

Appendix A : Key dates in UK's divorce with EU

FEBRUARY 2019 - Commons approval

By now, Parliament must pass an Implementation and Withdrawal Bill Act, setting out the terms of Brexit.

UNTIL MARCH 29 2019 - Ratification

To take effect, the withdrawal agreement must be backed by at least 20 of the other 27 EU countries (and 65 per cent of their population). That decision must also be approved by the European Parliament. Any legally questionable elements of the withdrawal treaty could also be referred to the European Court of Justice by MEPs.

MARCH 29 2019 - Brexit day

Could produce a largely seamless transition or, if they fail to yield any deal, a much more chaotic “cliff edge” Brexit.

AFTER MARCH 30 2019 - *If a deal is reached.....*

APRIL 2019 - Trade talks and transition

Talks begin between the UK and the EU throughout a transition period lasting up to December 2020. During this time most aspects of UK's future relationship with the EU will be decided, with the UK remaining in the customs union and adopting free movement of goods, services and people. However, the UK also continues to pay membership contributions to the EU.

DECEMBER 31 2020 - An end to transition?

A full UK-EU trade deal expected to be agreed, but given the protracted nature of such talks, this may not be achieved. The EU insists on “backstop” provision to avoid a hard border in Ireland that will last unless new arrangements are implemented. Free movement of people will come to an end. Payments (other than those where the UK has legally committed to uphold e.g. migrant support in Turkey) will cease.

DECEMBER 31 2021 - Goodbye to the backstop?

The UK government says it expects that any “temporary customs arrangements” introduced as part of the backstop would cease by this time because alternative measures will have been put in place. The EU is highly sceptical.

MID 2020s - Journey's end?

Many business leaders caution against relying on advanced technology to speed-up customs clearances which would need years to put in place, delaying “full Brexit” until deep into the 2020s. A less ambitious “fast track” system on the US-Canada border took decades to develop and billions of dollars in investment.

AFTER MARCH 30 2019 - *If a No Deal is reached.....*

APRIL 2019

UK preparations for a no deal scenario will be tested. Emergency laws are drafted and ready to be put before Parliament, however there are many unknowns at this point.