

Press release – Brexit: the Withdrawal Agreement passes the first European Parliament test



After parliamentary ratification in the UK was concluded earlier today, with Royal Assent granted for the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill, [Constitutional Affairs Committee](#) MEPs voted in favour of a positive recommendation regarding the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement, with 23 votes for, three against and no abstentions.

The vote took place after a statement by Committee Chair [Antonio Tajani](#) (EPP, IT) and a discussion between the Parliament's Brexit coordinator [Guy Verhofstadt](#) (Renew Europe, BE) and political group coordinators.

The debate in the Committee focussed on Parliament's contribution to [protecting citizens' rights](#) in the context of Brexit (with the majority of speakers during the first round commending the EU's negotiating team), as well as the [steps that should be taken by the UK and EU27 governments](#) to continue protecting these rights during the transition period and beyond. The discussion also addressed the overall impact of Brexit and the future relationship between the EU and the UK, which is going to be the objective of the future negotiations.

You can watch the debate on [EP Live](#). Click on the links below for specific

parts of the meeting.

[Opening statement](#) by Chair Antonio Tajani

[Statement](#) by the rapporteur Guy Verhofstadt

[Statements](#) by the shadow rapporteurs

[Interventions](#) by MEPs on behalf of political groups

[Recording](#) of the vote

Statements by MEPs after the vote: [part one](#) and [part two](#)

Next steps

The UK's withdrawal from the EU is set for midnight CET on 31 January 2020, with Parliament scheduled to vote on the Agreement next Wednesday, 29 January. To enter into force, any withdrawal agreement between the EU and the UK needs to be approved by the European Parliament by a simple majority of votes cast ([Article 50 \(2\) of the Treaty on European Union](#)). The Council will then conclude the process on the EU side by a qualified majority vote, foreseen for 30 January.