

News from the Brexit Cliff Edge

12th Mar 2019

News Highlights

Welcome to the Brexit Cliff Edge

UK Economic Impact

- Moody's produced an analysis of how much a No Deal Brexit would cost the Japanese car industry in the UK, which makes up half of UK car production. Assuming a 10% tariff was imposed under WTO rules, Japanese carmakers would be hit by an extra £1bn per year
- The City of London has lost £900bn in financial assets which have been moved from London to other European countries over the last 2 years
- The UK vehicle crash repair industry is predicting up to 1,000 repair companies would collapse inside a few weeks in the event of No Deal Brexit
- The International Energy Agency says a No Deal Brexit would hit the global energy market, reducing oil demand and holding back growth in international trade
- After UK company spending fell for the last four successive quarters, a Bank of England expert predicts a low business investment environment will continue for the foreseeable future

Industry, Farming, Aviation

- The UK government revealed that medicines and power station supplies would have priority on No Deal Brexit ferries, ahead of food
- All UK-based Ryanair investors, who own shares, will be barred from buying more stock under a No Deal Brexit
- Lamb farmers are worried about how a No Deal Brexit would hurt them, as 90% of their lamb exports go to the EU each year. With 20m lambs born each year, where are these lambs going to be sold.
- A passport renewal rush on the UK Passport agency website at the weekend caused a systems crash

Is it really a Political `Breakthrough`?

- Theresa May claims to have secured `legally binding` changes to the EU deal which may placate supporters in a vote later today
- The changes are not in the Withdrawal Agreement itself, but in the accompanying political declaration. They recommend a process of arbitration, by both parties, is the best way to decide when or if the UK would be able to pull out of the Irish backstop agreement with the EU

Political Shenanigans

- A poll puts support for Scottish Independence at 66%, the Labour Party in Scotland, meanwhile, is on course for its worst election results since 1910
- Labour Party MPs received a QC opinion which says Theresa May's promise on maintaining workers' rights after Brexit are worthless and unenforceable
- The Daily Mirror revealed Boris Johnson's trip to Afghanistan last year, to avoid a vote on

- approval of a new runway Heathrow Airport, cost the taxpayer £20k
- The producer of Brexit the Movie looks likely to be jailed for fraud
- In the event of a No Deal, the EU would seek to get the UK to pay the outstanding money it owes BEFORE resuming any future talks on securing a future trade deal
- Labour's Sir Keir Starmer savaged the 'new Theresa May deal' as empty, as not a single word of the Withdrawal Agreement has changed

Jobs at Risk

No-deal Brexit could cost Japanese carmakers in UK \$1bn a year

A no-deal Brexit would cost Japanese carmakers in Britain more than \$1bn a year if 10% tariffs were imposed on trade between the UK and EU, new analysis suggests. Nissan, Toyota and Honda together account for almost half of UK car production but trade under World Trade Organization terms could cost the companies \$1.17bn (£899m) in operating profit, according to calculations published on Monday by Moody's

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/mar/11/no-deal-brexit-could-cost-japanese-auto-makers-in-uk-1bn-a-year>

Additional sources: (Financial Times)

How the City has moved £900bn out of UK already to prepare for Brexit

Banks, asset managers and insurers have already moved nearly £1 trillion of assets out of the UK and to other European countries ahead of Brexit, with more likely to be shifted in coming months, according to new research. New Financial, a think tank, has identified more than 275 firms that have moved or are moving some of their business, staff, assets or legal entities from the UK to the EU in preparation for Brexit. "This is not Project Fear; this has already happened," says William Wright, the managing director of New Financial and one of the authors of the report. "It has been apparent to everyone in the City ever since the referendum that they needed to prepare for a hard Brexit.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2019/03/11/new-research-lays-bare-900bn-city-brexit/>

Up to 1,000 vehicle repair companies could collapse within 2 weeks of a no-deal Brexit

Up to 1,000 companies in the UK vehicle repair industry could collapse within two weeks of a no-deal Brexit, with many more forced to close within a month, according to leaked minutes from a meeting of leading industry figures seen by Business Insider. The UK vehicle crash repair industry — which is comprised of around 3,000 companies and employs an estimated 35,000 people nationwide — relies heavily on car parts imported through "just in time" supply chains. Repairers need to complete jobs quickly — not just to keep their cashflow going, but also to ensure they have enough courtesy cars for customers. Repairers effectively work to a one repair in, one completed repair out system.

