

Brexit Update

Research Briefing

4 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.

An electronic copy of this document can be found on the National Assembly website: www.assembly.wales

Copies of this document can also be obtained in accessible formats including Braille, large print, audio or hard copy from:

National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Tel: **0300 200 6315**

Email: Nigel.Barwise@Assembly.Wales

Twitter: [@SeneddResearch](https://twitter.com/SeneddResearch)

Blog: SeneddResearch.blog

LinkedIn: [Senedd Research, National Assembly for Wales](#)

National Assembly for Wales
Senedd Research

Brexit Update

Research Briefing

4 March 2020

© National Assembly for Wales Commission Copyright 2020

The text of this document may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium providing that it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading or derogatory context. The material must be acknowledged as copyright of the National Assembly for Wales Commission and the title of the document specified.



The Assembly and

BREXIT

Contents

Introduction.....1

Developments in Wales.....2

National Assembly for Wales.....2

Welsh Government.....4

News.....4

EU developments.....5

European Council.....5

European Commission.....5

European Parliament.....6

News.....6

UK developments.....7

UK Government.....7

House of Commons.....7

Committees.....8

 Agriculture Public Bill.....8

House of Lords.....8

Committees.....9

 Economic Affairs.....9

EU Select.....9

EU Energy and Environment Sub Committee.....9

EU Financial Affairs Sub Committee.....10

EU Internal Market Sub Committee.....10

EU Justice Sub Committee.....10

News.....11

Scotland.....13

Scottish Parliament.....13

Scottish Government.....13

Northern Ireland.....14

Northern Ireland Assembly.....14

UK-Ireland relations.....14

Reports published.....15

Houses of Parliament libraries.....15

UK in a Changing Europe.....15

LSE Brexit.....16

The Conversation.....16

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 4 – 25 February 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](#).

On 5 February the Welsh Government [responded](#) (PDF, 292KB) to the Committee's 12 December 2019 [report](#) (PDF, 174KB) on the [Welsh Government's Draft International Strategy](#).

The most recent sessions of the EAAL Committee were:

- 10 February: The Committee held a scrutiny session with the Minister for International Relations and the Welsh Language, Eluned Morgan AM. The webcast can be [seen here](#); and
- 24 February: After noting papers the Committee met in private. The webcast can be [seen here](#).

On 10 February the Committee noted:

- [Correspondence from the Counsel General and Brexit Minister to the Chair regarding the Committee's report - Common policy frameworks: Assembly Scrutiny](#) – 23 January (PDF 452KB);
- [Correspondence from the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union to the Chair regarding the Withdrawal Agreement Bill](#) - 29 January (PDF 361KB);
- [Response from the Welsh Government to the Committee's report on UK international agreements after Brexit](#) – 3 February (PDF 256KB), and [Annex A](#) (PDF 169KB); and
- [Response from the Welsh Government to the Committee's report on the Welsh Government's draft international strategy](#) (PDF 293KB)

On 24 February the Committee noted:

- [Correspondence from the Chair of the House of Lords European Union Committee to the Chair regarding continuing engagement with the devolved legislatures](#) - 12 February (PDF 68KB); and
- [Correspondence from the Counsel General and Brexit Minister to the Chair regarding additional information following scrutiny session on 27 January 2020](#) - 14 February (PDF 262KB).

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.

Plenary

5 February: [Questions to the Minister for International Relations and Welsh Language; Debate on the External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee Report: Common policy frameworks: Assembly scrutiny](#).

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](#).

Senedd Research publications

Senedd Research blog articles and research briefings are published on [In Brief / Pigion](#). The latest Brexit related publications are:

- [Negotiations on the UK-EU Future Relationship: What are the key elements for Wales?](#);
- [Negotiations on the UK's withdrawal from the EU](#); and
- [UK common policy frameworks: The story so far](#).

Welsh Government

4 February: **£1.4 million to help transform Llandeilo Market Hall into a high-quality development** – funded by the European Regional Development Fund and the Welsh Government.

5 February: Written Statement: **Brussels and Paris Visit 16-17 January 2020**.

6 February: Written Statement: **Joint Ministerial Committee (EU Negotiations)**. A **communiqué** was issued (PDF, 52.4KB).

