

News from the Brexit Cliff Edge

5th Apr 2019

News Highlights

Welcome to the Brexit Cliff Edge

3% Growth Lost since 2016 says S&P

- [S&P Global Ratings said the UK economy would have been 3% larger by the end of 2018](#), if the country had not voted out in the June 2016 referendum. S&P estimates that the country has lost £6.6bn in economic activity every quarter since the vote

£1 trillion taken out of UK financial services to Europe

- [Channel 4's economics correspondent said she](#) had been told that upwards of £1 trillion has been taken out of the UK and transferred to Europe as part of the sector's preparations for a No Deal Brexit

Self-driving car market could go off the economic cliff edge

- [The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders said that Britain's leading role in the development](#) of self-driving cars - an industry potentially worth £62bn - would be in turmoil in the event of a No Deal Brexit

Farmers have a beef about a No Deal Brexit

- [The Ulster Farmers' union, the North's Livestock and Meat Commission and the Meat Exporters Association](#) all said that a No Deal Brexit threatens the North's £1.3bn beef and lamb industry

Dial back the rhetoric say the police

- [People with a platform, including activists, politicians and the press have](#) to tone down their language used to discuss Brexit to avoid inciting violence, according to the National Police Chiefs Council's new chairman, Martin Hewitt

Lorries face huge queues in a No Deal Brexit scenario say insiders

- [The government is drawing up plans to deal with a massive increase in the number of lorries](#) needing official paperwork to cross to mainland Europe in the wake of a No Deal Brexit

London town halls making plans to hold European elections

- [Letters will soon go out to EU citizens in the capital telling them they can take part in European elections](#) if they are held. If the government confirms that it intends to hold these elections, this will happen almost immediately after

Epilepsy and bipolar disorder medicine shortages possible

- [The NHS is unable to stockpile certain drugs in the event of a No Deal Brexit](#). Drugs to treat and manage conditions such as epilepsy and bipolar disorder drugs cannot be stockpiled and there would be shortages soon after the start of a No Deal Brexit, according to documents seen by BBC

The House of Commons springs a leak

- [Angela Merkel hailed those MPs who voted to force the PM into asking the EU](#) for another Brexit delay, saying they have reduced the risk of a No Deal brexit.
- [Theresa May and Jeremy Corbyn are considering the idea](#) of forcing a future PM to secure the consent of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland before they can alter the UK's future relationship with the EU. This would apply were a customs union with the EU to be agreed
- [The Guardian reported that Theresa May](#) is expected to write to Jeremy Corbyn to set out the government's offer on Brexit. The letter is supposed to include a proposal for MPs to vote on a second referendum
- [The House of Lords spent the day debating the Cooper-Letwin Bill](#) which would delay Article 50 and prevent the UK leaving with no deal. Brexiteers attempted to filibuster the deal through a mix of speeches and amendments. The next stage looks to conclude on Monday
- [Senior cross party MPs who oppose Theresa May's Brexit](#) deal have met to discuss how to stop May's team from stitching up crucial votes which will decide how the UK is going to leave the EU
- [The EU Council President, Donald Tusk, is considering proposing](#) a 12 month 'flexible' Article 50 extension for the UK, but it needs to be agreed by EU leaders at the emergency summit next week
- [A 12 month extension to Article 50 was also mentioned by](#) the Attorney General, Geoffrey Cox, in an Independent story
- [The Labour Party held Newport West in a by-election](#), due to the death of the incumbent Paul Flynn, on a 37% voter turnout
- [The Guardian reported that leaked emails](#) it had seen confirmed a coordinated plan of infiltration by former UKippers into Dominic Grieve's constituency for the sole purpose of deselecting him because of his views on Brexit
- [The House of Commons 'sprung a leak' as water poured](#) into the press gallery, filling light fittings and flooding a cafe on the floor above.
- [The Foreign Office's UK Ambassador to France, Ed Llewellyn, was interviewed by France 24](#) and he is quoted as saying that the UK government has spent £4bn on No Deal Brexit planning

Economic Impact

Brexit - UK loses £6.6 billion a quarter since referendum, S&P says

The United Kingdom has lost £6.6 billion in economic activity every quarter since it voted to leave the European Union, according to S&P Global Ratings, the latest company to estimate the damage from Brexit. In a report published on Thursday, the ratings agency's senior economist, Boris Glass, said the world's fifth-biggest economy would have been about 3 percent larger by the end of 2018 if the country had not voted in a June 2016 referendum to leave the EU. Quarterly growth rates would have averaged about 0.7 percent, rather than 0.43 percent, he said.

https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-s-p/brexit-uk-loses-66-billion-a-quarter-since-referendum-sp-says-idUKKCN1RG0QW?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=twitter&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+google-news-brexit-rss-feed+%28Google+News+Brexit+UK+RSS+Feed%29

Additional sources: ([Metro](#))

Brexit is already undermining the economy—how much worse could it get?

