals as `blatant window dressing` and nothing more than `procedural tweaks` protecting no one
- The Conservative Party chief whip, Julian Smith, has issued an ultimatum to the ERG hardline Eurosceptics, saying they must back Theresa May`s deal, or see Parliament take over
- Channel 4 News broadcast a detailed investigation in Brexit backer Arron Banks and offered up strong evidence that he eagerly pursued a multi-billion pound gold deal offered to him by a Russian oligarch, who has close ties to the Kremlin, just a few months before the EU referendum
- Both the Scottish and Welsh national assemblies voted on Tuesday to oppose the Brexit deal agreed by the UK government. This is the first time this has occurred simultaneously, and it is

- a sign of the internal fracture of the United Kingdom starting to widen due to Brexit
- The Leave side has signed up a former head of Mi6 and many academics, who co-signed a letter, to be made public, that argues that a No Deal Brexit is far better than the deal Theresa May has secured
 - The head of the Northern Ireland civil service wrote to local political parties saying `if the UK crashes out unemployment is likely to rise sharply, security could be undermined, and a no deal Brexit would cause fresh challenges for the security services and the police, particularly if a hard border returned`
 - Brussels sources told Reuters that the talks between the EU and the UK have not gone well, but talks will resume Wednesday, in an effort to find an agreement
 - IAG chairman, Willie Walsh, the airline group that owns British Airways, said `the lack of progress in Brexit talks is very shocking and it will hurt the UK economy.` In a forward to the company annual report, he predicted Brexit will have an even greater impact in the months ahead
 - Donald Tusk claimed external powers meddled in the Brexit vote. He called for EU member states to do far to protect the upcoming European elections from external and internal interference
 - A Vote Leave regional spokesperson, Peter North, was found guilty of libelling pro-EU campaigner Professor Anthony Grayling and the judge awarded costs and £20,000 in damages against Mr North
 - Sir Ivan Rogers, the UK`s former top diplomat in Brussels, told Business Insider that `Brexit is a national crisis` and he believed the chaos it is causing and damage it will do `may trigger a future public inquiry`
 - Fourteen Conservative Party members have been suspended for posting Islamophobic or racist comments on social media
 - The government looks set to slash the UK`s trade tariffs to some of the lowest levels in any point in history if a No Deal Brexit occurs, according to Sky News. The cuts will be outlined in documents, if Theresa May fails to get her deal approved in Parliament. They will be a potential bombshell for many manufacturers and farmers in the UK. As tariffs are a charge on goods entering the country, they are designed to protect domestic producers from overseas competitors. Tariffs slashed by 80-90% means domestic companies could be fighting for survival against cheaper imports

Jobs at Risk

Hundreds of jobs at Nissan could be at risk, reports suggest

Reports suggest Japanese carmaker Nissan is considering plans to change production shifts at its Sunderland plant in a move that would lead to hundreds of job losses. The automotive giant has refused to comment on claims that it is looking to cut back production line shifts at its Sunderland plant , threatening around 400 jobs.

<https://www.chroniclive.co.uk/business/business-news/hundreds-jobs-nissan-could-risk-15926526>

Nissan could cut back production line shifts threatening jobs, Sky sources

Nissan is considering plans to cut back production line shifts at its Sunderland plant in the latest setback to the UK car industry, Sky News understands. If the Japanese carmaker goes ahead with the plan it could result in 400 jobs being threatened, Sky sources say. The Nissan proposals would see the number of shifts on a production line making Qashqai and Leaf vehicles reduced from three to two.

<https://news.sky.com/story/nissan-could-cut-back-production-line-shifts-threatening-jobs-sky-sources-11655931>

Nissan could cut production shifts at Sunderland, says report

Nissan is evaluating plans to cut back production line shifts at its Sunderland plant, which could threaten 400 jobs, according to reports. The Japanese car maker is considering cutting the number of shifts on the production line that makes the Qashqai and X-Trail SUVs from three to two, Sky News says. Nissan recently reversed plans to build the next-generation X-Trail at Sunderland, citing the decline in demand for diesel as the key factor - while acknowledging uncertainty over Brexit raised questions over long-term investment in the plant.

