

# News from the Brexit Cliff Edge

## 23rd Apr 2019

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### News Highlights

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## Welcome to the Brexit Cliff Edge

### Talks resume, Irish backstops starts, Theresa May under attack internally, Remain surges

- [The government plans to resume Brexit talks](#) with the Labour Party as MPs return to Westminster following the Easter break, The PM's de facto deputy, David Liddington, will meet senior opposition figures in an attempt to resolve the Brexit impasse
- [The Sun reports that Theresa May has asked](#) officials to look again at a rival plan put forward by Tory MPs for the Irish border to escape the Brexit deadlock. The Tory rebels insist that replacing the backstop with their Malthouse Compromise formula is the only way to proceed
- [This week, Theresa May will be told by her MPs to name the date of her departure](#), or face being ousted in June, after the Conservative Party's patience with her finally run out. The chair of the 1922 Committee, Sir Graham Brady, will tell the PM that the party is preparing to hold an extraordinary general meeting to change the rules of the party to enable Tory MPs to unseat Mrs May. Backbenchers have already set a date by which they plan to remove May if she does not comply - June 12th
- [As her complications mount, The Sun reports that Theresa May](#) has been forced to abandon a planned major Cabinet reshuffle because of the Brexit delay
- [A Survation opinion poll of Tory councillors has Boris Johnson](#) as the favourite leadership candidate, backed by 19% of the councillors with Nigel Farage in second place on 15%
- [A new Comres opinion poll says that in the event of a fresh referendum](#) on leaving the EU, Remain would be ahead by 58% to 42%. However, a separate YouGov poll said voters on both sides of the Brexit debate are digging in and are more sure about their positions than before
- [The Labour Party's deputy leader, Tom Watson, said that Labour would not see off Nigel Farage](#) if it continued to sit on the fence over a second referendum. Watson says Labour needs to endorse and enthusiastically back a new referendum, and work with fellow centre-left parties to defeat Farage

### Tories face a drubbing in local elections

- [Respected pollsters Colin Rallings and Michael Thrasher](#) say the Conservative Party looks certain to lose up to 500 seats in the local election, but it could be much worse if recent opinion polls turn out to be accurate. Some 8,400 seats in 248 councils are up for grabs in England. Five councils have inaugural elections and there will be contests for six directly elected mayors.

### Derbyshire Tories go on strike for the European Election

- [The Conservative Group on Derbyshire County Council](#) has voted to 'go on strike for the European elections' and the councillors are refusing to campaign in anyway to support the Conservative Party's prospective MEPs

## **Nicola Sturgeon sets out independence plan for Scots**

- [In a week's time the SNP will vote on a Sustainable Growth Commission report by Andrew Wilson](#), which includes things such as six tests to be met by an independent Scotland before it would adopt an independent currency. Sturgeon stressed her desire to show competence in economic management as the basis for her plan and said voters would contrast this with the awful way Brexit has been handled

## **The only man to stop Nigel Farage winning the European Elections could be Jeremy Corbyn**

- [The independent's Andrew Grice predicts Farage's Brexit Party](#) is on course to wreak havoc at the ballot box and it is vital that Labour come off the fence and adopt a strong Remain and Reform position to combat him. If not there is every likelihood the Brexit Party could win the election

## **Growing sense that disunity amongst anti-Brexit parties could cost them seats and hand Farage victory**

- [The Financial Times criticizes the anti-Brexit parties for their collective failure](#) to not agree a unified slate of candidates to fight the European elections next month. The FT predicts this could cost these parties up to half of the seats they would otherwise be likely to win. If the anti-Brexit parties fought as a bloc they would get up to 16 out of the 75 seats. If they do not, only seven seats would be secured, the analysis suggests

## **Electing a true Brexit believer as the next Tory leader will wreck the chances of the UK getting a good trade deal says former UK ambassador to the EU**

- [Sir Ivan Rogers said hardline Brexiteers will make promises that the EU would never agree to](#). Such pledges may win leadership elections but they would make opening trade negotiations next to impossible with the EU he said

## **Government spent £13m in just two months on consultants to help them with Brexit**

- [According to The Sun £12.4m was spent by the Cabinet Office](#) on consultant fees which has involved them drawing up alternative plans for the Irish border and preparing for a no deal Brexit. It is a whopping 221% increase on the total consultancy spend for the same three month period a year earlier. The government also spent £300,000 on promoting the plan to the public in December, and a further £400,000 in January with no tangible benefit

## **Pro-Brexit Labour MP provokes a backlash after complaining about the application process for settled status for her parents**

- [Twitter users did not fail to see the irony when Ashfield MP Gloria del Piero](#) tweeted the Home Secretary to claim the process to register EU citizens living in the UK was not good enough. Her tweet provoked more than 1,000 responses - with the majority pointing out she should be speaking up for the three million EU citizens not just her parents. The respondents also claimed her U-Turn on Brexit since the referendum had added to the hostile environment facing those now living in the UK

## **New IRA admits responsibility for journalists murder**

- As the status of the Irish border between north and south comes under intense scrutiny, as part of the Brexit debate, Northern Ireland police chiefs have repeatedly been warning that terrorist groups in the north were looking to recruit and seek to capitalise on the chaos and the disunity. Sadly, a journalist was [shot and killed by a member of the New IRA over the Easter weekend](#). The language the New IRA uses to admit responsibility is disturbing 'she was killed while standing behind enemy forces'

## **Tory donors are by-passing Conservative Central Office and giving money to MPs instead**

- [Politics Home reported that Tory party donors are giving money](#) directly to Conservative Party constituency associations and MP's instead of handing it to Central Office in protest at the perceived lack of leadership over the Brexit issue

## **Jeremy Corbyn says Brexit Talks are at risk because the Tories are dead set on doing a deal with Donald Trump**

- [Labour said that ministers have given little ground in the talks](#) between the two parties so far, and Jeremy Corbyn accused the government of dithering over its Brexit strategy. One of the reasons Corbyn felt was the government's desire to cut a trade deal with Donald Trump

## **Tory Minister Caroline Nokes says EU citizens fleeing domestic abuse should go back to their own EU country**

- [UK Immigration Minister, Carolyn Nokes, said that vulnerable EU migrant women](#) living in the UK and fleeing domestic abuse should just return to their own countries. The comments, made in reply to an MP, were branded as callous, heartless and willfully ignorant

## **Jobs at Risk**

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### **Halloween Brexit gives JP Morgan bankers with 'suitcases by the door' extra time**

Hundreds of JP Morgan bankers have been given a six month breather after being told to sign new EU contracts and have their "suitcases by the door" if there's a no-deal Brexit. The delay of Brexit until Halloween means that around 300 investment bankers no longer have to sign the contracts and might not need to relocate to an EU hub such as Paris or Frankfurt after the UK's exit after all, insiders said. "All the people were ready to go with suitcases by the door as if they were about to go into labour," one senior banker said. "They don't need to go now. It's on ice." The Wall Street bank asked the bankers to sign the contracts confirming they would move "at short notice" last month <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2019/04/21/halloween-brexit-gives-jp-morgan-bankers-suitcases-door-extra/>

### **Brexit inertia means London's finance workers face summer slump**

With Brexit on ice until as late as October 31 and the terms of the exit still to be agreed, fears are building that this could be one of the leanest years for the City since the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis. The London Stock Exchange has had only one corporate listing in excess of 75 million pounds (\$97.61 million) so far this year. Trading turnover on the London Stock Exchange in February and March was down a third from a year ago, and the lowest since August 2016. <https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-britain-eu-city/brexit-inertia-means-londons-finance-workers-face-summer-slump-idUKKCN1RU2HZ>

## **Economic Impact**

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**Brexit-related price hikes see UK families spend billions more on everyday goods, new**

## **research finds**

People in the UK are paying billions of pounds more for everyday goods because of Brexit-related price hikes, new research has found. The fall in the value of the pound after the 2016 Leave vote means money spent by individuals and businesses on imported items does not stretch as far as it used to. As a result, consumers and businesses have had to pay at least £15bn more for the same items, according to analysis by the People's Vote campaign. The group said the price of filter coffee has risen by 10 per cent, the cost of bananas has increased by the same amount and a glass of wine bought in a pub or restaurant has gone up by 8 per cent. Combined with flat-lining wage growth, it suggests households are having to spend more for less. Divided between the UK's 27 million households, it suggests the average household will have paid at least £550 more since 2016.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-food-prices-rise-uk-families-a8876946.html>

