

The 16 Brexit proposals on the table ahead of tonight's 'indicative votes'

British lawmakers have submitted 16 proposals ahead of tonight's so-called 'indicative votes' on Brexit. These options will be whittled down by the Speaker later today, but come tonight's vote, we think there is a real risk that parliament decides to back a proposal that is unacceptable to the EU. [Read more about the process and what options mean here](#)

The 16 options on the table ahead of Wednesday's indicative votes

Motion	Official name	Description
A	Constitutional and accountable government	To make it harder for MPs to control the agenda
B	No deal	No deal
C	Unilateral right of exit from backstop	(Unacceptable to EU) Unilateral exit mechanism from Irish backstop
D	Common market 2.0	Option 5 - Single market + customs union
E	Respect the referendum result	"Reaffirm referendum result" - ie make no decision on alternative path
F	Participation in a customs union	Option 4 - Customs union
G	Revocation instead of no deal	Option 2 - Revoke Article 50 if deal still isn't approved 4 days before Brexit day
H	EFTA and EEA	Option 3 - Single market (no customs union)
I	Consent of devolved institutions	Seek consent of devolved administrations for any deal or 'no deal' decision
J	Customs union	Option 4 - Customs union (stronger wording)
K	Labour's alternative plan	Labour's plan (effectively permanent customs union)
L	Revocation to avoid no deal	Option 2 - Revoke Article 50 if deal still isn't approved 2 days before Brexit day
M	Confirmatory public vote	Option 1 - Second referendum
N	Maltese compromise plan A	(Unacceptable to EU) Irish backstop replaced by alternative arrangements
O	Contingent preferential arrangements	(Unacceptable to EU) Option 7: Free trade agreement (no Irish backstop)
P	Contingent reciprocal arrangements	(Unacceptable to EU) Managed no deal

Key

- 1 **Second referendum**
- 2 Revoke Article 50
- 3 Single market (No customs union)
- 4 **Permanent customs union**
- 5 **Single market + customs union**
- 6 **The prime minister's deal**
- 7 **Free trade agreement (FTA)**



Source: ING, UK Parliament

A quick guide to tonight's vote

Ahead of the so-called 'indicative votes' on different Brexit options later today (Wednesday), British lawmakers have been submitting their proposals. As things stand, there are 16 on the table, and we've put together a quick digest of what they all are in the diagram above.

As you can see, there is quite a bit of duplication and some options have more support than others, so the speaker of the House of Commons is likely to whittle them down before they go to a vote around 7pm this evening. The selected proposals will be printed on a slip of paper, and lawmakers will be able to say "yes" or "no" to as many options as they like.

In theory, [we think a permanent customs union is most likely to get backing from MPs](#) - it's a softer form of Brexit that doesn't involve free movement of people.

However, we'd note that at least four of the 16 proposals are likely to be unacceptable to the EU. As MPs have voted for some of these options previously (for example the 'Malthouse compromise'), we wouldn't rule out lawmakers getting behind one of these paths again. This could complicate efforts to convince the EU to grant a longer extension to the Article 50 period beyond 12 April.

Importantly though, today's vote may not be the end of the process. The backbench MPs who proposed the 'indicative votes' also have time available next Monday, where it's possible some of the more popular options are entered into a series of run-off votes.

Where does PM May's deal stand in all of this?

The prime minister's deal intentionally doesn't feature in the indicative votes mix - the government reportedly doesn't want to be seen as legitimising the process, which they are against.

However, given that indicative votes could result in parliament rallying behind a softer form of Brexit, some members of the eurosceptic European Research Group (ERG) have been reluctantly swinging behind PM May's deal after all. Some high profile names have made the switch, and there are reports that former foreign secretary Boris Johnson may be prepared to back the deal too. The government reportedly could try and put its deal back to parliament for a third meaningful vote later this week.

So will it be successful? Well, while the margin of opposition has been narrowing, there are still some MPs that still need convincing. At the time of writing, [Buzzfeed](#) estimates that 62 Conservative lawmakers still oppose the deal (or rather, haven't publically shifted their position). Meanwhile, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) don't appear to have changed their stance at all following talks with the government.

A lot also depends on the 20-30 Labour MPs, who some believe may be prepared to back Mrs May's deal in the end. Many of these lawmakers represent leave-supporting regions and are wary of hints of a second referendum. However, with a customs union on the table as part of the indicative votes - which is perhaps more acceptable than PM May's deal to some of these Labour lawmakers - the number of opposition MPs willing to swing behind the current deal could diminish.

In other words, we think the odds are still stacked against PM May's deal, although a lot depends on whether the prime minister unveils a 'departure plan'. The PM will reportedly speak to Conservative MPs at a meeting of the 1922 committee at 5 pm today (Wednesday), and there have been some suggestions that she may use this opportunity to offer her resignation, on the condition that MPs approve her deal.

The logic here is that the Brexiteers could install a leader who could then pursue their 'harder' vision of Brexit in the forthcoming negotiations on the future trading relationship.

Author

James Smith

Developed Markets Economist, UK

james.smith@ing.com

Disclaimer

This publication has been prepared by the Economic and Financial Analysis Division of ING Bank N.V. ("ING") solely for information purposes without regard to any particular user's investment objectives, financial situation, or means. *ING forms part of ING Group (being for this purpose ING Group N.V. and its subsidiary and affiliated companies).* The information in the publication is not an investment recommendation and it is not investment, legal or tax advice or an offer or solicitation to purchase or sell any financial instrument. Reasonable care has been taken to ensure that this publication is not untrue or misleading when published, but ING does not represent that it is accurate or complete. ING does not accept any liability for any direct, indirect or consequential loss arising from any use of this publication. Unless otherwise stated, any views, forecasts, or estimates are solely those of the author(s), as of the date of the publication and are subject to change without notice.

The distribution of this publication may be restricted by law or regulation in different jurisdictions and persons into whose possession this publication comes should inform themselves about, and observe, such restrictions.

Copyright and database rights protection exists in this report and it may not be reproduced, distributed or published by any person for any purpose without the prior express consent of ING. All rights are reserved. ING Bank N.V. is authorised by the Dutch Central Bank and supervised by the European Central Bank (ECB), the Dutch Central Bank (DNB) and the Dutch Authority for the Financial Markets (AFM). ING Bank N.V. is incorporated in the Netherlands (Trade Register no. 33031431 Amsterdam). In the United Kingdom this information is approved and/or communicated by ING Bank N.V., London Branch. ING Bank N.V., London Branch is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and is subject to regulation by the Financial Conduct Authority and limited regulation by the Prudential Regulation Authority. ING Bank N.V., London branch is registered in England (Registration number BR000341) at 8-10 Moorgate, London EC2 6DA. For US Investors: Any person wishing to discuss this report or effect transactions in any security discussed herein should contact ING Financial Markets LLC, which is a member of the NYSE, FINRA and SIPC and part of ING, and which has accepted responsibility for the distribution of this report in the United States under applicable requirements.

Additional information is available on request. For more information about ING Group, please visit www.ing.com.