





ANNONCIADÉ MUSEUM – ST TROPEZ UNIQUE PICASSO EXHIBITION FEBRUARY – 16 JUNE 2019

A unique exhibition has just started at the Annonciade Museum in Str. Tropez, featuring scarves, drawing, and pottery works of Picasso. The collection owes its existence to two private collectors Dominique and Guy Ludovissy, long time St. Tropez residents, some of the works have only recently been acquired. It features numerous works Picasso made at Vallauris, plus others, including works devoted to bullfighting, one, with peace, his favourite subject.



It would be a good idea to visit before the crowds hit St. Tropez.

BOOK SWAP 20 MARCH

St Antonin, Chez Penny & Grove Balaam, 16, Chemin de La Nate, St Antonin 83510.

Tel: 04 94 80 35 17 or 06 12 31 69 10. Travelling Book Swap with coffee and biscuits. 10h00-12h00.

Email Mim Kayfor exact directions or follow the balloons! (mimi4opp@gmail.com)



VO FILMS IN LORGUES

Sunday 2 March : 18h 00 Green Book(In English)

Thursday 7 March : 19h 00 Royal Opéra - Traviata

Sunday 10 March : 18h The Favourite (in English)

Sunday 17 March : 18h 00 The beautiful Boy (In English)

Sunday 24 March : 18h 00 The Mule (In English)

Sunday 31 March : 18h 00 Mary Queen of Scots(in English)



OPERA DE TOULON – DONIZETTI'S L'ELIXIR D'AMOUR 22, 24 & 26 MARCH

Friday 22 March – 20h

Sunday 24 March – 14h30

Tuesday 26 March – 20h.

BLEVINS FRANKS FINANCIAL SEMINAR - WEDNESDAY 27 MARCH **Chateau Ste Roseline, Les Arcs.**

“The B-word. What does it mean for you?”

Love it or hate it, there is no escaping it, so our spring seminars will take a close look at what Brexit means for UK nationals in France. While the key concerns for many expatriates are residence rights and healthcare, we will also consider how Brexit could affect pensions and discuss potential implications for taxation, estate planning and your savings and investments.”



Partners: Rob Kaye & Simon Eastleigh.
10:00 for 10:30 AM start until 12:00 PM
South East France - +33 (0)4 88 78 21 03
Château Sainte-Roseline, 1854 Route de Sainte-Roseline, LES ARCS 83460,
RESERVE YOUR SEAT NOW.



NEW EXPO – LES CARRIERES – LES BAUX – 1 March 2019 – January 2020 **An immersion in Van Gogh's finest masterpieces!**

As of 1 March 2019 (to January 2020), the Carrières de Lumières will exhibit the work of the genius painter Vincent Van Gogh

(1853–1890), who only achieved fame after his death. Spanning the 7,000 m² of the Carrières, a visual and musical production retraces the intense life of the tormented artist, who, during the last ten years of his life, painted more than 2,000 pictures, which are now held in collections around the world.

Van Gogh's immense oeuvre—which radically evolved over the years, from the Mangeurs de pommes de terre (The Potato Eaters, 1885) to the Nuit étoilée (Starry Night, 1889), Les Tournesols (Sunflowers, 1888), and La Chambre à coucher (The Bedroom, 1889)—will be projected onto the giant stone walls of the Carrières.



The clouds, suns, and portraits, represented in the artist's unique style, come to life on walls that are more than fifteen metres high, evoking the artist's boundless, chaotic, and poetic interior world. Via a thematic itinerary relating to the various phases of his life—his time spent in Arles, Paris, and Saint-Rémy-de-Provence—visitors will be immersed in his first works and those of his later years, from his sunny landscapes and night scenes, to his portraits and still lifes.

The Dutch painter's expressive and powerful brushstrokes produced works with bold colours and an unrivalled style that highlight a permanent dialogue between light and shadow. The visual and musical experience produced by Culturespaces and created by Gianfranco Iannuzzi, Renato Gatto, and Massimiliano Siccardi, highlights this chromatic richness, as well as the power of the artist's drawings and impasto.



Plus – DREAMED JAPAN – an Immersive journey



**ART EXHIBITION - HOTEL CAUMONT –
AIX EN PROVENCE - CHAGALL
“From Black & White to Colour”
1 NOVEMBER -24 March 2019**

Marc Chagall was celebrated as a master of colour by the artists and critics of his day. This new exhibition is devoted to the last part of the artist's career, highlights his change of style and reveals each stage in the artist's creative process, from 1948 until his death in 1985.



More than 100 works (paintings, sculptures, drawings, engravings, washes, gouaches, and collages) reflect Chagall's artistic exploration of black and white and his subsequent mastery of particularly luminous, intense, and profound tints.

**A RENEWED AND UNIQUE APPROACH TO
WORKING WITH COLOUR**

In Chagall's work, the dialogue between black and white and colour began in the 1920s, when he discovered the techniques of

engraving in Berlin. In the 1920s and 1930s, Ambroise Vollard commissioned him to illustrate Fables de La Fontaine and the Bible. The artist captured the range of colours in the landscapes of the Auvergne and Palestine, and then mastered the density and various shades of black.

And of course one can make a visit to this Museum a complete day's outing, housing as it does a very sophisticated collection of 18th c artefacts, pictures, furniture, tapestries, everything that complimented life in that era, plus there is a charming courtyard, gardens, and café cum restaurant serving appetising snacks lunches an immersive experience, total culture.

<http://www.caumont-centredart.com/en>



located just a few steps from the Cours Mirabeau
Ouvert de 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

3 rue Joseph Cabassol 13100 Aix-en-Provence



**Annonciade Museum – ST. TROPEZ
Picasso Exhibition February – 16 June**



A unique exhibition has just started at the Annonciade Museum in Str. Tropez, featuring scarves, drawing, and pottery works of Picasso. The collection owes its existence to two private collectors Dominique and Guy Ludovissy, long time St. Tropez residents, some of the works have only recently been acquired.

It features numerous works Picasso made at Vallauris, plus others, including works devoted to bullfighting, one, with peace, his favourite subject.



