



## House of Commons 'Meaningful Vote' on the negotiated withdrawal agreement between the UK and the EU (the Deal)

**Provisional Date for the first motion to the House of Commons: 11 December 2018**

**If Parliament accepts the 'Deal':** Businesses will have certainty and we can move on to the transition period, due to end on 31 December 2020.

**Likelihood of the Deal being accepted:** The PM's deal, which needs 321/642 votes to pass, is currently facing opposition from 133 Tory Brexiters, 240 Labour MPs, 10 DUP, 6 Tory Remainers, and 51 MPs from other parties, making a total of 440 (i.e. a shortfall of 122)

Yet the closer we get to Brexit Day without a deal, the more likely that markets will take fright. In that kind of atmosphere, May might have more success getting moderate Tory and Labour MPs onside.

If Parliament **rejects** the deal: The PM could technically make a second attempt at getting the deal through the Commons. There is a maximum **three-week window** between the Government's deal being defeated and the requirement on ministers to propose a way forward. This could be either be a deal which is heavily amended to satisfy the MPs who opposed it initially **OR** the following six outcomes could take place:

<b>Outcome:</b>	<b>Duration:</b>	<b>Likelihood:</b>
<b>1.) PM resigns:</b> (or if 48 Tory MPs write to the backbench 1922 Committee, there will be a leadership vote) Either way, it will end up in a <b>Tory leadership contest.</b>	<b>Up to 12 weeks</b> (It only happened quickly last time because after Cameron resigned Theresa May was the only plausible candidate left standing)	This 12-week period would take us up to Brexit Day on 29 March 2019. <i>Therefore, an extension of the Article 50 process needed.*</i>
<b>2.) May tries to go back to Brussels and renegotiate.</b> With no-deal fast approaching, vaguer wording would convince MPs to vote it through and restart the hard/soft Brexit fight that began 2 years ago, only once we are safely in the 21-month transition period that starts after 29 March 2019.	Indefinite state of limbo for the British public	Quite likely, even though the PM will have lost all credibility at this point. Indeterminate fudge could satisfy businesses in the short-term. This is despite constant warnings made by the European Commission that the negotiators have "exhausted the margin of manoeuvre" in the talks and the draft deal is "the best we can do".
<b>3.) PM calls a General Election.</b> May could decide this is her only way to secure public support for her deal that she negotiated.	<b>25 days</b> (excluding weekends and public holidays - so could happen just after the New Year)	Despite the Fixed Term Parliament Act, this is easy for PM to call as Labour want this badly.



<p><b>4.) People's Vote on the Final Deal</b> 2nd Referendum with 3 options on the Ballot paper: May's Deal, No Deal, or Remain</p>	<p>The <a href="#">UCL Constitution Unit</a> estimates that it would take at least <b>22 weeks</b> to pass the legislation, get the Electoral Commission to carry out question testing, have officials prepare for administering the poll and set aside the 10-week campaigning period required by law.</p>	<p>This assumes there is no disagreement in parliament about the question to be asked, which there will be.</p> <p><i>Therefore, the Article 50 process would need to be extended.*</i></p>
<p><b>5.) Motion of no-confidence in the Government</b> This is allowed under the Fixed Term Parliament Act.</p>	<p>No immediate time problem. If it was passed, Labour would have two weeks to try to stitch together a coalition with other parties and there would only be a general election if they failed.</p>	<p>Not likely that an opposition-led attempt to trigger no-confidence could win support from enough Tory MPs to be successful.</p>
<p><b>6.) May, or the Tory leader who replaces her, could try to force through 'No Deal Brexit':</b> Only requirement is that the PM must come to the Commons before 21 January 2019 and state that there is no deal.</p>	<p>Three issues: 1.) There can then be a debate (length unknown), but the motion is supposed to be neutral and therefore unamendable. So, MPs would not be able to use this to secure a new referendum or demand that the Government return to the negotiating table. 2.) The fact that this motion is neutral is up to the Speaker, John Bercow, to decide. 3.) Corbyn could use an 'Opposition Day' motion, but it's the Government which grants the time for that. There are also backbench motions, but again the Government controls allocations.</p>	<p>If the Government is committed to a 'No-Deal Brexit', then it could reject any motions being put forward. This would be viewed as vindictive behaviour, and the media from all sides of the political spectrum would have a field day and place the Government under intense pressure.</p>

*\*If the Article 50 process is extended to after the European elections on 23-26 May 2019, the UK will have to stage elections for British MEPs. £9 million has already been set aside by Whitehall for this outcome.*

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