We will be on our own in an increasingly acrimonious world. where being part of a big bloc offers benefits we cannot quantify. Moreover, the act of detaching from the EU was, as we can now see, misunderstood or misrepresented. We should worry for the economic risks, but in the fullness of time, these will pass (after they have made us relatively worse off.) What we cannot allow for is the

harm that might be done to our security, and democratic ideals and values—which we will have to work hard to sustain.

https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/WP_SITEURL/blogs/george-magnus/brexit-is-already-undermining-the-economy-how-much-worse-could-it-get%e2%80%a8

@Channel4News "Upwards of £1 trillion" is being taken out of the UK and transferred to Europe, according to estimates from the UK banking industry

"Upwards of £1 trillion" is being taken out of the UK and transferred to Europe, according to estimates from the UK banking industry. Our Economics Correspondent @HeliaEbrahimi explains how no-deal Brexit preparations are impacting the UK economy.

<https://twitter.com/Channel4News/status/1113755404167729152>

Fearing a No-Deal Brexit, British Companies Hoard Like It's Wartime

For 46 years, British manufacturers have built their supply chains and export markets around free trade with Europe. On April 12, that could come to an end, rupturing one of the world's most advanced, cross-border assembly lines. To get ready, British companies are hoarding at rates rarely seen outside of wartime.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/british-companies-fearing-no-deal-brexit-hoard-like-its-wartime-11554389316>

The value of the customs union to the UK is overrated

Support for a customs union is based on the belief that it makes sense for the UK to have frictionless trade with its biggest trading partner: no tariffs, no quotas, no customs posts, no border checks, unimpeded supply chains. Outside of the customs union, UK firms would have more forms to fill in, more red tape to disentangle. They would be disadvantaged in the way that American, Chinese and Japanese exporters to the EU currently are. No question, the customs union certainly makes it easier for multinational companies to ship parts and semi-finished goods backwards and forwards across the Channel. But the real test of the worth of the current system is whether it has done anything to improve Britain's trade performance.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/04/customs-union-soft-brexit-trade-goods>

Self-driving cars could provide £62bn boost to UK economy by 2030

Britain's leading position in developing self-driving cars could produce a £62bn economic boost by 2030, the car industry claimed – but warned that such potential could be jeopardised by a no-deal Brexit. A report published by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders said the UK has significant advantages over other countries in pushing connected and autonomous vehicles, including forward-looking legislation allowing autonomous cars to be insured and driven on a greater proportion of roads than elsewhere. Mike Hawes, the chief executive of the SMMT, said more than £500m had been invested in research and development by industry and government, and another £740m in communications infrastructure to enable autonomous cars to work.

<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2019/apr/04/self-driving-cars-could-provide-62bn-boost-to-uk-economy-by-2030-brexit>

Administrative Fall Out

Civil servants handling no-deal plans offered mental health support

Civil servants have been offered mental health support to help ease the stress of preparing for a no-deal Brexit, it has emerged.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/04/civil-servants-no-deal-brexit-mental-health-support-defra>

Additional sources: (Yahoo!)

'All I hear is anger and frustration': how Brexit is affecting our mental health

Feeling low and anxious? Suffering from disrupted sleep? Could Brexit be damaging your mental health? A Britain Thinks poll of more than 2,000 people, the results of which were released this

week, found that 83% of those surveyed were sick of hearing about Brexit, while 64% thought it was damaging their mental health. The poll found that the dominant words people use in relation to Brexit have changed: in 2017, it was “confusing” or “uncertain”; now, it is “broken” and “chaos”. No politician is singled out, because we’re blaming all of them equally; except for David Cameron, who has a special, individuated space in the nation’s psyche as the man who unleashed this hell. Wishing for the politics of a lost age is the last thing people do when they have given up: it isn’t an acceptance of the status quo, but rather frustration at not being able to put these hideous worms back in their can.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/04/anger-and-frustration-how-brexit-is-affecting-our-mental-health>

No-deal Brexit threatens North’s £1.3bn beef and lamb industry, organisations warn

Farmer and meat industry representatives in Northern Ireland have warned that a no-deal Brexit is the “absolute worst possible outcome” for Northern Ireland’s £1.3 billion beef and lamb industry. As negotiations on how the United Kingdom exits the European Union appear to be reaching a climax the Ulster Farmers’ Union, the North’s Livestock and Meat Commission, and Meat Exporters’ Association have demanded that “every effort” is made to avoid Britain crashing out of the EU. “A no-deal will jeopardise our ability to export. It will undermine our domestic market. It is crucial decision-makers fully understand the devastating economic and social impact it will have on Northern Ireland, ” the three organisations said on Thursday. “This is not project fear. This is project fact,” they added.

