

News from the Brexit Cliff Edge

20th Mar 2019

News Highlights

Welcome to the Brexit Cliff Edge

- Sir Charlie Bean, a member of the Office of Budget Responsibility, told MPs it was `almost impossible` to accurately predict the shockwaves that would be sent through the economy, should the UK crash out of the EU without a deal. He said that, as with Lehmans Collapse in 2008, the actual havoc wrought by the shock would only become clear as events unfolded
- Less than half the applications from UK firms seeking `Trusted Trader` status have been approved since 2016. This is a quality marker which the government says allows firms to fast-track shipments through customs. Hauliers say they`ve been given chaotic information about the programme. It could be crucial in the event of a No Deal
- British business executives are growing anxious about the parliamentary gridlock and very concerned about the consequences to their businesses if the UK leaves with No Deal on March 29th. They are also worried about the Brexit uncertainty continuing a further few months or years
- The government has thrown a £500m lifeline to British pensioners across the EU, by offering to cover the costs of their healthcare for up to 12 months after Brexit exit day
- NHS chief executives said `Brexit has had a negative impact on staffing, with EU nurses and doctors leaving the service, it poses a threat to future vaccination programmes and the maintenance of hospital infrastructure.` All complained about `the lack of meaningful guidance from NHS England to local hospital trusts,` describing it as `like navigating through treacle`
- Lorry drivers plan to stage an anti-EU blockade on the M5 as early as this weekend. Brexit Direct Action is calling on hauliers to block motorways if the government does not leave the EU on March 29th
- Holders of UK driving licences in Ireland, who have applied for Irish permits have been told to stay off the roads for six weeks, due to the enormous backlog of people with UK licences that need change over to Irish ones
- Universities are raising the alarm over the loss of millions of pounds worth of EU grants for research, in the event of a No Deal Brexit. They have warned government that life-changing research could be just days away from stalling and urged the government to set up contingency plans to protect UK access to research funding

Deal or No Deal

- Theresa May`s cabinet split badly over her plans for a Brexit delay, some ministers even suggesting that if she proposed asking for 2 years, it could lead to the break up the Conservative Party. May`s reticence to tell them how long she intends to ask the EU for, led to many suspecting she is going to ask for 2 years, with a break clause if a deal is found sooner
- Michel Barnier indicated the price of a long Brexit delay, in the event of Theresa May`s withdrawal agreement being defeated again, would be a soft Brexit or a `new event` - such as a second referendum or a General Election. Barnier stressed that a delay imposes extra costs on the member states so approval is not guaranteed

- Hundreds of thousands of people from all over the country are set to march to Westminster on Saturday 23rd March, to take part in the 'Put it to the People March.' This march calls on the government to give voters the final say on whatever deal MPs finally agree on
- The Information Commissioner has fined the Brexit campaign group Vote Leave £40,000 for sending out nearly 200,000 unsolicited text messages. The text messages contained a link to its campaign website, alongside information about its original purpose
- U.S. President Trump sees great opportunity for a trade deal with the UK, his National Security Adviser, John Bolton, told Sky News
- Donald Trump's son criticised the way Brexit has been handled over the last two and half years. He said the Brexit result and his father's Presidential win were examples of the people overcoming the elite and urged that Brexit be completed soon

Jobs at Risk

City jobs market 'in slow motion' as Brexit uncertainty hurts banking sector

Founder and chief executive Robert Walters said political uncertainty had negatively impacted recruitment in the City as firms and candidates craved clarity. "It's impacted confidence, the London jobs market has gone into slow motion, it's not frozen as there is still plenty going on but it's like walking through treacle at the moment," he said. "Doom and gloom is not the right phrase, it's just a 'rabbit caught in the headlights.'" The recruitment veteran said no specific city had emerged as a rival to London despite a significant amount of relocation activity.

<http://www.cityam.com/274876/city-jobs-market-slow-motion-brexit-uncertainty-hurts>

Economic Impact

Britain's fiscal watchdog compares shock of no-deal Brexit to collapse of Lehman Brothers

Britain's fiscal watchdog has compared the shock of a no-deal Brexit to the collapse of Lehman Brothers that sparked the global financial crisis more than a decade ago. Sir Charlie Bean, a member of the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR), told MPs it was "almost completely impossible" to accurately predict the shockwaves that would be sent through the economy should the UK crash out of the EU without a deal. He said that, as with the collapse of Lehman's in 2008, the actual havoc wrought by the shock would only become clear as events unfolded.

