

News from the Brexit Cliff Edge

21st Mar 2019

News Highlights

Welcome to the Brexit Cliff Edge

- Consultancy EY say the UK finance industry is taking £1 trillion in assets out of the UK and 7,000 jobs are expected to go as a result of the Brexit uncertainty
- UK OBR officials pushed back on industry fears that proposed No Deal tariffs on goods and services would force prices up sharply. With the exception of cars, the OBR said, foreign producers may well absorb the extra costs and a lower pound may offset costs as well
- A short-term loan group had an advert promoting people taking out cash to stockpile food and drink banned stopped by the Advertising Standards Authority
- The UK government said it is hoping to use the EHIC health card, when it leaves the EU. But it stressed EHIC won't be usable in the event of a No Deal Brexit but may once a trade deal is signed in a year or two
- The CBI said there has been a drop in UK manufacturing output during March. Export order books have increased, but the level of domestic demand has declined more than expected
- UK retirees living in the EU attacked the UK government's plan to only offer to pay for healthcare in EU countries for a single year for them
- There were more reports of NHS bosses saying there is an unprecedented shortage of medicines in the NHS and drug prices are already under pressure because of Brexit stockpiling

Theresa May - charming and offensive at the same time

- Early yesterday, Mrs May spent hours meeting MPs from all parties in her House of Commons office, seeking to persuade them to support her withdrawal agreement.
- Then Mrs May, went to the Commons and told MPs it was their fault that a No Deal was now alive once more, badgering them to back her deal in a 3rd meaningful vote, due to take place next week
- Then at half eight, Mrs May made a somewhat belligerent public broadcast to the nation from No10 Downing Street, in which she appealed to voters saying 'I am on your side' and that 'Brexit chaos is all the fault of MPs who are naval gazing'
- Earlier in the day, EU Council President, Donald Tusk, had said a brief Brexit extension of 3 months would be possible, but only if May had a deal or some clear plan
- Tusk also stressed that several member states were sceptical about supporting an extension and would need to see a UK plan in order to be convinced
- The Labour Party's Alison McGovern has tabled an SO24 emergency debate motion for later today, which seeks to win support for a debate on Theresa May's proposal to ask Brussels for a 3 month extension. The outcome and objective for the SO24 motion are still a little hazy
- Channel 4 News said sources had told it that the government would schedule a 3rd meaningful vote on Brexit on March 28th, the day before the UK is set to leave with a No Deal. This forecast is now being picked up by other media and starting to cause ripples of concern
- The Brexit Cabinet Secretary told Cabinet ministers in a letter that Operation Yellowhammer will begin on Monday March 25th. This is the government's contingency plan for a No Deal Brexit exit from the EU

- A Guardian editorial called for Theresa May to hit pause and rethink what kind of Brexit the country wants
- The Independent attacked Mrs May for continually caving in to her Brexiteers, and in fact, to anyone who challenges her. Two weeks ago pro-EU remain Cabinet ministers threatened to resign and she caved in to them too
- Former Tory Attorney General, Dominic Grieve, made an impassioned speech saying 'he'd never been more ashamed to be a member of the Conservative Party.' He went on to predict 'if we do not get a grip we will spiral into oblivion - and the worst thing is, we will deserve it'
- The Huffington Post said MPs are furious after Theresa May blamed them for the Brexit crisis. It said they felt her performance was 'toxic, arrogant and disgraceful'
- Theresa May's broadcast to the country sparked a petition to Revoke Article 50 and remain in the EU into life. Within just a few hours it went from next to no signatures to around 360,000 in support
- The Irish Times said Brexit was exposing the inherent weakness of the UK constitution: parliamentary sovereignty meant it was the ultimate decision maker on all matters. The way the referendum is being forced through is taking that away from Parliament - making them simply implementers of instructions
- Unhappiness in Brussels with Theresa May's government is also manifestly on show. Diplomats quoted in the Financial Times said 'it was a circus beyond comprehension' and 'it is like dealing with a failed state'

Economic Impact

£1tn in assets to Brexodus: EY

The finance industry is taking roughly £1 trillion in assets out of the UK as a result of Brexit uncertainty - up by £200 billion from an estimate in January, according to data from EY. That comes as firms are triggering their contingency plans just days before the UK's currently scheduled departure from the EU on March 29. Roughly 7,000 finance jobs are expected to move outside the UK, with Frankfurt, Paris and Dublin the most popular destinations, EY says.

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/news/1tn-in-assets-to-brexodus-ey-4980810/>

Additional sources: ([Financial Times](#))

Brexit will cost 7,000 City jobs and £600m tax — nothing, right?