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/no-deal-brexit-threatens-north-s-1-3bn-beef-and-lamb-industry-or-ganisations-warn-1.3849893>

Brexit: Police Chief Says MPs, Activists And The Press Have A Responsibility Not To Inflammate 'Febrile' Atmosphere

People with a platform, including activists, politicians and the press, should be careful about the language used to discuss Brexit in order to avoid inciting bad behaviour, one of the country’s most senior police officers has warned. Police chiefs said they had been planning for the worst case scenario and felt confident they were well able to react to any disorder caused by the UK leaving the EU, no matter what option the government chooses. The contingency planning has involved preparations for protests, riots, disruption at the UK’s ports and maintaining the supply chains of food, fuel and medicine. Pointing out that there is an “incredibly febrile atmosphere” as a result of Brexit, the National Police Chiefs Council’s new chairman, Martin Hewitt, said prominent individuals who have a platform have a responsibility in the way they conduct themselves.

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/police-chief-says-mps-activists-and-the-press-have-a-responsibility-not-to-inflame-febrile-atmosphere_uk_5ca4cf4de4b094d3f5c51488

Leaked file shows stark contrasts for Britons in EU after no-deal Brexit

A leaked EU document lays bare for the first time the differences in how British nationals will be treated by the bloc’s member states after a no-deal Brexit, with two countries emphasising that requests to stay could be rejected on public order and security grounds. The European commission paper presents a hotchpotch of attitudes among the EU27, Iceland, Norway, Lichtenstein and Switzerland, to the Britons living in their territory should the UK leave without a negotiated deal. Brussels has recommended in the event of a no-deal Brexit, UK nationals should not be considered to be staying illegally straight away but that contingency measures should be temporary with national migration policies returning “back to normal as soon as possible”.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/04/leaked-file-shows-stark-contrasts-for-britons-in-eu-after-no-deal-brexit>

Serbia advises citizens to avoid travelling to UK due to ‘major political chaos’

Serbia’s foreign minister has suggested that citizens should not travel to the UK because of the

danger posed by “major political chaos”, according to local media reports. Ivica Dacic’s remarks, which he described as “cynical”, were made in response to cautionary travel advice about travelling in northern Kosovo, issued by the British embassy in Pristina.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/serbia-kosovo-uk-ivica-dacic-embassy-travel-a8854436.html>

Lorries face huge queues in a no-deal Brexit, say industry insiders

The government is drawing up plans for dealing with a massive increase in the number of lorries needing official paperwork in the wake of a potential no-deal Brexit. Industry insiders have told Sky News they fear that document checks could lead to huge queues on the motorways leading to Channel ports in Kent - undermining work to speed lorries through from Dover to Calais. At the moment, only a small fraction of hauliers need a permit - known as a transit document - to take goods between the UK and mainland Europe. However, if the UK was to leave the EU without a deal, that figure could go up 10 times - perhaps more, with thousands of drivers needing to obtain permits.

<https://news.sky.com/story/lorries-face-huge-queues-in-a-no-deal-brexit-industry-11684363>

London town halls make plans to let EU citizens take part in European elections

London town halls are preparing to write to hundreds of thousands of EU citizens in the capital to tell them they can take part in European elections if they are held. They will send out the letters if the Government decides to press ahead with the European polls in order to get a long Brexit extension rather than crash out without a deal. Lewisham council is the lead town hall in London for the European elections and a spokesman said: “The Regional Returning Officer, Janet Senior, can confirm that all London authorities are making appropriate preparations and contingency plans to deliver these elections, should the decision be made that the UK will be taking part.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/brexit-news-latest-london-town-halls-make-plans-to-let-eu-citizens-take-part-in-a-european-elections-a4109291.html>

Brexit: Some drugs 'cannot be stockpiled' for no-deal

The health service has been unable to stockpile certain drugs in case of a no-deal Brexit, potentially putting patients at risk, documents show. Confidential NHS England files - seen by BBC Newsnight - suggest supply chain issues mean some drugs used to treat conditions like epilepsy and bipolar disorder “cannot be stockpiled”. Potential shortages would have “a significant impact”, documents say. The Department of Health said supplies “should be uninterrupted”.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p075g4j7>

Political Shenanigans

Britain needs a Brexit compromise. Forging one could be the making of Corbyn’s Labour

There is also a case for Corbyn to be bold, a case for him not to miss this opportunity by failing to grasp the national importance of the moment, the political weakness of the prime minister and the opportunities for Labour that her offer opens up. The process seems likely to fail. Yet the situation cries out for compromise. Compromise is an ineradicable element of politics. Knowing how, when and why to offer or accept a compromise is a vital art of government. It would be even more vital under a fairer voting system. Yet the key protagonists at this hour are almost uniquely unsuited to the task. Can they work together? Stranger things have happened in politics. But not many.

https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/03/britain-brexit-compromise-making-corbyns-labour?CMP=share_btn_tw

Theresa May's Brexit ministers have discussed the possibility of second referendum with Labour

