Freedom of Information request: UKRI2018/0097

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request submitted on the 27th July 2018 in which you requested the following:

Your Request:

Please could you release any documents/reports/risk assessments/risk registers on the impact of Brexit on any of URI’s component research councils (STFC, AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC) produced since the 23rd June 2016?

Our response:

I can confirm that information relevant to your request has been identified. Some of the material provided by the Councils was considered out of scope as they did not meet the criteria of your request. Other material is deemed to be of a sensitive or business critical nature and is therefore exempted under Section 36 (Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs), and specifically 36 (2) (c) would otherwise prejudice, or would be likely otherwise to prejudice, the effective conduct of public affairs.

Application of section 36 exemption requires confirmation from the 'Qualified Person' that in their reasonable opinion the prejudice would occur if the information is disclosed. For the purposes of UK Research and Innovation the appointed Qualified Person is Sir Mark Walport (CEO), and he has confirmed that, in his opinion, the prejudice may occur and that the material should be exempt.

Section 36 is also a qualified exemption and requires the application of a Public Interest Test (PIT). I can confirm that UK Research and Innovation has conducted a PIT in respect of this information:

Public Interest Test:

Factors in favour of releasing the information are:
• Disclosure of information held by a public authority on request is of value and in the public interest to promote transparency and accountability in relation to the activities of public authorities.

• The quality of advice and the content of deliberations by officials may improve if there was an expectation of the information being made publicly available.

• There is a clear public interest in demonstrating that the work of the public authority is effective in contributing to the development of policy at both an authority and a government level.

Factors against releasing the information are:

• There is a public interest in UKRI being able to have free and frank deliberations regarding their work to ensure that effective operational arrangements are in place.

• Disclosure would impact on the ability to debate live issues and reach decisions free from external interference and distraction – particularly in an area where the dynamics of the issue can change at short notice.

• Public release of information restricts the ability to test implications of policy decisions and undertake without prejudice rigorous and candid assessments

Overall UK Research and Innovation believes that the public interest is best served by the maintaining this exemption.

Documents falling within the scope of your request that can be released are as follows:

1) Extract from Council meeting papers April 2018 (ESRC)
2) Extract from Capability Committee papers November 2016 (ESRC)
3) Extract from the minutes of Capability Committees meeting November 2016 (ESRC)
4) Extract from Research Committee papers June 2016 (ESRC)
5) Extract from the minutes of Research Committee meeting June 2016 (ESRC)
6) Extract from the minutes from Research Committee meeting November 2016 (ESRC)
7) Extract from Council meeting papers July 2016 (ESRC)
8) Summary of Brexit consultations and link to published reports (MRC)
9) Briefing note for staff member visiting China (STFC)
10) Post referendum staff Q&A (STFC)

11) Extract from the minutes of Bioscience for Health Strategy Advisory Panel April 2018 (BBSRC)

Copies of these documents are attached.

Please note that some documents contain redactions where a Section 40 (Personal Data) exemption applies and where the individuals concerned would have no expectation that their details would be placed in the public domain.

Other redactions, particularly in the ESRC documents are made where material in not within the scope of the request.

The ESRC documents are internal documents from Council and Committees discussing ESRC’s funding priorities as part of the overall research strategy, which ultimately informs the wider social science base. These documents are not reflective of ESRC’s position. A link to one of ESRC’s key investments, UK in a Changing Europe, who promote rigorous, high quality and independent research into the relationship between the UK and the European Union is provided below in case it is of interest.

http://ukandeu.ac.uk/

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request you have the right to ask for an internal review. Requests for internal review should be submitted within 20 working days of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to:

Complaints Officer
UK Research and Innovation
Polaris House
North Star Avenue
Swindon
SN2 1FL
Email: foi@ukri.org

Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are still not content with the outcome of the internal review, you may apply the matter to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Further information about the Office of the Information Commissioner can be found at http://www.ico.gov.uk/

Yours sincerely

Information Governance Manager
UK Research and Innovation,
Information Governance Team
Annex I: ESRC Vision and Priorities

REDACTED

Research and Innovation Priorities 2019-20

REDACTED

REDACTED. The roll out of Brexit related programmes and also a new initiative on Trust and Global Governance will see the Political Transformations theme expand. However, given the dynamic and unfolding nature of Brexit and the uncertainty of its implications over the mid and longer, this may continue to be an investment priority for Council.

Broad areas of relative weakness or emerging gaps include: Digital Society and a lack of any strategic presence in the Education, Learning and Skills theme. Current future investment will do little to significantly bolster the Crime and Justice theme. The social transformations theme will also start to decline as core funding around demographic change reduces. Cross cutting themes like public services and transport have been absent from the portfolio for some time.

REDACTED
With this evidence in mind, we have looked to identify a possible set of priorities for 2018-19. We of course recognise that that this is inevitably a subset of the much broader evidence base, which we will curate and re-consider in future priority setting exercises.

We have created four ‘pillars’ under which we envisage a number of discrete but loosely connected initiatives could rest. The pillars we propose are:

i. Productivity and Growth
ii. REDACTED
iii. Next Generation Public Services
iv. UK in a Changing World

1: Productivity and Growth

With rates of productivity well below those of peer nations, stimulating productivity is arguably the biggest driver of current UK economic and industrial policy. Regional inequalities and the changing economic and political context of Brexit are also important considerations for sustainable growth. REDACTED

3: The Future of Public Services

REDACTED - the changing political and demographic context of provision (‘austerity’, ageing population, withdrawal of state provision, devolution, Brexit) and the potential changes on the horizon with developments in AI and automation, investment in public services has significant potential for impact on the design and delivery of future public services. Advances in ‘big data’ methods also provide opportunities to bring new perspectives to bear.

REDACTED

3: The Future of Public Services

REDACTED - the changing political and demographic context of provision (‘austerity’, ageing population, withdrawal of state provision, devolution, Brexit) and the potential changes on the horizon with developments in AI and automation, investment in public services has significant potential for impact on the design and delivery of future public services. Advances in ‘big data’ methods also provide opportunities to bring new perspectives to bear.

REDACTED
4: UK in a Changing World

In an interconnected world few societal challenges are either distinct to, or unconnected from, wider global socio-economic, environmental and technological changes. In the context of the changing political context globally and the UK’s changing relationship with Europe (and consequently its relationships with other parts of the world), research that speaks to, and helps make sense of this evolving political and socio-economic context will be important across all areas of ESRC investment.

REDACTED
OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE

Number       CAP 34/16
Purpose      Information
Author       REDACTED
Meeting date 25 November 2016

WIDER IMPLICATIONS OF THE EU REFERENDUM

Purpose

1. The purpose of this item is to provide information on the potential implications of the outcome of the EU referendum for UK research and the RCUK position. The item will be based around a short powerpoint presentation.

Action sought

2. The Committee is invited to note the issues raised in the presentation.

RCUK position and potential impact of ‘Brexit’

3. In addition to the substantive social science research agenda, which is covered elsewhere on this agenda, there are of course some direct consequences for UK research of the recent referendum vote. These include access to research funding and participation in collaborative activities; the UK’s influence on strategy and priorities at the European level; and the ability to continue to attract leading researchers to the UK and to support non UK EU PhD students.

4. RCUK set out its initial position in response to the House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee Inquiry¹. Further data collection and analysis is now taking place looking in more detail at funding, staff numbers and PhD students as well as the implications for particular disciplines/fields of research.

Evidence and expertise

5. The referendum outcome provides UK social science with an opportunity both to inform the negotiation and policy-making process and also to provide evidence for those who are required to scrutinise the work of government and hold it to account e.g. Parliamentary select committees. We are facilitating these opportunities through a number of routes including an event led by the social science team in POST (the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology) to bring together researchers and parliamentary staff²[2].

6. Of course the referendum campaign also highlighted an issue that has been variously described as ‘expert rejection’ or the creation of a ‘post-truth politics’ i.e. the view that there is increasing distrust of academic evidence and analysis on the part of both senior decision makers and the wider public. We are working closely with a range of other organisations with an interest in the use of evidence to consider what further activity might be appropriate in this context and will provide an overview as part of the presentation.

² 'Brexit: an Academic Conference'
HORIZON SCANNING AND PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS

Brexit

10. Brexit throws up a range of uncertainties about how we maintain a strong social science leadership role in Europe and can continue to build on the strong relationships we have established with key European funding agencies. UK social science is a net gainer from European fund schemes and it is unclear how this position might be sustained following the UK’s withdrawal from the European Union (see paper CAP 39/16).

11. A critical means of maintaining a strong presence in Europe is future joint initiatives through funding platforms such as NORFACE. Despite the current uncertainty, we must avoid losing sight of the opportunities of developing substantive initiatives with a strong European comparative focus. It will be important to consider challenges that need addressing in this broader, European context.
BREXIT-RELATED RESEARCH

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to update Committee members on both immediate plans for supporting Brexit-related research, and longer-term activities.

Action Sought

2. The Capability Committee is invited to:
   
   i. **note** the proposal to extend the UK in a Changing Europe initiative to April 2019;
   
   ii. **discuss** the focus of an immediate priority grant call;
   
   iii. **note** additional investment in fellowships and existing investments
   
   iv. **discuss** the timeframe and plans for a longer-term research investment ‘Governance after Brexit: the future of the UK in a Changing World’.

Background

3. The Committee was updated at its last meeting about emerging activity plans in response to the UK referendum vote to leave the European Union on 23 June. At its meeting on 21 October, Council agreed the importance of Brexit to the ESRC research agenda, and both the opportunity and responsibility of social science to make a significant contribution to the Brexit process.

4. Council agreed that the ESRC should be prioritising swift and significant support to Brexit-related research, including research synthesis and potential short-term research activity.

Budget

5. In response, the Office has re-allocated £2.5 million in 2017/18 from existing budgets to support a suite of activity which is outlined below.

   a. £500,000 to support:
      
      i. Extensions of UK in a Changing Europe (UKICE) initiative fellowships;
ii. Extending and enhancing the UKICE directorate, and further supporting existing investments.

b. £2 million to be allocated to support around 10 new Brexit priority grants.

