

# **Brexit Civil Society Alliance.**

## **Civil Society and Brexit**

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### **How to prepare for a no-deal Brexit**

# Introduction

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This guide is to help organisations plan for a no-deal Brexit. It is designed as a starting document, more extensive guides are linked below, highlighting key issues that have been brought to us by organisations during our regional roundtables which we hold across the country.

Why you need to plan: A no-deal Brexit has not been averted. The “Benn-Burt” bill passed by Parliament requires the Prime Minister to ask for an extension of Article 50, keeping the UK in the EU until the 31st January 2020. However, the Prime Minister and government “sources” have repeatedly said they aim to take the UK out on the 31st October with or without a deal. An extension is also dependent on the EU granting it. Furthermore if an extension is granted, the cliffedge is merely delayed, not removed. Only passing a deal or revoking Article 50 removes no-deal completely.

The impacts of a no-deal on civil society will be wide ranging and as an organisation you need to map out how it will affect you, the causes you champion and the beneficiaries you work with. Our briefing to MP’s on the impacts is [here](#)

It is therefore important and useful for your organisation to make plans for a no-deal Brexit and we hope this guide will aid conversations in your organisation for planning how to mitigate some of the impacts of a no-deal Brexit.

- NCVO: [No-Deal Brexit and the Voluntary Sector](#)
- Wales Civil Society Forum on Brexit: [Getting Brexit Ready](#)

# EU Settled Status Scheme

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The government has stated that it aims to end Freedom of Movement in the event of a no-deal Brexit. The government [can't do](#) this without passing primary legislation, currently unlikely to happen, however it is their long term aim.

EU citizens living in the UK prior to exit day will need to apply for settled or pre-settled status. In the event of no-deal, they have until 31st December 2020 to apply. Under the current scheme, if EU citizens have not applied and received a status by then, they become illegal residents and risk being subject to the Home Office's 'hostile environment'.

Settled status and pre-settled status give the following rights to EU citizens after the UK leaves the EU:

- Work
- Access the NHS
- Study
- Access public funds e.g. pension (if eligible) **differs between pre-settled and settled status**
- Travel in and out of the UK

Note - the time periods you can spend outside the UK vary depending on settled or pre-settled and what country you are from see more [here](#)

## To Do

- Employers have to perform Rights to Work checks on EU citizens
- Complete a staff audit to find out if any staff will be affected by settled status
- Familiarise yourself, and staff, with the government's advice on settled status
- Complete a review of the community your organisation works with on the following:
  - Do they need to apply for settled status?
  - If so, are they aware of it?
  - What challenges are in their way to accessing it?
  - Will their citizenship rights affect the work you do with them or their ability to access your services?
- Create an action plan for how to help staff or community members apply for settled status

## Resources

- [Home Office guide to Right to Work checks](#)
- [How to apply for settled status](#) by freemovement. Includes a wide range of FAQs and information
- The3million [pre-settled vs settled status guide](#)
- The Home Affairs Select Committee outlined accessibility issues around settled status scheme [here](#). It is useful to see if these apply to your employees or communities
- Public Law Project Research Briefing: [EU citizens' rights after a no-deal Brexit: What does the law say?](#)

# Data Protection

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A no-deal Brexit will have an impact on your data protection policy. Depending on what work you do with/in Europe you may have to make changes to your data protection policy to keep up with regulations.

The Information Commissioner's Office has provided a range of information, primarily aimed at businesses, for information on what to do in a no-deal Brexit.

If your organisation receives personal data from the EEA (EU plus Iceland, Norway, and Liechtenstein) or you have an "established presence" or target "customers" in the EEA you will have to make changes to make sure you are still compliant with data protection regulations.

## To Do

- Visit the ICO website for further no-deal information [here](#)
- Make sure you are GDPR compliant. The UK government intends to put GDPR into UK law when the UK leaves the EU. The ICO has help [here](#)

# Funding in No-Deal Brexit

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A no-deal Brexit will have significant impacts for those organisations relying on receiving EU funding. There is no EU funding or guaranteed replacement funds after 2020.

The UK government has guaranteed funding for projects agreed before the UK leaves the EU in the event of a no-deal Brexit. This means that organisations will continue to receive funding until the end of a project if they have successfully bid before exit day.

