

News from the Brexit Cliff Edge

14th May 2019

News Highlights

Welcome to the Brexit Cliff Edge

Honda Swindon closing

- [Honda Swindon confirmed that a 3 month consultation](#) had produced no viable alternatives to its plan to close the car plant in 2021. Talks to agree redundancy packages with the 3,500 workers would begin immediately

Nursing and Midwifery Council blame Brexit for the exodus of EU nurses and midwives

- [Nearly 5,000 nurses and midwives from EU countries](#) have quit the NHS in the past two years, with most citing Brexit as a contributing factor. The NMC said Britain's decision to leave the EU is exacerbating the NHS's growing staffing crisis and urgent action is needed

Britain risks copying the U.S. and creating extreme inequality in its society - says think tank the IFS

- [In a report to be published Tuesday, the IFS](#) said the result of its multi-year study into inequality showed that UK tax credits for the lower paid had kept inequality ratios relatively stable. However, recent changes to benefits and the likely opening up of the market to libertarian free market influence post-Brexit, risk exacerbating an already large inequality gap in the UK

Theresa May serves no one by clinging on to power

- [The delay until we sort a deal out strategy is dead.](#) The governing party run by Mrs May has ceased to function. Brexit remains unresolved. Those who wish to undermine faith in politics are being handed a new weapon with each week of torpor. May should set a departure date. In the words of one Tory MP 'whatever comes next is coming, we may as well get on with it'

Brexit - A customs union is both bad policy and bad politics

- [The Chair of the 1922 Committee and a number of senior former](#) Cabinet ministers have written to Theresa May urging them not to agree a customs union with the Labour Party. 'We won't have an independent trade policy nor any significant say in the trade policy of a wider entity. A Latvian MEP would have more say over our trade policy than anyone elected in the UK.'

Theresa May's chief EU negotiator, Olly Robbins, is heading off to Brussels

- [According to the BBC's political correspondent](#) he'll be asking the EU how long it might take to agree changes to the current withdrawal and political agreements, and what would the broader outline of an EU-UK agreement look like were there to be some kind of deal. 'If you squint at the emerging detail from these cross-party Brexit talks, you can just about see where, with some understanding and urgency, an agreement might be found' the BBC correspondent said

Is there going to be a vote on some form of withdrawal agreement on Thursday?

- [BuzzFeed News journalist Alex Wickham tweeted](#) the Parliamentary order paper for the Conservative Party and the instructions MPs have been given. Thursday appears to have been upgraded from a one-line Whip to a three line Whip, which tends to suggest the government intends to present something of importance

Any cross-party deal must include a new referendum - Sir Keir Starmer

- [The Shadow Brexit Secretary, Sir Keir Starmer](#), went out of his way, on Monday, to tell the media that no deal will get through Parliament without an agreement for a fresh public vote. Sir Keir told The Guardian that without a new referendum attached, up to 150 Labour MPs would vote against any agreement made

Theresa May's Plan B compromise looks set to be rejected by Labour as talks stutter

- [Labour said it cannot sign up to a promise to abide](#) by a fresh set of indicative votes in the House of Commons on Brexit suggestions. With her Plan B, thus, rejected and her Plan A faltering, Theresa May is rapidly running out of road

Theresa May remains opposed to any form of Brexit referendum

- [Downing Street spokespeople continued to stress](#) that Theresa May was staunchly opposed to any form of Brexit referendum in answers to press questions. So May appears to be closing down what might be her only escape route

EU vote demands are torpedoing the Labour-Tory Brexit talks

- [Surprisingly, Labour MP Stephen Kinnock](#) appeared to echo Theresa May's views on a second referendum in an interview with the BBC. He says demands for a second referendum by his Labour colleagues are torpedoing Brexit talks

Labour MPs tell Corbyn Labour is hemorrhaging votes to the Lib Dems and the Greens in the Euro Elections at PLP meeting

- [At the Monday PLP meeting Jeremy Corbyn faced repeated](#) questions on why the party's leaflets for the Euro elections fudged Labour's support for a public vote. MP after MP stood up and slammed the damage being done in the cross-party talks with the government to pass Brexit. Some said Labour faced an 'existential threat' if it continued to be unclear about its position on quitting the EU. Corbyn said he'd take immediate action in response to the concerns, though, still insisting his anti-austerity message offered the best chance to unite the country

Remain newspapers all saying the same as the Parliamentary Labour Party

- [Pro-remain voters drift away from Labour](#) as Brexit feud rages on - FT
- [Jeremy Corbyn has to get off the fence for](#) Labour to see off the Faragists
- [Seven in 10 Londoners would back](#) staying in the EU over Theresa May's Brexit deal

Prospects look bleak for the Conservatives at the European Elections

- [Thanks to the Brexit Party the Conservatives](#) can expect their worst ever result next week - Telegraph

- [How ironic that Farage the City Boy could help Corbyn crash the economy](#) - Mail
- [Tories slump to fifth place in polls ahead of European elections](#) - The Times
- [Polls put Lib Dems just 1% behind Labour](#) as the opposition to Nigel Farage - New European

The Sun is desperate for Theresa May to go

- [Theresa May's husband will persuade her](#) to resign if she fails to find a majority for a Brexit deal within a month, ministers now believe
- [It's time for Theresa May to choose her resignation](#) date before the Tories are damaged further

Farage's Brexit Party Agent says Tommy Robinson has been persecuted and Islamophobia is 'made up'

- [Noel Matthews the Brexit Party election agent](#) posted an article sympathetic to the far-right EDL activist writing: 'Tommy Robinson drew attention to grooming gangs. Britain has persecuted him.' As a post script it is worth pointing out that Nigel Farage said one of his main reasons for quitting UKIP was his former party's fixation with Robinson and Islam

Jobs at Risk

Swindon Honda closure 'a body blow', says Unite

Honda's decision to close its Swindon plant is a "body blow" and a "betrayal", a union has said. The Japanese car maker said a three-month consultation produced "no viable alternatives" to its plan to close the factory in 2021. It added talks to agree redundancy packages with the 3,500 workers would "begin immediately". Unite national officer Des Quinn said the union would speak to members about next steps. A proposal to cease production of 160,000 Honda Civics a year was confirmed in February. Honda UK director Jason Smith said the decision was taken with a "heavy heart". "We understand the impact this decision has on our associates, suppliers and the wider community," he said. "We are committed to continuing to support them throughout the next phases of the consultation process."