**UK in a Changing Europe (UKICE)**

6. The UK in a Changing Europe initiative, directed by Professor Anand Menon (King’s College London), has successfully undertaken substantial engagement and synthesis activity in both the run-up to and aftermath of the EU referendum. The total budget of the initiative is £4.95 million, and this is spent on engagement activities together with a number of senior fellows and small-scale commissioning fund projects.

7. UKICE is currently due to end in December 2017. The Article 50 process for the UK to leave the EU is due to be enacted in March 2017 and will take two years (although this process could be delayed given the recent High Court ruling). As such, Council has agreed to extend UKICE to run until March 2019.

8. Given that this initiative is already in place, has an extensive and significant network of contacts, and has substantial brand recognition, Council has agreed that while the commissioning process should be run by the ESRC, the UKICE programme should be used to support and oversee the urgent priority grants.
Minutes of the Fourth Meeting of the ESRC Capability Committee Held on 25 November 2016 at the MRC in London

Present: REDACTED

Apologies: REDACTED

Office: REDACTED

Guest: REDACTED

These minutes do not necessarily reflect the order in which items were discussed.

3. Chair's Business and Council Update

3.5 Council had also discussed Brexit related research and ways in which the ESRC could take forward issues following the referendum; particularly post-Brexit governance.

The Committee would discuss this item later in the meeting.
2. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising  
2.1 REDACTED

3. Chair’s Business and Council Update  
3.1 REDACTED

3.2 REDACTED

3.3 REDACTED

3.4 REDACTED

3.5 Council had also discussed Brexit related research and ways in which the ESRC could take forward issues following the referendum; particularly post-Brexit governance.

The Committee would discuss this item later in the meeting.

4. REDACTED  
4.1 REDACTED
5. **Wider Implications of the EU Referendum**

5.1 Dr Armstrong gave a presentation to the Committee on the potential implications of the outcome of the EU referendum for UK research and the RCUK position.

The presentation touched upon issues such as impact on research funding; other implications such as the freedom of movement and the ability to influence; work that the ESRC is undertaking in this area; the opportunities for social science; an overview of the next steps in relation to evidence and expertise.

Attention was drawn to the Treasury’s commitment to protecting Horizon 2020 funding up until the point that the UK left the EU.

Dr Armstrong also emphasised the recently published conclusions and recommendations of the House of Commons Science and Technology committee. These had strongly endorsed the RCUK position of freedom of movement, arguing that for the science base there should be an exemption from any broader restrictions introduced as an outcome of Brexit negotiations. It also recommended That a Chief Scientific Adviser to the Department for Exiting the EU should be appointed.

One member suggested that ESRC needs to make very clear to Parliament that replacing EU funding streams at a national level would not sufficiently replace access to international scientific research networks, and cash would not compensate for the loss of access to cross-fertilisation of ideas. Members considered that access to international networks was a key risk, particularly as disruption might also now extend to the USA. It was agreed by members that this is an important message to get across.

5.2 Dr Armstrong spoke about opportunities for social science and how important it would be to ensure the UK is able to influence discussions on research agendas and strategic relationships; especially for issues such as standards for data and ethics.

ESRC has the infrastructure to provide a rapid response to current social science questions that are arising, so is looking to inform select committees at Whitehall and ensure social science community is very well engaged in these discussions.

Members raised broader issues around “post-truth politics” and the perception
that the public has lost trust in the wider institution. It would be essential to underpin ESRC’s ability to maintain excellent social science while still actively engaging with researchers in the EU and beyond. Therefore members considered it would be important to re-frame the role of academics in engaging with the public, and think about the capabilities needed for this.

Dr Armstrong confirmed that the Research Councils were working collectively on this.

5.3 Members sought clarification on the status of student intake as a result of the EU referendum. Ms Burstow advised that ESRC is satisfied that it should be able to recruit as normal for the 2017/18 intake; however the Office is awaiting further clarification regarding the 2018/19 intake.

5.4 Members enquired whether the EU referendum outcome would affect the status of The ERIC (European Regulation of Internet Commerce) project.

Dr Martin advised that the Office is very much on top of this and would feed back in a coordinated way.

The Committee noted the update outlined in the presentation.

6. REDACTED
12. Brexit Related Research

12.1 Professor Squires introduced this item which updated members on both immediate plans for supporting Brexit-related research, and longer-term activities. Council had previously agreed that the ESRC should prioritise swift and significant support to Brexit-related research, including research synthesis and potential short-term research activity. Consequently the Office re-allocated £2.5 million in 2017/18 from existing budgets. The amount of £500,000 was to support extensions to the UK in Changing Europe (UKICE) initiative fellowships; and to extend and enhance the UKICE directorate, and further supporting existing investments.

Professor Squires added that £2 million would be used to support ten new Brexit priority grants. The call would be launched in early December, closing at the end of January. Grants are expected to commence on 1 April 2017 for up to 18 months in duration. Work would focus on research synthesis and potential short-term research activity, but with a continued emphasis on engagement and getting research outcomes to policy-makers throughout the grant period.

Members noted the proposal to extend the UK in a Changing Europe initiative to April 2019 and the additional investment in fellowships and existing investments.

12.2 Professor Squires informed members that Council had also endorsed the need for a longer-term investment in the area of ‘Governance after Brexit: the future of the UK in a Changing World’. It was currently planned for this activity to commence in April 2018 with an initial budget of £5 million over three years. Members noted that total direct ESRC investment in Brexit research was planned at £7.5 million.

12.3 The Committee discussed the focus of an immediate priority grant call; also the timeframe and plans for a longer-term research investment around the future of the UK in a Changing World.

Members debated the amount of urgent immediate work that was required versus the need to wait because it is not yet clear what the longer-term agenda is. Some members took the view that there were pressing sociological and political developments happening now, so there was a need to proceed; especially as researchers were in place with appropriate consents from participants. Others felt that it was too soon to be able to evaluate change, particularly economic change.

The Committee recognised that there was a great deal of existing work in this area, so proposed that those already active in this space should be encouraged to engage with the initiatives.

Members raised that the timetable for urgency grants was relatively short, and concern was expressed that some ROs internal submissions processes were not well-tuned to respond with sufficient agility. Dr Meller advised that the Office was mindful of this issue and that pre-announcements had been made in an effort to alleviate some of the pressure on the submission timetable.

Members suggested that opportunities to work with the USA, post-Trump, should be considered. Furthermore regional and devolved aspects of Brexit could prove interesting to explore, however it was noted that data in some devolved governments are not as developed as others.

Professor Squires re-iterated that there was still scope for the longer term agenda to be shaped and the committee’s views would be fed back into this process.
Current Priorities

This paper is a short summary of progress across the current ESRC priorities, agreed by Council through its annual priority setting process.

Priorities 2015

REDACTED

Constitutional Change

Duration: 2013 - 2017
ESRC funding: £15 million

Overview
This priority initially arose in response to the 2014 Scottish independence referendum and has evolved alongside the continued developments in UK constitutional matters and issues.

The Future of the UK and Scotland programme (directed by Professor Charlie Jeffery, University of Edinburgh, 2013-2015) was the original substantial investment, informing the public and policy-makers on the decision that was put before the Scottish people. Following on from this, the ESRC supported the Centre for Constitutional Change (directed by Professor Michael Keating, University of Aberdeen, 2015-2017) which focussed on the constitutional developments promised following the referendum outcome. This investment was also supported by a number of fellowships that analysed constitutional developments in other parts of the UK – including city regions.

In parallel, the priority evolved further to focus on the UK’s relationship with the European Union. In 2014 the ESRC commissioned the UK in a Changing Europe (UKICE) initiative, directed by Professor Anand Menon (King’s College London). An investment in this area was timely, and UKICE was able to play a central role in informing a range of stakeholders in the run-up to the UK referendum on EU membership held on 23 June 2016. Following the UK’s decision to leave the EU, UKICE has taken on a new role, providing critical analysis of the implications of the UK’s departure from the EU and how this might be implemented. The initiative has now been extended to March 2019 to run for the anticipated duration of the Article 50 process, and in December 2016 a call for Brexit Priority grants was launched under the auspices of UKICE, with funded grants due to commence in April 2017.

Future Activity
REDACTED
UPDATE ON ESRC'S INVESTMENT IN QUANTITATIVE METHODS (QM)

Purpose

1. REDACTED

Update on broader context outside of ESRC

16. REDACTED

17. Brexit is another aspect of the quantitative skills agenda that needs to be recognised. AQM is an area where DTCs have benefited from the ability to open up studentship eligibility. Students can be recruited from overseas and EU students for full awards in Economics or Advanced Quantitative Methods without adhering to the current residential eligibility rules up to a maximum of 35 per cent of their allocation in those areas. Brexit may also have an impact on the retention of key staff in Q-STEP Centres. It will be important for the Research Councils to monitor this area and be mindful of potential impact changes in policy on building capacity in quantitative methods.

18. REDACTED
CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE RESEARCH

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is for the Committee to receive an update on how additional activity is being supported immediately following the referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union; and to discuss plans for a new longer-term investment in constitutional change, as well as other related activities.

Action sought

2. The Committee is invited to:
   i. note the update on supporting additional short-term activity following the outcome of the EU referendum
   ii. discuss outline plans for a more substantial longer-term investment in constitutional change-related research.

Background

3. In response to the recent constitutional referenda in the UK, the ESRC has supported two high-profile initiatives to synthesise research and engage with both the general public as well as policy-makers and parliamentarians; the Future of the UK and Scotland (2014-16, £6.5m) and UK in a Changing Europe (2015-17, £4.6m). Additional research relevant to constitutional change has also been undertaken as part of the broader priority area on constitutional change, for example the Centre on Constitutional Change (which runs until November 2016) and some aspects of the urban transformation programme.

4. With clarity needed regarding the next steps in this sphere, an ad-hoc advisory group of leading academics from across the constitutional change field (including Professor Dan Wincott, Research Committee) was held on 3 June 2016. The meeting, chaired by ESRC Council member Professor Judith Squires, discussed immediate post EU referendum research needs, as well as longer-term requirements across the broader constitutional change agenda.

