
Brexit means...?

The British Academy's Priorities for the Humanities and Social Sciences in the Current Negotiations

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Executive Summary

The result of the referendum on the UK's membership of the EU puts at risk the UK's world-leading research excellence in the humanities and social sciences. Scholarship and research flourish in long-term stable and interconnected frameworks that support people, collaboration, resources and regulation. EU membership has provided such frameworks for the humanities and social sciences in the UK, based on:

- Our ability to attract an international talent pool through our open labour market;
- Working and competing with the best in the EU;
- Having a single regulatory framework that we have helped shape in the EU; and,
- Winning increasing EU funding through models of funding not available in the UK.

The humanities and social sciences face a major challenge as the UK withdraws from the EU if they are to continue to achieve success comparable to that they currently enjoy. The British Academy's top priority is therefore to ensure that the excellence and value of UK-based research, researchers and students in the humanities and social sciences are recognised and supported in the various agreements that will be required during and after the Article 50 process.

The UK is currently a world-leading player in research in the humanities and social sciences. These disciplines are vital for our future, and the academic communities working in these disciplines deserve the Government's recognition and support. The Government should bear in mind the contribution of the humanities and social sciences in an economy that is more than three-quarters services, professions, and craft-oriented.

World-class research in the humanities and social sciences is outward looking and internationally engaged, benefitting from the exchange of ideas, people, methods and practices across borders. Our current membership of the EU brings greater depth, range and vitality to the humanities and social sciences in the UK through collaborative research, the possibilities for international exchange, and the presence of non-UK EU researchers and students in our universities.

UK universities score highly in international rankings, more so than universities in other EU Member States. This is in large part because UK universities have been able to attract an international talent pool. Our attractiveness to that talent pool of researchers is aided by being embedded in the EU. The ability to sustain the presence of European scholars at UK universities is essential for our future excellence in the humanities and social sciences. In addition, outward mobility is fundamental to the humanities and social sciences. All research in these disciplines will require in one form or another the ability to travel, visit and reside either temporarily or on a more permanent basis in another country.



13 out of the top 15 disciplines with the highest amount of funding from 'EU government bodies' as a total proportion of that discipline's funding are in the arts, humanities and social sciences.

UK-based researchers in the humanities and social sciences, who include many colleagues from other EU countries and further afield, have been exceptionally successful in competitive EU research programmes that have no current counterparts here in the UK. These researchers have won more than 33% of all funding in the humanities and social sciences granted by the European Research Council (ERC – the flagship European fundamental research funder). In comparison, the life sciences and physical sciences have won less than 20%. This record shows that the humanities and social sciences are an area of exceptional strength for the UK. More broadly 13 out of the top 15 disciplines with the highest amount of funding from 'EU government bodies'¹ as a total proportion of that discipline's funding are in the arts, humanities and social sciences. This demonstrates the success of these disciplines in winning diverse sources of internationally competitive funding. It is vital that comparable funding with comparable characteristics be continued in order to sustain the world-leading role of the UK's researchers in the humanities and social sciences.

¹ 'EU government bodies' is a HESA income classification category. It includes all research grants and contracts income from all government bodies operating in the EU, including the European Commission as well as bodies outside EU Institutions. It is not possible to fully disentangle funding from the EU from other sources of funding within the geographic area that the EU covers. This data, however, remains as the best proxy available to investigate the importance of EU funding to UK research.

As regards mobility, the humanities and social sciences attract a broad range of academics and students internationally, including from the EU. Six out of the top ten disciplines with the highest proportions of non-UK EU staff are in the humanities and social sciences. Moreover, six out of the top seven disciplines with the highest proportion of non-UK EU undergraduates are in the humanities and social sciences. These figures indicate the importance of non-UK EU nationals to the humanities and the social sciences in the UK; they show how embedded this diverse academic workforce and student body is in the UK; and they demonstrate the current attractiveness of the humanities and social sciences to researchers and students from the EU. Disruption to this attractiveness is a threat to the continued excellence of the UK in these disciplines as competitor countries look to attract the world-leading academics, and their next generation, currently based in, or considering coming to, the UK.