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-wiltshire-48255590>

Additional sources: (*The Independent*) (*Daily Mirror*)

Administrative Fall Out

Brexit blamed for exodus of EU nurses and midwives

Over half of EU nurses leaving said Brexit was a contributing factor to them quitting the profession. Nearly 5,000 nurses and midwives from EU countries have quit the profession in the past two years, with many citing Brexit as a contributing factor. The number of EU-trained nurses and midwives working in the UK fell from a record high of 38,024 in March 2017 to 33,035 in March this year, a drop of nearly 5,000, according to official figures released by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). When the NMC asked these staff why they were leaving, 51% said Brexit was a key contributing factor. Experts have warned that Britain's decision to leave the EU is exacerbating the NHS's growing staffing crisis and 'urgent' action is needed.

<https://nursingnotes.co.uk/brexit-blamed-for-exodus-of-eu-nurses-and-midwives/>

Britain risks following US on extreme inequality, says think-tank

A report by the IFS, to be published on Tuesday at the review's launch, noted that while UK income inequality had been stable, this was largely because tax credits had offset worsening earnings inequality. "Benefit income received from the government may feel quite different, in terms of the dignity and security it brings, from income earning in the labour market," said the report. But inequality "is not just about money", added the report. Among other examples, it called attention to a rise in the UK of middle aged "deaths of despair", from suicide, drug overdose or alcohol-related

disease.

<https://www.ft.com/content/578e4ad4-7590-11e9-be7d-6d846537acab>

There's no such thing as a rape joke

Once you've experienced the life-changing, destructive trauma that is sexual violence, rape stops being a laughing matter. And you realise it never was a laughing matter, we just happened to live in a culture too uncomfortable with the topic to call out a rape joke for what it is: an insult to the actual trauma that rape has on real lives, and a gross denigration of human worth. Recently, Ukip MEP candidate Carl Benjamin refused to apologise for his ongoing rape jokes about Labour MP Jess Phillips. Ukip leader Gerard Batten has defended Benjamin's jokes as 'satire.' But anyone who has ever claimed the mantle of free speech in defence of rape jokes has surely never been a victim of rape themselves. They've never had to face the seemingly insurmountable flood of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety that disrupts your life, upends your career and ruins your own sense of trust in other people and the rest of the world.

<https://metro.co.uk/2019/05/13/theres-no-such-thing-as-a-rape-joke-9507372/>

Political Shenanigans

Brexit: Olly Robbins heads to Brussels

Are the talks between the government and the opposition dead? Not yet. Olly Robbins, (remember him?) the government's Brexit negotiator, is off to Brussels on Tuesday to talk about how long it might take, and how the broad outline of the future arrangement between the EU and the UK could be changed if there were to be some kind of deal. On its own, that sounds rather promising. It's been a demand from Labour that there would be changes to the so-called political declaration so that any compromises can be trusted. And broadly, the actual policies of the two main Westminster parties aren't so far apart after all. If you squint at the detail you can just about see where, with some understanding, and urgency, they could collide.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-48262338>

Brexit: 'A customs union is both bad policy and bad politics'

As the chairman of the 1922 Committee and former cabinet ministers, and who voted for your Withdrawal Agreement in the most recent vote on March 29, we are writing to urge you not to agree any customs union with the Labour Party. A customs union with the EU is both bad policy and bad politics. On policy, we would be stuck in the worst of both worlds. First, the democratic deficit: for the first time in this nation's long trading history we would have neither an independent trade policy nor any significant say in the trade policy of a wider entity. The British people would not be able to understand how none of their elected representatives had any say. A Latvian MEP would have more say over our trade policy than anyone elected in this country.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/the-letter-to-theresa-may-3tgkfz0v5>

Theresa May serves no one by clinging on to power

Even Tory loyalists cannot deny the pointlessness of carrying on as now. Brexit is unresolved; they cannot move on to any other issues and a radical Labour opposition goes unchallenged. It is not only the Tories who are suffering; those who wish to undermine faith in politics are being handed a new weapon with each week of torpor. There is no reason for Tory moderates to be optimistic about the next leader. Yet the "delay till a deal" strategy is exhausted. The governing party has ceased to function and so has Westminster. Mrs May should bank her records and set a departure date. In the words of one Tory MP: "Whatever comes next is coming. We may as well get on with it."

<https://www.ft.com/content/68d17d28-7565-11e9-bbad-7c18c0ea0201>

Brexit news latest: Theresa May told to abandon talks with Labour and not give ground on customs union

Theresa May is under pressure to abandon Brexit talks with Labour amid warnings she risks losing the "loyal middle" of the Tory Party if she gives ground on a customs union. Thirteen former ministers, together with the backbench 1922 Committee chairman Sir Graham Brady, have written to the Prime Minister urging her not to concede Labour's key demand. The signatories of the letter, seen by The Times, were said to include Gavin Williamson, who she sacked as defence secretary, as well as Boris Johnson and Dominic Raab.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/brexit-news-latest-theresa-may-told-to-abandon-talks-with-labour-and-not-give-ground-on-customs-a4141421.html>

@alexwickham NEW: Julian Smith has just told Tory MPs they are now on a three line whip for Thursday. It was previously a one line whip. No reason given for the update. MPs are asking if this means we could finally be getting a vote on the WAB

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<https://twitter.com/alexwickham/status/1127917318586163200>

Not voting Labour will let Nigel Farage win, warns party's deputy

Labour's deputy leader said not voting for his party in the European elections will give Nigel Farage a win, and has reached out to Remainers by saying its agenda is to "remain and reform" in Europe. Tom Watson is expected to plead in a speech at the Fabian Society for supporters to back Labour in the polls next week. "There are only two forces that can win this election - that nasty nationalism of the Farage Brexit Party, or the tolerant, compassionate outward looking patriotism of the Labour Party," Watson will say. "I can only plead with Labour supporters - don't stay at home, don't put that cross elsewhere, don't let them win."