5. The group noted that during the referendum campaign the lack of recent research relevant to the type of questions asked by both policy-makers and the public had been exposed. As such, it was noted by the group that a wider and more substantial programme of new
research is needed to address this perceived dearth, in addition to any short-term requirements following the EU referendum outcome.

**Immediate activity requirements (post EU referendum)**

6. Support for many of the researchers involved in these initiatives – particularly UK in a Changing Europe – will continue for a number of months following the EU referendum outcome. However, regardless of the referendum outcome, additional activity will be needed quickly in specific areas. Potential topics identified by the ad-hoc advisory group are detailed at Annex 1.

7. In response to this requirement, the ESRC will open a further commissioning fund round following the referendum which will be administered through the existing UK in a Changing Europe initiative. This will utilise uncommitted funds already allocated to the initiative and will allow an open call for short-term small grants of up to £10k in value. Specific steers, if required, will be decided in discussion with the Director, Professor Anand Menon, immediately following the vote. Additional funding may also be needed for extending current grants as required, as well as a potential re-focusing of work of the second cohort of the senior fellows, funded until the end of this year.

**Longer-term research requirements**

8. As noted above, the ad-hoc advisory group argued for a more substantive long-term investment in constitutional change-related research. This will require further scoping, but will address key questions of UK territorial and constitutional politics (particularly in areas of interest to research users and the general public) through both reconceptualisation and new empirical research.

9. The group agreed that the programme needs to be both multi and interdisciplinary. A key priority is that it should be a focused and coherent work package. A theme of whether we are entering a period of chronic flux in terms of the current constitutional settlement was regarded as being a useful starting point. More detailed thematic requirements for the programme of research are detailed at Annex 2.

10. Potential funding models were discussed by the group and it was agreed that the programme of activity could incorporate the three current strands of Europe, urban and UK territorial politics/devolution, although this could be broadened as required. A work programme may have staged/phased commissioning and cover a breadth of different activities, including public engagement and synthesis work in addition to substantive research.

11. Neutrality and independence in this sphere is clearly essential. As such, the group noted that the seeking of co-funding is neither practical nor desirable.

**Next steps**

12. Any new substantial research activity (as proposed above) will require Council approval to continue to be a formal ESRC research priority with additional funding attached to it. Subject to the Committee’s view and a discussion by Council on 14 July 2016, it is proposed that further development and scoping work is undertaken over summer/autumn 2016. A fully-developed proposal (including potential funding modes) would then be presented to Council in February 2017 as part of the annual priority refresh exercise.
13. In order to oversee the development of the proposal, it is suggested that an advisory group be established with Research Committee representation. With the establishment of the new Advisory Group, the existing UK in a Changing Europe Advisory group will cease to exist, with some of its membership being transferred to the new group to ensure continuity.
Immediate Activity Requirements (Post EU Referendum)

1. The ad-hoc advisory group agreed that regardless of the outcome of the referendum on 23 June 2016, there will need to be some urgent additional research; although this will be even more pressing in the event of a ‘leave’ vote. The group agreed that research to interpret the result was essential. In the event of a ‘remain’ vote research requirements include:
   
   a. EU budget model and budget negotiations – including how this affects other EU countries.
   
   b. The role of local government – including the shift from a needs-based to a resource-based settlement and implications regarding equity and local growth.
   
   c. Are both the UK and EU empowered, weakened or dismembered (including UK inter-country relations)?
   
   d. How the UK can re-engage with the EU (e.g. foreign policy, defence, leadership, engagement with EU institutions – such as the structural fund).
   
   e. Political party implications.
   
   f. Public finances within and across the constituent parts of the UK.
   
   g. Democracy and parliamentary sovereignty.
   
   h. Welfare reform (which is intrinsically related to devolution).

2. Many of the points above also apply in the event of a ‘leave’ vote, although the urgency may well be greater. Additional research requirements include:
   
   a. Shock element of a ‘leave’ vote.
   
   b. Immediate economic issues (such as trade and fiscal effects).
   
   c. Administrative law and public administration (issues of how to transfer back power from the EU to UK and devolved administrations).
   
   d. Impact in Northern Ireland (which shares a land border with another EU country – the Republic of Ireland) including unionist/nationalist perspectives and consequences.
Medium and Long-term Constitutional Change Priorities

1. The ad-hoc advisory group discussed the potential areas of research that any new investment should address. In addition to further analysis of some of the points noted in Annex 1, additional research requirements include:
   a. Territorial politics (taking a holistic – including historical – approach to understanding differing perspectives across the British Isles – including Ireland).
   b. Regional government relations (including inter-linkages between union and identity).
   c. De-centralisation – it is essential that research goes beyond the perceived ‘metropolitan elite’.
   d. Politics of re-distribution.
   e. Immigration and EU integration.
   f. Public policy and impact (effect of constitutional change on the organisation of services, such as the National Health Service).

2. The group agreed that theory and methodology were essential and that a multi and interdisciplinary perspective is highly desirable. Data collection will be crucial – with the comparative dimension across the UK having been seriously underplayed of late.

3. Normative questions are also important (e.g. rescaling) in areas such as gender, ethnicity, place, notions of democracy, and what is meant by ‘social solidarity’.

4. Capacity building was also regarded as important, with thought needing to be given to whether PhD or early career researcher targeting is required.

5. A key priority has to be ensuring a focused and coherent work package; therefore the framing of any initiative is important. The group agreed that a theme of whether we are in a time of flux in terms of the current constitutional settlement is a useful starting point.
### Office Report

**Communications**

9. The ESRC continues to run an active public affairs campaign, and since January 2016 we have:

   a) Held two All Party Parliamentary Group Social Science and Policy events on ‘the Housing Supply and Young People’ with Hilary Burkitt, Head of Research, Shelter, Professor Michael Oxley and Jim Vine, Director of Evidence, Data and Insight, Housing Associations’ Charitable Trust (HACT), the second covered ‘European referendum 2016 – British Electoral Behaviour’ with Professor John Curtice and Professor Anand Menon. In March we held an All Party Parliamentary Group for Global Uncertainties meeting on ‘Terrorist Propaganda and Social Media’ with Kalsoom Bashir, Director, Inspire, Dr Kate Ferguson and a Senior Officer, Metropolitan Police Service Counter Terrorism Command.

   b) REDACTED

**Publications**

10. The spring issue of Society Now was published in April and focused on the Europe referendum, migration and biosocial research. The magazine will be sent to 15,000 subscribers and the app is reaching approximately 200 people per issue, with up to two hours spent on reading. The YUDU page-turner version is also reaching over 1,500 readers per issue. The summer issue of the magazine will be published in July 2016.

11. REDACTED
Fostering Research and Innovation

UK in a Changing Europe

34. The UK in a Changing Europe one-day flagship conference took place on 10 June in the Queen Elisabeth II Conference Centre in London. The event was very well attended by academics, policy makers and journalists as well as by the members of general public both undecided and those taking opposing positions. Keynote speeches were given by Ed Milliband, Ian Duncan Smith and Professor John Curtice, sparking lively debates. Two sets of parallel sessions focused on the major issues of the campaign, for example immigration and free movement, agriculture and food in the referendum debate, the UK’s place in the world, the territorial dimension of the EU referendum debate and others. The immediate feedback on the event from the participants was very positive and Professor Menon and his team should be congratulated with successfully organised event.
5. Implementation of Delivery Plan Commitments

5.1 REDACTED

5.2 REDACTED

5.3 REDACTED

5.4 The Committee stressed the importance of now considering the impact of the Brexit vote across the substantive themes for each of the priorities. This would need to be factored into commissioning and subsequent work packages of successful projects.

5.5 REDACTED

8. Constitutional Change Research

8.1 Professor Wincott introduced the item, explaining that an ad hoc working group chaired by Council member Professor Judith Squires had been established to consider the shape and content of a potential new initiative around constitutional change. The group had concluded that there would be a clear short term need to react to the outcome of the Brexit vote (regardless of whether it was Leave or Remain), but also a medium and longer term requirement to study the ongoing implications of constitutional change.

8.2 Professor Wincott stressed the great success of the UK in a Changing Europe
Initiative in providing a balanced and impartial view of the Brexit debate. It would be important to exploit the wide range of contacts that the initiative Director Professor Menon and the core team had built up during this period as part of any new initiative. The Committee wished to congratulate Professor Menon and his team on the way they had provided evidence over the course of the highly politically charged and controversial Brexit discussions.

8.3 The Committee strongly endorsed the need for a new initiative, particularly in light of the decision to leave the EU. It suggested that key themes needed to be ‘What next for UK?’ and ‘getting the best deal for the UK’. It urged the ESRC to be proactive in claiming this space for social science and arguing with BIS for extra funding to provide the evidence to support a ‘successful’ Brexit and re-alignment. Any initiative was much broader than political science – it was a real opportunity for an interdisciplinary programme.

8.4 The Committee expressed caution about launching too much ‘new’ research activities in the short term. There needed to be a stronger emphasis on exploiting and synthesising existing research (as wide ranging as how social inequalities fed into the Brexit result) or mining and re-cutting existing data – particularly when researchers were in the field during the campaign collecting associated data. This was viewed as more effective and resource efficient. There needed to be a strong emphasis on medium and long term implications of Brexit as the picture unfolded and became clearer.

8.5 There was a shared view that there is a whole host of issues thrown up by the Brexit debate which were not confined to the UK – these included democracy, participation, disconnection of elites from broader population, and re-alignment. So any programme needed to take account of broader international/comparative questions (including - When does a Brexit initiative meet GCRF?)
EXTRACTED

OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE

Number  RC 35/16
Purpose  Discussion
Origin  REDACTED

Date Discussed  21 November 2016

Stage of development

- Evidence Gathering / Scoping
- Formulation / Development
- Final Agreement
- Implementation / Delivery

HORIZON SCANNING AND PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS

REDACTED

Brexit

10. Brexit throws up a range of uncertainties about how we maintain a strong social science leadership role in Europe and can continue to build on the strong relationships we have established with key European funding agencies. UK social science is a net gainer from European fund schemes and it is unclear how this position might be sustained following the UK’s withdrawal from the European Union (see paper RC 37/16).
Portfolio Meta-Analysis

Summary

This paper sets out the overall shape of the ESRC portfolio. It is very much a headline statement. Further work is required to provide a deeper and more sophisticated analysis of the current pattern of investment. At this stage the aim is provide a broad contextual backdrop to the Committee discussions on horizon scanning and priority setting.