## **Jean-Claude Juncker: Economic turmoil after Brexit will be UK's fault**

Jean-Claude Juncker, the European Commission chief, has warned that the UK would be "100 per cent" responsible if its decision to leave the EU caused economic turmoil, as he urged MPs to vote for Theresa May's Brexit deal. In an interview with a German newspaper, Mr Juncker urged the UK not to waste its six month extension to the Article 50 process and added that he did not have hopes of the UK eventually reversing Brexit. "We need to be prepared for a soft and a hard Brexit. In any event, the UK's withdrawal will have a negative impact - more for the British than for the EU," he told Funke. "There will be no single-market-based solution. As far as I am concerned, the British side bears 100 per cent responsibility

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/04/19/jean-claude-juncker-economic-turmoil-brexit-will-uks-fault/>

## **Administrative Fall Out**

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### **Thanks to Brexit, I've got 30 days to leave my home in France**

I have 30 days to leave my home thanks to Brexit. our local prefecture, which last week wrote to us to tell us that we had 30 days to leave the country. The reasons they gave is that there was no proof that James is self-supporting (we were not made aware of any missing information from our application - if we had we'd have provided it) and that my business does not make enough. Between us we need to prove that we have €1175.00 per month to live on. The feeling of panic I got from the moment I opened those letters is still with me now. It sits in the pit of my stomach as a constant reminder of the nightmare we are now living.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/brexit-immigration-settled-status-france-eu-citizens-a8874646.html>

### **Tory minister says EU citizens fleeing domestic abuse should go home**

UK immigration Minister Caroline Nokes has said that vulnerable EU migrant women living in Scotland and fleeing domestic abuse should just return to their own countries, it has emerged. Nokes made the statement in a letter to Kirsty Blackman MP, who is campaigning for a change in law to stop EU women who are judged not to be exercising their treaty rights - because they are not working, studying or able to support themselves - having to choose between staying in a dangerous, abusive relationship or facing destitution. Blackman said that she was shocked by Nokes letter and branded the Home Office "heartless" and "wilfully ignorant".

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/17587773.tory-minister-says-eu-citizens-fleeing-domestic-abuse-should-just-go-home/?ref=twtrrec>

### **London-born baby with British-resident parents denied UK status**

A baby that was born in the UK to two British-resident parents has been denied the right to live in the country. Human rights lawyers called the decision "shameful" and "potentially unlawful". Dr Charles Kriel, a US national and special adviser to a parliamentary select committee, was returning to Britain from Florida with his fiancée Katharina Viken and their 15-week-old daughter, Viola Pearl Viken-Kriel when they were stopped by border officials. They said his child did not have the right to

reside in the country. Instead they said she could enter the UK but only on a six-month tourist visa specifying that she must not work or use public services.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/baby-citizenship-uk-status-child-immigration-home-office-parents-america-a8878421.html>

### **Brexit: I felt unwelcome and returned to Poland**

PachYa is a Polish singer who lived in the UK for 10 years, but she no longer felt welcome in the country after Brexit. So she moved back to Poland with her daughter Amelia. Two years later she returns to Nottingham and thinks about what she has left behind.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/stories-47978474/brexit-i-felt-unwelcome-and-returned-to-poland>

## **Political Shenanigans**

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### **Brexit: Cross-party talks to resume**

The government will resume Brexit talks with the Labour Party as MPs return to Westminster following the Easter break. Cabinet ministers, including the PM's defacto deputy, David Lidington, will meet senior opposition figures in an attempt to solve the Brexit impasse. But the resumption of talks has provoked anger among a number of Tory MPs, with senior backbenchers meeting later to discuss their next move. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Theresa May will chair a meeting of her cabinet. Tory MP Nigel Evans, a Brexiteer and critic of Mrs May, told the BBC the government's handling of Brexit had been "frustrating" and that "fresh leadership" was needed. Senior members of the Conservative backbench 1922 committee, which Mr Evans is a member of, will meet late this afternoon. He said: "She's reaching out to the Labour Party and Jeremy Corbyn, when she should have been reaching out to the people."

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-48018540>

### **Emergency meeting set to be called to OUST Prime Minister over Brexit 'farce'**

Last night the threshold needed to demand an extraordinary general meeting of the party's national convention, the most powerful body representing the rank and file, was reached. Sources involved in the plot said the petition had been backed by at least 65 constituency association chairmen after the Prime Minister's "spectacular failure to deliver" Brexit. "It's a farce," they added. "If she's not capable of doing the job, then somebody come forward that is because this just can't go on." It will be at least a month before the meeting can be held and the results of the confidence vote will not be binding on the Prime Minister. But losing the support of the party's volunteers, who give up their free time to knock on doors to rally support, would heap pressure on her to go. It comes amid a slew of devastating polls for Mrs May as she prepares for local and European elections next month.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1117126/brexit-news-latest-theresa-may-eu-negotiation-conservative-convention-meeting-replace>

### **Brexiteers' Irish border plan gets a boost after Theresa May asks officials to look again at the proposals**

Theresa May has asked officials to look again at a rival plan by Tory MPs for the Irish border to escape the disastrous Brexit deadlock. Senior Tory Brexiteers are lobbying the PM to use the new six month delay to mount a fresh push on the EU to adopt their 'alternative arrangements' model. The development comes as Theresa May will today come under renewed pressure to call time on stalled talks with Labour for a cross-party exit deal. But replacing the controversial Irish backstop to keep the border open with the 'Malthouse Compromise' formula of stand off customs declarations and checks is still the only way she can win a Commons majority for one, the group insist.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/8916207/theresa-may-brexit-irish-backstop-rival-plan/>

### **MPs to warn Theresa May she will be forced out over Brexit failure if she fails to name her departure date**

Theresa May will be told by her own MPs to name the date of her departure or face being ousted in June after the Conservative Party's patience with her finally ran out. Sir Graham Brady, the chairman of the 1922 Committee of Tory backbenchers, will tell the Prime Minister that the party is preparing to change its rules to make it easier to throw out unpopular leaders if they refuse to go. Backbenchers have already set June 12 as the date Mrs May will be forced out if she does not comply - exactly six months on from the day she fought off the last attempt to depose her through a confidence vote in her leadership.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/04/22/mps-warn-theresa-may-will-forced-brexite-failure-fails-name-departure/>

### **This is why my Change UK-TIG party will not be forming a 'pro-Remain alliance' for the European elections**

I am a pluralist who thinks tribalism is overrated, so I can see the attraction of a coalition. But no one has been able to explain to me how the practical hurdles can be overcome

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/brexit-european-elections-mep-change-uk-the-independent-group-remain-leave-alliance-a8881306.html>

### **Theresa May could be booted out in June as PM after furious Tory MPs plot to change party rules**

Theresa May could be booted out as PM by furious Tory MPs in mid-June under radical plans to be considered by senior figures today. The Sun can reveal the Conservative 1922 committee is expected to vote on an extraordinary proposal to rewrite party rules to allow a new no confidence challenge just six months after the PM survived the last one in December.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/8916261/theresa-may-could-be-booted-out-in-june-as-pm-after-furious-tory-mps-plot-to-change-party-rules/>

### **Theresa May to face grassroots no-confidence challenge**

Prime Minister Theresa May is to face an unprecedented no-confidence challenge - from Conservative grassroots campaigners. More than 70 local association chiefs - angry at her handling of Brexit - have called for an extraordinary general meeting to discuss her leadership. A non-binding vote will be held at that National Conservative Convention EGM. Dinah Glover, chairwoman of the London East Area Conservatives, said there was "despair in the party". She told the BBC: "I'm afraid the prime minister is conducting negotiations in such a way that the party does not approve." The Conservative Party's 800 highest-ranking officers, including those chairing the local associations, will take part in the vote

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-48011201>

### **Theresa May is forced to abandon plans for major Cabinet reshuffle because of new Brexit delay**

Theresa May has been forced to abandon plans for a major Cabinet reshuffle next month because of the Brexit delay. The new blow to the PM's survival hopes comes as it emerged that three out of five party members plan to refuse to vote Tory in the euro elections. Close allies had urged the PM to carry out a big clear of her ageing top team. The move would have helped fend off calls for her to resign immediately after an expected local election meltdown on May 2. Ushering in a younger generation of Tory MPs to the Government's top ranks could have kept the PM in No10 until December, Cabinet allies argued. But the new six-month delay to Britain's EU exit until October has plunged Mrs May into a fresh crisis and destabilised her yet further. A senior No10 source told The Sun: "A reshuffle is going to be impossible now. Things are just too precarious.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/8910517/theresa-may-abandons-plan-cabinet-reshuffle-brexit-delay/>

### **My TED talk: how I took on the tech titans in their lair**

For more than a year, the Observer writer has been probing a darkness at the heart of Silicon Valley.

