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# BREXIT UPDATE

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**The Information Centre**  
An t-Ionad Fiosrachaidh

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## CONTEXT

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### Summary of recent developments

On 25 November 2018, EU leaders endorsed the [Withdrawal Agreement \(setting out legal arrangements for the UK's departure from the EU\) and a Political Declaration \(on the UK-EU future relationship\)](#) negotiated between the UK and the EU. Ratification of the Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration requires:

- approval by the UK Parliament
- approval by the European Parliament
- implementing legislation in the UK

On 15 January 2019, the House of Commons rejected a motion to approve the Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration by 202 votes to 432. The Prime Minister has subsequently attempted to re-negotiate the Northern Ireland backstop provisions in the Withdrawal Agreement.

The default legal position remains that the UK will exit the EU on 29 March 2019 whether there is a ratified Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration or not.

This *SPICe Brexit Update #81* provides an update on negotiations, no deal preparations and common frameworks.

## RE-NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE EU

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As covered in *Brexit Update #79*, on 29 January 2019 the Prime Minister (PM) committed to re-negotiating the Northern Ireland backstop provisions with the EU. This commitment followed the House of Commons's rejection of the Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration on 15 January.

As described in *Brexit Update #80*, the UK Government's re-negotiation efforts had not yielded concrete results ahead of a House of Commons vote on 14 February.

Since then, official level and ministerial level meetings between the UK and the EU have continued.

### Devolved consent for legislation to implement withdrawal

On 19 February, the Scottish Government's Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations, Michael Russell gave a [statement](#) to the Scottish Parliament. The Cabinet Secretary commented on the Commons vote that took place on 14 February and described the Scottish Government's no deal preparations (see No Deal Preparedness section below).

The Cabinet Secretary then announced that the Scottish Government would not recommend consent to the primary legislation intended to implement the Withdrawal Agreement if it was to be brought forward for approval before the 29 March 2019:

- ” the Prime Minister has now indicated that, in the event of an agreement being reached, she would intend to push through the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill, as well as a range of other Brexit-related legislation, before 29 March. That could mean passing laws of the profoundest importance, with consequences for all the devolution settlements, in a few days. That cannot and should not be done. If that bill is presented to this chamber for legislative consent, the Scottish Government will recommend that such consent be refused because of that impossible timetable and because the UK Government has moved not an inch on the issue of essential changes to the Sewel process.

### Progress of the re-negotiations

On 20 February, the PM and European Commission President, Jean-Claude Juncker met to “take stock” of the re-negotiation efforts to date.

According to [the statement](#) their discussions covered:

- ” which guarantees could be given with regard to the backstop that underlines once again its temporary nature and give the appropriate legal assurance to both sides.
- ” the role alternative arrangements could play in replacing the backstop in future
- ” whether additions or changes to the Political Declaration can be made that are consistent with the EU and UK Government positions and increase confidence in the focus and ambition of both sides in delivering the future partnership envisaged as soon as possible.

The statement also confirmed that negotiations would continue and that the President and the PM would “talk again before the end of the month”.

Other developments:

- On 19 January, the Withdrawal Agreement and the Political Declaration was published in the Official Journal of the European Union - the official gazette of record for the EU.
- On 21 January, [Michel Barnier met](#) with Stephen Barclay, Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union and Geoffrey Cox, Attorney General; and separately with Jeremy Corbyn, Leader of the Labour Party.

### Brexit at the EU-League of Arab States summit, Egypt

While Brexit was not on the [agenda for the first summit between the EU and Arab league \(24-25 February\)](#), the PM attended alongside other EU leaders and continued re-negotiation efforts.

On 25 February, in a [press statement at the summit](#), the PM said:

“Of course, I’ve also had the opportunity to discuss Brexit while I’ve been here. I held good meetings with President Tusk, Prime Minister Conte, Chancellor Merkel, Prime Minister Rutte, President Juncker and the Taoiseach. There is still more work to do, and my team will be in Brussels tomorrow working on the legally binding assurances that the UK Parliament needs in relation to the backstop. But what I have sensed in all of my conversations with my fellow leaders both here in Sharm el-Sheikh and in recent days is a real determination to find a way through which allows the UK to leave the EU in a smooth and orderly way with a deal.

