

Brexit Update

Research Briefing

18 March 2020



The Assembly and

BREXIT

The National Assembly for Wales is the democratically elected body that represents the interests of Wales and its people, makes laws for Wales, agrees Welsh taxes and holds the Welsh Government to account.

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Introduction

This paper provides an update on the most recent developments on Brexit that are relevant to Wales. It covers developments in Wales, the EU, Westminster, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The period covered is 25 February – 10 March 2020, although reference is made to later events where information is available at the time of final drafting.

Developments in Wales

National Assembly for Wales

External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee

The External Affairs and Additional Legislation (EAAL) Committee is the lead Committee in the Assembly for co-ordinating the Brexit-related activities of Committees.

The EAAL Committee is currently undertaking work on **International Agreements**; the **Scrutiny of the Welsh Government's International Strategy**; and the **negotiations between the UK and EU**.

The most recent sessions of the EAAL Committee were:

- 2 March: After noting a paper the Committee met in private. The transcript can be **seen here**; and
- 9 March: The Committee held a Scrutiny session with the Counsel General and Minister for European Transition, Jeremy Miles AM. The Committee scrutinised the Minister on the Welsh Government's role in the negotiations, their response to the UK Government's negotiation position and progress on Common Frameworks. The Committee then held an evidence session on 'the UK-EU future relationship negotiations - a view from Brussels' with think tanks from the EU and UK; the European Policy Centre, Bruegel and the European Centre for International Political Economy. The webcast can be **seen here**.

On 2 March the Committee noted:

- **Performance Report on the Welsh Government Overseas Network - Quarter 3 2019/20** (PDF - 461 KB).

On 9 March the Committee noted:

- **Correspondence from the Minister for International Relations and the Welsh Language in follow-up to the 10 February committee meeting** - 3 March 2020 (PDF - 282 KB), and
- **Correspondence from the Minister for International Relations and the Welsh Language regarding the UK's trade negotiations with the USA** - 4 March 2020 (PDF - 256 KB).

Other Committees

The **Legislation, Justice and Constitution (LJC) Committee** (formerly the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee) publishes reports on subordinate legislation relating to the UK's exit from the EU. They can be found on the **Committee's webpages**.

The Committee is currently carrying out an inquiry into **Wales' Changing Constitution** including consideration of the implications of Brexit for the Welsh devolution settlement. On 9 March the Committee took evidence from the Secretary of State for Wales, Rt Hon Simon Hart MP, including discussion of his views on the impact of Brexit on the UK constitution. The webcast can be **seen here**.

The Assembly's **LJC Committee** and the **Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee** are considering Legislative Consent Memorandums in relation to the UK Brexit Bills on Agriculture, Environment and Fisheries.

Plenary

25 February: **Statement by the Counsel General and Brexit Minister: Legislation related to leaving the EU**.

26 February: **Questions to the Counsel General and Brexit Minister (in respect of his Brexit Minister responsibilities); Debate on Devolution; Debate on the economy after Brexit**.

3 March: **The Common Agricultural Policy (Direct Payments to Farmers) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2020**.

4 March: **Debate on the External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee report: The Welsh Government's Draft International Strategy**.

Senedd Research publications

Senedd Research blog articles and research briefings are published on **In Brief / Pigion**. The latest Brexit related publications are:

- **Wales, Europe and the world: the Welsh Government's International Strategy**.
- **Negotiations on the UK's withdrawal from the EU**.

Welsh Government

27 February: **First Minister: UK government putting ideology above people's livelihoods.**

28 February: **Shared prosperity? PM faces test on devolution pledge.**

28 February: Written Statement: **Welsh Government's analysis of the UK Government's negotiating mandate for the Future Relationship with the EU.**

4 March: Written Statement: **Visit to North America.**

4 March: Written Statement: **The UK's approach to trade negotiations with the US.**

8 March: **UK Budget must finally address broken promises.**

9 March: **We need a migration system that works for Wales.**

10 March: **Government must engage with devolved administrations on EU negotiations** – joint statement from the devolved governments of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

EU developments

European Council

25 February: **EU-UK relations: Council gives go-ahead for talks to start and adopts negotiating directives.**

25 February: **Council decision authorising the opening of negotiations** (PDF - 116KB), and text of **negotiating directives** (PDF – 298KB).

