

# Research Briefing **Brexit Update**

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**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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Research Briefing

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# 1. Introduction

This paper provides an update on the most recent developments on Brexit of relevance to Wales. It includes sections on the work of the Assembly and Welsh Government; EU; UK; and Scotland and Ireland. The period covered is 15 – 29 November, although reference is made to later events where information is available at time of final drafting.

## 2. 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 most recent sessions of the EAAL Committee were:

- 20 November: The Committee held evidence sessions with the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Welsh Government's Permanent Secretary ([Transcript](#)) for both of its current inquiries: [Resilience and preparedness: the Welsh Government's administrative and financial response to Brexit](#) and [The European Union \(Withdrawal\) Bill and its implications for Wales](#).
- 27 November: The Committee met jointly with the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee for an evidence session with the First Minister on the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill ([Transcript](#)). The EAAL committee then held another evidence session with the First Minister on Brexit negotiations and preparations. In the joint session the First Minister said that a [Welsh EU Continuity Bill has been prepared](#) (BBC).

21 November: David Rees AM, Mark Drakeford AM and Michael Russell MSP spoke on the Withdrawal Bill and Devolution at the "[EU Withdrawal Bill Summit](#)" in the London Guildhall.

5 December: David Rees will speak on [Brexit and the Welsh Economy](#) at Policy Forum Wales, Nathan Gill AM and Steffan Lewis AM are the chairs for the day.

The Research Service's own blogs are published on [In Brief](#). The latest Brexit blogs are [Negotiations on the UK's Withdrawal from the EU: Monitoring Report](#); four on Brexit and the environment: A look at how the UK legislatures' Committees are preparing: [Part 4- The House of Lords](#), [Part 3- The House of Commons](#), [Part 2- The Scottish Parliament](#) and [Part 1- The National Assembly for Wales](#); and three publications: [The red meat sector](#); [The Dairy Sector](#) and [The food and drink industry in Wales](#).

#### Other

The Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee has published its reports on [Marine Protected Areas in Wales](#), and the [Future of Agricultural and Rural Development Policies in Wales](#).

The Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee is considering the use made of support from the EU and the impact of Brexit as part of its inquiry into [Selling Wales to the World](#).

The Equalities, Local Government and Communities Committee is considering the implications of Brexit on Human Rights as part of its inquiry into Human Rights in Wales. The Committee held an informal discussion on the latest developments in relation to Brexit and Human Rights with the Equalities and Human Rights Commission and experts from the Assembly Commission.

The Constitution and Legislative Affairs Committee has begun reporting on where subordinate legislation currently being laid before the Assembly may need amending after the UK leaves the EU.

The Constitution and Legislative Affairs Committee has launched its **inquiry into Powers in the EU (Withdrawal) Bill to make subordinate legislation**. The consultation closed on 30 November.

## **Plenary**

15 November: Short debate: **The exploitation of immigrants to the UK by immigrant criminal gangs**.

22 November: Jane Hutt **elected to EAAL** in place of Eluned Morgan, Jenny Rathbone elected in place of Jeremy Miles.

22 November: Short Debate: **Business post-Brexit and the opportunities for Wales**.

## **Welsh Government**

16 November: **European politicians in Wales to talk Brexit**. The Welsh Government hosted the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions. The **Cardiff Declaration** was signed at the conference.

22 November: **Mark Drakeford responds to the UK government's Autumn Budget**.

24 November: Mark Drakeford was on the **"UK, Ireland and Brexit"** panel of the Dublin 2017 meeting of the Irish Association for Contemporary European Studies.

27 November: **"We will work with our farmers to help them meet the challenges of Brexit"** - Lesley Griffiths on the opening day of the Royal Welsh Winter Fair.

27 November: **Welsh Government expands overseas operations to boost trade post-Brexit**.

## **News**

16 November: **Brexit, equality and human rights in Wales** (By Catherine May, Principal at the **Human Rights Commission in Wales**, in Welsh Brexit blogs)

20 November: **Tenanted Sector of Agriculture Needs Land Tax Reform to be Brexit Ready** (Tenant Farmers Association)

22 November: **NFU Cymru underlines importance of EU market access**.

27 November: **Industry/Government Partnership Produces Clear Plan - Amaeth Cymru - for the Future of Welsh Agriculture** (Tenant Farmers Association)

28 November: Royal Welsh Showground: **Brexit and the European Parliament: What it means for agriculture – Wales** (European Parliament)

28 November: **Post-Brexit farming vision must be to produce more food from less land** (CLA)

# **3. EU developments**

## **European Council**

17 November: **European Pillar of Social Rights: Proclamation and signing**.

17 November: Remarks by President Donald Tusk after the **informal meeting of EU heads of State or government in Gothenburg** – includes paragraph on Brexit.

