



London 15th October 2019

Dear Presidente Sassoli,

We are grateful for the meeting you granted us in Brussels last Wednesday after your London trip to see Boris Johnson and John Bercow. We understand that we did not have enough time to unravel and discuss our proposal of ringfencing citizens' rights but as promised we are delivering this letter with the hope that you will consider and reflect upon this issue with the sensitivity and depth that characterises you, and that you will carry our message tomorrow when addressing the European Council.

No deal is the worst possible outcome of this negotiation and it would have a major impact on the lives of more than 5 million people and their families, EU citizens in the UK and British citizens in the EU27.

We form almost a third of the 17 million citizens who have exercised their free movement rights and made a life and a career by embodying EU citizenship.

If the European Union abandons us, it is fundamentally going against its own values.

We are always told that if there is a **no deal** then the very next day the UK and the Union will sit down and will surely find a reasonable solution to protect these citizens, but the truth is that we will never get the same protection and the same rights that are currently included in the draft Withdrawal Agreement.

For example, the UK has already published their no-deal policy for EU citizens and we will lose the right of family reunification after 2022. We will not have the protection of an Independent Monitoring Authority that can oversee the process of acquiring the EU Settlement Scheme. We will not have the right of appeal if status is refused. We will not have the vital protection of the European Court of Justice. We will be subject (without any protection) to the so called "hostile environment" that makes life in the UK impossible for anyone without the right paperwork – removing the right to work, housing, healthcare, benefits, banking etc. The mantra that the UK repeats "*we will expel only the serious criminals*" is not true at all as doctors, professionals, academics from outside the EU are already victims of this system – see our webpage at <https://www.the3million.org.uk/hostile-environment>.

How will British citizens get the same level of rights and protection in all the EU27 countries if the Commission cannot coordinate the process, but can only **ask** the member states to be "generous"? British citizens will be subject to 27 different sets of rights according to the country where they live, generating citizens of class A, B, C etc.

They were promised that they would retain their freedom of movement. However during the negotiation process they discovered instead that they would lose their freedom of movement and be landlocked in a country, clearly also affecting their profession as some built their

career through exercising freedom of movement. As if this was not enough now they have to hope on the generosity of each member state.

Is it really this the European project? Abandoning their citizens because it will be too complicated to ringfence our rights?

Ringfencing all the sections of the Withdrawal Agreement which involve citizens may be challenging, but it is the only solution to truly safeguard our rights as we will then have the protection of an international treaty. The Commission has the best lawyers in the world, if there was the political will they would be able to extrapolate all the sections on citizens' rights even if entangled with other topics.

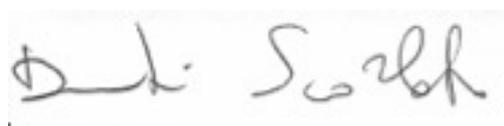
We have experienced two "no-deal cliff-edges" already earlier this year. What we have learnt is that it is simply not possible to sort out citizens, rights just before such a cliff-edge – for both political and legal reasons. Politically we become part of the chaotic 'no mini-deals!' rhetoric, even though it is beyond words to call the rights of 5 million citizens a mini-deal. Legally it is not possible to have enough time to sort out all the UK legislation that would be needed to ratify and implement a citizens' rights deal.

That is why, if there is an extension which it now looks like there will need to be in all circumstances, there should be an immediate commitment to ringfencing citizens' rights in all circumstances. The work on this should start straight away after an extension begins, to keep us well away from the 'no mini-deals' cliff-edge chaos, and to leave enough time to reach an agreement and prepare the necessary legislation in the UK.

Citizens' rights can and must be taken off the negotiating table once and for all.

We feel as if we are on a sinking ship with lifeboats on it which are not being used, instead we wait for 27 different rescue boats to approach and rescue us, but each one will come at a different time and with a different rescue kit. If the European Union allows this, it keeps defying its sense of being a true Union.

Dimitri Scarlato. the3million

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Scarlato". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font. The first letter 'D' is large and prominent. The rest of the name is written in a more fluid, connected script.