<https://www.businessinsider.com/vehicle-repair-companies-could-collapse-after-a-no-deal-brexit-2019-3?r=US&IR=T>

Economic Impact

'Disorderly Brexit' and trade spats would hit oil demand IEA warns

A "disorderly Brexit" could hit crude oil demand, the International Energy Agency said, marking the first warning from the body about how the UK's exit from the EU could reverberate across global energy markets. Consumption of oil depends on the strength of the world economy and the IEA said uncertainty stemming from trade spats as well as concerns about an ill managed Brexit were major factors dictating consumption patterns. "Ongoing trade disputes between major powers and a disorderly Brexit could lead to a reduction in the rate of growth of international trade and oil demand," the Paris-based intergovernmental organisation said on Monday.

<https://www.ft.com/content/00aabf38-43cf-11e9-a965-23d669740bfb>

Low business investment set to persist, says BoE

Companies' capital spending fell for four successive quarters last year, the longest period of decline outside of a recession since 2003. Bank of England's Mr Haskel said that, whatever the final trade deal between the UK and the EU, business investment was likely to be lower with the BoE forecasting that every form of Brexit will lead to lower economic growth. "The longer-term question is whether [business] investment will eventually bounce back after [Brexit] uncertainty is resolved . . . At least for the next few years the prospect of low investment seems possible," he said in a speech at Birmingham university.

<https://www.ft.com/content/24836ad8-43ff-11e9-a965-23d669740bfb>

FCA to run no-deal Brexit 'financial war room'

The Financial Conduct Authority has plans in place for a financial war room to take action in the event of a no-deal Brexit. The war room will keep a close eye on the IT changes that will be required over the weekend following 29 March. It is understood that the regulator will keep in close contact with leading City firms to watch for potential disruption in the financial markets. The FCA will also liaise closely with Whitehall and Threadneedle Street.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-47531355>

Administrative Fall Out

Medicines and power station supplies will have priority on no-deal Brexit ferries ahead of food

Medicines and raw materials to keep power stations going will have the top priority for space on cross-Channel ferries if there is a no-deal Brexit - ahead of food supplies - the Government has revealed. Vaccines, transplant organs and both prescription and over-the-counter pills are among 'critical goods' that will get priority places on Government-chartered vessels if we leave without a deal. Similar material for animals and 'critical chemicals or consumables' for generating energy will also get a place, according to the two-page briefing note released by the department for Leaving the European union (DexEU). However baby milk formula is the only food that makes it onto the list for items under consideration for places in 'Government-secured freight capacity' system.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6796317/Medicines-power-station-supplies-priority-no-deal-Brexit-ferries-ahead-FOOD.html>

Ryanair's UK investors to lose rights in no-deal Brexit

Airlines not majority-owned by EU nationals or companies risk losing ability to fly within bloc. So...British citizens who own shares in Ryanair will be barred from buying more stock, voting on company resolutions or attending annual shareholder meetings if a no-deal Brexit goes ahead, the Dublin-based carrier said on Monday.

https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/mar/11/no-deal-brexit-ryanair-to-ban-uk-citizens-from-buying-more-shares?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Tweet

'Absolutely devastating': British lamb farmers fear impact of no-deal Brexit

A so-called meaningful vote in Parliament due Tuesday evening could help determine the fate of Theresa May's Brexit deal — and so, too, the fate of millions of British lambs being born right now. At the heart of the issue is a no-deal Brexit scenario that could put the brakes on the export of prized British lamb. As Brexit and lambing season converge, an industry threatens to unravel in a costly, unpalatable mess. About 20 million lambs are born in the U.K. every year. There's way more domestic lamb than Brits actually consume, so well over a third is exported — and a full 90 per cent of those exports go to the European Union.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/absolutely-devastating-british-lamb-farmers-fear-impact-of-no-deal-brexit-1.5051205>

