

Half of UK voters want Theresa May to resign: poll



The survey also showed growing support for no deal and a second referendum — as well as for remaining in the EU | Dan Kitwood/Getty Images

LONDON — British voters want Theresa May to resign as prime minister following the humiliating defeat of her Brexit deal, and for MPs to block no deal while voting to extend Article 50, according to an exclusive snap poll.

The POLITICO-Hanbury poll of 500 Britons, carried out in the hours after the U.K. prime minister's deal was overwhelmingly rejected for a second time Tuesday evening, reveals widespread discontent with the amended agreement May brought back to the Commons. The survey also shows growing support for no-deal and a second referendum — as well as for remaining in the EU.

Most strikingly, there is now clear public support for the prime minister to quit. After Tuesday night's events, 50 percent of respondents said May should resign, compared to just 32 percent who indicated she should stay. Even a quarter of Tory voters now think the PM should go, the poll suggests.

The public narrowly also favor — by 42 percent to 38 percent — a general election to break the deadlock. But on this question they are split along party lines, with Conservative voters opposed 76 to 16 percent and Labour voters in favor by 67 to 18 percent.

MPs are due to vote Wednesday on whether or not to pursue a no-deal exit from the EU. If the House of Commons rejects leaving the EU without an agreement, MPs will be asked to vote on Thursday on whether to ask the EU for an extension to the Article 50 negotiating period.

According to the snap poll, there is clear support for MPs rejecting no-deal Wednesday and then extending Article 50 the following day in a bid to find a better negotiated settlement with Brussels.

Forty-seven percent of the public say parliament should vote to rule out no deal, compared to 35 percent who want MPs to vote in favor of leaving without an agreement with the EU, the poll suggests.

There is also support for an extension of the Article 50 negotiating period, with 44 percent in favor and 39 percent against. This support drains away, however, the longer the proposed extension. The public clearly finds an extension of one month acceptable — 52 percent to 34 percent in favor. Support for a three-month delay is wafer thin: 44 percent to 43 percent.

While the poll results will make tough reading for May's team in No. 10 Downing Street, there are a few glimmers of hope for those pushing for the prime minister to tough it out for a third meaningful vote.

While 41 percent of the public said parliament was right to reject the prime minister's deal Tuesday night, compared to 33 percent who said they were wrong, this is reversed among Tory voters.

According to the poll, Conservative voters have rallied to the PM's deal with 56 percent of Tories insisting the House of Commons was wrong to reject the deal and just 27 percent saying it was right.

In terms of what the prime minister should do after that, the country remains as divided as ever. Just under a third — 29 percent — want the PM to come out for a second referendum, while a quarter want her to come out for no deal. Overall 35 percent still want some form of negotiated deal, even if that means with Labour support.

When asked about future options, 38 percent said they favor remaining in the EU. When this question was asked in a POLITICO-Hanbury poll in February, 31.5 percent said they wanted to retain EU membership.

Source:

<https://www.politico.eu/article/poll-half-of-uk-voters-want-theresa-may-to-resign/>

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