

What might stop a negotiated Article 50 agreement? (28 March 2018)

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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 Feb
Tory party revolt	Backbench remains uncertain about course taken, but has not acted upon public statements. Transition model has been accepted, but flashpoints on fisheries and Irish border	Medium	No change
UK government is unclear on objectives	Continued lack of development of resolution on outstanding substantive points within Withdrawal Agreement, but has been able to advance on elements of draft text	Low-Medium	Falling
EU27 fail to agree position	EU now has agreed broad mandate for new relationship, but no major disputes yet	Low	No change
European Parliament refuses to accept agreement	Despite various concerns on citizens' rights and the Irish border, the EP continues to be broadly supportive	Low	No change
Radical hardening of UK position	Cabinet has been acquiescent in accepting second draft, including on transition, but May's rhetoric on Irish dimension suggests scope for intransigence.	Low	No change
UK Parliamentary revolt	Limited activity, mostly pointing towards softening terms, instead of a no-deal	Low	No change
Non-ratification by an EU27 assembly	Commission Phase 2 mandate continues approval process without major issues and no sign of breaking ranks	Very Low	No change
Insufficient negotiating capacity	Despite short-staffing and high staff turnover in DExEU, no sign this will hinder ability to reach agreement on planned schedule.	Zero	Falling
Disagreement over sequencing of agreement	Sequencing is no longer an issue on either side, as they move into Phase 2	Zero	No change