

# News from the Brexit Cliff Edge

## 19th Mar 2019

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### News Highlights

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#### Welcome to the Brexit Cliff Edge

- A study published by the Royal College of Radiologists said cancer centres were reporting dire staffing levels, with half of all posts vacant, being so for more than a year. Demand for therapy is rising 2% a year and it identifies EU staff leaving in large numbers as a major reason. Additionally, it said there are concerns over whether a No Deal Brexit will adversely affect the steady supply of isotopes for cancer treatment
- Pro-Brexit truckers are planning to bring the motorways of Britain to a halt this Friday
- A Reuters story featured a worried multi-million pound UK asparagus farmer, who is concerned that he would not get foreign labour to pick his harvest easily, as UK staff won't replace the Eastern European staff, who are now far less likely to come
- Police Scotland said they had put hundreds of extra police on standby because of Brexit. These police are ready to step in, should protests, or logistical issues, arise across Scotland during the coming months
- Travelodge is seeking to fill its huge staffing gap, down to EU nationals leaving, by targeting working parents who seek flexible hours and extra income
- Rightmove said its survey of the housing market shows asking prices are falling
- A children's legal charity, Coram, estimates there are 900,000 EU national children in the UK, with about 285,000 born here. The charity believes children in foster care, care homes and in vulnerable families could slip through the new Home Office compulsory scheme to register all EU nationals net

#### Bercow throws a 1604 spanner in the works

- The House of Commons Speaker invoked a 1604 Parliamentary Convention to stop the government repeatedly bringing the same motion back to the Commons for a vote in an unchanged format
- The government had no advance warning of the Speaker's decision and was flat footed by it. It had planned to carry on lobbying its MPs for a 3rd meaningful vote on Theresa May's EU Withdrawal Agreement which had been scheduled for Tuesday
- Some commentators were predicting May would lose Meaningful Vote 3 (MV3), so the Speaker's ruling could be a blessing in disguise as she has more time to lobby MPs
- The Kyle-Wilson Amendment (proposed by Labour) is now being promoted by the People's Vote campaign and supporters as a 'classic compromise.' In practice, the Labour Party abstains on the vote for MV3. In return, the Withdrawal Agreement is submitted to the people in the form of a referendum, with Remaining in the EU also on the ballot paper alongside it
- The government told The Sun it was 'drawing up a letter to the EU Council to make a formal request for a long delay, of around 9 months to 1 year. But, this delay period will have an escape clause active between nine and twelve months'
- The SNP is growing increasingly unhappy with the extremely strong influence of the DUP on the Conservative government and, along with the Welsh Assembly, it is expressing a more rebellious sentiment towards Westminster

- Theresa May had promised to `name the day she would step down as PM` as part of the deal to get the Eurosceptics to vote for her deal on Tuesday (before Speaker Bercow`s decision). She had also promised to offer them the head of her chief negotiator, Olly Robbins, who would step down once her deal passed
- May`s deal would have had difficulties, as a hard core of 20-30 Tory MPs said they would not vote for it under any circumstances. So May would still need Labour Leave MPs to replace these votes
- With the 29th March departure date still looming, The Guardian reported on MEPs getting ready to clear their desks and vacate their offices
- The EU Commission were said to be `gaming` the possible resignation of Theresa May and her replacement as PM by a hardline Eurosceptic successor, during a meeting of EU ambassadors and senior officials last Friday
- MP`s are now suggesting alternative next steps publicly - Crispin Blunt MP called for a General Election to break the deadlock
- James Gray MP, an ardent Brexit supporter, told ITV Brexit will not happen now
- Hardline Tory MPs suggested to The Sun that they go on a voting strike if she asked the EU for another year`s extension to the leaving date.

## **Jobs at Risk**

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### **Dawnus administrators cite Brexit**

Administrators for Welsh construction group Dawnus say that while Brexit did not directly cause the business to fail, it made it harder to save. Whilst the financial difficulties of the group were not a consequence of Brexit, there is no doubt that Brexit uncertainty impacted the ability to rescue the business," said administrators - 700 people are affected across a number of sites in the UK

<https://www.theconstructionindex.co.uk/news/view/dawnus-administrators-cite-brexit>

## **Administrative Fall Out**

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### **Cancer doctor shortage threatens patient welfare says report**

A shortage of cancer specialists could be putting patients at risk, according to a new report. The study from the Royal College of Radiologists (RCR) said cancer centres were reporting "dire" staffing levels with more than half of vacant posts being empty for more than a year. It said almost 1,000 people are diagnosed with cancer every day and demand for radiotherapy is going up 2% every year, while demand for chemotherapy is rising 4% a year. In 2018, there were 863 full-time equivalent clinical oncology consultants working across the UK's 62 cancer centres.

<https://news.sky.com/story/cancer-doctor-shortage-threatens-patient-welfare-says-report-11669841>

### **M1 and 'all major roads in Yorkshire' set to be targeted by Pro-Brexit go slow protests**

Angry lorry drivers are set to stage a nationwide pro-Brexit go-slow protest which could bring Britain's motorways to a standstill. Truck and HGV drivers across the country are planning a series of demonstrations across the UK on Friday and Saturday, threatening to disrupt rush hour traffic.