According to the latest survey by consultants EY, financial services groups have triggered contingency plans that will move £1tn of assets, and 7,000 jobs, out of the UK to Europe. Never mind that there are still eight whole days to go before Britain leaves the EU with no withdrawal deal and no agreement on future trade in goods and services.

<https://www.ft.com/content/371c63ba-4b08-11e9-8b7f-d49067e0f50d>

UK tariff plan for no-deal Brexit will have limited impact on economy — OBR

Contingency plans published last week, to eliminate most tariffs but impose a 10 per cent duty on imports of cars and some animal products, drew a fierce reaction from industries that would face fiercer international competition and consumer groups that say some prices would rise sharply. However, OBR officials said the overall impact on the economy would be limited, and that the “real world” impact of tariffs would depend on how they were implemented and enforced, and how people changed their behaviour in response. Robert Chote, the OBR chairman, told MPs that the “dominant effect” would come from the tariffs imposed on cars — but added that there might be “quite considerable compliance challenges”. Given different rates for finished and unfinished vehicles, he added, one would need to ask if “all that was needed . . . would be to stick on a wing mirror”. Mr Bean said that tariffs would not necessarily affect domestic prices, because foreign producers might absorb the impact, and that because the plans published last week were quite “tightly targeted”,

there might be "more scope to redefine a product so it falls into a different bucket".

<https://www.ft.com/content/fd76036e-4a5d-11e9-bbc9-6917dce3dc62>

Administrative Fall Out

Brexit food stockpiling loan ad banned

A financial services company has been ordered not to reuse an advert in which it tried to persuade people to take out a loan, in case they wanted to stockpile food because of Brexit. Cash On Go, trading as Peachy.co.uk, sent out an email saying, "it's a good idea to have a little stockpile ready." The Advertising Standards Authority upheld a complaint from a reader who said the advert was irresponsible. Peachy said it referred to Brexit light-heartedly and to make it topical.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-47629809>

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

UK aiming to keep EHICs if there's a no-deal Brexit - but they may not work on exit day

The UK Government has proposed to EU member states that the European Health Insurance Card arrangement should stay the same until the end of 2020, even if we leave the European Union with no deal - but says protections may not be in place on the day we leave. In a written statement to Parliament, health minister Stephen Hammond wants to guarantee that the "reciprocal healthcare rights", which include the use of the EHIC, will remain until the end of 2020 if a no-deal Brexit occurs. If there's a deal the rights will remain until at least the end of 2020. But Hammond adds that whilst steps have been taken to ensure this does occur, EHICs "may no longer be valid" in a no deal scenario.

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/news/2019/03/uk-proposes-keeping-the-ehic-even-if-there-s-a-no-deal-brexit---/>

UK manufacturers in despair at Brexit impasse, says CBI

Britain's manufacturers are in despair at the failure of politicians to end the Brexit impasse, according to the CBI, which reported a drop in output in March as businesses cut back production. Export order books increased among the 358 manufacturers in the survey, supported by the low level of sterling, but this was cancelled out by a decline in domestic demand to leave the industry in a weakened position ahead of a decision in parliament on Brexit. The total orders balance fell back to +1% in March after picking up to +6% in February from a three-month low of -1% in January, the CBI said. Prospects for the industry were likely to worsen following the recent slowing in the global economy, which was expected to undermine the demand from foreign buyers for UK manufactured goods.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/20/uk-manufacturers-in-despair-at-brexit-impasse-says-cbi>

UK retirees in EU say NHS plans under no-deal Brexit are 'sick'

The government has been described as sick and uncaring by an organisation representing more than 10,000 British nationals in Europe over NHS healthcare plans for pensioners in a no-deal Brexit scenario. British nationals who have retired to EU countries have reacted with fury to what they describe as an insulting and offensive offer by the government to cover healthcare costs for up to one year if they had applied for or are undergoing treatment before exit day. This is in contrast to the current reciprocal arrangement whereby the NHS reimburses EU member states for treatment of those who have paid into the UK national insurance system for a qualifying number of years.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/20/eu-retirees-say-nhs-plans-under-no-deal-brexit-are-uncaring>

Unprecedented drug shortage linked to Brexit, NHS bosses say

Hospitals across England are experiencing medicine shortages due to "stockpiling and price pressure as the Brexit deadline approaches", NHS Providers has told BBC Newsnight. The trade association warned some trusts had seen shortages of up to 160 different drugs in the past six weeks. This was compared with just 25 to 30 drugs in normal times, it said. The Department of

Health said there was "no evidence" the "small number of supply issues" were related to Brexit.