8 February: **Wales and Ireland drive forward new collaboration** - supported by funds from the EU's European Territorial Co-operation (ETC) programme.

11 February: Written Statement: **Welsh Government response to the initial UK and EU negotiation mandates**.

13 February: **Wales looks forward to future relationship with its strongest trading partner as German Ambassador to UK visits key sites**.

13 February: **More support for hard-to-reach EU citizens living in Wales**.

News

14 February: **Brecon and Radnor farmers highlight concerns about future to new MP (Farmers Union of Wales)** (Farmers Union of Wales (FUW)).

14 February: **What you need to know about Brexit and EU Funds from WCVA** (Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA)).

18 February: **MP discusses lambing, trade deals and the Agriculture Bill** (National Farmers Union Cymru (NFU Cymru)).

21 February: **Flooding prompts NFU Cymru to seek three crop rule derogation** (NFU Cymru).

EU developments

European Council

18 February: **Council sets its priorities for the 2021 EU budget**.

20 February: **Remarks by President Charles Michel before the Special European Council**.

21 February: **Remarks by President Charles Michel after the special meeting of the European Council on 20-21 February 2020**.

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

10 February: **Trade preferences boost developing countries' exports to the European Union**.

11 February: **Von der Leyen sets out the ambition for a free trade agreement with the UK**.

11 February: **Speech by President von der Leyen in the Plenary of the European Parliament at the debate on the Commission's proposal for a mandate for the negotiation of a new partnership with the United Kingdom**.

12 February: **Commission welcomes European Parliament's approval of EU-Vietnam trade and investment agreements**.

12 February: **February infringements package: key decisions** - Road transport: Commission requests the UK to comply with the Directive on Road Charging.

13 February: **Winter 2020 Economic Forecast: Offsetting forces confirm subdued growth**. Full document: **Winter 2019 Economic Forecast**.

19 February: **Documents presented to EU Member States on 18 February 2020: "Trade agreements - geography and trade intensity"** (807.1 KB - PDF).

21 February: [Remarks by President von der Leyen at the joint press conference with President Michel, following the Special European Council, 20-21 February 2020.](#)

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.](#)

European Parliament

12 February: [EU-UK future relations: “level playing field” crucial to ensure fair competition.](#)

19 February: [President Michel’s MFF proposal not acceptable for Parliament.](#)

21 February: [EP’s MFF negotiators disappointed by failure of EU budget summit.](#)

News

11 February: [UK trade deal faces potential veto from every EU country](#) (Politico).

25 February: [FoodDrinkEurope statement on the future of the EU-UK relationship](#) (FoodDrinkEurope)

UK developments

UK Government

4 February: [UK statement to the WTO on the Joint Initiative on Services Domestic Regulation.](#) The government also published a [note to WTO members](#) (PDF - 202KB).

10 February: [Government confirms plans to introduce import controls.](#)

10 February: [Sajid Javid: I’ll give the City the flexibility it needs to thrive outside the EU](#) (the then Chancellor of the Exchequer writing in City AM).

13 February: [Ministerial appointments: February 2020.](#)

17 February: [David Frost lecture: Reflections on the revolutions in Europe.](#)

19 February: [Points-based immigration system: Latest Information.](#)

19 February: [Seasonal Workers Pilot expansion confirmed for 2020.](#)

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

House of Commons

4 February: Foreign and Commonwealth Office questions: [Leaving the EU: Human Rights.](#)

5 February: Northern Ireland questions: [Leaving the EU: Economic and Social Effect; Customs Regulations: Consistency; EU Withdrawal Act: Effect on the Union; EU Customs Declarations; Barnett Formula.](#)

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

6 February: Environment, Food and Rural Affairs questions: [Small and Medium-sized Food Producers; Imported Agricultural Goods.](#)

6 February: Public Accounts Commission questions: [Leaving the EU: National Audit Office.](#)

10 February: Home Department questions: [“Migration: Helping Scotland Prosper”; Points-based Immigration System.](#)

10 February: Treasury Written Statement: [Freeports](#).

11 February: Treasury questions: [EU Single Market Access: Manufacturing and the Economy](#). (13 February): [Letter of correction from the Chancellor of the Exchequer](#).

