

News story: Funding from EU programmes guaranteed until the end of 2020

Businesses, universities and local organisations were assured today (24 July 2018) that any funding they secure through EU programmes, from now until the end of 2020, will be guaranteed by the UK government even in a no deal scenario.

The implementation period agreed in March would see the UK continue to participate in all EU programmes until the end of 2020 – providing certainty for British organisations and their European counterparts.

The guarantee announced today (24 July 2018) will reflect this by underwriting the UK's full allocation for structural and investment fund projects, such as funding secured through the European Regional Development Fund, until the end of 2020.

In addition, the Treasury will also guarantee funding for UK organisations which successfully bid directly to the European Commission – through projects like Horizon 2020 – until the end of this EU budget period if no deal is agreed.

This will give potential applicants continued confidence to bid for funding whatever the outcome of the negotiations, and ensure that UK organisations continue to benefit from funding post-Exit.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond said:

We continue to make positive steps towards getting the best possible deal with the EU – one that works for the whole of the UK. The guarantee we are making today however means that, even in the unlikely event of a no-deal, our businesses, universities and local authorities can be confident that they will continue to receive the funding they successfully bid for from any EU programme.

In 2016 the government [committed to protect projects that were successful in securing EU funding before exit day](#). This new guarantee means that successful bids for EU funding until the end of 2020 will receive their full financial allocation and will continue to receive funding over a project's lifetime.

Statement to Parliament: SoS, Dominic Raab statement on the White Paper on Legislating for the Withdrawal Agreement between the UK and the EU

With permission Mr Speaker, I would like to make a statement on the White Paper which has been published today, setting out the Government's plans for legislating for the Withdrawal Agreement and the implementation period.

On Friday the 29th of March 2019, the UK will leave the European Union, giving effect to the historic decision taken by the British people in the 2016 referendum.

This Government is committed to delivering a smooth and orderly Brexit.

That's why we've already passed the EU (Withdrawal) Act through Parliament, so we are ensuring our statute book functions after... exit, whatever the outcome of the negotiations.

I am grateful to the House, and the other place, for the many hours of scrutiny devoted to that vital piece of legislation.

We are now embarking on the next step in the process of delivering that smooth Brexit for the people and businesses of this country.

Mr Speaker, since June last year, the UK has been negotiating with the EU to decide on the terms of our withdrawal.

We have made substantial progress: protecting the rights of EU citizens in the UK and UK citizens in the EU, deciding on the terms of the financial settlement, agreeing a strictly time-limited implementation period.

Most of the Withdrawal Agreement, according to the EU side, around 80%, has now been agreed with our EU partners, and we have isolated outstanding issues for further focused negotiation.

I will be meeting Michel Barnier again on Thursday, to take forward these negotiations at this critical time.

We have already agreed a financial settlement, estimated at between £35-39 billion, well below the figures being bandied around by some when we started this negotiation.

The implementation period is finite, it allows for the negotiation and conclusion of free trade deals.

Many of these arrangements will require new domestic legislation to deliver them into UK law.

And that is why, last November, we announced our intention to bring forward a new piece of primary legislation to implement the Withdrawal Agreement in UK law.

So today, we are publishing a White Paper setting out our proposals for this important legislation, which will be introduced once the negotiations have concluded and Parliament has approved the final deal.

Our expectation is to reach agreement in October.

And under the terms of the EU (Withdrawal) Act, Parliament will have its say on the final deal.

Our expectation is, if approved at that point, we will we bring forward the legislation so that it can be in place for when we leave the EU on the 29th of March 2019.

So in setting out our proposals today, we are giving Parliament the opportunity to scrutinise the plans well ahead of the Bill's introduction, given the need to enact the legislation in the time available, mindful of the importance of maximum scrutiny in this House.

By publishing the White Paper today, the Government is providing further certainty to people and businesses here in the UK and indeed across the EU.

And it also sends a clear signal to the European Union that the United Kingdom is a reliable dependable, negotiating partner, delivering on the commitments it has made across the negotiating table.

Of course, while we are making good progress, discussions are ongoing in various areas.

And that means that some parts of the Bill will only become clearer as we settle the remaining parts of the Withdrawal Agreement.

In light of that, the White Paper we published today focuses on those parts of the Withdrawal Agreement where the text is already agreed.

Let me take them in turn.

Mr Speaker, the first priority of the UK in negotiating our withdrawal from the EU was to reach agreement on the rights of our citizens.

That includes the 3.5 million EU citizens that live in the UK and are valued members of their communities and play an integral part in the life of this country.

Likewise, the approximately one million UK nationals who currently live in the EU are equally valued by their host countries and communities.

The agreement reached on citizens' rights will allow EU citizens in the UK and UK nationals in the EU to live their lives broadly as they do now and will enable families who have built their lives in the EU and UK to stay together.

The most important next step will be to provide a continued right of residence for those citizens.

