The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee

Stephen Gethins
Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Energy
Scottish Government

11 November 2026

Dear Minister

Intergovernmental engagement ahead of the UK-EU summit

On 3 November 2026, the EEAC Committee considered the first of a new series of quarterly Devolution Oversight Monitoring Reports, which will inform its scrutiny of the operation of devolution throughout in Session 7.

As you know from the Committee's exchanges with you during the evidence session you attended on 1 September 2026, we are also following closely the plans for the upcoming UK-EU summit and, in particular, the implications that the outcomes of the summit and any subsequent legislation may have for devolved policies in Scotland, the UK's relations with Europe, and the powers and responsibilities of the Scottish Parliament.

In light of the above, the Committee agreed to write to both Governments to seek their assessments of the level of engagement that there has been between the UK and Scottish Governments, ahead of the UK-EU summit on 20 November.

The work of our predecessor Committee on the transparency of intergovernmental activity and its implications for parliamentary scrutiny pointed to the importance not only of improving transparency in relation to intergovernmental engagement through the formal structures set up by the 2022 Review of Intergovernmental Relations, but equally the importance of improving parliamentary scrutiny of intergovernmental activity taking place outside of the formal structures.

The Committee also notes the Scottish Government's priorities for the second UK-EU summit, published on 6 October, and the reference to what it calls the "core principles which must underpin the governance of the negotiation process"—

- consultation: Devolved Governments have the opportunity to comment formally on the UK negotiating mandates before they are agreed by the UK Cabinet
- transparency: the UK Government shares the emerging negotiating texts with the Devolved Governments at meaningful points in the negotiating process

- access: Devolved Government officials have appropriate ‘live’ access to the talks for relevant subject areas, whether ‘in the room’ or via some kind of ‘room next door’ model, using named policy leads for each area of negotiation

We also note the statement, in relation to a potential future role for the UK in decision-shaping of relevant EU rules, that—

“It is critical to ensure that those decision-shaping arrangements are secured, and are designed to include a clearly defined role for the Devolved Governments, in a way which fully respects devolved competence.”

We would therefore welcome a written response from you with your assessment of the frequency, content and effectiveness of engagement between the UK Government and the Scottish Government, in preparation for the UK-EU summit in November, including whether you consider that the “core principles” set out above are being met. We would also be interested to know whether the Scottish Government has received any response from the UK Government to the wider issues set out in its priorities for the UK-EU summit, including in relation to decision-shaping arrangements.

Yours sincerely,



Patrick Harvie MSP
Convener