



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Task Force for Relations with the United Kingdom  
Unit A1 Communication, coordination, planning and administrative support  
Head of Unit

Brussels,  
uktf(2020)5518079

Dear Petitioners,

President von der Leyen thanks you for your petition regarding the UK withdrawal from the EU.

We are fully aware that the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union invokes serious consequences for a great number of citizens – both from the UK and from EU Member States.

The UK left the European Union on 31 January 2020. In accordance with its wish, it ceased to be a Member State of the EU. This is a decision that the EU regrets but respects.

As regards the proposal that you mention in your email to create an associate citizenship for UK citizens, we must inform you that, under the current EU treaties, only nationals of EU Member States are entitled to EU citizenship. Citizenship of the Union is linked to national citizenship and, according to settled case-law of the European Court of Justice, it is for each Member State, having due regard to EU law, to lay down the conditions for the acquisition and loss of its nationality.

Nevertheless, thanks to the Withdrawal Agreement agreed between the EU and the UK, the rights of all UK nationals lawfully residing in an EU Member State – as well as of EU citizens lawfully residing in the UK – at the end of the transition period, will be guaranteed. These citizens, and their family members, will keep the right to live, study, work and travel between the UK and the EU.

The EU is fully committed to the correct implementation of the Withdrawal Agreement, in particular as regards citizens' rights and the Protocol on Ireland and Northern Ireland. This must be a priority on both sides.

In line with the EU's negotiating directives adopted by the Council on 25 February 2020 and with the Political Declaration jointly agreed with the United Kingdom on 17 October 2019, the EU also seeks to negotiate a broad and ambitious future partnership with the United Kingdom.

As the UK will leave the EU Single Market and Customs Union, our relationship will inevitably be different from what it is now and everyone – businesses in particular – should prepare for the changes that will happen in any case as of the end of the transition period, as of 1 January 2021.

Nevertheless, as Michel Barnier, Head of the Task Force for Relations with the United Kingdom, said on several occasions, our attitude is and will remain resolutely constructive because we want to succeed. We want to build a close and lasting partnership with the United Kingdom. Such a partnership must be founded on mutual respect and trust.

The Commission hopes to have the United Kingdom as a close partner of the European Union also in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Stefaan De Rynck