No-deal Brexit would leave UK vulnerable to fresh horsemeat scandal

A no-deal Brexit could leave the UK vulnerable to 'food fraud' as a result of suppliers cutting corners

in an attempt to offset rising prices, industry experts believe. One of the most high-profile instances of food fraud was the 2013 horsemeat scandal when it emerged multiple supermarkets were selling processed beef products that contained horsemeat.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/brexit/no-deal-brexit-food-fraud-another-horsemeat-scandal/>

Brexit no deal fear causes UK Passport website crash as Britons update their documents

Brexit sparked panic among British passport holders who flocked to renew their document on the website, only to be met with an error message on-screen. The UK Passport office's official site crashed at the weekend as worried travellers sought to make sure theirs was fit for travel. Last month, Express.co.uk reported how millions could potentially be rendered invalid in light of a no deal Brexit. Prime Minister Theresa May's Brexit divorce deal will face a meaningful vote ahead of March 29, with further crucial House of Commons votes on the UK's departure from the EU due this week.

<https://www.express.co.uk/travel/articles/1098659/brexit-news-latest-uk-passport-office-website-crash-no-deal>

Brexit: 10 ways you could be affected by no-deal

The BBC discuss 10 possible ways in which people might be affected by a No Deal Brexit

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-47470864>

No-deal Brexit 'could bring return of low-welfare egg imports'

Billions of eggs produced by hens kept in battery cages could be back on the UK menu in the event of a no-deal Brexit unless the government acts to protect consumers, the industry will warn this week. The British Egg Industry Council (BEIC) and the welfare group Compassion in World Farming (CIWF) have joined forces to seek assurances from ministers that consumers will not be exposed to eggs or egg products from non-EU countries such as the US, Ukraine, India and Argentina where animal welfare standards are significantly lower.

<https://www.theguardian.com/food/2019/mar/10/brexit-egg-imports-return-welfare-farming-industry>

Brexit could spell disaster for Edinburgh tram extension

We are also only a couple of weeks away from Brexit day. Due to the inept Conservative government we don't know even now, after two years of dithering and procrastination, whether we will leave with the awful deal negotiated by Mrs May, a "no deal" which would damage Edinburgh significantly or a delayed deal. Why does this matter? The business case for the new tram line relies on income from passengers. Those figures could change dramatically if numbers of passengers at Edinburgh Airport fall as a result of a "no deal" Brexit (for example). The case also relies on a special dividend from our excellent Lothian bus company.

<https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/news/opinion/brexit-could-spell-disaster-for-edinburgh-tram-extension-rob-ert-aldridge-1-4886204>

Political Shenanigans

Brexit: Claims that 'Legally binding' changes to EU deal have been agreed

The prime minister has secured "legally binding" changes to her Brexit deal a day ahead of MPs voting on it, says the Cabinet Office minister. David Lidington said the changes will mean the EU "cannot try to trap the UK in the [Irish] backstop indefinitely". But he said further negotiations are taking place as the PM is still meeting EU officials in Strasbourg. Shadow Brexit secretary Keir Starmer questioned whether any changes had been made to the withdrawal agreement. Replying to Mr Lidington's statement in the Commons, he said: "People will be disappointed when they look at the detail."

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-47533164?ns_linkname=news_central&ns_campaign=bbc_politics&ns_source=twitter&ns_mchannel=social

Additional sources: (The Daily Telegraph) (Belfast Telegraph) (ITV) (Financial Times) (Daily Record) (Politico) (LBC)

Theresa May claims she's won legally binding changes to Brexit deal in last-ditch bid to

avoid crushing defeat

At a joint press conference with Mr Juncker she said: "a joint instrument with comparable legal weight to the Withdrawal Agreement will guarantee that the EU cannot act with the intent of applying the backstop indefinitely". And "if they do, it can be challenged through arbitration and if they are found to be in breach the UK can suspend the backstop."

