

**NEWS – ECIPE PRESS RELEASE – NEW POLICY BRIEF**

# **Negotiating Uncertainty in UK-EU Relations: Past, Present, and Future**

By **David Henig**, *Director of the UK Trade Policy Project*

**Brussels, 19 September 2024** - The UK must stop being so naïve about negotiations and the EU more flexible in order for the reset of their relationship, so crucial to European security and competitiveness, to be successful. Equally, there are no easy 'silver bullet' solutions such as the UK rejoining the single market, and therefore stakeholders must get used to a situation of uncertainty and gradual improvement.

These are the main conclusions of the [first paper](#) to seriously examine the reset proposed by the new UK government. Author David Henig is a widely respected expert on UK-EU relations who spoke with numerous current and former officials on both sides over the last year in researching this work. Their fears that a reset would prove to be challenging for both sides now seem to be coming to pass.

Finding a new way on UK-EU relations will require far more extensive joint working in terms of scoping a common work programme, not least as there are far too many subjects for a single negotiation. This would ideally be an outcome from the first formal leader level summit between Keir Starmer and Ursula von der Leyen, once the new Commission is in place.

Failing to take advantage of this moment would be a major setback for the wider policy aims of both UK and EU given the relationship is one of the world's most significant in terms of trade and security.

Henig said ***“Emotions around the UK’s departure from the EU are far from healed, and this scarring is damaging the prospects of both. The UK-EU relationship will always be time-consuming for governments, but requires change for these efforts to bring positive results.”***

---

**Publication details:** [Negotiating Uncertainty in UK-EU Relations: Past, Present, and Future](#), ECIPE Policy Brief No. 17/2024,

**Contact the author:** David Henig, [david.henig@ecipe.org](mailto:david.henig@ecipe.org)

**Media inquiries:** [info@ecipe.org](mailto:info@ecipe.org) or +32 2 289 13 50