<https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/transport/m1-and-all-major-roads-in-yorkshire-set-to-be-targeted-by-pro-brexit-go-slow-protests-1-9656922>

### **Brexit crisis tipped for British asparagus as EU seasonal workers stay away**

Uncertainty over eastern Europeans' employment rights and how long they can stay, combined with a fall in the value of the pound, meant Germany and the Netherlands were now considered more attractive destinations. "They go somewhere which is most straightforward and any, even minor, hurdles you put in their way is just nudging them ever closer to going somewhere else," he said. With just 11 days to go until Britain is due to leave the EU, the government is yet to agree a withdrawal arrangement or an extension, meaning the risk of a disorderly "no-deal" Brexit cannot be

ruled out.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-farming-labour-idUKKCN1QZ06R>

### **Brexit billionaire chooses BMW engine for 'British' 4x4 project**

The UK's richest man, expat Brexit supporter Jim Ratcliffe, has enlisted Germany's BMW to supply engines for a "British" successor to the Land Rover Defender, after handing the vehicle design contract to another German firm last year. Ineos, the chemicals company Ratcliffe founded in 1998 that is responsible for his estimated £21bn fortune, said BMW had joined a partnership aiming to build an "uncompromising" new 4x4 vehicle. He called the tie-up with BMW a "major step forward" in its plans, called Projekt Grenadier, to build a vehicle to be marketed to customers around the world.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/mar/18/land-rover-project-uk-brexit-billionaire-chooses-bmw-engine>

### **Hundreds of Scottish police on standby for Brexit fallout**

Police in Scotland will be ready to respond to any emergencies during an "unprecedented set of circumstances" after Brexit, a senior officer has said, with hundreds of officers ready to step in should protests or logistical issues arise. Assistant chief constable Steve Johnson, Police Scotland's EU exit tactical commander, said the force would be prepared to handle a range of potential challenges presented within the coming months. It included having 360 officers on standby to cover unforeseen eventualities. Johnson, who met the Scottish justice secretary, Humza Yousaf, said preparations would extend to any delays at ports, as well as possible political protests.

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/mar/18/hundreds-scottish-police-on-standby-brexit-fallout>

### **Brexit: Wales sets out environment protection plans**

Action to ensure protection of wildlife and the environment is not lost after Brexit has been unveiled by the Welsh Government. It said it was committed to maintaining and enhancing existing standards. But a 12-week consultation will ask how potential breaches of environmental law should be investigated in future. Nature groups have warned that time is running out to get these safeguards in place.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-47575085>

### **Travelodge targets parents to fill post-Brexit staffing gap**

Budget hotel chain Travelodge is targeting parents who want to return to work to fill a potential post-Brexit staffing gap if EU worker numbers fall. It plans to open 100 new hotels creating 3,000 jobs by 2023, and says it hopes to attract parents by offering flexible hours and school hour roles. The firm, which in 2012 was on the brink of administration, reported strong sales and profits for last year. Travelodge said sales rose 8.8% to £693.3m in 2018. Staff from the EU make up nearly a quarter of all jobs in the hospitality sector. But there are concerns that proposed regulations could dictate what type of workers are allowed to come to the UK after Brexit. The government is consulting on a minimum salary requirement of £30,000 for foreign workers seeking five-year visas.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-47605767>

### **Brexit or no Brexit, universities must be bridge across a Europe simmering with discontent**

Looking around the situation in Europe can be an uncomfortable experience for those who believe in inclusive, open and progressive societies. The rise of populism in many capitals and a growing disregard for evidence-based policymaking is worrying, particularly for those of us working in universities with a mission to advance our collective knowledge base and to work collaboratively to meet the problems our societies face. No part of Europe is immune. We have seen discontent in France, Italy, and even in countries which in the last 30 to 40 years have been more stable politically, like Germany and the UK. Universities spanning countries and sharing education and ideas, can be the beginning of a process to put some of what has been lost together again once

more

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/03/18/brexit-no-brexit-universities-must-bridge-across-europe-simmering/>

### **Brexit fears dampen spring property revival as asking prices fall**

Brexit anxiety has all but killed the traditional spring property revival, pushing down asking prices across the UK by 0.8% in the year to March, according to property website Rightmove. Inner London saw the sharpest falls, followed by boroughs across the rest of the capital and surrounding counties, as separate reports showed that Brexit uncertainty was also damaging UK exports and the broader economy.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/mar/18/brexit-property-uk-asking-prices-fall-rightmove>

### **Revealed: The Swindon hospital risk assessments for no-deal Brexit**

In one risk assessment, GWH's head of procurement warned hospital executives: "There could be difficulties in manufacturers sustaining support (repair, parts and documentation) for devices, if we are not part of an agreement with the EU." The hospital said it had contacted EU-citizens on the staff roster, informing them of changes to the rules requiring non-UK nationals to pay for settled status. The staff turnover rate for EU nationals was lower now than it was six-months-ago. Currently, it stands at almost 19 per cent compared to 23 per cent half a year ago.

