



## AcSS and CfSS response to the EU Home Affairs Sub-Committee inquiry into Brexit: EU Student Exchanges and Funding for University Research

1. The Academy of Social Sciences and its Campaign for Social Science have [long argued](#) that retaining the closest possible association with the EU framework programmes, and access to exchange programmes like Erasmus+, are necessary to ensure the continued vibrancy and vitality of the UK science and research sector. This would not only help safeguard research funding and continued opportunities for international collaboration, but would also help ensure a continued flow of international talent and skills into UK higher education. It is essential that trans-national collaborative networks are strengthened and the continuous flow of ideas supported so as to enhance the UK's prominent position within global science, including the social sciences, and that this also pays due attention to local and regional development needs across the UK. **Government should continue to support the competition of ideas across all disciplines, rather than narrowing focus to a limited disciplinary base, given the breadth of evidence outlining the social, economic and environmental benefits that dynamic and diverse university research brings to all parts of the UK.**

### FUNDING AND COLLABORATION

2. **The Academy and its Campaign believe that the UK government should take all steps necessary for continued UK participation in Horizon 2020, and the closest possible association with Horizon Europe (Framework Programme 9).**
3. In previous framework programmes (such as FP7 and Horizon 2020), there have been three types of participants: (1) the EU countries themselves, (2) associated countries, (3) and other third country participants.
  - a. EU country participants (Category 1) determine the shape and scope of the framework programmes and naturally have full rights to participate in all aspects of those programmes.<sup>1</sup>
  - b. Associated countries (Category 2) are those third party countries who have negotiated an agreement to fully 'participate ... under the same conditions as EU Member States.'<sup>2</sup> They are fully eligible for funding in the same way as EU countries, their researchers can be principal investigators and lead projects, and their institutions may host principal investigators (and thus projects).<sup>3</sup> While they pay into the programmes, associated countries have not been previously been allowed any formal role in deciding its content or direction. They may, however, attempt to influence its content during the consultative phase in the years before its regulations are finalised. Historically, associated countries have been those in the process of EU accession, EFTA countries, or states that had been previously associated with FP7 according to Article 7 of the H2020 regulations.<sup>4</sup> For EFTA countries like Switzerland, association to H2020 hinged on maintaining freedom of movement.<sup>5</sup> Fifteen countries held this status as of 29 April 2016,<sup>6</sup> and it should be

noted that historically association agreements have taken some time to be concluded and ratified.

- c. Finally, *'other' third country participants* (Category 3) must negotiate bi-lateral agreements with the EU. Their researchers are 'not automatically eligible for funding', and must find their own sources of funding for their projects.<sup>7</sup> Researchers from these countries have only been able to lead projects if they are 'engaged and hosted by a Host Institution based in an EU Member State or an Associated Country for the whole duration of the grant.'<sup>8</sup>

4. **We recognise and welcome that the UK government has already taken some of the steps needed to participate in EU research programmes.** The Orderly UK Withdrawal Agreement provides for the UK to 'continue to participate in the Union programmes financed by the MFF 2014-2020',<sup>9</sup> confirming its participation in Horizon 2020 at least until the year 2020. This is dependent, however, on the UK avoiding leaving the EU with a 'no deal' scenario. **The government also pledged in Autumn 2016 to underwrite research awards made to UK researchers under Horizon 2020.** This is intended to 'support UK Horizon 2020 applicants to continue to collaborate with European partners and prepare quality bids to Horizon 2020' in the context of a no deal scenario. However, if there is no deal, researchers would only be able to submit such bids with the rights of an 'associated country' up until exit day in March 2019, after which applicants would be submitting under the same terms as other third country participants 'without the automatic right of participation.'<sup>10</sup> **It should be noted that leaving the EU without a deal would, therefore, have implications for members of the UK Science and Innovation community, even if they were eventually able to attain association with Horizon Europe.**
5. The Orderly UK Withdrawal Agreement also says that the UK 'may wish to participate in *some* [emphasis added] Union budgetary programmes of the new MFF post-2020 as a non-Member State', striking a hopeful tone for both Horizon Europe and participation in programs like Erasmus+ and its successor after 2021. It is vital however that this participation goes beyond STEM subjects to include the social sciences, as these are essential to address the social, economic and environmental challenges facing the UK and the EU. With social science expertise essential for tackling these issues, we maintain that the Government's commitment to 'strengthening the UK's world leading science base' should extend to *all* sciences. In general, we think it would be important for the quality of the UK's entire research and science base if UK governments did not attempt to cherry-pick which programmes or projects they might support, but instead committed themselves to support any projects which were successful under the very competitive EU funding regimes.
6. We therefore welcome the government's statement that it will 'explore association in research and innovation programmes, including Horizon Europe,' in its July 2018 white paper on the [Future Relationship Between the United Kingdom and the European Union](#). There has been an expression of a desire to 'explore forging a more ambitious and close partnership with the EU than any yet agreed between the EU and a non-EU country' within the government's future partnership paper on '[Collaboration on Science and Innovation](#)'. **However, while we**