Six out of the top ten disciplines with the highest proportions of non-UK EU staff are in the humanities and social sciences. Moreover, six out of the top seven disciplines with the highest proportion of non-UK EU undergraduates are in the humanities and social sciences.

Encouraging EU students to come to the UK, including through continued full participation in Erasmus+ and its successors, in the knowledge of the benefits this brings is vital and the Academy believes it is critical that students are removed from the Government's migration figures.

Providing an indefinite right to remain and continuation of the current rights of staff employed in the UK, and their dependants, at the time of UK withdrawal are central to preserving the competitive position of UK humanities and social sciences. In particular it is necessary to safeguard the concerns of staff, students and their dependants on the island of Ireland given the characteristics of its internal border. At present, 24.6% of staff at Northern Ireland higher education institutions (HEIs) are non-UK

EU nationals (the highest proportion anywhere in the UK) and they are indispensable to sustaining higher education and research there.²

A determined effort will be required in the next few months to support and to sustain the interconnected pillars of people, collaboration, resources and regulation for the humanities and social science community in the following contexts:

- The UK’s withdrawal agreement from the EU;
- Our future relationship with the EU; and,
- The implementation arrangements as the UK moves toward this future relationship.

The Withdrawal Agreement

The foci of the withdrawal agreement have been citizen’s rights, the financial budgetary settlement, and the situation on the island of Ireland. All three impact on the humanities and social sciences. The British Academy’s priorities in this area are:

- Providing an indefinite right to remain and continuation of their current rights to all EU staff and their dependants, employed in the UK at the time of the UK’s withdrawal from the EU;
- Maintaining the opportunities for UK nationals to work in the EU/EEA because the UK benefits from them being able to work overseas and develop expertise and networks, and bring these back to the UK;
- Providing full funding for those projects and grants begun before the date of withdrawal under the EU’s Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon 2020, to the Erasmus+ programme, and to EU Structural Funds for the entirety of the remainder of the UK’s membership of the EU, and setting out how such a guarantee will work;
- Ensuring that the UK retains involvement in the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) Research and Training Programme, which includes archaeological research;

² The Royal Irish Academy and the British Academy have begun publishing a series of Brexit Briefings on UK-Ireland issues, including in October 2017, Professor Mary E. Daly MRIA, *Brexit and the Irish Border: Historical Context*; Professor Gordon Anthony, *Brexit and the Irish Border: Legal and Political Questions*; Professor Imelda Maher MRIA, *The Common Travel Area: More Than Just Travel*; Professor Chris McCrudden FBA, *The Good Friday Agreement, Brexit and Rights*, which can be viewed here: www.britac.ac.uk/brexit-briefings

- Safeguarding the concerns of staff, students and their dependants at stake on the island of Ireland, given the character of the border.

Future Relationship

The UK's future relationship with the EU will determine how attractive the UK research environment is to excellent researchers in the humanities and social sciences. The British Academy's priorities in this area are:

- Forming the closest achievable association of the UK to the EU's next Framework Programme 9 (FP9) for Research and Innovation following Horizon 2020. The All European Academies' recent Framework Programme 9 Vision Paper³ is one that the Government should endorse and build on;
- Finding a way for the UK to continue to influence the content and direction of FP9 comparable to the influence the UK has exercised over previous Framework Programmes;
- Sustaining the UK's full participation in the European Research Council so that researchers based in the UK can continue to apply for and win its large-scale awards and conduct their and their teams' research in the UK;
- Continuing the UK's leadership of the European Social Survey based at City University London;
- Continuing full participation in the Erasmus+ programme on the basis of an arrangement that would enable the UK to fulfil all the obligations of the Erasmus+ programme as a non-EU Programme Country;
- Encouraging and welcoming students and staff from EU Member States to the UK, and vice versa, as well as those already in the UK, as a prerequisite for any future UK immigration policy;
- Creating targeted arrangements to facilitate the recruitment and retention of professional services staff such as language assistants who are unlikely to meet the current Tier 2 salary requirements as applied to non-UK or EU nationals.