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/brexit/8608650/brexit-deal-vote-house-of-commons-theresa-may/>

EU's Juncker says agrees last chance Brexit package update with UK

European Commission head Jean-Claude Juncker said on Monday he agreed an updated Brexit deal with British Prime Minister Theresa May to make the agreement more palatable to MPs but warned they would not get a third chance to endorse it. "There will be no third chance. There will be no further interpretations of the interpretations, no further assurances of the re-assurances – if the meaningful vote tomorrow fails," Juncker said.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-eal-juncker/eus-juncker-says-agrees-last-chance-brexit-package-update-with-uk-idUKKBN1QS2T0?feedType=RSS&feedName=domesticNews>

Theresa May dashes to Strasbourg in bid for Brexit compromise

Theresa May has made an 11th-hour dash to meet EU leaders in Strasbourg as the government insisted the meaningful vote on her Brexit deal would go ahead on Tuesday as planned. May was greeted in Strasbourg by Jean-Claude Juncker and Michel Barnier as she arrived in pursuit of a Brexit compromise late on Monday, after a phone call with the European commission president earlier in the day.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/11/brexit-meaningful-vote-will-go-ahead-theresa-may-says>

Brexit news: May to fly to Strasbourg in desperate last-ditch bid for breakthrough to avert looming Commons humiliation

Theresa May will fly to Strasbourg this evening to try to salvage her Brexit deal ahead of a vote in the Commons tomorrow, the Irish government says. But Simon Coveney, the deputy prime minister, played down any talk of a breakthrough – saying Ms May would “try to finalise an agreement if that’s possible”.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-news-latest-theresa-may-vote-strasbourg-eu-negotiations-a8817666.html>

Poll reveals Scots ready to back independence over any type of Brexit

Scottish voters would rather have independence than any kind of Brexit, a new poll has revealed. The Panelbase survey, carried out for the Wings Over Scotland blog, also indicated that support for staying in the EU has skyrocketed to 66%, up from the 62% who backed remaining in 2016’s vote. When given a straight choice between Scottish independence and a no-deal Brexit, voters chose independence 52% to 48%.

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/17492233.poll-reveals-scots-ready-to-back-independence-over-any-type-of-brexit/>

There may be a Brexit breakthrough on the backstop

There are mutterings that the Donald Tusk/Jean-Claude Juncker letters to the UK delegation of early January could be turned into some kind of legal basis for a declaration on the Irish backstop that may win the support of Theresa May's eurosceptic MPs

<https://blogs.spectator.co.uk/2019/03/there-may-be-a-brexit-breakthrough-on-the-backstop/>

Joe FitzPatrick: Brexit medical supply fears are 'unacceptable'

The health and social care system will face “damaging and lasting consequences” if the UK Government does not rule out a no-deal Brexit, it has been claimed. Scotland’s Public Health Minister, Joe FitzPatrick, also described the lack of guarantees over medical supplies in the event of a no-deal as “completely unacceptable”.

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/17490604.joe-fitzpatrick-brexit-medical-supply-fears-are-unacceptable/>

Labour MPs warned that Theresa May's worker rights vow 'not enforceable' ahead of crunch Brexit vote

Theresa May's "half-hearted" promise to protect workers' rights after Brexit cannot be enforced, Labour MPs have been warned. The scathing verdict comes in a legal opinion sent to all Labour MPs by two trade unions ahead of Tuesday's crunch Commons vote on the Prime Minister's Brexit deal. In a bid to win Labour backing for her embattled agreement, Mrs May last week unveiled a string of pledges designed to protect workers' rights after Britain leaves the EU.

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/political-parties/labour-party/news/102416/labour-mps-warned-theresa-mays-worker-rights-vow>

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

We've suffered 47 years of penal servitude, says Jacob Rees-Mogg

If this cannot be achieved then the default position is that the UK leaves without a deal. Some MPs say that they could never agree to this but many of them voted for the Article 50 Act that sets out the timetable and then stood on a Conservative manifesto which stated clearly that "no deal is better than a bad deal". If such people were to use Parliamentary prestidigitation to delay, in the hope of preventing Brexit, the honour and trustworthiness of politicians would fall to a new low.

