



Members' Mailing: MM/17/05

The United Kingdom's exit from and the new partnership with the European Union

6th February 2017

Summary: This paper offers an overview of the key points from the White Paper in relation to higher education. In summary, the Paper does not reveal any major new initiatives that were not already know before its release.

Distribution: Members, CREST, ukadia

Action: For information

Further information: A copy of the White Paper can be found [here](#)

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Introduction

On 2nd February 2017 the UK Government published its White Paper on the UK's exit from and new partnership with the EU.

The paper adds some limited detail to the previously announced 12 principles for exit; members will be particularly interested in principle 10 on science and innovation and principles 5, 6 & 7 covering people and immigration. However, actual policy detail is far from clear.

Overview

The paper as a whole does not greatly expand upon the Prime Minister's speech made in January. However, there are a few indications of emerging policy. This paper offers a brief overview of the main points in principles 5, 6, 7 & 10 that will be of interest to members and covers some of the other key points.

Key points for HEIs:

Many of the areas relating to the HEI, mainly covered in Chapter 10, have already been in the public domain for some time. There are no new major announcements.

- The **High Level Stakeholder Engagement Group** (on which Gordon McKenzie represents GuildHE) is mentioned
- UK researchers are encouraged to **continue to bid for EU projects** (ie Horizon 2020) for as long as the UK remains a member of the EU
- **University staff and students** are drawn out in the chapter on immigration and especially recognised as making an "important contribution"
 - Furthermore, the UK "**will always welcome genuine students**"
- **Student loans and home fee status** for EU students starting courses in 2017-18 is confirmed. Funding support will continue for the duration of their courses
- Similarly, postgraduate **support for research students** receiving funding through the Research Councils are confirmed as remaining to open EU students as they currently are. Funding will likewise be guaranteed for the duration of their course.
- Government has held and will continue to hold **Commons debates** on the impact of exiting the EU in specific areas – **science and research** is one of the first (along with workers' rights)
- **European Structural and Investment Funds** signed before the Autumn Statement 2016 will be fully funded even if projects continue following the UK's exit from the EU
 - Similarly, those signed after the Autumn Statement 2016 and continuing post Brexit will be honoured; however, this will only be the case if "they provide strong value for money and are in line with domestic strategic priorities"

Other key points:

- There will be a **white paper on The Great Repeal Bill** (which aims to transport all EU law into domestic UK law prior to the UK leaving the EU in preparation for examining individual laws at later dates)
- Following The Great Repeal Bill, any “**significant policy changes**” will be “underpinned by other primary legislation” in other words full Parliamentary debate as is the case with HERB at present
 - **Bills on immigration and customs** are specifically highlighted as being “expected” to be subject to future, primary legislation
 - On immigration in particular, Government will “ensure that businesses and communities have the **opportunity to contribute their views**”
 - There may be a **phased implantation** for any new arrangements
- The UK will no longer be subject to the jurisdiction of the **European Court of Justice**
- It is unclear how exactly Government intend to protect the **Common Travel Area** (free movement) between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland as Government will do so whilst “protecting the integrity of the UK’s immigration system”
- Government had hoped to resolve the issue of securing **EU citizens’ rights** within the UK and UK citizens’ rights within the EU before the start of formal negotiations; this is however unlikely
- **EU nationals’ rights remain unchanged** whilst we remain in the EU. The paper continues that “those who have lived continuously and lawfully in a country for at least five years automatically have a permanent right to reside”.
- **Agriculture, food and fisheries** receive a brief mention. The UK will be renegotiating its relationships for all three areas, with the implication being that will be outside of the Common Agricultural Area
- The **EU’s Digital Single Market** is mentioned (point 8.18; pg41); but it is unclear whether the UK will continue to seek to participate in the scheme
- In terms of **Customs**, the Government “will not seek to replicate another country’s model and will pursue the best possible deal for the UK”
- In terms of trade, the UK will seek an “international rules based system” to underpin “free trade and to ward off protectionism”
- The UK will be hosting a **Commonwealth Trade Ministers’ Meeting** in March 2017 ahead of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 2018
- The UK will continue to participate fully in EU security and criminal justice measures whilst we remain in the EU and will be looking for the “best deal” upon exit.
- The UK will leave the **Euratom Treaty** (which established the European Nuclear Committee).

Some relevant links, articles and coverage:

- **Parliament** has established a [Brexit: next steps for the UK's withdrawal webpage](#)
- The **Institute for Government** gives a good and clear overview of what we know about [Brexit and scientific funding](#) at present
- **The Conversation** has a [section dedicated to Brexit](#) and today's posts offer some good insight from the academic community
- There has been a lot of media coverage over the White Paper. **The Mirror** for example gave an [entertaining overview](#) of the White Paper and picks up on several key points.