

What might stop a negotiated Article 50 agreement? (31 January 2019)

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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 Dec.
Tory party revolt	Extent of rejection of the Withdrawal Agreement in the Meaningful Vote highlights lack of support for May, even if there is no consensus about alternative models	High	No change
UK Parliamentary revolt	No obvious path for ratification, following the Meaningful Vote. However, no obvious majority for any alternative path	High	No change
UK government is unclear on objectives	May to seek renegotiation on backstop, but without clarity about what this might involve	Low	No change
Radical hardening of UK position	Possible consequence of Parliamentary impasse, to win over hard Brexit/no-deal elements, but limited by need to keep softer MPs on-side	Low	No change
EU27 fail to agree position	The critical time pressure might open up cracks in EU27 unity, although the line so far has been very consistent	Very Low	No change
European Parliament refuses to accept agreement	No sign that this will be a problem at all, unless renegotiation occurs	Very Low	No change
Non-ratification by an EU27 assembly	Almost inconceivable at this stage	Zero	Falling
Insufficient negotiating capacity	No longer an issue, given limited agenda around outstanding Withdrawal Agreement problems	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