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EIN-A4

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EIN Seminar on: "The political consequences after BREXIT"

European Parliament, Brussels

Chair:

- **Paulo RANGEL MEP**, *EIN Chairman, Vice-Chair of the EPP Group in the European Parliament responsible for Political Strategy and the European Ideas Network*

Speakers:

- **Thomas HORSLEY PhD**, *Senior Lecturer in European Union Law, University of Liverpool*
 - **John BRUTON**, *Former Prime- Minister of Ireland*
 - **Andrew DUFF**, *Former Member of the European Parliament, Honorary President of the Union of European Federalists*
 - **Federico FABBRINI**, *Full Professor of EU Law, School of Law & Government of Dublin City University*
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- Theresa's May speech in the Tory's conference tell us that we can be pessimistic about the possibility of reaching a reasonable agreement between the UK and the EU27 but optimistic with the unity of the remaining 27 about UK's access to common market without accepting the four liberties. The positions so far are very extreme and radical but we have to find a solution.
 - The referendum's role was advisory but with crucial political impact. There is no consensus in Britain about BREXIT, we don't really know if UK wants to leave the customs union as well. UK is itself a sensitive union: there was no Scottish constituency voting to leave, leading to a possible second referendum about independence. Another problem concerns the Northern Ireland border with the Republic of Ireland. Finally, the legal challenges of the Parliament's role triggering the Article 50.
 - BREXIT is a challenge for the EU institutions and an opportunity to solve the current problems. Referendums are difficult and dangerous tool because people vote with emotions. We have to show that we can make decisions, that we are capable. We need to explain to the people why the membership is so important for their daily life, that in deeper integrated and globalized world, only together the countries can fight for consumer rights, fight against international monopolies. In addition, the EU is as insurance policy and a guarantor of peace.
 - We have to protect the EU investments in UK in the upcoming EU-UK trade agreement. UK decided to leave the EU without realizing the kind of relationship the UK wanted to have with EU, and it has to be them to decide it. The agreement would bring political and legal difficulties. Now it is time to solve the question before other major EU problems move the attention from BREXIT to the immigration crisis or the stability of the financial sector.
 - Furthermore, from all the possible scenarios discussed in the past few months, there is one that strangely is not in the agenda. The EU could settle an agreement with the UK much like the one settled with Ukraine, a deep and comprehensive free trade agreement. This agreement considers only three of the Internal Markets "four freedoms", excluding for now the free movement of people.
 - Although the leave itself does not force the treaties to be reviewed, the original text of the treaties will need to be altered. Furthermore, a new decision about the European Parliament's composition as well as financial provision will be required. In addition, in order to do it, it is needed the unanimity of the Council, a decision of the Parliament and national ratifications. BREXIT is an opportunity for the constitutional reforms in the EU.
 - The Labour Party turned even more to the left; much of the former UKIP militants are joining the Conservative Party. This two mainstream parties are being pushed from inside to more radical positions. In the end, the British democracy, admired by many for so long, becomes discredited.

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