

Statement to Parliament: Exiting the European Union: Ministerial statement 2 February 2017

With permission, Mr Speaker, I wish to make a statement on the government's plans for exiting the European Union.

Today we are publishing a government White Paper on the UK's exit from, and new partnership with, the European Union.

The government has made clear that it will honour the choice made by the people of the UK on 23 June 2016 to leave the European Union.

This House is currently considering a straightforward Bill that will give the Prime Minister the authority to trigger Article 50 of the Treaty of the European Union and begin the negotiation over our exit.

That is not a Bill about whether or not we leave the EU, or even how we do so, but about implementing a decision already taken by the people of the UK in last year's referendum.

But we have always said we would detail our strategic aims for the negotiation, and seek to build a national consensus wherever possible.

This White Paper sets out those aims and the thinking behind them.

It confirms the Prime Minister's vision of an independent, truly global UK and an ambitious future relationship with the EU.

This is based on the 12 principles that will guide the government in fulfilling the democratic will of the people of the UK. These are:

- providing certainty and clarity where we can as we approach the negotiations
- taking control of our own laws and statute book
- strengthening the Union by securing a deal that works for the whole of the UK
- maintaining the common travel area and protecting our strong historic ties with Ireland
- controlling immigration from the European Union
- securing the rights for European Union citizens already living in the UK and the rights of UK nationals living in the European Union
- protecting and enhancing existing workers' rights

- ensuring free trade with European markets, forging a new strategic partnership with the EU including a bold and ambitious free trade agreement and mutually beneficial new customs agreement
- forging ambitious free trade agreements with other countries across the world
- ensuring the United Kingdom remains the best place for science and innovation
- co-operating in the fight against crime and terrorism
- and, finally, delivering a smooth, orderly exit from the European Union

These 12 objectives amount to one goal: a new, positive and constructive partnership between Britain and the European Union, that works in our mutual interest.

All of them are key. But let me highlight some of the specific issues in the White Paper.

It reiterates our firm view that it is in the UK's interest for the European Union to succeed politically and economically. I can't say too firmly, we want the EU to succeed politically and economically.

And so we approach the negotiation to come in a spirit of goodwill and working to an outcome in our mutual benefit.

We recognise the EU's principle of the 4 freedoms, and so the UK will leave the single market.

Instead we seek a new strategic partnership. A bold and ambitious free trade and customs agreement that should ensure the most free and frictionless trade in goods and services that is possible.

That will be to our mutual benefit. As the White Paper notes, we export £230 billion worth of goods and services to the EU, while importing £290 billion worth of goods and services from the EU every year.

It also sets out how after we leave the European Union, the UK will look to significantly increase its trade with the fastest growing export markets in the world.

While we cannot sign new trade deals while still members, we can and are preparing the ground for them. This means updating the terms of our membership of the World Trade Organisation, of which the UK was a founding member – as GAC in the first instance.

Modern free trade agreements require mechanisms to resolve disputes and to provide certainty for businesses on both sides. So the White Paper examines precedents in this area, and makes clear that we will negotiate an arrangement that respects UK sovereignty.

In terms of clarity and certainty, we recognise the need to provide it wherever we can during a period when some uncertainty is inevitable.

So we will bring forward another White Paper, on the Great Repeal Bill, which will lay out our approach in detail.

This legislation will mean the repeal of the European Communities Act and end the authority of EU law and convert it into domestic law at the point of exit.

That means that the position we start from, a common regulatory framework with the EU Single Market, is unprecedented.

The negotiation will not be about bringing together 2 divergent systems. It is about finding the best way for the benefits of the common systems and frameworks that currently enable the UK and EU businesses to trade with and operate in each other's markets to continue when we leave the EU.

The White Paper also sets out that we will take control of our own laws, so that they are made in London, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast, and ensure that we can control the number of people coming to the UK from the European Union.

And the jurisdiction of the Court of Justice of the European Union in the UK will come to an end.

It will be for Parliament and the devolved legislatures to determine significant changes to reflect our new position.

I have said at this dispatch box before that there will be any number of votes on substantive policy choices. To that end, the White Paper makes clear that we expect to bring forward separate legislation in areas such as customs and immigration.

Delivering a smooth, mutually beneficial exit, avoiding a disruptive cliff-edge, will be the key.

A never-ending transitional status is emphatically not what we seek. But a phased process of implementation of new arrangements – whether immigration controls, customs systems, the way we cooperate on criminal and civil justice matters, or future regulatory and legal frameworks for business – will be necessary for both sides.

As the White Paper says, the time needed to phase in new arrangements in different areas may vary.