Theresa May's ministers have discussed the possibility of giving MPs a vote on a second referendum during talks aimed at agreeing a Brexit deal with Jeremy Corbyn, it has emerged. A team of four

ministers led by David Lidington, the Cabinet Office minister, held four and a half hours of talks with their Labour counterparts on Thursday during which the idea of offering a second referendum was discussed as an option. Labour's Keir Starmer is believed to have said that a second referendum had to be one of the options put to MPs in a series of so-called indicative votes which will take place if a deal cannot be agreed

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/04/04/theresa-mays-brexite-ministers-have-discussed-possibility-second/>

Angela Merkel hails MPs who voted to force the PM into asking for another Brexit delay as she meets with Irish Taoiseach Leo Varadkar in Dublin

Angela Merkel yesterday hailed MPs who voted to force the PM into asking for another Brexit delay, saying they have reduced the risk of no deal. The German Chancellor met Irish Taoiseach Leo Varadkar in Dublin - and praised Remainers who backed the Cooper-Letwin amendment as they vowed to fight until the "last hour" to stop a crash out. She said: "We're following this with great interest and we hope this will open up possibilities of an orderly Brexit. "It's an important message there's a vast majority in the Commons that wants to avoid a disorderly Brexit without a deal, and this is my starting point."

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/brexit/8796045/angela-merkel-brexit-delay-leo-varadkar/>

'Plan with a chance' could come out of cross-party Brexit talks

Will it at this last moment provide a stable platform not only for a one-off vote on the principle of this Brexit model but also the complex, controversial, attendant and necessary legislation? Well maybe - if Theresa May can ignore the weeks ahead of outrage from her own Brexiter MPs, who may quit her Government and even her party in disgust. Oh and Labour and Jeremy Corbyn could face a similar risk of binary fission, if the offer of a confirmatory referendum looks conditional and therefore to all intents and purposes fictional.

<https://www.itv.com/news/2019-04-04/plan-with-a-chance-could-come-out-of-cross-party-brexit-talks/>

A people's vote is not a Brexit option, it is a solution

Ms Nandy's argument positions Leavers as the authentic political voice — particularly of the left — forgetting that the result in 2016 was extremely close and that Brexit has arguably seen the collapse of party political ideology. Her analysis, in fact, makes the perfect case for a people's vote: Brexit continues to divide the country and both the government and, now, parliament has failed to deliver compromise or consensus. Putting the decision to the people is the only way to break this gridlock, reach a genuine evidence-based consensus, and move on with the business of healing the country.

https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/our-politics-needs-to-move-beyond-binaries-now-more-than-ever-55ngsgwfl?mc_cid=0c72d1d962&mc_eid=7b5a45611c

Parliament is having a 'collective breakdown' as Brexit stress hits exhausted MPs

Parliament is undergoing "a collective breakdown" as the stress of the Brexit crisis tips dozens of exhausted MPs over the edge, a senior MP has warned. Education Committee chair and former Tory minister Rob Halfon issued the alarm over the intense personal pressure that the deadlock and repeated high stakes voting is having on all MPs.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/8794839/brexit-stress-hits-parliament-exhausted-mps/>

Newport West by-election won by Labour's Ruth Jones with 37% turnout

Labour held on to Newport West in a by-election battle which saw turnout slump. The party's Ruth Jones took 9,308 votes, giving her a majority of 1,951 over the Tories, with Ukip in third place. The contest was triggered by the death of veteran MP Paul Flynn and came against the backdrop of Brexit battles at Westminster. The city has long been a Labour stronghold and voted Leave by a margin of 56% to 44% in the 2016 in-out referendum.

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/breaking-newport-west-election-won-14238445>

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

Jeremy Corbyn's Brexit problem

May's Brexit offer forces the Labour leader to choose whether his party will really help deliver Brexit. Make no mistake: underneath the gloved hand of friendship extended to its leader Jeremy Corbyn by British Prime Minister Theresa May on Tuesday was a clenched fist primed to punch the opposition party right where it hurts. The calculation is simple. Labour supporters are overwhelmingly opposed to Brexit, but the constituencies it needs to take power are overwhelmingly in favor. The leadership does not believe it can afford to be either purely anti-Brexit or purely pro. May's offer to the Labour leader to help shape Brexit is designed to finally push Corbyn from his high-wire tightrope walk

<https://www.politico.eu/article/jeremy-corbyn-brexit-theresa-may/>

Theresa May And Jeremy Corbyn Could Give Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland A Veto On Future Changes To A Brexit Deal

Theresa May and Jeremy Corbyn are looking at the idea of forcing a future prime minister to secure the consent of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland before they can alter the UK's future relationship with the EU. BuzzFeed News has learned that one option under consideration ahead of Thursday's talks between the government and the Labour Party is to require any repeal of a permanent customs union to be agreed by the devolved assemblies in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, according to two Whitehall sources.