European Commission

25 February: **Future EU-UK Partnership: European Commission receives mandate to begin negotiations with the UK.**

25 February: **Future EU-UK Partnership: Question and Answers on the negotiating directives.**

26 February: **Speech by Michel Barnier to the students at ESCP Europe: Cooperation in the Age of Brexit.**

26 February: **Winter Package puts competitive sustainability at the heart of the European Semester.** Country reports have been published, including for the **United Kingdom** (2.4 MB - PDF).

28 February: **Terms of Reference on the UK-EU Future Relationship negotiations** (271.3 KB - PDF).

28 February: **Agenda of the first round of UK-EU Future Relationship negotiations - 2-5 March 2020** (229.2 KB - PDF).

5 March: **Negotiations with the UK: Michel Barnier, the European Commission's Chief Negotiator, sets out points of convergence and divergence following the first round of negotiations.**

European Parliament

2 March: **EU-UK future relations: crucial to ensure EU leverage and unity** - Statement by David McAllister, Chair of Parliament's UK Coordination Group.

News

25 February: **FoodDrinkEurope statement on the future of the EU-UK relationship** (FoodDrinkEurope)

UK developments

UK Government

27 February: [Immigration statistics – February 2020](#).

27 February: [UK Trade in Numbers](#).

27 February: [Inspection Report Published: An inspection of the EU Settlement Scheme \(April 2019 to August 2019\)](#).

27 February: [The Future Relationship with the EU](#) (PDF - 334KB)

27 February: The Chancellor of the Exchequer's letter to Vice President Dombrovskis regarding the [UK's preparations for assessments of financial services equivalence](#) (PDF – 236KB).

1 March: [Liz Truss kick-starts UK-US trade talks](#). The UK's objectives are in [UK-US Free Trade Agreement](#) (PDF, 6.35MB). The US's objectives are in [United States-United Kingdom Negotiations](#) (PDF, 500KB).

3 March: [Elizabeth Truss outlines bold new era for trade](#) - Speech given by Secretary of State for International Trade to the WTO General Council.

5 March: [Landmark Immigration Bill to end free movement introduced to Parliament](#).

5 March: [Statement on the conclusion of the first round of negotiations](#).

6 March: [UK 'Will Leave' EASA, Says British Transportation Secretary](#) (interview in Aviation Week).

10 March: [UK-US trade negotiations to start this month as Minister of State for Trade Policy visits US East coast](#).

House of Commons

24 February: Statement on the [Points-based Immigration System](#).

26 February: Wales questions: [Regulatory Divergence from the EU](#).

26 February: [Prime Ministers questions](#).

26 February: Second Reading of the [Environment Bill](#), and [continued](#).

26 February: Westminster Hall debate: [UK Chemical Industry: Regulatory Divergence](#).

27 February: Cabinet Office questions: [European Union: Future Relationship; EU Nationals: Voting Rights; Import Controls: EU](#).

27 February: Statement on [European Union: Future Relationship](#).

27 February: Debate on [Welsh Affairs](#).

2 March: Education questions: [EU Educational and Research Programmes](#).

2 March: Statement on a [UK-US Trade Deal](#).

4 March: [Prime Ministers questions](#).

9 March: Cabinet Office written statement: [UK's Future Relationship with the EU: Negotiations](#).

5 March: International Trade questions: [UK/US Free Trade Agreement; UK/EU Trade Agreement \(correction issued on 9 March\); Bilateral Trade Relations: Japan; UK/US Trade Agreement: SMEs; UK Ports of Entry; UK/US Trade Agreement: Thames Valley; Global Exports: Tech Start-ups; Trade Agreements: Non-EU Countries](#).

11 March: [Prime Ministers questions](#), and [continued](#).

11 March: [Financial Statement](#) and [Budget Resolutions](#).

Committees

Agriculture Public Bill

12-25 February: Written evidence published, including from the [Farmers Union of Wales](#) (PDF 172KB) and the [National Farmers Union](#) (PDF 191KB).

