

## Brexit bulletin: End of the beginning

Britain joined the European Economic Community on Jan. 1, 1973. This evening, 17, 196 days later, it will leave the EU, setting the stage for 11 months of potentially *fraught* talks on future ties.

fraught 焦虑的; 担心的

Big Ben won't bong at 11 p.m., but Downing Street is marking the event with a prime ministerial address, a light show, a countdown clock and a party. Guests will eat roast beef and down English *sparkling wine*. Over in Parliament Square, Nigel Farage and his fellow Brexiters will rally under grey London skies. In Brussels, the EU will *stage* an intentionally muted farewell.

sparkling wine 气泡酒

stage 举行; 上演

The low-key tone is because so much remains to be done. Britain may be legally out of the *bloc*, but Prime Minister Boris Johnson still has to reach a trade deal with the EU and start to heal some bitter domestic divisions.

bloc 集团

Neither will be easy: the EU officials say they expect negotiations to get *nasty* and perhaps miss the year-end deadline. There are big battles ahead on what constitutes a level competitive playing field and over fishing rights, financial services, data protection, and the *jurisdiction* of EU law.

nasty 下流的; 肮脏的

jurisdiction 司法权; 管辖权

Domestically, Johnson also faces a struggle. The country now needs to forge a new identity, or at least find a version of its old one. For some voters, Brexit was a chance to reassert their Britishness. But it's left others uncertain about whether they're still welcome.

The first chapter of Brexit is over. What comes will surely be no more predictable.