<https://www.buzzfeed.com/alexwickham/may-corbyn-scotland-wales-northern-ireland?ref=hpsplash>

Committee seeks reassurances from Home Secretary about EU Settlement Scheme

Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws, Chair of the Sub-Committee, said "We are reassured on some aspects of the EU Settlement Scheme, but more needs to be done to ensure that it is fit for purpose and does not lead to problems in future. We are pressing the Home Secretary for further information about our key concerns, and seeking to make constructive proposals for improvements. In particular, we remain very concerned about the Government's resistance to providing physical proof of status, and we are asking why the centralised system cannot work in tandem with physical proof." The EU Justice Sub-Committee has asked for a response within ten days.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/lords-select/eu-justice-subcommittee/news-parliament-2017/eu-settlement-scheme-concerns-ongoing/>

No-deal Brexit pressure group paid DUP's Lee Reynolds for consultancy work

The DUP's director of policy carried out paid consultancy work for a pressure group campaigning for a no-deal Brexit. Belfast councillor Lee Reynolds received almost £1,000 for just over a week of work between November and January on behalf of Brexit Express. The group, founded by multi-millionaire financier Jeremy Hosking, is actively pushing for the UK to leave the European Union without a deal. It launched a Brexit-backing billboard advertising campaign in February with slogans saying "no deal is ideal" and it is "the only way to end the humiliation". Brexit Express, which offered funding to Leave-supporting Tories in 2017's election, is now seeking to register as a new political party in Britain.

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/northernirelandnews/2019/04/04/news/no-deal-brexit-pressure-group-paid-dup-policy-chief-for-consultancy-work-1590159/>

Theresa May to make written Brexit offer to Jeremy Corbyn

Theresa May is expected to write to Jeremy Corbyn to set out the government's offer on Brexit, with negotiations due to resume in Downing Street on Friday. Letter to include proposal to offer MPs vote on second referendum, source suggests

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/04/theresa-may-to-make-written-brexit-offer-to-jeremy-corbyn>

Brexit: senior MPs discuss tactics to avert No 10 'stitch-up'

Senior MPs who oppose Theresa May's Brexit deal have met to discuss how to stop No 10 "stitching up" crucial votes that will decide how the UK leaves the European Union. The cross-party group

includes Sir Oliver Letwin, Nick Boles, Yvette Cooper and Hilary Benn, who have already successfully forced legislation to prevent a no-deal Brexit through the House of Commons. They are now concerned that No 10 could present a series of Brexit alternatives for parliament to vote on – such as May’s deal, Labour’s proposals, or a customs union – without consulting MPs properly about what options should be on the table. There is growing suspicion that the government is still set on trying to get the prime minister’s deal through parliament if talks with the Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn, fail.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/04/brexit-senior-mps-discuss-tactics-to-avert-no-10-stitch-up>

Lords prepare to sit 'until 6am' as Tory Peers try to block Article 50 extension

The House of Lords braced to sit through the night Brexiteer Peers tried to block a Bill which would delay Article 50 and prevent the UK leaving with no deal. Yesterday MPs voted for the Bill which forces Theresa May to seek an extension to negotiations with EU by just one vote, 313 votes to 312.

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/lords-prepare-sit-until-6am-14237190>

Barclay: no guarantee UK won't vote in EU elections

Responding to a question from Labour's Emma Lewell-Buck, Brexit Secretary Stephen Barclay says "there is no guarantee the UK would not participate in European parliamentary elections". He said it should be clear to MPs that "asking the public to hold elections for an organisation we are meant to have left would damage trust in politics".

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-politics-47814830/brexit-secretary-stephen-barclay-uk-could-participate-in-eu-elections>

Brexit: EU's Donald Tusk 'suggests 12-month flexible delay'

European Council President Donald Tusk is proposing to offer the UK a 12-month "flexible" extension to its Brexit date, according to a senior EU source. His plan would allow the UK to leave sooner if Parliament ratifies a deal, but it would need to be agreed by EU leaders at a summit next week. The UK's Conservatives and Labour Party are set to continue Brexit talks later. Attorney General Geoffrey Cox has told the BBC that if they fail, the delay is "likely to be a long one". The UK is due to leave the EU on 12 April and, as yet, no withdrawal deal has been approved by MPs. Downing Street said "technical" talks between Labour and the Conservatives on Thursday had been "productive" and would continue on Friday.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-47821646>

Brexit Is Georgia's Chance to Push for EU Membership, President Says

Georgia must seize the opportunity presented by the U.K.'s departure from the European Union to push its case for integration leading to membership of the bloc, according to the country's new president. "We are looking at this situation with the determination to get the most out of it," Salome Zourabichvili said in an interview in the capital, Tbilisi. "There is a logic that the country that has been steadily moving toward and wanting Europe can't be treated less than the country that's steadily moving away from Europe."

https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-04-05/brexit-is-georgia-s-chance-to-open-eu-entry-door-president-says?utm_source=twitter&utm_content=brexit&utm_medium=social&cmpid%3D=socialflow-facebook-brexit&utm_campaign=socialflow-organic

