

'No deal' cannot be an option – First Minister Carwyn Jones

Setting out the potential repercussions of 'no deal', the First Minister said that walking away from the negotiations would cause chaos and lasting damage to the UK's economy and future security.

In the past month, a series of expert organisations' have warned of the impact of no deal:

- The BMA says it would potentially result in delays to cancer diagnosis and cancelled operations
- The British Airlines Pilots Association says UK airlines could find they have to stop flying
- The British Retail Consortium says reverting to WTO tariffs might mean UK shoppers paying up to a third more for everyday food items, while customs controls would create enormous disruption and have a potential impact on the availability of food on the shelves
- The Freight Transport Association says a cliff edge solution would send costly shockwaves through EU trade flows and supply chains;
- The Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board models a 'Fortress UK' scenario where we trade on WTO terms as one which would see upland farms become economically unsustainable
- Dutch bank, Rabobank estimates that 'no deal' could lead to a level of GDP 18% lower in 2030 than it would have been had we remained in the EU.

Speaking in the Senedd, the First Minister said:

"The UK government and the gung-ho Brexiteers must wise up and listen to what the experts are saying. No deal is unthinkable. It would be impossible to mitigate the effects of such a disastrous conclusion to the Brexit negotiations.

"Preventing this outcome, not preparing contingency plans, is what we must focus on. To do otherwise would be like a passenger on the Titanic who, upon seeing an iceberg, chooses to find his lifejacket and pack his things, rather than rushing to the bridge and desperately attempting to alert the captain of the disaster ahead.

"The UK government must concentrate on reaching a credible position on our exit terms so that the December European Council can move negotiations into the second phase and very rapidly thereafter agree a transition phase of at least 2 years."