

# **International agreements**

Agreements considered on  
17 February 2025

March 2025



# 1. Background

1. The Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee is responsible for the scrutiny of non-trade international agreements in the sixth Senedd.
2. International agreements signed by the UK Government can cover matters within devolved competence or matters which have important policy implications for Wales.
3. The Committee considers the impact on Wales of international agreements laid in the UK Parliament under the process established by the *Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010* (CRaG Act 2010). It provides an initial 21-day scrutiny period.
4. Our consideration of an international agreement takes into account:
  - whether it engages the Senedd's competence; and/or
  - whether there are potential policy implications for Wales.
5. On 17 February 2025,<sup>1</sup> we considered seven international agreements that had recently been laid in the UK Parliament:
  - UK-Ukraine One Hundred Year Partnership Agreement;
  - UK-Spain: Agreement on the Free Pursuit of Gainful Occupation by Dependants of Members of Diplomatic Missions and Consular Offices;
  - Comprehensive Security Integration and Prosperity Agreement ("C-SIPA");
  - Framework Agreement for International Collaboration on Research and Development of Generation IV Nuclear Energy Systems;
  - UK-Romania Defence Cooperation Agreement;
  - UK-Australia Defence and Security Cooperation Agreement;
  - UK-Slovenia Termination Agreement for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.

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<sup>1</sup> Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee, 17 February 2025

- 6.** We agreed to take further action in relation to two of these agreements. Details on each of the agreements, and our respective actions, are set out below.

## 2. Agreements requiring further action

### **UK-Ukraine One Hundred Year Partnership Agreement**

**7.** This agreement was announced in the UK Parliament on 20 January 2025 by the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, David Lammy MP (Secretary of State). A scrutiny deadline does not apply until the agreement has been laid, as required by the CRaG Act 2010.

**8.** The Secretary of State confirms that the UK Government has signed a 100-year partnership with Ukraine, stating:

*“The partnership enshrines both sides’ commitment to a relationship benefiting the whole of our nations: businesses as well as the Government, communities as well as our military. It consists of a legally binding treaty and a political agreement outlining our co-operation in greater detail.”<sup>2</sup>*

**9.** The partnership covers nine “pillars” of cooperation. Specific activities span maritime security, military collaboration, scientific and technology partnerships, a Grain Verification Scheme, energy cooperation (including critical minerals and green steel production), 100 school partnerships to foster cultural exchanges, a £40m new economic recovery programme called TIGER (Triggering Investment Growth and Economic Resilience) and annual high-level Strategic Dialogues between the UK and Ukraine.<sup>3</sup>

**10.** On 11 February 2025, the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Jane Hutt MS, confirmed that the Welsh Government was consulted on the text of the agreement.<sup>4</sup>

**11.** Although the agreement concerns the reserved matter of international relations, the Committee agreed to notify the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee of the Agreement, in light of its international relations remit and previous exchanges with the Welsh Government on cultural support provided to Ukrainian arrivals in Wales.

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<sup>2</sup> UK Government, [Oral Statement: UK-Ukraine 100-year Partnership](#), 20 January 2025

<sup>3</sup> UK Government, [UK-Ukraine 100 Year Partnership Declaration](#), 17 January 2025

<sup>4</sup> Plenary, [11 February 2025, Record of Proceedings \(ROP\)](#), [382]

## **UK-Spain Free Pursuit of Gainful Occupation by Dependants of Members of Diplomatic Missions and Consular Offices**

**12.** This international agreement was laid in the UK Parliament on 6 February 2025. Its scrutiny deadline, as required by the CRAg Act 2010, is 20 March 2025.

**13.** The purpose of this agreement is to allow dependent family members (spouses, partners or eligible children) of staff employed in UK diplomatic missions and consular posts to undertake gainful employment in Spain (and vice versa).

**14.** Following the withdrawal of the UK from the European Union and the end of freedom of movement rights, the dependants of staff in UK diplomatic missions and consular posts in Spain have no longer been able to undertake gainful occupation outside the mission/post in Spain. Conversely, qualifying dependants of foreign diplomats and consular officials posted in the UK have the right to work. This agreement addresses this disparity between the UK and Spanish treatment of one another's dependants by conferring reciprocal rights for qualifying dependants to work in the receiving state (Spain).

