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## **50 MPS, MEPS SUPPORT FAST-TRACK EU MEMBERSHIP FOR INDEPENDENT SCOTLAND**

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EurActiv (10 April 2017)

A group of 50 European politicians have put their weight behind Scottish independence in an open letter calling for a swift, smooth, and orderly transition to full EU membership.

The cross-party group – including MEPs and MPs from Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Portugal, Sweden, Greece, Hungary and Malta – argued that Scotland would be most welcome as a full member of the European Union if it breaks away from the UK after Brexit.

The group of EU politicians includes German Green MEP Reinhard Hans Butikofer, Maltese Labour MEP Miriam Dalli, Greek Green MP Giorgos Dimaras and Slovenian Social Democrat MEP Tanja Fajon. The politicians have also advised that they could not tell Scotland what path to take.

The Scottish government announced plans for a new independence vote on 13 March. Nicola Sturgeon will seek the power to call a new referendum on whether Scotland should follow the UK out of the EU or form its own country.

The politicians said in the letter that Democracy and mutual respect are at the heart of the European project and so, whilst we are saddened by the vote of a small majority for the United Kingdom to leave the EU, we respect this as a democratic decision of UK citizens.

We recognise that this was not your choice however and that Scotland voted strongly to remain within the EU.

The question of Scotlands constitutional future, and your relationships with the UK and the EU are for the people of Scotland to decide.

It is not our place to tell Scotland what path you should take.

62% of Scotland voted to remain in the EU last year and the latest news comes a week after Spains foreign minister announced the country would not block Scotlands attempts to apply for European Union membership.

Scotland seeks second referendum amid Brexit doubts

The Scottish government announced today (13 March) a new independence vote, pre-empting this weeks expected start of the Brexit process. Nicola Sturgeon will seek the power to call a new referendum on whether Scotland should follow the UK out of the EU or form its own country.

Greer, who organised the letter with German Green MEP Terry Reintke, said: There is a

tremendous amount of goodwill from across the continent towards Scotlands European aspirations. Independence is the only way to secure a European future for Scotland.

The only thing standing in Scotlands way to forging links with Europe is the Westminster government. Our parliament has voted to give the people a choice over their own future and no Tory government at Westminster should stand in the way of that.

The letter follows Spanish Foreign Minister Alfonso Dastis saying Madrid would not veto Scotlands membership of the EU if it applied as an independent nation.

Spain eases opposition to an independent Scotland in EU

Spain, at loggerheads with Britain over Gibraltar, appears to be easing its opposition to an independent Scotland in the European Union, saying it would not block such a move at least initially.

British Prime Minister Theresa May last month urged Scotland not to choose independence, while also fighting a political crisis in Northern Ireland in the frantic final days before she launched Brexit.

May holds crisis talks in Scotland on brink of Brexit

British Prime Minister Theresa May yesterday (27 March) urged Scotland not to choose independence, while also fighting a political crisis in Northern Ireland in the frantic final days before she launches Brexit.

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