<https://www.swindonadvertiser.co.uk/news/17502165.revealed-the-swindon-hospital-risk-assessments-for-no-deal-brexit/>

### **Northern Ireland's farmers urge DUP to back Brexit deal**

Ivor Ferguson has farmed quietly in Northern Ireland's County Armagh for decades. But Brexit has thrust him into the political battle in faraway Westminster.

<https://www.ft.com/content/4a10a60e-48b3-11e9-bbc9-6917dce3dc62>

### **Thousands of children 'could become undocumented' after Brexit**

Thousands of children of EU nationals risk becoming a new "Windrush generation", a children's legal charity has said. They are concerned that vulnerable children could become undocumented in the same way as the Caribbean children who came to the UK decades ago only to suffer at the hands of the Home Office's hostile environment decades later. An estimated 900,000 EU national children are in the UK with about 285,000 born in the country. Coram Children's Legal Centre fears that children in foster care, in care homes, and others from vulnerable families could slip through the net of the new Home Office registration scheme for EU nationals after Brexit.

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/mar/18/thousands-of-children-could-become-undocumented-after-brexit-new-windrush-generation>

*Additional sources: (Aljazeera)*

## **Political Shenanigans**

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### **John Bercow's ruling has changed everything - Europe now decides the fate of Brexit**

The one novel option that is now emerging from the fog of Brexit war is the grand compromise of a second referendum coupled with conditional approval of the May deal. This is the so-called Kyle-Wilson amendment which has won the, albeit confused, support of Jeremy Corbyn (who wants to vote Leave in the subsequent referendum, but on Labour terms which do not of course exist). It is "substantially different" from previous meaningful votes because it has a national referendum attached to it - a big move by anyone's standards.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/brexit-eu-article-50-delay-theresa-may-a8828081.html>

### **Speaker's unchanged Brexit deal vote ban could be good news for Theresa May**

Sky News' senior political correspondent Jon Craig says the PM has more time to win over enough waverers and serial malcontents as she was not looking likely to get her deal through this week, before the EU Summit

<https://news.sky.com/story/speakers-unchanged-brexite-deal-vote-ban-is-good-news-for-theresa-may-11669656>

### **EU could hand May lifeline with formal offer of new Brexit date**

The EU is set to offer Theresa May a helping hand after her plan for a new meaningful vote was derailed, by formally agreeing on a new delayed Brexit date at upcoming summit. This will focus her campaigning on seeking support for a deal and help sell the deal as different from the earlier two

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/18/eu-could-hand-may-lifeline-with-formal-offer-of-new-brexite-date>

### **@Channel4News Commons Speaker John Bercow says Theresa May cannot hold a third vote on her Brexit deal if her motion is the same, or very similar to, the one that was heavily defeated last week, citing 'convention' dating back to 1604.**

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<https://twitter.com/Channel4News/status/1107680529762136066>

### **@Brexit Speaker of the House of Commons John Bercow just said Theresa May will not be allowed to bring forward a third similar vote on her deal this week**

BLOCKED. Speaker of the House of Commons John Bercow just said Theresa May will not be allowed to bring forward a third similar vote on her deal this week

<https://twitter.com/Brexit/status/1107668874923778048>

### **Theresa May to ask for one year Brexit delay after smug Speaker John Bercow torpedoes third vote on EU deal**

Speaker John Bercow said “b\*ll\*cks” to the British people by torpedoing Theresa May’s deal and forcing her to ask the EU to delay Brexit for up to a year. The shock ruling – a year after a row over a “Bollocks to Brexit” car sticker was spotted in his wife’s motor – sparked jubilation from Labour ‘Remainers’ pushing for a referendum. Amid scenes of chaos in Parliament, he said a third vote on her Brexit deal could only take place if the offer before MPs was “substantially” different. He signalled updated legal advice would not be enough. senior Government figures revealed that the Ulster unionists took fright at Mr Bercow’s ruling. And they said there is now “almost no chance” at getting an agreement with the DUP over the line before a crunch EU summit on Thursday. Instead, No10 sources said the PM was drawing up a letter to EU Council president Donald Tusk to make a formal request for the long delay, instructed by Parliament last week if her deal still hadn’t been passed by the Commons. But the PM will also ask Brussels for an escape clause to the delay - expected to be between nine and 12 months.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/brexit/8666578/brexit-delay-theresa-may-john-bercow-third-vote/>

### **The Chaotic Triumph of Arron Banks, the “Bad Boy of Brexit”**

The U.K. is in a panic over voters’ decision to withdraw from the E.U. But the pugnacious millionaire whose donations—and Trumpian scare tactics—helped sway Britons has no regrets.