Last week, at a TED talk that became a global viral sensation, she told the tech billionaires they had broken democracy. What happened next?

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/apr/21/carole-cadwalladr-ted-tech-google-facebook-zuckerberg-silicon-valley>

### **Nigel Farage second most popular choice among Conservative Party councillors to be next Tory leader, finds new poll**

Nigel Farage is the second most popular choice among Conservative Party councillors to be the next Tory leader, a new poll has found. Only Boris Johnson is more popular than the leader of The Brexit Party with Mr Farage ahead of frontrunner candidates including Michael Gove, Jeremy Hunt, Sajid Javid and Dominic Raab. Mr Johnson, the former foreign secretary and prominent Brexiteer, was backed by 19 per cent of Tory councillors as the best option to take over from Theresa May when the field included Mr Farage. The former Ukip leader was supported by 15 per cent of the 781 Tory councillors polled by Survation between April 17 and 19.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/04/21/nigel-farage-second-popular-choice-among-conservative-party/>

### **Lord Buckethead reveals plans to stand against Nigel Farage in the Euro elections**

Lord Buckethead has revealed plans to stand against Nigel Farage in the European Parliament elections. The candidate, who famously stood against Theresa May in the 2017 General Election, revealed his plans on Friday night. He said “so many” people had “begged” him to run against the former Ukip leader, who recently unveiled his new Brexit Party. Mr Farage is bidding to be re-elected as the MEP for the South East England constituency. Writing on Twitter, he said: “BREAKING NEWS: Since so many have begged me to run against Nigel Farage in the EU Parliament election on May 23, a clever Earthling set up this link for you to fund the cost of the pricey deposit. “Will I agree to run if the goal is met? MY ANSWER: YES!”

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/lord-buckethead-reveals-plans-to-stand-against-nigel-farage-in-the-euro-elections-a4122341.html>

### **Nigel and Annunziata’s Brexit show basks in the sun, but winter is coming**

Like some sleight-of-hand artiste, Farage has pulled the Brexit party out of his flat cap. One moment it wasn’t there. The next it was leading the polls for the European Union elections. It was set up by Catherine Blaiklock in January, but she had to resign when it emerged that, like so many before her in her previous party, Ukip, she’d written things that were not difficult to construe as racist.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/20/farage-rees-mogg-nottingham-brexit-party-election>

### **Remain would win a second Brexit referendum, poll finds**

A second referendum would see the population resoundingly vote for the UK to remain in the EU, a new poll has found. The latest Comres poll revealed that Remain would now win by 58 per cent to 42 per cent of the vote. The Comres poll had Remain as heavy favourites if a second referendum were to be held tomorrow. But a separate Yougov poll found that voters had largely become even more sure that they voted the right way first time around almost three years of Brexit uncertainty since. It said 64 per cent of Remain voters were now “more sure” they voted the right way compared to 57 per cent of Leave voters.

<http://www.cityam.com/276486/remain-would-win-second-brexit-referendum-poll-finds-leave>

### **EU president Donald Tusk says Brexit can be stopped: ‘We cannot give into fatalism’**

The president of the European Council has warned opponents of Brexit not to “give in to fatalism” and accept Britain’s departure from the European Union. Speaking in the European parliament on Tuesday, Donald Tusk said Europe and Britain needed “dreams and dreamers” to keep the idea of a united Europe alive and the UK in the EU. “During the European Council, one of the leaders warned us not to be dreamers and that we shouldn’t think that Brexit can be reversed,” Mr Tusk told MEPs in Strasbourg. “I didn’t respond at the time. But today in front of you I would like to say at this rather

difficult moment in our history that we need the dreamers and dreams. We cannot give in to fatalism. At least, I will not stop dreaming about a better and united Europe.” Mr Tusk said he accepts the result of the EU referendum and that the decision on whether to leave is for the British people, but he has made no secret of the fact he would rather see the UK stay in the bloc.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-donald-tusk-eu-remain-second-referendum-theresa-may-deal-a8871921.html>

### **Change UK rejects growing calls for electoral alliance with other anti-Brexit parties**

An alliance of anti-Brexit parties including Change UK will not "ever be likely." Change UK: The Independent Group will probably never form an electoral pact with other pro-EU parties, the party's economics spokesperson Chris Leslie told Business Insider. This is despite polls suggesting that Change UK will suffer from the pro-EU vote being split across numerous parties at next month's European Parliament elections and potentially beyond. Leslie said that Change UK was the clearest anti-Brexit option and urged Lib Dems to quit their party.

<https://www.businessinsider.com/change-uk-chris-leslie-anti-brexit-alliance-will-not-ever-be-likely-2019-4>

### **Brexit: second referendum only way to beat Nigel Farage, warns Tom Watson**

Labour will never defeat Nigel Farage if it continues to “sit on the fence” over Brexit and offers only “mealy-mouthed” support for a second referendum, the party’s deputy leader says today. In an extraordinary intervention that exposes the tensions at the top of the party over Brexit strategy, Tom Watson warns that Labour will lose to Farage’s new “far right” Brexit party in May’s European elections if it continues to give the impression that “we half agree with him”. Writing in today’s Observer, Jeremy Corbyn’s deputy argues that Labour needs to give much clearer and more enthusiastic backing to another referendum and also spell out a positive, radical vision of how a Labour government could advance socialist values by working with other centre-left parties inside the European Union. Labour will never defeat Nigel Farage if it continues to “sit on the fence” over Brexit and offers only “mealy-mouthed” support for a second referendum, the party’s deputy leader says today. In an extraordinary intervention that exposes the tensions at the top of the party over Brexit strategy, Tom Watson warns that Labour will lose to Farage’s new “far right” Brexit party in May’s European elections if it continues to give the impression that “we half agree with him”. Writing in today’s Observer, Jeremy Corbyn’s deputy argues that Labour needs to give much clearer and more enthusiastic backing to another referendum and also spell out a positive, radical vision of how a Labour government could advance socialist values by working with other centre-left parties inside the European Union.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/20/second-eu-referendum-only-way-to-beat-farage-says-watson>

*Additional sources: (BBC News)*

### **Drubbing looms as Tories face loss of 500 council seats**

The Tories look certain to lose up to 500 seats in the English local elections on May 2, but it could be much worse if recent opinion polls turn out to be accurate. Some 8,400 seats in 248 councils fall vacant in England. Five councils have inaugural elections following the abolition or merger of their predecessors and there will be contests for six directly elected mayors. These largely reprise those held on the same day as the 2015 general election when David Cameron formed his majority government. The Tories did well in the local contests, too, winning six in 10 of all seats. Labour fell back and the Liberal Democrats — punished for their role in the coalition — lost 40% of their councillors. Recent by-elections show Labour and the Tories neck and neck in the battle for local votes. The Lib Dems are performing better in these contests than in the polls but are still a long way behind.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/drubbing-looms-as-tories-face-loss-of-500-council-seats-nvrbs35h>

### **Change UK: ‘we’re the natural home of the remain alliance’**



The anti-Brexit party Change UK will this week unveil its list of 70 candidates for next month's European elections after receiving more than 1,000 applications from former Labour, Tory, Liberal and Green party activists. The party's interim leader, the former Tory MP Heidi Allen, who yesterday challenged other leaders to a TV debate, claimed that the exodus from established parties showed Change UK was now the "natural home of the 'Remain Alliance'" and of people who wanted a second referendum. The party said that, of 3,700 people who had applied to stand under the Change UK banner in the 23 May poll, 895 were former Labour activists, 105 were ex-Liberal Democrats and 92 ex-Greens. Dozens of other applicants had been active in the Tory party, including former MPs. Of the Labour defectors, 32 were either former MPs, or had previously been parliamentary or council candidates.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/20/change-uk-independent-group-natural-home-remain-alliance>

### **Realism is set to strike the EU over the Brexit timescale**

The biggest danger of the Brexit extension is a delusion over time. The UK does not really have more than five months to make a decision. In reality, the effective timescale is just a few weeks. Once this drags beyond the scheduled elections of the European Parliament in late May, we enter a world of uncertain scenarios. The divisions that emerged among EU member states during the meeting of the European Council on April 10 are serious. But it would be wrong to characterise the debate as one between France and the rest. Several leaders supported Emmanuel Macron. Come October, the threat is not one of a veto by the French president, but of a shifting consensus. Heiko Maas, the German foreign minister, said in an FT interview that he believed the October deadline was hard. This is becoming a wider consensus view in Germany. Mr Macron is not isolated. He is winning the argument.

