The Scottish Parliament's Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations Committee has agreed to hold an inquiry to monitor and scrutinise the Article 50 withdrawal negotiations and their implications for Scotland.

The remit of the inquiry is to consider—

- the implications for Scotland and EU citizens in Scotland of the Article 50 withdrawal treaty;
- the process by which the UK position in relation to the Article 50 withdrawal negotiations are agreed and how Scotland’s interests are taken into account;
- the implications for Scotland of any discussions or agreement on the framework for the future relationship with the EU.

The objectives of the inquiry will be to—

- promote an understanding of the Article 50 negotiations and assess their implications for Scotland and EU citizens in Scotland;
- draw on evidence gathered in this inquiry and the Committee’s previous inquiry to make recommendations on how Scotland’s interests can best be represented;
- draw on evidence gathered in this inquiry and the Committee’s previous inquiry to scrutinise decisions taken in relation to the UK’s future relationship with the European Union and the impact of those decisions on Scotland; and
- to present the evidence gathered and the conclusions of the Committee.

Call for evidence on the Article 50 withdrawal process

Background

Article 50 negotiations on the withdrawal of the UK from the EU have now commenced. In advance of the negotiations being initiated, a series of documents were agreed by the EU institutions. The UK Government has also published documents setting out its position.

Following the Prime Minister’s Lancaster House speech on 17 January 2017, the UK Government published the White Paper The United Kingdom’s exit from and new partnership with the European Union on 2 February. On 29 March, the Prime Minister wrote to the President of the European Council – Donald Tusk – notifying of the UK’s intention to withdraw from the EU.

On 5 April, the European Parliament agreed a Resolution on Negotiations with the United Kingdom following its notification that it intends to withdraw from the European Union.

At the European Council meeting on 29 April, the EU27 leaders adopted guidelines for their negotiations with the UK. The European Commission, at its meeting of 3 May 2017, agreed a Recommendation for a Council Decision authorising the Commission to open negotiations on an agreement with the UK setting out the
arrangements for its withdrawal from the European Union. The annex provides detail on the objective, the nature and the scope of the negotiating directives.

The Article 50 negotiations, which EU27 sees as the first phase of the negotiations, will cover—

- the status and rights of the EU27 citizens and their families in the United Kingdom and of the citizens of the United Kingdom and their families in the EU27 Member;
- the financial settlement;
- issues relating to the Union’s continuing support to peace, stability and reconciliation on the island of Ireland and the land border between Ireland and the UK on the island of Ireland;
- measures to avoid a legal vacuum and, to the extent possible address uncertainties, in relation to goods placed on the market before the withdrawal date;
- Gibraltar and the Sovereign Base Areas of the UK in Cyprus;
- enforcement and dispute settlement mechanisms.
- a possible common approach towards third country partners, international organisations and conventions in relation to the international commitments contracted before the withdrawal date, by which the United Kingdom remains bound.

As soon as the European Council decides that sufficient progress has been achieved on the Article 50 negotiations, it will allow negotiations to proceed on the second phase: that of UK’s future relationship with the EU. Further negotiating guidelines and directives will have to be agreed by the EU27 in advance of those negotiations commencing.

The Inquiry into the implications of the Article 50 withdrawal negotiations for Scotland

The Scottish Parliament’s Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations Committee has agreed to hold an inquiry to monitor and scrutinise the Article 50 withdrawal negotiations and their implications for Scotland.

The aim of this call for evidence is to collect the views of stakeholders and individuals in Scotland on the implications of the negotiations for Scotland.

As the negotiations will take place over a period of time, the Committee has launched this call for evidence to seek views, in the first instance, on the European Commission’s working papers that set out its positions, and on the UK’s position as set out in its White Paper.

However, the Committee recognises that further documentation will be published by the EU institutions and the UK Government and therefore welcomes submissions on developments in the negotiations.
To date, the European Commission has published two initial working papers in advance of the Article 50 negotiations being initiated are—

- **Essential Principles on Financial Settlement**
- **Essential Principles on Citizens’ Rights**

Views are invited from organisations and individuals in Scotland on the implications of the proposals contained within the working papers and other key documents for individuals and organisations in Scotland.

**How to submit written evidence**

You may wish to respond on some or all of the issues outlined above, or to raise other issues that you consider to be of relevance to the Committee’s planned inquiry. Evidence should be reasonably brief and typewritten (preferably normally no more than 4-6 sides of A4 in total).

The initial **deadline for receipt of written submissions is 18 August 2017**, although the Committee will welcome further evidence that responds to developments relating to the Article 50 negotiations. Owing to the timescale normally required for the processing and analysis of evidence, late submissions will only be accepted with the advance agreement of the Clerk.

The Committee prefers to receive written submissions electronically and in a form accessible by MS Word. These should be sent to: **CTEER.inquiries@scottish.parliament.uk**

You may also send a hard copy of written submissions to:

European and External Relations Committee
Scottish Parliament
Holyrood
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

**Policy for Handling Written Evidence**

Before you submit your written evidence, please ensure that you have read our **policy on treatment of written evidence**. Written submissions will be handled in accordance with this policy.

We would also be grateful if, when using any tables or graphics in your submission, that you include a short paragraph explaining what the table/graphic shows. This helps readers with visual impairments.

**How to submit a video as evidence**

We welcome videos as a form of evidence. Please read our guidance before sending a video.

- **Guidance on producing a video as evidence (83KB pdf)**

**Contact**

For details about the Committee’s work on this inquiry please contact Katy Orr, Clerk to the Committee, tel 0131 348 5234 or **katy.orr@scottish.parliament.uk**.