

129 MEPs pen heartfelt letter to UK citizens urging end to “Brexit disaster”

Written by Lorna Hutchinson on 13 January 2019 in News
News

A cross-party, 26-nation group of MEPs has issued a last-ditch plea to the UK to reconsider leaving the EU.



Photo Credit: Press Association

The 129-strong group of MEPs, led by S&D group vice-president Josef Wiedenholzer, said in the letter that they were watching the unfolding “Brexit disaster” with “growing anxiety”.

“We are reluctant to intervene in your domestic politics, but we cannot help but notice that the opinion polls show a growing number of voters who want an opportunity to re-consider the Brexit decision, now that it is clear that Brexit is very different to the promises made by the Leave campaign nearly three years ago,” the letter said.

“We regret the decision made by the British people [but] we understand the need to respect it,” the letter said, but added, “Leaving without a deal would be a disaster for everyone involved – UK and EU citizens alike.”

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The letter comes as the UK braces for an eventful week, with Theresa May’s Brexit deal due to be voted on in the House of Commons on Tuesday.

There is widespread speculation that MPs will torpedo the deal and that the government will be forced to extend Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty in order to buy more time to resolve the Brexit crisis.

Though the government has consistently shut down rumours of plans to extend Article 50, adamant that the UK will leave the EU on 29 March, it is widely thought that a withering defeat in Tuesday’s vote will leave Theresa May with no other choice but to request an extension.

As this website reported on Friday, an extension of Article 50 could even lead to UK participation in the European elections in late May.

“Any British decision to remain in the EU would be warmly welcomed by us and we would work with you to reform and improve the European Union, so that it works better in the interests of all citizens” **Letter to UK from 129 MEPs**

‘WE WANT YOU TO STAY’

In their letter to the UK, which was published by the UK’s Independent newspaper on Sunday, the 129 MEPs said that should the UK decide to revoke Article 50 altogether, they would support it.

“Any British decision to remain in the EU would be warmly welcomed by us and we would work with you to reform and improve the European Union, so that it works better in the interests of all citizens,” the letter said.

It added, “We have greatly appreciated the enormous impact British politicians and citizens have contributed to the European project over the last 40 years. We would miss the extraordinary expertise of our British colleagues.”

On news of the letter, UK MEPs expressed their gratitude for such an outpouring of support and affection from their European Parliament peers.

S&D group MEP Julie Ward thanked her fellow group member Josef Weidenholzer, for organising “this lovely letter to all the British people.”

“It is clear we should remain at the heart of the EU, helping to lead, not merely spectating from across the Channel,” she added.

Scottish National Party MEP Alyn Smith, said of the letter, “Anyone in any doubt about EU attitudes to reversing Brexit need only read this very welcome letter, signed by serious MEPs from left and right, from the Algarve to the Arctic Circle.”

“How can Scotland not be part of this global A-Team?”

UK MEPS ‘MOVED’

UK labour MEP Jude Kirton-Darling said she found the letter “very moving.”

“MEPs from nearly every other country in the EU have signed a heartfelt joint letter to the British public asking them to reconsider their decision to leave the bloc to prevent an unfolding Brexit disaster,” she said.

Her sentiments were echoed by UK greens MEP Molly Scott Cato, who said, “More than 100 MEPs from every corner of the EU sign a heartfelt letter asking the British people to reconsider Brexit This is really touching.”

The MEPs’ letter concluded by saying, “We ask you to reconsider to leave our Union in the interest of the next generation of young people, British and Europeans, who will lose out on the opportunities of living, loving and working together.”

“Brexit will weaken all of us. We want you to stay. Together, we are stronger and together we can build a stronger Europe.”

About the author

Lorna Hutchinson is a reporter and sub-editor at The Parliament Magazine

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