<https://www.independent.ie/business/brexit/britains-fiscal-watchdog-compares-shock-of-no-deal-brexit-to-collapse-of-lehman-brothers-37929779.html>

A transatlantic front opens in the Brexit battle over derivatives

European politicians have declared that if LCH wants to clear euros when (or if) Brexit occurs, that business must either move to continental Europe, or be regulated by the European Securities and Markets Authority, the Paris-based entity. In one sense, that is no surprise. And what has come as a relief for the City — and banks — is that Esma declared last month that it will let London's clearing houses perform these functions, even after a hard Brexit, as long as they accept Esma rules. However, there is a trillion-dollar catch that sits completely outside the British parliament's control: the US. The CFTC has told Europe that it will not accept Esma controlling London's swaps business insofar as it impinges on dollar markets and US banks.

<https://www.ft.com/content/ab751f8a-499c-11e9-bbc9-6917dce3dc62>

UK employers defy approach of Brexit with hiring spree

British employers ramped up their hiring at the fastest pace since 2015 in the three months to January as the labour market defied broader Brexit weakness in the overall economy.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-economy-unemployment/uk-employers-defy-approach-of-brexit-with-hiring-spree-idUKKCN1R00X6>

Administrative Fall Out

Brexit: Less than half of trusted trader applications approved

Less than half of the applications from UK firms for "trusted trader" status have been approved by HMRC since 2016, Newsnight has learned. The status is a quality marker, which the government says allows firms to fast-track their shipments through customs. This could be crucial if the UK leaves the EU without a deal. Hauliers say they have been given "chaotic information". HMRC said businesses must "meet strict compliance standards" for the status.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-47628769>

UK business groups urge Theresa May to come up with Brexit plan B

British business groups that threw their weight behind Theresa May's Brexit deal are now pressing Downing Street to come up with a "plan B" in case she fails to get her agreement through the House of Commons. The prime minister received lukewarm support from business leaders for her withdrawal agreement when it was agreed with the EU in November, with many backing it mainly because it prevented the severe disruption of a no-deal Brexit. But now executives are increasingly anxious that if parliamentary gridlock continues, the UK could crash out of the EU without a deal on March 29 when it is scheduled to leave the bloc. They also worry that if the Brexit deadline is extended, political paralysis will continue if Mrs May fails to devise an alternate plan.

<https://www.ft.com/content/32213130-4a57-11e9-bbc9-6917dce3dc62>

Where is the DUP's £1bn 'bung'? Our schools and hospitals are broke

David Sterling, head of the Northern Ireland civil service, complained: "Our system of government was not intended to function in the absence of elected representatives ... Without ministers, we have no one with a democratic mandate to set new policies ... There is also ongoing work regarding planning for the sensible spend of the [£1bn] moneys. However, this is another area where the absence of ministers is handicapping us."

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/mar/19/dup-bung-schools-hospitals-northern-ireland>

No-deal Brexit: UK to pay some health costs of retired Britons in EU

The government has thrown a potential £500m Brexit lifeline to 180,000 British pensioners in EU countries outside the UK who rely on the NHS to pay for their healthcare. The health minister, Stephen Hammond, has said the government is committed to covering all treatments that began before exit day for up to 12 months afterwards in the event of no deal. "The UK government has committed to fund healthcare for UK nationals (and others for whom the UK is responsible) who have applied for, or are undergoing, treatments in the EU prior to and on exit day, for up to one year, to protect the most vulnerable," he said in a ministerial written statement.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/19/brexit-uk-to-pay-health-costs-of-retired-britons-in-eu-if-no-deal-agreed>

Cancer doctor shortage threatens patient welfare says report

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

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

7 Brexit terms no-one ever wants to hear ever again

There are now several phrases and terms which have sufferers of Brexit fatigue people running as soon as they hear them Perhaps the most devastating damage caused by Brexit has been to the

English language. The Mirror discusses seven terms which people are starting to get fatigued with hearing

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/7-brexit-terms-no-one-14152737>

Plans for Brexit blockade on M5 to bring 'huge area' to standstill could take place this weekend

Lorry drivers could stage their anti-EU blockade on the M5 as early as this this weekend, it can be revealed. Brexit Direct Action is calling on drivers to block major motorways around the country if the Government does not leave the European Union on Friday, March 29.

<https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/uk-world-news/plans-brexit-blockade-m5-bring-2661184>

Brexit 'information vacuum' fuelling NHS drug shortages, trust bosses warn

Hospitals are already facing drugs shortages as a consequence of Brexit, with an "information vacuum" hampering their ability to plan for no deal, NHS trust leaders have warned. One hospital chief executive said they are currently unable to source more than 160 medicines on a daily basis, an increase from about 30 in normal circumstances. Other chief executives said Brexit had already had a negative impact on staffing, with EU nurses and doctors leaving the service, and poses a threat to future vaccination programmes and the maintenance of hospital infrastructure. All complained of a lack of meaningful guidance from NHS England to local hospital trusts, describing planning as "high-level and sketchy" and "like navigating through treacle"

<https://news.sky.com/story/brexit-information-vacuum-fuelling-nhs-drug-shortages-trust-bosses-warn-11670232>

Man mocked for "drunkenly" spending over £600 on no-deal Brexit stockpile

A woman has mocked her husband on Twitter after he "drunkenly" ordered £600 worth of items in preparation for a no-deal Brexit. Juliet East shared a picture of husband Tony Smollett's supermarket haul, which includes 144 rolls of toilet paper, more than 50 tins of food and numerous bottles of wine. In the post, she wrote: "THIS is what my husband's drunken £600 No Deal shop looks like"

<https://news.sky.com/story/man-mocked-for-drunkenly-spending-over-600-on-no-deal-brexit-stockpile-11670478>

'It could be terrible for us': how one British high street is preparing for Brexit

Ordering and delivering within 24 hours will not be possible. I worry the flower business will go online and never come back," he says. "And, personally, I won't go there." Bothamley's Dutch suppliers are worried, too, he tells me, adding that Holland is a world centre for the flower trade. "They can manage without us." He needs them, however. We look around the shop; even the South African proteas come via the Netherlands. There is one jug of daffodils from Lincolnshire. "People don't like the air miles, but it's a global business. Practically every carnation on sale comes from Colombia. Those roses are Italian."

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2019/mar/19/brexit-bishy-road-bishopthorpe-york-high-streets-survive-shoppers>

'A riskier place to go': academics avoid conferences in Brexit Britain

According to Sandro Carnicelli, senior lecturer in events and tourism management at the University of the West of Scotland, UK academics may also find going to conferences more difficult. "Most academics are funded by research projects and a lot of those projects are European," he says. "Some partners in Europe are cautious about including British academics in proposals for funding, because they believe there may be issues in getting funding approved."

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2019/mar/19/academics-avoid-conferences-in-brexit-britain>

Brexit: Holders of UK licences in Ireland face weeks off road

Holders of UK driving licences who have applied to swap them for Irish permits due to Brexit have been told they must stay off the road possibly for weeks while awaiting new licences. There are thousands of UK licence holders in Ireland, who have been advised to change their licences as they

will be invalid in the event of a no-deal Brexit. Fianna Fáil transport spokesman Robert Troy said the Road Safety Authority (RSA) confirmed to him a demand of up to 500 applications per day was being seen. Amid backlogs caused by a rush of applications for licence exchange, drivers are being told by the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) that it is illegal for them to drive until they get their new permits.

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/brexit-holders-of-uk-licences-in-ireland-face-weeks-off-road-1.3831922>

Citi sets post-Brexit Frankfurt trading hub in motion

Citigroup's new broker-dealer in Frankfurt is now fully operational as the US bank finalises its Brexit contingency plans with political negotiations stuck in limbo less than two weeks before the UK's official leaving date. Citi's German investment firm has begun trading on the main European exchanges and issuing in capital markets on behalf of institutional and corporate clients that can no longer be served through its British entities, the lender said. It has also begun clearing on the Eurex exchange. Unable to wait any longer, in recent months banks have put the finishing touches to their structural changes as the UK heads into more Brexit uncertainty after parliament rejected the deal on offer.

<https://www.ft.com/content/8e4a7ec0-49c7-11e9-8b7f-d49067e0f50d>

No-deal Brexit could mean £130m hit to research budgets

Universities have raised the alarm about the potential loss of hundreds of millions of pounds worth of EU grants from the UK in the case of a no-deal Brexit. They warned that life-changing research "could be days away from stalling" and urged the government to set up contingency plans to protect UK access to research funding. Researchers who have submitted applications for the latest round of funding from the European Research Council (ERC) say they are still in the dark about what will happen to their submissions in the case of no deal.

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2019/mar/19/no-deal-brexit-could-mean-130m-hit-to-research-budgets>

Scots living in remote communities claim they are 'f***' because of Brexit**

Scots living in remote areas have issued a stark warning that "we are f*****" as result of Brexit, an official report as revealed. The blunt language appears in a document published by Scottish Rural Action (SRA). It featured on a side banner on page four of the document.

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/scots-living-in-remote-communities-claim-they-are-f-because-of-brexit-1-4891631>

Overseas students choose UK business schools despite Brexit

The percentage of overseas students making Britain their first choice for business school has increased since the EU referendum, suggesting that fears about Brexit damaging the sector were overblown. The resilience of the British market is attributed to declines in the value of the pound after the vote to leave the EU, which has made tuition fees in Britain relatively cheap for international students, particularly for people who would otherwise apply to US business schools.

