

Peter Niesen, Markus Patberg: Making Brexit reversible

Background information on existing regulations/policy issues/initiatives

Keywords: *citizen rights Brexit; European Parliament after Brexit; post-Brexit citizen rights; representation of British citizens; representation of British citizens in the European Parliament; representation of British expats; rights of British citizens in EU; rights of British expats*

Topic: The EU should ensure continued representation of British citizens in the European Parliament after Brexit

Overview

- The looming Brexit has opened up a fierce debate on the future of the rights of British citizens living in Europe
 - In the recent past, a variety of political and activist groups have warned that citizen rights have not been on top of the Brexit-negotiation-agenda, neither for EU negotiators nor for British representatives¹²
- Most discussions have revolved around the question, whether free movement of citizens, free movement of labor and certain rights pertaining the labor market as well as the recognition of academic qualifications abroad will still be granted for British citizens within the EU after Brexit

In detail

- There have been, however, no concrete discussions on the question whether Britain could still be represented in the EU Parliament after Brexit. On the contrary, there have been various official actions and statements suggesting that such will not be the case, including:
 - The recent yes-vote for a compromise agreement to shrink the European Parliament after Brexit. Under the proposal, the Parliament will reduce from 751 members to 705, with the remaining 27 (currently) British seats being redistributed amongst other member countries to compensate for existing biases in representation. The Parliament's influential Constitutional Affairs Committee voted 24 in favor to 4 against³
 - France, Spain, Italy, and the Netherlands will gain the most seats, MEPs decided with 21 MEPs in favour and four against⁴

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/mar/21/eu-leaders-accused-of-not-protecting-citizens-rights-in-brexit-deal>

² <https://www.the3million.org.uk>

³ <https://www.politico.eu/article/meps-vote-to-shrink-european-parliament-after-brexit/>

⁴ <https://euobserver.com/institutional/140654>

- The relocation of EU agencies out of the UK and into neighboring EU-countries, such as the relocation of the European Medicines Agency to Amsterdam and the European Banking Authority to Paris⁵
- The fact that with exiting the EU contractually Britain will lose all its representatives by default, be it in special committees of the Commission, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Committee of the Regions or any other formal EU institution⁶
- One of the few hopes that a tie between Britain/British citizens and the EU might still be upheld even after Brexit is suggested by the potential continuation of a EU representation in its current Westminster offices
 - “Although the UK is set to become a third country, as a former member state with many links to the EU, it nonetheless – and whatever the outcome of the negotiations – will remain a special and essential partner of the union. Most notably, as of now, more than 3 million non-British EU citizens reside in the United Kingdom”⁷

Topic: NGOs/organizations concerned with post-Brexit citizen rights

British in Europe

<https://britishineurope.org>

Expats Citizen Rights in the EU

<https://www.ecreu.com>

the3million

<https://www.the3million.org.uk>

Further reading

- https://ec.europa.eu/unitedkingdom/services/your-rights/Brexit_en
- https://ec.europa.eu/unitedkingdom/services/your-rights_en
- http://www.cer.eu/sites/default/files/pb_euafterBrexit_15april16.pdf
- [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/583154/IPOL_STU\(2017\)583154_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/583154/IPOL_STU(2017)583154_EN.pdf)
- <http://www.politics.co.uk/comment-analysis/2018/03/05/discarded-by-brussels-westminster-brits-in-europe-left-stran>

⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/nov/20/london-loses-european-medicines-agency-amsterdam-brexit-relocation>

⁶ https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/unitedkingdom_en

⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/may/03/eu-plans-to-retain-westminster-offices-former-tory-hq>