



Dear MP,

The [Britain in Europe](#) thinktank is calling upon you to vote to take a “no-deal” Brexit off the table.

A ‘no-deal’ Brexit will have a catastrophic effect upon life in the UK, at all levels.

It will cause significant damage to the UK’s economy in the short to medium term. It will disrupt trade and international travel. It will bring chaos to communities close to Dover. It can lead to initial shortages of basic necessities, including medicinal products, and an increased cost to the British consumer of groceries. It will cause irreparable damage to the car industry, our universities, our ability to conduct world leading research, based on seamless collaboration with our European partners.

As stated by the Director General of the British Chambers of Commerce last night, “the United Kingdom is not ready to face the consequences of a messy and disorderly exit from the European Union”. Expressing businesses’ dismay with the unfolding crisis in Parliament, he added that “Government agencies are not ready, many businesses are not ready, and despite two and a half years passing since the referendum, there is no clear plan to support communities at the sharp end of such an abrupt change”.

As graphically put by Hilary Benn MP, the Chair of the Exiting the European Union Committee, “businesses are pulling their hair out” with the current situation.

No-deal Brexit will deprive the UK of access to the service markets. It will [devastate](#) our financial services, business services, legal services, the creative industries, architecture, classical music.

In addition, a ‘no-deal’ Brexit will seriously [undermine](#) UK and EU capabilities in the fight against terrorism and organized crime, and this at a time when the EU is committed to stepping up its efforts to improve judicial and police cooperation in Europe.

The effect on individual citizens would be even more difficult to countenance. Experts from Britain in Europe have [documented](#) the impact of a ‘no-deal’ Brexit on EU citizens in the UK and UK citizens in the EU.

As far as the former are concerned, the changes to the immigration legislation introduced last July would mean that a certain level of protection would continue. A ‘no-deal’ Brexit would still mean a shorter deadline for applications, the loss of the right to appeal against a refusal of settlement under the scheme, the introduction of a cut-off point for family members to join EU citizens with ‘settled status’ and even a lower threshold for deportation, where EU citizens have committed minor crimes.

For UK citizens in the EU, the UK would not be able to act unilaterally to protect their rights in the EU. In relation to practical matters of critical importance for them, such as protecting past social security contributions, reciprocal healthcare arrangements and the right to bring EU and non-EU citizen family members back to the UK, the government's recent policy paper on citizens' rights was making the startling admission that the government was "exploring options" and would "set out further details in due course". More than two and a half years after the EU referendum, this is the frightening state of (no) planning for a 'no-deal' Brexit.

EU citizens have been treated as 'bargaining chips' for over two years in the Brexit negotiations. By voting for a 'no-deal' Brexit, you would now treat them as Brexit's 'collateral damage'. Other residents in the UK on the basis of EU law, such as non-EU parents of British children (the Zambrano families) have been completely ignored and face an uncertain future.

If you are prepared to disregard all this, on the basis that we need to keep no-deal on the table as a negotiating strategy, please consider the risks of reducing the negotiations to 'a game of chicken'. With only sixteen days remaining before the political rhetoric ends and we are confronted with the truth of the day after, the country expects you to protect our national interest, exercising responsibility and drawing on facts.

Thanking you in advance for your consideration.

On behalf of Britain in Europe

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