<https://www.express.co.uk/comment/expresscomment/1098146/brexit-negotiations-withdrawal-agreement-jacob-rees-mogg>

Big Brexit moment: Will MPs back or bin the PM's deal?

The prime minister will try again this week to get her plans for Brexit through parliament. The clock is ticking to 29 March when the UK is due to officially leave the EU, but if MPs vote against the deal, there could still be a last minute twist, as political correspondent Jonathan Blake explains.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-politics-47485289/big-brexit-moment-will-mps-back-or-bin-the-pm-s-deal>

Why the PM's Brexit would not be saved by her martyrdom

One of their number told me that even if a "proper" Brexiter became PM in short order - and they are by no means confident of that - they simply don't see how they would ever get out of the backstop, short of reneging on the Withdrawal Agreement after it has been ratified. "We are not in the business of ripping up international treaties," he said. "We've thought about it but it is not a good look for this country." So burying the backstop is all that matters to them.

<https://www.itv.com/news/2019-03-11/why-the-pms-brexit-would-not-be-saved-by-her-martyrdom/>

Scottish Labour steers clear of Brexit split with UK party

Scottish Labour has formally backed calls for a second referendum on Brexit but, echoing the UK leadership, done little to reassure Remainers that the party is ready to mount a serious push for such a vote. Ahead of a crucial week of Westminster votes on Brexit, Scottish Labour leaders used their spring conference to focus attention more on long-term socialist policy proposals such as a new wealth tax and free bus travel.

<https://www.ft.com/content/a3c6ff1a-4334-11e9-b168-96a37d002cd3>

Brexit motion to be voted on by parliament on Tuesday

Reuters detailed the exact wording of the Parliamentary motion that lawmakers will vote upon in deciding whether to support or oppose Theresa May's Brexit deal

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-motion/brexit-motion-to-be-voted-on-by-parliament-on-tuesday-idUKKBN1QS2UD?feedType=RSS&feedName=domesticNews>

Labour MPs urged to disregard PM's 'half-hearted' Brexit pledge on workers' rights ahead of crunch vote

Ahead of a Commons showdown on Ms May's Brexit deal, top QC Aidan O'Neill has drafted a damning assessment of the prime minister's proposals to protect workers' rights, which were unveiled last week in an attempt to win over Labour MPs. The EU law expert, who was commissioned by the Independent Workers Union of Great Britain (IWGB) and the Transport Salaried Staffs' Association (TSSA), argued that Ms May's offer provides no guarantee that future EU standards will be matched when the UK leaves the bloc. In a 47-page dossier sent to all Labour MPs, Mr O'Neill warned that future parliaments could rip up Ms May's pledges, and even if parliament did implement all new EU standards, workers could still lose out on key protections under EU laws.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/may-offer-workers-rights-labour-a8817611.html>

Political Setbacks

Government ordered to end secrecy over Jacob-Rees Mogg's 'hard' Brexit ERG lobby group

The UK Information Commissioner rules that Brexit department must release names of European Research Group MPs, following an openDemocracy Freedom of Information appeal. "The names and parliament email addresses of the MPs, MEPs and Lords redacted from the emails disclosed should be provided," the ICO ruled. The ICO added that ERG members' names are "constantly placed in the public domain" and "they frequently use publicly accessible Twitter accounts to provide their views".

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/opendemocracyuk/government-ordered-to-end-secrecy-over-jacob-rees-moggs-hard-brexit-erg-lobby-group/>

Officials accused of 'cover up' over cost of Boris Johnson's Afghanistan trip

Officials have been accused of trying to "cover up" the cost of Boris Johnson's trip to Afghanistan the day of a controversial vote. The former foreign secretary blew more than £20,000 of taxpayer's cash on a visit to Kabul, which allowed him to miss a crunch vote on Heathrow expansion in June last year.