17 November: **Statement following the EU-US Justice and Home Affairs ministerial meeting**.

18 November: 2018 EU budget: Agreement reached.

20 November: Organic farming: new European rules confirmed.

20 November: European Medicines Agency to be relocated to Amsterdam, the Netherlands, European Banking Authority to be relocated to Paris, France.

## European Commission

16 November: Residence permits for non-EU citizens - New high in first residence permits issued in the EU Member States in 2016 - Main beneficiaries from Ukraine, Syria and the United States.

16 November: Mapping the sources and level of air pollution in Europe: Commission publishes new Air Quality Index and Atlas.

17 November: Opening remarks by Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, at the press conference following the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth.

18 November: UN climate conference makes progress on Paris Agreement implementation.

20 November: Speech by Michel Barnier at the Centre for European Reform on 'The Future of the EU', Barnier to UK: Staying close to EU model could be 'decisive' (Politico)

20 November: New rules for organic farming: Statement by Commissioner Phil Hogan.

21 November: European SME Week 2017 - SMEs in the European Union generate half of the intra-EU trade in goods - with a slightly higher share for imports.

22 November: European Semester Autumn Package: Striving for sustainable and inclusive growth.

24 November: State aid: Commission approves joint capacity mechanism for Ireland and Northern Ireland.

28 November: Europe's social dimension: President Juncker and Prime Minister Löfven present way forward after the Social Summit.

29 November: Speech by Michel Barnier at the Berlin Security Conference.

## European Parliament

Study: Brexit and Ireland - Legal, Political and Economic Considerations Study.

Study: Smart Border 2.0 - Avoiding a hard border on the island of Ireland for Customs control and the free movement of persons.

Study: UK Withdrawal ('Brexit') and the Good Friday Agreement.

15 November: Rule of law and democracy in Poland at risk: EU Article 7 procedure should be launched to prevent a breach of the rule of law.

16 November: EP ready to start talks with EU governments on overhaul of Dublin system.

18 November: EU Budget 2018 deal: EP boosts support for youth and growth initiatives.

21 November: Clear rules on prohibited fishing gear and more flexibility for EU fishermen.

22 November: Organic food: green light for fresh EU rules.

24 November: Brexit and the European Parliament: What does it mean for science and research?

## News

- 14 November: **Europe rips up free-market rules to help farmers** - Farmers are finally making headway with complaints that they are the losers in the food supply chain (Politico)
- 15 November: **European Parliament cancels on Theresa May** Senior MEPs don't want to stay in Brussels on a Friday to meet with the British Prime Minister (Politico)
- 15 November: **Euro area international trade in goods surplus €26.4 bn, €3.1 bn surplus for EU28** (Eurostat)
- 16 November: **PESCO: Pragmatic and virtually apolitical** (Opinion piece in Euractiv)
- 16 November: **Brexit: How the Netherlands is braced for 'no deal'** (BBC)
- 16 November: **Barnier dashes Britain's trade hopes** - London's insistence on leaving single market and customs union makes basic free-trade deal the only option (Politico)
- 17 November: **Barnier's Brexit timeline: No transition deal until October 2018** - The timetable will alarm businesses who are keen for post-Brexit clarity as soon as possible (Politico)
- 17 November: **Irish PM: EU prepared to wait for Brexit 'concessions'** (Politico)
- 23 November: **Brussels takes aim at Britain's budget rebate in Brexit talks** (Politico)

