

Assessing a good deal

The best way for the government to negotiate from here with the EU is to remind them what No deal does for us, and then ask what they would prefer to that No Deal. An Agreement needs to be better than No Deal for them and for us.

No Deal ticks four of the five boxes to provide us with a good deal.

1. It means we pay them no money over the legal requirements for regular contributions up to departure in March 2019.
2. It means from March 2019 we can make our own laws, with the ECJ no longer having any sway over our legal system which will be under the control of the UK Supreme Court.
3. It means we will regain control of our fishing grounds and territorial waters
4. We can set out our own borders and migration policy with a system which is fair for the whole world

The only box it does not tick is our preference to have a full free trade Agreement with the EU instead of relying on WTO terms and rules. If the EU understands our intent to leave without an Agreement, it is still possible – as it is massively in their interest – that they will want to take up our offer of free trade as well.

The Deals which some in the UK and on the continent are sketching do not do as well as the No Deal/WTO option. They often envisage large sums in payment to the EU after we have left in March 2019 which would be unacceptable to many UK voters. They seek to keep some EU involvement in our law making, with a continuing role for the ECJ. They do not immediately restore either our fishing grounds or control over our borders. They may offer tariff free trade in goods, or go further and offer a service sector package as well.

Many versions of this kind of Deal would be a bad deal. The Prime Minister is right to be positive, warm and enthusiastic about a more all embracing Agreement, with the UK continuing to make an important contribution to Intelligence, security, defence culture and much else besides. She is offering a full free trade agreement in goods and services. She has hinted that for a good deal she would consider an Implementation period where the UK might make further financial contributions and accept some temporary joint or independent influence over our courts and laws.

If the government goes beyond this it soon reaches the territory of a bad deal which many people in the UK will not accept. We voted to leave. We do not want a full two years further delay after March 2019, we do not want to pay them large sums of money beyond the £30 bn leaving present we are giving by paying full contributions during the waiting period to exit and we do not want to still be unable to take back control 2 years nine months after the vote.