**15.** The Explanatory Memorandum confirms that no new legislation is required to implement the agreement.<sup>5</sup>

**16.** The Explanatory Memorandum states that although this agreement relates fully to a reserved matter, with no implications for the devolved governments, the UK government informed the devolved governments of the agreement.<sup>6</sup>

**17.** Although the agreement relates to international relations and employment policy within the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and the civil service, which are reserved matters, we agreed to notify the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee of the agreement, in light of its international relations remit and ongoing scrutiny of matters arising from the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

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<sup>5</sup> UK Government, Explanatory Memorandum: UK/Spain: Agreement on the Free Pursuit of Gainful Occupation by Dependants of Members of Diplomatic Missions and Consular Offices, February 2025, paragraph 5

<sup>6</sup> UK Government, Explanatory Memorandum: UK/Spain: Agreement on the Free Pursuit of Gainful Occupation by Dependants of Members of Diplomatic Missions and Consular Offices, February 2025, paragraph 10

### 3. Agreements noted for information

#### **Comprehensive Security Integration and Prosperity Agreement (“C-SIPA”)**

**18.** This agreement was laid in the UK Parliament on 8 January 2025. Its scrutiny deadline, as required by the CReG Act 2010, was 12 February 2025.

**19.** The Comprehensive Security Integration and Prosperity Agreement (C-SIPA) provides a legal framework which aims to foster broader regional security integration, bolster mutual deterrence against external threats and expand cooperation in the fields of commerce, science and technology with like-minded states in the Middle East region.

**20.** C-SIPA was originally agreed on 12 September 2023 between Bahrain and the USA, but was drafted with the expectation of welcoming future additional parties. The UK is the first additional party to be invited to join.

**21.** The Explanatory Memorandum states that no new legislation is required to implement the agreement.<sup>7</sup>

**22.** The Explanatory Memorandum states that as the agreement relates fully to reserved matters with no implications for the devolved governments, the UK Government has not consulted the devolved governments on its drafting.<sup>8</sup>

**23.** As the agreement relates to defence and national security which are reserved matters, we agreed to note the agreement for information only.

#### **Framework Agreement for International Collaboration on Research and Development of Generation IV Nuclear Energy Systems**

**24.** This agreement was laid in the UK Parliament on 20 November 2024. Its scrutiny deadline, as required by the CReG Act 2010, was 24 February 2025.

**25.** The purpose of this agreement is to create a new structure for ongoing international collaboration on Generation IV Nuclear Energy Systems to replace the existing Framework Agreement which expires on 28 February 2025.

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<sup>7</sup> UK Government, Explanatory Memorandum: Comprehensive Security Integration and Prosperity Agreement, January 2025, paragraph 5

<sup>8</sup> UK Government, Explanatory Memorandum: Comprehensive Security Integration and Prosperity Agreement, January 2025, paragraph 10

**26.** The agreement will enable international collaboration to continue on the research and development needed to determine the feasibility and performance capabilities of the next generation of nuclear energy systems. These systems will address key issues including nuclear safety, waste management, non-proliferation and public perception.

**27.** The Explanatory Memorandum confirms that no new legislation is required to implement the agreement.<sup>9</sup>

**28.** The Explanatory Memorandum states that as the agreement relates fully to reserved matters, with no implications for the devolved governments, the UK Government has not consulted the devolved governments on its drafting.<sup>10</sup>

**29.** As the agreement concerns international relations and nuclear energy, which are reserved matters, we agreed to note the agreement for information only.

### **UK-Romania Defence Cooperation Agreement**

**30.** This agreement was laid in the UK Parliament on 20 January 2025. Its scrutiny deadline, as required by the CRaG Act 2010, was 4 March 2025.

**31.** The purpose of this agreement is to provide a reciprocal framework for developing and furthering the bilateral cooperation and relations between the UK and Romania in the area of defence. This cooperation will be achieved through a variety of means including training, use of national facilities, exchanges and visits, exercises, meetings and staff talks.