<https://www.autocar.co.uk/car-news/industry/nissan-could-cut-production-shifts-sunderland-says-report>

BMW may shift Mini and engine work from UK in no-deal Brexit

Peter Schwarzenbauer, the German car giant's board member responsible for Mini and Rolls Royce cars, said the firm would "need to consider" moving production from the UK as the company could not absorb the extra costs they would inevitably face. He also told the Reuters news agency at the Geneva car show that some engine manufacturing, at Hams Hall in Birmingham, could be lost to Austria.

<https://news.sky.com/story/bmw-may-shift-mini-and-engine-work-from-uk-in-no-deal-brexit-11655739>

Brexit: BMW could shift production from UK to Austria in event of no deal, board member reveals

BMW may move some of its engine production from the UK to Austria in the event of a no-deal Brexit, one of its board members revealed on Tuesday. "We have some flexibility on the engine side with Steyr in Austria," Peter Schwarzenbauer told Reuters at the Geneva car show. "We would need to make some adjustments toward Steyr. We are preparing to be able to do it." Schwarzenbauer also told Sky News that BMW will "have to consider" ending Mini production at its Oxford plant if the UK leaves the EU with no deal in place.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/bmw-brexit-no-deal-production-move-uk-austria-job-cuts-workers-a8808236.html>

Brexit: BMW warns production of Mini could shift abroad if we leave with no deal

Production of the iconic Mini in the UK could end in the event of a no deal Brexit, German owner BMW warned. A top boss said Mini's plant in Oxford - and BMW's engine factory here - were in "danger" if the UK crashing out of the EU led to ...

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/brexit-bmw-warns-production-mini-14092374>

@Haggis_UK BMW tells #SkyNews that they would have to consider moving Mini production out of the UK in the event of a #NoDealBrexit.

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https://twitter.com/Haggis_UK/status/1102921032736915456

Ladbrokes owner moving servers, licences ahead of Brexit

Ladbrokes owner GVC Holdings said today it had made plans to relocate servers hosting online gambling platforms to Ireland for Brexit uncertainties. GVC owns games brands such as partypoker, PartyCasino, Casino Club, Gioco Digitale and Foxy Bingo. It also said the cut to the maximum stake on fixed-odds betting terminals (FOBTs) in the UK will result in the closure of up to 1,000 shops, while it expects the EBITDA impact to be £135m in 2019.

<https://www.rte.ie/news/business/2019/0305/1034344-gvc-holdings-results/>

Toyota and BMW warn no-deal Brexit could hit UK investment

Car giants Toyota and BMW have both warned a no-deal Brexit threatens the production of their cars in the UK. BMW told Sky News it could consider moving production of its Mini from the UK in a no-deal scenario. Separately, the head of Toyota's European operations said a negative outcome could put future investment at its UK factory near Derby at risk. Johan van Zyl told the BBC that if the

Brexit "hurdles" are too high it would undermine Toyota's competitiveness.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-47457219>

Economic Impact

UK economy flat-lines as Brexit nears, firms cut jobs - PMI

Britain's economy risks stalling or contracting as Brexit nears and a global slowdown worsens, with firms in the dominant services sector reporting job cuts for the first time in six years and falling new orders.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-economy-pmi/uk-economy-flat-lines-as-brexit-nears-firms-cut-jobs-pmi-idUKKCN1PU0UW>

EU banks could face panicky trading after no-deal Brexit

The Bank of England has said that the failure of EU regulators to put in place measures to protect continental banks increased the risk of panicky trading on financial markets in the aftermath of a no-deal Brexit. Without further guidance to EU banks and insurers and greater urgency to put in place rules before the 29 March article 50 deadline, traders on international money markets could raise the costs of lending to the banking sector. This could intensify the impact of Britain crashing out of the EU, the Bank said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/mar/05/eu-banks-could-face-panicky-trading-after-no-deal-brexit-bank-of-england>

