
Brexit: ahead with negotiations. Stuart (Univ. of Nottingham) to SIR, “Johnson’s premiership in the balance” between pandemic and Brexit

“I was encouraged by the tone of the president of the European Commission who showed willingness to meet the UK’s demand to have its sovereignty fully respected, which is one of the key issues in the negotiations”, said political expert Mark Stuart from the University of Nottingham. “I am concerned, however, about the fact that Boris Johnson, after briefing his ministers on the latest developments in the talks with Brussels, said that the EU and the UK are still far from an agreement on the outstanding crucial issues, and that a no-deal Brexit is at present the most likely outcome”. According to the expert, “Boris Johnson is now struggling to contain a rebellion of Tory MPs who do not like his management of the pandemic and is also eager to please the party’s hard-liners who are opposed to any deal with the EU”. Even if a “no deal” would damage the UK economy, especially in the long term, it would be an advantage for the prime minister. “If an agreement is finally reached, the prime minister will have to face the same problem as Theresa May’s: having it ratified by Parliament. At present, this will only be feasible with the support of the Labour Party, which would damage him politically. How can a Tory leader supported by the opposition remain in power? Without Labour support, however, Boris Johnson, like Theresa May, will fail to secure the backing of a majority of MPs”.

Valentina Bombelli