

European collaboration is vital to Welsh universities

Housing and Regeneration Minister Rebecca Evans, who is the lead Minister for the Welsh Government on the Ministerial Forum on EU negotiations, met Professor Colin Riordan, who sits on the Welsh Government's European Advisory Group and Vice-Chancellor of Cardiff University and Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, Innovation and Enterprise, Professor Kim Graham.

Rebecca Evans said:

"We heard from Professor Riordan and Professor Graham how much they value collaboration with partner universities and how vital it is that the UK continues to participate in the Erasmus+ and Horizon programmes.

"We share this view, which is why we have consistently lobbied the UK Government on the continued participation. Since 2014 Wales has received over €40m from Erasmus+, supporting more than 200 projects across a range of sectors. In addition Wales has secured more than €98m from the Horizon 2020 programme.

"While the investment is important in demonstrating the value of participation, our involvement goes much further by raising the quality of research and innovation and extending Wales' global reach."

Cabinet Secretary for Education Kirsty Williams, who is also attending the Brexit meeting, said:

"A no deal Brexit would be extremely damaging for our higher education sector. Not only would it deny our students and institutions access to vital opportunities but would also jeopardise those academic links that universities in Wales have worked so hard to establish over the past 31 years.

"We want Wales to continue to be a global and outward looking nation but you can't do this in isolation. That's why a programme like Erasmus+ is so beneficial because it means that staff, pupils and students can learn from what their peers are doing across Europe and bring that knowledge, expertise and international outlook back with them. These benefits reach across our schools, FE and HE institutions, training providers and adult education and youth organisations.

"We have also repeatedly and strenuously raised the need for the UK Government to share information and operational plans with us as we

work with our institutions on planning post-Brexit.”