Brexit won't bother the City - but everyone else should worry

No manufacturer would begrudge the Bank of England's efforts to save us from another 2008-style credit crunch. Threadneedle Street is merely doing its job and everybody knows it started with the advantage that the EU needs access to London's banks. But the outcome is a comfort blanket for the City - London is on its way to becoming a "free port", Simon Jenkins argued in this paper last week - and next to nothing for the rest of the economy.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/nils-pratley-on-finance/2019/mar/05/brexit-wont-bother-the-city-but-everyone-else-should-worry>

Things Are Looking Up for the Pound, Strategists Say

There is now just a 9 percent chance that the U.K. will leave the European Union at the end of March without an agreement, according to a Bloomberg survey of banks. Much more likely is that Britain's exit will be delayed or even that Prime Minister Theresa May's beleaguered deal will get through Parliament, both of which are seen pushing the pound higher.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-03-05/pound-set-for-further-strength-if-pundits-are-right-on-brexit>

Administrative Fall Out

Shropshire medics issue warning over 'crippling' effects of Brexit on NHS

Doctors and nurses from Shropshire are among the signatories to a letter warning of the damage Brexit is doing to the National Health Service.

https://www.shropshirestar.com/news/health/2019/03/02/shropshire-medics-issue-warning-over-crippling-effects-of-brexit-on-nhs/#disqus_thread

One in ten shoppers 'stockpiling food to prepare for no deal Brexit'

One in ten shoppers claim to have started stockpiling food to prepare for a no deal Brexit, according to Kantar Worldpanel. As Brexit uncertainty intensifies, the latest grocery market share figures, published today from Kantar Worldpanel, show year-on-year ...

<https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/business/retail/one-in-ten-shoppers-stockpiling-food-to-prepare-for-no-deal-brexit-1-9629832>

French customs agents disrupt Calais port ahead of Brexit

Traffic jams built up on Tuesday around the French port of Calais as customs officers worked to rule, carrying out tighter checks on lorries heading for the Channel Tunnel and the ferry port. The action, which began on Monday, is aimed at improving pay and staff numbers ahead of the UK's expected departure from the EU on 29 March. Dunkirk, further up the French coast, is also affected. "Brexit is a catalyst for deeper anger," said one union official.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/47454150>

How Brexit could affect the price of renting: 'I've heard from other landlords that they are putting rents up'

The latest data shows rents across Britain actually fell for the first time in a decade last year. The biggest falls were in Yorkshire and Humber, where rents dropped by £21 (3.63 per cent), and London, where rents were down by £30 per month from 2018. How Brexit will affect renters really depends on two things: your landlord and whereabouts you live in the country.

<https://inews.co.uk/opinion/comment/brexit-house-renting-prices-consequences-how-affect-landlord-rents/>

What Happens to London's Food Scene After Brexit?

As Britain prepares to leave the EU—with no agreement ensuring an unimpeded flow of goods between the two yet in place—both sides are ramping up their no-deal preparations: a scenario rife with fears of supply-chain disruptions, increased food prices, and economic uncertainty. Ottolenghi fears the situation could upset the country's esteemed food scene, as well its internationalist culture that has allowed his restaurants and others to thrive

<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2019/03/ottolenghi-brexit-consequences-uks-food-scene/583945/>

Hard Brexit Means Hard Times on the Toilet

In the case of the United Kingdom, where the average resident uses an unrivaled 110 rolls of toilet paper per year, the highest figure in Europe, any meaningful measure of forward planning would require more real estate than is currently available. This is just one of the terrible challenges that the paper industry—and the public—may face in the coming months, said Andrew Large, the director general of the Confederation of Paper Industries, the leading trade association for the U.K.'s paper-based industries.

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/03/05/hard-brexit-means-hard-times-on-the-toilet/>

Booze cruise back in fashion as Britons stock up before Brexit

The booze cruise is back in fashion as shoppers stock up on cheap wine from across the Channel before the Brexit deadline on 29 March. Sales at Majestic Wine's Calais stores soared 49% last month and pre-orders are up 78% in March as shoppers take advantage of France's low alcohol taxes while they can. Nearby Calais Wine Superstore said its pre-orders for March are up 100% and sales are up 51% since January. The huge increase in Calais sales comes amid evidence that one in 10 Britons have begun stockpiling groceries while a further 26% are considering doing so.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/05/booze-cruise-brexit-majestic-wine-calais-stockpiling>

Europeans are watchful but calm about Brexit

Differences on Brexit capture the way in which perceptions of the UK and EU's future prospects are filtered through each country's experience of recent European crises, its party political landscape and social cleavages. Far-right, rightwing populist and anti-establishment voters are much more likely than people on the centre-right, centrists or moderate leftists to think that the UK will prosper as a non-EU member.

