



# Research Briefing The Queen's Speech 2017

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Date: **July 2017**



**National Assembly for Wales**  
Research Service

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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Paper Number: **17- 011**

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Research Briefing  
**The Queen's Speech 2017**

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# 1. Introduction

The Queen's Speech was held on 21 June 2017, following the General Election held on 8 June 2017. The UK Government has announced that there will be no Queen's Speech next year so the legislative proposals cover a **two year period**.

The speech contains proposals for 19 pieces of legislation, 8 of which deal with issues arising from the UK leaving the EU. There are also 3 draft Bills.

Unlike previous Queen's Speeches the majority of proposed legislation deals with matters that are reserved to the UK or England and Wales matters. However, on agriculture and fisheries the UK Government states that "it will consult widely with the devolved administrations on the appropriate extent of any legislation."

## 2. Bills related to Exiting the EU

### Repeal Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- End the authority of European Union law in the United Kingdom and return powers from Brussels to the UK.
- Provide a functioning statute book on the day the UK leaves the European Union and ensure that it is for Parliament (and where appropriate the devolved legislatures) to make any future changes to UK laws.

The main elements of the Bill are:

- Repealing the *European Communities Act 1972* and converting EU law into UK law as the UK leaves the EU.
- Creating temporary powers to make secondary legislation, enabling corrections to be made to the laws that do not operate appropriately once the UK has left the EU. It will also allow changes to be made to domestic law to reflect the content of any withdrawal agreement under Article 50.
- Replicating the common UK frameworks created by EU law in UK law, and maintaining the scope of devolved decision making powers immediately after EU exit.

This will be a transitional arrangement to provide certainty after exit and allow discussion and consultation with devolved administrations on where lasting common frameworks are needed.

**The Bill's substantive provisions would apply to the whole of the UK.**

### Customs Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to provide new domestic legislation to replace EU customs legislation and modify elements of the indirect taxes system. This will allow the UK to operate stand-alone customs and indirect taxes regime on exit from the EU, whatever the outcome of the negotiations.

The main elements of the Bill are to provide a domestic legislative framework allowing the UK Government to:

- charge customs duties on imported goods and adjust the rates of these duties;

- collect payments of customs duties, administer the customs regime, and tackle duty evasion;
- control the import and export of goods;
- accommodate potential negotiated arrangements with the EU.

**The Bill would apply to the UK.** Customs, VAT, and excise regimes are reserved matters.

## Trade Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to support the UK in exiting from the European Union and ensure that UK businesses are able to benefit from trade with the rest of the world.

The main elements of the Bill are to put in place the essential and necessary legislative framework to allow the UK to operate its own independent trade policy upon exit from the European Union.

**The Bill would apply to the UK.**

The Conservative manifesto stated:

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We will create a network of Her Majesty's Trade Commissioners to head nine new regional overseas posts. These commissioners will lead export promotion, investment and trade policy overseas. We will reconvene the Board of Trade with a membership specifically charged with ensuring that we increase exports from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as well as England, and that trade policy is directly influenced by every part of our United Kingdom.

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## Immigration Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to allow the Government to end the EU's rules on free movement of EU nationals in the UK and make the migration of EU nationals and their family members subject to relevant UK law once the UK has left the EU.

The main elements of the Bill are:

- To allow the UK Government to repeal EU law on immigration, primarily free movement that will be saved and converted into UK law by the Repeal Bill.
- To allow the UK Government to make the migration of EU nationals and their family members subject to relevant UK law once the UK has left the EU.

**The Bill would apply to the UK.** Immigration is a reserved matter.

## Fisheries Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to enable the UK to control access to its waters and set UK fishing quotas once it has left the EU.

The main elements of the Bill are powers to enable the UK to exercise responsibility for access to fisheries and management of its waters.

Aspects of the Bill will extend to the UK, as international matters are not devolved. **The UK Government states that it will consult widely with the devolved administrations on the appropriate extent of any legislation.**

## Agriculture Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to provide stability to farmers as the UK leaves the EU.

The main elements of the Bill are measures to ensure that after the UK has left the EU, and therefore the Common Agricultural Policy, an effective system in place to support UK farmers and protect our natural environment.