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/03/25/the-chaotic-triumph-of-aron-banks-the-bad-boy-of-brexit>

### **Two thirds of Tory Brexit rebels vow to stay firm in major blow for Theresa May**

A survey by The Sun has found that among the 75 rebels who voted against the PM's deal, 32 said they would not back it if it was brought back to the Commons unchanged

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/brexit/8666550/brexit-theresa-may-deal-tory-rebels/>

### **Brexit latest: West Dunbartonshire MP thinks second referendum is best option**

A second referendum remains the best option to break the Brexit deadlock, according to West Dunbartonshire’s MP. Martin Docherty-Hughes has called on the UK government to take immediate action to extend Article 50. The local SNP MP, who voted against Theresa May’s proposed Brexit deal

for a second time last week, said he will not support a Tory hard Brexit that he claim hurts the jobs and living standards of his constituents in West Dunbartonshire.

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/local-news/brexit-west-dunbartonshire-referendum-government-14154094>

### **Brexit: Jacob Rees-Mogg hints at backing deal**

Leading Tory Brexiteer Jacob Rees-Mogg has warned Britain may never leave the European Union if Theresa May's deal is voted down by MPs for a third time. Mr Rees-Mogg, chairman of the influential Conservative European Research Group (ERG), said he still regarded the Prime Minister's Withdrawal Agreement as a "very bad deal". However, he expressed concern that if there was now a long delay to the UK's departure from the EU - due to take place on March 29 - Brexit could be thwarted altogether. "No deal is better than a bad deal but a bad deal is better than remaining in the European Union," he said during an LBC radio phone-in.

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/brexit-jacob-rees-mogg-hints-at-backing-deal-1-4891229>

### **DUP's influence over Brexit is 'unacceptable', Nicola Sturgeon tells Theresa May**

Theresa May is unfairly favouring Northern Ireland over Scotland and the UK's other devolved nations in the hope of forcing her Brexit deal through, Nicola Sturgeon has said. In a letter to the Prime Minister, she claimed the Government's actions on Brexit had done "sustained and consistent" damage to the idea that the UK was a partnership of equal nations. "It seems clear that maintaining your majority in the UK Parliament comes before respect for the properly constituted governments" Nicola Sturgeon The Scottish First Minister also accused Mrs May of putting her slim working majority at Westminster ahead of respecting the devolved governments by trying to win the DUP's support. Ms Sturgeon was responding to reports that the Government is preparing to offer Northern Ireland extra funding in a final desperate attempt to get its Brexit deal through the House of Commons.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/scotland/dup-influence-over-brexit-unacceptable-nicola-sturgeon-theresa-may/>

### **Brain of Brexit fears DUP could be bought into backstop U-turn**

One of the key brains of the Brexit campaign has expressed concern that the DUP might do a U-turn on the backstop in return for money. In comments which are implicitly withering, Dan Hannan said it was possible that the DUP would back down because "unionism has a materialistic side". Two weeks ago Mr Hannan said that "government strategists believe that the DUP is looking for an excuse to climb down and that, if it does so, the ERG will follow". Writing in The Daily Telegraph, Mr Hannan, a Tory intellectual who is respected on the right of the Conservative Party, noted the reports of Mrs May hoping "to induce the DUP to vote for a deal that has been expressly designed to weaken the Union". He said that under the backstop "Northern Ireland would remain under the regulatory control of the EU, but have no representation there.

<https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/brain-of-brexit-fears-dup-could-be-bought-into-backstop-u-turn-1-8854080>

### **Brexit: Jeremy Hunt says a 'lot more work' needed to get deal through**

A "lot more work" is required to get MPs to back Theresa May's Brexit deal, Jeremy Hunt has said, amid uncertainty over whether it will be put to a vote for a third time this week. The foreign secretary said there were "encouraging signs" that opponents of the deal were slowly coming round. But he said another vote would only be held before Thursday's EU summit if ministers were "confident" of victory. A number of Brexiteers have signalled they will continue to oppose the deal. Former foreign secretary Boris Johnson called for further changes to the terms of withdrawal, which the EU has rejected, while 22 Tory MPs have written to the Daily Telegraph saying that leaving without any agreement - known as a no-deal exit - on 29 March would actually be a "good deal" for the UK.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-47607186>

### **Britain's Brexit crisis is rooted in the power of our public schools**

Among the myriad absurdities of Brexit, one has repeatedly taken the whole thing into the realms of the surreal: the gifting of the whip hand to the Tory faction known as the European Research Group. At the start of yet another watershed week, it is still this 90-strong band of ideologues that holds the keys to both Theresa May's political future and the fate of her deal.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/mar/18/bitain-brexit-crisis-public-schools>

### **Theresa May turns to Vienna for Brexit help**

London is looking for creative — some say dubious — ways to bring opponents on board. That's where Article 62 of the Vienna Convention — a treaty that lays down the rules about international treaties, or legal agreements between countries — comes in. Under one option set out by the Brexit Secretary Steve Barclay, the U.K. could make a statement saying that if there are "unforeseen circumstances" arising from the implementation of the backstop, the U.K. would have the right to walk away.