On the same day, in [answer to press questions](#) on Brexit, Council President Donald Tusk said:

“I can first of all say that Prime Minister May and I discussed yesterday a lot of issues, including the legal and procedural context of a potential extension. For me it's absolutely clear that if there is no majority in the House of Commons to approve a deal. We will face an alternative: chaotic Brexit or extension. The less time there is until the 29th of March, the greater the likelihood of an extension and this is an objective fact, not our intention, not our plan, but an objective fact. I believe that in this situation we are in, an extension would be a rational solution, but Prime Minister May still believes that she is able to avoid this scenario. I can assure you, and I did it also yesterday in my meeting with Prime Minister May, that no matter in which scenario we will be, the 27 will show maximum understanding and goodwill.

### PM's statement to UK Parliament, 26 February

On 26 February, the PM provided a statement to the House of Commons and lodged an amendable motion for debate the following day.

This was in line with the commitment the PM made on 12 February to return to the Commons with a statement on 26 February and an amendable motion on 27 February,

if the UK Parliament had not agreed to the Withdrawal Agreement and a Political Declaration by those dates.

The PM provided an update on recent discussions in Brussels and Egypt and said:

“ As part of these discussions, the UK and EU have agreed to consider a joint workstream to develop alternative arrangements to ensure the absence of a hard border in Northern Ireland. This work will be done in parallel with the future relationship negotiations and is without prejudice to them. Our aim is to ensure that, even if the full future relationship is not in place by the end of the implementation period, the backstop is not needed because we have a set of alternative arrangements ready to go.

This mirrors the offer made by President Tusk and President Juncker to propose “provisional application of relevant parts of the future relationship”. This offer was made in the [exchange of letters with the UK Government on 14 January](#).

On changes to the backstop, the PM simply said:

“ I know what this House needs in order to support a withdrawal agreement. The EU knows what is needed, and I am working hard to deliver it.

The PM repeated a previously made commitment on post-Brexit standards in workers’ rights, environmental protections or health and safety to:

“legislate to give our commitments on both non-regression and future developments force in UK law”.

The PM then made a new announcement on the date of the second meaningful vote and the circumstances in which the UK Government would seek an extension to the Article 50 process:

“ First, we will hold a second meaningful vote by Tuesday 12 March at the latest.

Secondly, if the Government have not won a meaningful vote by Tuesday 12 March, then they will, in addition to their obligations to table a neutral, amendable motion under section 13 of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018, table a motion to be voted on by Wednesday 13 March, at the latest, asking this House if it supports leaving the EU without a withdrawal agreement and a framework for a future relationship on 29 March.

...Thirdly, if the House, having rejected leaving with the deal negotiated with the EU, then rejects leaving on 29 March without a withdrawal agreement and future framework, the Government will, on 14 March, bring forward a motion on whether Parliament wants to seek a short, limited extension to article 50, and, if the House votes for an extension, seek to agree that extension approved by the House with the EU and bring forward the necessary legislation to change the exit date commensurate with that extension.

On the length of any extension to the Article 50 process, the PM argued that

“...the House should be clear that a short extension—not beyond the end of June—would almost certainly have to be a one-off. If we had not taken part in the European Parliament elections, it would be extremely difficult to extend again, so it would create a much sharper cliff edge in a few months’ time. An extension cannot take no deal off the table. The only way to do that is to revoke article 50, which I shall not do, or to agree a deal.

On a proposal to reach a separate agreement on rights of EU citizens living in the UK in the event the whole of the Withdrawal Agreement cannot be ratified, the PM argued that:

“a separate agreement for citizens’ rights is something the EU has been clear it does not have the legal authority for. If it is not done in a withdrawal agreement, these issues become a matter for member states, unless the EU was to agree a new mandate to take that forward.

### Vote in the House of Commons, 27 February

The UK Government’s motion moved for debate on 14 February [read](#):

“That this House notes the Prime Minister’s statement on Leaving the European Union of 26 February 2019; and further notes that discussions between the UK and the EU are ongoing.

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, David Lidington [opened the debate](#).