<https://www.ft.com/content/4abfb190-497a-11e9-8b7f-d49067e0f50d>

@PortdeCalais HVs drivers: for a rapid transit, those documents will be needed on the port of Calais: International consignment note (CMR) The Master reference number MRN (barcode) If you are transporting sanitary or phytosanitary goods: the pre-notification document

BREXIT: From 29/03 00.00, HVs drivers: for a rapid transit, those documents will be needed on the port of Calais: International consignment note (CMR) The Master reference number MRN (barcode) If you are transporting sanitary or phytosanitary goods: the pre-notification document

<https://twitter.com/calaisport/status/1107637485981655040>

How Brexit will affect UK travel - from visas to traffic delays at the Eurotunnel

On February 1, EU ambassadors agreed to allow UK citizens visa-free travel to Europe - even with a no deal Brexit. This means Brits travelling to any of the 26 countries in the borderless Schengen area will be allowed visa-free travel for a temporary stay for up to 90 days. The allotted 90 days can be taken in any 180-day period. The European Council said its decision was based on an assumption that EU nationals would enjoy the same privilege when heading to the UK for a short stay. And they warned that a visa would quickly be imposed should that not be the case. The European Parliament is now expected to pass the decision into legislation.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/travel/8331597/eu-travel-brexit-uk-visa-delays/>

Political Shenanigans

Theresa May to ask for Brexit delay, 1,000 days since referendum

Theresa May is preparing to formally ask the EU to delay Brexit, 1,000 days since Britons voted to leave the EU. The prime minister will on Wednesday send a letter to Brussels revealing her preference for either a short or long extension of Article 50 - the legal mechanism to take the UK out of the bloc. But she could face a potential cabinet split, and the threat that such a request will be rejected.

<https://news.sky.com/story/theresa-may-to-ask-for-brexit-delay-1-000-days-since-referendum-11670556>

Brexit news: Theresa May to write to Tusk as exasperated EU leaders demand 'clarity' over delay plan

Theresa May is set to write to European Commission president Donald Tusk to lay out the government's plan for delaying Brexit. The cabinet spent 90 minutes discussing the issue this morning but reportedly did not reach a conclusion on the possible length of the extension. It comes as European leaders signalled that they may not agree to the UK's request for a delay to Britain's departure from the bloc, which was originally expected on March 29.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-news-live-vote-deal-theresa-may-john-bercow-commons-latest-a8829181.html>

Additional sources: (Yahoo!) (BBC News)

Dodds: DUP 'haven't softened' on Brexit deal

The DUP's conditions "haven't softened" when it comes to the government's Brexit deal, Nigel Dodds has said. The party's deputy leader said there had been "good" discussions, but they are not ready to offer support yet. The government needs the backing of the 10 DUP MPs in order to get the agreement through the House of Commons. It comes amid reports that Theresa May is writing to the EU to ask for Brexit to be postponed until 30 June with the option of a longer delay.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-47628566>

Additional sources: (Belfast Telegraph) (Reuters) (BBC News)

Labour's Corbyn calls on UK opposition parties to work on Brexit plan

Jeremy Corbyn, leader of Britain's main opposition Labour Party, called on other opposition leaders on Tuesday to work towards finding a majority in parliament for "a close economic relationship" with the European Union after Brexit. Corbyn met leaders from the Scottish National Party, Liberal Democrats, Wales' Plaid Cymru and the Green Party to discuss how to break the Brexit impasse in parliament, which has twice rejected Prime Minister Theresa May's deal to leave the EU. "Should there not be a majority in parliament for May's deal or a public vote, Corbyn called on the other parties to engage constructively to find a parliamentary majority for a close economic relationship with the EU that can work for the whole country," a Labour spokesman said. "The party leaders discussed efforts to ensure May's deal would be put to a public vote if she is able to force it through parliament with threats and phony bribes."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-labour/labours-corbyn-calls-on-uk-opposition-parties-to-work-on-brexit-p>

[lan-idUSKCN1R0220](#)

Four party leaders urge Corbyn to back second Brexit referendum

Labour remains publicly committed to a policy of seeking a second referendum if the party's own customs union-based Brexit plan is not adopted, and is pushing for a confirmation vote if May's deal passes parliament. The Labour spokesman said: "The party leaders discussed efforts to ensure May's deal would be put to a public vote if she is able to force it through parliament with threats and phoney bribes."

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/19/opposition-leaders-urge-corbyn-to-back-second-brexit-referendum>

As Brexit crisis deepens, Boris Johnson and lover take stroll on beach in Italy

Carefree Boris Johnson strolls on a paradise Italian beach while Britain is gripped by the Brexit crisis he helped to unleash. The former Foreign Secretary was pictured with blonde lover Carrie Symonds, 30, on Fornillo beach, at Positano on the stunning Amalfi Coast. Mr Johnson, 54, wore a suit and shirt without a tie for a stroll. One tourist website describes Fornillo as "a little hidden secret" and says: "Many visitors rush around... and have no idea that this slice of paradise exists."

https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/brexit-crisis-deepens-boris-johnson-14160396?utm_source=twitter.com&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=sharebar

Saturday's huge London protest demanding a Brexit vote could be the biggest in British history

Thousands of people across London are set to march to Westminster on Saturday (March 23) to take part in what will be one of the largest political demonstrations in British history. The 'Put it to the People' march will call on Parliament to give London and Britain's voters the right to have a crucial vote to say 'yes' or 'no' to whatever deal MPs finally come up with on Brexit. The huge march is likely to be even bigger than the previous demonstration organised by the grassroots People's Vote campaign back in October 2018, which was attended by around 700,000 people - including thousands from across London. Activists have been distributing thousands of leaflets in high streets in virtually every part of London in a bid to gather support for the march.