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-47646193?ocid=socialflow_twitter&ns_source=twitter&ns_mchannel=social&ns_campaign=bbcnews

Brexit: How one French port town is preparing

Dieppe, on the Normandy coast, is tied to Sussex by centuries of sea crossings. Nowadays, the ferry from Newhaven is a gateway to France - carrying up to 40 lorries and 600 passengers two or three times a day in each direction. As the UK makes preparations for a possible no-deal exit from the EU, how are people in Dieppe responding?

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-sussex-47558316>

Sunderland Council plans post-Brexit Nissan lorry park

A council is planning to create a temporary lorry park to help Nissan deal with any post-Brexit port delays. Sunderland City Council is planning a six-month lease at Deptford Terrace to create a waiting area for lorries bound for the Washington factory. It said there was already a "problem" with lorries parking around the area awaiting a delivery slot. The authority estimates delays at ports could see a "two-fold increase" in the number of waiting lorries. In an email sent to councillors by the Chief Officers Group, council bosses said: "Were there to be delays at ports nationally as a result of a No Deal EU Exit, then supply lorries would set off earlier to meet their delivery deadlines and overnight parking could increase greatly."

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-tyne-47637916>

Brexit: The choice facing British citizens living in Germany

The continued uncertainty surrounding Brexit means the rights of UK citizens living in EU countries are still to be guaranteed. Instead of waiting to see what's in store, an increasing number of British people abroad are applying for citizenship in the European country where they live and work. Germany was the place that welcomed most new citizens from the UK in the year following the referendum.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-europe-47633279/brexit-the-choice-facing-british-citizens-living-in-germany>

The Scream: Munch London show 'not intentionally timed with Brexit'

Curator at British Museum says date of exhibition featuring artwork is 'pure serendipity' - having conceived the exhibition five years ago, the timing of its opening, according to its curator, Giulia Bartrum, is "pure serendipity - certainly at the moment when we are all worrying about bloody Brexit. But that's actually sheer coincidence."

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2019/mar/20/the-scream-edvard-munch-london-show-not-intentionally-timed-with-brexit>

What No Deal Brexit tariffs mean and how cost of imported Volkswagen cars, steak and cheese could rise - but it means cheaper wine

Shoppers could pay more for items such as steak and cheese, cars and clothing as a result of a no deal Brexit - but it will also make hundreds of products cheaper. Usually there's no tax - known as a "tariff" to pay on goods being imported into the UK from the EU. But if a trade deal with the EU isn't agreed, a tax on one in 10 European Union imports to the UK will be introduced. And there's a fear that these higher taxes could be passed onto consumers in the form of higher prices. The temporary tariff regime would last for the first 12 months after a no deal Brexit while the Government comes up with a permanent solution. Some observers see the move as a threat to the EU from Theresa May, to convince them to give Britain a better Brexit deal or see taxes slapped on their exports.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/money/8627783/what-no-deal-brexit-tariffs-mean-and-how-they-could-push-up-cost-of-imported-volkswagen-cars-steak-and-cheese/>

Political Shenanigans

Theresa May's address to the nation sees her tell voters 'I am on your side' over Brexit

Theresa May has blamed MPs for failing to implement the result of the 2016 EU referendum, and told voters who want Brexit to be over: "I am on your side." In a televised address from Downing Street, May said that it was "a matter of great personal regret" for her to have to ask for a three-month delay to Britain's withdrawal from the EU, which was due to take place on March 29. She will go to Brussels on Thursday to make a formal request to the other 27 EU leaders for an extension to the two-year Article 50 negotiation process.

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/theresa-mays-address-nation-sees-14165403>

Additional sources: (Express.co.uk)

Theresa May blames MPs for Brexit delay

Theresa May blamed MPs for her request to delay Brexit for three months, warning the public is fast losing patience with the "political games" in Westminster. In a rare address to the nation Wednesday night from inside No. 10 Downing Street, the U.K. prime minister said her application for an extension to the Article 50 negotiating period was "a matter of great personal regret" but is necessary to deliver Brexit. The short five-minute address came after another day of high drama in Westminster in which she hinted she would quit rather than delay Brexit any further.

<https://www.politico.eu/article/theresa-may-blames-mps-for-brexit-delay/>

Brexit: 'Tired' public needs a decision, says Theresa May

Theresa May has told the public she is "on their side", laying the blame for the delay to Brexit squarely with MPs. Speaking from Downing Street, the prime minister said people were "tired of infighting and political games" and it was "high time" politicians made a decision on the next steps. Earlier, Mrs May wrote to EU Council President Donald Tusk requesting to delay Brexit until 30 June. She said the postponement was a "matter of great personal regret".

