

# Press release

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## Brexit: MEPs concerned about citizens' rights

- Concerns about the UK EU Settlement Scheme and the set-up of the independent authority
- Freedom of movement, the length of the transition period and limiting the damage to EU and UK citizens' lives at the heart of the debate



MEPs are concerned over EU and UK citizens' rights, including freedom of movement © Shutterstock.com/1000 Words

**Parliament highlights that assurances are needed on the protection of citizens' rights to ensure its consent to the Withdrawal Agreement.**

In a resolution adopted on Wednesday, MEPs take stock of citizens' rights in the context of Brexit and highlight that their consent to the Withdrawal Agreement will take into account "experiences gained and assurances given" about their protection. Parliament expresses

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concerns especially about the application-based approach used in the UK EU Settlement Scheme, the absence of physical proof for successful applicants, and its accessibility, among other issues.

MEPs question the set-up and independence of the UK's "independent authority" foreseen in the Withdrawal Agreement, stating that they would welcome the establishment of a joint European Parliament - UK Parliament scrutiny mechanism.

The adopted text calls for information campaigns to be launched to prepare citizens and urges governments in EU27 member states to adopt consistent and generous measures to provide legal certainty for UK citizens residing in their territory.

The resolution was adopted with 610 votes in favour, 29 against and 68 abstentions following a debate on Tuesday that focussed largely on the future of freedom of movement and limiting the impact of Brexit on citizens' lives.

[Video of statements by Nikolina Brnjac, representing the Croatian Presidency of the Council and by Ursula von der Leyen, President of the Commission](#)

[Video of MEPs' debate](#)

[Video of closing statements by Michel Barnier, EU's Chief Negotiator for the UK Exiting the EU, and Nikolina Brnjac](#)

## Background

To enter into force, the Withdrawal Agreement between the European Union and the United Kingdom needs to be approved by the European Parliament by a simple majority of votes cast ([Article 50 \(2\) of the Treaty on European Union](#)). Parliament will vote on the Withdrawal Agreement after the ratification process in the UK has been completed.

[Part Two of the Withdrawal Agreement](#) protects EU citizens in the UK and UK citizens in other EU countries, as well as their families. According to its provisions, all social security rights under EU law will be maintained and citizens' rights will be guaranteed throughout their lifetime. All relevant administrative procedures have to be transparent, smooth and streamlined. The implementation and application of these terms will be overseen by an independent authority with powers equivalent to those of the European Commission.

## Further information

[Adopted text \(15.01.2020\)](#)

[Video recording of the debate \(14.01.2020\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[EP resolutions and composition of the EP Brexit Steering group](#)

[More information](#)

[EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material](#)

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