

New position paper on trade confirms 'cake-and-eat-it' approach to Brexit



Green Party

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Molly Scott Cato MEP, Green Party Brexit spokesperson, has responded to a new government position paper published today on its negotiating approach to 'goods on the market' [1]. The paper seeks to ensure 'the freest and most frictionless trade possible in goods and services' and provide exporters and businesses with confidence to plan ahead.

Dr Scott Cato was dismissive of the government's approach:

"Talk of a 'smooth and orderly' withdrawal from the EU will be fantasy if it involves leaving the single market and customs union. My discussions with businesses have made clear that remaining in both are seen as key to the health of the British economy and protecting jobs, something the CBI also recognise, though secretary of State for Business, Greg Clark, has his head in the sand on this.

"The problems the government is seeking to address in this paper demonstrate exactly the reasons the single market was first established – to allow unrestricted trade across the EU and avoid unnecessary duplication of compliance activities. Now the Tories, who supported the creation of the single market for these reasons in the first place, want to re-invent the same thing outside the EU.

This is the have-your-cake-and-eat-it approach to Brexit we have come to expect from both the Tories and Labour. But the EU27, rightly, can't accept the UK enjoying the benefits of the single market and customs union without being members."

"This is also another attempt to lead the EU where they have consistently refused to go: to discuss our future relationship ahead of resolving matters such as the question of the Irish border, the rights of EU citizens living in the UK and a divorce settlement."

Notes:

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/position-papers-published-ahead-of-round-three-negotiations>

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