AVRASYA İNCELEMELERİ MERKEZİ
CENTER FOR EURASIAN STUDIES

AVRASYA
İNCELEMELERİ
MERKEZİ
CENTER FOR
EURASIAN STUDIES

BREXIT: HOW THE EU IS RESPONDING TO LATEST UNCERTAINTY

- 05.09.2019

Deutsche Welle (5 September 2019)

UK PM Boris Johnson's plan to lead his country out of the EU by the end of October has met a stinging defeat in the lower house. London is in disarray, but Brussels says it is prepared for all eventualities.

The British prime minister has insisted that talks with the EU on a revised Brexit deal were "making substantial progress." But the bloc says the UK has not submitted any substantial new proposals. European Commission spokeswoman, Mina Andreeva, told reporters in Brussels that "there is nothing new" from London.

She also said that the EU was open to a deal, but was also carrying on with no-deal preparations.

"There may be twists and turns in political developments in London right now, but our position is stable. We are willing to work constructively with Prime Minister Boris Johnson and to look at any proposals that he may have as long as they are compatible with the withdrawal agreement," she said.

Johnson's attempt to get the UK out of the EU by October 31, "no ifs or buts," stood in tatters after rebellious lawmakers on Wednesday night blocked his plan to leave the EU next month without a withdrawal deal and rejected his call to trigger a snap general election. He also now leads a government with no parliamentary majority.

Mitigating the impact

The EU is also freeing up □□□□ million ($860 million) in emergency funds to cope with the impact of a possible no-deal Brexit on member states, officials said on Wednesday.

Most of the money □□□□□□□□ □□□□ million □□□□ to come from a disaster fund called the Emergency Solidarity Fund, which is usually used to respond to natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes.

The rest is to come from the European Globalization Adjustment Fund, which helps workers made redundant by globalization.

Officials stressed that beyond the [redacted] figure, more cash could be made available to mitigate the effects of an abrupt Brexit from other funds, for instance budgeted cash for fisheries and agriculture.

Among the EU countries expected to be most impacted by an abrupt no-deal Brexit are Ireland, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, France and Denmark.

No backstop alternative?

Furthermore, the EU said on Wednesday that it currently sees no alternative to the so-called Irish backstop in a Brexit withdrawal deal.

British and EU customs and border experts met on Wednesday for technical talks to explore possible alternatives to the backstop clause, which Johnson insists must be scrapped if the UK is to sign up for a divorce deal.

But Brussels says that so far there are no other options which fulfill the EU requirements of protecting the Northern Irish peace agreement and safeguarding the European single market.

"The backstop... is the only solution identified that safeguards the Good Friday Agreement, ensures compliance with international law obligations and preserves the integrity of the internal market," the European Commission said in its latest Brexit planning document.

After a shrill referendum campaign, nearly 52 percent of British voters opted to leave the EU on June 23. Polls had shown a close race before the vote with a slight lead for those favoring remaining in the EU. Conservative British Prime Minister David Cameron, who had campaigned for Britain to stay, acknowledged the "will of the British people" and resigned the following morning.

Kaynak/Source: