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Brève n°17

Brexit: new agreement of 17 October and new extension until 31 January 2020

As a reminder: Brexit should have taken place on 29 March 2019, 2 years after the United Kingdom's invocation of Article 50. The Heads of State and Government have twice delayed the United Kingdom's exit from the Union. On 21 March 2019, 8 days before the initial date, they granted a delay until 12 April if Theresa May failed to ratify the agreement approved on 25 November 2018. On 10 April, in the absence of ratification, they agreed to extend this deadline until 31 October.

On 17 October, the European Council approved the new version of the withdrawal agreement with the United Kingdom, which would have made it possible to carry out a well-organized Brexit on 31 October and to open negotiations on the future relationship between the Union and the United Kingdom as soon as possible.

On 19 October, at an extraordinary session, the House of Commons did not rule on the agreement but forced Prime Minister Boris Johnson to request a new deadline from the Union.

Finally, the election of the British Parliament on 12 December 2019 offered Boris Johnson (Conservative Party) a clear majority, with more than 43% of the seats won. This event seems to mark the end of the uncertainty regarding Brexit.

In our brief of 30 October, we detailed the plan for the latest agreement on exit from the United Kingdom between Boris Johnson and the European Union. This agreement was not approved by the British Parliament on 19 October last, due to the lack of a majority of Conservatives.

From now on, with an almost absolute majority, Boris Johnson's party will apparently have no difficulty in obtaining this parliamentary authorisation, and will be able to definitively make the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union under the negotiated agreement.

Boris Johnson announced that he will present his Brexit agreement to the House of Commons on Friday, December 20, launching the parliamentary adoption process to ensure that the United Kingdom leaves the European Union by January 31, 2020.

DS Customs & Trade team is at your disposal to provide you with any additional information.

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