<https://www.ft.com/content/f064d5fc-61b8-11e9-b285-3acd5d43599e>

### **May takes lead in bid to rescue Brexit talks**

Theresa May will return from the Easter break on Tuesday, seeking to breathe fresh life into talks with the opposition Labour party as both sides search for a Brexit breakthrough that can avert the need to hold "unwanted" European elections. With time fast running out to secure a deal before the European poll on May 23, the prime minister is also likely to come under growing pressure from her own MPs to stand down if she fails to find a way to break the stalemate. But nearly three weeks after the talks with Labour began, there has been scant evidence of any progress. Labour, which wants the UK to retain close alignment with the single market and a permanent customs union, has been left frustrated over what it says is the Conservatives' failure to offer any new concessions.

<https://www.ft.com/content/c4930ff0-6435-11e9-9adc-98bf1d35a056>

### **Only remainers could snatch defeat from the jaws of victory like this**

Going into the European elections, the serial splitting of the pro-EU vote has been a masterclass in political incompetence

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/19/remainers-defeat-european-elections-eu-vote>

### **First Minister sets out independence plan - with a big warning to critics**

Nicola Sturgeon has today set out her "ambitious" and "credible" proposals to win independence as she prepares to update Scotland in the coming days on her plans for a second referendum. In a major intervention the First Minister referred to the ongoing Brexit turmoil and more people being open to back the Yes case, but she suggested such voters may not be won over with easy answers.

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/17586819.fm-sets-out-indy-plan-with-a-big-warning-to-critics/>

### **Brexit: Jean-Claude Juncker says any type of departure will be negative**

Any kind of Brexit will have "negative consequences" which will be worse for Britain than the EU and be entirely the UK's responsibility, European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker said. Mr Juncker said the "ball was in Britain's court" and urged the House of Commons to support the deal

negotiated by Theresa May. A second extension to Brexit was granted to the UK following talks in Brussels earlier this month, with the so-called flexextension meaning the departure date will be October 31 this year, or sooner if the Withdrawal Agreement is passed. In an interview with the German Funke Media Groupe, Mr Juncker repeated the words of European Council president Donald Tusk and urged the UK "not to waste time".

<https://www.scotsman.com/brexit-jean-claude-juncker-says-any-type-of-departure-will-be-negative-1-4912242>

### **EU Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker: The UK cannot keep delaying Brexit**

The UK cannot delay Brexit indefinitely and must stop wasting time, the European commission chief has said. Jean-Claude Juncker warned Britain that its departure from the EU must happen by the new 31 October deadline. "I hope that the British will make use of this time and not waste it again. We cannot keep on putting off the withdrawal date indefinitely," Mr Juncker said.

<https://news.sky.com/story/eu-commission-chief-jean-claude-juncker-the-uk-cannot-keep-delaying-brexit-11698676>

### **May to be told to quit by top Conservative - Sunday Times**

A top member of Prime Minister Theresa May's Conservative Party will tell her in the coming week that she must step down by the end of June or her lawmakers will try again to depose her, the Sunday Times reported, without citing sources. May survived a vote of no confidence in December and although party rules mean lawmakers cannot challenge her again until a year has passed, lawmaker Graham Brady will tell her the rules will be changed unless she quits, the newspaper said. Brady, who chairs the Conservative Party's influential 1922 Committee of backbench lawmakers, will tell her that 70 percent of her members of parliament want her to resign over her handling of Brexit, the Sunday Times said. Britain was originally due to leave the European Union on March 29, but that deadline was pushed back to April 12 and then again to Oct. 31 as May failed to break an impasse in parliament on the terms of Brexit.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-may/may-to-be-told-to-quit-by-top-conservative-sunday-times-idUKKCN1RWONN>

### **EU will end up with 50 angry and disruptive MEPs if it forces UK to hold European elections, Liam Fox warns**

The EU will end up with 50 "disruptive and resentful" British MEPs if it forces the country to take part in elections to the European Parliament next month, Liam Fox has warned. In an interview with The Telegraph, the pro-Brexit International Trade Secretary pointed out that the parliament, which is due to elect the next European Commission president later this year, "will have an effect on the formation of the next commission". "The last thing our European partners want are 50 disruptive and resentful UK MEPs," he added.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/04/20/eu-will-end-50-angry-disruptive-meps-forces-uk-hold-mep-elections/>

### **The only man who can stop Nigel Farage from sweeping the European elections is Jeremy Corbyn**

At a lavish party for Nigel Farage at London's Ritz Hotel five months after the 2016 referendum, the man himself predicted a "big, seismic shock in British politics" like Donald Trump's "total revolution" in the US. Farage told the 100 guests - friends, politicians and journalists (including me) - the UK's problem was "still being run by the career professional political class". He feared it would block Brexit. With Ukip seen as a basket case, in the margins of the event, his allies discussed launching a new, online-based movement based on Italy's Five Star. The Brexit Party is now up and running, the cleverest piece of political branding since New Labour. European parliament elections on 23 May offer the perfect opening; coming almost three years after the referendum, they validate Farage's repeated claims that politicians would betray the public. Ukip, a home for Islamophobes and misogynists who dismiss jokes about rape as "satire", makes Farage look respectable. Not surprisingly, the opinion polls suggest his new party is on course for a famous victory. His "big

seismic shock" is on the cards.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/brexit-nigel-farage-european-elections-jeremy-corbyn-second-referendum-a8877611.html>

### **This paralysing lack of leadership leaves remainers with nowhere to go**

The inability of the leading opposition party to oppose extends beyond its sneaky fudges. Labour is no more challenging every half-truth and whole lie made by Nigel Farage than it is exposing the empty nationalism of the seeming limitless supply of Tory leadership candidates. It's almost as if Jeremy Corbyn and the upper-class Stalinists who surround him are so lost in the infantile leftist belief that the EU is a capitalist and militarist conspiracy, they would rather let the right have its way than reverse Brexit. Without leaders, Labour voters are meant to solve Labour politicians' problems for them.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/20/paralysing-lack-leadership-remainers-nowhere-to-go>

### **Nicola Sturgeon: This plan is ambitious AND credible - it can win us independence**

The UK may have descended even deeper into Brexit crisis in recent weeks, but that hasn't stopped the architects of the 2014 Project Fear campaign - yes, the same people who said Scotland would lose EU membership if we voted for independence - springing back into action. In 2014, they told us there was no way Scotland could agree with the rest of the UK to continue to use the pound sterling - this time, with no hint of irony, they're throwing their hands up in horror at the suggestion that an independent Scotland might in future choose an alternative to sterling if that is in our best interests. Of course these politicians will always ridicule any suggestion that Scotland is capable of being a successful independent country, because they want us to believe that whatever happens to the UK and no matter what chaos ensues, the status quo is as good as it gets. But most people in Scotland don't take that view. In 2014, many who ultimately voted No were open to persuasion.