It would be a good idea to visit before the crowds hit St. Tropez. The Annonciade Museum in St. Tropez is one of the treasures of the Riviera, housing as it does a superb collection of post impressionist works by the principally Fauvist (savage) artists of the day – below one of my favourite fauvist works, of St. Tropez harbour!. It is my favourite Museum, which I can visit with pleasure time and time again. It has not staged any new exhibitions for a while, one suspects due to budgetary concerns, not only are they expensive to mount, but the insurance is prohibitive - but its collection is such that every visit yields more pleasure. Musée de l'Annonciade, Place Grammont. St. Tropez Closed Mondays. Entry 6 euros.

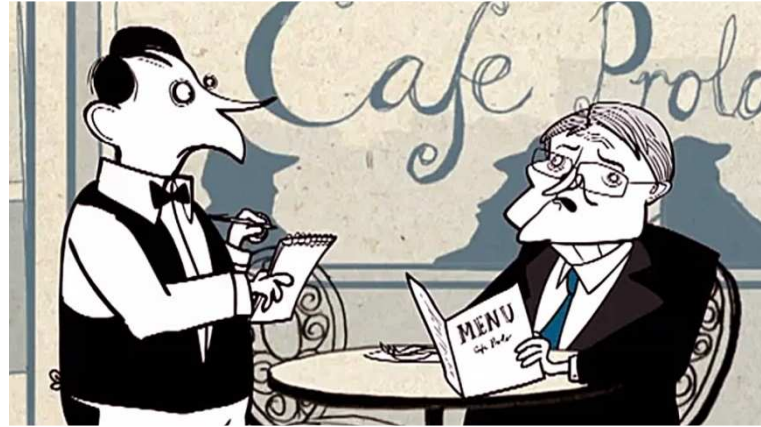
Musée Bonnard – Le Cannet



Another lovely Museum to visit not too far away is the Bonnard Museum in Le Cannet, just up from Cannes, housing as it does a fine collection of Bonnard works.

Pierre Bonnard lived in le Cannet from 1922 to 1947, eventually acquiring the villa Le Bosquet, up on the heights of the town.

He loved and painted the light of the Midi, which formed his inspiration, and produced over 300 paintings of the region.



A Word To The Wise

BY TRENCHERMAN

Just imagine that you were driving through the Parc naturel des Alpilles, a delightful part of Provence not well known to many.

It could be that you were visiting Les Baux with its famous restaurant, or perhaps you might be on the way to Arles with its Roman arena and its long connection to Van Gogh, or it could be that your sat nav didn't work and you are lost. Whichever of these reasons brought you here, if it be approaching lunch time you might well be in need of a welcoming hostelry to set you up for your onward journey.

The where to go question has now been solved.

Head to Paradou. Where? Paradou, a little known village which for some reason boasts three restaurants, including a Michelin starred example and three quite decent sounding hotels, clearly the Parc naturel des Alpilles has a lot to offer.

For reasons which will become apparent we ended up in the Bistro du Paradou, described in the Guide Michelin as *Cette Maison au volets bleus est un véritable institution locale*.

It goes on to be slightly effusive and encouraging.

I am a constant reader of the Guide, but had not got as far as looking up Paradou, having no idea where it was.

No, the reason we went to great lengths to reserve a table and make the journey to this off the beaten track destination is that the inimitable Rick Stein has just made another TV series about eating in France and he told me that the Bistro was the highlight of the trip. What more recommendation would anybody want?

I tracked down the phone number and called immediately.

Fermé pour fermeture annuelle.

So I called again the following week, the same message, and again until I got a message that following *travaux*, next week they might be open!

Thursday it was to be, and so for Thursday I booked.

We passed through parts of Provence where the newly built bungalow is king and dormitory suburbs are popping up like measles, and all are sold and occupied. This is clearly a growing part of the country. We were a little dismayed at the disappearing countryside, but people need to live somewhere and this was clearly a desirable area.

After a complicated diversion because of *travaux sur la route*, we found ourselves outside the blue shuttered bistro and I for one was in need of an uplifting glass.

As soon as you enter this old, but sensitively refurbished premises, you are overtaken by a sense of wellbeing, a realisation that all will be well. The smiling staff are quick to greet and seat and within moments my Pastis was in front of me and a glass of white wine was there for she who deserved it, having refrained from helpful comments about my driving.

We were told that today the plat-du-jour was Poulet de Bresse and the entrées were either Escargots or Brandade en Feuillette.

There is a lot to be said for keeping it simple, especially for she who can never make up her mind.

Brandade for her and escargots for me. There was already an open bottle of Côtes du Rhone on the table and the atmosphere was beginning to bustle, with other patrons taking their seats, as if on the last bus home, having been waiting for a long time.

The snails arrived quickly and so did the brandade, both were delicious, the perfectly cooked (rôtisseries) poulet arrived with tagliatelle and a rich sauce of morilles.

What else could we expect, a recommendation from a national treasure must be good?

An excellent cheese board and a home made tart brought the proceedings to a climax and a café Calva brought them to a close.

On other days of the week the *plat* changes, on a Tuesday it is either Tête de Veau with sauce ravigotte or local lamb, on a Friday it is Aioli du Bistro, on a Saturday it is local lamb.

My bill was 119€ including the Pastis and a good Calva and of course the wine.

We went on to Arles to spend the night and the next morning seriously considered going back for another shot at lunch the way it used to be in France, but the need to feed cats overtook my ambitions for lunch.

So the next time you find yourself between your Arles and your Les Baux, you will know where to go.

Just don't leave it too long, for as soon as the TV series is aired, tables will be changing hands like tickets for a good Rock concert.

Pip, pip

BBC – BRAINWASH CENTRAL

BBC bias is still skewing the Brexit debate

There are many good reasons to avoid Question Time on a Thursday night - from the ranty audience members to the unfunny Corbynista comics and the SNP politicians who somehow manage to link every issue, however tangentially, back to Scottish independence. Not for nothing does the show leave many viewers shouting at the TV while slugging petrol-strength wine (that's my reaction at least).