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-47647515>

Theresa May's very big gamble risks a no-deal Brexit

Her own leadership is now over. Unable to control the House, unable to control her cabinet, she lingers in office until her party gets round to removing her. It is hard to imagine her being prime minister long after this stage of Brexit is settled. If she is forced into the humiliation of going to Brussels on the eve of Brexit to beg for the long extension she has expressly ruled out, she is likely to resign soon after. As with all negotiations with the EU, nothing is final until it is irreversible. It may be that her deal will be defeated and a long delay then offered by the EU, but its leaders are conspiring with Mrs May to present next week as a defining moment. It is a very big gamble.

<https://www.ft.com/content/48e9f020-4b40-11e9-bbc9-6917dce3dc62>

Brexit: EU says short delay is possible if MPs back deal

The EU will only agree to a short delay to Brexit if MPs approve the current withdrawal agreement next week, Theresa May has been told. EU Council President Donald Tusk said an extension, requested by the prime minister on Wednesday, was possible. Mrs May has written to Mr Tusk requesting a Brexit delay to 30 June, saying she needed more time to get her deal agreed by MPs and passed into law.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-47636011>

EU demands conditions if Brexit delay to be granted

The EU has warned Theresa May the UK will not be granted a Brexit delay unless it has a "purpose" as Downing Street admitted that withdrawal from the EU had descended into "crisis". Mr Barnier's comments put the Prime Minister on notice that she has to shape a route ahead or no approval will be forthcoming

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/general-election/eu-demands-conditions-if-brexit-delay-to-be-granted-1-4892279>

Donald Tusk: Extension possible but conditional on positive Brexit deal vote

The president of the European Council has said a short delay to Brexit will be possible, but it will be conditional on the House of Commons backing the withdrawal agreement. He says that although "Brexit fatigue is increasingly visible and justified", the parties "should not give up seeking a positive solution until the last minute".

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/47645763/donald-tusk-extension-possible-but-conditional-on-positive-brexit-deal-vote>

EU Commission resists May's June 30 Brexit date - document

In a note on the Brexit process reviewed by the Commission at its weekly meeting on Wednesday, officials wrote that leaders meeting May at a summit on Thursday faced a "binary" choice of a short delay of Brexit from March 29 to before May 23 or a long delay to at least the end of this year, with Britain obliged to hold an election on May 23 for European Parliament lawmakers. "Any extension offered to the United Kingdom should either last until 23 May 2019 or should be significantly longer and require European elections," the document said. "This is the only way of protecting the functioning of the EU institutions and their ability to take decisions." EU states which were due to receive additional legislative seats after Brexit would need to know by mid- to late April if they would be denied those seats because Britain was staying. The note also said that in any extended membership, Britain should, "in a spirit of loyal cooperation", commit to "constructive abstention" on key issues, such as the EU's long-term budget and filling top EU posts after the May election.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-commission/eu-commission-resists-mays-june-30-brexit-date-document-idUKKCN1R11ES>

France ready to veto any meaningless Brexit delay: Elysee official

France is ready to veto any British request for a Brexit delay that either kicks the can down the road without offering a way out of its deadlock or imperils European Union institutions, an official in President Emmanuel Macron's office said on Tuesday

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-france/france-ready-to-veto-any-meaningless-brexit-delay-elysee-official-idUKKCN1R02A4>

Brexit SO24: What is SO24? And why is Labour backing it?

Labour has thrown its weight behind an emergency debate being held on Brexit in order to prevent Prime Minister Theresa May seeking a short extension of Brexit. Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell is supporting the application put forward earlier by Labour Wirral South MP Alison McGovern. Shadow Brexit Secretary Keir Starmer has also showed his support, tweeting: "What the Government should be doing is showing real leadership, making good on their commitment to break the deadlock and secure an extension with a genuine purpose."

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1102710/Brexit-SO24-what-is-SO24-standing-order-emergency-debate-Labour-Party-John-McDonnell>

UK Labour lawmaker requests emergency debate on Brexit

An opposition Labour lawmaker requested on Wednesday an emergency debate in parliament on Brexit, seeking to challenge Prime Minister Theresa May's pursuit of a short delay to Britain's departure from the European Union, her office said. The office of Alison McGovern, the Labour lawmaker, said the so-called SO24 emergency debate motion would be a very short statement on Brexit and would be aimed at securing a debate in parliament. It is not clear if that would trigger a vote. It is up to parliament's speaker to decide whether to press ahead with the move, after which McGovern would make a three minute speech on the case for such a debate and then parliament would have to agree that the debate should take place. The speaker, who blindsided the government earlier this week by saying May could not ask parliament to vote on her deal for a third time unless it was substantially different, could allow lawmakers to propose changes to what will be neutral statement. That might open the way for parliament to debate and vote on different options

for the way forward on Brexit. So far, it is not clear whether this will happen.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-emergencydebate/uk-labour-lawmaker-requests-emergency-debate-on-brexit-idUKKCN1R113S>