**The UK Government has said it will consult widely with the devolved administrations on the appropriate extent of any legislation.**

## Nuclear Safeguards Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to establish a UK nuclear safeguards regime as we leave the European Union and Euratom.

The main elements of the Bill are to give the Office for Nuclear Regulation powers to take on the role and responsibilities required to meet our international safeguards, and nuclear non-proliferation obligations.

**The Bill would apply to the UK. Nuclear safeguarding is a reserved matter.**

## International Sanctions Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to enable the UK to continue to impose, update and lift sanctions regimes both to comply with its international obligations and to pursue its foreign policy and national security objectives after the UK's exit from the EU.

The main elements of the Bill are to provide a domestic legislative framework to allow the UK Government to impose sanctions to ensure compliance with obligations under international law after the UK's exit from the EU. These include:

- Asset freezes, travel bans and trade and market restrictions;
- Ensure individuals and organisations can challenge or request a review of the sanctions imposed on them;
- Exempt or license certain types of activity, such as payments for food and medicine, which would otherwise be restricted by sanctions;
- Amend regulations for anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing and to pass new ones after the UK's exit from the EU.

**The Bill would apply to the whole of the UK** and would contain provisions to extend its provisions to the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies as appropriate.

## 3. Bills relating to the Economy

### Automated and Electric Vehicles Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- Allow innovation to flourish and ensure the next wave of self-driving (automated) technology is invented, designed and operated safely in the UK.

- Ensure we retain our position as a global leader in the market for electric vehicles by improving our national charging and hydrogen refuelling infrastructure.

The main elements of the Bill are:

- Extending compulsory motor vehicle insurance to cover the use of automated vehicles, to ensure that compensation claims continue to be paid quickly, fairly, and easily, in line with longstanding insurance practice.
- Allowing the UK Government to require the installation of charge points for electric vehicles at motorway service areas and large fuel retailers, and to require a set of common technical and operational standards. This will ensure that charge points are convenient to access and work seamlessly right across the UK.

**The provisions for automated vehicles would apply to Wales, England and Scotland.**

**The provisions relating to electric vehicle infrastructure would apply to the whole of the UK and are reserved matters**, except for in Northern Ireland where the UK Government will seek a legislative consent motion.

## Space Industry Bill

The main elements of the Bill are:

- New powers to license a wide range of new commercial spaceflight, including vertically-launched rockets, spaceplanes, satellite operation, spaceports and other technologies.
- A comprehensive and proportionate regulatory framework to manage risk, ensuring that commercial spaceflight in the UK remains safe.
- Measures to regulate unauthorised access and interference with spacecraft, spaceports and associated infrastructure – drawing on the UK’s extensive expertise – particularly in aviation security.
- To promote public safety by providing a regulatory framework to cover operational insurance, indemnity and liability.

**The Bill would apply to the UK**, as space and aviation are reserved matters.

## High Speed Rail (West Midlands – Crewe) Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to provide the powers to build and operate the next stage of the High Speed Two (HS2) network from the end of the Phase One route at Fradley to a junction with the West Coast Main Line just south of Crewe.

The main elements of the Bill are:

- Powers to compulsorily acquire the land needed for the railway, construct the railway, and operate it.
- Deemed planning permission to deliver the scheme. The details of planning will be developed on a site-by-site basis in coordination with the local planning authority.
- To set out the way railway regulation will apply to the railway.

**The Bill would extend to the UK** but concerns the route between Fradley and Crewe, in England.

## Smart Meter Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- Allow the UK Government to continue to support the effective and efficient completion of the smart meter rollout.
- Allow the UK Government to oversee implementation and ensure the successful realisation of the £5.7 billion of net benefits delivered by smart meters.
- Enable the continued secure provision of the national smart meter infrastructure in Great Britain.

The main elements of the Bill are:

- To extend the UK Government’s ability to make changes to smart meter regulations by five years, making sure the rollout is delivered effectively, and that benefits are maximised into the future.
- To introduce a Special Administration Regime which will provide insurance for the national smart meter infrastructure in the event that the company responsible for it were to become insolvent. The availability of a Special Administration Regime is standard practice for energy network companies, energy suppliers, and in other sectors such as water and rail.

