

# [Keir Starmer letter to David Davis calling for additional emergency round of talks](#)

## **Keir**

**Starmer MP, Labour's Shadow Brexit Secretary**, has written to David Davis calling on him urgently to request an additional emergency round of talks to try and reach an agreement with EU negotiators before next week's crucial EU Council meeting.

"Today's press conference confirms that the Government has failed to meet the target for this round of negotiations.

"Ministers have wasted months of the Brexit talks fighting amongst themselves. This increases the chances that Britain will crash out of the EU without a deal. That would be catastrophic for jobs and living standards and must be rejected as a viable option.

"That is why I have written to David Davis calling on the Government urgently to request an additional emergency round of talks with EU negotiators in the coming days to try and reach an agreement before next week's EU Council meeting.

"The Government must recognise the gravity of the situation. They must drop their ideological red lines and work round the clock to find a resolution to the current situation."

## **Ends**

## **Notes to editors:**

Full text of the letter:

Dear David

## **Article**

### **50 negotiations between the United Kingdom and the European Union**

I write regarding the Article 50 negotiations between the UK Government and the European Union (EU) following today's press conference.

The announcement of further progress on the rights of EU citizens and the issue of Northern Ireland is welcome. It is also encouraging to see a more constructive tone in the talks.

However, I am deeply concerned that more than six months on from the triggering of Article 50 this round of discussions has ended without an agreement, with the European Union warning of a “disturbing deadlock” over the divorce settlement. It now looks likely that the EU Council next week will not be able to agree negotiations have proceeded sufficiently to open up trade talks.

The deadlock in negotiations increases the risk of Britain crashing out of the EU without a deal. That would be catastrophic for jobs and living standards and must be rejected as a viable option.

That is why Labour is calling on the Government urgently to request an additional emergency round of talks with EU negotiators in the coming days to try and reach an agreement before next week’s EU Council meeting. The Government must recognise the gravity of the situation, must drop the ideological red lines and work round the clock to find a resolution to the current situation.

Given the significant interest in this matter, I am making this letter public.

Yours  
sincerely

**Keir  
Starmer MP**

**Shadow  
Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union**

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**[Labour secures vote on Universal  
Credit roll out](#)**

Labour has secured

a vote on the Government's plan to continue the roll out of Universal Credit Full Service.

This follows criticism of the Government's decision to persevere with the roll out of Universal Credit, which has been shown to be driving debt and arrears among low income families.

The Department of Work and Pensions' own data shows that one in four new claims are not being paid in full in six weeks, with half of those in rent arrears reporting that they went into debt after claiming Universal Credit.

Concerns have also been expressed regarding the high cost of calls to the programme's helpline, with some callers paying as much as 55p a minute.

This vote will be a key test of the Government's flagship welfare reform policy. At least twenty five MPs from the Conservative Party are believed to back Labour's call for a pause to roll out, more than the Prime Minister's working majority of thirteen.

**Debbie Abrahams MP, Labour's Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary,**

commenting on the announcement, said;

"The Government is ignoring its own evidence, and the concerns of its MPs to push ahead with their flawed Universal Credit programme.

"The social security system should work to prevent people from getting into debt, not to exacerbate it.

"The numerous problems with Universal Credit are not just administrative; the delays and cuts made by this Government to the programme are all contributing to claimant debt. We will work with them to tackle these issues.

"The Government must pause and fix the programme before the roll out can cause further harm to those struggling to get by."

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## Today's statement of funds available for the rail industry highlights the government's chaotic approach to rail investment – Andy McDonald

**Andy**

**McDonald MP, Labour's Shadow Transport Secretary**, commenting on the Government's statement of funds announcement for rail industry, said:

"Today's statement of funds available for the rail industry highlights the government's chaotic approach to rail investment: its promises, pauses and cancellations are all catastrophically undermining the industry.

"Pledges about record levels of funding will ring hollow both for passengers denied much needed upgrades and a rail supply chain hemorrhaging jobs and skills."

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## It's a sad day when the Government asks sacked workers to pay for expanded tax breaks for non-doms – Peter Dowd

**Peter Dowd MP, Labour's Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury**, speaking after the Committee stage of the Finance Bill, said:

"It is a sad day when the Conservative Government asks sacked workers to cough up to pay for expanded tax breaks for non-doms.

"The Conservatives voted down Labour's amendments, which would have ended fears that sacked workers might be taxed more, and instead opted to vote through a giveaway to wealthy non-doms.

"The next Labour government will end the Tories' unjust tax system, and

create a tax system that works for the many, not just the privileged few.”

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## Instead of engaging in infighting, the Chancellor should listen to Labour’s calls for a fairer tax system – McDonnell

**John McDonnell MP, Labour’s Shadow Chancellor**, commenting on analysis by the IMF today which supports calls for a fairer tax system, said:

“This report from the IMF supports the argument we made in the General Election for a fairer tax system. There is no evidence to support those who scaremonger about the effects of making the rich pay fairer taxes. Not only have the Tories slashed the top rate of tax, they still plan billions in tax giveaways to the super rich and big corporations over this parliament.

“With every day that passes the case for a change of direction at the Treasury grows. Instead of engaging in infighting in his own party the Chancellor should listen to Labour’s calls for fairer taxes and increased investment to build an economy for the many not the few.”