



Department  
for Exiting the  
European Union

# Stakeholder Bulletin

## Welcome

This is the latest edition of the Department for Exiting the European Union's Stakeholder Bulletin.

### Draft Withdrawal Agreement

Today the UK and EU negotiating teams have reached another **important milestone** in the Brexit process by agreeing the terms of a time-limited implementation period.

The [agreement](#), which we hope will be endorsed by the March European Council at the end of the week, will **give businesses and citizens the time they need** to put in place the new arrangements required, as the terms of our future partnership become clearer.

This marks an **important step** towards finalising the full Withdrawal Agreement by October, across which the negotiating teams have made substantial progress.



In December we reached an important milestone by achieving agreement on the first phase of negotiations.

And today, we've taken another significant step by reaching agreement on the next phase.

Just as in December, this has required flexibility on both sides - but the deal reached will **protect our economic and security cooperation**, and we have secured a number of our key aims.

**Access to one another's markets will remain unchanged** until the 31 December 2020, meaning citizens and businesses in the UK and across the EU can plan for life after our withdrawal with confidence.

But the deal also recognises that this period is about beginning life outside the EU, serving as a **platform on which we will build our future partnership**.

- We will be free to **negotiate, ratify and sign trade deals** with new partners, while continuing to benefit from the EU's existing agreements during the period.
- The UK will also be able to prepare for its future **arrangements in respect of fishing** opportunities through specific consultation and engagement mechanisms.
- We will bring into force ambitious **new arrangements on foreign policy and defence** cooperation as soon as possible - and until that point, in the unlikely event our national policy means we cannot agree with an EU decision, the UK will be able to choose not to apply it.
- We will be able to **join new security measures where it makes sense** to do so, bridging to the future security partnership.

For the implementation period to function effectively, the UK will need to remain in step with the EU. In this context, the Withdrawal Agreement will be **underpinned by a duty of good faith, with a Joint Committee** in place enabling either side to raise issues or concerns. These arrangements will help ensure that the implementation period **works properly for both sides**.



In only a few weeks we have managed to finalise the chapters of the financial settlement and citizens’ rights – delivering on our commitment to provide certainty to citizens.

Significant progress has also been made to turn the **Joint Report from December into the legal text of the Withdrawal Agreement**, which we will conclude in full by October.

Across **citizens’ rights and the financial settlement**, we have managed to translate all of the commitments we made in December, delivering on our promise to reflect the Joint Report in the Withdrawal Agreement. And we have reached a reciprocal agreement on UK and EU citizens who move during the implementation period.

In relation to **Northern Ireland and Ireland**, the negotiating teams remain committed to the Joint Report in its entirety. In this context, we are agreed on the need to include a legally operative version of the “backstop” solution for the border between Northern Ireland and

Ireland in the Withdrawal Agreement that is acceptable to both sides, while continuing to work up the other options.

Finally, across **other separation issues**, and institutional provisions, the UK and the EU have made significant progress, which we hope to continue in the discussions to come.



The deal we have struck today, on top of that agreed in December, should give us confidence that a good deal for the United Kingdom and the European Union is closer than ever before.

The agreement we have reached today represents another **major milestone** in our progress towards a Withdrawal Agreement, and builds an important bridge to our future partnership, **giving citizens and businesses the time and confidence** they need to plan.

## Contact us

This bulletin provides updates on the Department for Exiting the European Union's work and engagement.

If you would like to discuss any questions or thoughts with us, please contact us on the following address:

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