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/officials-accused-cover-up-over-14119585>

Brexit movie producer admits £500,000 scam

The producer of 'Brexit: The Movie' is facing jail after admitting he faked his earnings to secure a half a million pound investment for a business venture. Tory activist David Shipley, 36, convinced Resourcing Capital Ventures he could begin his own financial recruitment company after photoshopping wage receipts for business presentations. The corporate finance executive admitted a single count of fraud by false representation at Southwark Crown Court. Shipley used the fake invoices to secure £519,000 for his corporate finance...

<http://courtnewsuk.co.uk/brexit-movie-producer-admits-500000-scam/>

Additional sources: (Evening Standard)

Nigel Farage met Donald Trump and urged him to back no-deal deal Brexit

Nigel Farage urged Donald Trump to back a no-deal Brexit when they met in Washington earlier this month. Former Ukip leader Mr Farage told the US leader to support the idea that Britain should walk away if a bad agreement was on offer. President Trump and Mr Farage became friends during his campaign when the former Ukip leader, dubbed "Mr Brexit", was greeted at a rally in Mississippi before the 2016 election.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/nigel-farage-met-donald-trump-and-urged-him-to-back-nodeal-deal-brexita-4088886.html>

Number 10 Issued A Private Apology After Two Tory Officials Quit And Accused Party HQ Of Ignoring Their Islamophobia Complaints

In revelations that cast fresh doubt on Tory Party boss Brandon Lewis' claim to have a "zero

tolerance" policy on Islamophobia, the leaked emails show he was first made aware of the allegation in September 2018, but neither he nor the party's complaints unit responded despite repeated requests for answers. When Theresa May was informed in January this year that the two association chairs had resigned saying their complaints had been ignored, she asked her senior adviser David Beckham to respond. In his letter to Jagota, he apologised and said he had obtained assurances from CCHQ the complaint was being investigated, the leaked correspondence shows.

<https://www.buzzfeed.com/alexwickham/number-10-apology-conservative-hq-islamophobia>

We Are More Divided Than Ever On Brexit - Extending Article 50 Would Give Us Time To Build Consensus On How To Move Forward

There's been no plan B, no flexibility on red lines, no reaching out - the Prime Minister should focus on getting agreement on what kind of Brexit people want to see

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/yvette-cooper-brexit_uk_5c865861e4b08d5b7863b762

The UK Has Yet Another Idea To Solve The Backstop, But MPs Already Say It's "Legally Meaningless"

BuzzFeed News has learned that, under a proposal drawn up by May's team and discussed with MPs and ministers over the last 48 hours, the government could publish a unilateral statement saying it would consider it "bad faith" on the part of the EU for the UK to be kept in the backstop for more than a period of up to five years. And that is what will be sold as the 'guarantee' that the EU will not control the matter to opponents

https://www.buzzfeed.com/alexwickham/brexit-unilateral-statement-backstop?utm_source=dynamic&utm_campaign=bfsharetwitter

Labour 'disaster' poll also brings a warning for the SNP

It is just 15 months since Richard Leonard took over the leadership of Scottish Labour. While his claim that the party was back on the road to power seemed pretty far-fetched to most people, myself included, I expected that they would recover at least some of the ground lost under Jim Murphy and Kezia Dugdale. After all, how could things possibly get worse? But get worse they did. And if the Wings Over Scotland/Panelbase poll released last week is accurate, Labour is now on course for its worst General Election result since 1910, before the introduction of universal male suffrage. That surely explains the air of desperation about Richard Leonard's ever-more extravagant promises.

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/17490571.labour-disaster-poll-also-brings-a-warning-for-the-snp/?ref=mr&lp=2>

Britain's Future Stopped, Then Restarted Its Massive Facebook Ad Campaign Just Before A Key Brexit Vote

An investigation revealed Britain's Future is Britain's biggest political spender of Facebook advertising, purchasing more than £350,000 of ads targeting users to contact their MPs. On Monday morning, Facebook's ad archive showed Britain's Future was not currently advertising on the platform. But hours later, the group had 43 new ads targeting Facebook users displayed on the platform's ad archive tool. It's unclear whether the group stopped its advertising campaign as part of a scheduled or strategic decision, or whether this came as a result of recent media coverage of the group.