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/17586824.sturgeon-our-currency-position-is-ambitious-and-credible-it-can-win-us-independy/?ref=twtr>

### **Theresa May 'boxed in' as voters punish the Tories for Brexit delay**

Conservative voters are angry and frustrated and the reason is obvious. In April's monthly ComRes poll for The Telegraph, the only Brexit outcomes 'acceptable' to Tory voters were to leave with no deal or, less enthusiastically, agree to Theresa May's deal. All other options were 'unacceptable' to at least 70 per cent of Tory voters. Until the Tory Party realise that Brexit is a visceral issue, outside the flexible political norms of Burkean representative democracy, they cannot recover because the Brexit Party is scratching where the Conservative electorate itch.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/04/19/theresa-may-boxed-voters-punish-tories-brexit-delay/>

### **Grassroots Conservatives refuse to take part in European election campaign in protest Brexit delay**

Grassroots Tories are refusing to take part in next month's European election campaign in protest at the delay to Brexit. In an extraordinary show of defiance, the Conservative group on Derbyshire County Council has effectively voted to go on strike. They have refused to knock on doors or deliver leaflets in support of Tory MEPs, saying they will not take part in the elections because they 'should not be happening'.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6941165/Grassroots-Conservatives-refuse-European-election-campaign-protect-Brexit-delay.html>

### **Members 'won't mention Theresa May on doorsteps' as Tories prepare for election drubbing**

Theresa May is now so unpopular with swathes of her own party that some Tory members won't mention her by name on the doorstep or have ruled out campaigning altogether, it has emerged. The Prime Minister has become synonymous with "betrayal" over Brexit in voters' minds, leading

some activists to try to focus on local issues, rather the Government's main goal. Tory HQ has even registered a name variation with the Electoral Commission that allows the candidates to appear on ballot papers as "Local Conservatives", downplaying any link with the PM.

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/17586835.members-wont-mention-theresa-may-on-doorsteps-as-tories-prepares-for-election-drubbing/>

### **Theresa May faces threat of new confidence vote after European elections amid Brexit backlash**

Theresa May could face a new confidence vote in the wake of the European elections under plans that will be considered by senior Tory MPs this week, The Telegraph can disclose. On Tuesday the 1922 committee of backbench Tory MPs will meet to discuss whether the rules should be changed to allow a new bid to remove the Prime Minister. Alan Mabbutt, a senior Conservative Party official, has confirmed that the rules surrounding leadership challenges are not determined by the party's constitution but by backbench MPs themselves. It comes as a string of senior Tory called for Theresa May to name a date for her departure amid concerns that the European elections will be a "disaster" for the party.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/04/19/theresa-may-faces-threat-new-confidence-vote-european-elections/>

### **Journalist shot dead in 'terrorist incident' in Northern Ireland**

A 29-year-old female journalist was killed during riots in Derry, Northern Ireland, on Thursday night in what police are treating as a "terrorist incident." According to reports, violence broke out following police searches in Derry's Creggan district, with petrol bombs thrown at police Land Rovers.

<https://www.politico.eu/article/journalist-shot-dead-in-terrorist-incident-in-northern-ireland/>

### **Leave.EU's latest scandal shows digital propaganda is out of control**

Elections can be energising, they can be bruising, and over the past few years the public have been to the ballot box far more often than expected. Two years ago today, Theresa May stood at the lectern outside of No 10 and announced a snap election. It had been less than a year since a divisive referendum, and there wasn't much appetite from the public or from parliament for yet another campaign. Today, European elections are looming, a public vote on Brexit seems more and more likely, and another snap election is a constant possibility. We are in a time of political crisis and no one knows what will happen next, but trust in our elections is essential to rebuilding public faith in politics. That's why the government must take urgent action to protect the integrity of our democracy. We do not have the laws we need to defend our democracy from online interference.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/brexit-leave-eu-fake-videos-migrants-digital-advertising-facebook-a8874961.html>

### **Tories and Labour in jeopardy as new voting 'tribes' seek alternatives to the status quo**

The Conservatives and Labour are both losing ground to smaller parties, but the Conservatives are hurting more. We analysed recent opinion polls using the new regression techniques which give better accuracy than classic polling approaches. These show a Labour lead of four per cent, with Labour predicted to win 290 seats if there were a new general election. Beneath these headline figures there are identifiable groups of voters who are changing their mind. Using a three-dimensional political landscape, we identified seven tribes, many of whom don't correspond to the traditional left-right spectrum

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/04/19/tories-labour-jeopardy-new-voting-tribes-seek-alternatives-status/>

### **Clash of Jeremys as Hunt tears into 'Marxist' Corbyn over austerity in fiery online row**

Jeremy Hunt, a front-runner for the Tory leadership, has defended the Conservative's austerity programme during a clash with Jeremy Corbyn and said it is the Labour leader's "Marxist regime" that will put Britain's economy at risk. The Foreign Secretary said in an interview this week that he admired the "genius" of David Cameron for convincing people to accept austerity. He said their

success in delivering cuts "without poll tax-style riots" had helped "put the economy on its feet to the extent we're now creating 1,000 jobs every single day since we've been in office".

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/04/19/jeremy-hunt-defends-tory-austerity-clash-jeremy-corbyn-attacks/>

### **Nigel Farage's Brexit Party is a 'very serious threat' to Labour warns top peer**

Nigel Farage's Brexit Party "poses a very serious threat" to Labour in the European elections, a top party peer has warned. Lord Maurice Glasman said the newly-founded group was a risk to his party if voters felt Labour had ignored the result of the 2016 referendum and backed a second vote.

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/nigel-farages-brexit-party-very-14433969>

### **Guy who shouts 'Stop Brexit' at Parliament every day to stand in Euro elections**

A man who has yelled "stop Brexit" at Parliament every sitting day for the last 18 months is standing for the European Parliament. Steve Bray, known locally as the "Stop Brexit Guy", began protesting in Westminster in September 2017, wearing a blue and yellow hat and draped in a Union Flag cape. He started as a lone voice, shouting at the seat of democracy once a day. But as time has gone on, and anti-Brexit sentiment has swelled, so has his group of screaming Remainers, hurling an increasingly lengthy stream of invective at the Palace. Along with "stop Brexit", Steve and his group have gradually started adding "It's not a done deal" and "it's not going well, is it?"

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/guy-who-shouts-stop-brexit-14431996>

### **How May's failed deal shattered EU relations**

Donald Tusk, though devastated by a 2016 Brexit referendum result he had predicted, counselled for calm. Brussels had no choice but to wait it out for the formal two years of withdrawal talks to start, he argued. There would be no negotiation without Britain's formal notification of the wish to leave. Even attempts by the government's senior Brexit adviser, Olly Robbins, to speak to the EU's most senior lawyers would be denied until the treaty exit mechanism, known as article 50, was triggered.

[https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/19/brexit-theresa-may-failed-deal-eu-relations?utm\\_source=dlvr.it&utm\\_medium=twitter](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/19/brexit-theresa-may-failed-deal-eu-relations?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter)

### **Brexit Britain must avoid self-pity and revenge**

Most other EU countries have experienced searing humiliations in their recent histories — defeat in war, the collapse of democracy, or occupation by a foreign power. Compared with these, Brexit is pretty mild stuff. If the UK can avoid succumbing to self-pity or a sense of victimhood, Brexit might even serve as a valuable reality-check — one that eventually allows the country to rethink its place in the world, in a calm, unhysterical and unhumiliated fashion

<https://www.ft.com/content/0f4e3256-610f-11e9-a27a-fdd51850994c>

### **Boris Johnson 'WOULD WIN' the Tory leadership contest if Theresa May is toppled in the next few weeks, key all**

Both senior Tories are now counting on the votes of more than 50 Conservatives MPs, from a total of 313. But BoJo's campaign team are convinced he will trounce his successor as Foreign Secretary in phase two of the campaign, a head-to-head run off between the two leading candidates in front of all 150,000 party members.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/brexit/8894996/boris-johnson-topple-theresa-may-tory-leadership/>

### **Nigel Farage has near-total control of Brexit party, constitution suggests**

Nigel Farage has almost total control over the new Brexit Party, with power to appoint its governing board and all but no membership to keep him in check, it is understood. The party – which polls suggest could win the European elections – formed in January and registered last week. While more than 100,000 people have signed up to be registered supporters, it is not yet allowing them to become formal members with power to vote on the leadership. It is understood only a handful of

people have actual membership of the Brexit party, which is a skeleton operation as it gears up to fight its first election at the European polls. The party's constitution, released under freedom of information laws, also reveals Farage's power over the project, with the leader having the ability to appoint four to eight board members and the chairman.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/18/nigel-farage-has-near-total-control-of-brexit-party-constitution-suggests>

**@SkyNews Brexit Party leader @Nigel\_Farage says leaving the EU is about upholding a 'higher democratic principle' and the UK must honour the referendum result, regardless of any economic fallout.**

Brexit Party leader @Nigel\_Farage says leaving the EU is about upholding a 'higher democratic principle' and the UK must honour the referendum result, regardless of any economic fallout.