The Bill would apply to Wales, Scotland and England.

## National Insurance Contributions Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to legislate for the National Insurance contribution (NICs) changes announced in the 2016 Budget and the 2016 Autumn Statement.

**The provisions in this Bill would apply to the UK.**

## 4. Other Bills

### Travel Protection Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to improve protection for holidaymakers by updating the UK’s financial protection scheme for holidays.

The main elements of the Bill are to update the ATOL scheme and align it with enhancements to the EU and UK package travel regulations that predate people booking their holidays on the internet.

The measures would:

- enable the ATOL scheme to cover new digital business models and modern consumer purchasing behaviour;
- align protection with that offered across Europe to allow UK established companies to sell more easily across borders.

**The Bill would apply to the UK.**

### Tenants’ Fees Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to ban charging tenants ‘letting fees’ to improve transparency, affordability and competition in the private rental market.

The main elements of the Bill are:

- Measures to ban landlords and agents from requiring tenants to pay letting fees as a condition of their tenancy.
- Measures to enforce the ban with provision for tenants to be able to recover unlawfully charged fees.

The Bill would apply to England only. However, some minor amendments to the *Consumer Rights Act 2015* **may apply to England and Wales.**

### **Draft Domestic Violence and Abuse Bill**

The purpose of the Bill is to change the approach to domestic violence and abuse to ensure that victims have the confidence to come forward and report their experiences.

The main elements of the Bill are:

- To establish a Domestic Violence and Abuse Commissioner, to stand up for victims and survivors, raise public awareness, monitor the response of statutory agencies and local authorities and hold the justice system to account in tackling domestic abuse.
- To define domestic abuse in law to underpin all other measures in the Bill.
- To create a consolidated new domestic abuse civil prevention and protection order regime.
- To ensure that if abusive behaviour involves a child, then the court can hand down a sentence that reflects the devastating life-long impact that abuse can have on the child.

The Bill's substantive provisions would apply to England and Wales only. **The functions of the Domestic Violence and Abuse Commissioner in relation to Wales are to be determined in consultation with the Welsh Government.**

### **Civil Liability Bill**

The purpose of the Bill is to ensure there is a fair, transparent and proportionate system of compensation in place for damages paid to injured personal injury claimants.

The main elements of the Bill are to reduce the number and cost of whiplash claims by banning offers to settle claims without the support of medical evidence and introducing a new fixed tariff of compensation for whiplash injuries with a duration of up to two years.

**The Bill would apply to England and Wales.**

### **Courts Bill**

The purpose the Bill is to reform the courts and tribunal system to improve access to justice, making better use of technology and modernising working practices.

The main elements of the Bill are:

- To put an end to the direct cross examination of domestic violence victims by their alleged perpetrators in the family courts and extend the use of virtual hearings, which will allow victims to participate in trials without having to meet their alleged assailant face-to-face.
- To enable those charged with some less serious criminal offences to opt to plead guilty, accept a conviction and pay a statutory fixed penalty online which will free up court time for more serious cases. Defendants will need to actively opt into this process and could still choose to have their case heard in court instead. An example would be where a first time offender has admitted to travelling

on a train without purchasing a ticket. The reforms will also introduce digital services which will allow businesses to pursue their cases quickly, enabling them to recover debts more easily.

- To meet the demands of a modern justice system, by providing a better working environment for judges, allowing more leadership positions in the judiciary to be offered on a fixed term, and enabling judges to be deployed more flexibly to improve the opportunities for career progression.

**The Bill would apply in full to England and Wales** and in part to Northern Ireland and Scotland.

## Financial Guidance & Claims Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- Establish a new arm's-length Single Financial Guidance Body that will replace three existing providers of publicly funded financial guidance.
- Strengthen the regulation of Claims Management Companies by transferring the regulatory responsibility to the Financial Conduct Authority.