Twelve amendments (and one amendment to an amendment) were lodged. The full text of all the amendments is available from the [Commons’ Order Paper](#). The amendments selected by the Speaker, and the outcome of the votes are below:

Amendment (a) Jeremy Corbyn	Defeated (Ayes: 240 Noes: 323)
Amendment (k) Ian Blackford	Defeated (Ayes: 288 Noes: 324)
Amendment (c) Dame Caroline Spelman	Not moved
Amendment (b) Alberto Costa	Agreed without division
Amendment (f) Yvette Cooper	Agreed (Ayes: 502 Noes: 20)

The agreed motion as amended read:

That this House notes the Prime Minister’s statement on Leaving the European Union of 26 February 2019; and further notes that discussions between the UK and the EU are ongoing; **and requires the Prime Minister to seek at the earliest opportunity a joint UK-EU commitment to adopt part two of the Withdrawal Agreement on Citizens’ Rights and ensure its implementation prior to the UK’s exiting the European Union, whatever the outcome of negotiations on other aspects of the Withdrawal Agreement;** and further notes in particular the commitment of the Prime Minister made in this House to hold a second meaningful vote by 12 March and if the House, having

rejected leaving with the deal negotiated with the EU, then rejects leaving on 29 March without a withdrawal agreement and future framework, the Government will, on 14 March, bring forward a motion on whether Parliament wants to seek a short limited extension to Article 50, and if the House votes for an extension, seek to agree that extension approved by the House with the EU, and bring forward the necessary legislation to change the exit date commensurate with that extension.

The text of Amendment (b) - Alberto Costa is marked in red. The text of Amendment (f) Yvette Cooper is marked in purple.

## Next steps

In her statement on 26 February, Prime Minister set out the UK Government's intentions for a three stage parliamentary process"

- 12 March - conduct a second "meaningful vote" seeking approval for the Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration. If the House of Commons votes in favour of approval this is the next stages will not happen.
- 13 March – if the House of Commons does not approve the Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration on 12 March, the UK Government will bring a vote asking the House of Commons if it supports leaving the EU without a deal on 29 March 2019. If the House of Commons supports this proposal the next stage will not happen.
- 14 March – if the House of Commons does not support leaving the EU without a deal, the UK Government will bring a vote on whether the House of Commons wants to seek a "short, limited extension to article 50, and, if the House votes for an extension, seek to agree that extension approved by the House with the EU and bring forward the necessary legislation to change the exit date commensurate with that extension".

The current default legal position remains that the UK will exit the EU on 29 March 2019 whether there is a ratified Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration or not.

If the re-negotiation does result in any mutually acceptable changes or clarifications, these may require European Council decisions. The next European Council is scheduled for 21-22 March – one week before exit day.

## MINISTERIAL FORUM (EU Negotiations)

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### Eighth meeting

The [eighth meeting of the Ministerial Forum \(EU Negotiations\)](#) was held in Cardiff on 25 February. Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans, Graeme Dey attended from the Scottish Government.

The brief [communiqué](#) states:

- “ The principal agenda items at the meeting were an update and discussion on the UK’s exit from the EU; a discussion on data issues, including the protection of personal data in the context of our future relationship with the EU; and a discussion on the role of the Ministerial Forum in the next phase of negotiations.

## NO-DEAL PREPARATIONS

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### Scottish Government preparations

On 19 February, the Scottish Government’s Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations, Michael Russell gave a [statement](#) to the Scottish Parliament.

The Cabinet Secretary provided an update on the Scottish Government’s preparations for no-deal and made the point that:

- “ even if the withdrawal agreement were approved by the UK and European Parliaments, it is entirely possible, even probable, that a no-deal exit will only have been postponed rather than avoided... it is impossible to say with any confidence that the terms of any future trade deal with the EU would be approved by MPs.

On no-deal preparations, the Cabinet Secretary said:

- “ The work of the Scottish Government’s resilience committee and the Scottish resilience partnership on planning, mitigation and preparing arrangements to respond to the risks and impacts of leaving the EU without a deal is continuing and intensifying, as the First Minister made clear last week after our special Cabinet meeting. The resilience committee met in Glasgow last week—its ninth session—prior to that Cabinet meeting, and it will meet again tomorrow.