The government has proposed a UK Shared Prosperity Fund to replace the funding but has not released the consultation or any details on the fund. This leaves a lot of civil society organisations reliant on EU funding in limbo.

## To Do

- Find out if, and how much, EU funding your organisation receives
- Draft a worst-case scenario budget
- Review what the loss of this funding would mean for your organisation
- Prepare any contingency plans for alternative funding
- Continue bidding for EU funding
- Work with organisations such as Equally Ours to make sure the UKSPF is designed for the sector
- Read the governments EU funding page and their department specific technical notices

## Resources

- Directory of Social Change [funding search](#)
- UK government no-deal Brexit [funding information](#)
- ACEVO has a range of guides on matters such as 'Financial governance' available [here](#)
- Institute of Fundraising [general fundraising advice](#)
- Institute for Government [explainer on EU Structural Funds](#)
- UK Government: [European Social Fund \(ESF\) grants in a 'no-deal' Brexit](#)
- UK Government: [European Regional Development Funding \(ERDF\) if there's no Brexit deal](#)

# The Wider Economic Picture

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Aside from the short-term impacts of a no-deal Brexit it is also worth factoring in what the likely medium to long-term impacts will be.

Economic predictions by the [UK in a Changing Europe](#) shows that a no-deal Brexit, for example a Brexit on World Trade Organisation terms (WTO Brexit), would reduce the UK's income per capita by between 3.5% and 8.7% and the Bank of England has [estimated](#) the economy shrinking by 5.5%. Similarly, the UK government's own analysis estimates that UK GDP would reduce about 8% over the next 15 years in the event of a WTO Brexit.

Further, research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation shows that child poverty is set to increase across the country and hit the poorer areas of the UK the worst. While this rise predates the 2016 referendum, many of the worst-hit areas will likely be highly exposed to changes in trade with the EU and any loss of EU funding. The government's 'Operation Yellowhammer' report also states that: "low-income groups will be disproportionately affected by any price rises in food and fuel". This may place additional pressure on demand, particularly for service-delivery organisations. In addition to predicted short-term disruptions, it's also necessary to map out what the medium to long-term impacts of a no-deal will be on the causes your organisation champions and the impacts it will have on your beneficiaries.

- Joseph Rowntree Foundation: [How could Brexit affect poverty in the UK?](#)
- UK Government: [Operation Yellowhammer- HMG reasonable worst case planning assumptions](#)
- NCVO: [Letter to the government requesting funding for charities in a no-deal Brexit](#)
- Third Sector News: [How a no-deal Brexit would affect charities](#)

# Information Sharing

In the event of a no-deal Brexit it is important that civil society share information and work together to navigate the impacts of a no-deal. As part of your planning you should consider three key areas:

1. Staying up to date with Brexit political and policy news
2. Building local connections
3. Being aware of official government updates

## Staying up to date with Brexit news

Sign up to our weekly [Brexit E:Bulletin](#). It explains the impact of politics, policy and events of Brexit on civil society

Sign up to daily political email briefings. The examples below are free:

- Politico - [London Playbook](#)
- Huffington Post - [Waugh Zone](#)
- Bloomberg - [Brexit Bulletin](#)
- NewStatesman - [Morning Call](#)

For in depth explainers on events and policy sign up to:

- House of Commons Library [email alerts](#)
- Institute for Government [email alerts](#)

## Building local connections

If you're not already, you should get in touch with your local CVS. NAVCA has a useful finder tool to find local CVS organisations [here](#). Local CVS organisations have a wealth of local knowledge and connections your organisation will find useful

Local Resilience Forums. These are multi-agency partnerships made from representatives of local public services. They will be used by government to coordinate responses to serious issues that arise such as food shortages. Establishing contact with your local one can be done via [this government page](#)

Local council. Some councils have a dedicated council officer working on Brexit, some don't. Get in touch with your council and engage with their plans for a no-deal Brexit. Work with them to highlight issues your organisation will have.

## Official Government Updates

The government will regularly push updates on policy out. You can sign up for free to updates via email or RSS

Most government department websites have an option to sign up to email or RSS updates. For example the Department for Exiting the European Union email alert sign up is [here](#).

Using an RSS reader, such as [feedly.com](#), is useful as it creates a feed of all the updates pushed out. Gov.uk and Parliament both have multiple feeds you can subscribe to.

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