

Deal or no deal?

The government is trying to secure a deal to trigger trade talks with the EU. Today we learn that the EU is now prepared to talk about trade and the future relationship as well as the three special subjects it singled out for discussion so far. That is welcome, and means there can now be serious negotiations about a future Agreement. It was never possible to settle the Northern Ireland border issue without knowing the basis for future trade, for example.

We need to remember that leaving on the WTO option means no additional payments to the EU, whilst taking back control of our borders, our laws and our money. A good deal has to be better than this, otherwise the government's mantra that No deal is better than a bad deal should apply.

Everyone needs to remember that this agreement is not the Agreement on the UK leaving the EU. It is an agreement to talk about all matters, and is still governed by the crucial principle that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed.