

First Minister sets out vision for trade post-Brexit

The Brexit trade paper, supported by an economic impact analysis from Cardiff Business School, argues the Welsh economy is best protected by retaining full access to the European Single Market and membership of a customs union.

The paper sets out the severe impact a hard Brexit would have on Welsh jobs and the economy. If the UK were to move to World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules, the Welsh economy could shrink by 8% – 10%, which would be the equivalent of between £1,500 and £2,000 per person in Wales.

The report shows the Welsh economy would be disproportionately impacted by a hard Brexit and identifies that the sectors most at risk from tariffs are automotive, chemicals, steel and electrical engineering, while the aerospace industry is most at risk from non-tariff barriers. These are sectors which are amongst the most productive in Wales and provide a large number of highly-skilled, well-paid jobs.

The trade paper calls on the UK government to provide evidence of how new trade deals would replace the benefits of access to the EU. The Welsh Government also wants decisions on new trading relationships with the EU and the wider world to be taken in partnership with devolved administrations to fully reflect the interests of all parts of the UK.

Launching the document at Zodiac Aerospace in Cwmbran – a world leader in aerospace equipment and systems – the First Minister said:

“Welsh exports are worth £14.6bn each year, with 61% of Welsh exports and just under half of our imports going to and from the EU. Wales is currently attracting record levels of inward investment, which is largely due to our access to the EU’s 500m customers.

“As our trade paper highlights, moving to WTO rules and the imposition of tariffs could have a catastrophic impact on our lamb sector and on the Welsh shellfish industry, which currently exports around 90% of their produce to the EU.

“These hard facts underline what is at stake if the UK government fails to get the right deal for the UK or we crash out of the EU without one.

“I fundamentally disagree with the Prime Minister’s well worn phrase that ‘no deal is better than a bad deal’ and believe leaving the Single Market and the Customs Unions would be hugely damaging for Welsh businesses and jobs, with our agricultural, food producers and automotive sectors being particularly hard hit.

“Ministers in London have yet to show us any evidence of the benefits of leaving the Single Market and the Customs Union or how new trade deals would replace the benefits of access to the EU. In fact, UK government documents that have come to light this week chime with our own analysis of a post-Brexit economy.

Today’s paper is a constructive, evidence-based contribution as the UK government prepares for phase 2 if the EU exit negotiations.”

The First Minister added:

“The paper I am launching today is a positive vision of Wales as an outward looking, globally trading nation, open to the wider world while maintaining our strong trade with the EU. It sets out the need for a post-Brexit deal that enables Welsh goods to keep flowing into the EU without new obstacles or costs, whilst recognising the significant trading opportunities outside of Europe.

“I urge the UK government to give serious consideration to our proposals and work with us to develop a post-Brexit trade policy which protects Welsh jobs and the economy.”

[Health Secretary confirms Perjeta \(pertuzumab\) will be available on NHS in Wales to treat advanced breast cancer](#)

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has today recommended Perjeta (pertuzumab) be made routinely available. In preparation for the NICE recommendation, NHS Wales has been working closely with the medicine’s manufacturer Roche, to reach an agreement to ensure it is available.

Under the terms of the Welsh Government’s New Treatment Fund health boards in Wales must now make Perjeta available within 60 days.

Perjeta provides treatment for people whose HER2-positive breast cancer has returned to the breast but is inoperable, or where it has spread to other parts of the body.

Vaughan Gething said:

“I’m pleased that Perjeta (pertuzumab) will now be routinely available on the Welsh NHS for people with advanced breast cancer. The Welsh Government’s flagship £80m New Treatment Fund is making more medicines available quicker than ever before. On average, new medicines are now being made available in only 10 days following recommendation. This means people with life-threatening conditions are getting much faster access to the latest medicines when they need them.”

The announcement could potentially benefit up to 50 women a year in Wales.

Dr Catherine Bale, Consultant Medical Oncologist, Associate Medical Director, Wales Cancer Network said:

“This is extremely welcome news for our ladies with advanced breast cancer who will now have the opportunity to benefit from this effective treatment which can both prolong life and maintain quality of life. Making effective treatments available in a timely way to the population of Wales remains a priority and the New Treatment Fund is making this a reality for patients now.”

[Latest categorisation reveals improvement in school performance](#)

Introduced in 2014, the National School Categorisation System places schools into one of four colour-coded support categories to demonstrate the level of support they need – green, yellow, amber and red.

There are now more schools in the green and yellow categories when compared to last year. Green schools require just four days of support and yellow schools receive up to 10 days of support.

This year sees a small change to the factors that decide a school’s category. Instead of just looking at areas such as performance, including GCSE results, there is now a much broader assessment that considers areas such as teacher assessments from other subjects, wellbeing and the quality of teaching and learning.

The purpose of including a broader and more sophisticated range of factors is to understand the kind of support needed by a school and to give parents a better picture of how a school is performing.

Out of over 1,500 schools across Wales only 4 appealed against their category.

In summary:

- 85.3 per cent of primary schools and 68.3 per cent of secondary schools are now in the green and yellow categories. This increase from last year continues the upward trend since 2015.
- There has been a very small rise in the proportion of red schools – those identified as needing most support – by 0.4 percentage points in the primary sector and 2.9 percentage points in the secondary sector.
- 45 per cent of special schools have been categorised as green, and needing less support, with no schools categorised as red and in need of most support.

Cabinet Secretary for Education Kirsty Williams said:

“I’m pleased to see that more schools are now in the green and yellow categories, which continues with the upward trend we have seen over the past few years.

“These schools have a key role to play in supporting other schools to improve by sharing their expertise, skills and good practice.

“Last September, I announced that to further raise schools standards we would make changes to the school categorisation system following advice from the OECD.

“As well as taking into account a much broader range of factors about a school’s ability to improve, categorisation now places more of an emphasis on discussions about how the school could improve – leading to a tailored programme of support, challenge and intervention.

“I’m confident that the changes we have made to the categorisation process are in the best interests of pupils and will help ensure schools are given the right support at the right time.”

[Wales bans the intimate piercing of under 18s](#)

The new law, coming into force today is making it an offence for piercing practitioners to arrange and/ or carry out an intimate piercing on under 18s.

The aim of the new law is to protect children and young people from the potential health harms which can be caused by an intimate piercing.

The change will come under the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017, prohibiting the intimate piercing of persons under the age of 18 in Wales. It will also be an offence to 'make arrangements' to perform an intimate piercing on a child or young person under the age of 18 in Wales.

The intimate piercing of children and young people under 18 could also be considered a child protection issue. By undergoing an intimate piercing procedure, young people under the age of 18 may be placed in a vulnerable position.

During a visit to Frontier Tattoo Parlour in Cardiff to discuss the new law, the Chief Medical Officer for Wales, Dr Frank Atherton said;

"In line with The Public Health (Wales) Act 2017, this new law is in place to ensure we can protect children and young people's health and wellbeing.

"It's concerning that a third of young people with intimate piercings have reported complications following a procedure. The child protection issues that could also arise from this scenario highlight even further, the importance of implementing such a law.

"I hope this piece of legislation will help to reduce these issues, and that practitioners understand the importance of obtaining proof of age beforehand".

The Chief Dental Officer for Wales, Dr Colette Bridgman said:

"Tongue piercing can lead to lasting damage to teeth and gums, and can cause serious swelling in the mouth that can affect breathing. Many dentists in Wales have seen patients who have permanent harm following piercing and dental teams in Wales really welcome this new law".

A study in England found that amongst individuals aged 16-24 complications were reported with around a third of all body piercings. The same study found a higher incidence of complications in connection with certain types of body piercings, including intimate piercings. Problems were most likely to be reported in the case of tongue piercing (50%), followed by piercings of the genitals (45%) and the nipples (38%).

As young people continue to grow during their teenage years, an intimate piercing performed at a young age could result in further complications arising as their bodies develop. Young people may also be less likely to have the experience or knowledge of how to clean or maintain an intimate piercing, leading to an increased risk of infection.

Local authority enforcement officers and Police Officers have received

training in advance of the new law coming into effect to enable them to enforce the new legislation effectively.

Intimate piercing practitioners operating in Wales are encouraged to ensure they have a rigid system in place to help them confirm proof of age, and to obtain signed consent for each procedure to avoid prosecution and a fine.

[Fly-grazing incidents down following landmark Act](#)

Three years on from the introduction by the Welsh Government of a law to address “flygrazing”, a new report shows it has had a positive impact in reducing the number of horses reported and removed due to fly-grazing straying or abandonment.

Thursday 01 February 2018

The report by Equiventus Ltd shows a clear link between the reduction in this behaviour and the approach taken to the problem in Wales, including the swift introduction of the Control of Horses (Wales) Act 2014.

Other key interventions include an increase in education programmes for horse owners, a rise in public awareness of the problem and improved communication and collaborative working between the key agencies involved.

Welcoming the publication of the report, Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs Lesley Griffiths said

“Last year I commissioned Equiventus Ltd to evaluate the value and effectiveness of the Control of Horses (Wales) Act and to consider whether this had resulted in benefits for communities across Wales.

“It is positive news indeed the Act has played such an important role in reducing the number of horses reported and ultimately removed due to fly grazing, straying or abandonment. It is clear from the report’s findings that the Act has made a positive impact on reducing behaviour that has caused so many difficulties for the communities affected and for the animals involved.

“However, while the report by Equiventus Ltd is very good news we should not let our guard down and must continue with the

partnership approach, with local authorities, the Police, landowners and welfare organisations to deliver on the report's recommendations. I am determined to continue to do what's needed to combat the blight on communities caused by incidents of fly grazing, straying and abandonment of horses and ponies."

A copy of the report and the Welsh Government's response can be found on the Welsh Government [website](#).

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