**welcome these expressions of support in principle, in order to enhance the health and excellence of UK science, including the social sciences, we believe practical steps to ensure continued participation in these programmes are essential.**

7. Overall, the UK received €3.4 billion more than it paid in to EU research, development and innovation activities from 2007 to 2013. The social sciences especially were beneficiaries, ranking first among EU member states for total ERC starting grants between 2007 and 2015, and first in total advanced awards between 2008 and 2014. Indeed, UK academics obtained over 31% of the ERC's Advanced Grant awards over this period in the social sciences and the humanities.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, the amount of EU funding for the social sciences increased over this period – with the amount of EU government funding received by the UK social sciences in 2012/13 reaching almost half of that awarded to it by the UK research councils, and nearing what the UK social sciences receive from the UK government directly.<sup>12</sup>
8. Through participation in H2020 and future framework programmes, the social sciences are able to enhance our understanding and help tackle many of the grand challenges and societal challenges. These include projects on the environment, ageing,<sup>13</sup> poverty, housing, population growth, educational outcomes, economic productivity, health-related behaviour,<sup>14</sup> international growth and development, and regional growth and development in advanced economies. This involves investigating issues ranging from the effects of regulation and taxation and other system-wide policy interventions, to those focused on individual behaviour change. UK social sciences have out-performed other UK disciplines and the social sciences in other countries in winning framework grant funding to address precisely these issues.<sup>15</sup> This steady rise in EU funding for UK social science research in recent years has provided a much needed offset to the corresponding decline in domestic research council and departmental funding.<sup>16</sup> It is, therefore, vital that the remarkable performance of the social sciences and humanities in attracting EU funding is recognised by Government. We are currently compiling case studies that demonstrate clearly how EU funding has led to research that is of direct economic, social and environmental benefit to the UK and will be publishing these in the New Year.
9. Access to the framework programmes helps our ability to attract and retain world-class talent across all parts of the UK. In a university system that is globally recognised for its excellence, international-origin staff bring essential knowledge and skills. Not only is this true for STEM subjects, but also for the social sciences. Three out of every 10 academics working in UK Higher Education Institutions are of international origin. In economics, 61% of academic staff are of international origin, as are 54% in those in finance, 46% in development studies, and 43% in politics.<sup>17</sup> The closest possible participation in framework programmes is vital if we are to continue to attract world-class researchers.
10. [Pascal Lamy's July 2017 LAB-FAB-APP report](#) recommended to the EU that association to future programmes like Horizon Europe should be based on excellence and financial contributions, without mentioning freedom of movement requirements. This opens the possibility that the UK could seek future association with Horizon Europe, while still regaining control over migration. Significantly, it would help the UK to maintain its key role in the

European Research Area and to continue to engage in mutually beneficial international research collaboration, regardless of the eventual post-Brexit model of EU-engagement that is agreed.

11. Article 12 of the current draft compromise regulations for Horizon Europe (as of 5 November 2018), seems to confirm the possibility of full third party ‘association’ for countries not covered by the traditional routes of being a country in the EFTA or EEA, an acceding country, or one covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy. As it stands now, it appears that a country like the UK – regardless of the deal it brokers – could seek an association agreement so long as it meets ‘the following criteria:
- i. a good capacity in science, technology and innovation;
  - ii. commitment to a rules-based open market economy, including fair and equitable dealing with intellectual property rights, respect of human rights, backed by democratic institutions;
  - iii. active promotion of policies to improve the economic and social well-being of citizens.’
12. We hope and believe that association is therefore possible, but note that a no-deal scenario will make it far harder to reach an association agreement with the EU. International cooperation has played a significant role in developing UK research expertise, capacity, and quantitative skills in areas like health policy and inequality, social mobility, and innovation, to name but a few. Achieving the closest possible associated status with Horizon Europe would not only have funding implications (especially for the social sciences), but would also entail the loss of important international leadership roles on collaborative projects. This is especially so in the light of [recent calls](#) by MEPs to increase the budget allocations for EU Horizon programmes to €135 billion, rather than the €83.5bn allocated by the Commission.<sup>18</sup> Failure by the UK government to prioritise and underwrite participation in these enormous programmes of research would lock UK researchers out of world-leading projects across all subjects, and could risk damage to the excellence of UK science and social science.

