

Welcome to the monthly newsletter for **British in Germany**, the group dedicated to protecting the rights of British citizens in Germany during and after any kind of Brexit. As a British in Europe coalition member, we're proud to stand for an open, inclusive, British-European identity – and we're determined to make sure that both UK and EU27 citizens' voices are heard in the ongoing Brexit negotiations. It's a big task and the next months up until the end of 2018 are crucial – so we need all the help we can get! If you'd like to **join up, volunteer or donate**, check out the information at the end of this newsletter.

Whirlwind week sees BiE give evidence in Brussels & London

BiG's Jane Golding joined representatives from other BiE organizations and the3million in both Brussels and London to lobby key British and European authorities. On 4 June, the joint BiE/the3million lobby group met with Michel Barnier's team, the EU Council, and MEPs—including the European Parliament's lead Brexit negotiator Guy Verhofstadt. Jane says the meeting with the Task Force was engaged and constructive, with Verhofstadt confirming his commitment to securing continued free movement for British citizens living in the EU27, and that such rights are a red line for the European Parliament—which has the power to veto any final Brexit agreement. In the meantime, Jane says that a lot of follow-up work between now and September is needed to ensure the continued support of the European Parliament and to follow up on the draft Withdrawal Agreement and with the EC.



Heading from Brussels to London, Jane and our BiE representatives appeared before the House of Commons' Select Committee for Exiting the EU, giving evidence on continued free movement (FoM), registration, and family reunification, among others. Jane told the committee that our continued FoM rights weren't a red line for the EU27, and would potentially be a winnable concession — if the UK Government chose to put them back on the negotiating table. Fiona Godfrey, Co-Chair of British in Europe and Chair of Immigrants Living in Luxembourg, told the committee continued FoM rights were essential for Brits, like her, who regularly cross borders for work, or to receive necessary healthcare. You can watch BiE's [testimony](#) (starts at 10:29) and also read The Guardian's [coverage](#) of the meeting. Jane was then back in London again on 12 June to give evidence on the same issues before a roundtable of the House of Lords EU Justice Sub-Committee, prior to an appearance of the new Home Secretary on Brexit issues the week after that.

Over 3,000 people respond to FoM Survey

The survey results are in and one thing is clear: continued FoM rights after Brexit are a clear priority for respondents—with the majority saying that a loss of FoM would affect them or their families in very real ways. 58 per cent of respondents answered they would be personally affected by the loss of FoM rights, with 42 percent saying that their children would be affected. Respondents indicated they rely on FoM to work, provide services, own a second home, or potentially move in the future. Respondents also said their children may be affected because they may wish to work or study in another EU27 country—potentially not returning until after transition is slated to end in December 2020. While the survey's sample in Germany was not big enough to be more than an indicator, over 300 Brits living in Germany responded to the BiE survey, with over 80 percent indicating that they rely on continued FoM for their work. You can read the full results and download the pdf on our [website](#).



#KeepFoM Video campaign kicks off

The current draft withdrawal treaty seriously threatens our continuing free movement rights, so we're taking action! British in Germany has launched a campaign of video shorts on behalf of the wider British in Europe campaign to maintain our continuing free movement. Thanks to the dedicated support of a film director, editor, and animator based in Berlin and

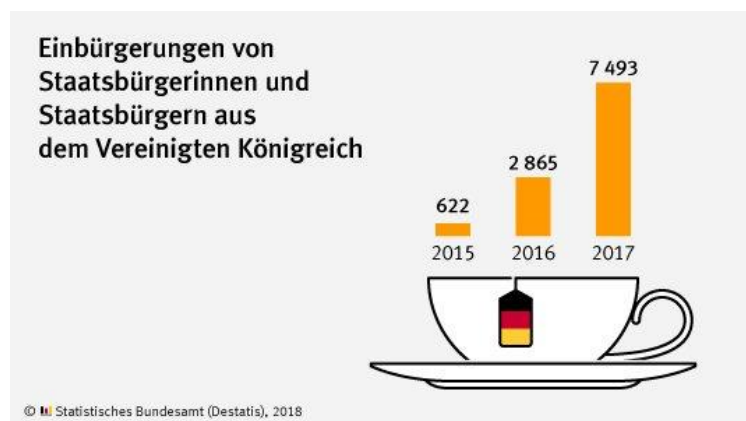


Leipzig, have released two video shorts that illustrate the positive influence free movement has on everyday life and work in Europe. More importantly though, the videos aim to kick off a movement across Europe and to motivate people from all walks of life to make the positive case for FoM, and why free movement matters. And that's where we need your help! We want to get as

many people as possible making their own homemade short videos for us to put up as part of the campaign. A 'How To' guide is underway and will be posted to YouTube soon. Please do one yourself and ask your friends, colleagues, and contacts to support us in making these videos. It's very simple to do on your phone and we'll be sending out more information soon. If you have any questions in the meantime, please contact Daniel, Abigail, or Emma either directly or through the public e-mail BiEvideocampaign@gmail.com

