

European Green Party leaders urge second Brexit referendum

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News

The two joint leaders of the European Green Party have called for a second referendum on Brexit.



Photo Credit: Press Association

The demand by Reinhard Bütikofer, a German MEP, and former MEP Monica Frassoni, comes just ahead of a key vote on the Brexit deal struck by Theresa May and the EU.

A second poll has been touted as a possible solution to the current impasse on Brexit. The EU referendum in 2016 saw a narrow majority in favour of Britons wanting to quit the EU.

The “meaningful vote” takes place in the UK House of Commons on Tuesday evening, with the Labour party saying it will table a motion of no confidence in May’s government if she loses.

This could trigger the collapse of May's government and a general election.

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On Monday, the two Greens leaders said, "The European Green Party is united in its conviction that the UK's EU membership makes Europe stronger and more relevant in the world."

"We are also convinced that the people of Britain should be consulted with a 'People's Vote' to see if they agree with the deal negotiated by Theresa May."

"There is too much at stake for both Europe and the UK to cut the cord that has kept us together for the past 45 years without asking the people," added the statement signed by the pair.

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Meanwhile, on Monday the UK Prime Minister made a last-ditch bid to win over wavering Tory MPs ahead of the key Commons vote.

"The European Green Party is united in its conviction that the UK's EU membership makes Europe stronger and more relevant in the world" **Reinhard Bütikofer and Monica Frassoni**

In a speech delivered in Stoke-on-Trent, May referred to the letters she received on Monday from the Presidents of the Council and Commission, Donald Tusk and Jean-Claude Juncker.

She said, "We now have a commitment from the EU that work on our new relationship can begin as soon as possible after the signing of the Withdrawal Agreement - in advance of the 29 March - and we have an explicit commitment that this new relationship does not need to replicate the backstop in any respect whatsoever."

May added, "We have agreement on a fast-track process to bring the free trade deal we will negotiate into force if there are any delays in member states ratifying it, making it even more likely that the backstop will never need to be used."

"We now have absolute clarity on the explicit linkage between the Withdrawal Agreement and the Political Declaration, putting beyond doubt that these come as a package," May added.

The Prime Minister, who, despite her latest efforts, is still expected to lose Tuesday's vote, said, "The letters published today have legal force and must be used to interpret the meaning of the Withdrawal Agreement, including in any future arbitration."

“They make absolutely clear the backstop is not a threat or a trap.”

She addressed two other “areas of concern” - the protection of workers’ rights and environmental standards.

May said, “I could not have been clearer that, far from wanting to see a reduction in our standards in these areas, the UK will instead continue to be a world leader.”

“We have committed to addressing these concerns and will work with MPs from across the House on how best to implement them, looking at legislation where necessary, to deliver the best possible results for workers across the UK.”

About the author

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