<https://www.theneweuropean.co.uk/top-stories/tom-watson-warns-not-voting-labour-will-let-nigel-farage-win-1-6046798>

Pressure grows on Sajid Javid to allow asylum-seekers to work in Britain

Pressure is growing on Sajid Javid to allow asylum seekers to work in a desperate hunt across Government for new cash streams. The Treasury has demanded the Home Secretary reduce the spiralling bill for claimants in the UK, which now stretches into the hundreds of millions every year. One idea being looked at is to end the long standing ban on foreign nationals who have claimed asylum taking jobs. The controversial move - which could be pushed through as part of new post-Brexit immigration rules - would save the Treasury a fortune in paying out handouts as well as bringing in extra income tax.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/9067907/pressure-sajid-javid-asylum-seekers-work/>

Brexit: Cross-party deal must include new referendum - Sir Keir Starmer

A cross-party Brexit deal will not get through Parliament unless it is subject to a fresh public vote, shadow Brexit secretary Sir Keir Starmer says. Talks between Labour and ministers over leaving the EU have been going on for a month with little sign of progress. Sir Keir told the Guardian that without a new referendum up to 150 Labour MPs would vote against any agreement made. Environment Secretary Michael Gove suggested Labour needed more time to come to terms with the idea of a deal. "For some in the Labour Party it will be a significant step to accept supporting Brexit and to come behind the prime minister's approach," he told the BBC. After talks broke up on Monday evening, a Labour spokesperson said the shadow cabinet would be updated on what had been discussed.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-48245499>

Mark Harper: "I will vote Conservative, but I can understand why many of our supporters aren't going to"

Mark Harper MP insists such “self-indulgent” speculation about the party leadership should not be the priority with the European elections looming large. But is the former chief whip mulling a crack at the top job? He speaks to Sebastian Whale

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/political-parties/conservative-party/house-magazine/103770/mark-harper-%E2%80%9Ci-will-vote>

Michael Gove: Theresa May will be prime minister 'for a while to come yet'

Theresa May will be prime minister "for a while to come yet", a Cabinet minister has told Sky News. Environment Secretary Michael Gove said Mrs May should be given the "time, space and dignity to leave in a way that she believes is right". The PM has promised to leave office once the first phase of Brexit has been sorted out, but the deadlock over Britain's departure from the European Union continues to drag on.

<https://news.sky.com/story/michael-gove-theresa-may-will-be-prime-minister-for-a-while-to-come-yet-11719224>

Which senior Labour figures support a second Brexit referendum?

Labour's Brexit divisions have been laid bare once more, after two frontbenchers warned any Brexit deal was "impossible" to get through the Commons without a public vote attached. Sir Keir Starmer, the shadow Brexit secretary, and deputy leader Tom Watson have both thrown their weight behind calls for a second referendum on a cross-party agreement. But the prospect of a Final Say vote remains divisive among senior Labour figures, which has led, in part, to the party's carefully crafted Brexit position.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/labour-brexit-final-say-jeremy-corbyn-shadow-cabinet-a8911771.html>

Seven in 10 Londoners would back staying in EU over Theresa May's Brexit deal

Londoners are saying an emphatic “no” to Theresa May's Brexit deal, with seven out of 10 saying they would rather stay in the European Union. The exclusive poll also found that nearly half of Londoners want a second referendum to be called, the strongest support yet, with 47 per cent in favour and just 29 per cent against. The findings by YouGov, with research commissioned by Queen Mary University of London, suggest a big shift from the referendum in 2016 when the capital divided 60-40 for staying in the EU.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/seven-in-10-londoners-would-back-staying-in-eu-over-may-s-deal-a4140766.html>

The party leaders have failed on Brexit. The UK's fate is now in MPs' hands

A greater challenge then presents itself. The Commons must empower a plausible executive machine to deliver what it decides. The party leaders must agree in advance to implement that decision. This would require the Tories to support May, still their leader, to present Brussels with whatever the Commons has decided, irrespective of what the Tories alone decided. To carry any credibility, the prime minister would need other Commons parties alongside her.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/13/brexit-mps-commons-leaders-deal-eu>

Liz Truss says Tories should build a million homes on green belt as she drops clear hint at leadership bid

Top minister Liz Truss has said the Conservatives should build one million homes on the green belt, as she all but confirmed she would stand for the party leadership. The Chief Secretary to the Treasury said the eye-catching proposal would “allow the under 40s to own their own homes”. But it is likely to get short shrift from the old guard in the Tory membership, which has been strongly opposed to building on green belt land.

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/political-parties/conservative-party/theresa-may/news/103813/liz-truss-says-tories-should>

@BBCLauraK Brexit talks are not in good health, but not dead yet, Olly Robbins is heading to Brussels tomorrow to talk about how, and how long it might take to change the political declaration IF there were to be an agreement

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<https://twitter.com/bbclaurak/status/1128042076854202371>

Brexit talks between Labour and Government on brink of collapse as deadlock continues

Brexit negotiations between the Government and Labour are on the brink of collapse after the latest round of talks ended without agreement. Senior frontbenchers from both sides met for nearly two hours on Monday in a fresh bid to find a breakthrough. But sources said they broke up without any “substantive progress” being made. In a clear sign that the negotiations a deal is as far away as ever, no further talks have been pencilled in. Theresa May will report back to her Cabinet on Tuesday, as will Jeremy Corbyn with his Shadow Cabinet. And it looks increasingly likely that both sides will decide to pull the plug on the talks, which began more than a month ago.