## 4. UK developments

### UK Government

- 16-17 November: PM meeting with **Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven; Irish Taoiseach Leo Varadkar; EC President Tusk and President Macron of France;**
- 13 November: **Withdrawal Agreement and Implementation Bill** will give legal standing to separation from the EU.
- 14 November update: **Information about the Withdrawal Bill: Overview; Converting and Preserving Law; Correcting Power; Power to implement the withdrawal agreement; Devolution; Charter of Fundamental Rights; Workers rights, Environmental protections; Consumer protections; Treaty rights; Glossary; Impact assessment; Regulatory Policy Committee opinion; Equality analysis.** The **Delegated Powers Memorandum** identifies the provisions of the Bill that confer powers to make delegated legislation.
- 14 November: **David Davis' speech at UBS.**
- 16 November: **David Davis' speech to the Süddeutsche Zeitung Economic Summit, Berlin, David Davis fails to convince German business leaders over Brexit free trade deal** (The Telegraph Premium)
- 17 November: **David Davis: Some EU countries want to move on to post-Brexit trade talks** (Radio 4 via Politico)
- 17 November: **UK and Ireland can strengthen ties via Brexit:** article by Boris Johnson in the Irish Times.
- 17 November: **David Davis' update to the House of Commons on EU negotiations.**
- 21 November: **PM meeting with Sinn Féin and the DUP.**
- 23 November: **PM attending Eastern Partnership summit.**



23 November: [David Davis concludes visit to Estonia.](#)

## House of Commons

[European Union \(Withdrawal\) Bill list of amendments to date.](#)

15 November: Brexit questions on the [Irish border](#), and the [Ireland Act 1949](#).

15 November: [European Union \(Withdrawal\) Bill committee stage.](#)

20 November: The [Taxation \(Cross-border Trade\) Bill](#) was presented to the House.

21 November: Question to the Foreign Secretary on [Leaving the EU: Foreign and Security Policy](#).

21 November: [European Union \(Withdrawal\) Bill committee stage.](#) 22 November: [Financial Statement.](#)

28 November: [Urgent Question: Leaving the EU: Sectoral Impact Assessments, Brexit: Government studies handed to MPs amid secrecy row](#) (BBC)

28 November: Westminster Hall debate: [Rural Economy of Wales.](#)

29 November: Urgent Question on the costs of Brexit.

## Committees

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Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: [Published written evidence](#) for its inquiry into the [impact of Brexit on the aerospace industry](#). An [Evidence session](#), Transcript, [Airbus U.K. Warns of Brexit Risk as China Covets Wing Business](#) (Bloomberg) - 21 November. [Secretary of State questioned on Brexit](#), gig economy and Industrial Strategy - 29 November.

Constitution: Evidence Session on the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill with [Keir Starmer \(Labour\)](#) and [Tom Brake \(Liberal Democrat\)](#) - 29 November.

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: [Evidence session on Brexit: Trade in food](#), Transcript, Euractiv article [Agriculture strategist: 'Impossible' for UK grain producers to compete outside EU](#) - 15 November. Further [written evidence has been published](#). [Brexit impact on dairy, poultry and pigs industries](#) evidence session on 29 November. An evidence session was held on 15 November with [UK fishing industry representatives](#), Transcript. [Brexit impact on fishing industry](#) was also examined on 29 November.

European Scrutiny: [Committee published Government response to a report](#) from its predecessor committee in the last Parliament.

Exiting the EU: [European Union \(Withdrawal\) Bill report released](#) – 17 November. [Letter to Chair from Secretary of State sending impact assessments](#) - 27 November. [Letter to Secretary of State from Chair on impact assessments](#) - 28 November. Evidence session on [Impact of Brexit on trade](#) – 29 November.

Foreign Affairs: Correspondence from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, relating to [International Court of Justice](#) elections - 28 November. [Minister of State questioned on UK diplomacy towards EU](#), Transcript – 28 November. [Academics questioned on future of Britain's diplomatic relationship with Europe](#) – 29 November.

Health: [Nursing workforce evidence session](#) – 28 November.

Home Affairs: **Report** published '**Home Office delivery of Brexit: customs operations**' - 16 November. **Home Office delivery of Brexit: immigration, Transcript** – 21 November and **29 November**, and **10 November transcript**.

Human Rights: **David Davis has responded** to the **Chair's letter of 2 November** on the EU (Withdrawal) Bill – 20 November.

International Trade: Evidence session on **Continuing application of EU trade agreements, Transcript** - 15 November. **UK's trade relationship with Australia and New Zealand inquiry launched** – 16 November. **UK trade options beyond 2019 - Government Response** published – 17 November. **Transcript of evidence on US-UK trade relations** – 22 November. Evidence session on the **Trade Bill** – 29 November.