Category by category overview

This section provides a category by category overview of the current portfolio. It seeks identify the main strategic investments in each category, along with some understanding of how responsive mode schemes contribute to shape and development. In the text below, bracketed figures indicate the end date of major investments, to try and give some qualitative indication of mid to longer term investment patterns.

There is currently significant level of investment in Economy, Finance and Growth built upon a suite of major research centres. This includes the recently re-funded the centre for the Micro-economic Analysis of Public Policy at the IFS (2020), and Centre for Economic Performance (2020), and Centre for Competitive Advantage in the Global Economy (2019). Although funding for the Centre for Macro-economics ends in 2017, the commissioning of a Large Grant on the Credit and Labour Market Foundations of the Macro-economy (2020) and a new initiative on Understanding the Macro-economy (2021) will sustain investment in this area.

The portfolio has also been strengthened in the last 12 months in the area of UK productivity and growth. The decision to commission a new research initiative on Productivity (2021) along with the extension of funding for the Enterprise Research Centre (2018) will add momentum to the work that the CEP and IFS are already leading in this area. Planned new investment in underlying data infrastructure – a key feature of the new Productivity initiative – will further enhance the capacity for research.

Overall the portfolio has a strong and enduring platform through which to explore a wide range of theoretical and applied macro and micro-economic research issues. One key question though is the extent to which this portfolio has the capacity to respond major contextual changes such as Brexit and the impact of broader political changes, and how existing and new initiatives adapt their research activities to reflect this unfolding and uncertain landscape. For example certain broad themes like international trade may require a stronger emphasis than previously imagined.

With the phasing out of funding for the Innovation Research Centre and AIM initiative, there are only two strategic investments in the Business and Enterprise category. The Enterprise Research Centre continues to look at what drives the growth of SMEs. The ESRC/HMRC Tax Administration Research Centre, is building both new data infrastructure and conducting research around currently a relatively narrow range of taxation issues. Funding for the Centre has now been extended until 2018. However, these centres cover only a small part of a bigger set of research challenges across this category. Given Brexit and also the Government’s emerging industrial strategy there is scope to do much more.
Place, Migration and Community

Overall this is healthy category built around enduring strategic investments. There are two gaps. Firstly, there is little research on transport and mobility. Secondly, there is only one major investment which considers UK growth through an explicit spatial lens - the Local Economic Growth What Works Centre. The focus of this centre is synthetic work. Recent investment through the Urban Transformations initiative is adding a stronger research focus, but building out from that initiative there would seem obvious scope to strengthen the portfolio in this area particularly in the ‘devo-max’ context (now fuelled by the Government’s emerging Industrial Strategy) and when considering the differential spatial impact of Brexit.
Appendix 1 to Annex 1 to RC 35/16
Political transformations has recently been characterised by major initiatives around UK constitutional change. Current funding for The Future of Scotland in the UK (2016) is due to conclude in 2016 whilst that for UK in a Changing Europe runs until 2018. The recent decision to launch an initiative around Brexit will add important momentum to research in this area. One significant gap is, however, around understanding the implications of constitutional reform within England, particularly the regional devolution of power.

Coalescing around these major investments is a series of projects relating to elections, funded through the standard grants scheme and in part exploiting the British Election Study. However, there is little in the portfolio which reflects recent popular challenges to mainstream political, social and economic thinking and political ‘elites’ both in the UK, Europe and the US.
The portfolio in **Education, Learning and Skills** has recently been strengthened by the Centre for Global Higher Education (2020), boosted at an international level by a joint initiative on HE with South Africa, supported by the Newton Fund. New investment in the ESRC/NSF/Wellcome Trust Science Learning + initiative has added further depth and international breadth to this category.

There is a good deal of research on basic skills acquisition in children (reading, writing, vocabulary, numerical) and primary and secondary school education interventions mainly around literacy and numeracy. This features regularly through the standard grants scheme. There is less on children with specific learning difficulties (Dyslexia, ADHD, Autism). Research on life-long learning rests largely with Centre for Research on Learning and Life Chances which finishes in 2018. Work using the Council’s longitudinal studies continues on the support analysis of education and social mobility.

Major investment with DfID on the development of education systems in the global south (2019) had added an important broader international dimension to the portfolio.

Two major centres spearhead the portfolio on **Language and Communication** – the International Centre for Language and Communicative Development (2019), and the Corpus Approaches to Social Science (2018). There is a good body of standard grant funding around this category. The main gap is around non-verbal communication, in an otherwise strong
category, particularly following the conclusion of funding for the Deafness Cognition and Language Research Centre

Moving on, Individual Behaviour (£21m) intersects with many of the other categories, but is centrally driven by two large grants: Sanctions, Support and Behavioural Change (2018) and the Network of Integrated Behavioural Science which is drawing to a close in 2016. Standard grant funding is strong covering a wide spectrum of topics ranging from ‘normal’ behaviours and values, through to addictive ones and those focussed on risk and reward. A good part of this research looks at how best to influence positive changes in individual behaviour through policy interventions, although there is scope to strengthen this within specific environmental contexts.

All the areas covered under the Basic Psychological Research (£9m) category - memory, face recognition, attention, perception and visual processing – find coverage from current funding. The category lacks a unifying strategic investment but is rather driven strongly by standard grants. Over 80 per cent of funding comes through this route. This is potentially problematic, although given that psychology has a consistently impressive track record in securing funding through the scheme, it should not be viewed as an issue of real concern.

Interdisciplinarity

Part of the driving rationale for the creation of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) is the need to further promote integrated approaches to major societal challenges. This involves bringing disciplines together from across the science base.

The Research Councils already have a strong tradition of working together. They have run a number of major joint programmes, the most recent suite covering: Conflict and Security, Digital Economy, Energy, Food, Life Long Health and Well Being and Living With Environmental Change.

The ESRC is the only Council to be involved in all six of these programmes. As the portfolio analysis demonstrates there are also very many examples of bi and tri – lateral initiatives with other Councils. At an individual project level the ESRC has been active under the Cross Council Funding Agreement (CCFA), which makes provision for co-funding of individual grants, typically through responsive mode.

Chart 2 sets out the distribution of spend with other Research Councils and Innovate UK. This is regardless of whether funding is flowing into the ESRC accounts, or whether ESRC is transferring funding to a partner Council. Total investment is over £50m. The figure is made up of spend on live research grants which are typically three years in length, although with co-funded research centres this is as long as five years. As with the earlier portfolio analysis, it thus captures cumulative spend over a number of financial years.

The distribution of spend is quite evenly distributed, with the exception of the Science and Technology and Facilities Council with whom ESRC has no co-funded projects. In absolute terms MRC and EPSRC are the ESRC’s major funding partners. However, on relative size of individual Research Council budgets, AHRC and NERC are major collaborators.

Overall the Council invests around four per cent of its annual budget in co-funding with other Research Councils, so despite the strength of existing relationships there is scope to do more, particularly given the UKRI context.
Initial findings

From this initial meta-analysis of the ESRC portfolio the key finds are:

- The portfolio is rich and diverse reflecting the breadth of social science.
- It demonstrates a strong tradition of working with other Councils and promoting interdisciplinarity, although it is clear more could be done in a UKRI context.
- International research is well represented across the portfolio, and will grow given major new investment through the Global Challenge Research and Newton Funds.
- At a meta-level the portfolio appears to be broadly balanced. More recent priority setting by Council is likely to bring it into closer alignment, particularly through investment in the broad area of economic performance.
- More specifically there are a number of gaps in the portfolio. The most obvious are:
  - Ageing
  - Behaviour drivers of environmental change
  - Crime
  - Dementia
  - Democracy and challenges to political elites
  - Financial markets and financial services
  - Migration and integration
  - Regional devolution and local economic growth
  - Religion
  - The rise of illiberal democracies
  - Transport and mobility
Portfolio Analysis
Classification System

Economy, finance and growth
This covers projects that explore theoretical and empirical aspects of the operation of the micro and macro economies at local, national and global scales. This includes the operations of markets, public and private sector finance, risk, insurance, and regulation. It also includes the economics of public sector provisioning and services including taxation, health, education and welfare systems.

- European economics and finance (incl. Euro)
- Financial markets (regulation and risk)
- International monetary system
- International trade and development
- Macroeconomic policy and theory
- Probability, risk, uncertainty
- Productivity and growth
- Public expenditure and taxation
- Welfare economics (health, pensions, social security, income and wealth distribution)

Business and enterprise
This group includes projects that explore how businesses are organized, led, and function as entities in a spatial and temporal context, how they respond to shocks and stimuli, and change over time. It includes exploration of how businesses interact with their competitors, with the financial systems for borrowing and lending, with government and regulators. It examines businesses at all scales from micro-business to multinational conglomerates.

- Accounting
- Business Innovation New business models
- Corporate governance
- Enterprise/SMEs/entrepreneurship
- Finance and access to finance
- Leadership
- Management
- Organisational behaviour
- Regulation/regulatory models
- Taxation

Work, employment and labour markets
This category includes all projects relating to: the individual experience of work and providing labour (including unpaid domestic and caring duties) throughout life; employer relations and behaviour; the social and economic dimensions of labour markets (both formal and informal) and employment service markets; and work and welfare policy issues and debates. This category would also include projects relating to skills shortages and labour market needs, though projects on actual skills acquisition would be picked up under Education, learning and skills. Issues around criminal labour markets and experiences (e.g. slavery) should be captured under crime and justice.

