

Brexit closes Brit expats' bank accounts

Many of the 1.8-million British expats living in Europe will have their UK bank accounts closed imminently because of Brexit - and they should urgently seek alternatives to "sidestep avoidable issues".



Nigel Green, CEO, deVere Group

"Many Britons who live in Europe face being stripped of their UK bank accounts and credit cards within weeks, because of the failure of the EU and Britain to agree rules for operating after Brexit.

"Most of the major UK banks are already writing to customers to inform them that they will no longer be able to provide them with banking services, unless they have a UK address," says Nigel Green, the chief executive and founder of deVere Group.

UK banks will no longer be allowed to provide services to customers in the EU without the right banking licences, when Britain formally leaves the bloc on 31 December.

Passporting system

Currently, they operate under a passporting system, which allows banks in the EU to trade freely in any other state in the European Economic Area (EEA) without the need for more authorisation.

"To operate without passporting becomes enormously complex, incredibly time-consuming and very expensive for banks. This is the reason why they are ditching many of their customers across Europe – even if they have been with them for decades.

"We only have a matter of weeks until it will become for illegal for most UK banks to service many clients in the EU.

"This will cause considerable disruption for many individuals, families, businesses and other organisations, especially where there are larger deposits, standing orders, regular payments and credit facilities to another bank," he says.

"I would urge those who could be affected to urgently seek alternatives with providers that already operate under pan-European rules to sidestep avoidable issues. There's a growing need for clients to have borderless access to, and management and use of their money. Challenger banks and fintech firms are stepping up as traditional banks are now having to routinely abandon their customers due to Brexit," Green says.

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