Recently it has also become a prime example of the Brexit bias which pervades the BBC. Question Time panels are regularly stacked with Remainers. A recent night's line-up featured only one Leave supporter (Camilla Tominey of this parish) alongside two remain-voting MPs and a remain-backing CEO. The arch

priestess of Remain herself, Gina Miller, made a last-minute substitution for the footballer John Barnes.

A quick number-crunch reveals that remainers outnumbered eurosceptic panellists by 4/1 on five of the last eight panels. I have yet to find a single occasion since the referendum where the show has actually reflected the views of the British public, with Leavers outnumbering Remainers.

These aren't anomalies, either, but long-running trends which apply to other flagship BBC programmes. According to the Institute of Economic Affairs, of the 297 panellists appearing on Radio 4's Any Questions between 2016 and 2017, two thirds were Remainers. And this is only the most overt example of the BBC's biased approach to Brexit.

There are also the more subtle forms of bias that steer the debate. BBC presenters often use loaded terms, particularly when examining the potential impact of a 'No Deal' scenario on the UK economy. We hear about 'cliff edges' and 'crashing out' - rather than more neutral language like 'leaving without a deal' or 'leaving on WTO terms'.

Recently the BBC website reported on a survey by the Institute of Directors, which found that a third of the organisation's members had considering relocating some aspects of their businesses abroad because of Brexit. The survey provides a useful insight into the views of IoD members. The trouble was how the story was reported.

The initial title, which has since been amended, implied the poll applied to all UK businesses ("A third of UK firms could move business abroad"). Yet IoD members tend to be larger-than-average firms which conduct more overseas trade (64% are exporters compared with less than 10% of British businesses). As such, any survey would always be unrepresentative of wider business.



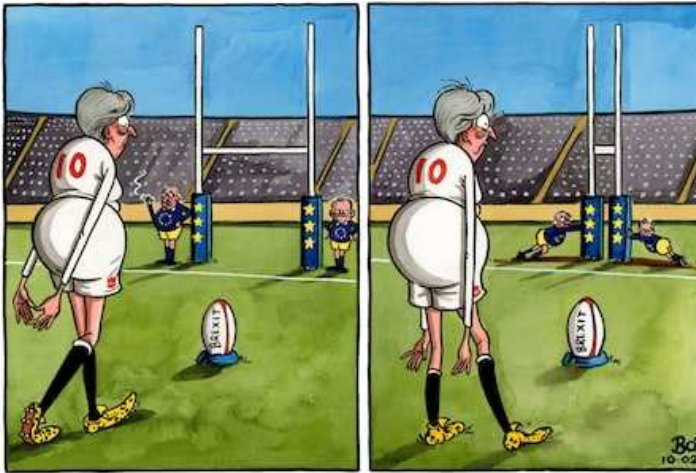
The oleaginous Fiona Bruce, chairing Question Time

Of course, all institutions will exhibit bias of some kind (whether consciously or not). But the compulsory nature of the licence fee means that questions of influence and bias weigh more heavily at Auntie. Since everyone with a TV must pay up, they have a right to expect fair treatment from a supposedly impartial state broadcaster.

One major stumbling block to the BBC's claim to impartiality is the sheer volume of left-wingers and Labour apparatchiks among its managers, strategists and journalists. The effect of this largely Left-wing, bien-pensant cadre at the helm of the state broadcaster is often a bland uniformity of view. While the BBC does many things brilliantly, it struggles with diversity of

opinion - and, as in other areas of British cultural life, contains few conservatives in its ranks.

Next April, the BBC's licence fee is set to rise by £4 - a small sum in the grand scheme of things, but a hike that could nudge some of the more agnostic BBC viewers towards subscription platforms like Amazon Prime and Netflix. For some of us, the subtle - and not-so-subtle - forms of bias that persist in the corporation's coverage of Brexit, might also tip the balance.



BREXIT OR WHAT ?

The UK political scene is worse than a six ring circus, and it isn't even funny. Suggestions of new Olympic sports, might include Zumba, or Break Dancing, why not Political Kicking the can down the road into the Long Grass ? at which Prime Minister May is an absolute Champion.

But what constantly amazes is the fact that the EU is desperate for UK money to balance its budget and will do anything, it looks like anything along the lines of blackmail and extortion to get it. **All this despite the fact that the UK economy is booming, whereas the EU, the Eurozone is literally teetering above the precipice of a huge economic recession.**

However Figures for the UK reveal ""Between 1999, when the euro was launched, and the start of 2017, the latest period for which IMF data is available from Bloomberg, the eurozone's GDP grew by 26 per cent, against the UK's 44 per cent and 42 per cent in the United States. Italy is up by just 6.7 per cent and Greece by 1.3 per cent; both have suffered two wasted decades.

If being part of the single market and customs union mattered so much more than any other policy, the eurozone would have boomed. Yet it didn't, and the voters know they have been sold a pup. If you want to see proper growth, you need to turn to the emerging world, to China (which has multiplied the size of its economy in extraordinary fashion), to India, to Singapore, to Israel (up 98 per cent).

Of course, the UK has underperformed these past two years; and yes, Brexit uncertainty, compounded by the Government's incompetence, was one important reason. Yet this brief period of EU overperformance is ending. Eurozone industrial production was down a calamitous 4.2 per cent, year-on-year in December, led by a 6.7 per cent collapse in Spain, 5.5 per cent in Italy and 3.9 per cent in Germany. French industry's crisis was less pronounced at minus 1.7 per cent; Britain did slightly better

again, by shrinking only 1.2 per cent"" All this despite Project Fear Mar 11!

Latest headline reads:

Britain's economy is set to boom and become the largest in Europe - because of Brexit

The public finances are on the mend, recording a healthy surplus in January on booming tax receipts. Employment is at record levels, with real wage growth at a two-year high. Despite a global slowdown, Britain expanded 1.4 per cent last year, recording just 4 per cent unemployment. Yet Germany and France are on the brink of recession, the Italian economy is contracting and eurozone joblessness is twice as high. The UK has economic problems - and let no-one say we don't hear about them, given the relentless drumbeat of anti-Brexit media negativity. Just as the economy held up after the 2016 referendum, though - belying Treasury warnings of "an immediate and profound economic shock" - there are signs of defiant economic strength once more and confidence in our long-term future.