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/political-parties/conservative-party/theresa-may/news/103858/brexit-talks-between-labour-and>

Nigel Farage to launch eighth bid to become an MP at next general election

Nigel Farage has confirmed that he will mount an eighth attempt to become an MP in a bid to ensure Britain leaves the European Union. The former Ukip leader's new Brexit Party is on course to beat both Labour and the Conservatives at the EU elections next week, amid a growing backlash from Leave voters over the ongoing parliamentary deadlock. Mr Farage also confirmed that he would be willing to prop up a minority Tory government at Westminster if it meant that a no-deal Brexit would be delivered.

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/political-parties/news/103855/nigel-farage-launch-eighth-bid-become-mp-next-general-election>

Theresa May's 'Plan B' Brexit Compromise Set To Be Rejected By Labour As Talks Falter

Theresa May's hopes of a 'Plan B' Brexit deal with Jeremy Corbyn look set to be dashed as senior Labour figures have warned they can't sign up to her plea to abide by a fresh set of Commons votes. Talks between the government and opposition broke up again without any substantive agreement on Monday night, and few on either side now expect a cross-party agreement on major issues such as customs or a second referendum. But with her preferred option of a joint deal on the edge of collapse, HuffPost UK has learned that even May's fallback plan - of a series of 'indicative votes' - is set to be rejected by Labour.

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/plan-b-brexit-labour-talks-falter_uk_5cd9976ae4b0615b08170cb5

At Change UK we will fight to save London from Brexit

As a BBC correspondent in Northern Ireland I often asked prominent members of the IRA what they made of Corbyn. They repeatedly used the same phrase: he was, they said, a “useful dupe”. Now he is flirting with Theresa May's Brexit deal. It will make London poorer and will see Mrs May replaced by a hardline Brexiteer in her own party. Even his supporters surely cannot wish for him to become a useful dupe once more — this time of Nigel Farage, Mark Francois, Boris Johnson, Dominic Raab, Jacob Rees-Mogg and Ukip.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/comment/comment/at-change-uk-we-will-fight-to-save-london-from-brexit-a4140816.html>

Brexit impasse leads to longest UK parliament session since civil war

The Commons has sat for 298 days, and with MPs unable to agree a Brexit deal no new session is in sight. The current session of parliament is now the longest since the civil war period as the impasse over Brexit continues, House of Commons officials have said. As of Friday, the Commons had sat for

298 days, comprising 2,657 hours and 56 minutes, the House of Commons library said in a briefing. The existing record was set during the “long parliament”, when members sat for 3,322 days without prorogation from 3 November 1640 until 20 April 1653. The record session, which the library noted was unlikely to be broken, included not just the civil war but the trial and execution of Charles I, and ended only when Oliver Cromwell used soldiers to remove MPs.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/13/brexit-impasse-longest-uk-parliament-session-civil-war>

Thanks to the Brexit Party, the Conservatives can expect their worst ever result next week

The Brexit Party looks set to drain the Tories' Eurosceptic base, though Labour are struggling too. There have been plenty of previous challenges to the electoral grip of the Conservatives and Labour. The Liberal Democrats have long been snapping at their heels, regularly winning around a fifth of the vote until they entered the 2010-15 Coalition. In the last Euro-election in 2014 Ukip shocked the political establishment by coming first. Scotland is now a SNP fiefdom. However, until now these challenges have occurred separately, not in combination. Ukip's challenge coincided with a collapse in the Liberal Democrat vote. The SNP does not threaten the two main parties south of the border. Now, The Brexit Party does.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/05/13/thanks-brexit-party-conservatives-can-expect-worst-ever-result/>

@TNewtonDunn Gove is far from alone among Cabinet Brexiteers in not wanting the leadership contest until after Brexit. Holding it before in their view,

Interesting. Gove is far from alone among Cabinet Brexiteers in not wanting the leadership contest until after Brexit. Holding it before in their view, 1. Favours Raab and Boris, 2. Creates a No Deal showdown with the Commons, and therefore 3. Invites on a general election.

<https://twitter.com/tnewtondunn/status/1127977281912168448>

Why I won't be advising people to vote tactically in the European elections

With Brexit on the horizon and the main parties so divided, it's no wonder that progressive voters want to come together to show a united front. Tactical2017, a progressive campaign that encouraged people to vote tactically in the 2017 general election to get the Conservatives out of government, is being asked again for guidance, this time for the European parliament elections on 23 May. Here is why we won't be making any solid recommendations, and why we advise people not to follow other sites that do

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/13/why-i-wont-be-advising-people-to-vote-tactically-in-the-european-elections>

How will Labour's heartlands greet its Brexit tightrope act?

Jude Kirton-Darling was looking forward to spending a bit of time with her toddler Natan this spring. Although the north-east Labour MEP remained disappointed about the EU referendum result, she thought it would be nice to be a full-time mum for a while. But Theresa May's failure to get a deal through parliament means Kirton-Darling finds herself on the stump again instead of going to playgroup. “If you had told me three years ago, I wouldn't have believed you,” she said. “As MEPs we see the Brexit process very, very closely from both sides and I have never seen such incompetent negotiations.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/13/how-will-labours-heartlands-greet-its-brexit-tightrope-act>

How ironic that Farage the City boy could help Corbyn crash the economy

The most significant consequence of a Brexit Party advance, however, would be Labour winning well over 300 seats, way ahead of the Tories. On this basis, Jeremy Corbyn, with the support of the Scottish National Party, would become Prime Minister, and John McDonnell Chancellor of the Exchequer. That would not bring about the Brexit that Nigel Farage wants. Labour is fundamentally a Remain party, and even if it were to take the UK out of the EU, it would be only on the basis that we

remained permanently part of the Customs Union: it has repeatedly said as much.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7021455/DOMINIC-LAWSON-ironic-Farage-City-boy-help-Corbyn-crash-economy.html>