<https://www.ft.com/content/a6ca486e-3f3a-11e9-b896-fe36ec32aece>

BBC faces probe over 'biased reports and pointless stories' after both political sides claim it's not impartial

Regulators have launched an inquiry into the impartiality and 'depth' of the BBC's news and current

affairs coverage. The Ofcom probe follows bias claims from both sides of the political divide – especially over Brexit. It also comes amid growing fears that serious news coverage is 'in retreat' and allegations from rival news providers that the BBC uses too much 'clickbait' – celebrity or frivolous stories with little public service value – to lure online readers.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6775061/BBC-faces-probe-biased-reports-pointless-stories-claims-not-impartial.html>

BBC staff to receive ‘unconscious bias’ training

BBC staff are starting to undergo “unconscious bias” training. Staff are being asked to complete online courses. A spokeswoman said training is being provided to all staff and is designed to make the BBC a “better and more inclusive” place to work. The BBC said in early February that it would “roll out” unconscious bias training.

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/uk/bbc-staff-to-receive-unconscious-bias-training-1-4882482>

How Brexit broke the BBC

One strand of criticism unites the Remain and soft Brexit factions—that the BBC is so obsessed with “balance” that, on Brexit issues, it gives credence to nonsense. And there are heavyweights in the BBC who worry about this too. One senior presenter put it like this: “We should encourage debate... while being more militant about our core approach—that we are fact-based, and question and test all sides of the debate. We should not be doing vanilla ‘on the one hand’ versus ‘on the other hand’ journalism. I am sympathetic to the arguments about the danger of ‘false equivalence,’ and think we should be clear about the weight of arguments. But if a substantial number of people believe, so to speak, that bananas are blue we have to treat that seriously. Seriously, but robustly.”

<https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/mark-damazer-bbc-brexit-coverage-bias>

Brexit: Northern Ireland businesses not ready for no-deal

Northern Ireland businesses will not be ready for new border procedures if there is a no deal Brexit later this month, senior customs officials have warned. The HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) officials were giving evidence to MPs on the Public Accounts Committee. Jim Harra told the committee that even if border processes were announced today there is "insufficient time for traders who wish to comply to get ready."

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-47452886>

Transport group warns of no-deal Brexit threat to trade

A national association representing Ireland's transport and logistics industry has accused the Government of being unprepared for a no-deal Brexit scenario. Freight Transport Association Ireland (FTAI) has called on the Government to "advance and clearly communicate" contingency plans for a no-deal Brexit or, it warns, the country will face "significant threats to its supply chain". Speaking on RTÉ's Morning Ireland, FTAI General Manager Aidan Flynn said: "A no-deal Brexit would have a seismic impact on the UK's trading environment and in turn, the freight distribution and logistics sector on both sides of the Irish Sea.

<https://www.rte.ie/news/brexit/2019/0305/1034335-brexit-ftai/>

Political Shenanigans

Workers rights: MPs promised vote on changes after Brexit

MPs have been promised a vote on any changes to workers' rights after Brexit as Theresa May seeks Labour support to pass her deal on leaving the EU. No 10 said Parliament would be given a say over whether to adopt any new protections introduced on the continent and to stay aligned with EU standards. Labour MPs in Leave constituencies have been seeking assurances the UK will not fall behind EU standards after Brexit. But the TUC said they should not be "taken in by blatant window dressing". The union movement said what was being offered was "flimsy procedural tweaks".

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-47460850>

Additional sources: ([Huffington Post UK](#)) ([Reuters](#)) ([Huffington Post UK](#))

Frances O'Grady: Theresa May's Brexit promises on workers' rights are worthless

The flimsy proposals she's unveiled today won't even guarantee your existing rights after Brexit. And they certainly won't stop workers' rights in the UK from falling behind those in the rest of Europe. Theresa May says our rights at work won't be watered down. But her promises are worthless when she is unlikely to be in post this time next year. And there's nothing to stop a future right-wing Tory government from tearing these rules up altogether.

