

What might stop a negotiated Article 50 agreement? (26 July 2018)

Simon Usherwood

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 June
Tory party revolt	There has been much unhappiness with the Chequers model, leading to several high-profile resignation and continued disquiet about May's leadership	Medium-High	No change
UK government is unclear on objectives	Chequers meeting did produce more detailed plan on future relationship, but continued silence on resolution of immediate issues in Withdrawal Agreement	Medium-High	Rising
Radical hardening of UK position	Dissatisfaction over Chequers has re-opened some harder options within UK, as seen in amendments to Customs and Trade Bills, but balanced by some regrouping on soft Brexit side of debate	Low-Medium	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
EU27 fail to agree position	EU continues to hold broadly-agreed line, although likely to see increased input from member states in final phases	Low	No change
UK Parliamentary revolt	Evidence from Withdrawal, Customs and Trade Bills points to structurally stronger position of hard Brexiters, but little sign of work to prevent a 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	No change
Disagreement over sequencing of agreement	Sequencing is no longer an issue on either side, as they move into Phase 2	Zero	No change