North-east England is not obsessed with Brexit - it's just a symbol

Brexit was, and remains, largely about this mythical EU and its symbolic opposition to an equally mythical Britain, rather than about anything specific to the actual EU. Brexit is pure magic – standing in for your hopes or fears. Bring it down to the level of the prosaic, to MEPs and trade policy, and it loses this magic and becomes ugly and undesirable. Ultimately Brexit cannot be fulfilled, it can only be betrayed.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/13/european-elections-brexit-middlesbrough>

Heidi Allen challenges Nigel Farage to live TV debate before EU polls

Heidi Allen, the leader of the pro-remain Change UK party, has challenged the Brexit party leader, Nigel Farage, to a live TV debate before the European elections. Allen, the former Conservative MP who joined the breakaway Independent Group, said she wanted to take on Farage so the British people could decide which new party's vision they preferred. The challenge was made on Monday night in Change UK's party election broadcast, launched in Cardiff at a rally in which Allen spoke alongside the former Labour MP Chuka Umunna, another key voice in the party. "I'm challenging Nigel Farage to join me in a new live TV debate and let's share with the British people our vision for the future and let them decide which they prefer," Allen said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/13/heidi-allen-challenges-nigel-farage-to-live-tv-debate-before-eu-elections-brexit-party>

Tom Watson says late Labour leader John Smith would have backed a second Brexit referendum

Late Labour leader John Smith would have backed calls for a second referendum on Brexit, Tom Watson will declare. In a heartfelt address on Monday, the deputy party leader will argue that Mr Smith, who died in 1994, would have seen a so-called 'People's Vote' as a route out of "this destructive mess". Mr Watson will also urge Labour voters to stick with the party at the upcoming European Parliament elections and deny victory to the far right and the Brexit Party led by Nigel Farage.

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/political-parties/labour-party/tom-watson/news/103816/tom-watson-says-late-labour-leader>

Tories slump to fifth place in polls ahead of European elections

The Conservatives have fallen into fifth place behind every major political party with the exception of Ukip and ChangeUK in this month's European elections, a new poll for The Times suggests today. The YouGov research has the Tories at just 10 per cent behind the Liberal Democrats on 15 per cent and the Greens on 11 per cent. The poll indicates that Labour is also hemorrhaging support to Nigel Farage's new party, with its vote share down five points to 16 per cent. The Brexit Party is up four points on 34 per cent while ChangeUK is on 5 per cent.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/politics-tories-slump-to-fifth-place-in-polls-7jzfpmh>

Fading away: Brexit Party and Change UK gone within a decade

Nigel Farage's Brexit Party. Both will be fighting for political survival in an increasingly crowded field. A poor performance is likely to send them to an early grave. As things stand, the public don't think either of these two new parties will still be around in a decade's time. The majority of Britons (56 per cent) think Change UK "will eventually fade from politics, and probably not be a force in British politics in 10 years". Just 10 per cent think that "they are here to stay and will likely remain an important part of British politics for the next 10 years". The public are even more pessimistic about the Brexit Party, with 63 per cent thinking it will fade over the next decade, although 13 per cent

think it's here to stay. UKIP's prospects are just as gloomy as those of their newer rivals: 61 per cent think it will fade and 13 per cent think is here to stay.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/most-britons-think-the-brexit-party-and-change-uk-will-be-dead-within-a-decade-cksncxz5>

Corbyn urged to commit Opposition to People's Vote to secure Labour MPs' support for cross-party Brexit deal

Jeremy Corbyn is facing increased public pressure from senior figures in his own Shadow Cabinet to throw the leadership's weight behind a second EU referendum on any cross-party Brexit deal in order to gain the backing of their own MPs. Sir Keir Starmer, the Shadow Brexit Secretary, warned it was "impossible" to see how an agreement between the Conservatives and his party could clear the Commons unless it guaranteed the deal would be put back to the public for a "confirmatory vote".

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/17636682.jeremy-corbyn-urged-to-commit-opposition-to-peoples-vote-to-win-about-mps-support-for-cross-party-brexit-deal/>

Brexit: Labour's old leader would have backed a second referendum, Tom Watson tells Corbyn

Tom Watson has launched a fresh bid to convince Jeremy Corbyn to back another Brexit referendum by claiming that former party leader John Smith would have understood the need for a Final Say vote. In a speech on Monday, the party's deputy leader will admit that Labour supporters are "not happy" with its current Brexit policy and make an impassioned plea to them not to abandon the party in European parliament elections later this month. In comments that will be widely interpreted as an attack on Mr Corbyn, he will hit out at left-wing critics of the EU and say that they are just as "wrong-headed" as right-wing Eurosceptics.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-news-latest-labour-second-referendum-jeremy-corbyn-tom-watson-a8910711.html>

DUP: Arlene Foster says Brexit vote would put 'democracy at risk'

A confirmatory Brexit referendum would place democracy at risk, Arlene Foster has warned. The DUP leader rejected calls from senior Labour politicians that any Brexit deal that might emerge from their party's talks with the Conservatives should be put to a public vote.