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/frances-ogrady-theresa-mays-brexit-14092145>

Chief whip hands Tory Eurosceptics ultimatum on May Brexit deal

Julian Smith, the government chief whip, has issued an ultimatum to Eurosceptic Tories: vote for Theresa May's Brexit deal or Europhile Conservative and Labour MPs will join forces to keep Britain in a customs union with the EU. Mr Smith told the cabinet on Tuesday that the stakes would be very high when MPs have a second "meaningful vote" on Mrs May's deal. "He didn't sound very optimistic we would win," said one minister at the meeting.

<https://www.ft.com/content/7b375ac6-3f25-11e9-9bee-efab61506f44>

Additional sources: ([The Guardian](#))

Do a deal on Brexit or risk Britain as strategic rival to EU, Hunt warns Macron

Jeremy Hunt today warned French president Emmanuel Macron to do a deal on Brexit or risk the UK becoming a "strategic" competitor just offshore of the EU. The Foreign Secretary piled pressure on Paris to ditch its hardline stance on Brexit as Attorney General Geoffrey Cox dashed to Brussels to seek a breakthrough in the deadlocked talks on the UK's "divorce" from the EU.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/do-a-deal-on-brexit-or-risk-britain-as-strategic-rival-to-eu-hunt-warns-macron-a4083041.html>

The Banks Files: how Brexit "bad boy" Arron Banks was eyeing a massive Russian gold deal

Millionaire Brexit backer Arron Banks eagerly pursued a multibillion-pound gold deal brought to him by a Russian oligarch with links to the Kremlin just months before the EU referendum, Channel 4 News can reveal. Business associates of the self-styled "bad boy of Brexit" offered to oversee a plan to create a massive new Russian gold company, and tried to arrange a personal meeting in Moscow with key players from a state-owned Russian bank. Five months before the referendum, the finance company suggested that Banks travel to Russia to meet executives at state-owned bank Sberbank to hurry the deal along. Associates of Mr Banks even identified a shell company, based in Sweden, to be used as a vehicle for the deal. Russia experts have told Channel 4 News that the document suggests Mr Banks and his associates expected the funding to come "one way or another from the Russian government".

<https://www.channel4.com/news/the-banks-files-how-brexit-bad-boy-arron-banks-was-eyeing-a-massive-russian-gold-deal>

May's Chief Whip Tells Cabinet Vote Will Be Tight

The government's chief whip told the Cabinet that the vote next week on May's Brexit deal will be tight, according to three people familiar with the situation.

https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-03-05/u-k-in-last-ditch-talks-to-fix-divorce-deal-brexit-update?utm_content=brexit&utm_campaign=socialflow-organic&utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&cmpid%3D=socialflow-facebook-brexit

Parliament will force Britain into permanent customs union with EU if Theresa May's Brexit deal is voted down, Chief Whip warns Cabinet

Parliament will force Britain into a permanent customs union with the EU if the PM's Brexit deal is voted down next week, the Chief Whip has warned. Government discipline chief Julian Smith delivered the dramatic assessment to the Cabinet's weekly meeting on Tuesday. Instead of a simple Brexit delay of up to three months to keep negotiations on the PM's deal going, Mr Smith said rebel Tories would ally with Labour to swiftly take control of the Commons order paper. An indicative vote would swiftly follow for MPs to pick their preferred Brexit outcome, which he is now certain would be a softer Brexit and a customs union.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/brexit/8569835/permanent-customs-union-theresa-may-brexit-deal/>

@PA The Independent Group MPs are at the Electoral Commission for talks about becoming a fully-fledged political party, group spokesman Chuka Umunna says

The Independent Group MPs are at the Electoral Commission for talks about becoming a fully-fledged political party, group spokesman Chuka Umunna says