I will be in London tomorrow, attending yet another UK Cabinet EU exit sub-committee, and I will seek firm answers to the many questions that we still have. For example, we do not yet know how much ferry capacity is available, on what routes it will exist or exactly what priority goods will be carried. Nor do we know what priority will be accorded to each category of goods, nor what arrangements will be made to service Scottish requirements including the particular challenges of rurality. We have also not yet heard whether export of foodstuffs can be

integrated with special arrangements for import, consolidating inbound and outbound capacity to maximise the benefits. There are many more matters on which we need clarity and on which we will continue to seek it, given that such clarity is essential for our preparations.

Leaving those difficulties aside, although we are working as closely as we can with the UK Government, we do not now believe that, even if there were a perfect information flow, there would be the time or the resource to ensure that absolutely everything required would be in the most effective place, in the most effective way, by the required dates. That is not a criticism of anyone who is working very hard on these matters north or south of the border; it is simply a fact, given the shortness of the time that is available and the size of the task to be undertaken.

The Cabinet Secretary announced that the Scottish Government would publish a paper on the likely economic costs and impact of a no-deal Brexit, describing these as:

- “ a significant and live risk that would lead to a major dislocation to the Scottish economy. The impact of any shock would likely vary across sectors as well as across regions according to their economic structure and, if prolonged, could lead to significant structural change in the economy. In addition, the uncertainty about Brexit is already impacting key economic indicators for Scotland, including consumer confidence and business investment.

The Cabinet Secretary then provided an update on various policy areas:

- “ Transport Scotland is working with providers and ports and airports in Scotland to assess existing capacity and to identify how that capacity could mitigate disruption to imports and exports. With regard to trade, although the UK Government is currently negotiating with 40-plus trading partners in an attempt to roll over existing EU third-country agreements, there is now no possibility that all or even a majority of those agreements will be in place. Access to some markets will therefore be considerably disrupted. Nonetheless, we are working to secure as consistent and wide-ranging a food supply as possible and to enable improved or new supply chains to get to every part of the country. We are trying to overcome barriers to the export of food and drink as well.

If free movement is curtailed, as seems very likely, that will have serious and immediate consequences for workers in health and social care, among other sectors. The Scottish Government is absolutely committed to doing all that it can to speak up for and support EU citizens who work in those roles and many others at this uncertain and anxious time. We passionately want relatives, friends, neighbours and colleagues from other EU countries to stay in Scotland. We have already committed £800,000 to Citizens Advice Scotland to provide advice and support to EU citizens in Scotland who are affected by changes in the immigration rules as a result of Brexit, and we will shortly intensify our information campaign to encourage EU nationals to stay.

In my statement earlier this month, I urged MSPs to reach out to small businesses in their constituencies and encourage them to seek the information that they need on Brexit. It remains of concern that so many small businesses, in particular, have not yet engaged in sufficient detailed planning and preparation. Undoubtedly, the

normalcy bias is well established in Scotland, but the UK Government is not functioning as a normal Government. It may well allow a no-deal exit to come about either by accident or by design, contrary to all norms of government. Accordingly, I strongly urge all businesses to seek out the information that we have provided through our Brexit webpages on [www.mygov.scot](http://www.mygov.scot) or the website for the prepare for Brexit campaign, which is a one-door online approach that is jointly delivered by Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Skills Development Scotland—and to do it now, whether or not they export.

The chief constable recently announced plans to put 360 officers on standby from mid-March to deal with any incidents that may arise across the country, such as disruption at ports. That is just one more example of an initiative that seeks to align existing financial and staff resources to the challenges that we face to ensure that we have the right people with the right skills in the right places to respond quickly and effectively.

We have made it clear that any cost related to EU exit should not have a detrimental impact on Scotland's public finances. Derek Mackay again raised that matter with the Chief Secretary to the Treasury when they met last week, although no satisfactory response was forthcoming. We are actively pursuing with the UK Government the issue of funding for the consequences of a no-deal outcome, along with a number of other matters. However, it is abundantly clear that Brexit is going to cost Scotland at every level of governance, in every business sector and in every part of the country far more than the existing consequentials.

