

# **EU panic as Boris Johnson to become ‘nasty’ with Brussels to secure Brexit trade deal**

EUROCRATS have been warned Brexit trade negotiations could bring out the “nasty” side of Boris Johnson after the Prime Minister pledged to deliver on an agreement within 12 months.

Boris Johnson ruled out extending the Brexit transition period past December 2020 as he expressed his confidence a new commercial agreement with the European Union can be struck by December 2020. His commitment sparked political expert Richard Werly to warn Brussels could see the Prime Minister become “nasty” in order to secure a deal with the bloc within 12 months. Le Temps Paris correspondent told France 24: “I’m afraid that in 2020, as far as the European Union is concerned, we are going to discover a nasty Boris Johnson.

“Until now he was the buffoon or the populist but he is going to become nasty on the trade issue – it isn’t going to be easy for the EU to negotiate that trade deal.

“To tell the truth, the EU needs a trade deal as much as the UK. We’ve been told in 2019, with a large part of the truth, the UK was in a weaker position because a Brexit without an agreement would have been difficult for the British economy, now it’s a bit different.”

Mr. Werly also suggested EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier could see his attempts to keep the EU27 united through the second phase of Brexit talks collapse should member states begin to “calculate the benefits” of a close trade alliance with the UK.

The European Union maintained a united front through the first three years of talks with the British Government but some countries, including Ireland, have expressed concerns the bloc’s firm stance could have a serious impact on their national economies.



Boris Johnson insisted he will secure a trade deal with the EU by December 2020 (Image: NUMBER 10)

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Mr. Werly continued: “With the British election in his favour, Boris Johnson can now come forward more forcefully and I’m afraid the unity there was in the 27 might be shaky during the coming months.

“At some point, different countries will take the calculator and start to see what are the benefits of having a good trade relationship with the UK and, when you start to calculate, the sense of unity may disappear.”

The Prime Minister’s latest Brexit bill rules out any extension to the transition period beyond the end of 2020, meaning London and Brussels will have just 11 months to broker a free trade agreement, which would typically be expected to take several years.

If no trade agreement is agreed by the end of the transition period and no extension is agreed, the UK may still face an effective no-deal Brexit when the transition ends.



Werly also suggested Michel Barnier could see the unity of the 27 crumble during Brexit trade talks (Image: FRANCE 24)

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Michel Barnier maintained unity among the 27 for over three years (Image: GETTY)

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Following the Conservatives' success on December 12, Mr. Varadkar has been

urged to lay out a timetable for an orderly dissolution of the Dail, Ireland's Parliament.

