

## **THE COSTA AMENDMENT – Protecting people’s rights**

On Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> February, you as a Member of Parliament will face one of the biggest political decisions of your life. It is now less than 40 days until Brexit day, and five million British citizens in Europe and EU citizens in the UK still have no certainty regarding our citizenship rights post-Brexit. **We write to you on behalf of British in Europe and the3million, urging you to support an amendment to the Government’s motion that aims to finally remove our “bargaining chip” status from these negotiations once and for all.**

After two and a half years of uncertainty, we still do not know if the UK will leave the EU with a binding agreement that protects us. There are now international citizens’ rights agreements in place between the UK and Ireland, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland, to take effect even in a no deal scenario. Yet in the event of no deal, citizens from the other 26 EU Member States resident in the UK and British citizens resident in those countries will have their rights determined by 27 separate governments.

There will be no agreed cooperation mechanisms on healthcare, aggregation of pensions or social security entitlements, and no international protection whatsoever. Most immediately, UK pensioners in EU countries now undergoing life-preserving treatment which depends on those arrangements still do not know whether that treatment will continue after March 29<sup>th</sup>.

For British citizens in the EU26, the consequences of no deal will be disastrous: they would become third country nationals overnight, and be dependent on contingency plans in 26 different countries to secure their legal residence. Only a few EU member states have confirmed that British citizens will have similar protections as with an agreement. In most other countries, they will face a substantial loss of rights. Even in the case of an extension to Article 50, although the prospect of no deal will be temporarily held at bay, the anxiety and uncertainty that five million people have been enduring since the 2016 referendum will be prolonged still further.

**The Costa Amendment** aims to end this uncertainty by asking the EU and UK Government to agree **as soon as possible** that the citizens’ rights part of the UK-EU Withdrawal Agreement will be implemented in all Brexit outcomes. Part two of this Agreement is largely uncontroversial, and has widespread support in the House of Commons.

Apologies if you are one of the many MPs who has already offered their support. If you have not yet done so, please contact the Office of Alberto Costa MP and confirm your agreement to this amendment.

***“This House considers the Prime Minister’s statement of 26<sup>th</sup> February and requires the Prime Minister to seek at the earliest opportunity a joint UK-EU commitment to adopt part two of the Withdrawal Agreement on Citizens Rights and ensure its implementation prior to the UK’s exiting the European Union, whatever the outcome of negotiations on other aspects of the Withdrawal Agreement”.***

Yours sincerely,

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