**32.** The agreement builds upon the existing bilateral Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) between the Governments which were signed in 1996 and 2019. These MoUs will be terminated once the agreement comes into force. The agreement is also underpinned by the NATO Status of Forces Agreement.

**33.** The Explanatory Memorandum confirms that no new legislation is required to implement the agreement.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> UK Government, Explanatory Memorandum: Framework Agreement for International Collaboration on Research and Development of Generation IV Nuclear Energy Systems, January 2025, paragraph 5

<sup>10</sup> UK Government, Explanatory Memorandum: Framework Agreement for International Collaboration on Research and Development of Generation IV Nuclear Energy Systems, January 2025, paragraph 10

<sup>11</sup> UK Government, Explanatory Memorandum: UK/Romania: Agreement on Defence Cooperation, paragraph 5

**34.** The Explanatory Memorandum states that as the agreement relates fully to reserved matters, with no implications for the devolved governments, the UK Government has not consulted the devolved governments on its drafting.<sup>12</sup>

**35.** As the agreement concerns international relations and defence, which are reserved matters, we agreed to note the agreement for information only.

### **UK-Australia Defence and Security Cooperation Agreement**

**36.** This agreement was laid in the UK Parliament on 22 January 2025. Its scrutiny deadline, as required by the CReG Act 2010, is 6 March 2025.

**37.** The purpose of the agreement is to update the Treaty between the UK and Australia on Defence and Security Cooperation, which was signed in 2013.

**38.** The agreement updates the Treaty by introducing two new components: it formalises the established practice of consulting on issues that affect sovereignty and regional security; and includes a status of forces agreement, making it easier for forces of both parties to operate in each other's countries.

**39.** The Explanatory Memorandum states that the agreement reflects the current strategic environment and the renewed importance of the bilateral defence relationship.<sup>13</sup>

**40.** The Explanatory Memorandum confirms that no new legislation is required to implement the agreement.<sup>14</sup>

**41.** The Explanatory Memorandum states that as the agreement relates fully to reserved matters, with no implications for the devolved governments, the UK Government has not consulted the devolved governments on its drafting.<sup>15</sup>

**42.** As the agreement concerns international relations and defence, which are reserved matters, we agreed to note the agreement for information only.

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<sup>12</sup> UK Government, Explanatory Memorandum: UK/Romania: Agreement on Defence Cooperation, paragraph 10

<sup>13</sup> UK Government, Explanatory Memorandum: UK/Australia: Agreement for Defence and Security Cooperation, January 2025, paragraph 2

<sup>14</sup> UK Government, Explanatory Memorandum: UK/Australia: Agreement for Defence and Security Cooperation, January 2025, paragraph 5

<sup>15</sup> UK Government, Explanatory Memorandum: UK/Australia: Agreement for Defence and Security Cooperation, January 2025, paragraph 10



## **UK-Slovenia Termination Agreement for the Promotion and Protection of Investments**

**43.** This agreement was laid in the UK Parliament on 30 January 2025. Its scrutiny deadline, as required by the Crag Act 2010, is 14 March 2025.

**44.** The purpose of the agreement is to terminate the parties' Bilateral Investment Treaties (BIT), in line with European Union commitments made by the UK when it was a Member State.

**45.** The agreement contains investment protection provisions that provide investors with commitments on the treatment they can expect to receive with respect to established investments in the other state's territory. These provisions seek to protect investors from arbitrary, unfair, and discriminatory treatment, as well as expropriation without compensation.

**46.** The Explanatory Memorandum states that although the policy content of the agreement is international investment, which relates fully to a reserved matter, in view of the fact that the content of the UK-Slovenia BIT potentially applies to treatment of Slovenian investments by the devolved governments, and to treatment in the Republic of Slovenia of investors from the devolved governments, the UK Government has informed the devolved governments of the agreement.<sup>16</sup>

**47.** As the agreement concerns international relations and financial services, which are reserved matters, we agreed to note the agreement for information only.

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<sup>16</sup> UK Government, Explanatory Memorandum: UK/Slovenia: Agreement on Termination of the Agreement for the Promotion and Protection of Investments, done at Ljubljana on 3 July 1996, January 2025, paragraph 10