<https://www.buzzfeed.com/markdistefano/britains-future-facebook-ad-campaign>

@Channel4News [Theresa May] has allowed hardliners in the ERG group to hijack the government and hijack the country."

[Theresa May] has allowed hardliners in the ERG group to hijack the government and hijack the country." Labour's Yvette Cooper says that "instead of reaching out", Theresa May has allowed Conservative Eurosceptics to set the Brexit agenda.

<https://twitter.com/Channel4News/status/1105158575532503040>

Doublethink: How Brexit arguments lost all meaning

The deal hasn't just gone down badly because it will genuinely hurt future generations. Leavers hate it because it's the first time an actual picture has been painted from the referendum result. And when all of the lies and rhetoric and misinformation are scrubbed away, what's left is bleak, expensive and nothing like what was advertised. Ever since the question was decided, the UK has fallen victim to a debate between fantasy and reality. And as long as the government is allowed to pursue this blank cheque Brexit, whose terms are utterly divorced from what was on the ballot paper, we continue to risk monumental harm.

<http://www.politics.co.uk/comment-analysis/2019/03/11/doublethink-how-brexit-arguments-lost-all-meaning>

EU eyes cash demands as Brexit talks turn sour

Prime Minister Theresa May agreed a withdrawal treaty last year under which Britain would pay the European Union close to 50 billion euros (43.4 billion pounds) over the coming years to meet commitments made while a member. But the British parliament has rejected the deal and the treaty will be void if nothing changes by March 29. In the event of a no-deal exit, likely to cause economic disruption, the EU would insist on Britain committing to settle those bills - a significant part of the EU budget - before any resumption of talks on how to manage future trading relations. "Imagine all the bad blood and acrimony should we end up with a no-deal after two years of negotiations," an envoy who follows Brexit for one EU member state told Reuters.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-condition/eu-eyes-cash-demands-as-brexit-talks-turn-sour-idUKKBN1QS1B1>

Brexit: It's far too late for UK to say what it wants, says Varadkar

Mr Varadkar told reporters. "We're two and half years if not three years since the referendum. It is far too late for the United Kingdom to tell us what they want. The withdrawal agreement requires a compromise and this withdrawal agreement is already a compromise."

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/brexit-it-s-far-too-late-for-uk-to-say-what-it-wants-says-varadkar-1.3821626>

Dog owners hound Theresa May in call for Brexit referendum

Theresa May has been accused of making a "dog's dinner" of Brexit by second referendum campaigners and their pooches. The prime minister was hounded by pup-owners who gathered in Westminster to condemn the "diabolical" situation just 19 days from Brexit.

<https://news.sky.com/story/dog-owners-hound-theresa-may-in-call-for-brexit-referendum-11661306>

Brexit: Keir Starmer savages Theresa May's new 'deal' in fiery Commons statement

Labour's Keir Starmer tonight savaged Theresa May's Brexit 'deal' in a fiery House of Commons statement. The former Director of Public Prosecutions swept into full lawyer mode as he held aloft hundreds of pages of documents in a furious attack. Sir Keir shot down Mr Lidington's argument by saying Theresa May had promised to change the Brexit deal itself - and achieved no such thing.

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/brexit-keir-starmer-savages-theresa-14121263>

Brussels in bleak mood in 'crunch' Brexit week

"How can we move forward with the UK?" another EU diplomat spluttered in frustration. "We held talks this weekend, yes. But with whom? UK civil servants representing whom? Theresa May only?" "How can the EU conduct negotiations, when the other side (the UK) doesn't have one position but many? And they keep changing and contradicting." The mood in the EU, I can assure you, is not one of a bloc that is poised to "blink" at the last moment. And there is huge irritation in EU circles that UK government fingers of blame are pointing at Brussels for what they see as EU intransigence.

