

# What might stop a negotiated Article 50 agreement? (3 September 2017)

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Article 50 states that if no agreement is found by the end of two years after notification, then a member state leaves in any case. Why might this happen?

The Risk	Why might it happen?	Likelihood of preventing agreement	Change since July
UK government is unclear on objectives	Continued mixed signals from different parts of government, and position papers that do not go beyond listing options	Medium-High	No change
UK Parliamentary revolt	Labour's move towards Customs Union/Single Market membership potentially is of consequence, but this has yet to be tested in practice	Low-Medium	No change
Tory party revolt	The approach of party conference might be an opportunity for dissent to break out, possibly resulting in a leadership contest, especially if May's relaunch does not work	Low-Medium	No change
European Parliament refuses to accept agreement	EP continues to reiterate its intention to block any agreement not resolving citizens' rights.	Low	No change
Non-ratification by an EU27 assembly	The Commission mandate limits Art.50 negotiations much more clearly, so much less risk of requiring unanimous adoption (or involvement of sub-national assemblies)	Low	No change
Insufficient negotiating capacity	The UK remains below recruiting targets for negotiators, so might simply lack staffing to produce an agreement of sufficient scope and detail	Low	No change
Disagreement over sequencing of agreement	While the UK has followed the Commission's sequencing, it still pushes for immediate discussion of Phase II (transitional arrangements)	Very Low	No change
EU27 fail to agree position	Commission mandate confirms EUCO track, with no sign of substantive disagreements	Very Low	No change
Radical hardening of UK position	Confusion over UK positions as likely to result in softening as in any hardening	Very Low	No change