

Brexit in Buckinghamshire



Summary of preparations

25th March 2019

Recommendations

- **To note and support the Council's work with partners, businesses, and voluntary and community sector organisations to ensure the resilience and preparedness of Buckinghamshire as a place**
- **To note and support the Council's role in supporting the roll out of the EU Settlement Scheme**
- **To note and support the Council's 'no deal preparations'**





4 days
to Brexit

National Overview

At the time of writing (14th March), the national situation remains volatile and uncertain:

- On 12th March, Parliament voted against the government's Withdrawal Agreement for the second time.
- On 13th March, Parliament voted to rule out any 'no deal' withdrawal from the European Union.
- On 14th March, Parliament is expected to vote in favour of an extension of the Article 50 process.

It is difficult to predict with any certainty the eventual outcome of Brexit. However, it is worth noting that despite the vote on 13th March, the **default legal position remains for the UK to leave the EU on the 29th of March without a deal** (defaulting to WTO trading rules)

The agreement of a deal or an extension to the Article 50 process would maintain the status quo for a period of time. As such, our preparations in Buckinghamshire remain focused on :

- **EU Settlement Scheme**
- **'No deal' preparations**



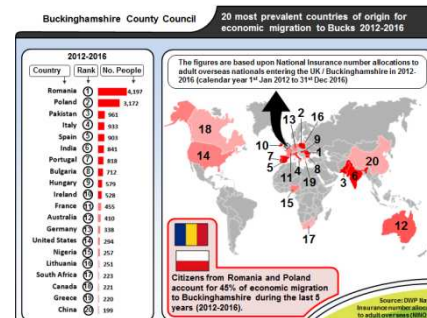
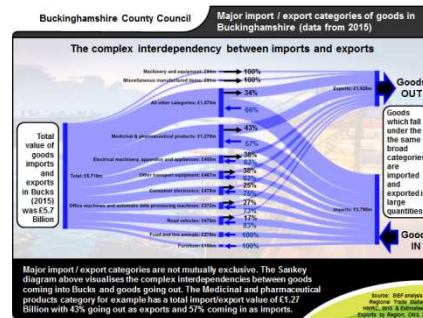
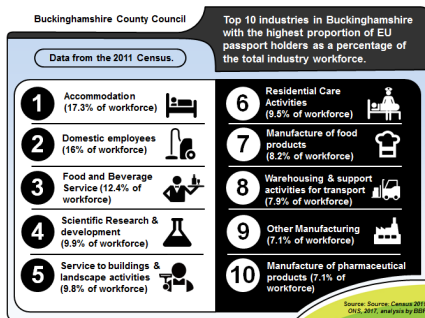
Brexit preparations in Buckinghamshire

In partnership with BBF, Buckinghamshire County Council started preparing for Brexit in earnest around **May 2017**

- Initial scoping of potential risks and opportunities presented by Brexit
- Task & Finish Group meeting monthly - representatives from across the Council (and BFF) ensuring strategic overview and expert input

Phase 1 (2017 to mid 2018) focused on analysis and lobbying, including:

- **Workforce analysis** (BCC and countywide)
- **Buckinghamshire businesses & trade analysis** (including exposure to Brexit)
- **Lobbying government** to take into account the needs of businesses and the public sector post-Brexit (harnessing opportunities and mitigating risk)
- **Signposting information to businesses and residents**
- **Buckinghamshire Brexit Summit** (December 2017)



Brexit preparations in Buckinghamshire

- Following the establishment of a solid analytical foundation: “*So what do we do about it?*”
- Mid to late 2018, government also increased engagement across the board

Phase 2 (mid 2018 to present) has focused on practical actions to ensure Buckinghamshire’s preparedness and to support businesses and residents across Bucks, with a special focus in two key areas:

- **EU Settlement Scheme:** supporting the scheme’s roll-out and providing further resources to support EU nationals
- **No deal preparations:** helping ensure the resilience of BCC, partners, businesses, and residents across Bucks



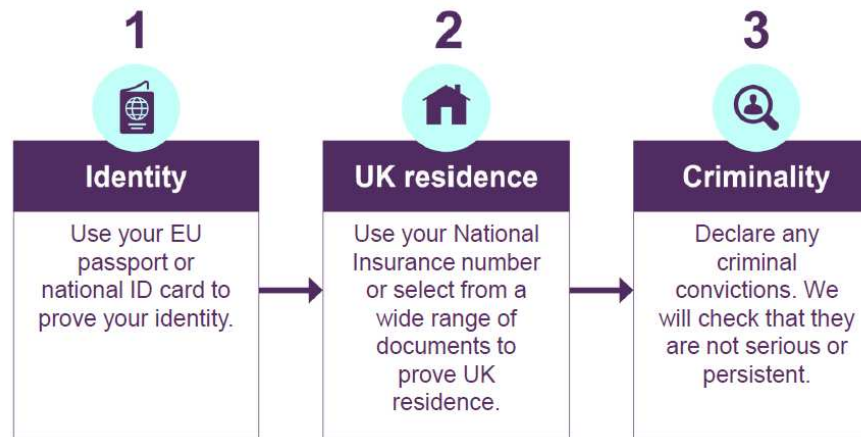
Prepare for EU Exit



EU Settlement Scheme overview

- The scheme will also apply in the event of a ‘no deal’ (albeit with slight modifications)
- Currently in open test phase and the vast majority of EU nationals can apply
- Pre-Settled or Settled Status means that EU citizens will have the **same rights and access to services and benefits as now**

Process



More information

www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families

Criteria



EU citizen or close family member



Arrived in the UK before 31 December 2020, or close family member



Not a serious or persistent criminal or public security risk

Link to application

www.gov.uk/apply-stay-uk-leaves-eu-test-phase



EU Settlement Scheme in Buckinghamshire

BCC is committed to support the roll-out of the EU Settlement Scheme in Buckinghamshire, including supporting the most vulnerable in society