MPs prepare fresh bid to take control of Brexit process

MPs will on Monday make a fresh effort to seize control of the Brexit process from Theresa May by seeking to ensure the House of Commons votes on alternatives to the prime minister's exit package. Yvette Cooper, a former Labour minister leading efforts in parliament to try to prevent a no-deal Brexit, made a passionate appeal on Wednesday to Mrs May in the Commons to commit to so-called indicative votes by MPs on different Brexit options. Mrs May appeared to resist the idea, saying MPs had already had multiple chances to vote on Brexit alternatives.

<https://www.ft.com/content/6ed9a360-4b2d-11e9-8b7f-d49067e0f50d>

'Absolutely jaw-dropping': third 'meaningful vote' on Brexit deal could be held as late as next week

A Tory MP has described the possibility that a third "meaningful vote" on Theresa May's Brexit deal could be held in the same week the UK is due to leave the EU as "absolutely jaw-dropping". Former minister Nicky Morgan was responding to suggestions the Government could hold a vote on the 28 March, the eve of Brexit, despite Mrs May suffering two heavy defeats on the deal in recent months. According to Channel 4 News, the Government could kick off next week with a statement from the Prime Minister, before putting a "paving motion" to a vote that would overrule the Speaker John Bercow after he ruled out MPs voting a third time on the same deal unless it was "substantially" different.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/brexit/brexit-vote-meaningful-third-delay-theresa-may-nicky-morgan/>

New Brexit vote would be divisive, says FM Drakeford prompting row

Labour's divisions on Brexit erupted in the Senedd on Tuesday after the first minister said a new referendum would inevitably be divisive and may not be decisive. Mark Drakeford said a new poll would not be straightforward. The comments prompted a robust response from Alun Davies, Blaenau Gwent Labour AM and a People's Vote campaigner, who said he regretted Mr Drakeford's tone. Mr Drakeford told him it is not a "difficulty free" option.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-politics-47624515>

No deal Brexit BOMBSHELL: No deal plan WILL be implemented if no delay agreed by Monday

Brexit Secretary Stephen Barclay told Cabinet ministers in a letter the plan will be implemented on March 25 unless a new exit date is agreed. Operation Yellowhammer is the UK Treasury's contingency plan for no deal exit from the bloc. The plan drafts what would happen for factors such as money, citizens, trade and customs.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1102542/Brexit-news-latest-theresa-may-no-deal-eu-uk-stephen-barclay-operation-yellowhammer>

Derek Mackay claims Scotland "sold out" by Brexit process

The UK government has been accused of "shortchanging and ripping off Scotland" as the country prepares to leave the European Union. Scotland's finance secretary, Derek Mackay, said that the country had been "sold out" during the Brexit process while other parts of the UK were "bought off" with "bungs"

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/derek-mackay-claims-scotland-sold-out-by-brexit-process-1-4892241>

Brexit: Welsh Government split as minister calls for poll

A senior member of the Welsh Government has told BBC Wales that another referendum should be held on Brexit. The stance of the Health Minister, Vaughan Gething, puts him at odds with the First

Minister, Mark Drakeford. On Tuesday, Mr Drakeford said a new referendum would inevitably be divisive and may not be decisive. But Mr Gething said he wanted "the people to have that choice between the reality of leaving....and the potential to think again".

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-politics-47638809>

The Guardian view on the Brexit crisis: take back control by giving it up | Editorial

A meaningful pause would also allow time to reflect on whether this form of Brexit is what the country wants. This is about Mrs May giving back control – both to parliament and to the people. The Guardian has already made it clear that, if required, this country should have a debate on Europe. Taking part in European parliamentary elections would be a good place to start. The advocate general at the European court of justice has also pointed out that such elections would not represent an “insuperable obstacle” to extending article 50.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/mar/19/the-guardian-view-on-the-brexit-crisis-take-back-control-by-giving-it-up>

Remain would win second Brexit referendum but no-deal would get more votes than Theresa May’s deal, poll indicates

Nearly two-thirds of people would vote to remain in the EU rather than for Theresa May’s deal if a referendum offering those options were called, a snap poll by YouGov has found. Sixty-one per cent of the population would vote to remain while 39 per cent would opt for the existing deal. However, if people were asked in a public vote whether they would prefer to remain in the EU or leave with no deal in place, Remain would still win, though by the smaller margin of 57-43 per cent.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-second-referendum-deal-opinion-poll-theresa-may-a8831241.html>

