

Article 50 Timeline: What happens now?

It is not possible to be precise because no Member State has ever left the EU. Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) has never been invoked before and there are at least 18 elections forecast across the EU over the next two years but a broad indicative timeline would include the following possible events:

Approximate Date	Possible Event
29 March 2017	UK communicates its intention to leave the EU by triggering Article 50. UK expected to publish a white paper and possibly the Great Reform Bill in the aftermath of triggering Article 50
31 March 2017	EU expected to give its response to UK's Article 50 notice
23 April 2017	First round voting in French Presidential Elections
29 April 2017	EU-27 leaders meet in the European Council to discuss the triggering of Article 50 and what to do next (in particular, in the context of the negotiating guidelines)
7 May 2017	Second round voting in French Presidential Elections
April 2017 (and later)	Detailed discussions begin between the EU and UK – they might not formally commence until June/July
11 & 18 June 2017	French Parliamentary Elections
1 July 2017	Estonia takes over Presidency of the European Council (it was meant to have been the UK but it has relinquished EU Presidency (will be taken over by Estonia)
27 August – 22 October 2017 but expected to be 24 September 2017	Period in which German General Election can be held
1 January 2018	Bulgaria assumes European Council Presidency
1 July 2018	Austria assumes European Council Presidency
30 September 2018	Date set by EU's chief Brexit negotiator, Michel Barnier, to conclude terms of the UK's exit from the Union – this would leave, in reality, about a year to negotiate a deal because of the delays in commencing (e.g, due to the French and German elections as well as the need to clarify/agree their positions)
October 2018 – March 2019 (or later!)	Possible Brexit Deal which would then require consent by UK (simple majority in UK Parliament), consent by the European Parliament (absolute majority) and the EU-27 (by super qualified majority – 20 of the 27/65% of the population)
1 January 2019	Romania assumes European Council Presidency
1 June 2019	European Parliament Elections
1 July 2019	Finland assumes European Council Presidency
1 January 2020	Croatia assumes European Council Presidency
30 March 2020	UK Parliament scheduled to be dissolved ahead of UK General Election on 7 May 2020
7 May 2020	Scheduled UK General Election
1 July 2020	Germany assumes European Council Presidency