Northern Ireland: **Chief Minister of Gibraltar questioned on Brexit and land border, Transcript** – 15 November. New Inquiry - **Devolution and democracy in Northern Ireland: dealing with the deficit** – 24 November. Oral Evidence Session, **The land border between Northern Ireland and Ireland**, with Chloe Smith and Robin Walker - 29 November.

Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs: Evidence Session on **Devolution and Exiting the EU** - 28 November. **Clause 11 is seen as constitutionally insensitive, says PACAC – Report** – 29 November.

Scottish Affairs: **Urgent action needed to end devolution stalemate on repatriation of powers, Report** – 19 November. **Glasgow hosted second meeting of immigration inquiry** – 27 November.

Treasury: The UK's economic relationship with the European Union **Transcript** - 15 November.

Welsh Affairs: **Letter to Chair from First Secretary of State Damian Green on Brexit** - 20 November. Royal Welsh Agricultural Society Winter Fair hosted a Brexit impact discussion with the Committee, as part of its inquiry into **Brexit: agriculture, trade and the repatriation of powers** - 27 November.

15 November: The Chair of the Commons Science and Technology Committee wrote to the Chancellor of the Exchequer asking that the UK stays in the **Horizon-2020 research programme**.

## House of Lords

16 November: Questions on **Brexit: Data Transfer**.

16 November: Questions on **Permanent Structured Cooperation**.

16 November: Short debate on **Brexit: Least Developed Countries**.

20 November: Questions on **Brexit: Aviation**.

20 November: Short debate on **Devolved Administrations: Memorandum of Understanding**.

22 November: Questions on **Brexit: Border Crossings**.

23 November: Questions on **Brexit: Devolved Administrations and repatriation of powers**.

23 November: Questions on **Brexit: Mental Health Research Funding**.

28 November: Questions on **Brexit: Release of Impact Assessments**.

## Committees

EU Select: **Committee replies to Government responses on Gibraltar and Crown Dependencies reports** – 24 November. A delegation attended the **58th Conference of Parliamentary**

**Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC) in Estonia** – 26-28 November. **Letter from David Davis regarding impact assessments** - 27 November.

EU Energy and Environment Sub-Committee: Roundtable discussion with organisations from the UK and Europe to explore **the potential impact of Brexit on the UK's trade in waste**, **Transcript** – 22 November. Letter to Michael Gove following **1 November committee meeting** - 22 November.

EU External Affairs Sub-Committee: **EU external approach to migration** was considered by Committee on 30 November.

EU Justice Sub-Committee: **Former judges explore possible impact on jurisdiction of CJEU post-Brexit**, **Transcript** – 21 November.

EU Financial Affairs Sub-Committee: **Financial regulation and supervision following Brexit** evidence sessions – 15 November and **29 November**.

EU Home Affairs Sub-Committee: **Health implications of leaving Euratom** explored by Committee in one-off session – 22 November. **Reciprocal healthcare in Ireland and Northern Ireland post-Brexit** 15 November. **Reciprocal healthcare after Brexit** on 15 November, and again on **29 November**.

EU Internal Market Sub-Committee: Letter to Chairman from Liam Fox on the **UK Trade Remedies Authority** – 15 November. Letter to Chairman from Margot James on **Brexit: competition** – 20 November. Committee follow up session on **post-Brexit trade in air services** – 30 November.

## News

15 November: Federation of Small Businesses says '**we won't have a Northern Powerhouse' unless EU funding to the region is replaced** (Chronicle Live)

15 November: **Manfred Weber: May knows Brexit will cause damage** Center-right leader in European Parliament left talks with British PM 'more positively than he went in.' (Politico)

15 November: **UK and non-UK people in the labour market: November 2017**. Estimates of labour market activity by nationality and country of birth (ONS). **Number of EU workers in UK reached record high after Brexit vote**. Figures indicate a particular increase among people from Bulgaria and Romania. (Politico)

15 November: **Theresa May is in a stronger position than it appears** (The Conversation)

17 November: **Implementing the UK's Exit from the European Union** - The National Audit Office.

23 November: **Britain must accept more immigrants if it wants a free trade deal, Indian diplomat warns** (The Telegraph Premium)

25 November: **'No EU-UK deal? It is not the end of the world', says WTO chief** (The Telegraph Premium)

28 November: The Financial Policy Committee "judges the UK banking system could continue to support the real economy through a disorderly Brexit." – **Bank of England Financial Stability Report no. 42**.