<https://www.politico.eu/article/uk-prime-minister-theresa-may-turns-to-vienna-for-brexit-help-delay-irish-backstop/>

### **Priti Patel's brazen anti-aid agenda is ultimately all about Brexit**

Patel, you might think, given the nature of her departure, might not be best thought of as a star turn on the future of British aid, unless you are, of course — like her hosts the TaxPayers' Alliance — essentially ill-informed and hostile to the idea of international development as most understand it. In endorsing the pressure group's new report, which calls for a shift in priorities in British aid, what Patel actually exposed was their profound shared misunderstanding of how aid works.

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2019/mar/18/priti-patel-brazen-anti-aid-agenda-all-about-brexit>

### **Brexit: 'No vote' on deal this week without DUP and ERG support**

DUP says talks with UK government are focusing on legal assurances and not cash.

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/world/uk/brexit-no-vote-on-deal-this-week-without-dup-and-erg-support-1.3829665>

### **Jacob Rees-Mogg says THIS person should take over Brexit negotiations from Ollie Robbins**

Jacob Rees-Mogg disclosed who he thinks should take over trade negotiations between the UK and EU, urging Theresa May to announce the change at the next European Council meeting. Mr Rees-Mogg believes Crawford Falconer, who is currently the UK's Chief Trade Negotiation Adviser, should step in for the next stage of Brexit negotiations. LBC host Nick Ferrari remarked: "Boris Johnson suggests that Theresa May needs to go back to Brussels to seek and I quote, 'real change'. Is he right?" Mr Rees-Mogg replied: "Well there is a council this week on March 21, on Thursday, I think that will be an opportunity to say to them look you do not want the backstop, we do not want the backstop, let's put an end date in.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1101872/brexit-news-latest-uk-eu-jacob-rees-mogg-olly-robbins-john-bercow-com-mons-vote>

### **Chief Brexit negotiator Ollie Robbins will quit if deal goes through, Tory MPs told**

Theresa May is under growing pressure to postpone a third Brexit vote after a suggestion that she would replace her chief EU negotiator to get her deal through left her still facing defeat. A meaningful vote that was widely expected tomorrow night could now be held on Wednesday or moved to next week unless there is a major breakthrough this evening. In a desperate last ploy to save her deal, Downing Street has told Tory MPs that Mrs May's chief Brexit negotiator Ollie Robbins will quit if it goes through.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/theresa-mays-chief-brexit-negotiator-could-be-ousted-in-bid-to-save-deal-a4094491.html>

### **DUP backing will not secure May's Brexit deal, says Jim Wells**

Theresa May could lose a third vote on her Brexit plan even if the Democratic Unionists back it in the

Commons, due to the number of Conservative rebels, a former DUP minister has predicted. Amid a final scramble by the prime minister to bring her informal coalition partners onboard before a probable vote this week, Jim Wells, who was the DUP's minister for health in the Northern Ireland assembly, said he believed up to 30 Tories would still vote against the plan. "So even with the DUP support, I think it's inevitable that Theresa May, if she pushes a third vote, will go to yet another defeat," he told BBC Radio 4's Today programme.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/18/dup-backing-will-not-secure-may-brexit-deal-says-jim-wells>

### **For all our sakes: Theresa May's Brexit deal must be voted down**

It is utterly inexcusable that a softer Brexit in the form of a customs union has not been subject to debate in the House of Commons. It is a condemnation of parliament's absurd polarisation and archaic submission to the government of the day. For Britain to proceed towards departing the EU without even voting on what was promised – a "frictionless" leave – would beggar belief. Now, at least, that option will be up for discussion.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/mar/18/theresa-may-brexit-deal-fail-eu-compromise>

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<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/theresa-mays-chief-brexit-negotiator-could-be-ousted-in-bid-to-save-deal-a4094491.html>

### **Steve Bannon talks Russia, Brexit, 2020 and his controversial following**

Mr Bannon, who since leaving the White House has become a sort of intellectual guru for nationalist uprisings in Europe, also says Nigel Farage has more influence on Mr Trump than the British prime minister. He went on to heap praise on former foreign secretary Boris Johnson, but for an unexpected reason. He said: "I think Boris Johnson would make a good prime minister. I think Boris Johnson is a guy with big ideas. I think he's the new recreated Boris Johnson who's lost 30 pounds - he's got a new haircut, he's a role model - the way he's lost so much weight... very inspiring."

<https://news.sky.com/story/steve-bannon-talks-russia-brexit-2020-and-his-controversial-following-11668563>

## **Political Setbacks**

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### **Theresa May warned she cannot hold another vote on same Brexit deal**

Speaker John Bercow has warned Theresa May he will veto a third vote on her Brexit deal unless it is "substantially" different from the previous two versions. He cited a more than 400-year-old Commons rule that blocks parliament being forced to vote on the same issue repeatedly in a short space of time.