UK’s emergency plans for no-deal Brexit begin to be put into action

Kent county council has activated no-deal plans to keep its roads, hospitals and schools open, as the government considers pulling the trigger on national contingency measures involving 30 central departments and 5,000 staff. With the country placed on a knife-edge by the Theresa May’s latest Brexit crisis, the government is preparing for “any outcome” with a decision on Monday on whether to roll out the national Operation Yellowhammer contingencies for food, medicine and banking. Some measures have already swung into place, including Operation Fennel’s traffic management in Kent. The Europe minister, Alan Duncan, has also said the Foreign Office staff deployed to its Brexit “nerve centre” were working to help UK citizens in the EU in the event they get caught up in a Brexit mess.

https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/20/uks-emergency-plans-for-no-deal-brexit-begin-to-be-put-into-action?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Tweet

Brexit: Jeremy Corbyn walks out of crunch talks because Chuka Umunna was invited

Jeremy Corbyn walked out on a crucial meeting with party leaders because former Labour MP Chuka Umunna was invited. The Labour leader was reported to have said he was leaving because Mr Umunna, now an Independent Group MP, is “not a real party leader”. A Labour spokesperson said: “It was not the meeting that had been agreed and the terms were broken. Downing Street is in such chaos that they were unable to manage their own proposed meeting. “We are in discussions with Number 10 about holding the bilateral meeting with the PM that Jeremy proposed at PMQs .”

https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/breaking-brexit-jeremy-corbyn-walks-14164974?utm_source=twitter.com&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=sharebar

Political Setbacks

Theresa May has kept her job by caving in to the Brexiteers, but her humiliation is complete

May is expected to ask for a delay of up to three months. She originally wanted the option of a longer extension but has backed down after a revolt by cabinet Brexiteers, amid threats of resignations and growing speculation that she could be forced out. A weak prime minister is being buffeted, in whichever direction the gale blows: two weeks ago, a threat to resign by four pro-European ministers forced her to rule out a no-deal exit this month. Now Eurosceptics led by Andrea Leadsom, who want a “managed no-deal”, have pushed May in the other direction. The cliff edge will move from March to June.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/brexit-delay-article-50-theresa-may-erg-andrea-leadsom-eu-a8831361.html>

'Terrible': Tory despair over leadership deepens but May ploughs on

Dominic Grieve, who has known May since they were at Oxford University together, spoke for many in his party when he gave a stinging speech in the emergency Brexit debate, saying he had “never felt more ashamed to be a member of the Conservative party”. He said the prime minister was “zig-zagging all over the place, rather than standing up for what the national interest must be” and if the government did not get a grip, “we will spiral down into oblivion – and the worst thing is, we will deserve it”.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/20/prime-minister-faces-increasing-pressure-to-quit->

'Toxic, Arrogant, Disgraceful': MPs Are Furious After Theresa May Blamed Them For The Brexit Crisis

Theresa May has triggered a major backlash from MPs after she blamed them for the Brexit crisis. MPs from across the political spectrum - and both Remain and Leave supporters - condemned the Prime Minister’s “arrogant”, “toxic” and “irresponsible” late night address to the nation from inside Downing Street.

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/theresa-may-mps_uk_5c92b3b4e4b0d952b22304c7?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly90LmNvL2hGUHhpcQzFTQWo&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAICYIEYMwsjh-QLssPhzej3OCueesxccP0BwpP95ZawO8rhKIU7HXhqGzY362iKTFpz4LmOcnQW9TBZkpH77bdMB4ogvo3okob7CnpVVzHqFhb0d8rXO-apzZ1s3-MLTzjFOiWJ21reP8W4TWBt44Uv8xi8L9fsQR1jOctPCMKD

Revoke Article 50 petition: 300,000 people demand UK remains in EU as Theresa May begs for Brexit delay

More than 300,000 people have signed a petition demanding that Article 50 is revoked as Theresa May was forced to beg EU leaders for a delay to Brexit. An influx of people jumped to sign it on a night of political chaos as the Prime Minister turned on MPs as she delivered an impassioned speech to the nation on Wednesday night. The 100,000-signature threshold for the petition to be debated in Parliament was quickly surpassed and the phrase revoke Article 50 became a global trend on Twitter.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/revoke-article-50-petition-300000-people-demand-uk-remains-in-eu-after-theresa-may-begs-for-brexit-a4097161.html>

Brexit: A risky pitch of Parliament versus Public

Theresa May has pitched herself tonight against Parliament on the side of the people. It's true that No 10 believes strongly that swathes of the population have simply had enough of Brexit. The way it drowns out other public concerns, the way its processes, contradictions and clamour have wrapped their way around the normal workings of Westminster - remote at the best of times and downright bizarre at the worst. But, when it is MPs the prime minister needs to get on side if she is to have a real chance of finally getting her deal through next week - third time extremely lucky - the choice of message was not without risk.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-47647611>

'Disingenuous' and 'an outrage' - Norfolk MPs react to Theresa May's Brexit statement

A Norfolk MP has said it is an “outrage” that parliament has been denied the opportunity to take

control of Brexit, as the prime minister rounded on representatives in a televised statement. But North Norfolk Liberal Democrat MP Norman Lamb said MPs had not been given the chance to have a say. He said: "I think there's some self delusion here, she keeps talking about MPs are good at saying what they don't want but not good at saying what they do want." But he said MPs had not been given the chance to do so.

