



The Centre for
Cross Border Studies

MEDIA WATCH

3 August 2018 – 10 August 2018

6 August 2018

InterTradelreland claims more firms getting ready for Brexit

There has been a spike in demand for Brexit planning help at InterTradelreland, the cross-border body said.

Its business monitor for the second quarter said that the number of firms on the island of Ireland reporting growth was at its highest level for seven years.

But their findings suggested businesses felt there remained "significant" challenges ahead.

At the same time, as a growing number of firms reported growth, there were also increasing numbers of firms reporting a decline.

There were mixed signals across the board, with uncertainty over Brexit weighing heavily.

Energy costs and other overheads, including wages, were major headaches for companies.

The going was even tougher for smaller firms and those in retail and construction.

However, over a quarter of professional services businesses were preparing for growth.

But one in four SMEs said they were putting off investment because of Brexit, while just under a third said they were concerned about sales. One in five had developed plans for when the UK leaves the EU.

Aidan Gough, InterTradelreland's director of strategy and policy, said: "The number of firms preparing for Brexit is increasing all the time.

"We see this in the demand for our supports and services. In particular, our Brexit Advisory Service which offers bespoke help and assistance for SMEs, including a £2,000 Brexit start to plan voucher, has seen a big spike in demand.

"However, businesses can't afford to be complacent, as 80% of firms still have no plans to deal with Brexit."

Source: The Belfast Telegraph

8 August 2018

Cross-border student body backs a second vote on the final Brexit deal

AN organisation representing tens of thousands of students in Northern Ireland is calling for a people's vote on the Brexit deal amid "massive uncertainty" around tuition fees across the border.

Olivia Potter-Hughes, president of the National Union of Students-Union of Students in Ireland (NUS-USI) - which represents 200,000 members - has given her support to a referendum on the deal.

Ms Potter-Hughes said: "There is still massive uncertainty around the tuition fees students studying on a cross-border basis will face.

"In light of the utter farce and chaos that has engulfed the Brexit process since the referendum result was announced, the public must be given another chance to have its say on what direction the UK should take on Brexit."

Last week a call for a second referendum on the final Brexit deal was endorsed by the National Union of Students, which represents 4.3 million members across the UK.

A petition supporting the campaign for a Final Say On Brexit set up by The Independent newspaper has passed 590,000 signatures.

Recent polling revealed the majority of students would back a vote on the final Brexit deal, as some 70% believe they will be worse off after leaving the EU.

Support among young voters for a new referendum has surged from 58% in February 2017 to 67% this month, according to the survey of undergraduates, conducted by Youthsight.

It was recently revealed more than 1.4m more young people would be eligible to vote in a fresh referendum than was the case in the 2016 Brexit poll.

Meanwhile, a Fine Gael minister in the Republic has called on Sinn Fein to resign their Westminster seats and support nonabstentionist candidates in the subsequent by-elections.

Junior Finance Minister Michael D'Arcy (left) said Sinn Fein should back "agreed Remain candidates" who would vote for a soft Brexit once elected in the by-elections. "Those successful agreed remain candidates would do their duty, take their seats in Westminster and ultimately vote down a hard Brexit should such a proposal come before the House of Commons," Mr D'Arcy said.

"This is a tangible way for Sinn Fein to make a real contribution to Ireland's Brexit challenge, without compromising on abstentionism. In this way they could do more for politics than ever before."

He said Sinn Fein did not "put their shoulder to the wheel" during the Brexit referendum and it was now time for Mary Lou McDonald to put "country before party".

Elsewhere, police chiefs have acknowledged a risk to the British public from a hard Brexit. The Association of Police and Crime Commissioners have written to the Home Secretary to express concern over what withdrawing from the EU will mean for security measures.

They warned that leaving the EU without an agreement on future relations would mean "a significant loss of operational capacity" because police would instantly lose access to cross-border investigative powers and access to databases.

The association says these concerns come as threats to the UK from abroad are increasing.

Tensions are rising as Britain tries to hammer out an agreement that can be approved by all the EU member states.

The cross-party Brexit working group has requested a meeting with Home Secretary Sajid Javid to discuss "preparations, contingencies and the financial implications of post-Brexit policing".

Source: The Belfast Telegraph