As one of the most important actors in global affairs, we will continue to work with the EU to preserve UK and European security, fight crime and terrorism and uphold justice. We must work more closely, not less, in these areas.

We will continue to seek to build a national consensus around our negotiating position.

So we are talking all the time to business, civil society, the public sector, representatives of the regions.

We have engaged the devolved administrations in this process and, while no part of the UK can have a veto, are determined to deliver an outcome that works for the whole of our country.

We continue to analyse the impact of our exit across the breadth of the UK economy, covering more than 50 sectors, 58 at last count, to shape our negotiating position.

To conclude, the referendum result was not a vote to turn our back on Europe. It was a vote of confidence in the UK's ability to succeed in the world and an expression of optimism that our best days are still to come.

Whatever the outcome of our negotiations, we seek a more open, outward-looking, confident and fairer UK that works for everyone.

The White Paper is available on the government website. I have arranged for copies to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

[Read the White Paper.](#)

Press release: Benefit cap restores fairness to the system

New analysis has revealed how the cap restored fairness to the system – before they were capped, nearly 180 households were getting the equivalent of a pre-tax salary of at least £57,000 in benefits.

Since its introduction in 2013, 26,000 households who were previously capped have moved into work, with a further 14,000 reducing their housing benefit claim, or ending their claim altogether. Anyone eligible for Working Tax Credits is exempt from the cap, providing a clear incentive to move into work.

The new benefit cap, limiting the total amount workless households can receive in benefits to £20,000 across the UK or £23,000 within Greater London, is now in place across the country following its successful rollout.

Work and Pensions Secretary Damian Green said:

Since the benefit cap was introduced in 2013, people in tens of thousands of households have moved into work. The new lower cap continues to build on that success by incentivising work.

There are over three quarters of a million job vacancies across the country, and we are determined to do everything we can to help people into work.

We are creating a country which works for everyone, and the lower cap ensures the system remains fair to both the taxpayers who pay for it and to those people who need it.

Anyone eligible for Working Tax Credits is exempt from the cap, providing a clear incentive to move into work. People claiming Carer's Allowance, Guardian's Allowance, and most disability benefits are also exempt from the cap, ensuring those who cannot work are supported.

The Department for Work and Pensions is also working closely with local authorities, and will have provided them with over £1 billion of Discretionary Housing Payments by the end of this Parliament to support people transitioning to our reforms, as the new cap is introduced.

The new benefit cap is set at £20,000 a year outside London and £23,000 in Greater London to reflect higher rent costs. For single people without children, the cap is £15,410 in Greater London and £13,400 elsewhere.

Anyone working and receiving Working Tax Credits is exempt from the cap, as are households where someone receives Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Personal Independence Payment (PIP), or the support component of Employment and Support Allowance (ESA).

Those claiming Carer's Allowance or Guardian's Allowance are exempt from the new cap, in recognition of the valuable contribution they make to society.

Statistics on the new lower benefit cap will be released in May 2017.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5111

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[News story: CMA welcomes new Project Director](#)

From:

First published:

2 February 2017

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has today announced the

appointment of Alison Gold as a Project Director.

Alison joins from the BBC, where she was Head of Strategy at the BBC Trust.

Daniel Gordon, CMA Senior Director, Markets, said:

I am delighted to welcome Alison to the CMA. She impressed us deeply with her leadership abilities and experience of public policy gained at the BBC Trust, and I am very confident that she will be a very strong addition to the CMA's senior leadership team.

Alison is the fourth and final recruit to join us following the last successful campaign, which attracted a very competitive field. Fred Houwen, Tim Geer and Lucilia Falsarella-Pereira have each already started in their new posts.

Notes for editors

1. The CMA is the UK's primary competition and consumer authority. It is an independent non-ministerial government department with responsibility for carrying out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries and enforcing competition and consumer law. For CMA updates, follow us on Twitter [@CMAgovuk](#), [Flickr](#), [LinkedIn](#) and like our [Facebook](#) page.
2. Alison Gold joins from the BBC where she was Head of Strategy at the BBC Trust, running a core part of the BBC's governance and regulatory system and acting as a senior adviser to the Chairman and Board of the BBC. She was previously a strategy management consultant at KPMG and at a media sector specialist advisory firm.
3. Media enquiries should be directed to Simon Belgard (simon.belgard@cma.gsi.gov.uk, 020 3738 6472).

[Press release: Huge response to dangerous driving proposals](#)

From:

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2 February 2017

Thousands of people have had their say on plans to introduce life sentences for killer drivers.

The consultation, which opened on 5 December 2016, attracted over 1,000 replies in just 3 days, reaching more than 9,000 when it closed yesterday (1 February 2017).

The overwhelming response is one of the highest for a Ministry of Justice (MOJ) consultation, and included contributions from victims, bereaved families, road safety groups and charities.

Justice Minister Sam Gyimah said:

Killer drivers ruin lives. While we can never compensate for the loss of a loved one, we are clear that the punishment must fit the crime.

So I would like to thank the thousands who have contributed to this consultation. We will now carefully consider each of these and will set out our plans as soon as possible.

The consultation sought views on whether the current maximum penalties available to the courts should be increased.

The proposals included:

- increasing the maximum sentence for causing death by dangerous driving from 14 years to life
- increasing the maximum sentence for causing death by careless driving whilst under the influence of drink or drugs from 14 years to life
- creating a new offence of causing serious injury by careless driving, with a maximum sentence of 3 years
- increasing minimum driving bans for those convicted of causing death.

The plans build on the government's pledge to consider sentencing powers available to the courts for the most serious driving offences. The government will consider the responses and set out its plans in the coming months.

Notes to editors

- The UK has one of the best road safety records in the world – but deaths and serious injuries cause devastation to victims and their families.
- The [consultation](#) looked at the most serious road offences. It did not cover other driving or regulatory offences such as speeding, the setting of drink drive limits, the basic offences of careless or dangerous driving and driving whilst using a mobile phone.
- This follows further action in 2015, when the government increased the maximum custodial sentence for causing death whilst driving when disqualified from 2 to 10 years. A new offence of causing serious injury when driving whilst disqualified was also created, with a maximum penalty of 4 years imprisonment. It also brought into force the statutory requirement to extend a driving ban to take account of any time spent in custody.
- Sentencing remains a matter for independent judges, with decisions made

based on the full facts of the case.

- For more information call the MOJ press office on 020 3334 3503 or 020 3334 3529.

[News story: UK invests in new submarine training school on the Clyde](#)

HM Treasury this week approved the Initial Gate Business Case for the new submarine school to be built at Scotland's largest military establishment this week. Final design approval is expected soon, which will allow work to begin later this year.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

We are now making a long-term investment of hundreds of millions of pounds to improve and upgrade the waterfront at Clyde to make sure it is ready to support the United Kingdom's whole submarine fleet.

As well as a boost to the Scottish economy, this will also bring welcome stability for our personnel, who work hard to help keep Britain safe and secure.

The new schools will provide academic and technical training for all Royal Naval personnel entering the submarine service from 2022. It is an important step for both the Royal Navy and Scotland as it means all submariners' careers, whether afloat or ashore, will be principally conducted from Faslane as part of a £1.3 billion investment in making the Clyde Britain's submarine hub.

All 11 Royal Navy submarines will be based at HMNB Clyde from 2020, seeing the number of people employed at the base will rise from 6,800 people to 8,200. The school will support the Astute hunter killer submarines, as well as the delivery of training for the new Dreadnought nuclear deterrent boats, which provide the United Kingdom with its continuous nuclear deterrent.

Head of the Submarine Service, Rear Admiral John Weale said:

Our new single integrated operating base will make significant improvements to the work-life balance of our 5,000 submariners.

By putting our boats and training in one place, our submariners can

put down roots in Scotland knowing that they are no longer required to commute from one end of the country to another.

The re-location of submarine training from HMS Sultan and HMS Raleigh is consistent with the Better Defence Estate Strategy, published in November, which set out the department's plans sets out plans to achieve a more efficient, modern and capability focused defence estate and bring greater harmony to Service families.

Key milestones in the development of a Submarine Centre of specialisation at HM Naval Base Clyde include:

- A drumbeat of arrivals of the last four Astute class submarines on the Clyde due to be commissioned into the Royal Navy between 2018 and 2024 (eventually replacing the Trafalgar class).
- The move of the last two Trafalgar class submarines, HM Submarines Talent and Triumph, to the Clyde in 2019 and 2020 from Devonport (Plymouth). On current plans, the end of service date for Talent is 2021 and for Triumph is 2022.
- The move of the Submarine Escape Rescue Abandonment and Survivability Training capability from Hampshire to the Clyde by 2019.
- A new Nuclear Support Hub, providing modern standard effluent disposal by 2020 which will remain compliant with Scottish and UK environmental standards.
- The Faslane Nuclear Infrastructure Continuous Availability Programme to replace or refurbish Nuclear Facilities by 2024.
- The four Dreadnought nuclear deterrent submarines will start to arrive at Faslane from the early 2030s (replacing the Vanguard-class boats).