

BRITISH IN EUROPE

THE COALITION OF UK CITIZENS IN EUROPE

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The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1A 2AA

13 October 2019

Dear Prime Minister,

It has been clear to us since this government took office that British citizens in Europe are simply not a priority in its Brexit plans. We have explained time and time again that no deal would be a disaster for us and our families.

In addition, we have had to manage the fallout from Home Office ministers' statements and their impact on our position in the countries where we live.

We pointed out diplomatically and privately back in August how we were directly impacted by the Home Secretary's statement that free movement would end immediately in the event of a no-deal Brexit. Her name and announcement were mentioned to us specifically in meetings to us and was reflected in the European Parliament's recent resolution on the UK-EU negotiations which raised grave concerns about how EU 27 citizens will be treated by the UK in the future.

In last week's interview – with a German newspaper, Die Welt - Brandon Lewis's admission that EU citizens who fail to apply for settled status by end 2020 would be deported has again raised alarm bells. Did he stop to think that the draft German no-deal contingency legislation on the status of some 107,000 British citizens in Germany is currently being debated in the Bundestag? And did he think about the consequences of using the term deportation in a German historic context?

It is clear that ministers are either unaware or indifferent as to the consequences of their pronouncements on our position in the countries where we live and are either unaware or heedless of the principle of reciprocity.

Let us spell it out again: the status of 1.3 million British citizens, young and old, depends directly on the way in which EU 27 citizens are to be treated in the UK. Language *and* policies matter – undermining the status of our EU 27 friends in the UK undermines our status.

This is a far cry from the promises that were made during the Referendum campaign when Vote Leave - the group you spearheaded - pledged that nothing would change for the five million people whose lives would be directly affected by Brexit. In fact, you accused those of us raising these entirely prescient concerns of 'scaremongering'. And even if a deal is reached by end October, we will lose key rights anyway, such as free movement, and cross border working and recognition of qualifications.

It gives us no pleasure whatsoever to have been proved right, and we call yet again upon the government to make good upon its duty to protect the interests of its citizens who reside in the EU 27.

Yours sincerely,

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