



**DEMOCRACY
UNDER
THREAT**
#StopTheCoup

British democracy under threat: grassroots group gathers in Berlin

Concerned British and European citizens gather in Berlin to protest the attempts to force through a no-deal Brexit. The group will also collect signatures for a letter to be delivered to British Ambassador Sir Sebastian Wood.

Berlin, 6th September 2019 – A grassroots protest group has formed in Berlin since the announcement of the prorogation of the British Houses of Parliament at a time of national crisis.

Grave concerns have arisen over the current government's desire to pursue Brexit at any cost – even attempting to push through a worrying no deal departure from the European Union. This is on top of existing wild uncertainty that is affecting the lives of British people in Germany and our counterparts in the UK and elsewhere in Europe.

Our concerns include:

- The uncertain status of British citizens living in Germany is already limiting our ability to plan or make life-changing decisions, while great numbers of us have already been turned down for everything from mortgages to job interviews – and some even stripped of existing jobs, benefits, or other agreements where secure immigration status or EU citizenship is required. The rising threat of a no-deal Brexit is worsening our situation in Germany.
- Confusion over immigration status, the British settled status scheme, and the right to return to the UK or the continent with our families is causing much turmoil to Brits in Germany, Brits in Europe, and EU citizens in the UK. Many families now face the very real risk of being forced to choose between loved ones back home and partners or children – and the reality that families will be kept apart and broken up in the event of no deal.
- Failure by the UK to ensure consistent reciprocal ringfencing of citizen rights in the event of a no deal means British citizens in Europe – like the three million EU citizens in the UK – have become bargaining chips. A no-deal scenario is a disaster for British citizens in the EU, who will face 27 different no-deal solutions across the EU. The resulting solutions – where provided at all – cannot possibly cover areas currently coordinated across the EU, such as social security.
- The loss of freedom of movement, a right many attendees have freely exercised, is something many British citizens both in Europe and in the UK



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will mourn. Many people's livelihoods, especially those of frontier workers or those who live in one EU state but regularly work in another, are already at risk – and this will worsen in the event of a no-deal Brexit.

- British citizens who have lived outside of the country for 15 years or more have been disenfranchised and unable to have their say on a matter which drastically affects their lives. We estimate over 80% of all Brits living outside the UK globally have lost their right to vote.

One of the biggest #StopTheCoup demonstrations outside the UK

Spontaneous demonstrations of individuals who gathered near the British Embassy from the time of the announcement first led to a 40-strong demonstration that gained mass media coverage on Saturday 31st August [images attached].

A week in planning, now a larger gathering will assemble on the east side of Pariser Platz from 12:00 to 14:00 on Saturday, 7th September. Bigger, brighter, bolder and bursting with British – and European – spirit.

High-profile speakers and attendees

Speakers include MEP Sergey Lagodinsky (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen), academic Mareike Kleine (LSE/Freie Universität), political analyst Jon Worth, and a representative from British in Germany. The event will also feature musical performances and a short routine from Berlin-based Scottish comedian Neil Numb. Representatives from supporting groups such as Pulse of Europe, British in Germany e.V. and British in Europe will present.

Letter to the British Ambassador

The organisers will also be collecting signatures for a letter to be hand-delivered [copy attached] to British Ambassador to Germany, Sir Sebastian Wood.

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Berlin, 7th September 2019

To the hands of Ambassador Sir Sebastian Wood,

We, the undersigned British and EU citizens, are here today to register our objection to the events currently transpiring in the United Kingdom under Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

This calculated prorogation of Parliament is a threat to British democracy, causing a constitutional crisis at a time of national crisis.

The approx. 1.3 million British citizens in Europe, just like the 3 million EU citizens residing in the UK, have already endured three years of uncertainty, stress, dread and – at times – utter panic surrounding Brexit and the threat of no deal.

Those of us who have exercised our free movement rights are already enduring hardships and discrimination over our uncertain status, and we now grow increasingly concerned over the mounting prospect of a highly damaging no-deal Brexit.

We stand to lose many rights while our friends and families back in the UK are set to endure everything from food and medicine shortages to pileups at Dover. The lives of people we care about are being put at risk as the once-united kingdom is now led headfirst into disaster by a minority government.

This utter chaos has brought us together in solidarity to defend British democracy – for the country we love, its people today, and for future generations.

Signed

#StopTheCoup Berlin



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A range of images from the demo on 31 August, 2019 can be viewed at:
<https://stopthecoup.de/images-from-31-august-demo/>

Images can also be downloaded in high resolution from:
https://stopthecoup.de/310819_StopTheCoup_Berlin.zip

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