British trade unions are finally backing a new Brexit referendum - now it's up to Jeremy Corbyn to deliver it

So my fight for a people’s vote is motivated very simply, by the untold damage that Brexit will do to my already devastated community. I can only describe my feelings, on hearing the announcement from Unison – my trade union – that we backed a public vote on Brexit, as absolute joy.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/brexit-jeremy-corbyn-referendum-final-say-vote-unions-newcastle-a8854496.html>

Political Setbacks

Why the House of Commons is falling apart

Those 12 indicative votes were, in fact, useful, because they showed the extent to which the main division in the Commons over Brexit remains that of party. In all but one of those votes, the majority of Labour MPs faced the majority of Conservative MPs. The things Tory MPs want, Labour MPs don't; the things Labour wants, the Conservatives will not abide. Indeed, on many recent votes, the numbers of MPs breaking from their party is not that significant. The root cause of the impasse is not the lack of discipline, but that there is no majority to cushion against even the smallest of rebellions.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/comment/comment/why-the-house-of-commons-is-falling-apart-a4109446.html>

Treacherous Theresa May has surrendered our freedom... and her honour

Lips will curl at her very name for decades to come. It will be spat to the floor in balls of green-gob spittle, hissed, sworn at with the sort of language we must not print in a popular newspaper. NO DEAL COULD HAVE BEEN BRILLIANT She will be called a traitor, with plenty of adjectives attached. And she will deserve it. This is a terrible thing to say about any person, let alone a church-going diabetic who has been our Prime Minister for two years. I take no pleasure in levelling the charge of treachery at a Tory leader who secured 42 per cent of the vote in the 2017 General Election. We all want our Prime Ministers to be honourable and to improve the lot of our land. But after her surrender this week to Brussels and to Jeremy Corbyn, May's name will rank alongside those of the worst eels in Western history.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/8785350/theresa-may-surrendered-our-freedom/>

The Brexiters' rearguard defence against Article 50 extension has fallen apart

This defeat was not just lost on the floor of the Commons. It was the result of years of party mismanagement, of a tin-eared prime minister refusing to listen to moderate voices in her government or her party benches, leading key figures to drop out, one by one, over the course of this whole sorry, dreary saga. It was made up of several individual stories of political disenchantment. If any one of them had not happened, yesterday's vote would have failed. It is like a morality tale of the long-term consequences of short-sighted political calculations.

<https://politics.co.uk/blogs/2019/04/04/the-brexiters-rearguard-defence-against-article-50-extension>

Leaked emails show infiltration fears before attempt to oust Grieve

Concerns were raised about the "infiltration" of Dominic Grieve's local Conservative association by 200 new members in the months leading up to his attempted ousting, leaked party emails reveal. The Guardian has learned that a Ukip supporter was among the flurry of "suspicious" newcomers who tried to join the association in the year before the former attorney general – who has been a standard-bearer for the remain camp in the Brexit debate – lost a confidence vote, leaving him facing deselection. In a single small town in the constituency, seven people, including a man who had been canvassed as a Ukip voter, tried to join the party in the space of 48 hours, leading to infiltration concerns. One email noted it could not be a "fluke".

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/04/leaked-emails-show-infiltration-fears-before-dominic-grieve-tory-confidence-vote>

House of Commons suspended after water pours through ceiling

A Brexit metaphor? Water pours into House of Commons – Leak soaks section of press gallery, fills light fittings and floods a cafe on the floor above

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/04/house-of-commons-suspended-water-pours-through-ceiling>

House of Commons sitting ends after parliament's roof leaks

A leaking roof has forced House of Commons proceedings ... Labour's Justin Madders wrote: "In the Commons chamber and can hear rain dripping in through the roof. Parliament really is broken."

<https://news.sky.com/story/house-of-commons-sitting-suspended-as-parliaments-roof-leaks-11684169>

Tory peer warns of 'insurrectionary forces' if referendum result not accepted

A pro-Brexit Conservative peer has warned that "undesirable insurrectionary forces" will be unleashed if parliament does not accept the result of the 2016 EU referendum.

<https://news.sky.com/story/tory-peer-warns-of-insurrectionary-forces-if-referendum-result-not-accepted-11684351>

Blowing the whistle on Brexit

A year after revealing that the official leave campaign broke electoral law, whistleblower Shahmir Sanni and Guardian and Observer journalist Carole Cadwalladr assess the impact of the story.

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/audio/2019/apr/04/blowing-the-whistle-on-brexit>

Brexit has become so toxic, even the gentle House of Lords is raging

In the House of Lords, peers bickered over a bill to delay Brexit with far more passion than would normally occur. For many it is a throwback to earlier days when they sat in the 'Other Place'

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/04/04/brexit-has-become-toxic-even-gentle-house-lords-raging/>

Parliament must accept Leave vote or face 'understandable insurrectionary forces', says Brexiteer Lawson

Brexiteer Lord Lawson has raised the sinister possibility of "understandable insurrectionary forces" if parliament attempts to delay Brexit. He warned of a deepening "rift" between politicians and the public and that "an ugly situation" was developing. He made his comments in a debate in the House of Lords, where pro-Brexit peers are attempting to resist a Bill which would force the prime minister to ask the EU for an extension to the Article 50 process beyond 12 April and would give parliament the power to decide the length of this delay.

<https://www.theneweuropean.co.uk/top-stories/lord-lawson-must-accept-leave-vote-no-second-referendum-1-5978997>

Mike Russell accused of 'game playing' over second Brexit referendum

The constitutional relations secretary, appearing before MSPs yesterday, suggested the "best outcome" to the Brexit deadlock would be a People's Vote. However, moments after the comment, he said that the SNP government could well reject the outcome if the UK-wide result differed from the one in Scotland. Mr Russell said: "If I were able to wave a magic wand and get what I want - apart from no Brexit, which has been a complete distraction and disaster for the last two and half years of massively damaging proportions - then it would have to be a very long delay, a referendum, the European elections taking place and perhaps some calmness coming into this to look at the damage that would be done by proceeding along the present lines."

<https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/politics/westminster/1715614/mike-russell-accused-of-game-playing-over-second-brexit-referendum/>

Jeremy Corbyn ally Shami Chakrabarti: Second referendum or General Election 'very likely'

A second referendum or a General Election appears "very likely", one of Jeremy Corbyn's closest allies said today as the Labour leader opened a second day of talks with Theresa May aimed at breaking the Brexit deadlock. Shadow Attorney General Baroness Shami Chakrabarti suggested that another public vote would not be justified if Labour and the Government could agree a deal on quitting the European Union. However, expectations are low that Mr Corbyn and Mrs May can unite behind a joint position and he is facing growing pressure to push for a so-called "People's Vote".

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/jeremy-corbyn-ally-shami-chakrabarti-second-referendum-or-general-election-very-likely-a4109141.html>

Goodbye EU, and goodbye the United Kingdom

The invented identity of 'Britishness' is unravelling as English nationalism takes hold

<https://www.ft.com/content/e4b113f0-5552-11e9-91f9-b6515a54c5b1>

Andrew Wilson: Brexiteer jobs are doing lasting damage to UK

I feared the worst but thankfully it was only thunder. It was like the heavens were sending a message to the governing classes a few hundred yards away in Westminster. The end of days. I am fearful though because the descent of Britain's society and standing in the world has progressed from risible and pathetic to palpably dangerous. The stakes are soaring.

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/17548846.andrew-wilson-brexiteer-jobs-are-doing-lasting-damage-to-uk/>

How a Brexit that MPs might support could destroy the Tory party

The magnitude of the gulf between the cabinet and perhaps a majority of Tory MPs over how to deliver Brexit was on display like an oozing wound on my show last night. The Chancellor was his normal phlegmatic, unsugaring self when revealing the government is reconciled to a long Brexit delay till at least the end of the year - and that the best the prime minister can hope for from the emergency EU council on Wednesday is that the EU's 27 leaders would allow her a break clause, so that if a Brexit deal is fully approved on all sides earlier, the UK could leave the EU at that earlier juncture. But even so, he conceded there is now no escape from preparing to participate in European parliamentary elections, at considerable financial and emotional cost to the UK.

<https://www.itv.com/news/2019-04-04/how-a-brexiteer-jobs-are-doing-lasting-damage-to-uk/>

House Of Commons Springs A Leak, Forcing It To Close For The Day

It was supposed to be a rare quiet afternoon for the House of Commons, a break from the chaos of Brexit. But as members of the U.K. Parliament discussed other issues, their chamber began to take on water, through a large leak in the ceiling. And with rainwater pouring in, business was canceled for the rest of Thursday. Members of Parliament gamely tried to speak over the sound of water echoing as it splashed into the gallery above them. But as they spoke, they often sneaked glances toward the ceiling, keeping an eye on the deluge while they discussed tax enforcement policies.

<https://www.npr.org/2019/04/04/709907657/house-of-commons-springs-a-leak-forcing-it-to-close-for-the-day>

Brexit to be delayed until next year after parties fail to break deadlock, attorney general warns

Brexit is on course to be delayed until next year, the attorney general has warned, as cross-party talks to end the crisis remained deadlocked. Geoffrey Cox risked blowing apart the fragile cabinet truce over an Article 50 extension by suggesting it would be more than "just a few weeks or months" - unless Theresa May and Jeremy Corbyn strike a deal. The prime minister is still clinging to the hope of carrying out EU withdrawal by 22 May, but Mr Cox acknowledged that hope was fading before a crunch summit of EU leaders next Wednesday. "The problem then would be that we would be in an extension. It's likely to be a long one, by which I mean longer than just a few weeks or months," he said. Asked, by the BBC's Nick Robinson for his Political Thinking podcast, if he meant "more than a year" - as some EU leaders have suggested - Mr Cox said the EU held all the cards.