<https://twitter.com/PA/status/1102942865997684738>

Scottish parliament, Welsh assembly join forces to oppose Brexit

Scotland's parliament and the Welsh national assembly voted on Tuesday to oppose the Brexit deal agreed by the UK government, the first time they have done so simultaneously in a sign of the United Kingdom's internal fracture over Brexit. Britain's 52-48 percent 2016 vote to leave the EU has stretched relations between the four-nation United Kingdom because England and Wales voted to leave but a majority in Scotland and Northern Ireland voted to stay.

https://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-eu-scotland-wales-idUSKCN1QM2B3?utm_campaign=trueAnthem:+Trending+Content&utm_content=5c7f05644b7385000164dfa2&utm_medium=trueAnthem&utm_source=twitter

Brexit: UK in further push for deal with EU

Mr Cox has dismissed reports he has given up on securing a firm end date to ensure the UK is not stuck. MPs will vote on the deal by 12 March. The UK is currently scheduled to leave the European Union on 29 March. If MPs reject the withdrawal agreement for a second time, they will have the opportunity to vote on whether to go ahead in just over three weeks' time without any kind of negotiated deal. If they decide against, they will then have a vote on whether to extend negotiations and push the date of departure back by several months.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-47449853>

Brexit: 'Difficult discussions' with the EU and UK if no-deal

The Republic of Ireland will need to have "difficult discussions" with the EU and UK if there is a no-deal Brexit in a few weeks' time, the Irish prime minister has said. Leo Varadkar was speaking in the Irish parliament on Tuesday.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-northern-ireland-47458935/brexit-difficult-discussions-with-the-eu-and-uk-if-no-deal>

Ex-MI6 chief says no-deal Brexit far better than Theresa May's offering

The former head of MI6 and dozens of senior academics have said a no-deal Brexit would be far better for Britain than Theresa May's "disastrous" deal. Sir Richard Dearlove said there would be "no tangible benefits" from a Brexit conducted under Mrs May's deal, which would merely "prolong the agony". In a letter to The Daily Telegraph, he is joined by 33 academics and business leaders who say that a no deal Brexit would offer "immediate opportunities".

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/03/05/ex-mi6-chief-says-no-deal-brexit-far-better-theresa-mays-offering/>

Brexit threat to Northern Ireland jobs revealed by civil service chief

Unemployment could rise sharply in Northern Ireland if the UK crashes out of the EU, the head of the civil service in the region has said in a letter to local political parties. Security in the region could also be undermined, David Sterling said, adding: "The planning assumptions include the possibility that, in some scenarios, a no-deal exit could result in additional challenges for the police if the

approach appeared to be unfair or unreasonable for some of those most affected.” “These consequences do not arise from the possibility of checks or controls on either side of the land border, but would simply be the direct consequence of the legal position that would apply. This point is well understood by the business community.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/05/brexit-threat-to-northern-ireland-jobs-revealed-by-civil-service-chief>

EU-UK Brexit talks failed to reach deal on Tuesday - sources

Talks between European Union and British Brexit negotiators ended after more than three hours in Brussels on Tuesday and will resume on Wednesday, sources from both sides said. An EU official said the talks did not go well. Neither side released any comments after the meeting, which involved the EU’s Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier and the UK’s Brexit Secretary Stephen Barclay and Attorney General Geoffrey Cox.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-tuesday/eu-uk-brexit-talks-failed-to-reach-deal-on-tuesday-sources-idUKKCN1QOM2QI?feedType=RSS&feedName=domesticNews>

Nicola Sturgeon warns no-deal Brexit would be ‘unforgivably reckless’

Nicola Sturgeon hit out at the UK Government’s “unforgivably reckless” stance on Brexit as she led calls from both Scotland and Wales to rule out Britain quitting the European Union without a deal in place. Ms Sturgeon spoke as both the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly looked set to rally behind a plea for Theresa May to rule out no-deal and extend the Article 50 deadline beyond March 29. Leaving the EU without any deal in place is an “avoidable outcome” which could only happen “by the choice of the UK Government,” the Scottish First Minister said.

<https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/national/17477954.nicola-sturgeon-warns-no-deal-brexit-would-be-unforgivably-reckless/>

Macron lays out proposals for a more ‘protective’ EU

Emmanuel Macron has stepped up calls for a more united EU, laying out a series of proposals for a “European renaissance” to fend off resurgent populists expected to score big gains in the bloc’s elections in May. “Never since the second world war has Europe been so necessary,” he wrote in an address to the “citizens of Europe” to be published on the opinion pages of multiple newspapers on Tuesday. “And yet Europe has never been so much in danger.”