27 February: [Seventh Sitting](#) and [Eighth Sitting](#).

3 March: [Ninth Sitting](#) and [Tenth Sitting](#).

5 March: [Eleventh Sitting](#) and [Twelfth Sitting](#).

Environment Public Bill

10 March: **First Sitting** and **Second Sitting**.

Future Relationship with the European Union

9 March: **Committee to begin inquiry examining future relationship negotiations with Michael Gove hearing**.

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

4 March: Launch of the **Agriculture Bill: Trade Standards** inquiry.

11 March: **MPs to question standards of imported food in future trade deals**.

Northern Ireland Affairs

5 March: **New inquiry - Committee to scrutinise “unfettered access”**.

Public Accounts

5 March: Committee starts accepting written evidence for the inquiry: **EU Exit: Get ready for Brexit Campaign**.

Welsh Affairs

5 March: **Committee to probe EU aid successor**.

6 March: **Brexit on Welsh trade inquiry launched**.

10 March: **Committee takes evidence on Wales and the Shared Prosperity Fund**.

House of Lords

25 February: Statement: **Immigration: Points-based System**.

25 February: Short Debate: **Trade: Standards**.

26 February: Question on **Brexit: Financial Assistance for Businesses**.

26 February: Order of Consideration Motion on the **Fisheries Bill**.

27 February: Statement on **EU: Future Relationship**.

2 March: Private Notice question: [European Arrest Warrant, Europol and Eurojust](#).

2 March: First Committee Day of the [Fisheries Bill](#), and [continued](#), and [continued](#).

2 March: Statement on [UK-US Trade Deal Negotiating Objectives](#).

3 March: Grand Committee: [Rules for Direct Payments to Farmers \(Amendment\) Regulations 2020](#), and [Financing, Management and Monitoring of Direct Payments to Farmers \(Amendment\) Regulations 2020](#).

4 March: Second Committee Day of the [Fisheries Bill](#), and [continued](#).

5 March: [Financing, Management and Monitoring of Direct Payments to Farmers \(Amendment\) Regulations 2020](#).

9 March: Third Committee Day of the [Fisheries Bill](#), and [continued](#).

9 March: Motion to Regret on: [Continuity Agreement: Kingdom of Morocco](#).

Committees

EU Select

25 February: [Committee visits Belfast to take evidence on the Protocol on Ireland / Northern Ireland. Transcript](#) and [transcript](#).

4 March: [EEA-EFTA Separation agreement drawn to the special attention of the House](#) – Report: [Scrutiny of international agreements; treaties considered on 3 March 2020](#).

5 March: [Committee reports on the EU's negotiating directives for UK-EU relationship](#) – Report: [Report pursuant to section 29 of the European Union \(Withdrawal Agreement\) Act 2020: Council Decision authorising the opening of negotiations with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for a new partnership agreement](#). In paragraph 118 reference is made to Chair David Rees AM's letter of 3 March to the Committee regarding regulatory divergence.

EU Energy and Environment Sub Committee

26 February: [Ex-EU Fisheries Chair gives evidence to Committee. Transcript](#).

4 March: **Environment Secretary on the record: EU access to UK waters.** **Transcript.**

4 March: **What does the EU's carbon border adjustment mean for the UK?** **Transcript.**

5 March: **Lords Committees come together on the climate change challenge.** A new inquiry, **Climate change and COP26,** has been started.

11 March: **What next for international carbon markets?**

EU Financial Affairs Sub Committee

26 February: **Industry leaders questioned on financial services after Brexit.** **Transcript.** Written evidence from **TheCityUK.**

4 March: **City Minister questioned on financial services after Brexit.** **Transcript.**

EU Home Affairs Sub Committee

24 February: **Letter to Rt Hon Priti Patel MP on local authorities and refugee resettlement,** 18 February 2020 (PDF – 234KB).

2 March: **Letter from Rt Hon Brandon Lewis MP on ECRIS and SIS,** 13 February 2020 (PDF – 93KB); and **Letter to Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP on ECRIS and SIS,** 28 February 2020 (PDF – 93KB).

3 March: **Possible impact of Brexit on criminal justice cooperation raises concerns.** **Transcript.**

11 March: **Climate change experts discuss impact on migration.**

EU Internal Market Sub Committee

26 February: **Letter from Kelly Tolhurst, MP, Minister for Small Business, Consumers & Corporate Responsibility on State Aid after Brexit** (PDF – 61KB).

27 February: **Academics and experts questioned on the level playing field.** **Transcript.**

5 March: **Why is state aid such a key matter in UK–EU negotiations?** **Transcript.**

12 March: **Committee discusses options for a UK subsidy regime post 2020.**

EU Justice Sub Committee

25 February: Evidence session: **How will Brexit affect family and commercial law?**

25 February: **Vulnerable people risk losing right to stay in UK** - Letter to **Kevin Foster MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Immigration, Home Office** (PDF 97 KB).