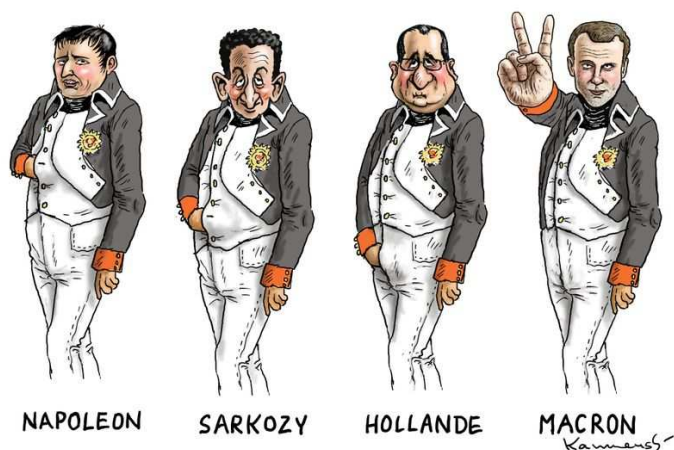
Norway's \$1 trillion (£753 billion) sovereign wealth fund, among the world's most respected investors, has just confirmed it will boost its UK holdings.

"Over time, our UK allocation will increase," said Yngve Slyngstad, the Norwegian Fund's CEO.

"With our 30-year plus time horizon, current political discussions don't change our view," he added, reaffirming his commitment to Britain even in the case of a "no-deal" Brexit.

This kind of clear-sighted, grown-up analysis from professionals contrasts starkly with endless doom-mongering we get from subsidy-hungry politicians at the CBI. It's precisely because Britain will thrive after Brexit that we attracted record foreign direct investment last year, beating the US, with only China attracting more. Even British start-ups raised almost £8 billion in venture capital during 2018 - some 70 per cent more than their French and Germany counterparts.

Boeing has opened its first manufacturing plant in Europe - in Sheffield. Technology-driven investment is piling in - not just to London but to Manchester and the North East too. And, as Brexit-bashing stories about planes not flying are trumped by reality, investors from China to the Middle East are flocking to a country just judged by Forbes magazine as the "best place in the world to do business" for the second year in a row.



FRANCE & THE UK- BREXIT

More than a million industrial jobs have been lost in France over the past 20 years – many of them to Eastern Europe !

Of all the European leaders, Macron is noted for being the most intransigent in his public utterances on Britain's Brexit negotiations. He has nailed his pro-European colours to the mast and insisted that, in opting for Brexit, the British people must bear the consequences even if, as he claims, they were lied to by their politicians. However, it's Macron's own people who are likely to be seriously impacted by a hard Brexit.

France stands to forfeit £2.6bn (€3bn) of exports in 2019 in the event of post Brexit disruption, making it the third worst affected EU nation after Germany and Holland, according to a recent report by French-based credit insurer Euler Hermes. Brexit could also affect France's largest trade surplus in goods with any single country, Britain; in 2017, this stood at £8.13bn (€9.27bn); last year, it was £10bn (€11.4bn), according to French customs statistics. That surplus is important in offsetting France's £15bn (€17bn) trade deficit with Germany, not to mention its overall balance of trade deficit, which for 2018 stood at £52bn (€59.9bn).

Yet what will happen to France's surplus in the event of a no-deal Brexit has received little attention publicly from the French government or French media. Macron's high-profile attempt to woo City financial firms to Paris has been a flop; those that have chosen to set up in Europe have largely avoided France.

Meanwhile French government decrees on measures to be taken in the event of Britain exiting the EU without a deal on 29 March offer little in the way of detail on how key exporting sectors will be supported. Understandably there is an attempt to mitigate the impact on ports or airports with the presumed need for additional customs officials after a hard Brexit. The plans also try to address an area that will be affected immediately, whatever the nature of Britain's exit: fishing. Already French fishermen are up in arms at the prospect of being denied access to Britain's coastal waters, claiming that they will block all sales of British fish to the European continent. The French government has pledged some of the £43m (€50m) from the hard Brexit fund to come to their aid. Yet as vocal and militant as they are, French fishermen are few in number and insignificant in trade terms compared with other sectors that risk a major hit.

According to French foreign ministry figures, in 2017 the sector with the largest surplus with Britain £906m (€1.1 billion) is the wine industry, followed by jewellery £705m (€805 million) and perfumes and cosmetics £663m (€757 million). Wine sales to Britain, other than their scale, will be a particularly thorny issue for president Macron. Unlike jewellery, perfumes and cosmetics it is an industry composed of 87,400 vineyards each employing on average a mere two people (Le Monde 14 Sept 2016), few of whom are wealthy and who are proud of a militant tradition of protest. The international wine trade is also particularly competitive. At present French exporters to Britain are protected from non-EU producers in the new world by the EU's common customs tariff; if this is removed, French wines will be obliged to pay a British import tariff, making Australian, American, South American wines more competitive in the British market. It is the cheaper French wines that will suffer as a result. To make matters trickier for Macron, 37 per cent of French wine production comes from cooperatives in the Languedoc-Rousillon and Côtes du Rhone regions which have been the most politically militant for over a century. Although some large French wine exporters can of course stockpile in the UK, small producers do not have that luxury. Furthermore, if British wine importers turn increasingly to suppliers outside Europe, it is not only French, but also Spanish and Italian producers, who will be hit. This will leave the European market awash with wine, driving down European prices and putting more producers out of business. The same danger would threaten France's agricultural sector. Plunging agri-food export volumes to the UK would make France one of the worst affected EU states, according to a 2017 report for the European Parliament on Brexit. As with wine, French agriculture is made up of many small producers with a formidable tradition of protest; few are admirers of Macron. Similarly threatened – and just as radical – are the independent hauliers and northern French dockers. French industrial exports to the UK might also take a hit, worse than any country except Germany, according to CEPIL. Meanwhile the leading German Halle Institute for Economic Research released a report yesterday putting job losses in France from a no-deal Brexit at some 50,000. Parts of the British economy might suffer too, of course. But in the event of a no-deal Brexit, UK trade will be cushioned, rather than aggravated, by the cheaper pound. A further crucial difference between Britain and France is that key parts of France's trade with Britain are reliant on small, very vulnerable suppliers with a long history of militancy. This is not what president Macron needs given his dismal poll ratings, the yellow vest protest movement, a fractured society, European elections in May and crucial French local elections ten months later.