<https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/politics/norfolk-mps-react-to-theresa-may-s-brexit-statement-1-5950054>

Theresa May's endgame: Prime minister blames MPs for Brexit failure and demands they back her deal

Theresa May has set the scene to take her final shot at pushing her troubled Brexit deal through parliament next week, after a day which left her strategy and her political career teetering on the edge of ruin. In a statement from Downing Street the prime minister blamed MPs in the House of Commons for naval gazing and said they should just get on with it and pass her agreement

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/theresa-may-statement-brexit-mps-deal-eu-leave-a8832711.html>

Brexiters are stopping Brexit because they believe in the fantasy of "Global Britain"

Brexiters are stopping Brexit because they believe in the fantasy of "Global Britain" The delusion that the UK can strike valuable trade deals with the rest of the world has driven Leavers to repeatedly reject Theresa May's deal.

<https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/economy/2019/03/brexiters-are-stopping-brexit-because-they-believe-fantasy-global-britain>

Brexit may have just killed the British constitution

The decision to resort to a referendum to decide on the UK's EU membership was always going to lead to difficulties. The bitter divisions it opened up undermined two key features of the UK's constitution. First, it undermined the organising principle of the British constitution; the idea of parliamentary sovereignty which has traditionally meant that parliament is the ultimate decision-maker on all matters. The referendum moved parliament from its role of taking decisions to the role of implementing the electorate's decision to leave the EU, no matter how vague and confused the instruction given by voters.

<https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/brexit-may-have-just-killed-the-british-constitution-1.3831676>

Stella Creasy slams head on desk over Brexit

"Stop! Make it stop!" says Labour's Stella Creasy after slamming her head after Conservative Nadhim Zahawi's Brexit comments on Politics Live.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-politics-47644969/brexit-stella-creasy-slams-head-on-desk>

UK retirees in EU say NHS plans under no-deal Brexit are 'sick'

The government has been described as sick and uncaring by an organisation representing more than 10,000 British nationals in Europe over NHS healthcare plans for pensioners in a no-deal Brexit scenario. British nationals who have retired to EU countries have reacted with fury to what they describe as an insulting and offensive offer by the government to cover healthcare costs for up to one year if they had applied for or are undergoing treatment before exit day. This is in contrast to the current reciprocal arrangement whereby the NHS reimburses EU member states for treatment of those who have paid into the UK national insurance system for a qualifying number of years.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/20/eu-retirees-say-nhs-plans-under-no-deal-brexit-are-uncaring>

Pathetic, incoherent, chaotic: Europe's verdict on Brexit shambles

"Britain's reputation is, there's no denying it, much diminished," judged Pascal Lamy, one of France's most senior public officials, a former presidential adviser, European commissioner and World Trade Organization head. Some British politicians are "on another planet", Lamy said, incapable of seeing that Brexit is the infinitely complex diplomatic and legal equivalent of "trying to

take the eggs out of an omelette. Even today, they spout the most monstrous nonsense. Many have still not landed in a place one could call reality. The cognitive dissonance is ... remarkable."

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/20/pathetic-incoherent-chaotic-europes-verdict-on-brexit-shambles>

France, Spain and Belgium could veto Theresa May's request for a Brexit extension

Sources have told the Press Association that France, Spain, Belgium and maybe Italy stand prepared to reject an extension without evidence parliament is now ready to accept a deal and "the deadlock can be broken". Some member states worry there is no point to an extension as, even after 1,000 days of negotiation, May's deal keeps being rejected and the EU cannot move any further towards the UK.

<https://www.theneweuropean.co.uk/top-stories/france-spain-and-belgium-could-veto-brexit-extension-1-5949758>

EU frustration with UK rises as Brexit talks near final hours

One negotiator says Brussels has 'zero' trust in Theresa May and her government. "This is a circus that is beyond comprehension," said one senior EU diplomat working on Brexit. Another senior Brussels figure involved in talks likened it to "dealing with a failed state". The 585-page draft exit treaty UK prime minister Theresa May has agreed with the bloc looks comatose, stuck in ratification stalemate in the House of Commons.