<https://news.sky.com/story/theresa-may-warned-she-cannot-hold-another-vote-on-same-brexit-deal-11669533>

### **Brexit: John Bercow rules out third meaningful vote on same deal**

The solicitor general, Robert Buckland, said the decision was a "constitutional crisis" and that the government might have to consider the drastic step of ending the parliamentary session early and restarting a new session. "We're in a major constitutional crisis here ... This has given us quite a lot to think about in the immediate term. There are ways around this – a prorogation of parliament and a new session – but we are now talking about not just days but hours to 29 March," Buckland told BBC News. "Frankly we could have done without this, but it's something we're going to have to negotiate with and deal with." Downing Street was blindsided by the announcement and unable to

give a response at its regular afternoon briefing for journalists. "The speaker did not forewarn us of the content of his statement or the fact that he was making one," May's spokeswoman said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/18/brexit-john-bercow-rules-out-third-meaningful-vote-on-same-deal>

### **Brexit deal MUST change or I'll block third vote, John Bercow says in urgent statement**

The speaker of the House of Commons said MPs have expressed concerns about being asked to vote on Mrs May's controversial deal more than once. He said unless her deal is revised, he will prevent the third meaningful vote on it. He said: "It has been strongly rumoured that third and even possibly fourth meaningful vote motions will be attempted. Hence this statement is designed to signal what would be orderly and what would not. "If the Government wishes to bring forward a new proposition that is neither the same nor substantially the same as that disposed of by the House on March 12 this would be entirely in order.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1101809/brexit-latest-news-brexit-statement-theresa-may-john-bercow>

### **Watch: John Bercow lays into Andrea Leadsom**

Today, the Speaker John Bercow dealt a harsh blow to the government's Brexit strategy after announcing that he would block a third vote on Theresa May's withdrawal agreement, unless it changed in a substantial way. Not content though with just one attack on the government, the Speaker also found time to launch a dig at his favourite rival in the House of Commons: Andrea Leadsom. 'I note that as the right honourable gentleman asks his question and I respond, the leader of the house [Leadsom] is playing with her electronic device and so is the deputy chief whip [Pincher]. I didn't include him in the category of very senior people in the house, but that's a debatable proposition.'

<https://blogs.spectator.co.uk/2019/03/watch-john-bercow-lays-into-andrea-leadsom/>

### **Third Brexit vote must be different - Speaker**

Speaker John Bercow has thrown the UK's Brexit plans into further confusion by ruling out another vote on the PM's deal unless MPs are given a new motion. In a surprise ruling, he said he would not allow a third "meaningful vote" in the coming days on "substantially the same" motion as MPs rejected last week. With 11 days to go before the UK is due to leave the EU, ministers have warned of a looming "constitutional crisis". The UK is currently due to leave the EU on 29 March. Theresa May has negotiated the withdrawal deal with the EU but it must also be agreed by MPs. They have voted against it twice, and the government has been considering a third attempt to get it through Parliament. Mr Bercow cited a convention dating back to 1604 that a defeated motion could not be brought back in the same form during the course of a parliamentary session.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-47614074>

### **Government's Brexit deal needs 'substantial changes' before MPs can vote on it again**

House of Commons Speaker John Bercow has ruled out another vote on Theresa May's Brexit withdrawal agreement if the motion is substantially the same as last time. The ruling means May's deal, as it stands, will not be put before MPs as anticipated would happen this week. Bercow said the government cannot "resubmit to the House the same proposition, or substantially the same proposition," for a third time. The Speaker cited the Commons rulebook Erskine May as he set out a convention dating back to 1604 that a defeated motion cannot be brought back in the same form during the course of a parliamentary session.

<https://www.itv.com/news/2019-03-18/governments-brexit-deal-needs-substantial-changes-before-mps-can-vote-on-it-again/>

### **Bercow detonates May's third vote with dramatic Brexit intervention**

John Bercow blew the whole thing apart. After years of petty sneers and active sabotages of parliament by the government, he finally took his revenge. And it was huge: dramatic, constitutionally-explosive and with far-reaching repercussions for Brexit and British democracy.

Once he was done, the prime minister's strategy was in ruins. This was a long time coming. The referendum had created a new kind of sovereignty in British democracy. Since the English civil war in the 1600s, sovereignty lay with parliament, which gained its legitimacy through the elections held by the public. But the referendum result created a new form of political legitimacy: that of direct democracy.

<https://www.politics.co.uk/blogs/2019/03/18/bercow-detonates-may-s-third-vote-with-dramatic-brexinterv>

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<https://www.channel4.com/news/conservative-mp-rachel-maclean-speaker-has-increased-risk-of-very-long-extension-or-no-deal>

### **Brexit: Bercow chucks a hulking great spanner in the works**

"He's breaking the constitution" - quite the accusation, laid at the door of John Bercow's grand speaker's apartments. It's notable because it's the view of a government minister who is not one of those whose pulse quickens when discussing leaving or trying to stay in the European Union. There is, of course, precedent in the very well-thumbed copies of Erskine May, the parliamentary rules, for the speaker's decision. Quoting decisions as far back as 1604, John Bercow was quite clear that governments are not meant to be able to keep asking parliament the same question, in the hope of boring MPs into submission if they keep saying no. But as another member of the government put it mildly, the speaker has a reputation for being "interventionist", and he has, this afternoon, chucked a hulking great spanner in the works.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-47616477>

### **@JolyonMaugham Here's the page from Erskine May which the Speaker is reading out.**

Here's the page from Erskine May which the Speaker is reading out.