Sharp increase in number of Brits taking German citizenship

As the first full calendar year after the 2016 referendum, 2017 saw a spike in Brits successfully applying for German citizenship. The 2017 numbers represent a 161 percent increase in applications over 2016, and more than a tenfold increase since just 622 Brits



became German in 2015—a record trend the [federal statistics office](#) is attributing to Brexit. The highest number of applications from EU citizens came from Brits, while in the overall numbers, only Turkish nationals exceeded Brits in the number acquiring German citizenship. The numbers will likely rise further still, given estimates that only 10 percent of eligible Brits have successfully picked up a German passport. 9

percent of British applications also came from people not currently resident in Germany. These applications may, for example, be those of the descendants of people stripped of their German citizenship during the Third Reich. German nationality law allows citizens to retain other EU nationalities when they become German. In most other cases, naturalized Germans must give up any non-EU nationality unless they obtain a special dispensation, potentially forcing Brits applying for German citizenship post-Brexit to choose between being British or German. We're lobbying German authorities to allow dual citizenship for Brits at least until the end of the transition agreement. In the meantime, BiG strongly encourages anyone eligible to apply before Brexit to do so. The Guardian is also out with a [piece](#) on the spike.

Brexit at the Biergarten

40 or so Brits combined beer and Brexit at a Munich beer garden on Friday, 25 May.

Rechtsanwalt and solicitor David Hole delivered a sobering analysis of where we are now and the risks ahead, followed by discussions in smaller groups of more detailed aspects. Guests came from a wide cross-section of the British population in and around Munich, including everyone from new arrivals to long-standing residents, self-employed workers, researchers, IT professionals, designers, translators, and consultants from anywhere between age 20 to 70. Among them, too, were a



growing number of “new Bavarians,” or much relieved Brits having recently obtained German citizenship, while retaining British nationality. With the citizenship option not on the table for more recent arrivals, the group focused on discussing permanent residence permits. Some are even considering working towards obtaining German citizenship (possible after 8 years of residence) and then giving up their British citizenship (dual citizenship only being permissible while the UK is still in the EU).

What issues were discussed?

Primarily those issues that are still unresolved following the draft withdrawal agreement:

- Freedom of movement (FoM) across the EU27 post-Brexit. Without FoM, young British professionals hoping for an international career in the EU will be seriously disadvantaged.
- Mutual recognition of qualifications. Anyone relying on qualifications to carry out their job needs to get informed in good time.
- Self-employed people and the provision of cross-border services.

For the most up-to-date and accurate information on these issues, you can read more at: <https://britishineurope.org/where-does-the-march-agreement-leave-me/>
And on residency: <http://www.remaininfrance.org/citizens-rights.html>

First BiG ‘InfoAbend’ in Leipzig

On Wednesday 16 May, BiG’s Daniel Tetlow spoke alongside Mr. Tim Jones—Head of the Economic, Finance, and Trade Team at the British Embassy—to a new eager group of Brits wanting to know about the implications of Brexit on their lives. There was an impressive

range of people in attendance—not just Brits—who came to ask questions and to show their support, from Italian teachers to German immigration lawyers.

Daniel started his speech by taking to task David Davis’ claim of 29 March 2018: “We have secured the rights of the million Brits living in the EU and the 3 million EU citizens living in the UK—meaning that they can look to their futures with confidence, knowing that they can carry on living their lives as they do now.”

Daniel said this was quite simply not the case, and that this illustrated the work that still needs to be done by citizens’ rights groups like British in Germany and British in Europe. When Daniel went on to describe the impact of the present draft Withdrawal Agreement, it elicited looks of shock from many of the audience.