<https://www.ft.com/content/80bcdb6a-4b19-11e9-bbc9-6917dce3dc62>

Brexit: Jeremy Corbyn walks out of crunch talks because Chuka Umunna was invited

Jeremy Corbyn walked out on a crucial meeting with party leaders because former Labour MP Chuka Umunna was invited. The Labour leader was reported to have said he was leaving because Mr Umunna, now an Independent Group MP, is "not a real party leader". A Labour spokesperson said: "It was not the meeting that had been agreed and the terms were broken. Downing Street is in such chaos that they were unable to manage their own proposed meeting. "We are in discussions with Number 10 about holding the bilateral meeting with the PM that Jeremy proposed at PMQs ."

https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/breaking-brexit-jeremy-corbyn-walks-14164974?utm_source=twitter.com&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=sharebar

Jeremy Corbyn 'walked out of crucial Brexit meeting with Theresa May and opposition leaders because Independent Group MPs were present'

Jeremy Corbyn refused to take part in crucial Brexit talks between opposition parties and Theresa May because breakaway Independent Group MPs were present, Lib Dem leader Vince Cable said. The Labour leader is reported to have left at the start of the meeting because TIG MP Chuka Umunna, who defected from Labour, was present and allegedly said he is "not a real party leader." Liberal Democrat leader Sir Vince described it as "a very strange way to behave in a moment of national crisis."

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/jeremy-corbyn-walked-out-of-brexit-meeting-with-theresa-may-and-opposition-leaders-because-a4097101.html>

The Maybot's binary messages have become just a series of noughts

For more than two years, the prime minister has spoken Maybot, a very primitive computer language only capable of basic sentences that are more or less grammatical, but still almost totally devoid of meaning. Since she became Leader in Name Only, Lino - hard to nail down, but easy to walk over - she can't even manage that. Her binary messages into deep space are now just a long series of random noughts. She literally has nothing to offer. More worrying still, her already limited random access memory has totally failed. She now has no recollection of anything she said just days earlier.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/20/the-maybots-binary-messages-have-become-just-a-series-of-noughts>

'Astonishing level of ignorance': Matt Hancock criticised for revealing results of his genetic test for diseases

Matt Hancock has faced criticism from experts after claiming a controversial genetic test for cancer could have saved his life. The health secretary was accused of showing an "astonishing level of ignorance" about the use of such tests, which he said could change the way the NHS works. Experts are largely sceptical about his demand to roll out genetic testing more widely, as they say it is premature and could place undue pressure on an already strained service.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/matt-hancock-genetic-test-prostate-cancer-nhs-genomics-a8832081.html>
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The Guardian view on May and Brexit: a prime minister gone rogue

Theresa May has put no deal firmly back on the table in flagrant defiance of parliament and the dictates of responsible government. Her political capital is all spent. She has no allies at home or abroad. Her only leverage in parliament comes from the fear that her appalling management of the country provokes – the prospect that she is incompetent enough to allow the worst to happen. She long ago lost sight of diplomacy and strategy. Then she shed authority. Now she has abandoned responsibility, completing the journey from bad prime minister to rogue prime minister.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/mar/20/the-guardian-view-on-may-and-brexit-a-prime-minister-gone-rogue>

Theresa May manages to be both charming and offensive

On a day in which she launched a desperate eleventh-hour bid to persuade MPs to vote for her Brexit deal, Theresa May managed to do both charm and offensive on her own. She spent hours attempting to charm MPs of all parties in a series of meetings in her Commons office. Then she went on TV and was offensive to MPs, insulting them and questioning their motives. Earlier, in Prime Minister's Questions, she accused the House of Commons of "contemplating its navel" and said it had "indulged itself on Europe for too long".

<https://news.sky.com/story/theresa-may-manages-to-be-both-charming-and-offensive-11671382>

'Don't compare it to the People's Vote march', plead Brexit protest organisers

Organisers of the March To Leave say their pro-Brexit protest is "completely successful" despite photographs appearing to show dwindling numbers on their two-week journey from Sunderland to London.

<https://www.theneweuropean.co.uk/top-stories/leave-means-leave-nigel-farage-march-sunderland-to-london-1-5945940>

Trade Deals/Negotiations

'EU is FAILING model!' Tycoon Richard Tice calls for Brexit revolution - 'Let's go WTO!'

BREXITEER business tycoon Richard Tice has blasted the European Union for being a "failing model", insisting that only by leaving can the UK "thrive".

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1102359/brexit-news-theresa-may-brexit-delay-richard-tice-brexit-march-leave-means-leave-wto-video>