<https://www.mylondon.news/news/west-london-news/saturdays-huge-london-protest-demanding-15998210>

Cabinet fractures over Brexit delay as May warned she could cause 'the end of the Conservative Party'

Theresa May's Cabinet is fracturing over her plans for a Brexit delay after ministers told her she was risking "the end of the Conservative Party". Angry ministers turned on the Prime Minister after she refused to tell them how long an extension she intends to request from the EU, leaving some suspecting she could ask for a delay of up to two years. Amid accusations that Mrs May has failed to get a grip on what she admits is a "crisis", Eurosceptic ministers warned that a long delay would lead to a Jeremy Corbyn government and turn Britain into a "barren land" with "gulags". Andrea Leadsom, Liam Fox and Chris Grayling left Mrs May in no doubt that they would have to consider quitting the Cabinet

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/03/19/cabinet-fractures-brexit-delay-may-warned-could-cause-end-conservative/>

Eurosceptic Tories use covert talks to call on EU countries to veto Brexit extension

Backbench Eurosceptic Tory MPs have made a behind-the-scenes bid to persuade European Union leaders to veto any delay to Brexit at this week's Brussels summit. The undercover diplomatic initiative has been led by Tory MPs Daniel Kawczynski, Craig Mackinlay and former Cabinet minister Owen Paterson. The talks have been discussed at meetings of the European Research Group of around 60 hardline Conservative MPs. The MPs were hoping that one of the EU's 27 remaining member states could veto Britain's expected request to an extension to Article 50 to make it more likely that the UK leaves the EU at the end of next week.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/03/19/eurosceptic-tories-use-covert-talks-call-eu-countries-veto-brexit/>

Meaningful Vote 3' could be held the day before Brexit Day

Two government sources suggest the Meaningful Vote “take 3” might happen on Thursday of next week. Of course, like everything else right now, that could change. But if it did pan out that way it would mean that we were voting on the eve of the 11pm 29th March departure time that is still in UK law. The week would start with a Monday statement from Theresa May following the EU summit which happens this Thursday/Friday. There has been talk in government of then having a “paving motion” ahead of the Meaningful Vote to over-rule the objections of The Speaker by proving there is parliamentary will for a third attempt at getting the deal through.

<https://www.channel4.com/news/meaningful-vote-3-could-be-held-day-before-brexit>

May seeking Brexit delay to June 30 with option of two-year extension

British Prime Minister Theresa May will write to the European Union on Tuesday to ask for a Brexit extension until the end of June and with a possible two-year delay, the BBC’s political editor said. With Britain due to leave the bloc in just 10 days, May’s spokesman earlier said she would be writing to European Council President Donald Tusk to request a delay to Brexit either on Tuesday or Wednesday. But the BBC’s Laura Kuenssberg said on Twitter after Tuesday’s Cabinet meeting: “Cabinet sources say PM is writing letter to EU today asking for extension - frustration that she is going to ask for end date of June 30th, with proviso of delay of up to 2 years.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-kuenssberg/may-seeking-brexit-delay-to-june-30-with-option-of-two-year-extension-bbc-idUKKCN1R01ML?feedType=RSS&feedName=domesticNews>

Getting rid of Theresa May solves nothing

Whoever is Conservative leader after Theresa May — Henry Kissinger, Nelson Mandela, Donald Trump — Britain will still be in the same position, with a relatively weak negotiating hand facing a fairly united negotiating partner. Getting, as a result of the current mess, a year or two longer to prepare for leaving might mildly strengthen our hand (which is one reason we shouldn’t assume the EU will automatically agree to it). But no deal with our main allies and trading partners will remain significantly unattractive and hard to sustain. So we will need a deal and the sort of deal we will end up with won’t change much.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/getting-rid-of-theresa-may-solves-nothing-7q70kfc0>

Price of Brexit delay could be referendum or election, says Barnier

Michel Barnier has suggested that the price of a long Brexit delay in the event of Theresa May’s deal being defeated again would be a soft Brexit or a “new event” such as a second referendum or general election. Speaking two days before Thursday’s crunch leaders’ summit, the EU’s chief negotiator said the bloc’s heads of state and government would want to be convinced of the usefulness of extra time, given the costs involved. The EU is seeking a detailed road map from the prime minister on how parliament will decide on one of those options should her deal be rejected again next week, and is pushing for a commitment by May that a decision would be made by MPs by mid-April.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/19/eu-ministers-baffled-frustrated-brexit-chaos-bercow>

