

European Commission and United Kingdom publish Joint Statement outlining further progress in Article 50 negotiations

The new elements of agreement are set out in detail in points 3 and 4 of [the Joint Statement](#), which also outlines the UK's engagement on the remaining separation issues.

Michel Barnier, the European Commission's Chief Negotiator for Article 50 negotiations, said, *"Today's progress is due to the dedication and commitment of both negotiating teams, whom I would like to thank. We have advanced on some separation issues for which European businesses need certainty, such as customs, VAT, Euratom and certificates for goods. Engagement by the UK on remaining issues such as the protection of personal data and geographical indications is also to be welcomed. Serious divergences remain, however, on the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland. I would like to recall that the Withdrawal Agreement must contain a fully operational backstop solution for Ireland and Northern Ireland. I will present the state of play of the negotiations to the European Council and the European Parliament. Today marks a step forward in these negotiations but a lot more work needs to be done before October."*

Next steps

Michel Barnier will present the state of play of the negotiations to the European Council (Article 50) which takes place on 28 and 29 June 2018, and to the European Parliament. Negotiations on the Withdrawal Agreement will continue over the coming weeks, together with the discussions on the framework for the future relationship.

The agenda for this week's negotiations is available [online](#).

Background information

On 28 February 2018, the European Commission published [a draft Withdrawal Agreement](#) between the European Union and the United Kingdom. This draft translated into legal terms [the Joint Report](#) from the negotiators of the European Union and the United Kingdom Government on the progress achieved during phase 1 of the negotiations, published on 8 December 2017, and proposed text for those outstanding withdrawal issues which are mentioned in, but not set out in detail, in the Joint Report. It also included a draft Protocol on Ireland / Northern Ireland. Both the EU and the UK have recognised that the unique situation of the island of Ireland requires a specific solution. Both sides have already committed to including a legally operable backstop in the Withdrawal Agreement.

On [19 March 2018](#), the EU and the UK published an updated version of the Withdrawal Agreement, outlining (in green, yellow, and white) the areas of agreement and disagreement between the negotiators of the EU and the UK.

On [23 March 2018](#), the European Council (Article 50) welcomed this agreement and adopted guidelines on the framework for the future EU/UK relationship. Discussions on these points are ongoing.

A final version of this Withdrawal Agreement, together with an accompanying political declaration on the framework for the future relationship, should be agreed by the EU and the UK by October 2018 to allow for the timely ratification by the European Parliament, the Council (Article 50) and the UK, according to its own constitutional requirements.

For more information

[Joint Statement, 19 June 2018](#)

[European Council \(Article 50\) Guidelines, March 2018](#)

[TF50 website](#)