### **Erasmus+/Erasmus**

13. **The Academy and its Campaign believe that it is important the Government continues to participate in the ERAMUS+ programme and its anticipated successor scheme following the UK’s withdrawal from the European Union, given both the tangible and intangible benefits that such programmes bring to individuals and society as a whole.**
14. We welcome the fact that the Government has expressed a commitment to participate in the Erasmus+ programme until the end of 2020 as financed by MFF 2014-2020.<sup>19</sup> With the UK Government continuing to encourage universities and other organisations in the UK to participate in and bid for Erasmus+ programme funding, we welcome the recognition of the value that international exchanges and collaboration throughout education, training, youth and sport bring to individuals and society.

15. Participation in the Erasmus+ programme brings many benefits to the UK through student and staff mobility. Those UK students who have benefitted from the Erasmus+ programme have been shown to improve their employability through learning new graduate skills and improved outcomes, and this is particularly true of those from disadvantaged backgrounds.<sup>20</sup> Not only is the Erasmus+ programme advantageous for students, but it also helps foster new partnerships bringing valuable economic and social benefit for wider UK society.<sup>21</sup> This enriches many longer-term intangible benefits associated with the Erasmus+ programme.<sup>22</sup> The Erasmus+ programme also facilitates cultural exchange and widening of participants' horizons, which is essential in an inter-connected world. At the same time, participation in the Erasmus+ programme generates benefits for local economies by attracting international students and staff, who spend and generate money in the regions in which they come to live and work.
16. For these reasons, the Academy of Social Sciences and its Campaign are encouraged that the Government has signalled that 'the UK is open to exploring participation in the successor scheme' of the Erasmus Programme for 2021-27, 'and has proposed a new UK-EU culture and education accord that "provides for UK participation in EU programmes"'.<sup>23</sup>
17. Participation in Erasmus+ has risen annually from 14,801 students in 2014/15, to 15,645 in 2015/16.<sup>24</sup> Whilst students travelling abroad has so far been greater among other EU member states compared to the UK, numbers in both groups have been trending upwards.<sup>25</sup> We anticipate this trend will continue. It is therefore important that the UK government continues to support outward mobility for students and staff through such programmes, and to encourage a reciprocal openness so that we can enjoy the full benefits of the Erasmus+ programme and its successor. Again, we view this as essential to the long-term health and excellence of UK science and social science.

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<sup>1</sup> 'EU Programmes with EEA EFTA Participation,' European Free Trade Association, accessed May 31, 2016,

<http://www.efta.int/eea/eu-programmes>

<sup>2</sup> 'Participant Portal H2020 Online Manual, International Cooperation,' DG Research & Innovation, European Commission, accessed May 31, 2016, [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/cross-cutting-issues/international-cooperation\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/cross-cutting-issues/international-cooperation_en.htm).

<sup>3</sup> The participant portal of the European Commission's Research & Innovation website, defines a 'Host institution' as 'the applicant legal entity that engages and hosts the Principal Investigator', which 'is established in a Member State or an Associated Country.'

('Participant Portal, Support,' DG Research & Innovation, European Commission, accessed May 31, 2016,

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/support/reference\\_terms.html](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/support/reference_terms.html))

<sup>4</sup> Article 7 also states that 'Specific terms and conditions regarding the participation of associated countries in Horizon 2020, including the financial contribution based on the GDP of the associated country, shall be determined by international agreements between the Union and the associated countries. The terms and conditions regarding the association of the EFTA States that are party to the Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA) shall be in accordance with the provisions of that Agreement.'

(Regulation (EU) No 1291/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing Horizon 2020 -

the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) and repealing Decision No 1982/2006/EC, available from:

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/legal\\_basis/fp/h2020-eu-establact\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/legal_basis/fp/h2020-eu-establact_en.pdf))

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.acss.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Professional-Briefings-9-EU-Referendum-Leave-what-next-for-UK-social-science.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> 'Participant Portal H2020 Online Manual, International Cooperation,' DG Research & Innovation, European Commission, accessed May 31, 2016, [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/cross-cutting-issues/international-cooperation\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/cross-cutting-issues/international-cooperation_en.htm).