<https://twitter.com/JolyonMaugham/status/1107667240785199105>

### **Brexit: EU wary of divisions over UK delay**

The EU has almost given up understanding what's going on in UK politics. This weekend, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte compared UK Prime Minister Theresa May to the Monty Python knight whose limbs get cut off in a duel, but insists to his opponent that the fight was a draw. Elsewhere in the EU, there is less attempted humour about the situation, especially with the prospect of a lengthy delay to Brexit on the cards. "The whole point of Article 50 [which sets out the legal process for leaving the EU] is to go," a diplomatic contact from one of the UK's closest trading partners told me. "The UK triggered Article 50 two years ago, but it prevaricates, debates with itself and hovers around on the EU stage."

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-47610439>

### **Brexit: Frustrated voters in Labour's Wales heartlands just want it to be over**

Nestled at the foot of the Gwent Valleys just north of Newport, Cwmbran forms part of the safe Labour constituency of Torfaen. Residents voted by 59.8% to 40.2% to Leave at the 2016 referendum. It is typical of the traditional Labour heartlands which ...

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/frustrated-voters-labours-wales-heartlands-14153770>

### **With Brexit approaching UK's voice in Brussels grows quiet**

Although delay is on the cards, wheels are in motion for the long-planned Brexit day. British MEPs have been told to clear their offices by 29 March, as their passes will stop working soon after. Redundancy notices have been served to British MEP assistants, although contract renewal notices are now in the works for some. "It's uncertain, it's unnerving that we still don't have an answer," one assistant said. "If there is any kind of extension that is a bonus, but for me I've always been planning on 29 March." Outside the Brexit hothouse, the reality has not fully hit home for everyone. "I'm getting invites to host events in Brussels in April," the Labour MEP Seb Dance tweeted recently. "What can I say?!" "There is a sort of resignation in the air in recent weeks," he told the Guardian. "It is not one I share. I have always said all along the odds are against stopping Brexit - that's obvious, but if anything is going to change it will be in the last few weeks."

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/18/with-brexit-approaching-uks-voice-in-brussels-grows-quiet>

### **Leave MPs must take responsibility for the horrors of a long Brexit delay**

In a letter published in the Daily Telegraph, 23 Conservative MPs explained why they still wouldn't vote for Theresa May's Brexit deal, despite the alternative before them of a potentially lengthy delay to the whole idea. As long-standing supporters of leaving the EU, they said that their "moral course is clear". They argued that it is not their fault that they are now confronted by what they regard as "two unacceptable choices" - a bad deal or a prolonged delay - "but it will be our fault if we cast a positive vote in favour of either for fear of the other". This statement has important implications and is also a fascinating argument.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/03/18/leave-mps-must-take-responsibility-horrors-long-brexit-delay/>

### **Believe me, the Civil Service is trying to sink Brexit. I have seen it from the inside**

As a civil servant I can tell you large parts of the Whitehall machine are systematically working against leaving the EU. I have met thousands of civil servants in the past few years: I can only recall five who voted for Brexit. At first, I thought they were perhaps just staying quiet given the political climate, but my worst fear was confirmed during the high-profile remainder Gina Miller's successful court case to make sure Parliament has a say on the Brexit outcome

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/03/18/believe-civil-service-trying-sink-brexit-have-seen-inside/>

### **EU plans for Theresa May's departure 'after losing confidence' in prime minister**

EU officials are preparing contingency plans on how to deal with a hardline successor to Theresa May. European leaders revealed at the weekend that they have lost confidence in the prime minister's ability to govern and are concerned she will be replaced by a leader who will try and unpick the withdrawal agreement. During a meeting of EU ambassadors and senior officials on Friday the European Commission's secretary general Martin Selmayr raised the scenario of May leaving office.

<https://metro.co.uk/2019/03/17/eu-plans-for-theresa-mays-departure-after-losing-confidence-in-pm-8916055/>

### **Tory MP Says Theresa May Should Call Snap Election To Break Brexit Deadlock**

A Conservative MP says Theresa May should now call a snap general election in a bid to break the Brexit impasse. Crispin Blunt told Eddie Mair the Prime Minister should seek a "new mandate from the electorate" after Speaker John Bercow ruled MPs can't vote on her Brexit deal for a third time without "substantial" change.