<https://twitter.com/SkyNews/status/1118809430018146304>

**Labour MPs to urge Jeremy Corbyn not to 'torpedo' Brexit deal**

Jeremy Corbyn is to be urged by a group of Labour MPs not to "torpedo" the prospect of a Brexit deal with Theresa May by insisting on a second referendum. The MPs, including Stephen Kinnock and Gloria De Piero, are set to send the Labour leader a letter early next week setting out their "deep-seated reservations about a second referendum", which they believe would be "divisive but ... not decisive". They also express a worry that insisting on a second referendum would cause talks with the government to collapse, arguing that Conservative MPs would never back such an idea. Labour has committed to keeping a second referendum on the table as an option to stop a "damaging Tory Brexit", but there are conflicting views at the top of the party about whether to insist on one if Corbyn can secure a deal with the Conservatives.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/18/labour-mps-urge-jeremy-corbyn-not-torpedo-brexit-deal-second-referendum>

**Disunity to cost anti-Brexit parties seats in Europe poll**

Anti-Brexit parties' failure to agree a unified slate of candidates to fight the European elections next month could cost them half of the seats they would have won as a single group, according to a Financial Times analysis. If the Liberal Democrats, the newly formed Change UK and Green party combined into a single entity to contest the European Parliament elections on May 23, they would win 16 of the 60 seats up for grabs across England, the research found. But with the parties having decided to field separate slates of candidates, only seven seats would be secured, the analysis concluded, based on polling numbers from four organisations.

<https://www.ft.com/content/17c356d2-6128-11e9-a27a-fdd51850994c>

**Britain will have its second referendum - at the EU elections on 23 May**

In just five weeks' time, Britain will have a referendum on Brexit. This will take the form of elections to the European parliament, but in reality this will be a pre-referendum, or, if you like your neologisms ugly, a preferendum. So there is now one simple task: to maximise the vote for parties that support a confirmatory referendum on Brexit, giving the British people a democratic choice between accepting the negotiated Brexit deal and remaining in the EU.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/18/european-elections-second-brexit-referendum-vote-register>

**Electing a Brexiteer as next Tory leader will 'wreck' chances of a deal, claims former UK ambassador to EU**

Electing a "true believer Brexiteer" as the next Tory leader would likely "wreck" any chance of agreeing a Brexit deal with Brussels, the former UK ambassador to the EU has claimed. Sir Ivan Rogers said Eurosceptic leadership challengers like Dominic Raab and Boris Johnson could make promises to the Tory grassroots to get elected which the bloc would never agree to. Those promises

could include reopening the Withdrawal Agreement to delete or change the Irish border backstop protocol - something which the EU has repeatedly said it will not countenance. He said such a pledge would torpedo the talks and any prospect of the two sides agreeing to a new trading relationship.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/04/18/electing-true-believer-brexiteer-next-tory-leader-will-wreck/>

### **Putin's far-right allies gear up for European elections**

Last week, leaders of far-right parties from several European Union countries assembled in Milan to announce the creation of a nationalist alliance for the upcoming parliamentary elections. The group, known as the European Alliance for People and Nations, aims to win the largest bloc of seats in the European Parliament and already includes members from Germany, Italy, Finland, Denmark, Austria and France. "We share the same objectives, the same ideals and values," Matteo Salvini, Italy's deputy prime minister and the host of the meeting, told journalists ahead of the announcement.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/04/17/putins-far-right-allies-gear-up-european-elections/>

## **Political Setbacks**

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### **Government spent £13 million in just two months on consultants to help with Brexit deal**

The government spent more than £13 million in just two months in their desperate attempts to convince MPs to vote for Theresa May's Brexit deal. According to the Sun, £12.4 million was spent by the cabinet office on external consultant fees, which involved drawing up alternative plans to the Irish border and preparing for a no-deal Brexit. It is a whopping 221% increase on the total spend on consultancy services in the same three month period a year earlier. Best for Britain found that the department spent £300,000 in December on communicating the plan to the public and then a further £400,000 in January, which would have involved using Google and social media networks. The spending spree was a flop, as Theresa May failed to gain the support of the House of Commons, and the government appeared to u-turn on plans for a no-deal Brexit.

<https://www.theneweuropean.co.uk/top-stories/government-spend-on-brexit-consultants-1-6006137>

*Additional sources: (Evening Standard)*

### **Derbyshire Tories boycott EU elections over Brexit chaos**

Conservative councillors in Derbyshire have voted to go on "strike" and not help candidates campaign in the upcoming European elections, in an extraordinary show of local defiance to the national party. It comes as a survey of 781 Conservative councillors for the Mail on Sunday shows that 40% of them are prepared to vote for Nigel Farage's Brexit Party at the elections on 23 May. Every one of the 37 Tory councillors at Derbyshire County Council are in support of the boycott, meaning that hundreds of activists will not deliver leaflets or canvass for the party's candidates in the run up to the elections. Council leader Barry Lewis: "I suppose it is described in one way as going on strike, to not take part in a campaign for an election like this. "It is with a heavy heart - we are an activist group at Derbyshire County Council, we want to support our candidates - but we simply cannot go against the wishes of the people.

<https://news.sky.com/story/derbyshire-tories-boycott-eu-elections-over-brexit-chaos-11699287>

*Additional sources: (The Guardian)*

### **Pro-Brexit MP provokes backlash after complaining about application process for settled status for her parents**

A Labour MP who now supports the UK leaving the European Union caused Twitter to implode when she messaged the home secretary complaining about the application for settled status for her parents. Twitter users did not fail to see the irony when Ashfield MP Gloria De Piero tweeted Savid Javid to claim that the process to register EU citizens living in the UK was "not good enough." She said: "Dear @ukhomeoffice @sajidjavid trying to sort my parents application for settled status. They are in their 70s and 80s. They don't have smart phones but I'm happy to sort it for them but It's such a complicated process I can't figure out how to do it. This is not good enough." Her tweet provoked

more than 1,000 responses - with the majority pointing out that she should be speaking up for the three million EU citizens - not just her parents. The respondents also claimed her u-turn on Brexit since the referendum had added to the "hostile environment" facing those now living in the UK.

[https://www.theneweuropean.co.uk/top-stories/gloria-de-piero-on-settled-status-for-eu-citizens-1-6007353?utm\\_source=Twitter&utm\\_medium=Social\\_Icon&utm\\_campaign=in\\_article\\_social\\_icons](https://www.theneweuropean.co.uk/top-stories/gloria-de-piero-on-settled-status-for-eu-citizens-1-6007353?utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=Social_Icon&utm_campaign=in_article_social_icons)

*Additional sources: (The New European)*

### **Rape, Race and UKIP's MEP Candidate**

I have no better way of putting it: Carl Benjamin is the Dunning-Kruger candidate. He is the walking, talking embodiment of an overestimated, overinflated belief in one's intelligence and critical faculties. Anyone who saw his performance at the recent launch of UKIP's MEP campaign understood immediately that he was manifestly ill-equipped for the business of politics. Adopting the poses of a Poundland Mussolini, yet looking like IT middle-management, he railed against the assembled press and pouted as his tweet to Labour MP Jess Phillips - "I wouldn't even rape you" - was brought up. When pressed for an explanation, he responded: "If a woman is being a giant bitch and laughing about male suicide I'm going to be a giant dick back to her". He was much like a petulant teenager, caught out.