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/17636082.arlene-foster-second-brexit-referendum-places-democracy-at-risk/>

Brexit: Cross-party deal must include new referendum - Sir Keir Starmer

A cross-party Brexit deal will not get through Parliament unless it is subject to a fresh public vote, shadow Brexit secretary Sir Keir Starmer says. Talks between Labour and ministers over leaving the EU have been going on for a month with little sign of progress. Sir Keir told the Guardian that without a new referendum up to 150 Labour MPs would vote against any agreement made. Environment Secretary Michael Gove suggested Labour needed more time to come to terms with the idea of a deal. "For some in the Labour Party it will be a significant step to accept supporting Brexit and to come behind the prime minister's approach," he told the BBC.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-48245499>

Sir Vince Cable, Lib Dem leader: 'Three options' in second EU referendum

Vince Cable said there could be three options on any future second referendum - No Deal, Theresa May's Deal or Remain in a TV interview with Krishnan Guru-Murthy

<https://www.channel4.com/news/sir-vince-cable-lib-dem-leader-three-options-in-second-eu-referendum>

Theresa May remains opposed to any form of Brexit referendum

Downing Street said May had made clear her views about a second public vote: "She has said on many occasions that she is focused on delivering the result of the first referendum." May's spokesman declined to put a deadline on the talks but said the government was prepared to move

on to a series of indicative votes in parliament if no resolution was possible. "If we were able to make progress with Labour then we would look to bring the bill before the House of Commons before the European elections," he said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/13/theresa-may-remains-opposed-to-any-form-of-brexit-referendum>

Poll puts Lib Dems just 1% behind Labour as the opposition to Nigel Farage

A new YouGov poll has thrown into doubt claims that Labour is the main opposition party to Nigel Farage's Brexit Party - with 60% of 2017 general election voters moving away from the party. The latest figures put Labour in second place, but with just 16% of support, as 44% of voters from the 2017 general election plan to vote for pro-Remain parties instead. It has given the Liberal Democrats a boost, giving them 15% of the support, a difference of just 1%. This is followed by the Greens on 11% and Change UK on 5%.

<https://www.theneweuropean.co.uk/top-stories/poll-puts-lib-dems-just-1-behind-labour-in-european-elections-1-6047639>

Brexit: EU vote demand is 'torpedoing' Labour-Tory talks

Cross-party talks to break the Brexit deadlock are not succeeding because of Labour's demand for another referendum, a Welsh MP has warned. Aberavon Labour MP Stephen Kinnock says his party's call is "torpedoing" the discussions between both main parties. Talks between Conservative ministers and Labour over leaving the EU have been going on for a month with little sign of progress. Half of Welsh Labour's 28 MPs have backed another public vote. The shadow Brexit secretary Sir Keir Starmer has said a cross-party deal will not get through Parliament unless it is subject to a fresh public vote. He suggested a referendum on the final deal had become a red line of its own for many Labour MPs, saying "a significant number, probably 120 if not 150, would not back a deal if it hasn't got a confirmatory vote".

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-politics-48255352>

Jeremy Hunt says UK 'should consider defence spending boost'

The UK should consider "decisively" increasing defence spending after Brexit, Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt has said. He told the Lord Mayor's Banquet in London the threats facing the UK had changed "markedly" since the Cold War. "We simply do not know what the balance of power in the world will be in 25 years' time", he added. He said any extra money should be spent on "new capabilities and not simply plugging gaps". Mr Hunt said it was "not sustainable" to expect the US to spend 4% of its GDP on defence while other Nato allies spent between 1% and 2%. "So for these and other reasons I believe it is time for the next Strategic Defence and Security Review to ask whether, over the coming decade, we should decisively increase the proportion of GDP we devote to defence," he said.

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-parliaments-48262331?ns_mchannel=social&ns_campaign=bbc_politics&ns_lnkname=news_central&ns_source=twitter

Conservative MPs' fury as party leaflet takes aim at Brexiteers who opposed Theresa May's deal

Conservative in-fighting has broken out after the party produced a European Parliament election leaflet which tells people to lobby directly Brexiteer MPs who have voted down Theresa May's Brexit deal. A leaflet - seen by The Telegraph and titled "How to show you want a Brexit deal delivered as soon as possible" - says that "for a deal to pass it needs the support of more than half of all MPs". It includes a photograph and quote from Mrs May saying: "At this critical moment for our country, parties should not be playing politics - or acting for their own personal gain. We need to come together, stay the course, and deliver Brexit in the national interest."

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/05/12/conservative-mps-fury-party-produces-election-leaflet-urging/>

Additional sources: ([Politics Home](#))

Political Setbacks

Labour MPs Tell Corbyn Party Is 'Haemorrhaging' Votes To Lib Dems And Greens In Euro Elections

Jeremy Corbyn has admitted that Labour needs a clearer message on Brexit after a raft of his MPs warned the party was "haemorrhaging" votes to the pro-Remain Lib Dems and Greens. At a heated meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) on Monday night, the Labour leader faced repeated questions on why the party's leaflets for the Euro elections had fudged its support for a public vote on a Tory Brexit deal. MP after MP got up to slam the damage being done by talks with the government, and warned that Labour faced an "existential threat" if it continued to be unclear about its position on quitting the EU. Corbyn pledged he would take "immediate" action to respond to the concerns, though he insisted that his anti-austerity message offered a chance to unite the country in both Remain and Leave areas.

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/labour-mps-corbyn-losing-votes-lib-dems-greens-euro-elections_uk_5cd9be90e4b073aa0b320964

Lopresti ice cream boss handed restrictions over 'slavery risk'

The boss of a popular ice cream firm faces restrictions on his business after a judge raised concerns that he could commit slavery offences. Salvatore "Sam" Lopresti, 75, of Long Ashton, will not be able to employ staff or deal with wages at Lopresti Ice Cream, in Bristol. The measures are part of a Slavery and Trafficking Risk Order (STRO) that was imposed last week. However, he will not face a charge relating to modern day slavery. The company is owned by the family of Tory MP for Filton and Bradley Stoke, Jack Lopresti.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-48253749>

AstroTurfers of Britain Part Two: Who is Behind Brexit Party Recruitment and its PR Makeover?

Otto English delves deeper into Claire Fox and Spiked Online's close connection to Nigel Farage's new party, and discovers another PR executive involved in recruiting potential MEPs. It seems just a few short weeks ago that we were howling at its laugh-a-minute 'March for Leave' and low-tech website. How did it turn from an amateurish outfit into an undeniably slick operation - with a superior launch video and a festival-style roadshow touring the country? And, on that journey, why has Nigel Farage stuck so steadfastly by Claire Fox, the only weak link in the chain?