<https://www.lbc.co.uk/radio/presenters/eddie-mair/tory-mp-saystheresa-may-call-snap-election-brexit/>

### **London: The Athens of the north**

The ignorance of so many at Westminster in this matter of the utmost national importance is truly staggering. And it is that revelation that many of my journalistic colleagues from across Europe have found most disturbing; that so many British politicians are prepared to take such monumental decisions on the basis of such colossal ignorance of that which they claim is damaging their country. Know thy enemy is sound advice. They refuse to follow it. Just ask Sir Ivan Rogers when he is in

Dublin next week. The celebration of the unlearned by the unprincipled, the elevation of dogma over fact, the rewarding of bullying over brains - all have led the British political class to where they are now: clawing at each other in last minute desperation, seeking to find answers to questions that should have been asked, and answered, long before they set the Article 50 clock in motion.

<https://www.rte.ie/news/analysis-and-comment/2019/0318/1036746-brexiteer-analysis/>

### **Rees-Mogg: Brexit 'has made no difference to my financial situation'**

Despite statistics continually showing Brexit is leaving the British people worse-off, Brexiteer Jacob Rees-Mogg says that it has made "no difference" to his financial situation. That the country as a whole, in his view, would see the benefit not just him

<https://www.theneweuropean.co.uk/top-stories/jacob-rees-mogg-says-bad-deal-better-than-remain-1-5943779>

### **@ITVNews 'Brexit will not now occur.' Ardent Leaver and Conservative MP James Gray gives his reaction to the speaker's decision on a third meaningful vote.**

'Brexit will not now occur.' Ardent Leaver and Conservative MP James Gray gives his reaction to the speaker's decision on a third meaningful vote.

<https://twitter.com/itvnews/status/1107706677363724288>

### **France's EU minister names her cat 'Brexit' because 'he meows loudly to be let out but won't go through the door'**

France's minister for European affairs says she has named her cat "Brexit" on account of its indecisive nature. Nathalie Loiseau told Le Journal du Dimanche that her pet meows loudly to be let out each morning, but then refuses to go outside when she opens the door. The comments from the French government's lead in Brexit talks come ahead of a decision by EU leaders on whether to extend the Brexit negotiating period at the request of the UK. And this week will see a possible third rejection of Theresa May's Brexit deal by the House of Commons. "He wakes me up every morning meowing to death because he wants to go out, and then when I open the door he stays put, undecided, and then glares at me when I put him out," Ms Loiseau said.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/brexit-france-theresa-may-deal-nathalie-loiseau-cat-a8828026.html>

### **Hardline Tory Brexiteers threaten to go on strike if Theresa May carries out vow to delay Brexit by a year**

Hardline Tory Brexiteers have threatened Theresa May they will go on strike if she carries out her vow to delay Brexit by a year. No10 on Monday set a deadline of late on Tuesday for MPs to agree the PM's exit deal before Thursday's European summit.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/brexit/8666568/>

### **@ByDonkeys Day 3 of the #MarchToLeave. Looks like we're down to about 60, though could be some stragglers. Still no sign of @Nigel\_Farage**

Day 3 of the #MarchToLeave. Looks like we're down to about 60, though could be some stragglers. Still no sign of @Nigel\_Farage

<https://twitter.com/ByDonkeys/status/1107609109988339712>

### **Revealed: How dark money split the Tories' ruling elite**

One of the remarkable features of Brexit is that this rule has been broken. The Conservative party has wrenched itself asunder over an issue which most people in the UK didn't much care about before 2016. This group is desperate to pull Britain away from the European regulated space, and drag it into the deregulated American-sphere, where the winner takes it all, and they've already decided who the winner will be. And no, it's not you. First, there's a large chunk of the media - papers like the Telegraph and the Sun, owned by multi-millionaires who live, respectively, in the Channel Islands and the US, and who have been the biggest institutions driving Brexit. There's the

people who funnelled dark money into the Leave campaigns - the cash openDemocracy revealed, which went through former Scottish Tory golden boy Richard Cook to the DUP, and the cash which came through Arron Banks, via Gibraltar, and which we've spent much of the last two years tracing.

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/17506649.revealed-how-dark-money-split-the-tories-ruling-elite/?ref=twtr>

## **Trade Deals/Negotiations**

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### **UK reaches post-Brexit trade agreement with Iceland and Norway**

Britain on Monday reached an a deal with Iceland and Norway to allow trade to continue unchanged if it leaves the European Union without a deal, trade secretary Liam Fox said. Britain is seeking to replicate around 40 EU bilateral trade deals ahead of its exit from the bloc.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-trade/uk-reaches-post-brexit-trade-agreement-with-iceland-and-norway-id-UKKCN1QZ2C3>

### **Brexit: trading insults**

The UK government set out its proposed tariffs if there is a 'no deal' Brexit. Even if they aren't applied, they may indicate where negotiations will go after the Withdrawal Agreement phase. This united the Irish, Northern Irish and UK business lobbies in fury at the consequences and lack of consultation, though some farming interests can feel relieved. Some EU imports - notably of cars and meat - would become more expensive, and foreign buyers of some UK exports would face price hikes, requiring a sharp shift in the business model of these sectors in the UK. The next phase of negotiations could be cruel in exposing both the paucity of options facing the UK and the inexperience of Britain's trade negotiators. And even more complex than goods trade is the more important services sector.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-business-47608760>