Brexit: With ten days to go, what is going to happen?

a) Further votes on May’s deal (in spite of Bercow’s ruling) b) A major renegotiation (but the EU have ruled this out) c) Another referendum (but May has ruled this out) d) A general election (May doesn’t have the power, but it could happen with the support of more than two-thirds of MPs) e) Labour could table another no confidence vote f) Another option is no Brexit. g) The European Court of Justice ruled that the UK could unilaterally revoke Article 50 and abandon Brexit without the need to consult all 27 member states. Would this mean no Brexit ever or another referendum – it’s unclear.

<http://www.cityam.com/274922/brexit-ten-days-go-going-happen->

@Peston Huge Tory revolt under way to stop @theresa_may asking EU for Brexit delay of nine months or more

Huge Tory revolt under way to stop @theresa_may asking EU for Brexit delay of nine months or more. She has been requested to address the 1922 committee of Conservative MPs at 5pm tomorrow, where she will be told in no uncertain terms that delay must not be longer than...

<https://twitter.com/Peston/status/1108150958079569920>

The EU should be ready to grant Britain a long Brexit delay

Blame for the current political chaos lies not with Mr Bercow but with Mrs May, and her dogged insistence on treating Brexit as Conservative party property. The Speaker's ruling rightly prevented the prime minister from putting a motion again before parliament that still has insufficient votes to pass. If Mrs May succeeds in mustering a majority in favour of her deal, that same majority can vote to set aside his judgment. Mr Bercow himself might allow another vote as early as next week if the prime minister secures a change to the planned exit date at an EU summit on Thursday and Friday.

<https://www.ft.com/content/dbb09376-4a3e-11e9-8b7f-d49067e0f50d>

'An extension will have consequences' says EU as Downing Street admits 'crisis' over Brexit

There will be "consequences" if Article 50 is prolonged, the EU has said as Theresa May prepares to ask for an extension. The comments from the European Union come just hours after Downing Street admitted the UK is "in crisis" over Brexit. The EU's chief negotiator, Michel Barnier also said that any extension to Britain's membership had to be "useful" and warned it would bring "uncertainty". Commenting on the length of any potential extension, Mr Barnier said a longer delay would only be granted if it is "linked to something new, a new event, a new political process". ITV News Political Editor Robert Peston assessed that Mr Barnier's comments imply a general election or referendum would be required in the UK before the EU commits to a longer extension.

<https://www.itv.com/news/2019-03-19/downing-street-admits-britain-in-crisis-over-brexit-deal/>

@ITVNews Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn comments on the most recent Brexit developments and says if the government doesn't 'get a majority for its way on Monday' then it is 'surely time for a general election'

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<https://twitter.com/itvnews/status/1108079333292294145>

Brexit: Angela Merkel vows to fight for orderly process

German Chancellor Angela Merkel has said she will fight for an "orderly Brexit" until "the very last hour". Mrs Merkel said that current events were in a "state of flux", adding that European Union leaders would try to react to whatever the UK proposed. The UK is due to leave the EU in 10 days' time, with or without a deal. Prime Minister Theresa May is writing to European Council President Donald Tusk to ask for an extension. She will meet EU leaders later this week. Mrs May's proposed Brexit deal has already been rejected twice by MPs at Westminster.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-47629229>

'Only majority in Parliament is for soft Brexit'

Under the current law, the UK will leave the European Union with or without a deal on 29 March. The New Statesman's Grace Blakeley tells Politics Live "the only thing in Parliament that has a majority is a soft Brexit". Responding, Conservative Brexiteer Owen Paterson says if there is a lengthy extension to Article 50, he and other MPs will "continue to represent the interests of the 17.4 million" people who voted to leave the EU.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-politics-47630839/grace-blakeley-and-owen-paterson-on-brexit>

Brexit: Council adopts a series of contingency measures for a "no-deal" scenario

The Council today adopted a series of legislative acts as part of its contingency preparations for a "no-deal" Brexit scenario. The aim of these acts is to limit the most severe damage caused by a disorderly Brexit in specific sectors where it would create a major disruption for citizens and businesses. They come on top of other measures, such as on citizens' rights, adopted by member states as part of their preparations for a "no-deal" scenario. These measures are temporary in nature, limited in scope and adopted unilaterally by the EU. They are in no way intended to replicate the full benefits of EU membership or the terms of any transition period, as provided for in the withdrawal agreement. In some areas, they are conditional upon the UK's reciprocal action.

