

Brexit can still be overturned – this is your chance

The President of the European Parliament has said Britain would be welcomed back with open arms if voters changed their minds about Brexit on 8 June.

This directly contradicts Theresa May's claim that 'there is no turning back' after Article 50.

Liberal Democrat Leader Tim Farron said: "This shows it's not too late to prevent a divisive, hard Brexit.

"On 8th June, together we can change the direction of this country.

"The Liberal Democrats will be the real voice of opposition to this Conservative Brexit government."

News story: Statement on the Sky / Fox merger media public interest consideration process

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Karen Bradley, today confirmed that, following discussion with the parties, Ofcom, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and the Propriety and Ethics Team in the Cabinet Office, she has written to the CMA and Ofcom extending the period within which they must report to her on the proposed merger.

As has been the case throughout this process, the Secretary of State has kept Parliament informed on progress of the proposed merger and intends to table a Written Ministerial Statement early next week on this issue. In the meantime, she has written to the speakers and leaders of both the House of Commons and House of Lords, the chair of the commons select committee (CMS), and the shadow culture secretary – these letters have been laid in the parliament library and are public.

Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Karen Bradley, said:

On Thursday 16 March I intervened in the proposed acquisition of Sky by 21 Century Fox on the media public interest grounds of media plurality and commitment to broadcasting standards by issuing a European Intervention Notice (EIN).

The EIN triggered the requirement for Ofcom to assess and report to me on the public interest grounds specified and for the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) to report to me on jurisdiction. I required Ofcom and the CMA to provide their reports to me in response to the EIN by Tuesday 16 May. Once these reports are received, my decision-making role in this process would resume.

Given the proximity of this decision to the forthcoming general election and following discussions with the parties, Ofcom, the CMA and the Cabinet Office Propriety and Ethics team, I wrote to Ofcom and the CMA on Friday 21 April to extend the period by which these reports should be submitted to Tuesday 20 June.

Notes to editors

1. Sky Plc announced on Friday 9 December that it had received an approach from 21 Century Fox (21CF) to acquire the 61% share of Sky Plc which it does not already own.
2. The Secretary of State confirmed, in a statement to both Houses of Parliament on 16 March that she had issued a European Intervention Notice (EIN) on the media public interest grounds of media plurality and commitment to broadcasting standards.
3. The original EIN required Ofcom and the CMA to provide reports to the Secretary of State by Tuesday 16 May. The revised deadline is Tuesday 20 June and is expected to fall after the State Opening of Parliament
4. The General Election was called on Tuesday 18 April and will take place on Thursday 8 June. The purdah period begins at midnight on Friday 20 April.
5. For further information please contact the DCMS press office on 0207 2112210

Press release: Government confirms funding for EU students for 2018 to 2019

The government has today (21 April 2017) confirmed that EU students will continue to remain eligible for undergraduate, master's, postgraduate and advanced learner financial support in academic year 2018 to 2019.

The decision means EU students applying for an undergraduate or master's course at an English university or further education institution in the 2018 to 2019 academic year will continue to have access to student loans and grants, even if the course concludes after the UK's exit from the EU.

EU students are eligible for home fee status, which means they are charged the same tuition fees as UK students. Other non-EU, international students do not have their tuition fees capped in this way.

EU nationals will also remain eligible to apply for Research Council PhD studentships at UK institutions for 2018 to 2019 to help cover costs for the duration of their study.

Universities and Science Minister Jo Johnson said:

We have been clear about our commitment to the UK's world-class higher education sector. Through our modern industrial strategy and the additional £4.7 billion committed for research and innovation over the next 5 years, we are ensuring the UK has the skills and environment it needs to continue leading the way in academia and research.

A key part of our success is attracting talent from across the globe. This will provide reassurance to the brightest minds from across Europe to continue applying to study in the UK, safe in the knowledge financial assistance is available if needed.