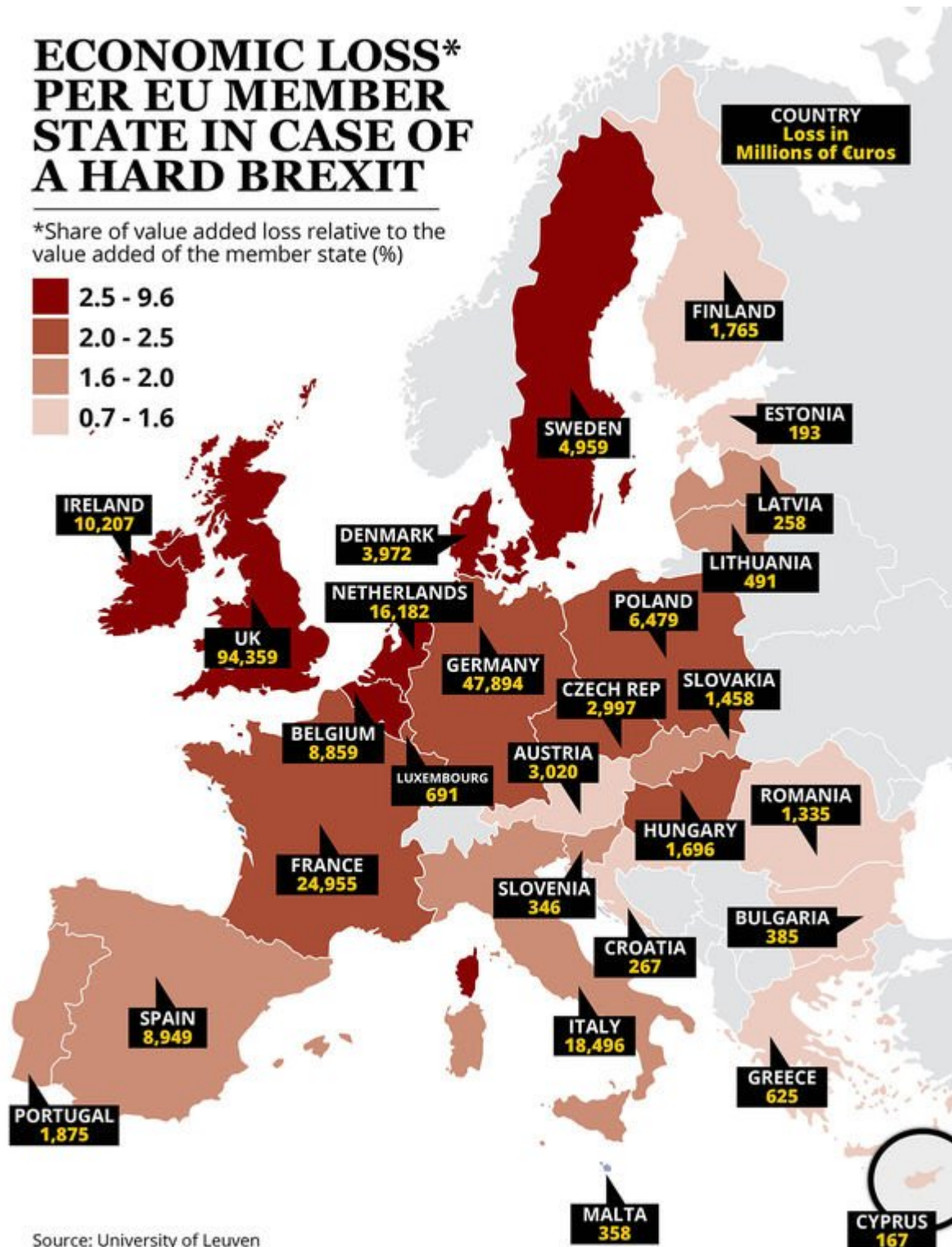
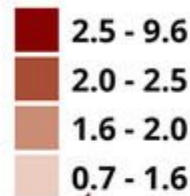
Fianna Fáil leader Michael Martin urged Mr. Varadkar to do "the responsible thing and end the speculation and agree to a date for the dissolution of the Dail, a date for the holding of the election."

The Dail is currently closed for a month-long recess before reconvening on January 15.

Relations between Mr. Martin's group and Mr. Varadkar's Fine Gael have hit rock bottom.

# ECONOMIC LOSS\* PER EU MEMBER STATE IN CASE OF A HARD BREXIT

\*Share of value added loss relative to the value added of the member state (%)



Source: University of Leuven

EU member states have expressed concerns over the risks a lack of no deal with the UK could have on their economies (Image: EXPRESS.CO.UK)

Ireland's Taoiseach is said to be furious over Mr. Martin's demands for an election and has refused to reply.

Instead, Mr. Varadkar has called for face-to-face talks with his opponent to be held either this week or after the Christmas holidays.

Government sources said the Irish leader had repeatedly asked Fianna Fáil to agree on an election date for next summer.

One source close to the Taoiseach hit back at the claims in the letter, saying it was “ironic” for the opposition to be “claiming the moral high ground”.

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Source:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1223033/EU-news-warning-Boris-Johnson-Brexit-trade-deal-withdrawal-agreement-UK-latest-news>

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