- <sup>7</sup> 'Participant Portal H2020 Online Manual, International Cooperation,' DG Research & Innovation, European Commission, accessed May 31, 2016, [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/cross-cutting-issues/international-cooperation\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/cross-cutting-issues/international-cooperation_en.htm).
- <sup>8</sup> 'Participant Portal, Frequently Asked Questions, FAQ ID: 2918,' DG Research & Innovation, European Commission, accessed May 31, 2016, <https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/support/faqs/faq-2918.html>.
- <sup>9</sup> *Joint report from the negotiators of the European Union and the United Kingdom Government*, 8 December 2017. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/joint\\_report.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/joint_report.pdf)
- <sup>10</sup> <https://www.researchprofessional.com/0/rr/news/uk/politics/2018/7/Deal-no-deal-and-Horizon-2020-A-guide-for-the-confused.html>
- <sup>11</sup> Linda Hantrais and Ashley Lenihan. (2016) 'The Implications of the EU Referendum for UK Social Science: Post-referendum Options for UK Social Scientists.' Working Paper CIS/2016/03, Centre for International Studies, London School of Economics and Political Science, July 2016. <http://www.lse.ac.uk/international-relations/assets/documents/cis/working-papers/cis-working-paper-2016-03-hantrais-lenihan.pdf>.
- <sup>12</sup> Linda Hantrais and Ashley Lenihan. (2016) 'The Implications of the EU Referendum for UK Social Science: Post-referendum Options for UK Social Scientists.' Working Paper CIS/2016/03, Centre for International Studies, London School of Economics and Political Science, July 2016. <http://www.lse.ac.uk/international-relations/assets/documents/cis/working-papers/cis-working-paper-2016-03-hantrais-lenihan.pdf>. See also: <https://www.ref.ac.uk/2014/media/ref/content/expanel/member/Main%20Panel%20C%20overview%20report.pdf>.
- <sup>13</sup> See: London School of Medicine and Tropical Hygiene, *Social Sciences Shaping Health* (2014) Available at: [https://www.lshrm.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2017-06/social\\_sciences\\_shaping\\_health\\_interactive.pdf](https://www.lshrm.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2017-06/social_sciences_shaping_health_interactive.pdf).
- <sup>14</sup> Campaign for Social Science, *The Health of People: How the social sciences can improve population health* (2017), Available at: [https://campaignforsocialscience.org.uk/wp-content/themes/base\\_theme/assets/images/the\\_health\\_of\\_people.pdf](https://campaignforsocialscience.org.uk/wp-content/themes/base_theme/assets/images/the_health_of_people.pdf)
- <sup>15</sup> Linda Hantrais and Ashley Lenihan. (2016) 'The Implications of the EU Referendum for UK Social Science: Post-referendum Options for UK Social Scientists.' Working Paper CIS/2016/03, Centre for International Studies, London School of Economics and Political Science, July 2016. <http://www.lse.ac.uk/international-relations/assets/documents/cis/working-papers/cis-working-paper-2016-03-hantrais-lenihan.pdf>.
- <sup>16</sup> See: Academy of Social Sciences, *Navigating Brexit: Supporting & Safeguarding UK Higher Education* (2016). Available at: <https://campaignforsocialscience.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Navigating-Brexit-Supporting-and-Safeguarding-UK-Higher-Education-November-2016.pdf>
- <sup>17</sup> Campaign for Social Science, *A World of Talent* (2018) Available at: <https://campaignforsocialscience.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/A-World-of-Talent-International-Staff-at-UK-Universities-the-Future-Migration-System.pdf>
- <sup>18</sup> See Craig Nicholson (2018). 'MEPs agree to push for bigger Horizon Europe budget,' *ResearchProfessional.com*, November 16.
- <sup>19</sup> *Joint report from the negotiators of the European Union and the United Kingdom Government*, 8 December 2017. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/joint\\_report.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/joint_report.pdf)
- <sup>20</sup> European Commission, *The Erasmus Impact Study: Effects of mobility on the skills and employability of students and the internationalisation of higher education institutions* (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2014), [http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/study/2014/erasmus-impact\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/study/2014/erasmus-impact_en.pdf). See also: International Unit, *Gone International: the value of mobility; Report on the 2013/14 graduating cohort* (London: UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016), accessed May 31, 2016, <http://go.international.ac.uk/gone-international-2016-value-mobility>.
- <sup>21</sup> Universities UK, Parliamentary Briefing: Backbench business debate on Erasmus+ (2018) Available at: <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2018/uuk-parliamentary-briefing-erasmus-backbench-debate-june-2018.pdf>
- <sup>22</sup> 'The Guardian view on cultural ties and Europe: in praise of shared values and ideals,' *The Guardian*, May 30, 2016. European Commission, *The Erasmus Impact Study: Effects of mobility on the skills and employability of students and the internationalisation of higher education institutions* (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2014), [http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/study/2014/erasmus-impact\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/study/2014/erasmus-impact_en.pdf). See also: International Unit, *Gone International: the value of mobility; Report on the 2013/14 graduating cohort* (London: UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016), accessed May 31, 2016, <http://go.international.ac.uk/gone-international-2016-value-mobility>.
- <sup>23</sup> Erasmus+: Brexit update (2018) accessed 15 November 2018 <https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/brexit-update>
- <sup>24</sup> Universities UK, Parliamentary Briefing: Backbench business debate on Erasmus+ (2018) Available at: <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2018/uuk-parliamentary-briefing-erasmus-backbench-debate-june-2018.pdf>
- <sup>25</sup> International Unit. *International Higher Education in Facts and Figures* (London: Higher Education International Unit, 2015), 16.