



The British Community Committee of France

Paris, 30 November 2017

Dear members of the British Community Committee of France (BCC),

I would greatly appreciate it if you would kindly forward this update on Brexit and the attached files to your own members. As the Brexit negotiations reach a crucial crossroads, most of this update will be about British in Europe, where there is an increasingly acute need for volunteers to help (see below). Many thanks!

In November, representatives of British in Europe and the 3 million (who represent EU27 citizens living in the UK), attended meetings in Brussels with the European Commission chief Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier, his deputy Sabine Weyand, and Guy Verhofstadt, the lead Brexit negotiator for the European Parliament. The other participants in the British in Europe delegations besides myself were Jane Golding of Berlin, Chair, Fiona Godfrey of Luxembourg, Vice-Chair, and Jeremy Morgan QC, Vice-Chair, who lives in Italy.

After 6 rounds of UK-EU27 negotiations the current offers fall well short of the general principle that both the UK and the EU27 signed up to – namely that people would be able to carry on with their lives exactly as they had before Brexit. Major sticking points remain, including the lifelong right of return for EU nationals in the UK, and onward freedom of movement for British people living in EU27 countries.

British in Europe sees a serious risk of a political stitch-up in the run-up to the crucial meeting of the Council of the EU (heads of member state governments) on 14 and 15 December. That meeting is due to pronounce on whether "sufficient progress" has been made in the UK-EU talks, or not. If the Council decides that "sufficient progress" has been made, that would enable both sides to move on to discussing trade. Our fear at British in Europe is that "sufficient progress" may be decided on, despite the fact that many of our citizens' rights claims have not been met. In that case, the UK and EU27 could discuss their future trade relationship without fully guaranteeing our rights. We would become bargaining chips in the fullest sense of the term.

Before the Council meeting, the European Parliament will itself hold a debate the "sufficient progress" question, expected in early December. In the coming days, we need as many UK citizens living in France as possible to write to their MEPs and *députés* in the French region where they live, and to their MEPs and MPs in the UK, to persuade them to appraise very carefully the situation regarding citizens' rights before they vote on "sufficient progress".

British in Europe are therefore looking for **Activists to join their lobbying teams**. The only requirements are enthusiasm and a desire to get involved! Lobbying team members will help send emails and letters to MEPs and MPs in France and the UK. They will learn about our campaign and be part of a lively community with shared aims, working together to make a difference. Only basic computer skills and access to a laptop are needed. There's no need to be a social media user, as we work with Ryver, a simple communication platform. Volunteers can put in as much or as little time as they want, but during our campaigns will need to give a minimum of two hours a week. There will be plenty of time to get to know and chat with fellow campaign members too!



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Also needed are **Coordinators for lobbying teams** who will help keep address lists and spreadsheets up-to-date, collecting and collating responses and follow-ups, to gauge how successful our campaigns are. They will also help with support tasks, such as formatting letters and emails. They will need to commit a minimum of 1 to 2 hours a week, have access to a laptop and a basic understanding of spreadsheets (we use Google spreadsheets, which are open access).

There are also opportunities for translators to help translate emails, letters and responses into and from the main EU27 languages.

The campaign also needs intensive support on Twitter, so British in Europe is also recruiting "**Twitter Dragons**" who will be part of a dedicated group supporting the British in Europe Twitter account, by retweeting and liking our tweets, joining in conversations on citizens' rights, and tagging BiE on their own tweets. They will do this from their own personal Twitter account, following and interacting with major players in citizens' rights. This support will be vital in growing our presence on Twitter. We suggest a minimum of 1 hour a week.

Other **Specialist volunteer positions** in support of British in Europe include:

- a) Admin support for our advocacy team
- b) a Wordpress developer to help with the website
- c) Media professionals in the UK and EU27 for our communications team
- d) Fund-raising professionals.

These roles are *pro bono* and self-funding in the short-term. In return, volunteers will be helping an important cause and gaining an extended network of dedicated professionals.

If any of your members would like to take part in these activities in the next few days, they should contact as soon as possible our volunteer coordinator, Kalba Meadows at kalba.meadows@britishineurope.org. Again, many thanks.

With all best wishes for the fast-approaching festive season,

Christopher Chantrey OBE
Chairman, British Community Committee of France
(BCC)
Member of the Steering Committee,
British in Europe