

## **Brexit highlights that the struggle for European unity is more important than ever**

The EGP still regrets the result of the 2016 referendum on the UK's membership of the EU.

Since the referendum in 2016 UK governments have been negotiating a withdrawal agreement with the European Union that tried to solve many of the major issues:

- safeguarding citizens' rights, both Non-British EU citizens in the UK and UK citizens in the EU;
- agreeing financial settlement;
- preventing a hard border on the island of Ireland that could jeopardise the fragile peace after the Good-Friday-Agreement.

Thus, the EU and the UK were trying to build a basis on which a future UK-EU agreement could stand.

While we supported these negotiations, one thing remains true: any responsible UK government would have outlined such solutions before even calling a referendum. The opposite happened in the UK. Before and during the referendum anti-Europeans and eventually the leave campaign consciously spread misinformation to voters all over the United Kingdom. This created a growing climate of mistrust, division and xenophobia.

The EGP calls on the UK government to condemn hate crime and tackle all forms of racism, whether from politicians, the press or individuals.

The EU stood together during the negotiations and agreed to several extensions to give the UK parliament more time to ratify the withdrawal agreement. This time was given to find a way out of the deadlock.

Thus, the EGP welcomes the latest decision by the Council to extend the Article 50 procedure. More time is the only way to find a way to move forward.

As European Green Party we:

- will support the Green Party of England and Wales, the Scottish Green Party and the Green Party in Northern Ireland in the upcoming general election and fight together for a historic great result;
- will push for ambitious social, environmental and consumer rights and make sure that any agreement on the future relationship between the EU and the UK will not be a race to the bottom, as far as civil, social and consumer standards as well as environment protection are concerned;
- will not support any changes on a withdrawal agreement that jeopardize peace on the island of Ireland;
- welcome that the biggest pro-European civil movement of the continent arose in the United Kingdom. Millions of people marched repeatedly for citizens' rights and above all: their voice to be heard in a people's vote;
- stand firmly side by side with the pro-European civil movement. We will not stop supporting those who fight for the United Kingdom to remain in the EU;
- support the call for a people's vote on the withdrawal agreement and the future of the UK, as government and parliament have remained unable to build common ground on the issue of Brexit so far;



- will support, from the first day after Brexit, should it happen after all, all those who want the United Kingdom to re-join the European Union. We will not give up the United Kingdom and their citizens and will continue to fight for them and their rights, even after Brexit.