On progress to “correct deficiencies” in the statute book that would arise in a no-deal Brexit, the Cabinet Secretary said:

“ I turn to the important matter of our legislative preparations. To date, only 30 of the 114 UK statutory instruments to which we have consented have completed their passage through the UK Parliament. I have made clear to the UK Government my concerns on that matter, and I have impressed on it the importance of ensuring that the deficiency fixes to which we have given our consent are delivered. We are still on track to have processed both parts of the programme—UK SI notifications and Scottish SIs—through the Scottish Parliament by the end of March, so our laws should be as ready as they can be for the shock of EU exit.

### Scottish Government economic analysis of no-deal Brexit

On 21 February, the Scottish Government's Chief Economist published an “illustration of the potential impact that a no deal Brexit... could have on the Scottish economy over the next 12 - 24 months.”

The report described impacts that a no deal Brexit *could* have on:

- trade disruption
- investment
- exchange rate
- inflation and interest rates

- migration
- labour market
- different sectors and regions

Describing the overall economic implications, the report says:

” Based on the response to the Scottish and UK economies to previous economic shocks, there is the potential for GDP to contract by between 2.5% - 7% by the end of 2019 depending on the way in which a No Deal Brexit outcome evolves.

Fraser of Allander Institute responded to this analysis with a blog on interpretation and modelling:

- [Will a 'no deal' Brexit wipe £11bn off Scotland's economy in under a year?](#) (21 February)

### UK Government preparations – business and trade

On 26 February, following discussions between Anna Soubry MP and David Lidington, the Minister for the Cabinet Office, the UK Government has [published its latest assessment](#) of the implications for business and international trade in the UK of a no-deal Brexit.

The note covers government activity and an assessment of “third party” preparedness – i.e. actions by businesses, individuals and other countries.

The note also describes the anticipated effects of a no deal scenario in the following areas:

- Economy
- Border issues, including inbound and outbound ‘roll on, roll off’ road traffic
- Tariffs
- Northern Ireland
- Service sectors
- Regulated, integrated and just-in-time industries
- Data flows
- Citizens

On impacts in Scotland and other devolved nations, the note states:

” The effects on Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are likely to be similar to those for the rest of the UK, as described above. In addition to issues arising specifically in Northern Ireland, and the economic impacts mentioned in paragraph 20, key examples of particular impact on Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland include:

- a) Impact on the UK's agriculture, forestry or fishing industries would have particular effects in Scotland. ONS figures demonstrate that these three industries account for 1.21% of Scotland's economy, compared to 0.46% of England's.
- b) Around 92% of Welsh lamb exports by value go to the EU. Consequently, disruption to animal exports would likely be felt strongly by the Welsh lamb industry.
- c) Impacts on the UK's food and drink sector would be more pronounced in Wales, Scotland, and particularly Northern Ireland, where the sector comprises 5.07% of the economy, compared to 1.38% for England.

Other developments and statements on trade in a no-deal scenario include:

- [Written statement](#) on the UK Government's trade continuity programme (21 February)
- [Guidance](#) on the trade agreements of which the UK participates as a member of the European Union and the status of those agreements that may not be in place by exit day (21 February)
- [List of trade and mutual recognition agreements the UK has signed](#) with non-EU countries (21 February)
- House of Commons [debate on potential future free trade agreements](#): Australia, New Zealand, US and a comprehensive and progressive agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (21 February)
- UK Government [statement to the House of Commons on trade remedies](#) (25 February)

## UK Government preparations – citizen rights

When the UK leaves the EU, the rights for EEA citizens in the UK and UK citizens in EEA countries established by the EU Treaties and EEA Agreement will no longer apply. However, the Withdrawal Agreement contains provisions to continue many of the freedom of movement rights.

If there is no deal, the UK Government has [stated in December 2018](#) that EU citizens who can prove residency in the UK before 29 March 2019 would be able to apply for settled status, [albeit under terms which differ somewhat from those in the Withdrawal Agreement](#). UK Government policy is to seek reciprocal arrangements for UK citizens in other Member States.