EU citizens lawfully residing in the UK on the 31st of December 2020 will be able to stay.

And this month, the Home Office published further details about how EU citizens and their families can obtain settled status in the UK.

And that statement confirms that the Settlement Scheme will be simple and straightforward for EU citizens and their families to secure their long-term status in this country.

The Bill will ensure EU citizens can rely on the rights set out in the Withdrawal Agreement, and enforce them in UK courts.

It will also establish an independent monitoring authority to oversee the UK's implementation of the deal on citizens' rights, providing further reassurance to citizens.

Mr Speaker, all EU Member States must implement the Agreement in full and provide certainty to UK nationals on the continent.

And, as the Home Secretary recently stated, we now need to know more of the details on how each Member State will fulfil their obligations and implement their side of the agreement.

And we will be pressing further on those details over the summer.

The next chapter of the paper deals with the strictly time-limited implementation period that the UK agreed with the EU in March.

The UK will leave the EU on the 29th of March 2019.

After this, we have agreed an implementation period that will ensure that people and businesses will only have to plan for one set of changes as we move towards our future relationship.

From the 30th of March 2019 until the 31st of December 2020 common rules will remain in place, with EU law continuing to apply, and businesses will be able to trade on the same terms as they do now.

During this period we will not be a Member State, and will have the flexibility we need to strike new trade deals around the world, something many argued we would not be able to achieve in the negotiations.

In order to legislate for the implementation period, we must ensure that the statute book, the UK statute book, continues to reflect the relevant EU law, as it applies to the UK during this time-limited period.

As the House will know, the current mechanism for bringing EU law into UK law is the European Communities Act 1972. Under the EU (Withdrawal) Act, that will be repealed on the 29th of March 2019.

Therefore, as set out in the White Paper, the EU (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill will contain a time-limited provision so that parts of the ECA are saved until the 31st of December 2020.

These changes will ensure that our statute book functions properly throughout the implementation period, according with the agreement we have made with the EU.

Turning to the financial settlement, the structure of that was agreed in December on the basis that it would sit alongside our future partnership.

And as we have said from the start, nothing is agreed until everything is agreed. That is in keeping with Article 50. It is in keeping with the guidelines that have been given to the EU for the negotiation.

We will have a Framework for our Future Relationship with the EU, alongside the Withdrawal Agreement.

And our approach to that future partnership is set out in our White Paper published earlier this month.

There must be a firm commitment in the Withdrawal Agreement requiring the framework for the future relationship to be translated into legal text as soon as possible.

It is one part of the whole deal we are doing with our EU partners.

And of course, if one party fails to honour its side of the overall bargain, there will be consequences for the deal as a whole, and that includes the financial settlement.

In addition, we have agreed an obligation for both parties to act in good faith through the application of the Withdrawal Agreement.

And the White Paper published today explains that the EU (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill will include a standing service provision to allow the Government to meet the commitments of the financial settlement.

In the interests of transparency and oversight, it also includes proposals to enhance the existing scrutiny for the payments made to the EU.

Mr Speaker, this White Paper sets out our approach to delivering the Withdrawal Agreement and implementation period into law.

I look forward to discussing all of the proposals with Honourable Members across the House.

It is a necessary part of leaving the European Union and ensuring a smooth and orderly departure.

It provides the clarity and certainty to EU citizens living here and UK nationals abroad that their rights will be properly protected.

It will enact the time-limited implementation period, giving businesses greater certainty, giving the public finality with respect to our relationship with the EU.

And it provides for the appropriate means for paying of the financial settlement.

Above all, with 80% of the Withdrawal Agreement settled with our EU friends the White Paper is another key milestone on the UK's path to leaving the EU.

And I commend this statement to the House.

News story: Defence Minister outlines progress on building a Better Defence Estate

In a statement to MPs, Mr Ellwood confirmed that the MOD has already disposed of nine sites and has advanced its plans for the release of other sites which have been identified for sale.

The changes under the Better Defence Estates Strategy, announced in 2016, are the most significant since the end of the Second World War and will see the sale of 91 sites owned or managed by the MOD.

The site sales will release land no longer required by the military, which will be able to be used for more economically beneficial purposes, such as house building.

The plans will save the taxpayer around £140 million by the end of the decade, rising to £3 billion by the end of 2040. The changes will also reduce the number of personnel being regularly moved between different bases, providing greater long-term stability and certainty for our Armed Forces and their families.

All money raised will be reinvested back into defence, with £4 billion committed to improving military bases, including accommodation.

Mr Ellwood also announced that the RAF will stop using RAF Linton-on-Ouse in North Yorkshire by 2020 and RAF Scampton in Lincolnshire by 2022.

RAF Scampton is the current home of the Red Arrows and work is underway to find them a new home fit for purpose. The MOD will work closely with the local council and potential buyers to ensure the site's future use meets the needs of the local economy, whilst also exploring ways in which the heritage of the site, including a museum, can be preserved.