1. Student loans and grants: funding rules for EU nationals, or their family members, who are applying for a place at university from August 2018 to study a course that attracts student support will remain unchanged.
2. Under current student finance rules, EU students are eligible to receive undergraduate tuition fee loans and master's loans if they have resided in the European Economic Area for at least 3 years prior to study. EU nationals who have resided in the UK for over 5 years are also able to apply for undergraduate maintenance support.
3. Research Council studentships: EU nationals are eligible for a fees-only award. EU nationals who have been resident in the UK for 3 years prior to the studentship may be eligible for both a fees award and a stipend to help cover the cost of their training.
4. The migration status of EU nationals in the UK is being discussed as part of wider discussions with the EU. The Prime Minister was clear in her letter to the President of the European Council that that we should seek an early agreement on the rights of UK nationals in the EU and EU nationals in the UK, on a reciprocal basis.

[News story: Cefshot DC 250mg](#)

Intramammary Suspension for Cattle – Product defect recall alert

Product defect recall alert for Cefshot DC 250mg Intramammary Suspension for Cattle by Zoetis UK Ltd.

We wish to make wholesalers and veterinary surgeons aware that Zoetis UK Ltd has issued a recall of Cefshot DC 250mg Intramammary Suspension for Cattle (Vm 42058/4183).

Zoetis UK Ltd has identified that there is a small possibility that some syringes from the batches listed below, have not been correctly sterilised. As such, these batches are being recalled from the market with immediate effect to the veterinary practice level.

This issue impacts on the following batches that have been placed on the UK market; details of which are provided in the table below.

Batch Number	Pack Size	Expiry Date	Vm No.
ABE031A	Bucket of 120 syringes	April 2019	42058/4183
ABE031A	Box of 24 syringes	April 2019	42058/4183
ALS018A	Bucket of 120 syringes	July 2019	42058/4183
ALS018A	Box of 24 syringes	July 2019	42058/4183

Zoetis UK Ltd is contacting wholesale dealers and veterinary surgeons to arrange return of affected batches.

If you have any queries in relation to the recall, or wish to report a suspected adverse reaction, contact Zoetis Technical Services on 0845 300 8034, option 1.

News story: Scottish shipyards begin building Royal Navy's latest patrol ship

Tony Douglas, Chief Executive Officer for Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S), the UK's Defence procurement organisation, pressed the button to cut the first sheet of steel for the HMS Spey at BAE Systems' Govan shipyard on the Clyde today.

Like her four sister ships HMS Forth, HMS Medway, HMS Trent and HMS Tamar, which are all either under construction or preparing for sea trials, HMS Spey will be built at Govan before she is transferred to the Scotstoun yard, where she will be fitted out for operations.

Work to build HMS Spey and the rest of the OPV fleet is sustaining 800 jobs and the vital skills needed to build the fleet of next-generation Type 26 Frigates, which will begin construction at Govan in the summer.

Minister for Defence Procurement, Harriett Baldwin, said:

The start of work on HMS Spey, the fifth Offshore Patrol Vessel, is another milestone in a significant programme of work which is sustaining hundreds of jobs in Scotland and the vital shipbuilding skills needed to build the Royal Navy's new Type 26 Frigates.

The on-going successful delivery of these ships is a key element of the Government's ten-year, £178 billion equipment plan to provide the UK's armed forces with the kit they deserve.

HMS Spey, which will be 90 metres long and displace around 2,000 tonnes, is one of two ships being built under a £287 million agreement signed between the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and BAE Systems in December 2016. She is due to be delivered to the Royal Navy in 2019 and enter service by 2021.

She is expected to carry a 30mm cannon and a flight deck capable of receiving a Merlin helicopter, in support of counter-terrorism, anti-piracy, anti-smuggling and maritime defence operations.

DE&S CEO Tony Douglas said:

The team at Defence Equipment and Support has driven the successful delivery of the OPV programme; today's steel cut is a proud moment not only for us, but for the Royal Navy and our industry partners too.

I am looking forward to continuing this long-standing and close relationship when we begin manufacturing for the Type 26 fleet later in the summer.

Batch 2 Offshore Patrol Vessels have a maximum speed of 24 knots and can sail 5,500 nautical miles before having to resupply.