- Career pathways and retirement
- Employment, unemployment and worklessness
• Forms of work (including volunteering, domestic and precarious work)
• Labour markets dynamics both formal and informal
• Work and structural inequalities (e.g. gender)
• Work and welfare policy
• Work organisation, employee relations and rights, bargaining and alliances

Environment and sustainability
This covers projects examining the interactions between people, society and the environment, how these are planned, managed and regulated, including social science dimensions of climate change, disasters and natural hazards. It includes projects exploring options for improving the sustainability of societal interactions with the environment, and managing the impact on prosperity at any levels of analysis.
  • Anthropogenic and natural threats and disasters
  • Climate change
  • Energy security
  • Energy systems
  • Environment and sustainability governance
  • Environment and sustainability policy, practice and reform
  • Environment, ecosystems, valuing nature
  • Food security, sustainable intensification, land use
  • Food/energy/water consumption
  • Resilience, coping with shocks/change
  • Sustainable prosperity/growth, green economy
  • Water scarcity, flooding

Social transformation
This category includes all aspects of local, regional, national and international change that is socioeconomic and/or sociocultural (e.g. organisational policy changes, social innovation) in nature. It includes formal processes and actors as well as more informal and amorphous processes.
  • Advocacy
  • Humanitarian relief, role of civil society, charities
  • Policy and practice reform (welfare, justice, NHS, social care, religious etc.)
  • Social innovation

Political Transformation
This category includes all aspects of local, regional, national and international political change. It includes formal political processes and actors as well as more informal and amorphous processes, networks and movements. It also includes resistance to the status quo or to change and transformation.
  • Constitutional reform
  • Democratisation and participation
  • Political parties and/or voting behaviour
  • Resistance, activism, social and political movements, including political uprisings (NB overlap with ‘security and conflict’)

Security and Conflict
This theme includes aspects of security and insecurity at individual, community, national and international levels; factors underpinning conflicts, contestations other forms of violent actions (including understanding motives driving individuals and groups to be engaged in these activities) and factors contributing to their prevention, mitigation and resolution (including issues of justice and reconciliation relating to these activities). It includes decision making processes at the local, national and international level, and the way actors interact and influence each other in pursuit of their interests. It also includes the role and place security and military forces play within society and how their role changes over time in response to security environment and the level of resistance or acceptance (adaptability) of these changes by society. Other dimensions of individual economic and social security and/or insecurity are included under Identity and Diversity.

- Conflict and violence
- Cyber-security
- Military and society
- National regimes, global structures and geopolitics (geo-economics)
- Politics of security
- Post-conflict reconciliation and peace-keeping
- Security at all scales (individual, group, national etc.)
- Terrorism

Crime and Justice
Includes all research on crime, criminalisation and criminal justice in the UK and internationally. This includes: trends in crime and reporting of crime, policing, criminal violence, youth justice, sentencing and alternative forms of justice. It also includes research focused on perpetrators and victims of crime and support services in place for both. There is an overlap between this category and the Security and Conflict as crime, including international crime, is also often a threat to public safety and security.

- Changes in patterns of crime and reporting of crime spatially and over time
- Crime and policing
- Criminal justice system
- International policing
- Neighborhood crime and policing,
- Restorative justice
- Transnational organized crime

Place, migration and community
This category includes research that relate to the role of place in the construction and experience of people’s lives. This includes the various infrastructures which support and enable social life, from individual homes or the lack of home, to neighbourhoods, local or social or virtual communities, to all kinds of urban and rural areas and the various social and capital asset structures through which they are produced. It also includes the features of particular places and settings and the interplay between the physical infrastructure and social fabric which in turn can influence experience and behaviour (e.g. inclusive cities, fair trade towns, healthy or safe spaces). This category also incorporates the movement and mobility of people through and between spaces including transportation, migration and diaspora.

- Communities, towns and cities (healthy, inclusive, age friendly etc. environments)
- Community engagement (including contribution to public services, civil society)
- Housing, homes, homelessness
- Local economic growth, urban and regional policy and planning
• Migration and settlement (including refugees)
• Social infrastructure and capital (including assets and services – prisons, social care, schools, sports, sanitation etc.)
• Transport
• Urbanisation

Health, development and well-being
This topic includes health related both to normal healthy development throughout life and research associated with poor health e.g. risky health related behaviours such as alcohol consumption and poor diet (this research might also relate to ‘Individual behaviour’ heading), specific diseases and conditions such as cancer and dementia. It encompasses all parts of the life course and both physical and mental health. It also includes research on health and social care provision although research focused on the reform of these services is included under ‘social and political transformation’.
• Addictions
• Ageing
• Alcohol use
• Child development when related to health/ well-being outcomes
• Cognitive decline
• Diet, Physical Activity
• Health and social care provision
• Mental health
• Public health
• Well-being

Individual behaviour
This topic includes research on the reasons behind behaviour, how to influence behaviour and what might prevent behaviour change from happening. It is about behaviour at the individual level – including behaviour which could be scaled up to group or population level – and includes the full range of behaviour that might be found at the individual level. Behaviour at the level of organisations is included under ‘Business and growth’.
• Full range of behaviours including financial, health, environmental, charitable giving
• How to influence behaviour and barriers to this
• Motivation
• Study of interventions to change behaviour
• What influences behaviour

Education, learning and skills
This topic includes the full range of types of learning and learning environments from pre-school through to learning in the workplace and in non-work and informal settings throughout life. It includes what is more traditionally seen as education but also learning of non-curriculum based skills and knowledge and basic skills acquisition related to child development.
• Basic skills acquisition e.g. related to child development
• Early years education
• Education – primary and secondary
• Further and Vocational Education
• Higher Education
• Informal learning
• Non-work skills acquisition
• Teaching and Pedagogy as they relate to learning
• The relationship between memory and learning
• Work placed learning and skills acquisition

Language and communication
This topic might include research on the development and use of native and second languages, how language is learnt and applied in different contexts, and other forms of communication.

• Language development (including second language acquisition)
• Language learning
• Language use; language as a social and cultural phenomena
• Non-verbal communication

Basic Psychological Research
This category will be used for psychological research that is not clearly applied to one of the other classification areas. It is likely to be used for basic research which aims to make conceptual or theoretical developments. The areas that might be relevant are below, although this is not an exhaustive list and other basic psychological research should be categorised under this heading:

• Attention
• Memory
• Perception
WIDER IMPLICATIONS OF THE EU REFERENDUM

Purpose

1. The purpose of this item is to provide information on the potential implications of the outcome of the EU referendum for UK research and the RCUK position. The item will be based around a short powerpoint presentation.

Action sought

2. The Committee is invited to note the issues raised in the presentation.

RCUK position and potential impact of ‘Brexit’

3. In addition to the substantive social science research agenda, which is covered elsewhere on this agenda, there are of course some direct consequences for UK research of the recent referendum vote. These include access to research funding and participation in collaborative activities; the UK’s influence on strategy and priorities at the European level; and the ability to continue to attract leading researchers to the UK and to support non UK EU PhD students.

4. RCUK set out its initial position in response to the House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee Inquiry\(^1\). Further data collection and analysis is now taking place looking in more detail at funding, staff numbers and PhD students as well as the implications for particular disciplines/fields of research.

Evidence and expertise

5. The referendum outcome provides UK social science with an opportunity both to inform the negotiation and policy-making process and also to provide evidence for those who are required to scrutinise the work of government and hold it to account e.g. Parliamentary select committees. We are facilitating these opportunities through a number of routes including an event led by the social science team in POST (the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology) to bring together researchers and parliamentary staff \(^2\).

6. Of course the referendum campaign also highlighted an issue that has been variously described as ‘expert rejection’ or the creation of a ‘post-truth politics’ i.e. the view that there is increasing distrust of academic evidence and analysis on the part of both senior decision makers and the wider public. We are working closely with a range of other organisations with an interest in the use of evidence to consider what further activity might be appropriate in this context and will provide an overview as part of the presentation.


\(^2\) ‘Brexit: an Academic Conference’
Stage of development

- Evidence Gathering / Scoping
- Formulation / Development
- Final Agreement
- Implementation / Delivery

BREXIT-RELATED RESEARCH

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to update Committee members on both immediate plans for supporting Brexit-related research, and longer-term activities.

Action Sought

2. The Research Committee is invited to:
   i. note the proposal to extend the UK in a Changing Europe initiative to April 2019;
   ii. discuss the focus of an immediate priority grant call;
   iii. note additional investment in fellowships and existing investments
   iv. discuss the timeframe and plans for a longer-term research investment ‘Governance after Brexit: the future of the UK in a Changing World’.

Background

3. The Committee was updated at its last meeting about emerging activity plans in response to the UK referendum vote to leave the European Union on 23 June. At its meeting on 21 October, Council agreed the importance of Brexit to the ESRC research agenda, and both the opportunity and responsibility of social science to make a significant contribution to the Brexit process.

4. Council agreed that the ESRC should be prioritising swift and significant support to Brexit-related research, including research synthesis and potential short-term research activity.

Budget

5. In response, the Office has re-allocated £2.5 million in 2017/18 from existing budgets to support a suite of activity which is outlined below.

   a. £500,000 to support:
      i. Extensions of UK in a Changing Europe (UKICE) initiative fellowships;
ii. Extending and enhancing the UKICE directorate, and further supporting existing investments.

b. £2 million to be allocated to support 10 new Brexit priority grants.

**UK in a Changing Europe (UKICE)**

6. The UK in a Changing Europe initiative, directed by Professor Anand Menon (King’s College London), has successfully undertaken substantial engagement and synthesis activity in both the run-up to and aftermath of the EU referendum. The total budget of the initiative is £4.95 million, and this is spent on engagement activities together with a number of senior fellows and small-scale commissioning fund projects.

7. UKICE is currently due to end in December 2017. The Article 50 process for the UK to leave the EU is due to be enacted in March 2017 and will take two years (although this process could be delayed given the recent High Court ruling). As such, Council has agreed to extend UKICE to run until March 2019.

8. Given that this initiative is already in place, has an extensive and significant network of contacts, and has substantial brand recognition, Council has agreed that while the commissioning process should be run by the ESRC, the UKICE programme should be used to support and oversee the urgent priority grants.

**Priority Grants**

9. Council has agreed that around 10 priority grants (£100,000 to 300,000) be supported to commence in early 2017. These will be up to 18 months in length and able to support research synthesis and potential short-term research activity, but with a continued emphasis on engagement and getting research outcomes to policy-makers throughout the grant period.

10. The call will be launched in early December and have a closing date of the end of January. The expectation is that the grants should commence on 1 April 2017.