A 'Golden Calf' is placed in front of the European central Bank during protests in Frankfurt

'Bankfurt', Paris await Brexit boom as banks stay loyal to London

Remember when hundreds, nay thousands of jobs were going to flood out of London to Paris and Frankfurt! Well it just hasn't happened !

LONDON/FRANKFURT (Reuters) - In Frankfurt and Paris, the flood of banking jobs predicted to arrive after Brexit is, for now, little more than a trickle.

An analysis of job postings on eight of the world's major investment bank websites show a modest push to recruit staff in other European cities but little to suggest London is set for a rapid demise as the region's top banking hub.

Goldman Sachs, Citigroup, JP Morgan, Morgan Stanley, Bank of America/Merrill Lynch, UBS, Credit Suisse and Deutsche Bank are seeking to fill 1,545 new roles in Britain, numbers up to January 22 show.

In Germany and France - the two countries predicted to see the biggest influx of financial services from Britain as a result of Brexit - just 301 roles have been listed.

Only Deutsche Bank is looking to hire more people in Germany than in Britain, with 133 German vacancies posted online compared to 132 in the UK.

"It isn't really a tsunami of hires," said Christine Kuhl, a partner with executive placement firm Odgers Berndtson in Frankfurt.

The figures do not capture numbers of existing employees who might relocate from London to other EU offices under contingency plans following Britain's exit from the European Union (EU) or roles that are not publicly advertised.

But they are forward-looking indicators of how each bank is looking to remodel their European workforce over the coming months in the face of Brexit, and suggest banks are only making modest tweaks as Britain's EU departure approaches on March 29.

"Culturally, Paris is French, Frankfurt is German but London is international. The Americans - who own this industry - want to operate in an English speaking environment. No one wants to go," said Martin Armstrong, partner at headhunting firm Armstrong International.

Other recruitment specialists reported few signs of banks preparing to bulk up in a hurry, even if Britain has to leave the EU without a deal covering financial services.

The small number of moves to date have followed many months of consultations and negotiations, the headhunters said, with banks keen to avoid relocations which might prove premature or even unnecessary.

"It can be done, but we are talking months, possibly longer if there are families involved," said James Murray, a director at search firm Robert Walters.

"That said, if risk takers do start to move elsewhere than that is where we could start to see real movement in terms of jobs.

When the risk takers move, then surely the risk managers move, and so on," he added.

HOMEWORK

Search firm Korn Ferry set up a Brexit task force after Britons voted in 2016 to leave the EU and met regularly to prepare for a mass transfer of talent from London to Frankfurt. But the influx hasn't happened.

One senior banker who is making the move to Frankfurt is Christoph Seibel. Seibel, a German national, left the city in 1993 to go to business school in the United States and then pursue a career in London.

Mizuho poached him from RBC Capital Markets in London to become CEO of the bank's newly headquartered EU operations in Frankfurt. He takes up the new post on March 28.

Mizuho is one of 45 financial firms that Germany's financial regulator Bafin says are setting up Frankfurt hubs after Brexit. But moves like Seibel's are few and far between, with activity to date well short of the 6,000 financial jobs lobby group Frankfurt Main Finance previously expected to move to Germany's largest financial hub in the event of a hard Brexit.

Slideshow (5 Images)

Seven leading executive search firms contacted by Reuters reported few offerings for leadership roles in Frankfurt as uncertainty about Britain's future trading relationship with the bloc continues.

Some banks are nevertheless betting on London to retain the balance of power over rival centers in the EU, opting to base top executives and keep their European headquarters in London - for the time being at least.

Citi's new EMEA Chief Executive David Livingstone will be based in the UK capital, as will HSBC's newly appointed global markets boss Georges Elhedery, who will relocate from Dubai to London to take up the job two weeks before Brexit.

Goldman Sachs has recently expanded the role of London-based Richard Gnodde to head of the bank's international operations while Morgan Stanley has appointed Clare Woodman to head up its EMEA business - also from London.

FAST-TRACK

For now at least, head hunters say London is winning the war to retain its talent, undermining Germany's 'Bankfurt' ambitions or President Emmanuel Macron's push to swell the Paris finance industry at London's expense.

U.S. hiring surges despite government shutdown - Goldman Sachs for example, which is making Frankfurt its EU hub after Brexit, is looking for just 15 roles in Germany's financial center with most of them in compliance, tax, legal, risk management or operations.

By contrast, the bank has 190 jobs advertised in Britain including I.T., compliance, human resources, as well as corporate & investment banking roles.

And with the market for permanent roles seen in rude health, persuading London-based bankers to move is no easy task, with handsome pay packages and better promotion prospects central to the negotiations.

"People say: 'talk to me about jobs in Asia first, then Dublin, then Frankfurt, then Paris' – in that order. People want big upticks and guaranteed bonuses as standard," Darren Burns, operations director at headhunter Morgan McKinley, said.

"There's a feeling if you move to Dublin as a director now, you could be managing director in three years, whereas in Frankfurt, there is already too much competition for the top roles. The local talent is already your boss or your boss's boss."

As banks automate more processes to cut costs, they are also recruiting more in countries where they can hire skilled workers in areas such as technology and risk management at a fraction of the cost seen in Western financial centers.

After Britain, the second hottest jobs market in Europe is Poland, where 878 posts are up for grabs across Warsaw, Krakow and Wroclaw.

Citi and Credit Suisse have advertised 531 roles in Poland between them, compared with an aggregated 36 posts in Germany and 8 jobs in France.