In line with this policy, on 8 February, the [UK and EEA EFTA states agreed arrangements on no deal citizen rights](#). No equivalent agreement exists between the UK and the EU, although the EU has also published its own [no deal proposals on citizens' rights in the event of a no deal](#). On 27 February, an amendment in the name of Alberto Costa was passed (see above) which calls on the UK and EU to implement the citizens' rights part of the withdrawal agreement at "the earliest opportunity" regardless of the outcome of negotiations.

Irish citizens living in the UK and UK citizens in the Republic of Ireland hold additional travel, residency and employment rights. UK Government [guidance on rights under the Common Travel Area](#) arrangements was published on 22 February.

## UK Government preparations – medicines

On 25 February, the UK Government's Minister for Health, Stephen Hammond made a [written statement](#) to the UK Parliament on medicines and medical products in a no-deal scenario.

Health is a devolved policy area, however he confirmed that:

“ My Department [for Health and Social Care] has overall responsibility on behalf of the Devolved Administrations for ensuring the continuity of supply of medicines, and they have opted to utilise our contingency arrangements so we can work together to ensure the supply of medical devices and clinical consumables. Therefore, all supply arrangements take into account the whole of the UK, reflecting the engagement and co-operation of our colleagues in the DAs.

The statement goes to detail actions taken, summarising the situation as follows:

“ A combination of securing freight, buffer stocks, stockpiling and warehousing, and regulatory requirements, will be needed to help ensure the continuation of medicines and medical supplies in the event of a no-deal exit. Local stockpiling is unnecessary and could cause shortages in other areas, which could put patient care at risk.

## COMMON FRAMEWORKS

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### Finance and Constitution Committee evidence, 27 February

On 27 February, the Finance and Constitution Committee [took evidence](#) from the Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations, Michael Russell on UK Common Frameworks.

By way of an update on discussions the Cabinet Secretary said:

“ Discussions on frameworks have been conducted at official level, overseen by the joint ministerial committee on EU negotiations... Initial framework outlines in six areas were considered by the JMC(EN) in October 2018... fisheries; animal health and welfare; nutrition; hazardous substance planning; food and feed safety and hygiene; and public sector procurement... That work is being taken forward by agreement and is without prejudice to the views of ministers.

... Officials are now turning their attention to the frameworks in the non-legislative category. Work continues on the cross-cutting issues that are required to be worked through in order for frameworks to be finalised in the areas of domestic governance, international obligations, trade, the internal market and, where appropriate, future funding. We are committed to continuing to work

collaboratively on developing those frameworks in specific areas, but, of course, we remain resolutely opposed to section 12 of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018, and we will not discuss a framework if a restriction is imposed on devolved powers.

On the timescales, the Cabinet Secretary said:

- It was never the intention that frameworks would be in place by exit day, and, although there is a connection with the necessity for various pieces of legislation to be in place for exit day, that is only a connection and not an absolute link. Frameworks remain discrete longer-term arrangements that are to be put in place post-Brexit. They will be agreed only when there is clarity about the UK's final agreement, the future relationship with the EU and the situation in Northern Ireland. The progress on frameworks will therefore continue until the end of the implementation period, if that is December 2020—although, again, that is absolutely up for grabs.

Given this timescale, the Cabinet Secretary was asked about a no deal scenario:

- The Convenor:

...if we leave with no deal and no common framework in place on 29 March, how can that internal market operate successfully?

Michael Russell:

That is an excellent question. I have no answer to it and nor does the UK Government. We have not seen statutory instruments that would give us the answer to that or to lots of other things. For example, we have not seen statutory instruments on possible tariffs after 29 March. Presumably, we would be in a position in which the UK Government would attempt to impose. I hope that that would not be the case, because we would not co-operate.

## About this publication

This regular paper produced by SPICe sets out developments in the UK's negotiations to leave the European Union, the process for which formally begun following the Prime Minister's triggering of Article 50 on 29 March 2017.

The updates provide information on the UK Government's approach to leaving the EU including the domestic legislation necessary to ensure a smooth transition in terms of the UK statute book, along with details of the positions of the Scottish Government and the other Devolved Administrations. The updates also provide information on developments within the EU with regard to the UK's departure. Finally, the updates will provide information on the key issues likely to be at play during the negotiations and in developing the UK's future relationship with the European Union.

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