11 February: Debate: [Migration and Scotland](#).

12 February: Scotland questions: [Trade](#); [Leaving the EU](#); [Fisheries](#).

12 February: [Prime Ministers questions](#), and [continued](#).

12 February: Westminster Hall debate: [UK fisheries](#).

13 February: Attorney General questions: [Leaving the EU: Human Rights and the Rule of Law](#).

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

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

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

Committees

Agriculture Public Bill

11 February: [First Sitting](#), and [Second Sitting](#).

13 February: [Third Sitting](#) (evidence from NFU Cymru, the Farmers' Union of Wales, and the Welsh Government); and [Fourth Sitting](#).

25 February: [Fifth Sitting](#), and [Sixth Sitting](#).

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

House of Lords

5 February: Question on [Trade Deals: Animal Welfare](#).

5 February: Short debate on [Wales: European Structural Funds](#).

10 February: Question on [Yorkshire: Devolution](#).

11 February: Second Reading of the [Fisheries Bill](#).

12 February: Question on the [Fishery Protection Squadron](#).

25 February: Statement: [Immigration: Points-based System](#).

25 February: Short Debate: [Trade: Standards](#).

26 February: Question on [Brexit: Financial Assistance for Businesses](#).

Committees

Economic Affairs

11 February: The Committee took evidence from [the Governor of the Bank of England, Mark Carney, on financial stability, Brexit and green finance](#). [Transcript](#) (PDF 223.9 KB).

EU Select

5 February: [EU Committee draws special attention to UK–Morocco agreement - Scrutiny of international agreements: treaties considered on 4 February 2020](#).

11 February: [Committee hears from experts on the revised protocol on Ireland / Northern Ireland](#). [Transcript](#) (PDF 230.7 KB).

12 February: [Committee publishes twenty-first treaty report - Scrutiny of international agreements: treaties considered on 11 February 2020](#).

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

EU Energy and Environment Sub Committee

12 February: Evidence session: [Access to UK fishing waters: what's the deal? Transcript – Academics session](#) (PDF 170.6 KB); [Transcript – Fishers and processors session](#) (PDF 206 KB).

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

EU Financial Affairs Sub Committee

5 February: **City experts questioned on financial regulation after Brexit.** [Transcript](#) (PDF, 200KB)

12 February: **Bank of England and Financial Conduct Authority questioned on financial services after Brexit.** [Transcript](#) (PDF 220 KB)

26 February: **Industry leaders questioned on financial services after Brexit.**

EU Internal Market Sub Committee

11 February: **Should the UK continue to spring forward and fall back? - Report: Clock changes: is it time for change?**

13 February: **Inquiry on the level playing field and state aid launched.**

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

EU Justice Sub Committee

4 February: Evidence session on **Is the EU Settlement Scheme working for children in care?** [Transcript](#).

11 February: **Rights of UK citizens living in the EU probed further: Letter to Michael Gove MP, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster about the position of UK nationals in the EU** (PDF 71.66 KB).

11 February: Evidence session: **How Brexit will affect consumers?** [Transcript](#) (PDF 249.5 KB).

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).

News

5 February: **Aim high on global standards for UK/USA trade deal** (Confederation of British Industry (CBI))

6 February: **CLA responds to Trade Secretary's speech on the future of UK-US trade** (Country Land and Business Association (CLA))

6 February: **The future EU-UK relations** (PDF – 479KB) (Business Europe)

7 February: **Risk from pandemic could be heightened without continued cooperation with EU** (Brexit Health Alliance)

9 February: **BPA Welcomes Freeports Consultation; Calls for Maximum Ambition in Scope and Scale** (British Ports Association)

9 February: **Boris Johnson's Brexit trade deal threat risks destroying UK trade with the EU, warn British businesses** (Business Insider)

10 February: **Brexit deal may place "huge, unnecessary burdens" on Scottish salmon sector** (Scottish Salmon Producers' Organisation)

10 February: **FTA comment on the UK's future relationship with Europe** (Freight Transport Association (FTA))

11 February: **Prepare businesses now to avoid border delays, RHA urges Government** (Road Haulage Association (RHA))

13 February: **Brexit - why free ports are a race to the bottom on workers' rights** (Trades Union Congress (TUC))

17 February: **Avoid Kent disruption by getting firms border ready** (RHA)

17 February: **EU toughens fisheries demands** (Fishing News)

17 February: **BCC/DHL: Trade negotiations must unlock potential of struggling exporters** (British Chambers of Commerce (BCC))