Morgan Stanley has 49 vacancies in Budapest, where it opened in 2006 and now employs more than 1,300 people.

"The biggest banks have been nearshoring and offshoring roles from their most expensive centers for the best part of 15 years now, entirely unrelated to Brexit," Murray said.

"If they still have jobs in London, it's because they genuinely need or want those jobs to be in London."



A Banksy-inspired graffiti piece depicting a little girl in a yellow 'gilets jaunes' vest has been discovered in Bordeaux in an apparent nod to the famed artist's Girl with Balloon – only the balloon is now a missing hand!

THE CONTINUING YELLOW JACKETS CRISE – UPDATE

(LEFT) Eiffel Tower constructed from wood pallets by Yellow Vest manifestants at Le Cannet des Maures

Quote from attendee at recent debate.

"I don't know if the Yellow Jackets are right or wrong," he says. "But I'll say this: Without them, we wouldn't have got anything. We would have been ignored. The little bit Mr. Macron has conceded we would not have had without the Yellow Jackets!~!" A local farmer

CORMOLAIN, France — In a large, bright village hall in a small village in deepest Normandy, 50 angry people want to decide the future of France. They are by turns passionate, funny, deadly serious, rambling, misinformed, confused, concise and intelligent.

In a political variant of the Tour de France, a nationwide series of "great debates" are taking place across the country. Unlike the Tour de France, the ones performing are life's spectators.

Threatened by the Yellow Jacket movement's ever-mutating anger and demands, French President Emmanuel Macron dreamed up the "Great National Debate" in desperation last December. The goal? To allow the French to air their grievances and discuss what has gone wrong in France. To take people away from their internet anger factories and reconnect them to democratic institutions. It has taken off like nothing else in his 21 months in office.

In Cormolain — a small town east of Bayeux in Normandy, population 411 — a small crowd gathered in its new *salle de fêtes* one recent evening to stage their own debate.

Denis, 61, a retired council worker, takes the microphone. "All you people in Paris, you say you didn't see the Yellow Jackets coming," he says. "Where were you then? Why didn't you know? Is there no internal intelligence service in France? Are there no local politicians? These problems are not new. The poverty and misery and lack of opportunities in rural areas are not new. Why didn't you see it?"

"Macron has been in government for five years. He's been president for nearly two years. Why didn't he know about all this? What is his excuse? Why did he take money — in diesel taxes, in new taxes on pensions — from people who have a little and give it to people who have a lot?"

The debate — like the almost 3,000 that have already taken place — is being recorded and transcribed. The results will be given to a committee to be translated into three or four issues for possible legislation — or maybe, a referendum in June or September. At least 3,000 more meetings are slated to take place before then, and 1 million suggestions or complaints have been posted online. If nothing else, the transcripts will provide a rich seam of material for historians of the future: a kind of French Domesday Book, in which all the county's most trivial and profound sources of anger or anxiety in 2019 are revealed.

Some have suggested that part of the reason the Yellow Jackets rebellion erupted last November was that the French no longer have many places where they can voice concerns, moan or gesticulate out in the open. There are fewer factories, cafés and bars. The Great Macron Talk-In has presented them with an opportunity. It has become a gargantuan radio phone-in: a nationwide orgy of group psychotherapy.

'Life-crushing'

The *grand débat* was widely mocked by the French media. The gatherings were boycotted by members of the Yellow Jackets. Perhaps they were right to be skeptical. The debates — where the four official subjects are taxation and spending; the organization of the state; democracy and citizenship; and the "transition" to a more ecologically friendly economy — have helped to noticeably take the wind out of the sails of the movement.

Macron has attended half a dozen meetings himself, taking questions in impressive, seven-hour, shirt-sleeved sessions. Psychotherapy for the head of state? He certainly seems to have been released from the panic of the early weeks of Yellow Jacket protests.

French national media have given plenty of coverage to this Macron-splaining. They have taken less interest in local debates like the event I'm attending in Cormolain.

The first speaker doesn't give his name. He is 56 years old. We know this because he mentions it several times. It seems to haunt

him, as if he has suddenly realized that he is facing the scrapheap. He lost his factory job more than a year ago and has not found another.

"You contact the unemployment people for help, training or something," he says. "They say it may take a year before they can do anything. Fine, but you break the 80 kph speed limit and you get the response through the post from government in two days."

"I've always worked. I'm 56 years old. Now there's nothing at all. No jobs. No factories. It's all tourism. What is there for me in tourism? I'm 56 years old."

He goes on and on. There are cries of anger from the hall. "OK. We've got the picture. You're not the only one."

"People blame Europe, but the problem is in Paris" — 40-year-old woman at Cormolain meeting

A woman in her early 40s, one of youngest people in the room, stands up. She is an organic farmer. She wants to talk about how "life-crushing" it is to deal with the French bureaucracy.

"They don't apply their own rules. They tell you one thing is the law, and then they do something else," she says. "People blame Europe, but the problem is in Paris. There are people sitting there with nothing better to do than to make our lives a misery. They have a great talent — a talent for splitting hairs 14 times. Lengthwise."

'We obey the rules. Others don't.'

An old man near me takes the microphone. His name is René, a retired farmer in his late 70s, maybe early 80s, and looks like an older Jeremy Corbyn. He has brought a sheaf of hand-written notes.

"I have a pension of €1,000 a month. I'll show you the details. You can't live on €1,000 a month. And I see all these retired politicians on fat pensions from the state. All the old presidents and prime ministers. That should be abolished for starters. Edith Cresson — how long was she prime minister? And she's on a fat pension. I worked hard all my life, but I get €1,000 a month." He starts to ramble. The meeting grows restless. He finally gives up the microphone, and it goes to an imposing man named Roger, 74, who is a retired farmer.



French farmers are particularly worried about the incoming Glyphosate ban |

"I don't know if the Yellow Jackets are right or wrong," he says. "But I'll say this: Without them, we wouldn't have got anything. We would have been ignored. The little bit Mr. Macron has conceded we would not have had without the Yellow Jackets. People say they're violent. I don't know. I was

a farmer. I went on demonstrations, and we knew that there had to be a little bit of violence or no one listened."