10 March: **Evidence session: What will be the impact of Brexit on patent protection?**

10 March: **Clarity sought on Government's patent court position – Letter to Minister for Science, Research and Innovation** (PDF – 71.5KB)

News

25 February: **Brexit Beyond Tariffs: The role of non-tariff measures and the impact on developing countries** (PDF 1.55MB) (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)).

26 February: **CLA responds to DEFRA's update on Farming for the future report** (Country Land and Business Association (CLA)).

26 February: **Mixed reaction to Environment Bill second reading** (CLA).

27 February: **CBI response to UK Government negotiating mandate** (Confederation of British Industry (CBI))

27 February: **BCC comments on UK trade negotiating strategy** (British Chambers of Commerce)

27 February: **British Ports Association responds to the UK's EU trade priorities** (British Ports Association)

27 February: **SMMT response to the UK Government's Approach to Negotiations** (Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders)

28 February: **FTA response to UK's negotiating objectives** (Freight Transport Association (FTA))

28 February: **UK Chamber reacts to UK Government negotiating paper** (UK Chamber of Shipping)

1 March: **CBI responds to UK-US trade negotiation objectives** (CBI)

2 March: **Freight forwarders urge for common sense and compromise as UK-EU future relationship negotiations commence** (British International Freight Association)

3 March: **CLA responds to ongoing trade talks** (CLA).

3 March: **Peugeot CEO says UK should provide compensation if Brexit tariffs hit** (Reuters)

6 March: **Statement on Transport Secretary comments on EASA Membership** (ADS).

9 March: **Government Promises To Follow The Evidence Must Be More Than Good Intentions** (Op-Ed by Paul Everitt, ADS Group CEO, in Aviation Week)

Scotland

Scottish Parliament

Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) publication: **How can the devolved administrations influence the future relationship negotiations?**

4 March: **Statement on the United Kingdom Government's Approach to Negotiations with the European Union.**

5 March: Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee: Evidence session on **Article 50 (Withdrawal Agreement and Negotiation of Future Relationship).**

Scottish Government

27 February: **UK mandate will hit Scotland's economy.**

28 February: **Response to decision to end participation in Creative Europe.**

2 March: **Food standards - UK mandate to hit rural Scotland.**

2 March: **'Reckless' approach to US trade talks.**

4 March: **Scotland's voice must be heard** - Cabinet Secretary updates MSPs on EU talks.

6 March: **Management of fish quotas** - New arrangement for trial period.

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland Assembly

The Assembly's Research and Information Services has a **Brexit Hub** with information and links to resources on Brexit and Northern Ireland.

27 February: **Statement from the First Minister and deputy First Minister on the publication of the UK negotiating mandate.**

2 March: **Foster and O'Neill seek urgent meeting with Gove on post-Brexit trading terms** (The Irish Times)

UK-Ireland relations

5 March: [**Statement by Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar Following Special European Council meeting.**](#)

10 March: [**Statement by An Taoiseach following today's EU Council meeting.**](#)

Reports published

Houses of Parliament libraries

[**EU Settlement Scheme**](#)

[**Brexit and state pensions**](#)

[**The UK-EU future relationship negotiations: process and issues**](#)

[**Brexit next steps: Defence and foreign policy co-operation**](#)

[**Brexit and UK Defence: An Explainer**](#)

UK in a Changing Europe

[**Minimum trade frictions will be vital for the UK automotive industry**](#)

[**Collaboration between UK and EU universities after Brexit**](#)

[**Food and agriculture, post-Brexit**](#)

[**The EU's mandate for the Future Partnership**](#)

[**Wales, post-Brexit**](#)

[**The Welsh Government and Johnson's Brexit**](#)

[**Six key messages on the UK's negotiating position**](#)

[**Asia shows Britain's trade paradox**](#)

[**How can the devolved administrations influence the future relationship negotiations?**](#)

Brexit negotiations: linkages need to be handled with care

EEA-EFTA: the other withdrawal agreement

The first round of negotiations, in four points (of divergence)

Brussels' gambit in the negotiations

LSE Brexit

Britain needs friends in the post-Brexit era. Alienating EU allies would be counter-productive

Long read | Who are you calling unskilled?

Brexit will affect, but not determine, the EU's roles in a changing world arena

Britain's fishing industry has been promised a lot. Expect cries of betrayal

Hard Eleexit: will Brexit increase the cost of electricity?

Institute for Government

The UK's different approaches to US and EU trade negotiations will not help either cause

The collapse of Flybe puts the government's post-Brexit agenda in the spotlight