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-47523611?ns_campaign=bbc_politics&ns_linkname=news_central&ns_source=twitter&ns_mchannel=social

Former Australian PM calls Brexit trade plan 'utter bollocks' - Kevin Rudd says UK

striking deals with Commonwealth is not 'magical alternative' to EU

Rudd, a former chair of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group, noted that, while Australia, Canada and New Zealand would remain supportive of a post-Brexit UK, their combined population of about 65 million people does not "come within a bull's roar of Britain's adjacent market of 450 million Europeans". And he cast serious doubt on suggestions the UK could quickly come to a free trade agreement (FTA) with India, pointing out that talks he began with the nation on behalf of Australia a decade ago are still going on. "A substantive India-UK FTA is the ultimate mirage constructed by the Brexiteers. It's as credible as the ad they plastered on the side of that big red bus about the £350m Britain was allegedly paying to Brussels each week. Not."

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/mar/11/former-australian-pm-kevin-rudd-calls-brexit-trade-plan-utter-bollocks>

@C4Dispatches - Dispatches reveals that Brexiteer and Tory MP Jacob Rees-Mogg may have earned at least £7 million since the 2016 EU referendum, from an investment firm he partly owns - which has seen its profits increase since the vote.

"The amount I receive is not for public disclosure." Dispatches reveals that Brexiteer and Tory MP Jacob Rees-Mogg may have earned at least £7 million since the 2016 EU referendum, from an investment firm he partly owns - which has seen its profits increase since the vote.

<https://twitter.com/C4Dispatches/status/1105108677768417280>

MPs have failed on a grand scale over Brexit

The May deal is the only one on the table right now and the only one that is ever going to be on the table. As MPs (should) have known since at least November, parliament has only three options: deal, no deal, no Brexit. A decision is long overdue. Rejecting the deal at this stage in the process isn't brave or principled and it certainly isn't leadership. It's rolling a dice with Britain's politics and economy because you can't bring yourself to take responsibility and face up to the complexities and compromises of real life.

<https://blogs.spectator.co.uk/2019/03/mps-have-failed-on-a-grand-scale-over-brexit/>

Brexit is the most expensive, ruinous divorce in history

Our once-proud democracy has been turned into an idiocracy run by inept fools thanks to Theresa May's woeful amateur-hour negotiating and the grandstanding, puffed-up Tory Brextremists, who still scream their dogmatic lies. If Parliament adopts the PM's bad deal or, worse, a no-deal exit, our nation's decline into irrelevancy and intolerance will be accelerated. If MPs do the right thing and go into extra time, there might be a chance to ask people if they really want to wreck Britain

https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/brexit-most-expensive-ruinous-divorce-14116846?utm_source=twitter.com&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=sharebar

Sir Rocco Forte: 'No point in delaying Brexit'

A no-deal Brexit is better than a bad deal, and Theresa May's is a bad deal according to hotel tycoon Sir Rocco Forte. Ahead of a series of Brexit votes in parliament this week Sir Rocco is urging MPs to reject both the prime minister's deal and the option of delaying Brexit. "There's no point delaying, Europe has said the deal is the deal, it's on the table and we're not going to change it, so what do we do? Are we going to delay? What's it going to do? if we take no deal off the table, we're finished. We have no negotiating position," he says.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-47513846>

The Great Indifference: Brexit Wrongdoing Swept Under the Carpet

On Tuesday Channel 4 repeated claims of Banks' business dealings with Russia in 2015 and provided evidence that a finance company, substantially owned by him, pitched a gold mine merger to a Kremlin linked oligarch just prior to the EU referendum. The destabilisation of the UK and the EU is a key objective of Putin's regime and any links between a major player in the Brexit process and

actors in that state should be a source of serious unease – but Banks responded to all of the Channel 4 allegations with his usual bluster. The idea that there can be ‘trust in politics’ when grifters like Banks can subvert elections and not reveal the source of his funding is, frankly, laughable. With the clock ticking down to 29 March serious and immediate questions need to be asked as to who actually funded Brexit – and Arron Banks urgently needs to be held to account.

<https://bylinetimes.com/2019/03/08/the-great-indifference-brexite-wrongdoing-swept-under-the-carpet/>