11. Thought needs be given as to whether the grants under this call could be co-funded – in particular by government departments. This would represent a departure for UKICE and the ESRC’s broader work on constitutional matters, but would have an advantage of potentially facilitating additional impact and leveraged funding. Council agreed that this should only be pursued if arms-length co-funding could be obtained that would not undermine the independence of the work. The Advisory Group would require some Whitehall representation for this to be taken forward.

12. The advisory committees and Advisory Group need to ensure that the thematic focus of the grants call is clearly detailed so that relevant activity is commissioned. The grants should centre on issues relevant in Article 50 negotiations (though not be too limiting) and current areas include: changing political contexts in Europe; citizens’ expectations on Brexit outcomes; and trade. The Committee’s advice is sought here in refining these priorities further.

13. Pathways to impact will be a particularly important part of the assessment process for the grants, and applicants will need to demonstrate the resilience of their plans to uncertainty in this arena.
Other Activity

14. In addition to the priority grants and the associated extension of the UKICE initiative outlined above, another activity is to extend some of the existing UKICE fellowships. A total of 12 of the initiative’s 14 senior fellows are due to end by 31 December 2016 and so that the momentum is not lost we will invite extensions in the key areas identified by the initiative Director. We plan to extend around three fellowships by a further six months.

15. Some of the ESRC’s current investments also have scope to undertake additional activity related to Brexit and so we also propose to invite applications in the same thematic areas as identified for the priority grants above. This will allow the ESRC to make an agile response in supporting activity.

16. Members will be aware that the Large Grants competition has recently closed and there is the potential for supporting Brexit-related research through this (at least two relevant proposals have been submitted) and other responsive mode calls, such as the Standard Grants scheme. Whilst activity supported through these mechanisms cannot be predicted or controlled, we can ensure that any such awards are linked into the wider initiative.

The Longer-Term Agenda

17. At its meeting on 21 October, Council endorsed the need for a longer-term investment in the area of ‘Governance after Brexit: the future of the UK in a Changing World’. This activity would be distinct from UKICE which will focus on Article 50 and the Brexit-process. It is currently planned for this activity to commence in April 2018 with an initial budget of £5 million over 3 years.

18. The initial proposal for the longer-term investment, as presented to Council, is attached at Annex 1. This is based on input from the Advisory Group (chaired by Professor Judith Squires, ESRC Council). The Terms of Reference and membership of the Advisory Group are at Annex 2.

19. Council has now asked the Research Committee to oversee the approval and development of this work, seeking input from the Advisory Group as appropriate. A particular issue is the timing of this activity, i.e. when it should commence. It is currently planned for this activity to commence in April 2018 with an initial budget of £5 million over 3 years.

20. The Committee is now asked to comment on the proposal.
Minutes of the Nineteenth Meeting of the ESRC Research Committee Held on 21 November 2016 at MRC London.

8. Wider Implications of the EU Referendum

8.1 Dr Christina Rowley gave a presentation to the Committee on the potential implications of the outcome of the EU referendum for UK research and the RCUK position.

The presentation touched upon issues such as impact on research funding; other implications such as the freedom of movement and the ability to influence; work that the ESRC is undertaking in this area; the opportunities for social science; and an overview of the next steps in relation to evidence and expertise.

In particular Dr Rowley noted that RCUK had welcomed HM Treasury’s commitment to protect Horizon 2020 funding up until the point that the UK left the EU. Dr Rowley also emphasised the recently published conclusions and recommendations of the House of Commons Science and Technology committee. These had strongly endorsed the RCUK position of freedom of movement, arguing that for the science base there should be an exemption from any broader restrictions introduced as an outcome of Brexit negotiations. The Committee noted the update outlined in the presentation.

9. Brexit Related Research

9.1 Professor Dan Wincott introduced this item which updated members on both immediate plans for supporting Brexit-related research, and longer-term activities.

Council had previously agreed that the ESRC should be prioritising swift and significant support to Brexit-related research, including research synthesis and potential short-term research activity. Consequently £2.5 million in 2017/18 had been re-allocated from existing budgets. The amount of £500,000 was to support extensions to the UK in Changing Europe (UKICE) initiative fellowships; and to extend and enhance the UKICE directorate, and further supporting existing investments.

Professor Wincott added that £2 million would be used to support around ten new Brexit priority grants. The call would be launched in early December, closing at the end of January. Grants are expected to commence on 1 April 2017 for up to 18 months in duration. Work would focus on research synthesis and potential short-term research activity, but with a continued emphasis on engagement and getting research outcomes to policy-makers throughout the grant period.
9.2 Professor Wincott informed members that Council had endorsed the need for a longer-term investment in the area of ‘Governance after Brexit: the future of the UK in a changing world’.

Professor Wincott advised that Council had assigned the Research Committee to oversee the approval and development of this work, seeking input from the Advisory Group as appropriate. A particular issue was noted regarding the timing of this activity, i.e. when it should commence. It was currently planned for this activity to commence in April 2018 with an initial budget of £5 million over three years. He noted that total direct ESRC investment in Brexit research was therefore planned at £7.5 million.

9.3 The Committee endorsed the proposal to extend the UK in a Changing Europe initiative to April 2019. It was also supportive of a longer term initiative although agreed that greater clarification was required on the focus of the new initiative, for example, was it on the outcomes of the referendum or the consequences of Brexit?

The Committee highlighted a range of issues that warranted covering under the initiative such as: how politicians are disciplined by parties and political attitudes; the rise of intolerance and how we can recreate social inclusion; challenges to the freedom of movement; economic impacts and exploring options such ‘pay to play’ in Europe.

The Committee acknowledged that some of the issues had a longer time trajectory than others and that the immediate priority must be to focus on time critical policy issues such as trade arrangements and freedom of movement where the window for influencing the direction of travel was small and closing. The Committee advised that this would require exploiting existing knowledge and expertise from across the social science community.

Members favoured a configuration of both research projects and fellowships, given the need to quickly harness existing expertise and to deliver results rapidly. There was support for drawing on expertise from beyond the existing UKICE network to achieve this objective.

9.4 The Committee queried the size of the budget for the initiative, which at £7.5 million was thought to be too low. Mr Neathey explained that other initiatives would also encompass a strong Brexit focus, so additional funds would be committed in other areas of the portfolio where there was a good fit.

The Committee cautioned against co-funding this work with government, as with the Future of the UK and Scotland initiative, it would be critical to be impartial.

Members noted that their comments would be fed back to the working group and the Committee would be kept closely updated with the development of this work.

**Action:**
- Working Group and Office
Current Priorities

This paper is a short summary of progress across the current ESRC priorities, agreed by Council through its annual priority setting process.

Priorities 2015

REDACTED

Constitutional Change

Duration: 2013 - 2017
ESRC funding: £15 m

Overview
This priority initially arose in response to the 2014 Scottish independence referendum and has evolved alongside the continued developments in UK constitutional matters and issues.

The Future of the UK and Scotland programme (directed by Professor Charlie Jeffery, University of Edinburgh, 2013-2015) was the original substantial investment, informing the public and policy-makers on the decision that was put before the Scottish people. Following on from this, the ESRC supported the Centre for Constitutional Change (directed by Professor Michael Keating, University of Aberdeen, 2015-2017) which focused on the constitutional developments promised following the referendum outcome. This investment was also supported by a number of fellowships that analysed constitutional developments in other parts of the UK – including city regions.

In parallel, the priority evolved further to focus on the UK’s relationship with the European Union. In 2014 the ESRC commissioned the UK in a Changing Europe (UKICE) initiative, directed by Professor Anand Menon (King’s College London). An investment in this area was timely, and UKICE was able to play a central role in informing a range of stakeholders in the run-up to the UK referendum on EU membership held on 23 June 2016. Following the UK’s decision to leave the EU, UKICE has taken on a new role, providing critical analysis of the implications of the UK’s departure from the EU and how this might be implemented. The initiative has now been extended to March 2019 to run for the anticipated duration of the Article 50 process, and in December 2016 a call for Brexit Priority grants was launched under the auspices of UKICE, with funded grants due to commence in April 2017.

Future Activity
Whilst much of the focus of UKICE to date has been upon the referendum and ‘Brexit’, there is also recognition that there is a wider set of constitutional issues that require more substantive research. In autumn 2016, Council and the Research Committee agreed in principal to make a significant strategic investment in this area, and the timetable for developing ‘Governance after Brexit: the future of the UK in a changing world’ is set out in a separate item on the Research Committee agenda.
Future Priorities

There is further scoping work to be undertaken in developing the priorities that Council now wants to consider for potential funding at its meeting in July 2017. This paper initiates the process of taking the broad areas that have been identified and outlining some possible substantive themes which might form the basis of future activities. The five broad areas under consideration are:

- REDACTED
- REDACTED
- The Future of Liberal Democracy
- REDACTED
- REDACTED

The Future of Liberal Democracy

The outcome of the Brexit vote in the UK, the election of Donald Trump in the US and the rise of populist anti-elitist politics across Europe has raised fundamental challenges to the long held values and assumptions that underpin liberal democracies and their institutions. Add to this what appears to be a growing acceptance of increasingly illiberal democracies in countries such as Russia and Turkey, and also India, then we may be witnessing a fundamental re- shaping of the western democratic ideas. Some key potential themes that might be addressed are:

- Are we grappling with a break-down of traditional distinctions between mature democracies and emerging democracies, and between liberal and illiberal forms of democracy? What are the consequences for research and understanding, and what theoretical, analytical and empirical innovations become necessary?
- Are we seeing a rolling back of liberalism, and/or the ascendance of illiberalism across the world as a new democratic norm? What questions do such trends raise for democracy research, and what theoretical innovations will be needed in the coming years to accommodate such trends?
- How is the evolution of democratic forms across the world likely to impact upon the key norms and institutions that underpin the world order and regional orders? What are the implications for international and comparative research, and how should the relationship between them evolve to enhance understanding of the future of world politics?
- What are the key drivers behind the evolution of democratic systems, and how can past research on issues such as populism, inequality and political resistance inform the next generation of democracy research?
- Has our apparatus for quantitative research on democracy, elections and voting now been proved to be inadequate? What are the consequences, and what methodological innovations will be needed to achieve genuine advances in the social sciences and beyond?
- How rich is our empirical base in democracy research, and what kinds of future empirical research will be needed to make sense of the evolution of democratic systems?
- What kinds of interdisciplinary working are needed in order to enrich democracy research across the social sciences, humanities and beyond?
- How well does democracy research contribute to public and policy debates on the nature of future of democracy, and how can the future...
A number of initial activities relevant to this research area are either planned or underway:

- A NORFACE workshop on the Future of European Governance, planned for March 2017. The ESRC is organising the workshop on behalf of NORFACE. The academic convenor is Professor Ed Page.

