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## **Brexit: ahead with negotiations. Stuart (Univ. of Nottingham) to SIR, “agreement ready, but still divergences. No deal would spell economic disaster for UK”**

“The deadline was extended again. Again, the decision was made to continue with the talks. But the real problem is that we do not know what is going on with the negotiations. I believe that an agreement has already been made with some gaps to detail the issues on which there are still divergences”. Interviewed by SIR news agency, Mark Stuart, a political expert at the University of Nottingham, commented on the joint statement released by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen yesterday. In it, despite the delays and misunderstandings, the two leaders decided, “after almost a year of negotiations, to go the extra mile”. “We have mandated our negotiators to continue the talks” and “see whether an agreement can be reached”, Ursula von der Leyen said as she read out the statement. So today, EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier is back to work, updating the ambassadors from the 27 EU countries (COREPER) on the talks. “The business world has breathed a sigh of relief”, Mark Stuart continued. “A no-deal Brexit, Britain’s withdrawal from the EU without a deal, has been averted for now, but a compromise must be reached by 31 December, when the Brexit transition period ends. For our country, a no-deal Brexit would spell economic disaster. Farmers fear they would be among the most affected alongside the automotive industry since duties on exports could increase by as much as 40%. And the EU market absorbs about half of the UK’s exports”.

Valentina Bombelli