"In all my years I have never seen a president as arrogant and as ignorant as Mr. Macron," he adds. "He comes from a world that doesn't know suffering and doesn't understand hard work."

Others want to talk about rural transport — how it's impossible for poor people to switch from diesel to electric cars; how night work and shift work makes ride-sharing impossible; how there aren't enough buses.

There's talk about farming — specifically, how worried farmers are about the weedkiller glyphosate, and how impossible it is to farm without it. Other countries will cheat when it's banned in France from 2022, they say.

"We obey the rules. Others don't. We're like a man running a 5-kilometer race with a 20-kilo sack on his back," says one participant.

'Envy and jealousy'

Most everyone agrees Paris is too remote, that it refuses to understand the problems of rural areas. Members address the local Macron-supporting MP, Bertrand Bouyx, as "you people from Paris" even though he is a pharmacist from Bayeux, a town some 25 kilometers away.

The mood is one of anger and anxiety. People talk about the complexity of modern life, of feeling perpetually cheated. There's an impressive understanding of some issues, an impatience with others.

More than a million industrial jobs have been lost in France over the past 20 years – many of them to Eastern Europe !

The economic fallout of the Yellow Vest demonstrations has been disastrous for the French economy. Despite the so-called Grand Debates called for by President Macron, serious criticisms are made as to how they are organised. The Prefet of the Var has again issued instructions for the 16 weekend for controls in Toulon, where shopkeepers have complained! Ex gatestone Instute, private Think Tank.

""The government and French President Emmanuel Macron have been doing everything they can to crush the movement. They have tried insults, defamation and have said the demonstrators were both "seditious people" wishing to overthrow the institutions and fascist "brown shirts". On December 31, Macron described them, as "hateful crowds". The presence of some anti-Semites led a government spokesman (incorrectly) to describe the entire movement as "anti-Semitic". The Minister of the Interior, Christophe Castaner, ordered the police to resort to a degree of violence not seen since the time of the Algerian war (1954-62). During the two last decades in France, other riots have taken place many times. In 2005, for instance, when the whole country was subjected to arson and riots for weeks, the number of wounded rioters remained low. But violence has consequences. **In just the last few weeks, 1,700 protesters were wounded, some seriously. Nineteen lost an eye; four lost a hand. Although French police officers do not use lethal weapons, they do use rubber ball launchers and often fire at protesters' faces -- a target prohibited by the current rules of engagement. The French are also the only police force in Europe to use Sting-Ball grenades.**

Macron has never treated protesters as people who have legitimate claims, so he has never paid attention to their claims. He only agreed to suspend the additional fuel tax, which was to have been begun in January, and to grant a slight increase in the minimum wage -- all of which he did only after weeks of protests.

Journalists say that Macron thought the movement would fade away after the end-of-year break; that police violence and desperation would induce the demonstrators to resign themselves to their fates, and that the support of the general population would collapse. Nothing of the sort took place. Macron wrote a letter to all French citizens inviting them to "participate", but saying explicitly that the "debate" would not change anything, that the government would continue in exactly the same direction ("I have not forgotten that I was elected on a project, on major orientations to which I remain faithful."), and that everything that was done by the government since June 2017 would remain unchanged ("We will not go back on the measures we have taken").

He then entrusted organizing the "debate" and drafting its conclusions to two members of the government, and requested that "registers of grievances" be made available to the public in all town halls.

Macron then launched the "debate" by meeting mayors of many cities, but not in public. He seems to have been concerned that if he organized meetings open to the public, he would be immediately chased away by crowds.

The first two meetings took place in small cities (with 2000-3000 inhabitants), and with mayors whom the organizers -- chosen by Macron -- allowed to come. The organizers also selected the questions to be asked, then sent them to Macron to be answered at the meeting.

The day before each meeting, the selected city was placed under the administration of legions of police. All access roads to the city were closed, and anyone found wearing a yellow vest or carrying one in his car was fined. All protests in the city were flatly forbidden. The police made sure that the road used by Macron's convoy to reach the city was empty of any human presence for several hours before the convoy arrived.

Television news channels were asked to broadcast the entire meetings, which lasted six to seven hours. Only a few journalists, also selected by Macron, had permission to attend.

Several commentators stressed that pretending to "debate" is nonsense, and that entrusting the organization of the "debate" and the drafting of its conclusions to members of the government, and the way the meetings were organized, clearly show that these performances are a sham.

Some commentators pointed out that the term "register of grievances" has not been used since the time of absolute monarchy, that mayors are treated as waxworks and that placing the cities Macron visits in a state of siege is unworthy of a democracy.

The French economy is, in fact, sclerotic. The Index of Economic Freedom created by the Heritage Foundation and the *Wall Street Journal* ranks it 71st in the world (35th among the 44 countries in the Europe region) and notes that "the government spending accounts for more than half of total domestic output". The Index also reveals that "the budget has been chronically in deficit"; that

"corruption remains a problem and that "the labor market is burdened with rigid regulations" leading to a high level of unemployment.

France has lost almost all its factories (industrial jobs account for only 9.6% of total employment). Its agriculture is in ruins, despite huge European subsidies: 30% percent of French farmers earn less than 350 euros (\$400) a month and dozens commit suicide each year. In the high-tech sector, France is essentially absent.

A brain drain has started that show no signs it will stop.

In parallel, each year, 200,000 immigrants from Africa or the Arab world, often without skills, arrive. Most are Muslim and have been contributing to the Islamization of France.

At the end of the protests in Paris on January 26, thousands of "yellow vests" had planned to gather peacefully on one of the main squares of the city, the Place de la République, for a "debate" and to provide responses to the "debate" organized by Macron. The police were ordered to disperse them brutally; they once again used rubber ball launchers and Sting-Ball grenades to do just that.