Despite RAF Scampton's closure, the RAF presence in Lincolnshire continues to grow. There will be significant investment in the Lincolnshire area, with several hundred service personnel arriving at RAF Cranwell, RAF Waddington and RAF Coningsby over the next five years.

RAF Linton-on-Ouse, the main base for the No.1 Flying Training School, will cease being an RAF Station in 2020 and the MOD is currently considering other potential defence uses, ahead of an eventual disposal of the site.

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Tobias Ellwood said:

Our military bases are where our service personnel live, train and work, so it's important that we have sites which suit the needs of the armed forces.

That's why we're making our defence estate more modern and efficient, by closing sites we don't need and investing in more modern accommodation. As well as saving money, and allowing reinvestment back into a more modern and better defence estate, the changes will provide greater long-term stability and certainty for our Armed Forces and their families.

Key facts

- The Better Defence Estates strategy is part of the Defence Estate Optimisation Programme, which will reduce the size of the built estate by 30 per cent by 2040 and will meet our SDSR commitment. See the strategy [here](#)

The programme has already delivered nine disposals at:

- Hullavington Airfield
- Chalgrove Airfield
- Somerset Barracks
- MOD facilities at Swansea Airport
- Moat House
- Rylston Road ARC (London)
- Newtonards Airfield
- Copthorne Barracks
- Lodge Hill
- The plans will deliver savings of over £140 million of running costs over the next 10 years, rising to nearly £3 billion by 2040. This is in addition to the £4 billion which will be spent over the next 10 years.
- As at 1 April 2016, the MOD currently controls around 2% of UK land, owning more than 568,000 acres of land and foreshore in the UK (either freehold or leasehold) and holding the rights over a further 548,573

acres.

- The estate includes approximately 50,000 houses, 60,000 technical assets such as hangars or workshops and 20,000 other key assets such as runways and electrical networks.
 - The cost of maintaining this estate is significant, approximately £2.5bn per annum and spread across too many inefficient assets and sites.
 - Approximately 40 per cent of our built assets are over 50 years old and do not meet the needs of a modern fighting force.
 - The size of the built estate has reduced by 9 per cent since 1999/00 compared to a total personnel reduction of 36 per cent.
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Press release: Government proposes shake-up of Local Enterprise Partnerships

New proposals for Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to supercharge economic growth and drive forward investment in local businesses across the country have been put forward by ministers today (24 July 2018).

The publication of the '[Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships](#)' review sees government delivering on its promise in the [Industrial Strategy white paper](#) to bring forward reforms to the leadership, governance and accountability of the 38 LEPs charged with kick-starting economic growth and creating jobs in their regions.

The review proposes a number of changes to boost the performance of LEPs, increase their diversity and ensure they're operating in an open and transparent way. These include:

- up to £20 million of additional funding between 2018 to 2019 and 2019 to 2020 to support the implementation of these changes and embed evidence in Local Industrial Strategies
- supporting LEPs to consult widely and transparently on appointing new Chairs and improve board diversity
- a requirement for women to make up at least one third of LEP boards by 2020 with the expectation of equal representation by 2023
- a mandate for LEPs to submit proposals for revised geographies including removing situations in which 2 LEP geographies overlap

The Communities Secretary, Rt. Hon James Brokenshire MP, said:

This publication of the Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships policy represents a step change in approach for LEPs. We will continue our work to strengthen these leading institutions to develop ambitious strategies for growth and build an economy which is fit for the future.

Local Growth Minister, Jake Berry MP, said:

We've committed over £9 billion to help LEPs through 3 rounds of Growth Deals to deliver on their investment priorities, while creating new and exciting economic opportunities for local businesses and communities across the country.

This landmark shake-up of our local enterprise partnerships will help us deliver on our pledge to deliver over £12 billion through the Local Growth Fund by 2021 while allowing LEPs to use their local knowledge to deliver inclusive growth.

Further information

Local Growth Fund

Local Enterprise Partnerships are playing a vital role in driving forward economic growth across the country, helping to build a country that works for everyone.

By 2021, government will have invested over £12 billion through the Local Growth Fund, allowing LEPs to use their local knowledge to get all areas of the country firing on all cylinders.

Analysis has shown that every £1 of Local Growth Fund invested could generate £4.81 in benefits.

The full [‘Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships’ report](#) can be accessed on GOV.UK

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Policy paper: Progress towards the sustainability of the building stock in England: sixth Parliamentary report

Section 6 of the [Sustainable and Secure Buildings Act 2004](#) requires a biennial report on the sustainability of the building stock in England.

This current report covers progress between November 2014 and November 2016 (unless otherwise stated) in relation to:

- furthering the conservation of fuel and power
- preventing waste, undue consumption, misuse or contamination of water
- furthering the protection or enhancement of the environment
- facilitating sustainable development