

# Prime Minister Theresa May EU Council press statement

*25 November 2018*

Today marks the culmination of a long and difficult process of negotiation between the UK and the EU.

There were those who said that reaching a Brexit agreement that worked for both sides was an impossible task.

From the start, I rejected that counsel of despair and set about negotiating a deal that worked for the UK and the EU - one that delivered on the result of the referendum and set us on course for a prosperous future while maintaining a close relationship with our friends and neighbours. Thanks to the hard work of both sets of negotiators, that is what we have today agreed.

I want to take a few moments to speak directly to the British people and explain what this deal means.

First, control of our borders. Not an emergency brake on free movement or a promise of greater transition controls in the future - but an end to the free movement of people, in full, once and for all. That is what this deal delivers. It will allow us to put in place an immigration system based not on where people come from but on the skills and talents they have to offer. That is in our national interest.

Second, control of our money. Not a reduction in our membership fee, not a bigger budget rebate - but an end to vast annual payments being sent to the EU. That is what this deal delivers. Instead, we will be able to spend taxpayers' money on our priorities, like the £394 million per week of extra investment we are putting into our NHS. That is in our national interest.

Third, control over our laws. Not just the return of some areas of control from Brussels - but an end to the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice in the UK, with our laws being made in our country by democratically elected politicians, interpreted and enforced by British courts. That is what this deal delivers and that is in our national interest.

In agriculture, it does not just deliver a better deal under the Common Agricultural Policy, it takes us out of the CAP completely, meaning we can design new systems of support for farmers that work for the UK.

And in fishing, it does not just deliver a bigger annual quota within the Common Fisheries Policy, it sets us free of the CFP for good and forever. The UK will be an independent coastal state once again, in full sovereign control of our waters, able to decide for ourselves who we allow to fish in them, with that access not tied to any other aspect of our economic partnership. That is in our national interest too.

On borders, laws and money - this deal delivers for the British people.

But I have been just as determined that as well as taking back control, this should be a deal that protects the things we value in our relationship with our European friends and sets us on course for a future of opportunity and prosperity and this deal does that too.

So if your family's livelihood depends on a skilled job in our manufacturing sector, you need a deal that keeps goods flowing easily across borders and keeps supply chains intact. This deal does that. We will be outside the single market and the customs union but have an economic partnership with the EU closer than any other country enjoys. Good for business and in our national interest.

If you are one of the over 3 million EU citizens who has come and built your life in the UK - come to be our colleagues, our neighbours and our friends - you need a deal that guarantees your rights. If you are one of the almost 1 million UK nationals living elsewhere in the EU, you need the same. This deal delivers for you all.

And because each one of us is made safer by the close security co-operation between the UK and the EU, we all need a deal that keeps that close partnership intact and this deal does that too.

As Prime Minister of the United Kingdom I have felt very keenly my responsibility to deliver a deal that works for the whole UK and for all of its parts. So what we have agreed protects the constitutional integrity of the United Kingdom. We rejected proposals which would have compromised that integrity and insisted on keeping all parts of our UK in a single customs territory - this deal delivers that. It also honours the solemn commitment we made to the people of Northern Ireland that there should be no hard border between Northern Ireland and Ireland.

This deal will safeguard the hard-won progress of the last twenty years and allow the people of that part of our United Kingdom to carry on living their lives as they do today.

This is a deal that works for the whole UK family - including our Overseas Territories and the Crown Dependencies.

On Gibraltar, we have worked constructively with Spain throughout this process and I want to thank Fabian Picardo for the statesmanlike role he has played.

We have ensured that Gibraltar is covered by the Withdrawal Agreement and by the Implementation Period.

Let no-one be in any doubt: for the future partnership the UK will be negotiating for the whole UK family, including Gibraltar.

I am proud that Gibraltar is British and its constitutional status will not change.

The deal we have agreed today unlocks a bright future for the UK. Outside the EU we will be able to strike new trade deals around the world and open up new markets in the world's fastest growing economies.

We will be able to focus our energies on the many other important issues that matter to the British people at home. Creating more good jobs and spreading prosperity more widely, taking care of our public services like the NHS and schools, building more homes, and tackling the social injustices that prevent too many people fulfilling their potential.

In any negotiation, you do not get everything you want. You need to identify what your vital interests are and stick to them, but be prepared to compromise in other areas in order to achieve a result. I think the British people understand that. When they look at this deal they will see it is a good one for our country and that it is in the national interest for everyone to get behind it.

It honours the referendum, protects what we value and sets us on course for a bright future.

Today marks the culmination of our exit negotiations with the EU - but it also marks the start of a crucial national debate in our country over the next few weeks.

Before Christmas, MPs will vote on this deal. It will be one of the most significant votes that Parliament has held for many years. On it will depend whether we move forward together into a brighter future or open the door to yet more division and uncertainty.

The British people don't want to spend any more time arguing about Brexit. They want a good deal done that fulfils the vote and allows us to come together again as a country.

So I will take this deal back to the House of Commons confident we have achieved the best deal available and full of optimism about the future of our country. In Parliament and beyond it, I will make the case for this deal with all my heart and I look forward to that campaign.