- An interdisciplinary workshop on the future of liberal democracy planned for May 2017. This has been commissioned by the ESRC as is being organised by the British International Studies Association, led by Professor Nicola Philips.
The purpose of this paper is to update the Committee on the outcome of the recent Brexit priority grants call; and to allow the Committee to discuss the development timeframe and themes of further work under ‘Governance after Brexit: the future of the UK in a changing world’.

Action sought

2. The Committee is invited to:
   i. Note the outcome of the Brexit Priority Grants call
   ii. Discuss the development timeframe and themes of the additional work under ‘Governance after Brexit: the future of the UK in a changing world’.

Brexit Priority Grants

3. As reported to the Committee’s last meeting, Council agreed in November 2016 hold a Brexit Priority Grants call. This was launched in December 2016, and a total of 155 proposals were received by the closing date of 25 January 2017. Proposals had to cover one of six priority areas associated with the implementation of the Article 50 process of the UK leaving the European Union.

4. A Commissioning Panel (chaired by Capability Committee member Professor Matthew Flinders, University of Sheffield) met on 27 February and recommended 25 proposals for support (10 of these are in reserve and subject to additional funding from BEIS) and these are detailed at Annex 1. These grants will be part of the UK in a Changing Europe (UKICE) initiative and are due to start by 1 April 2017 for a maximum of 18 months.
5. Council also agreed that the UK in a Changing Europe initiative be extended until the assumed end of the Article 50 process, March 2019. The initiative director, Professor Anand Menon (King’s College London) is currently preparing a proposal for the extended activity which is due to be received shortly.

6. A total of six senior fellows were extended from December 2016 to June 2017 to cover the period where the Brexit Priority Grants are being commissioned.

7. Coverage and capacity of the funded Brexit Priority Grants will be assessed by the director and a decision will then be taken by the Office and Advisory Group on whether a further round of senior fellows needs to be commissioned (there will be no further extensions to the current fellowships).

New Investment – ‘Governance after Brexit: the future of the UK in a changing world’

8. The Committee agreed at its November 2017 meeting to pursue a longer-term body of work entitled ‘Governance after Brexit: the future of the UK in a changing world’. This activity is distinct from UKICE (which focuses on Article 50 and the Brexit-process). It is currently planned for this activity to commence in April 2018 with an initial budget of £5 million over 3 years.

9. As a reminder, eight initial themes were identified in the previous paper as the possible focus of a wide-ranging but inter-related new research initiative, with Brexit as a major driver. These are:
   a. The constitution, constitutional principles and the UK’s legal systems.
   b. Devolution and the allocation and balance of competences.
   c. Inter-governmental and inter-institutional relationships.
   d. The economy and economic policy.
   e. Equity and social welfare.
   f. Immigration and migration.
   g. Diplomacy and security.
   h. Representation and democracy.

10. In light of the recent Brexit Priority Grants Call, the Committee is invited to consider whether any of these themes require revision or should be prioritised.

11. As was also mentioned in the previous paper, the proposed funding model for this initiative is a focused programme.

12. Over the next few months, the Steering Group (chaired by Council member Professor Judith Squires) will refine the scoping document and a draft specification for the recruitment of an investment co-ordinator will be considered by the Committee in July. It is expected that the position of co-ordinator will be advertised in September 2017, with a suitable candidate in place ready to commence work from April 2018.
CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE RESEARCH

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is for the Council to receive an update on how additional activity is being supported immediately following the recent leave vote in the European Union referendum; and to discuss plans for a new longer-term investment in constitutional change as well as other related activities.

Action Sought

2. Council is invited to:
   i. note the update on supporting additional short-term activity following the leave vote in the EU referendum;
   ii. discuss outline plans for a more substantial longer-term investment in constitutional change-related research;
   iii. agree that further development and scoping activity is undertaken over summer/early autumn 2016, with a proposal to be presented to Council in October 2016 (ahead of the annual strategic priorities refresh in February 2017).

Background

3. In response to the recent constitutional referenda in the UK, the ESRC has supported two high-profile initiatives to synthesise research and engage with both the general public as well as policy-makers and parliamentarians; the Future of the UK and Scotland (2014-16, £6.5m) and UK in a Changing Europe (2015-17, £4.6m). Additional research relevant to constitutional change has also been undertaken as part of the broader priority area on constitutional change, for example Centre on Constitutional Change (which runs until November 2016) and some aspects of the urban transformation programme.

4. With clarity needed regarding the next steps in this sphere, and recognising the need to respond quickly after the referendum regardless of the outcome, an ad-hoc advisory group of leading academics from across the constitutional change field was held on 3 June 2016. The meeting, chaired by Professor Judith Squires, discussed immediate post-EU referendum research needs, as well as longer-term requirements across the broader constitutional change agenda.

5. The group noted that during the EU referendum campaign the lack of recent research relevant to questions asked by both policy-makers and the public had been exposed. As such the group agreed that a wider and more substantial programme of new research is needed to address this perceived dearth, in addition to short-term requirements following the EU referendum outcome.
Immediate Activity Requirements

6. Support for many of the researchers involved in these initiatives (particularly UK in a Changing Europe) will continue for a number of months. However, following the vote to leave the EU, additional activity will be needed quickly in specific areas. Topics identified by the ad-hoc advisory group are detailed at Annex 1.

7. In response to this requirement, the ESRC will open a further Commissioning Fund round following the referendum which will be administered through the existing UK in a Changing Europe initiative. This will utilise uncommitted funds already allocated to the initiative and will allow an open call for short-term small grants of up to £10k in value. Specific steers will be based on the topics covered in Annex 1. Additional funding may also be used to: supplement existing investments; extend a small number of current fellowships; and to commission one or two additional fellowships as required. Work of the second cohort of the senior fellows (funded until the end of this year) will be re-focused as appropriate. The possibility of an urgency grant call in this area is also being explored.

Longer-term Research Requirements

8. As noted above, the ad-hoc advisory group argued for a more substantive long-term investment in constitutional change-related research. This will require further scoping, but will address key questions of UK territorial and constitutional politics (particularly in areas of interest to research users and the general public) through both reconceptualisation and new empirical research.

9. The group agreed that the programme needs to be single, multi and interdisciplinary. A key priority is that it should be a focused and coherent work package. A theme of whether we are entering a period of chronic flux in terms of the current constitutional settlement was regarded as being a useful starting point, but the precise focus and name given to any initiative will require careful consideration. Thematic requirements are detailed at Annex 2.

10. Potential funding models were discussed by the group and it was agreed that the programme of activity could incorporate the three current strands of Europe, urban transformations and UK territorial politics/devolution, although this could be broadened as required. A work programme may have staged/phased commissioning and cover a breadth of different activities, including public engagement and synthesis work in addition to substantive research.

11. Neutrality and independence in this sphere is clearly essential. As such the group took the view that the seeking of co-funding is neither practical nor desirable.

Next Steps

12. Any new substantial research activity (as proposed above) will require Council approval to continue to be a formal ESRC research priority with additional funding attached to it. Subject to Council’s approval, it is proposed that further development and scoping work is undertaken over summer/early autumn 2016. In view of the immediacy of these issues it is proposed that a proposal (including potential funding modes) would then be brought to Council in October, ahead of the annual priority refresh exercise in February 2017. This proposal was discussed by both the Research and Capability Committees on 30 June 2016, where the need for a substantial response to this agenda from UK social science was supported and the importance of synthesising existing research was reiterated.

13. In order to oversee the development of the proposal, it is suggested that an Advisory Board be established with Research Committee representation. This will include the transition of some members of the UK in a Changing Europe Advisory group (which will cease to exist).

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Immediate Activity Requirements

Following the leave vote, immediate research requirements have been identified by both the ad-hoc advisory group and the UK in a Changing Europe initiative. Input on these has also been sought from the Research and Capability Committees. Urgent requirements include:

a. Leave negotiation process and possible outcomes
b. British party politics and the European Union
c. Public finances within and across the constituent parts of the UK
d. Democracy and parliamentary sovereignty
e. Citizenship and participation
f. Immediate economic issues (such as trade and fiscal effects)
g. Administrative law and public administration (issues of how to transfer back power from the EU to UK and devolved administrations)
h. EU/other European nation politics and attitudes
i. Impact of leaving EU in:
   i. England
   ii. Scotland
   iii. Wales
   iv. Northern Ireland (which shares a land border with another EU country – the Republic of Ireland) including unionist/nationalist perspectives and consequences.
Brexit consultations

2016

House of Commons Science and Technology Committee: Leaving the EU – implications and opportunities for science and research – Philip Nelson, Chair of the RCUK Strategic Executive presented oral evidence to the Committee on 13 July 2016. The MRC contributed to a subsequent written response from RCUK, submitted on 23 August.

House of Commons Education Committee: The impact of exiting the European Union on higher education inquiry – The MRC contributed to an RCUK response, submitted on 18 November.

House of Commons Exiting the European Union Committee: UK’s negotiating objectives for withdrawal from EU inquiry – The MRC contributed to an RCUK response, submitted on 02 December.

2017

Migration Advisory Committee: Call for evidence and briefing note on European Economic Area workers in the UK labour market – Linda Holliday, MRC Director of Capacity and Skills led the RCUK response which also involved UKSBS, submitted on 25 October.

House of Commons Health Committee: Brexit – medicines, medical devices and substances of human origin inquiry – The MRC Regulatory Support Centre led the MRC submission, submitted on 30 October.

2018

Migration Advisory Committee: Call for evidence on international students: economic and social impacts – The MRC contributed to a joint RCUK response, with input from the RCUK Research Careers Network (RCN), submitted on 13 February.

