
LONDON TO OPEN BREXIT TALKS BY OFFERING TO PROTECT RIGHTS OF EU CITIZENS IN UK

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15.06.2017

EurActiv (15 June 2017)

The UK's Brexit minister, David Davis, will open divorce talks in Brussels next week with an offer to allow the three million European Union citizens living in Britain the same rights that they have now, the Financial Times reported on Wednesday (14 June).

The newspaper said Britain wanted these rights to be available only to those EU nationals who were living in the country before 29 March this year, when the government triggered the start of the two-year process of leaving the EU.

But it is likely to accede to EU demands that the date should be when Britain leaves the EU in 2019, the FT said.

British Prime Minister Theresa May has called on the EU to issue a sweeping, reciprocal guarantee of rights for British expatriates living in the EU after Brexit. But EU leaders insist these must be negotiated in detail for them to have any legal value as reassurance for those people affected.

EU leaders to tighten Brexit demands on citizen's rights, banks

European Union leaders will insist Britain grant permanent residence to EU citizens who arrive before Brexit in 2019 and stay five more years, according to a draft negotiating plan they will endorse this weekend.

The FT, citing anonymous officials, said Davis would offer to guarantee the rights that EU citizens currently have in Britain, such as the freedom to move and work in the country, and aim to treat them as fairly as they have been to this point.

The newspaper said one area of concern for the EU was whether those EU nationals living in Britain would be able to access the European Court of Justice, a red line for London.

A spokeswoman for the Brexit department said: We have said consistently that resolving the status of EU citizens living in the UK and UK nationals living in other member states is our first priority for negotiations.

Britain's preparations for the complex Brexit talks have been thrown into turmoil after Prime Minister Theresa May failed to secure a parliamentary majority in a national election last week.

The government is still in talks with a small Northern Irish party to secure the support of its 10 members of parliament to pass legislation.

BACKGROUND

Millions of citizens in the UK and the EU face uncertainty over their future given Britain's decision to leave the EU.

The UK and the remaining 27 EU member states are seeking a deal on citizens rights early on in the divorce talks. Over a million British citizens work in the EU while some three million EU citizens are in the UK.

Currently, these citizens enjoy the right to live, work and study in the EU; the free movement of citizens is hailed as one of the four freedoms of the EU.

But British Prime Minister Theresa May has interpreted the narrow victory for Leave as a mandate to take back control of British borders and introduce limits on immigration from the EU and elsewhere.

Kaynak/Source: