



UK Referendum on Membership of the European Union: Questions & Answers

Brussels, 24 June 2016

The European Commission takes note of the outcome of the UK Referendum.

Now that the UK has voted to leave the European Union, what happens next?

The European Commission takes note of the outcome of the UK Referendum. Proceedings under Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union will have to be launched.

The terms of the [UK Settlement](#) agreed at the European Council of 18-19 February 2016 have ceased to exist.

During negotiations under Article 50, European Union Treaties and law continue to apply to the UK. If no agreement is reached within 2 years of the UK activating Article 50, the UK would leave the EU without any new agreement being in place.

What role will the Commission play in the Article 50 process?

The European Commission will play the role foreseen in the Treaty.

Following notification by the UK of its intention to leave, the European Council, meeting without the UK, would need to agree the guidelines for the negotiation by unanimity. The agreement would be negotiated following the rules on international agreements in Article 218(3) of the Treaty. This means that the Commission would submit recommendations to the Council, minus the UK, which would then adopt a decision authorising the opening of negotiations and nominating the Union negotiator or the head of the Union's negotiating team.

The negotiated agreement would need to be adopted by a qualified majority of 72% of the remaining 27 Member States, representing 65% of the population. The final agreement would also need to be approved by the European Parliament, voting by a simple majority.

What happens next?

The College of Commissioners will meet on 27 June to assess the situation and prepare the European Council of 28-29 June.

The Commission stands ready to fulfil its role in the Article 50 negotiations.

ANNEX

Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union

1. Any Member State may decide to withdraw from the Union in accordance with its own constitutional requirements.
2. A Member State which decides to withdraw shall notify the European Council of its intention. In the light of the guidelines provided by the European Council, the Union shall negotiate and conclude an agreement with that State, setting out the arrangements for its withdrawal, taking account of the framework for its future relationship with the Union. That agreement shall be negotiated in accordance with Article 218(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. It shall be concluded on behalf of the Union by the Council, acting by a qualified majority, after obtaining the consent of the European Parliament.
3. The Treaties shall cease to apply to the State in question from the date of entry into force of the withdrawal agreement or, failing that, two years after the notification referred to in paragraph 2, unless the European Council, in agreement with the Member State concerned, unanimously decides to extend this period.
4. For the purposes of paragraphs 2 and 3, the member of the European Council or of the Council representing the withdrawing Member State shall not participate in the discussions of the European Council or Council or in decisions concerning it.

A qualified majority shall be defined in accordance with Article 238(3)(b) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

5. If a State which has withdrawn from the Union asks to rejoin, its request shall be subject to the procedure referred to in Article 49.

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Press contacts:

[Margaritis SCHINAS](#) (+ 32 2 296 05 24)

[Mina ANDREEVA](#) (+32 2 299 13 82)

[Alexander WINTERSTEIN](#) (+32 2 299 32 65)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)