https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-delay-2020-article-50-extension-theresa-may-jeremy-corbyn-a8855651.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=twitter&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+google-news-brexit-rss-feed+%28Google+News+Brexit+UK+RSS+Feed%29

I'm in no-deal planning ops. Here's a briefing from our Whitehall bunker

Acres of analysis will be written about what mistakes were made - the Institute for Government has already made a start. My point here is simply that while future inquiries will probably be devastating, they will probably also find evidence of positive significant change in civil service culture. Mark Sedwill and civil service chief executive John Manzoni hinted as much when they reminded every civil servant a few days ago that all sides of the Brexit debate have shown admiration for the civil service. If we collectively manage to avoid a no-deal Brexit - if we avoid Brexit altogether - we

should still weep for what those no-deal billions could have been spent on. But if those costs end up also contributing to a complete re-imagining of what public service is for and how it is conducted, I can live with that. Even if it's a long way from being a bargain.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/04/no-deal-planning-operation-yellowhammer-brexit>

Labour's Lords deputy accuses Tories of filibuster over no-deal Brexit bill

Opposition peers defeated several Tory backbench bids to block the progress of the bill but lengthy speeches and procedural devices were likely to significantly slow down proceedings. Lady Hayter, the Labour peer steering the bill to extend article 50 through the Lords after its narrow victory in the Commons late on Wednesday night, said the bill would not stop Brexit but would prevent a no-deal scenario. "It's been passed by the Commons ... we should not be trying to hold it up," Hayter told Sky News. "There is unfortunately a filibuster being organised by Conservatives to try to talk out this bill, they are getting a bit of support, in fact quite a lot of support from the government, which I think is fairly shameful."

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/04/labour-lords-deputy-lady-hayter-accuses-tories-filibuster-no-deal-brexit-bill>

SOS signal beamed onto White Cliffs of Dover calling for Brexit extension

An SOS signal to the EU has been projected onto the White Cliffs of Dover by anti-Brexit protesters. Activist group Led By Donkeys have beamed a huge SOS message onto the White Cliffs of Dover calling for a Brexit extension and a confirmation vote. The group posted three tweets addressing French President Emmanuel Macron and the German Chancellor Angela Merkel, written in English, German and French. Alongside a picture of the 50m by 75m projection, they wrote: "Dear Emmanuel Macron and Angela Merkel, opportunists from the hard right want Britain to crash out of Europe, even though a majority now wants to stay."

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/sos-beamed-across-the-channel-to-europe-calling-for-brexite-extension-a4109626.html>

EU uneasy over Ireland's Brexit no-deal readiness

Ireland's leader Leo Varadkar welcomes German chancellor Angela Merkel to Dublin on Thursday determined to reassure the EU that his country is ready to deal with the chaos that would be unleashed by a no-deal Brexit. Public support for Ireland — the EU country most exposed if the UK crashes out of the bloc — has so far been strong: this week French president Emmanuel Macron has told the taoiseach that Europe "will never abandon Ireland and the Irish, no matter what happens". But anxiety in EU circles is growing about Dublin's readiness for a no-deal scenario, when Brussels would require extensive checks on cross-border trade between Ireland and the UK — the very thing Mr Varadkar hoped to avert by insisting on the "backstop" in Theresa May's disputed Brexit treaty.

<https://www.ft.com/content/f1d883ea-56b2-11e9-a3db-1fe89bedc16e>

Theresa May has set a trap for Labour - but she could fall into it herself

By backing Brexit - even a soft Brexit like Common Market 2.0 - we would see our voter base fragment to the SNP, Greens, Lib Dems and newly formed, explicitly anti-Brexit Change UK. Labour supporters would see a May/Corbyn deal as a betrayal, leading to a Lib Dem-style vote collapse. Labour would not pick up Leave voters to compensate. Just as Tory voters stuck with real austerity in 2015, not the 'austerity-lite' of Ed Miliband, so Leave voters would stick with the Tories, and would not be swayed by the halfway house of a customs union or single market membership.

<https://labourlist.org/2019/04/theresa-may-has-set-a-trap-for-labour-but-she-could-fall-into-it-herself/>

@France24 "I think £4bn has been spent on #NoDeal planning," says UK Ambassador to France @EdLlewellynFCO.

<https://twitter.com/France24/status/1113066892795637762>

A Michael Gove premiership would be another blow for British Muslims

As far as Muslims are concerned, Britain's environment secretary is best known as the unsung commander-in-chief of the Islamophobes inside the Conservative Party

<https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/michael-gove-premiership-would-be-another-blow-british-muslims>

Trade Deals/Negotiations

@AlanDuncanMP Delighted to sign today the trade continuity agreement with the Dominican Republic

Delighted to sign today the trade continuity agreement with the Dominican Republic

<https://twitter.com/AlanDuncanMP/status/1113853032410820608>