Information



- Targeted communications promoting the EU Settlement Scheme to businesses, social care providers, employees, etc.
- Presentations to businesses and social care providers
- Signposted information on BCC and BBF websites

Registrars



- Passport and ID checking service, allowing residents to verify documents if unable to do so online for a one-time £14 fee (at cost)
- Service will be up and running in Aylesbury registrars and Wycombe library by end of March
- Ability to set up pop-up events and support partners and suppliers with passport/ID checking service

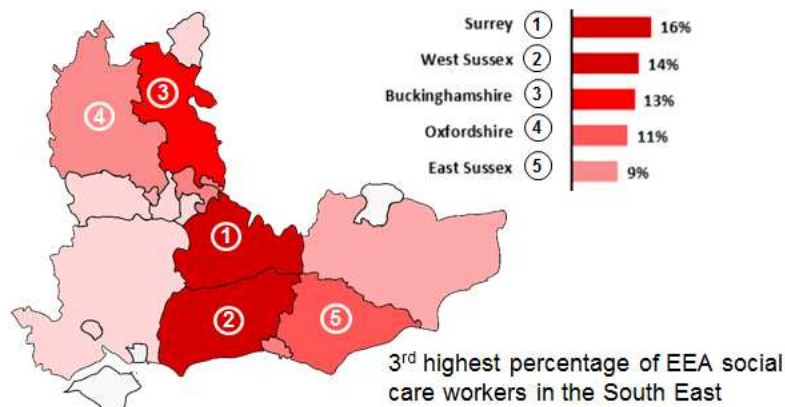
Libraries



- Libraries staff ready to provide information on scheme and signpost to national guidance and registrars service
- Unlimited access to PCs and internet for scheme registration
- In-person support to access government helplines (phone and online)

EU Settlement Scheme in Buckinghamshire

- The vast majority of EU nationals will have to apply for Settled Status to remain in the UK permanently post-Brexit
- We encourage businesses and individuals to share information with employees and other contacts
- Government have made a number of resources available online. These include template emails, posters, leaflets, and practical information on how to access the scheme.
- **Employer Toolkit:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-employer-toolkit>
- **Community Leaders Toolkit:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-community-leaders-toolkit>



21,000
estimated EU nationals in
Buckinghamshire (3.98%)



‘No Deal’/WTO preparations

- **The default legal position, as of 14th March, remains for the UK to leave the EU without a Withdrawal Agreement on the 29th of March.**
- Although a number of ‘side deals’ are already in place, for example on air travel, the default position would see the UK default to WTO trading rules, engaging with the EU on a ‘third country’ basis.
- Buckinghamshire County Council has been working with partners, both locally in Buckinghamshire, but also regionally across the Thames Valley and the wider South East, to ensure the resilience of public services in the event of a ‘no deal’ exit.
- We have also been engaging with businesses, and voluntary and community sector organisations to support their preparations for a potential ‘no deal’ exit.

Public Sector

- Buckinghamshire County Council is working to national planning assumptions and government guidance for a Reasonable Worst Case Scenario. This is **not** what is expected or likely to occur, but by preparing for the worst we will be better prepared for what may actually happen
- Preparations for a Reasonable Worst Case Scenario are well underway with national and local plans in place to deal with any potential disruption

Business Continuity

- In a majority of cases, normal business continuity arrangements should cover most eventualities arising from any short-term disruption. However, there are a number of practical actions that businesses and organisations should undertake to prepare for a potential ‘third country’ relationship with the EU, with trade taking place on WTO terms.



'No Deal'/WTO preparations

Business

- A large amount of information is now available online. Each sector will have its own specific concerns and issues, and businesses can find up to date information relevant to their sector here: <https://www.gov.uk/business-uk-leaving-eu>
- In partnership with BBF, BCC hosted a second **Buckinghamshire Brexit Summit** on 6th March 2019, focusing on preparations businesses should take ahead of a potential 'no deal'/WTO exit on 29th March. Slides and information from the day can be found here: <https://bbf.uk.com/news/round-up-of-the-2019-buckinghamshire-brexit-summit>

Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations

- Guidance for VCS/civil society organisations is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/five-ways-civil-society-organisations-can-prepare-for-eu-exit>

Residents

- British and Irish residents are unlikely to need to undertake significant preparations for a 'no deal'/WTO exit. However, guidance on number of topics, including going abroad, is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/prepare-eu-exit>
- EU (non-Irish) residents who want to continue residing in the UK, will in most case have to apply for Settled Status. Guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>

Ongoing & future actions



- BCC will continue to monitor closely the national situation and respond accordingly.
- While a near-term ‘no deal’/WTO exit remains the default legal position, BCC will continue to engage and work with government and partners (including District Councils, Police, Health, etc.) to ensure the resilience of public services in Buckinghamshire.
- The Council will also continue to engage with businesses, voluntary and community sector organisations, and residents to support their preparations for a ‘no deal’/WTO exit.
- We will also continue supporting the roll-out of the EU Settlement Scheme across Buckinghamshire, ensuring our EU residents are able to secure pre-settled or settled status, and remain a valued part of our local community.



More information

HM Government

- No deal guidance (technical notices, etc.):
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/how-to-prepare-if-the-uk-leaves-the-eu-with-no-deal>



HM Government

BBF

- Brexit-related information can be found on BBF's Brexit Hub:
<https://bbf.uk.com/brexit>
- More business support and guidance can be found on BBF's website: <https://bbf.uk.com/>



Buckinghamshire County Council

- For more information on the Council's Brexit preparations, please visit: <https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/council-and-democracy/brexit/>