<https://bylinetimes.com/2019/04/20/rape-race-and-ukips-mep-candidate/>

### **Ukip European election candidates: man who sent 'rape' tweet to Labour MP and comedian who trained his dog to perform Nazi salute**

Ukip has unveiled a man who sent a "rape" tweet to a Labour MP and a comedian who trained his dog to do a Nazi salute as its star candidates for the European elections. Gerard Batten, the Ukip leader, launched the party's European election campaign by inviting Carl Benjamin, a Youtube personality, to appear on the stage alongside him along with Mark Meechan a Scottish comedian. Mr Benjamin prompted controversy after it emerged he tweeted "I wouldn't even rape you" at Jess Phillips, a Labour MP. The Ukip candidate yesterday used a press conference to defend his comments. "I think we should treat women the same as men," he said.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/04/18/ukip-unveils-man-sent-rape-tweet-labour-mp-star-candidate-european/>

*Additional sources: (Sky News) (BBC News)*

### **How 'condescending' Brexiteer Mark Francois met his match in US Speaker Nancy Pelosi**

Nancy Pelosi, the US Speaker, rebuked the hardline Brexiteer Mark Francois for being condescending during a private lunch this week. Ms Pelosi, the third most powerful figure in the US, challenged the "red-faced" former junior defence minister after an exchange about the nature of the Irish border. The Speaker of the House of Representatives has been leading a delegation of senior American politicians on a visit to London and Dublin focused on Brexit. She will conclude her visit today with a trip to Belfast. The programme included a lunchtime meeting with four members of the European Research Group faction of Conservative MPs at a Westminster restaurant on Monday. In addition to Mr Francois the group included Jacob Rees-Mogg, Sir Bernard Jenkin and Steve Baker. The US delegation included Brendan Boyle, a Democrat representing Pennsylvania, who has taken a hard line on the potential damage to US relations after a hard Brexit, and other Irish Americans. Woody Johnson, the US ambassador to the UK, was also present.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/94fea254-615b-11e9-9842-63958b78574e>

*Additional sources: (Daily Mirror)*

### **Brexit supporter jailed after sending 'terror-filled' messages to MP Heidi Allen**

Jarod Kirkman - of Torquay Drive in Luton - was jailed for a total of 42 weeks for seven counts of sending malicious communications, having pleaded guilty to the offence at Westminster Magistrates' Court on Monday, April 8. Threatening communications were sent to MPs Heidi Allen, Nick Boles,



Yvette Cooper, Nicky Morgan, Sarah Wollaston, Jenny Chapman and David Lammy, and all were sent using fictitious email details via contact pages on the respective MPs websites. Kirkman was traced and identified by his IP address and, when interviewed, freely admitted he had sent the abusive messages, but couldn't recall all the details, and said "I was just being a stupid idiot over Brexit".

[https://www.elystandard.co.uk/news/luton-man-jailed-over-abusive-messages-to-mp-heidi-allen-1-6005529?utm\\_source=Twitter&utm\\_medium=Social\\_Icon&utm\\_campaign=in\\_article\\_social\\_icons](https://www.elystandard.co.uk/news/luton-man-jailed-over-abusive-messages-to-mp-heidi-allen-1-6005529?utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=Social_Icon&utm_campaign=in_article_social_icons)

*Additional sources: (The Independent)*

### **Facebook bans UK far right groups and leaders**

Facebook has imposed a ban on a dozen far-right individuals and organisations that it says "spread hate". The ban includes the British National Party and Nick Griffin, the English Defence League and the National Front. The list also includes Britain First, which was already banned, but this latest action will prohibit support for it on any of the US firm's services. It said it had taken the action because those involved had proclaimed a "violent or hateful mission". "Individuals and organisations who spread hate, or attack or call for the exclusion of others on the basis of who they are, have no place on Facebook," the social network added in a statement.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-47974579>

*Additional sources: (The Guardian) (The Times)*

### **Lyra McKee killing: 'New IRA admits responsibility'**

The New IRA has admitted responsibility for the killing of 29-year-old journalist Lyra McKee, according to a Northern Irish newspaper. In a statement given to The Irish News using a recognised code word, the group offered "full and sincere apologies" to her family and friends. Ms McKee was shot in the head while she observed rioting in Londonderry's Creggan estate on Thursday night. The New IRA said she was killed "while standing beside enemy forces".

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-48018615>

### **Brexit-backing Tory activists to seek Theresa May's resignation**

Conservative activists are to hold an emergency summit to debate a vote of no confidence in Theresa May, adding fresh pressure on her to resign as party leader and prime minister. The grassroots challenge to Mrs May's already precarious authority comes from the National Conservative Convention, which said on Monday that it would hold an extraordinary general meeting within weeks. The unprecedented move to discuss a vote of no confidence in Mrs May was triggered after more than 70 chairs of local constituency associations handed in a petition to the party.

<https://www.ft.com/content/52c55168-651a-11e9-a79d-04f350474d62>

### **Furious donors 'giving money to Tory MPs instead of Theresa May' amid Brexit anger**

Conservative donors are giving money directly to Tory MPs instead of the party's central office because of their anger about Theresa May's handling of Brexit, it has been claimed. Alexander Temerko, who has donated more than £1 million to the Conservatives, told The Times that the Prime Minister had "alienated" voters on both sides of the Brexit divide. And he revealed that he had now resorted to giving thousands of pounds in donations straight "to associations and MPs" instead of Conservative Campaign Headquarters (CCHQ).

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/political-parties/conservative-party/theresa-may/news/103363/furious-donors-giving-money>

### **May's failure in office reaches far beyond Brexit**

Herald Scotland savages Theresa May's performance at the helm of the nation and says the pervasive failure on Brexit stretches across a number of areas of society

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/opinion/17588954.andrew-mckie-mays-failure-in-office-reaches-far-beyond-brexit/>

### **Facebook ads by Lynton Crosby's firm 'part of push for hard Brexit'**

A network of secretive pro-Brexit Facebook campaigns overseen by Sir Lynton Crosby's company CTF Partners was part of a wider campaign to undermine ...

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/22/facebook-ads-by-lynton-crosbys-firm-part-of-push-for-hard-brexit>

### **Lyra McKee's friends stage protest at dissident republican office**

Friends of murdered journalist Lyra McKee have painted red hand prints across the office of a dissident republican group in Derry. Ms McKee, 29, was murdered on Thursday night while covering disturbances in Creggan. The gunman was aiming at police when he hit the journalist and author in the head. Her friends used red paint to cover their hands before planting prints across the Junior McDaid House in Derry, where Saoradh's headquarters are based. A group of about six men, understood to be members of the republican group, stood outside during the protest. Saoradh is associated with the New IRA.

<https://news.sky.com/story/lyra-mckees-friends-stage-protest-at-dissident-republican-office-11700770>

### **Tory election meltdown as activists switch allegiance to Nigel Farage's Brexit Party**

More than 60 per cent of Conservative activists are planning to switch sides and vote for Nigel Farage's new Brexit Party in next month's European elections, a dramatic survey has revealed. Mr Farage predicted that his party would "sweep the board" in the contests expected on 23 May, claiming it was attracting large numbers of Tory and Labour voters alike. Amid growing predictions of a Conservative meltdown at the ballot box, the senior MP Sir Graham Brady will reportedly warn Theresa May that 70 per cent of her MPs want her to step down by the end of June.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/brexit/tory-election-meltdown-as-activists-switch-allegiance-to-nigel-farages-brexit-party/>

### **'Toxic' Theresa: Tory election candidates avoid mentioning May's name on doorsteps after Brexit 'betrayal'**

Tory councillors are refusing to mention Theresa May's name on doorsteps ahead of next month's local elections because voters associate it with "betrayal". Conservative Associations across the country are finding that Mrs May's name is so toxic with voters that the mere mention of the Prime Minister gets in the way of campaigning. Tory councillors fear that voter backlash against Mrs May's handling of Brexit will cost them their seats, and are desperately trying to keep conversations focused on local issues to avoid being tainted by events in Westminster.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/04/18/toxic-theresa-tory-election-candidates-refusing-mention-mays/>

### **Jeremy Corbyn says government Brexit talks at risk because Tories want to 'do a deal with Donald Trump'**

Brexit talks between Labour and the Government are at risk because Conservative MPs want "to do a deal" with US President Donald Trump, Jeremy Corbyn has claimed. The Labour leader said ministers had given little ground in talks between the two parties so far, as he accused the Government of "dithering" over its Brexit strategy. Ministers and Labour frontbenchers have been holding talks for the past two weeks aimed at finding a compromise Brexit agreement that can get through the House of Commons, which has rejected Theresa May's own deal three times.