<https://www.ft.com/content/bb07cca4-3e93-11e9-b896-fe36ec32aece?segmentid=acee4131-99c2-09d3-a635-873e61754ec6>

Political Setbacks

IAG chief says lack of Brexit progress ‘quite shocking’

Willie Walsh, chief executive of IAG, the airline group that owns British Airways, has said the lack of progress in Brexit talks is “quite shocking” and would hurt the UK’s economy. In a foreword to IAG’s annual report, Mr Walsh wrote: “I think it is inevitable that Brexit will have a greater impact in the months ahead. It has been quite shocking to get so far in the political process without having any real clarity about the future. That can’t be positive for the economy.”

<https://www.ft.com/content/27a22fde-3f53-11e9-9bee-efab61506f44>

Additional sources: (Yahoo Finance UK) (RTE.ie)

Donald Tusk claims anti-European forces meddled in Brexit vote

Donald Tusk has claimed external powers meddled in the Brexit vote as he called for EU member states to do more to protect the upcoming European elections. “There are external anti-European forces, which are seeking – openly or secretly – to influence the democratic choices of Europeans, as was the case with Brexit and a number of election campaigns across Europe. And it may again be the case with the European elections in May,” said Tusk, a former prime minister of Poland and

vociferous critic of Vladimir Putin.

https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/05/donald-tusk-claims-anti-european-forces-meddled-brexite-vote?CMP=share_btn_tw

Additional sources: ([Sky News](#))

Chris Grayling defies calls to quit over Brexit ferry fiasco as he defends 'collective' decision

Chris Grayling has said he will not quit over a ferry contract blunder that forced the Government to shell out millions of pounds to Eurotunnel.

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/transport/news/102292/chris-grayling-defies-calls-quit-over-brexite-ferry-fiasco-he-defends>

Outspoken Brexit critic wins £20,000 damages from ex-UKIP candidate who branded him a paedophile

Professor Anthony Grayling CBE was 'distressed and enraged' after discovering a tweet by Peter North saying he kept hoards of vile videos. The May 2018 post said: 'I'd bet good money that AC Grayling has a hard drive full of underage botty sex videos.' Former Oxford don Grayling, who appeared on BBC's This Week criticising a British exit from the European Union, has sued Mr North for libel. Mr North has been described as 'a prolific writer in support of the UK leaving the European Union'. He failed to file a defence and, in a hearing at the High Court in London, Judge Richard Spearman QC awarded Professor Grayling £20,000 for the 'particularly pernicious' libel. 'In my view, that's a figure which should provide vindication for him,' he said. 'It must be clearly stated that there is no truth in the allegation against him.'

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6772425/Outspoken-Brexit-critic-wins-20-000-damages-ex-UKIP-candidate-branded-paedophile.html>

Bombs sent to London airports and Waterloo came from Ireland

The Garda was now aiding the London Metropolitan Police with its inquiries into the devices. British counter-terrorist police have opened an investigation into who sent the three small bombs to Heathrow and London City airports and Waterloo train station ...

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/world/uk/bombs-sent-to-london-airports-and-waterloo-came-from-ireland-1.3815339>

The endless Brexit lies have left us in an Orwellian nightmare

In the meantime, we are left with the last gasp of the old lies from 2016: the idea the Commission will buckle, that the member states will ride to our rescue. They will not. And there are older and uglier lies than that at play too: that Britain will always outmanoeuvre and outsmart the continental Europeans and the insubordinate Irish will eventually do as they're told. That, too, will not happen. In the end, British exceptionalism will be the last reality to collapse. Because it is our oldest lie of all.

<https://www.politics.co.uk/comment-analysis/2019/03/05/the-endless-brexit-lies-have-left-us-in-an-orwellian-nightmare>

Vote Leave cheated in the 2016 Brexit vote - how would we stop them doing it again?