House of Commons Science & Technology Committee: ‘An immigrations system that works for research’ inquiry – The MRC contributed to the joint UK Research and Innovation response, submitted on 12 June.
http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/sc
Key messages on Brexit

Excellence and collaboration:
- The UK’s excellence in science and research is well established and UK researchers are sought-after collaborators internationally.
- The continued success of UK research is dependent on our best researchers collaborating with partners and sharing facilities across international boundaries.
- We are committed to enabling and facilitating collaborations between UK researchers and international partners in Europe and across the world.
- Recent government funding for ODA-compliant research has opened up new avenues for new cooperation with developing countries, however RCUK will take a global view in shaping our international research portfolio, recognising the many long-standing links we have with more traditional partner countries, including in Europe.

People and mobility:
- The UK is a global science and research nation, and its research base is a national asset. We have achieved this position by being open to the world in attracting and investing in the best minds and skills in students, researchers, professional and technical experts and academics.
- The success of UK research is underpinned by a pipeline of talent which includes students, researchers, professional and technical experts and academics.

EU funding:
- Research Councils UK welcomed the statement made by HM Treasury on continuity of funding for UK applicants to Horizon 2020, published on 13 August.
- The statement provides reassurance for applicants to Horizon 2020 projects, confirming that where applications are submitted while the UK remains a member of the EU HM Treasury will underwrite the payment of awards, even when specific projects continue beyond the UK’s departure from the EU.
- RCUK will continue to engage actively in EU funding programme and policy conversations for as long as the UK remains a member of the EU.
- The UK Research Office (UKRO), our presence in Brussels, continues to provide clear and consistent practical and policy advice and support for subscribing research organisations.

Access to infrastructure:
- Maintaining access to a full range of world-class research facilities, both in the UK and internationally, is vital for the UK to remain a leading centre of research excellence.
- RCUK will continue to work to ensure that our researchers have access to leading research infrastructure and facilities wherever they may be located in the world.

Global policy engagement:
- RCUK will continue to participate actively in a wide range of international collaborative programmes and policy forums where engagement is of benefit to the UK research base (examples include the OECD Global Science Forum, the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures, Science Europe, and the Global Research Council).

Working with government and the UK research sector:
- We are working closely with colleagues in the relevant government departments to:
  - ensure that research and innovation is well-represented in negotiations on exiting the EU and to provide evidence to support a favourable outcome;
  - gain clarity where there is still uncertainty around immediate arrangements.
• We are working in partnership with HEFCE and Innovate UK, as part of the move towards UKRI, and liaising closely with other stakeholders in the research sector to ensure a co-ordinated approach in making our case for UK research.
STFC Staff post-referendum Q&A

**Impact on people**

What does this mean for STFC’s EU staff in the UK & UK staff in the EU?
Science is global. STFC will work with whatever changes may come to ensure we recruit, retain and support the best people we can from around the world. STFC is convening a working group to understand and plan for all of the impacts of the referendum outcome.

Our government and our CEO have reassured UK citizens living in European countries and European citizens living here that there will be no immediate changes in their circumstances. This applies equally to research council staff, researchers employed on research council grants and to students. It includes our staff on long-term attachment. Jo Johnson stated on 30 June “We remain fully open to scientists and researchers from across the EU. We hugely value the contribution of EU and international staff. And there are no immediate changes to their rights to live and work in the UK”.

What can STFC do to help support me?
STFC values all of our staff and are working really hard behind the scenes with the relevant bodies to support you and escalate your concerns. We will continue updating FAQs and post them on In.Focus as we gain clarity, for example, on the routes to citizenship, immigration status, impact on pensions and recruitment. Your line management is on hand to support you. Alternatively, please contact your HR advisor if you have specific concerns. STFC also provides the Employee Assistance Programme that offers confidential counselling support should this be appropriate.

Please respect individual’s views on the EU referendum and think carefully and show respect to your others when expressing your views.

**Impact on Horizon 2020**

Can I still participate in Horizon 2020?
Yes. The UK’s decision to leave the EU has no immediate effect on those applying to or participating in Horizon 2020 as the UK is still an EU member state. Both our government and the European Commission have made statements reminding UK participants that they can continue to apply to the programme in the usual way.

Can I still coordinate/lead a Horizon 2020 project?
Yes. There is no immediate change, UK organisations can continue to participate in Horizon 2020 under the same terms and conditions as they currently do, and that includes acting as Project Coordinators.

Could a non-member state coordinate a Horizon 2020 project?
Yes. There is nothing to prevent a non-member state or non-associated country from coordinating a Horizon 2020 project. However, only member states and associated countries are eligible to claim funding for doing so.
What is being done to reassure other Member States that including UK organisations in Horizon 2020 proposal consortiums is not a risky thing to do?

UK organisations can continue to participate in Horizon 2020 under the same terms and conditions as they currently do, and should not be discriminated against during the evaluation of proposals. Jo Johnson is in close contact with Commissioner Moedas on this issue.

Have you experienced discrimination? BIS have asked us to collect evidence of any problems in established projects as well as in consortia preparing proposals for Horizon 2020. If you experience any issues please contact us via the [redacted].

We will collate and forward your concerns. We can anonymise your response if you wish.

What will it mean for UK participants in funded Horizon 2020 projects if the UK leaves the EU before the project finishes?

It is too soon to say but we are working closely with BIS and the EC on this. This will be one of the many issues that will need to be addressed in the negotiations. Horizon 2020 is “Open to the World” and it is not a requirement to be in a member state or associated country to be involved in its projects, although participants would need to be either in a member state or associated country to claim funding.

How much income does STFC usually get through Horizon 2020 programme (and its predecessors)?

Income varies on a year-to-year basis. The usual income to STFC from European programmes over the past five years is between £4-5m per annum.

STFC is undertaking a more detailed analysis of our expected income from ongoing and committed FP7 projects and Horizon 2020 projects over the next few years. Since Horizon 2020 began in 2014 STFC has been awarded 38 projects with a total budget of €17.6M and is currently co-ordinator of three of these.

Impact on collaborations and science infrastructure

What happens to our access to international research infrastructures and facilities, and access to our research infrastructures and facilities for international researchers?

Maintaining access to a full range of world-class research facilities, either in the UK or abroad, is vital. There is no change in STFC’s policy on researchers’ access to leading research infrastructure and facilities wherever they may be located in the world. We will also continue to promote the UK’s world leading research infrastructures and facilities internationally, as a key factor in the vibrant research environment that serves as a magnet for the most talented researchers and multinational R&D companies.

Will the UK remain a part of CERN/ESS/SKA etc?

The UK’s participation in major European partnerships that are not part of EU institutions will not be affected. These include CERN, the European Southern Observatory (ESO), European Space Agency (ESA), Institut Laue-Langevin (ILL), European Spallation Source (ESS) and European Synchrotron...
Radiation Facility (ESRF). The UK also remains committed to other major international projects, including the Square Kilometre Array (SKA), T2K and the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO). Implications for any EU-funded Horizon 2020 projects aligned to these international partnerships are subject to the same considerations as other Horizon 2020 projects (see Horizon 2020 section).

What about our collaborations with the EU over Space?
The European Space Agency is not part of the European Union and the UK remains a full member. We need to understand how we can work with the all of the other EU space programmes.

Timeline

What has to happen for the UK to leave the EU? When?
The decision about when to trigger Article 50 that will start the formal and legal process to leave the European Union will not be taken until after the Conservatives replace David Cameron as party leader and Prime Minister by October. It is believed that the new Prime Minister will decide when to trigger Article 50. There will then be a negotiation process to redefine the terms of the UK relationship with Europe, and the period between invoking Article 50 and our eventual exit from the EU is expected to last at least two years.

When will we have some certainty about implications for research?
The full potential of the implications of the referendum outcome may not be known for some time, possibly until the period of negotiation is complete. STFC and RCUK are actively working with government on issues related to research and we will provide further information when it is available. Our ambition is that the UK remains one of the best places in the world to do research, to innovate and grow business. This can only be realised if UK researchers are able to engage with brightest minds, the best organisations and facilities wherever they are placed in the world.

Will this have any impact on the government’s plans for UKRI and reform of the higher education landscape?
The government is expected to continue taking forward the legislation that was set before Parliament in the Queen’s Speech, including the Higher Education and Research Bill.

How will STFC ensure we get the best deal for research?
STFC has built up strong relationships with BIS, the Research Councils and RCUK and will continue to work closely with these organisations over Europe. The UK Research Office (UKRO), which is the Brussels office of RCUK, will play a facilitation role between the UK research community and all relevant stakeholders over the coming period. This work includes working closely with the Research Councils and collating questions from its other subscribers to give a common and strong UK voice.
References:
PM Commons Statement on the result of the EU referendum: 27th June 2016:

Statement from Jo Johnson MP, Minister for Universities and Science, on higher education and research following the EU referendum: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/statement-on-higher-education-and-research-following-the-eu-referendum

Leading the world in the new age of global science, speech by Jo Johnson MP, Minister for Universities and Science, at the Wellcome Trust

European commissioner Carlos Moedas reassures UK researchers post-Brexit
i. The SAP reinforced the fact that the UK science community greatly benefits from European networks and the European ecosystem, and as such had grave concerns about the future state of the relationship between the UK and the EU post-Brexit. It was highlighted that the reality is that UK researchers are not being invited to be part of European partnerships as much as before the referendum results. The SAP enquired whether there had been a risk analysis, nationally and in the UKRI, of which research areas would be the most affected by Brexit. Additionally, the SAP queried whether an estimate of the cost of Brexit so far for the research community had been calculated.

ii. responded that all is being done to reassure researchers and maintain research and innovation at the top of the political agenda, recognising that science is a great asset to the economy. As a UKRI organisation, there is now a stronger voice to utilise than as a single research council. The UKRO FAQs on UK Participation in EU Funding for Research, Innovation and Higher Education, to be shared with the SAP, is an important document containing these assurances, and can be shared by the SAP with European partners to confirm UK research organisations can still be part of EU projects. indicated that the cost of Brexit is still being quantified, and that the risk analysis would be considered.

*Names redacted as exemption 40 (personal information) applies.*