One of the leaders of the "yellow vests" movement, Jerome Rodrigues, was shot in the face while filming police officers in a square nearby, the Place de la Bastille. He lost an eye and for several days was hospitalized. Other protestors were wounded. Sunday, January 27, a demonstration was organized by Macron's supporters, who called themselves "the red scarves". The demonstration was supposed to show that an impressive number of people were still on Macron's side. Organizers said that ten thousand people came. Videos, however, show that the number seems to have been far lower. One report said the so-called 'red scarves had been bussed in' by whom one wonders, nothing heard of them since.



ENGLISH REVIVAL HITS CARDIFF ROAD BUMP, TOULON REVIVAL STILL NOWHERE IN SIGHT

By SIMON EVELEIGH

French sides have always had the reputation of not travelling well, but Toulon and the national team have taken this cliché to the extreme this year. We are now two-thirds of the way through the regular season and Toulon sit in 10th place, 13 points clear of the relegation zone, but also 13 points off 6th place, with the top six qualifying for the end of season play-offs. There is still time for Toulon to put a run together and squeeze into the qualifying places, but with five of their remaining games being away from home and with Toulon's woeful form on the road so far this season, that seems like a remote possibility. At Stade Mayol Toulon's form has been more than acceptable, winning seven

and losing two, gaining five bonus points along the way.

However, away from home, they have failed to gain a single point. That's eight matches, eight defeats and the closest they have come to any of their opponents is a nine point deficit.

If they are ever going to break their duck, surely it has to be in their next game, at Perpignan, who are rooted to the bottom of the table and have lost all nine of their home fixtures. Whatever the opposite of the immovable force and the irresistible object is, this match has to be it!

Toulon's president, Mourad Boudjellal, is prone to making comments to grab the headlines, often in a deliberate ploy to take the attention off his players, but after the latest pointless journey (to Agen), in the view of many, his outburst seriously overstepped the mark.

Julian Savea is a World Cup winner and joined Toulon last summer. He is a fine rugby player but does come with a certain reputation for being "difficult" and he has struggled to settle in at Toulon, although it is always easier to find your feet in a winning team rather than one that is struggling.

After the Agen match, Boudjellal said that Savea was no longer welcome at Toulon and should not bother coming to training. Singling out one player seems unfair, but high profile overseas stars come at a price and in a business getting a return on your investment is vital.

It could, of course, have been a cunning ploy by the president to deliberately hurt Savea's professional pride and make him determined to prove the doubters wrong. However, if that was the intention, it could have seriously misfired, because I am sure that there are now a few players who would think twice about signing a contract with Toulon. With the World Cup every four years marking a point when players seek pastures new, there will be a number of southern hemisphere stars on the market come November and the big bucks and the Var sunshine may not be quite as appealing as they have been in the past.

Drew Mitchell, the Australian wing who had a highly successful spell at Toulon, but also had run-ins with Boudjellal, was particularly vociferous about the lack of respect being shown to Savea.

The New Zealander did not feature in the squad for the home win over Pau the week after the Agen defeat and it remains to be seen how much of a part he will play in the remaining three months of the season.

Whoever represents Toulon in their last nine games, they probably need to win at least six of those to stand any chance of getting into the top six and even that may not be enough. This month, after their trip to Perpignan, Toulon's next match is at home to another team who have failed to live up to expectations, Montpellier, and the month ends with a very stern test at Lyon, whose head coach is Toulon old boy Pierre Mignoni. Away from domestic action, the 6 Nations has held our attention and it is all set up very nicely for the last two rounds of games. Wales are unbeaten and dug deep to beat England in a pulsating match in Cardiff. They have now won their last 12 games, the best run ever by a Welsh team. When they were 16-0 down at half-time in their opening match in Paris, not many people would have put money on a Welsh Grand Slam, but that is very much on the cards now. However, it is far from a foregone

conclusion, with a trip to Murrayfield before a final fixture at home to Ireland.



Manu Tuilagi England – who is now debating moving to France and to Racing 92

England are still breathing down Wales' necks and with home fixtures against Italy and Scotland, they will be confident of winning the title if Wales should slip up.

England began with a massive display in Dublin against the reigning champions and the team of 2018 and followed that up by thrashing a woefully inept French side. They had chances to wrest control in Cardiff but failed to take them and could be made to regret that come the final reckoning.

After that initial defeat, Ireland have won in both Edinburgh and Rome. Whilst they are certainly not firing on all cylinders, with a home match against France in round four, they will still believe that they can retain their title.

Scotland's campaign has been hit by injuries to key players and after taking maximum points against Italy on the opening weekend, there is the very real possibility that they may not add to that tally.

France? Well, what can we say? Unfit, tactically naïve, poor at home, dreadful on the road. They somehow managed to throw away a 16 point lead against Wales, were humiliated at Twickenham, yet managed to salvage some pride with a bonus point win over a depleted Scotland. Incredibly, there is still a mathematical possibility that France will win the title, but that would need a series of very strange results and it is more likely that they will once again finish in the bottom half of the table (one third place in 2017 is the best they have done since 2011). Finally, poor Italy. They have now lost 20 successive 6 Nations matches and they will be targeting their final fixture at home to France. There has been an improvement in their overall play but the wooden spoon once again looks to be theirs.

As always in this great competition, there are likely to be a few more unexpected turns and we will round it all up for you next time.

Remaining fixtures (all kick off times are French time);

Saturday, March 9th

3.15pm Scotland vs Wales BBC/France 2

5.45pm England vs Italy ITV/France 2

Sunday, March 10th

4pm Ireland vs France ITV/France 2

Saturday, March 16th

1.30pm Italy vs France ITV/France 2

3.45pm Wales vs Ireland BBC/France 2

6pm England vs Scotland ITV/France 2

Brexit and pension transfers.

A window of opportunity?

Last year the UK began to impose a 25% tax on transfers to overseas pension schemes, including QROPS. This currently excludes individuals and QROPS where both are resident in a European Economic Area (including Gibraltar) country, but who knows what will happen after Brexit? If you wish to move your pension overseas, it may be better to do so now, under known rules, rather than wait and see what happens. Pension transfers can take months, so don't risk leaving it too late.

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04 88 78 21 03

aix@blevinsfranks.com

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