The court of appeal made it clear that they do not want to "interfere" with the 2016 referendum. Now, more than ever, it is essential MPs protect the national interest and that of their constituents, above party politics. If a Final Say referendum crystallises, it is vital that parliament engages in a cold, rational debate about the imposition of robust legal safeguards. Firstly, to act as a deterrent to non-compliance with agreed rules and, secondly, to ensure that any poll in which corruption occurs may be invalidated. If democracy means anything to those in power, they cannot allow any further cheating to taint it.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/brexit-vote-leave-electoral-commission-rules-a8806331.html>

Brexit Bulletin - Last Ditch

s Cox tries to achieve the apparently impossible on the much-loathed Irish backstop, two factors

play in May's favor: First, the European Union wants to avoid a delay. It would be messy because of European elections, and members are split on how long it should be. Secondly, since May effectively replaced the option of no deal last week with the alternative of extending Brexit, the decision facing hardliners is much tougher. They now have to choose between the risk of getting trapped in EU rules via the backstop, and the certainty of getting trapped in the whole bloc through an extension

https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-03-05/brexit-bulletin-last-ditch?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_content=brexit&utm_campaign=socialflow-organic&cmpid%3D=socialflow-facebook-brexit

@JP_Biz The Head of the NI Civil Service has sent an updated no-deal Brexit letter to the local parties warning of "grave" consequences which could have a "profound & long lasting impact on society."

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https://twitter.com/JP_Biz/status/1102959415269998593

Lord Sugar Tells LBC: "There's No Such Thing As A Good Brexit Deal"

Lord Sugar has told LBC there is "no such thing" as a good Brexit deal because the EU is "only interested in what's good for them". The pro-EU businessman and former enterprise advisor to Gordon Brown added that he had "no idea" whether he would have been able to have negotiated a better deal.

<https://www.lbc.co.uk/hot-topics/brexit/lord-sugar-lbc-no-such-thing-good-brexit-deal/>

Security adviser Max Bergmann on Russia: 'Brexit for them was a huge opportunity to sow discord in Europe and UK'

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<https://www.channel4.com/news/security-adviser-max-bergmann-on-russia-brexit-for-them-was-a-huge-opportunity-to-sow-discord-in-europe-and-uk>

Brexit is a major national 'crisis' which may trigger a public inquiry, says former UK ambassador

Brexit is a national crisis which could lead to a major public inquiry, according to the UK's former chief ambassador to the European Union. Sir Ivan Rogers told Business Insider that UK politicians and officials should be going through "a hell of a lot of reflection" on how they have handled Britain's exit from the European Union. He also said that Theresa May "didn't know very much" about the EU at the beginning of the Brexit process.

<https://www.businessinsider.com/ivan-rogers-brexit-crisis-may-require-a-public-inquiry-2019-3>

Tory party suspends 14 members for posting Islamophobic or racist comments online

Fourteen Conservative party members have been suspended after posting Islamophobic or racist comments on social media, The Independent can reveal. Comments found on a pro-Jacob Rees-Mogg Facebook group from Conservative party members included calling for Muslims to be "turfed out of public office", for the government to "get rid of all mosques" and calling Home Secretary Sajid Javid a "Trojan horse". The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), which has repeatedly called for an independent inquiry into Islamophobia within the party, said the latest revelation was "astonishing"

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/tory-islamophobia-racism-suspended-member-conservatives-a8808571.html>

Trade Deals/Negotiations

Brexit: Government to slash up to 90% of trade tariffs if UK leaves EU with no deal

The Government will slash Britain's trade tariffs to more than at any point in history if the UK leaves the European Union without a deal, Sky News has learnt. The Department for International Trade

(DIT) intends to cut 80-90% of all tariffs imposed on goods imported into Britain, according to Whitehall sources. The cuts, which will be outlined in documents published if the prime minister fails to get parliamentary backing for her EU withdrawal bill next week, represent a bombshell for many manufacturers and farmers in the UK. Since tariffs are a charge on thousands of types of goods entering the country, they protect domestic producers from overseas competitors.

<https://news.sky.com/story/brexit-government-to-slash-up-to-90-of-trade-tariffs-if-uk-leaves-eu-with-no-deal-1165609>

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