Upcoming Events

5 July: BiG Berlin Meeting.

For further information or to RSVP, contact Emma at:

info@britishingermany.org

25 July Stuttgart:

Infoabend with Simon Kendall, the new Consul General in Munich, and Dr Fritz Österle, the Honorary Consul in Stuttgart will be opening the event. RSVP on the Eventbrite link <https://www.eventbrite.de/e/open-evening-for-uk-nationals-in-stuttgart-tickets-47580759332>

18 July Nuremberg:

Infoabend with the British Embassy. RSVP on the Eventbrite link <https://www.eventbrite.de/e/open-evening-for-british-citizens-in-nuremberg-venue-tbc-tickets-47580609885>

Though it is encouraging for BiG to see that we can provide some clarity on just what exactly is and is not 'protected under the withdrawal agreement', we were struck by the countless examples of the impact that curtailing free movement will have on so many residing in Germany. Free movement became the predominant topic of the discussion, and it soon became evident that ensuring rights only in the host country will not be sufficient for many individuals' livelihoods. There were testimonies from musicians and stagehands who travel across many EU27 states for work who are unlikely to qualify as frontier workers; there were those who have been in Germany for less than 5 years with family across the world who fear that they cannot leave Germany to visit their relatives; and then there were those who fear for the security and educational rights of their children. The Leipzig meeting was a success in terms of BiG's goal to inform more Britons about their changing rights, and hopefully to motivate a BiG Leipzig group. Our thanks go to David Smith, the head of the International School in Leipzig for moderating the event, and Emma Corris and Raj Dahya for their invaluable help in recruiting and organising the evening's logistics. Next up, Dresden!

An article was posted on **The Leipzig Glocal – Leipzig's insider Blog and Webzine in English** before the event. It is still an interesting read and can be found on the [website](#).

Hannover-based Brits meet up

Lower Saxony-based Brits met up in Hannover in mid-May for a lobbying update from Jane Golding, and to relay their citizen rights concerns. Major themes included acquiring German citizenship and continued FoM rights post-Brexit.

Several attendees voiced anger that acquiring German citizenship after Brexit may force them to



give up their British nationality, leaving some worried about being able to return to the UK to care for their elderly parents or other family members in the future. Others were concerned about the lack of clarity over what administrative procedures may end up being required, including whether UK citizens would need to apply for a Schengen travel

document—a refusal of which may leave people “trapped” in Germany with fewer rights than other third-country nationals. Attendees also registered frustration at many still unresolved ambiguities in the application for permanent residence, saying German authorities weren’t being clear about how such status might be converted post-Brexit. No official representing Lower Saxony was present, but the group will continue to lobby to have someone present at future meetings who may be able to resolve some of the current ambiguities.

Call for fundraisers and volunteers

The British in Germany team fights for citizen rights on volunteer time, but we still need to raise funds to support our campaigning, lobbying work, and to pay for basic expenses such as travel and printing costs. If you know of anyone with strong fundraising skills and experience, or of any funds you think BiG should apply for that could be released within the next 6 months, we’d love to hear from them.



To pledge support to British in Germany’s work, please go on the BiG website and click on **Join** or **Donate** or [follow the link](#). Please note that it’s cost free to do a transfer rather than going via Paypal, whether for membership or donation.

For general campaigning and lobbying, we have a whole variety of needs. If you have a few hours to spare each week please get in touch by speaking to your local BiG group leaders and taking a look at our internal Working Groups Tasks and Targets document to get an idea of what our priorities are.

Feel free to contact our unrelenting volunteer Praktikantin Emma at info@britishingermany.org for a chat about how you can get involved. You can also follow the link to our [membership email](#).

Ways to Donate

You can also [donate](#) to support the work of our coalition group British in Europe. As the coalition bringing together UK citizens’ groups across the EU, BiE has been driving the core of our advocacy work in both the EU and the UK over the past year. Now, as the final stretch of the negotiations in 2018 get underway, the group has an incredibly important role to play in keeping the momentum going in the discussion on citizens’ rights, especially on outstanding issues like free movement and how we secure our rights in each EU 27 country – and a one-off or regular monthly donation could make all the difference.

Got news to share?

Are you putting on an event for UK citizens in your city? Have you had meetings with your local politicians about Brexit and citizens' rights? Are you campaigning to highlight citizens' rights issues after Brexit? If you have any news to share for the British in Germany newsletter or you'd like your upcoming event to be included in our calendar, please contact info@britishingermany.org with the subject line: BiG Newsletter.