## 5. Scotland

### Scottish Parliament

Scottish Parliament Brexit Update: **15 November**, **23 November**.

External Affairs Committee: **Presidency of the Council of the European Union** discussion with Her Excellency Tiina Intelmann (Ambassador of Estonia to the United Kingdom) – 16 November.

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee: **'UK Ministers should not be able to make law in devolved areas without the consent of the Scottish Government' - First report on the EU (Withdrawal) Bill** - 17 November.

## Scottish Government

20-21 November: **Look north for fairness and growth** - Eyes of northern Europe on Scotland as Arctic Circle Forum gets underway. **Arctic Strategy for Scotland**.

23 November: **Culture Secretary comments on Dundee 2023 bid**.

24 November: **Scotland and Ireland** - Links with close neighbours must continue to grow.

25 November: Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop writes to the European Commission and UK Government on **2023 European Capital of Culture**.

28 November: Call for full Brexit analysis - **Michael Russell asks UK Government to share analysis with public**.

## 6. Northern Ireland

The Assembly has published **EU Matters: BREXIT Negotiation Focus**, which includes a summary of the UK government, European Council and European Parliament negotiating positions.

**The Brexit Hub**: information and links to resources on the subject of Brexit and Northern Ireland.

25 November: **Theresa May's other hard-Brexit front** - Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionist Party lays down 'red lines' on Irish border issue.

## 7. UK-Ireland relations

**Some questions on Brexit Negotiations** – 16 November.

## 8. Reports published

**UN chief: Migration 'highly desirable' if managed humanely and responsibly** (Euractiv)

**What Brexit negotiators discussing Northern Ireland today can learn from Anglo-Irish relations in 1973** (The Conversation)

**Northern Ireland's economy has a lot more to lose from a hard Brexit than the Republic's** (The Conversation)

**The Brexit Vote, Inflation and UK Living Standards** (Politico)

**How to future-proof the West's economies** - Top economic thinkers from the US and Europe say we need to start by fixing our politics (Politico)

**Go easy on the social, Europe** - Europe needs both an open market economy and a reliable social safety net (Danish PM Rasmussen in Politico)

**Tech offers UK hope after Brexit, but support won't come cheap** (Politico)



**Bordering on Brexit: the views of local communities in the central border region of Ireland/Northern Ireland** (UK in a Changing Europe)

**Intergovernmental relations and fisheries: accommodating Scotland's unusual influence** (UK in a Changing Europe)

**The Brexit psychodrama is going exactly as expected** (UK in a Changing Europe)

**'You'll hate it': why the Norway option amounts to self-inflicted subservience to the EU** (LSE Brexit)

**Ensuring free movement of data after Brexit is crucial, but looks unlikely at the moment** (LSE Brexit)

**Who will pick fruit and harvest vegetables after Brexit? Reviving SAWS could be a solution** (LSE Brexit)

**The Irish border bites back** (UK in a Changing Europe)

**Building a post-Brexit food and rural policy for Wales** (Welsh Brexit blogs)

**Brits in Spain: four broad Brexit narratives** (LSE Brexit)

**Time for Britain to face up to its post-Brexit skills shortage** (The Conversation)

**A 'quick' British-American trade deal? NAFTA suggests not a chance** (The Conversation)

**Why 'take back control' trumped 'project fear'** (UK in a Changing Europe)

**A hard Brexit could be good for tax in the UK** (UK in a Changing Europe)

**The Brexit tax haven: a threat to the UK, not the EU** (UK in a Changing Europe)

**The continental divide? Economic exposure to Brexit in regions and countries on both sides of the Channel** (UK in a Changing Europe)

**Brexit has blown open the unreconciled divisions in Northern Ireland** (LSE Brexit)

**The inside story of how David Cameron drove Britain to Brexit** (Ivan Rogers, lecture at Hartford College, reported in Prospect)

**Mind the Gap(s): Food Brexit, regulatory divergences and the need for a new UK agri-food framework** (Welsh Brexit blogs)