17 February: **Without Comprehensive Trade Deal UK Consumers Will Suffer** (British Retail Consortium - Report: **A Fair Deal for Consumers** (PDF 2.28MB) (BRC))

18 February: **BCC comments on proposals for new UK immigration system** (BCC)

18 February: **CBI responds to new UK immigration system** (CBI)

19 February: **Future immigration system fails to meet needs of supply chains** (BRC)

19 February: **Government short-sightedness is putting Britain's supply chain at risk** (RHA)

19 February: **Why the new points-based immigration system threatens everyone's rights at work** (TUC)

19 February: **CLA responds to Seasonal Workers Pilot expansion** (CLA)

19 February: **UK economy cannot operate without vital logistics workers** – “Vital logistics workers must be excluded from the government's restrictive post-Brexit immigration policy” (FTA)

21 February: **Prioritise logistics or risk supply chain chaos, FTA tells UK Brexit negotiators** (FTA)

21 February: **FTA comments on effects of new immigration proposals on Scotland** (FTA)

24 February: **MPs Must Amend the Agriculture Bill to Protect Standards in Trade** (Tenant Farmers Association)

24 February: **Cool Heads Must Prevail to Prevent Gridlock** (BRC)

24 February: **Let firms concentrate on jobs and growth by limiting red tape** – “the CBI has set out a series of practical business priorities for the UK-EU FTA” (CBI)

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))

Scotland

Scottish Parliament

Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) publications: **Brexit Phase 2 begins – The EU's approach**, and **Brexit Phase 2 begins – The UK's approach**, and **Negotiating the future relationship – priorities of the EU Member States**.

6 February: **The Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee calls for 'sunset clause' in CAP transition legislation: Report - Agriculture (Retained EU Law and Data) (Scotland) Bill: Stage 1** (PDF – 1,062KB)

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

Scottish Government

10 February: **First Minister: 'We've never needed EU more'**.

10 February: **European Policy Centre: First Minister's Speech**.

14 February: **Brexit impact on Scotland's economy**.

16 February: **Call for urgent talks with new Chief Secretary to the Treasury** - Joint letter from the devolved administrations.

19 February: **Response to UK Government's immigration proposals**.

21 February: **EU trade standards 'cannot be replicated'**.

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.

UK-Ireland relations

12 February: [Taoiseach speaks to EU Council President Charles Michel](#).

Reports published

Houses of Parliament libraries

[Brexit next steps: The Court of Justice of the EU and the UK](#)

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

[Brexit next steps: Fisheries](#)

[The progress of the EU Settlement Scheme so far](#)

[Brexit: the financial settlement - a summary](#)

[Trade: Key Economic Indicators](#)

[Brexit next steps: The European Arrest Warrant](#)

[Constitutional implications of the Withdrawal Agreement legislation](#)

[Brexit: a reading list of post-EU Referendum publications by Parliament and the Devolved Assemblies](#)

[Brexit statements](#)

UK in a Changing Europe

[Government faces a number of tough choices in next stage of Brexit, new academic report finds](#) - Report: [Brexit: what next?](#) (PDF 3.6MB)

[Services: the forgotten child of Brexit?](#)

[Brexit: what next? Trade](#)

[West Midlands transport industries and Brexit](#) – Report: [Brexit and UK Auto, Rail and Aerospace: Understanding Logistics and Supply Chain](#) (PDF 886KB)

[Fisheries policy exposes tensions between the UK and Scottish governments](#)

[Brexit has placed Northern Ireland at the UK-EU interface](#)

[The financial services sector will be key as the trade negotiations begin](#)

British services have played second fiddle in the Brexit debate

Do voters want a 'hard or a 'soft' Brexit?

Post-Brexit trade barriers

The Agriculture Bill 2020: what's in it for British farmers?

Brexit offers an opportunity for the government to deliver on its environmental promises

Oven-ready or half-baked? implementing the Northern Ireland Protocol

The petrol and diesel ban: what sort of auto industry does the UK want after Brexit?

Minimum trade frictions will be vital for the UK automotive industry

LSE Brexit

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

The Conversation

Canada-U.K. free trade: A post-Brexit opportunity

What Sinn Féin's election success means for Irish relations with the EU – and Brexit