



EU Exit



News



European Commission

### Barnier – deal a ‘realistic’ possibility within two months

**10 September 2018**

Speaking at a conference in Slovenia, EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier revealed that a deal between the EU and UK following the UK’s exit from the EU could be struck within six to eight weeks. Barnier expressed optimism over the progress of bilateral negotiations, estimating that some 80-85% of dossiers were agreed upon, meaning that it was a ‘realistic’ prospect that a deal could be presented to the House of Commons and the European Parliament respectively in November within sufficient time for ratification before March 2019, when the UK formally leaves the bloc.

While fully recognizing the progress made, Barnier went on to warn that some significant hurdles to such an agreement still remained on the negotiating table in relation to the Chequers proposals – principally the Northern Ireland/Ireland ‘backstop’ arrangement. However, the PM’s spokesman confirmed “We have had very positive engagement over the summer with EU leaders in relation to the Chequers plan. That engagement continues”.

### Commission President Juncker strikes uncompromising tone during keynote speech 12 September 2018

**12 September 2018**

On 12th September the President of the EU Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, warned the UK that it could not “choose” the parts of the Union that it wished to participate in following the country’s exit from the EU. Addressing MEPs in Strasbourg during his annual ‘State of the Union’ speech, Juncker commented that although the UK “...would never be an ordinary third country for us...[the UK] will always be a very close neighbour and partner in political, economic and security terms”, the UK will no longer enjoy the “privileged position” of an EU member state.

Juncker's further insistence that the UK's proposal that it would remain within the Single Market for goods but not services would be unlikely to be agreed upon, he went on to express some optimism that the UK may benefit from a unique deal. According to Juncker "...I welcome Prime Minister May's proposal to develop an ambitious new partnership for the future, after Brexit. We agree with the statement made in Chequers that the starting point for such a partnership should be a free-trade area between the United Kingdom and the European Union".



**UK Government**

## **Government publishes second tranche of 'no-deal' technical advisory notices**

### **13 September 2018**

On 13th September, the UK Government published a second series of technical notices aimed at businesses, organisations and other relevant stakeholders providing continuation advice should Britain leave the EU without a withdrawal agreement. Comprising the second such release – a third series is understood to be scheduled for later this month – the notices cover wider-ranging policy areas. For example, advice is given on, variously, UK passport validity in the Schengen zone and future funding arrangements for European Social Fund Programme disbursements.

Of importance to businesses exporting to the EU were the notices concerning maritime security, data protection, the upholding of environmental standards and the recognition of seafarer certificates of competency.

## **Chancellor Philip Hammond echoes IMF in highlighting the cost of a 'no-deal' EU Exit**

### **17 September 2018**

On 17 September, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) released a report predicting a significant retraction throughout the UK economy in the event of a 'no-deal' EU exit. Christine Lagarde, IMF Managing Director, warned that "dire consequences" faced the UK in such a scenario, commenting that a 'no-deal' exit would "...inevitably have consequences in terms of reduced growth, and increase in the deficit and a depression of the currency".

Lagarde's remarks were subsequently echoed by Chancellor Philip Hammond at a joint press conference held at the Treasury, who stated that regardless of the considerable contingency planning already undertaken by the UK government, a

'no-deal' exit would "...put at risk the significant progress made over the past ten years in repairing the economy". Hammond's downbeat assessment, however, did not appear to correlate with the Prime Minister's view, who via a spokesman commented that "The PM said she believes...the best days are ahead of us, and that we have in plans in place for us to succeed in all scenarios".



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## Devolved Administrations

### Scottish Parliament committee launches inquiry to scrutinise article 50 negotiations

**14 September 2018**

The Scottish Parliament's Culture, Europe and External Affairs has launched an inquiry to monitor and scrutinise the Article 50 withdrawal negotiations and their implications for Scotland. The call for evidence seeks to provide information to MSPs on what the ongoing negotiations mean in practice for the country's businesses and organisations, and what further support is required from the governments at Holyrood or Westminster.

Joan McAlpine MSP, convenor of the committee, stated with less than 200 days until the UK leaves the EU, what Britain's exit looks like in practice is still unclear, as is its concrete ramifications on the day-to-day lives of the Scottish people. McAlpine further commented "We have started to see some guidance on the potential impact of Brexit being published by the UK Government and European Commission but we also want to hear about steps people, businesses and organisations in Scotland are taking to be ready for the outcome of the negotiations. And importantly, what further guidance is needed to ensure that Scotland can prepare for the UK's withdrawal from the EU"



Dates for  
the diary



- 3 September 2018: **Informal Summit of EU 28 leaders takes place in Salzburg, presided over by rotating Austrian Presidency**
- 23 September 2018: **Labour Party Conference Commences in Liverpool**



Further  
information



- The mechanics of striking an EU exit deal
- Institute for Government: Is Britain ready for EU exit?
- Why Ireland is the biggest stumbling block in reaching an EU exit deal

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