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/foreign-affairs/brexit/news/103306/jeremy-corbyn-says-government-brexit-talks-risk-because>

### **@TheSun Jeremy Corbyn blasted after video of him mocking captured SAS troopers and branding British forces in Iraq 'lawless' emerges**

Jeremy Corbyn blasted after video of him mocking captured SAS troopers and branding British forces in Iraq 'lawless' emerges

<https://twitter.com/SunPolitics/status/1119732475763331072>

### **Margaret Thatcher's former press secretary savages Ken Clarke's claim she would vote to stay in EU**

'I think it is ridiculous to claim she would have voted Remain just because, like me, she voted to confirm our membership of the Common Market in 1975. Sir Bernard Ingham instead argued that developments within the EU since Mrs Thatcher left office may have prompted her to 'threaten to leave'. He pointed to the adoption of the Euro single currency, which he argued has 'devastated southern Europe', and the moves towards a 'single foreign policy' and 'Euro-army' as factors which might have changed Mrs Thatcher's mind. 'All this ran against the grain of Mrs T's convictions and anyone, Ken Clarke or others, who suggests she would have sat unmoved by this nonsense is incredible,' he said. 'It is true she regarded referenda as the tool of dictators and that she never said to me either before or after 1990 that we should leave the EC. 'My best guess - and this is only a guess - is that she would have eventually challenged - and harried - the EU to drop its damaging federalism and go for a loose, wider freely co-operating group of nation states.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6942569/Margaret-Thatchers-former-press-secretary-savages-Ken-Clarkes-claim-vote-stay-EU.html>

### **Theresa May spotted in yellow vest working as marshal at Easter race**

Theresa May wore a hi-visibility jacket to help marshal a Good Friday race in her constituency, after returning from her Easter holiday in Wales. A smiling prime minister handing out water to thirsty runners at the Easter 10 contest in Maidenhead and walked the route with her husband, Philip. She also shared selfies with spectators before directing the runners, who - unlike so many Conservative MPs - followed her instructions, slapping the hands of some of them with the odd high-five as they passed by.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/theresa-may-yellow-vest-easter-holiday-maidenhead-run-a8877781.html>

### **Britons no longer just want to leave the EU - they want to change politics for good by smashing the two-party system**

The rapid rise of the Brexit Party in the polls just days after we launched formally has sent a shiver down the spine of the Conservative Party. This sense of apprehension is well deserved, as far as I am concerned. The omens for Theresa May do not look good. Take Councillor Barry Lewis, the Conservative leader of Derbyshire county council. On Friday, he confirmed that his group recently supported a motion not to take part in the European elections on May 23. Just think about that. The faithful servants of one of the oldest political parties in the world are on strike. They refuse to go out and canvass, such is their anger - and, no doubt, sheer embarrassment - at the appalling mess created

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/04/20/britons-no-longer-just-want-leave-eu-want-change-politics/>

### **A Far-Right Activist's Website Republished Articles From The Mail Online Without Permission**

Former Britain First deputy leader Jayda Fransen launched the new "venture" earlier this year. BuzzFeed News has found 28 articles that have been reproduced in part or in full from a variety of mainstream publications.

<https://www.buzzfeed.com/markdistefano/mail-online-far-right-jayda-fransen>

### **Theresa May's future to be determined in just DAYS as MPs plot new no confidence vote**

The Conservative Party's influential 1922 committee is set to meet on Tuesday to discuss whether the rule allowing a no confidence vote against the same person only once a year should be changed. Mrs May survived a no confidence vote in December 2018 and, according to the current regulations, her position is secured until the end of 2019. But backbenchers in the committee can vote to change the rules, as they are not determined by the party's constitution but by MPs themselves, according to Alan Mabbutt, a senior Conservative Party official. And the co-secretary of the committee, Nigel Evans, said he is "leaning towards" the idea of changing the rules. He said: "I certainly will be

leaning towards us changing the rules if another solution to this situation cannot be found. "We cannot leave it for 12 months. "If we fight the European elections there is only one person that is responsible - her."

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1116680/brexit-news-theresa-may-quit-no-confidence-vote-leadership-bid-european-elections>

### **I'm no Brexiteer, but even I can admit the Remain camp is slipping into fanatical territory**

The writer opines that the online #FBPE crowd are losing site of what they hope to achieve by being overly attack minded

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/brexit-remain-brexiteers-racism-far-right-islamophobia-xenophobia-a8875971.html>

### **How May's failed deal shattered EU relations**

Donald Tusk sent a "lines to take" memo to the EU's capitals setting out the legal reality and the bloc's strategic advantage under article 50. "We expect the UK to formulate its wishes when it comes to our future relationship," he said. "Any agreement, which will be concluded with the UK as a third country, will have to reflect the interests of both sides and be balanced in terms of rights and obligations. First we need to agree the arrangements for the withdrawal of the UK." At 11.23am BST, staff in Brussels received an email from the secretary general of the EU council, Jeppe Tranholm-Mikkelsen, seeking to assuage fears. "I know that many colleagues, in particular those who are British nationals, are very concerned today," the Danish official wrote. "I would like you to know that, for me, all ... colleagues are European Union officials, independently of the nationality."

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/19/brexit-theresa-may-failed-deal-eu-relations>

### **No Brexit more likely than a disorderly one, say economists**

The chances that Brexit will be cancelled are now greater than the chances Britain will leave the European Union without a deal, according to economists in a Reuters poll, who again pushed back their expectations for when the Bank of England will raise interest rates. In the latest monthly Reuters survey, taken April 12-17, the median probability Britain and the EU will part ways in a disorderly fashion - where no deal is agreed - held steady at the 15 percent given in March, the lowest since Reuters began asking in July 2017. Only one of 51 respondents gave a value over 50 percent. "Apart from the fact that no-deal Brexit is now less likely, the path ahead is as unclear as ever. A deal (and likely a softer Brexit) still seems more likely than not," BNP Paribas economists said. "But we are sceptical that this will happen any time soon."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-poll/no-brexit-more-likely-than-a-disorderly-one-say-economists-idUSKC N1RU01J>

### **Facebook to cave to EU pressure after row over political ad rules**

In a political standoff between European lawmakers and Facebook, the social networking giant has blinked first. After vocal complaints from the EU's three main institutions that the company's new political advertising rules will hamper region-wide campaigning, Facebook is expected to allow the European Parliament and EU political groups to buy social media ads across the 28-country bloc.

<https://www.politico.eu/article/facebook-european-elections-advertising-political-social-media-europe/amp/>

### **Forget Ukip, the only way to rattle the pro-EU establishment is to back the Brexit Party**

Following my declaration that I will stand as an MEP candidate for the Brexit Party, I have been asked more than once, "why the Brexit Party? Longworth is seeking to follow through on the 2016 referendum vote and hold the two main political parties to account

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/04/18/forget-ukip-way-rattle-pro-eu-establishment-back-brexit-party/>

### **Britain is once again the sick man of Europe**

Why so many crises have befallen the country at the same time and how they all relate to one

another are really important questions. Poor economic outcomes, in terms of real income growth, are surely related to the rise of national identity as a salient issue, though there are other factors, notably immigration. What matters, however, is not what caused all this, but that it is going to take a long time to sort all this out. The UK will, alas, remain sick for a while.

<https://www.ft.com/content/5a629584-610a-11e9-a27a-fdd51850994c>

### **Frustrated, confused: What Leave voters plan to do in the EU elections**

The overwhelming majority of those I met this week on a sunny afternoon in town were that way inclined. In summary, I got an earful of the F-word and the C-word. They are "frustrated" that the UK is still in the EU, and "confused" as to how they are going to cast their votes. If they cast their vote, that is. At least one lady said she planned to abstain in protest. Many people said they would vote for whichever party looked stronger on polling day.

<https://news.sky.com/story/ramsgate-the-small-seaside-town-with-a-role-in-the-brexite-saga-11696750>

### **'No minutes' of DUP Brexit donor's meetings with Stormont bodies**

No minutes were recorded of meetings the DUP arranged for a Brexit campaign donor to discuss "investment opportunities" with public bodies in Northern Ireland. Campaigners raised concerns yesterday after The Irish News revealed businessman Richard Cook's meetings with Invest NI, Belfast City Council and a Stormont department in the months following the EU referendum. Mr Cook, a former vice-chairman of the Scottish Conservatives, chairs the Constitutional Research Council (CRC) - a pro-union business group that donated £435,000 to the DUP during its Brexit campaign. Questions have persisted over the DUP's Brexit campaign money, of which £282,000 was spent on a front-page ad in the British newspaper Metro - a publication not circulated in Northern Ireland. Last week it emerged the DUP received a further £13,000 from CRC after the 2016 referendum. The party said it used donations to "further the cause of unionism".

<https://www.irishnews.com/news/brexit/2019/04/17/news/-no-minutes-of-dup-brexit-donor-s-meetings-with-stormont-bodies-1599567/>