

Brexit – timeline

CLYDE&CO

06|2015

David Cameron lays out his referendum plan at a European Council meeting in Brussels

11|2015

David Cameron sets out in a letter to the President of the European Council four key areas of reform that a 'new settlement' governing the UK's relationship with the EU would need to cover:

- Competitiveness
- Economic Governance
- Sovereignty
- Immigration/social security

17|12|2015

The European Union Referendum Bill receives Royal Assent. A referendum is to be held on the question "Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?"

02|02|2016

The President of the European Council addresses David Cameron's November 2015 letter by putting forward a proposed new settlement

18-19|02|2016

Terms of a new settlement are agreed by all Member States

15|04|2016

Start of the referendum campaign period

23|06|2016

Referendum takes place
Two possible outcomes

Remain

The UK stays in the EU on a renegotiated basis – the deal adopted by the European Council on 18-19 February 2016 "will become effective on the date the Government of the United Kingdom informs the Secretary-General of the Council that the United Kingdom has decided to remain a member of the European Union" (paragraph I.2 of the conclusions of the European Council meeting on 18-19 February)

Leave

- Brexit automatically occurs two years after the date on which the Government gives an 'Article 50' notice of the UK's intention to withdraw from the EU, unless within that period an agreement on the terms of the withdrawal is concluded or the other 27 member states unanimously agree to an extension of the period to negotiate the withdrawal (or, possibly, the Article 50 notice is withdrawn, if the UK changes its mind about leaving)
- In the meantime, the UK continues to be an EU member with the full benefits and responsibilities of EU membership (except that it is not entitled to participate on the EU side of the discussions and decisions about its withdrawal)
- There is probably a transition period of several years between the date of a withdrawal agreement (whether concluded within the two year period provided for by Article 50 or any extension to that period which may be agreed) and the date on which a separate agreement between the UK and the EU governing their future trading relationship would come into force

July-December|2017

UK Presidency of the European Council

Summer|2018 onwards

Brexit in the event of a vote to leave