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/03/19/brexit-council-adopts-a-series-of-contingency-measures-for-a-no-deal-scenario/>

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>

Brexiters threaten to go on strike over Article 50 delay

Some 20 hardliners have vowed to stop participating in key government votes if Theresa May extends the Brexit process by a year, according to the Sun. The prime minister had hoped to win over enough support in the coming days to get her deal passed before March 29th. But rather than winning over extra Tory support the Brexiters have instead insisted they will withdraw support for the prime minister altogether. A "vote strike" from 20 members of Theresa May's government would put it on the blink of collapse.

<https://www.theneweuropean.co.uk/top-stories/brexiters-threaten-to-go-on-strike-over-article-50-delay-1-5945259>

Political Setbacks

Pity poor Barnier, a man in search of the UK's plan

The EU's chief negotiator would settle for a few hints of what the UK's plan for Brexit is, perhaps, expressed through interpretive dance

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/19/pity-poor-barnier-a-man-in-search-of-the-uks-plan>

Jeremy Corbyn 'ready to stand down' because he is 'tired and fed up'

Jeremy Corbyn is reportedly 'ready to step down' as leader of the Labour Party, it has been claimed. Sources said last night that Mr Corbyn is becoming 'tired and fed up' in the role, and is looking to leave as he nears his 70th birthday in May. Speaking to The Standard, one member of the shadow cabinet said that those closest to the leader are of the view he would like to hand over his socialist project.

<https://metro.co.uk/2019/03/19/jeremy-corbyn-ready-stand-tired-fed-8935504/>

Theresa May admits country is 'in crisis' with 10 days to avert no-deal Brexit

Theresa May has admitted the country is in crisis as she prepares to write to the EU explaining her next steps with Britain heading towards a no-deal Brexit in ten days. The prime minister's spokesman argued that a crisis had now "come to pass", as Ms May warned it would after the House of Commons rejected her Brexit deal last week. She will now write to European Council president Donald Tusk setting out her next steps, a letter likely to involve some kind of request for a delay to Brexit.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-news-latest-theresa-may-letter-eu-crisis-deal-vote-a8829836.html>

We're edging away from Brexit - but both sides are set to lose

We are edging away from the EU exit, but not towards resolution of the social and political tensions exposed by the referendum. This is a dangerous dynamic. The remain cause makes tactical progress, helped by the ineptitude of its enemies, but the argument for being part of a European project has barely advanced. If Britain wants to preserve a healthy relationship with its nearest allies, it is not enough that Brexit fails. More people must want it to fail.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/mar/19/brexit-tensions-referendum>

No deal has sensationally risen from the dead, and is now more likely than ever

The Speaker's extraordinary intervention has transformed the political landscape. Until yesterday, pro-Brexit Tory MPs effectively had a gun to their heads.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/03/19/no-deal-has-sensationally-risen-back-dead-now-likely-ever/>

Vote Leave fined over thousands of unsolicited texts

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has fined Brexit Campaign group Vote Leave £40,000 (\$53,000) for sending out nearly 200,000 unsolicited text messages. The text messages contained a link to the campaign website alongside information about its ambitions. They were sent in the run-up to the EU referendum in 2016. The ICO said the group had been unable to prove that everyone who received the message had consented to the contact. Vote Leave said it had gathered numbers from people who had contacted it. It said the numbers came from website enquiries, texts it had received in response to other promotions and from running its own football competition.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-47623413>

Additional sources: (The Independent)

Speaker John Bercow wrong to stop Brexit deal vote - leader comment

Bercow, who has revealed he had voted Remain, may believe he is defending the Commons' rules; others will suspect he hopes defeating May's deal will lead to a second referendum. If the latter is true, he is playing a dangerous game of roulette that could well result in the worst of all outcomes – a no-deal Brexit. A delay and a second referendum would indeed be the best way out of our current mess, but MPs need to come to this conclusion themselves, not be bounced into it by the Speaker.

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/speaker-john-bercow-wrong-to-stop-brexit-deal-vote-leader-comment-1-4891548>

Tory MPs vow to quit party if Boris Johnson becomes leader

Johnson is the current favourite of Brexit-backing Tory activists, who will pick the leader out of a final two candidates. However, the former London mayor would first have to clear the hurdle of convincing Conservative MPs to put him on the final list of two. One minister said she would leave the party if Johnson and his supporters, such as Jacob Rees-Mogg, took over the Conservatives. Another minister said he knew of five or six Conservatives who were openly saying they were so opposed to a Johnson premiership that they could not stay in the party run by him and a group of "Brexit ultras". Anna Soubry, the former Tory minister who quit to join the new Independent Group, said she believed "people will leave" if Johnson were to become prime minister.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/19/tory-mps-vow-to-quit-party-if-boris-johnson-becomes-leader>

Donald Trump Jr: 'Brexit and my father's election are one and the same'

U.S. President Donald Trump's eldest son said the "establishment" is trying to "silence the voices" of those who voted for Brexit and elected his father. Writing in the Telegraph, Trump Jr. said British Prime Minister Theresa May has "promised on more than 50 separate occasions that Britain would leave the EU on March 29 2019. She needs to honour that promise." "In a way, you could say that Brexit and my father's election are one and the same — the people of both the UK and the US voted to uproot the establishment for the sake of individual freedom and independence, only to see the establishment try to silence their voices and overturn their mandates. "What we're seeing now in

Washington, London and Brussels is the desperate, last-gasp attempt by those previously in power to cling on to what was once theirs in the face of an overwhelming mandate for change."

<https://www.politico.eu/article/donald-trump-jr-brexit-election-comparison/>

Additional sources: ([Daily Mirror](#))

Donald Trump Jr and John Bolton berate UK leaders over Brexit

Donald Trump Jr and the US national security adviser, John Bolton, spoke out over Brexit on Tuesday in what appeared to be a coordinated intervention by the White House into British domestic politics. Both the US president's son and Bolton attacked British political leadership after Theresa May said she would ask the EU for a delay to the UK's exit from the European Union; in line with parliament's wish.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/19/donald-trump-jr-may-should-have-taken-my-fathers-brexit-advice>

Brexit: Theresa May begs EU for more time but faces full-scale Cabinet mutiny

Theresa May tonight faced a full-scale Cabinet mutiny as furious ministers tore into her bid to beg the EU for more time to sort Brexit. There were fears Leave MPs could quit over her expected formal request to Brussels on Wednesday for an extension that could keep us in the EU until June at the earliest or even up to two years. One raging minister said after a "spiky" Cabinet meeting on the matter: "I couldn't back a long delay. She'd have to sack me." It came as Downing St finally admitted the Brexit shambles was a "crisis". And Mrs May slipped closer to being toppled as fed-up Leavers believe any lengthy delay would kill her fading authority.

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/brexit-theresa-faces-full-scale-14160434>

Brexit: Cabinet split on length of delay

One minister who was in the room suggested the prime minister gave the impression that she would ask the EU for an extension to the end of June, with the option of (you guessed it) a "backstop" option of a delay of up to two years. But another minister said they left the meeting with the view that there had, in fact, been no judgement really made at all. Another insider was boiling with frustration that, in their view, yet again, Theresa May was failing to express what she actually wants to do clearly, and allowing the Tory Party, and of course Parliament - and more importantly the rest of the country - twist in the wind while she grinds on.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-47633569>

Public cheated if Brexit not on time says Brexiteer Tory MP

The public would feel "cheated" if Brexit did not happen on time, a former Welsh Secretary has warned. Clwyd West Tory MP David Jones said it would require an "awful lot of political courage" from Prime Minister Theresa May to delay the process. Mr Jones, a Brexiteer, has twice voted against Theresa May's deal. Last week MPs voted to reject a no-deal Brexit, in a non-binding Commons vote. The UK is currently due to leave the EU on 29 March.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-politics-47624506>

Pro-Brexit activist denies harassing MP Anna Soubry

A pro-Brexit activist has pleaded not guilty to harassing MP Anna Soubry outside Parliament. James Goddard, 29, from Altrincham, Greater Manchester, is alleged to have called the MP a "Nazi" and a "traitor". He denied three charges before the case at Westminster Magistrates' Court was temporarily adjourned when people in the public gallery started shouting. Mr Goddard was remanded on bail until 19 July when he will face a two-day trial at the court in London. He was held by police following protests outside Parliament.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-47622282>

Trade Deals/Negotiations

Donald Trump sees 'huge opportunity' for trade deal with Brexit Britain

US President Donald Trump sees "huge opportunity" for a trade deal if the Brexit impasse is solved, according to his national security adviser, John Bolton told Sky News that America is "ready to go" on a trade deal with "a newly independent Britain." "Trade minister Liam Fox would be welcome here; any member of the government would be welcome here, we can do these deals quickly. We are ready to go. We want to partner with a newly independent Britain," he said. "The president has been clear he wants a resolution to this issue that allows the United States and Britain to come to trade deals again."

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/donald-trump-sees-huge-opportunity-for-trade-deal-with-brexit-britain-a4096131.html>

'We're ready for a US-UK deal': Trump adviser John Bolton says America wants to partner with Brexit Britain

Donald Trump's national security adviser John Bolton has told Sky News that America is "ready to go" with a US-UK trade deal. In a UK exclusive, the former US ambassador to the UN said: "We are ready to go, we are ready to go." "Trade minister Liam Fox would be welcome here; any member of the government would be welcome here, we can do these deals quickly. We are ready to go. We want to partner with a newly independent Britain."

<https://news.sky.com/story/were-ready-for-a-us-uk-deal-trump-adviser-john-bolton-says-america-wants-to-partner-with-brexit-britain-11670385>