<https://bylinetimes.com/2019/05/13/astroturfers-of-britain-part-two-who-is-behind-brexit-party-recruitment-and-its-pr-makeover/>

Leave voters lash out at Jeremy Corbyn in huge Brexit rant - 'I voted Leave.'

Leave voters in Pontefract, West Yorkshire, lashed out at Jeremy Corbyn, admitting they now prefer Nigel Farage to the left-wing leader after being Labour supporters for a long time.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1126670/Brexit-news-Jeremy-Corbyn-Nigel-Farage-Brexit-Party-European-elections>

Labour wipe out: Brexiteers send stern warning to Corbyn - 'He will be gone in no time'

Speaking to LBC's Theo Usherwood during an interview with Brexit Party leader Nigel Farage, Leave voters in Ponterfact vowed to vote against the Labour Party at the next general elections. Asked whether they will support West Yorkshire MPs Yvette Cooper or Jon Trickett, one passionate Brexit supporter said: "Jon Trickett will be gone. He will be gone. He will be wiped out in no time. He will be gone."

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1126693/Brexit-news-UK-general-election-Jeremy-Corbyn-Yorkshire-Yvette-Cooper-Jon-Trickett>

Like Trump, Nigel Farage stands for nothing but himself. It's up to us to oust him at the

EU elections

Hard Brexiteers such as Farage and their cheerleaders don't much like the institutions that are fundamental to a liberal, free democracy – the judiciary (described by the Daily Mail as “enemies of the people”), our independent civil service (accused of “fiddling the figures” by Jacob Rees-Mogg), the Bank of England (Brexiteers have called for the governor's resignation) and backbench MPs defending their constituents' jobs against a hard Brexit. They have all been subject to attack, abuse or threat. The reason we are in this mess is because Brexit, in the form that it was sold to the British people by the Brexit elite – Nigel Farage, Rees-Mogg and others, is impossible to deliver.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/brexit-party-nigel-farage-andrew-marr-bbc-enemy-european-elections-a8911986.html>

800 voters turned away in ID trial during local elections

More than 800 people were unable to vote during a second trial of compulsory voter ID at this month's local elections, according to interim figures. Across the eight out of 10 test areas that have so far given figures, 819 people were turned away from polling stations and did not return, according to the Local Government Chronicle (LGC). The average of 102 per area compares to 70 in the first trial last year, when 340 people were unable to vote in the five councils trialling the system. Labour and election organisations renewed their condemnation of the government's planned national rollout of compulsory voter ID, which critics say disproportionately affects vulnerable voters and tackles a negligible problem.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/13/second-voter-id-trial-sees-800-people-unable-to-vote-in-local-elections>

Nigel Farage has joined the 'BBC bias' club. Now we know he's not worth listening to

Nigel Farage has been a public fraud and phoney for decades. It is only recently that he has been calling the tune. His is the only story that is emerging from these weird elections, because the other pipers have lost their breath. The Tories are not campaigning at all. Labour is trying to be all things to all people, trying not to be eaten alive by the Brexit beast, that would have posed an unimaginable headache to any Labour leader, but the biggest one of all to Jeremy Corbyn, who has been a professional liar on Brexit since he first launched Labour's campaign, three years ago at the Ministry of Truth.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/nigel-farage-andrew-marr-bbc-bias-brexit-party-a8912001.html>

Pro-Remain voters drift away from Labour as Brexit feud rages on

Labour's Brexit dilemma is deepening as Tom Watson, deputy leader, steps up calls for a clear commitment to a second EU referendum, amid signs that pro-Remain voters are abandoning the party. Barely two weeks ago, Mr Watson was routed by Jeremy Corbyn, who won a healthy majority at the party's National Executive Committee against efforts to ensure that Labour back another referendum in all circumstances. But since then Mr Watson and other pro-EU senior shadow ministers have continued to wage their campaign against the more ambiguous policy championed by Mr Corbyn and a group of his top officials. Mr Corbyn's policy has also failed to convince the voters, according to polls, with Labour supporters increasingly switching to other parties with clearer messages on Brexit, little more than a week ahead of EU elections.

<https://www.ft.com/content/3f2b124e-7570-11e9-bbad-7c18c0ea0201>

Jeremy Corbyn has to get off the fence for Labour to see off the Faragists

There is no knowing if Jeremy Corbyn is capable of this agility or too stubborn to shift. But when driving towards a concrete wall, a swerve is advisable. Some obstacles have been removed. The People's Vote campaign was viewed by some Labour conspiracy theorists as a way of covertly rallying anti-Corbynites. But now the Change UK group has split off, so far making very moderate headway, the path is clear for Labour remainers to be seen as just that – pro-Labour, pro-

referendum, pro-remain, no subversive agenda. In this election Labour's remainers will put country before party – and vote accordingly. The party's Brexit voters have already fled. It's for Corbyn to decide if he wants Labour humiliated: his remainers are waiting to hear, before they too defect.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/13/jeremy-corbyn-labour-brexit-nigel-farage-european-elections>

Why is Nigel Farage all over the airwaves while my party barely gets a look-in?