The main elements of the Bill are:

- To establish a new statutory body, accountable to Parliament, with responsibility for coordinating the provision of debt advice, money guidance, and pension guidance.
- To enable the body's activities to be funded through existing levies on pension schemes and the financial services industry.
- To transfer the regulation of claims management services to the Financial Conduct Authority, and transfer complaints-handling responsibility to the
- Financial Ombudsman Service.
- To ensure the Financial Conduct Authority has the necessary powers to implement a claims management regulatory regime. This will include a new power which will allow the Financial Conduct Authority to cap the fees that Claims Management Companies charge consumers, as well as ensuring a more robust authorisation process for new firms who wish to enter the market.

The financial guidance measures **would apply to the UK, except the provision of debt advice** by the Single Financial Guidance Body which would apply to England only as debt administration is a devolved matter.

Measures on regulating Claims Management Companies **would apply to England and Wales only.**

## Goods Mortgages Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to continue the UK Government's work to deliver a consumer credit market that the UK Government believes will function well and deliver a good deal for consumers by modernising Victorian-era legislation.

The main elements of the Bill are:

- Repealing the Victorian-era *Bills of Sale Acts* and replacing them with a *Goods Mortgage Act* which enables individuals to use their existing goods (such as a vehicle) as security for a loan, while retaining possession of the goods.
- Increasing protection for borrowers who get into financial difficulty, by introducing a new requirement for a lender to obtain a court order before seizing goods where a borrower has made

significant repayments (where one third of the loan has been paid) and wants to challenge the repossession.

- Helping borrowers in financial difficulty by giving borrowers the right to voluntary termination by handing over their vehicle or other goods to the lender.
- Providing protection for third parties who buy a vehicle subject to a logbook loan that may be at risk of repossession, and making it clearer that borrowers who knowingly sell goods with a logbook loan attached could be committing fraud.

In line with the Law Commission’s recommendations, **the Bill would apply to England and Wales.**

## Armed Forces (Flexible Working) Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to support recruitment and retention in the Armed Forces by enabling flexible working arrangements for regular Service personnel.

The main elements of the Bill are to amend the *Armed Forces Act 2006* to enable forms of part-time service and limited geographic employment within the Regular Armed Forces. The UK Government’s view is that new flexible working provisions will enable Service personnel returning from special leave including maternity, shared parental and adoption leave to have more options to support an easier transition back into duty.

The **Bill would apply to the whole of the UK**, and would also extend to the Isle of Man and the British overseas territories (except Gibraltar).

## Data Protection Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to make the data protection framework suitable for the digital age, allowing citizens to better control their data.

The main elements of the Bill are:

- To establish a new data protection regime for non-law enforcement data processing, replacing the *Data Protection Act 1998*. The new rules strengthen rights and empower individuals to have more control over their personal data, including a right to be forgotten when individuals no longer want their data to be processed, provided that there are no legitimate grounds for retaining it.
- To modernise and update the regime for data processing by law enforcement agencies. The regime will cover both domestic processing and cross-border transfers of personal data.
- To update the powers and sanctions available to the Information Commissioner.

The **Bill would apply to the UK**. Data protection is a reserved matter.

## Draft Patient Safety Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- Improve how the NHS investigates and learns from mistakes by establishing an independent Health Service Safety Investigation Body.
- Encourage staff and other participants to share information freely with the Health Service Safety Investigation Body by prohibiting the disclosure of information held in connection with its safety investigations, creating a ‘safe space’ for staff.

The main elements of the Bill are:

- To establish the Health Service Safety Investigation Body (HSSIB) in statute, providing it with clear powers to conduct independent and impartial investigations into patient safety risks in the NHS in England.
- To create a prohibition on the disclosure of information held in connection with an investigation conducted by the Health Service Safety Investigation Body, enabling participants to be as candid as possible. This prohibition will not apply where there is an ongoing risk to the safety of patients or evidence of criminal activity, in which case the HSSIB can inform the relevant regulator or the police.

The Bill would apply in England only.

### **The EU (Approvals) Bill**

The purpose of the Bill is to implement changes to international agreements between the EU and non-EU countries.

The main elements of the Bill are to allow the UK to support EU measures granting Serbia and Albania observer status at the EU' Fundamental Rights Agency and an agreement to provide for enhanced cooperation between the competition authorities of the EU and Canada.

**The Bill applies to the whole of the UK.**