Journalism largely missed or muddled the Brexit story because it is an exemplar of that inequality. To ward off criticisms of elitism, it gives platforms, again and again, to figures it misapprehends as voices of the people. Only an elite could mistake a wealthy, privately educated former commodities broker for a man of the people. The only way in which Farage has ever aided “the people” is in highlighting the unfairness of a system that gives much more weight to some votes and voices than others.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/13/nigel-farage-womens-equality-party-elections-media>

BBC is now the enemy, declares furious Farage after TV grilling

Nigel Farage has angrily accused the BBC of “outrageous bias” after he was repeatedly challenged in an interview about his past political views. During a series of confrontational exchanges on The Andrew Marr Show, the Brexit Party leader said that the broadcaster was in “denial” about public anger over Brexit. Marr used the interview to challenge Mr Farage over comments he has made in the past on issues such as immigration, climate change and gun control. He highlighted the politician's previous support for bringing in a health insurance system for the NHS, relaxing laws on gun control and his admiration for Vladimir Putin. He also quoted Mr Farage as saying that worrying about global warming was the “stupidest thing in human history” and that he felt uncomfortable hearing foreign languages on Tube trains.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/bbc-is-now-the-enemy-declares-furious-farage-after-tv-grilling-zrmf0bdv5>

Theresa May's husband will 'persuade her' to resign if she fails another Brexit deal within a month

Theresa May's husband Philip will persuade her to resign if she fails to find a majority for a Brexit deal within a month, ministers now believe. Even No10 loyalists think the PM will find it impossible to overcome “such a head of steam” against her from Tory MPs and activists if the crippling deadlock continues into June.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/9059132/theresa-may-husband-resign-brexit/>

It's time for Theresa May to choose her resignation date before the Tories are damaged further

The Tories are on course for their worst election performance ever as they bleed voters to the Brexit Party. Nigel Farage's outfit is so new it doesn't have any policies yet — imagine how much bigger the damage could get. Every day the PM remains in office, Jeremy Corbyn gets closer to power. News that one in ten wealth creators will flee Britain if Labour gets in is a reminder of how high the stakes are. No one could accuse Mrs May of not feeling a huge sense of public duty. But when even her adoring husband Philip admits she needs to resign, surely she must realise that she is now the problem, not the solution. This week Tory grandees will tell the PM to name the date she plans to hand over to a successor. She must do it.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/9060105/theresa-may-resignation-tories-damaged/>

The Brexit Party's Most Senior Election Official Says Tommy Robinson Has Been “Persecuted” And Islamophobia Is “Made Up”

The Brexit Party has distanced itself from its most senior election official after BuzzFeed News found he had defended Tommy Robinson and repeatedly mocked the concept of Islamophobia. Noel Matthews, the Brexit Party's national election agent and the person with ultimate legal responsibility

for its European election campaign, last year posted an article sympathetic to the far-right former EDL activist and wrote: "THIS. Tommy Robinson Drew Attention to Grooming Gangs. Britain Has Persecuted Him." Nigel Farage has said that one of his main reasons for quitting UKIP and setting up the Brexit Party was his former party's "fixation" with Robinson and Islam.

<https://www.buzzfeed.com/alexwickham/brexit-party-national-election-agent-tommy-robinson>

Tactical Voting: Website 'RemainVoter.com' Aims To Stop Nigel Farage's Brexit Party

A new website targeted at Remain voters has been launched by data scientists in a bid to help tactical voting against the Brexit Party. RemainVoter.com promises to identify the best tactical voting options to stop candidates from Nigel Farage's latest party winning a seat in the upcoming European elections. The site uses a new mathematical model to power a tactical voting engine for the European elections, said team leader and ex-Google software engineer Cheryl Hung. "We are entirely non-party political," said Hung. "Our sole aim is to remain in the EU as we see the damage that leaving it will do to our country. "We understand that party politics, political reality and technical factors prevented a pro-Remain alliance.

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/tactical-voting-explained-stop-brexit_uk_5cd90c15e4b054da4e8bf823

Labour send Euro vote campaign leaflets written in Welsh to homes in Highlands

The Labour Party sent campaign leaflets written in Welsh to voters in the Highlands after a Euro election bungle. Voters received bilingual literature that should have been sent to the Welsh Valleys. Labour has launched an investigation into the miscommunication, which resulted in Scots being implored in English to "Vote Welsh Labour on Thursday 23rd May". The message - "Pleidleisiwch dros Lafur Cymru ar ddydd Iau 23 Mai" - was posted alongside a picture of Jeremy Corbyn, who ads: "Theresa May and the Tories are in chaos and Britain is in crisis". In Welsh, the message was "Mae Theresa May a'r Toraid mewn anhrefn ac mae Prydain mewn argyfwng."

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/labour-send-euro-vote-campaign-15681951>

Andrew Marr's obsession with my past betrays the bias at the heart of the BBC

I'm not the first person to have been on the receiving end of BBC bias, and I won't be the last. But with an election campaign under way, I had expected our state broadcaster to behave responsibly in its coverage of this pivotal moment for democracy in Britain. Not a bit of it. On Sunday I was on The Andrew Marr Show. I anticipated a tough and free-flowing interview about the Brexit Party, our candidates, their strikingly different backgrounds, our campaign, and the merits of MEPs and the EU elections. Instead, shortly after the interview began, Marr produced a piece of paper and started reading scripted questions relating to things I allegedly said or thought years ago - questions I did not want to be asked

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/05/13/andrew-marrs-obsession-past-betrays-bias-heart-bbc/>

EU Funding Benefits

If Labour is so committed on climate, it should recognise how the EU can help

It's clear that the EU is leading on the design of financial levers to encourage a sustainability transition for the finance sector and thus for all companies. Rather than picking off the London Stock Exchange, Labour needs to embrace our continued membership of the EU. When it comes to tackling serious global issues such as climate change, and transitioning towards a green economy, we will achieve so much more working together cooperatively with our European neighbours.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/12/labour-climate-support-green-party-carbon-eu>

London to have world-first hydrogen-powered doubledecker buses

London will have the world's first hydrogen-powered doubledecker buses on its streets next year, as the capital steps up attempts to tackle its polluted air. Transport for London (TfL) has ordered 20 of the buses, which cost around £500,000 each and only emit water as exhaust. As well as cutting

polluting exhaust emissions, the buses will run on green hydrogen produced via North Kent offshore wind farms, according to TfL. The overall cost for the new fleet, including the refuelling infrastructure, will be £12m, £5m of which will come from European funding. The transport authority expects the running costs to be comparable for a diesel bus.

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/may/10/london-to-have-world-first-hydrogen-powered-doubledecker-buses>