³ All European Academies, *Developing a Vision for Framework Programme 9*, July 2017, www.allea.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/ALLEA_Statement_FP9.pdf

Implementation Arrangements

Clarity is needed on the implementation arrangements to cover the period between withdrawal and the settled future relationship. The British Academy's priorities in this area are:

- Committing to contributing fully to the EU's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon 2020, for the entirety of the timespan of the funding it will provide and to any future EU Framework Programme for the length of any implementation period;
- Making programmes such as INTERREG and PEACE in Northern Ireland the basis of a partnership and cooperation agreement;
- Guaranteeing that there will be no additional barriers introduced, bureaucracy created or costs charged for EU students and staff migration routes through any transitional period, including their dependants;
- Guaranteeing the UK's participation in Erasmus+ during any transitional period.

Conclusion

We have presented here vital priorities that are at stake for the humanities and social sciences as the UK withdraws from the EU and in the UK Government's current negotiations with the EU. There is still action required by the Government, and we have set out a series of priorities that the Government will need to achieve. If such action is not forthcoming, the reputation and excellence of the humanities and social sciences in the UK as a world-leading research environment, destination of choice for talented researchers, and a top research collaborator will be undermined. We urge the Government to maintain and build the UK's research collaboration in the humanities and social sciences with our closest partners in Europe through world-leading mechanisms like the European Research Council. This process will require the closest achievable association with current and future EU Framework Programmes. We look for certainty and long-term stability from the Government to ensure the foundational frameworks of collaboration, people, resources and regulation so that the excellence of the humanities and social sciences can be sustained. Without the guarantees outlined in this paper, the contribution of the humanities and social sciences to the UK's economic competitiveness, social wellbeing, and research creativity will be placed at risk.

Humanities and Social Sciences: What is at Stake?

EU Research Collaboration in the Humanities and Social Sciences

International collaborations lead to research with greater impact as measured by citation impact, and 60% of the UK's internationally co-authored research papers are with the EU partners.⁴ UK research excellence draws on collaboration with colleagues in other EU Member States and the UK requires these collaborations to retain its excellence. Given the UK's geographic proximity, historical links and the relative strength of the research base in many countries, UK research excellence in the humanities and the social sciences draws on collaboration with colleagues in other EU Member States. It is therefore vital that the UK is able to reassure our non-UK EU research partners of the UK's commitment to current and future collaboration.

Of the nations that the UK collaborates with seven out of the top 10 and 13 out of the top 20 are other EU Member States.⁵ Continuing to participate fully in a major multilateral research programme such as Horizon 2020 is particularly important as UK bilateral research programmes with other countries in the EU have compared poorly with existing EU arrangements.⁶ Collaborations can take many years to build and flourish, and the UK is currently well embedded in the EU's frameworks. A transitional arrangement once the UK leaves the EU will be important to manage the disruption and change that will be inevitable.

In addition, the EU provides forms of collaborative funding that the UK does not currently offer and would find difficult to replicate, such as the European Research Council, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, and research infrastructures. Continuing as full an involvement as possible in Framework Programmes will be important to the humanities and social sciences and in the UK. If this is not possible, credible alternatives need to be developed in consultation with the humanities and social science community.

⁴ International Comparative Performance of the UK Research Base – 2013, A report prepared by Elsevier for the UK's Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), December 2013, p.59–69, www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/263729/bis-13-1297-international-comparative-performance-of-the-UK-research-base-2013.pdf; Digital Science, 'The implications of International Research Collaboration for UK Universities: Research assessment, knowledge capacity and the knowledge economy', February 2016, p.3, https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/pfigshare-u-files/4786699/Digital_Research_Report_Collaboration.pdf

⁵ UUK, Evidence to Commons Science & Technology Committee inquiry on 'Leaving the EU', p.3, 7 September 2016.

⁶ HEFCE, Evidence to Commons Science & Technology Committee inquiry on 'Leaving the EU', p.3, 7 September 2016.

This is why it is essential that the Government commits now to participating fully to the EU's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon 2020, for the entirety of the timespan of the funding it will provide, and for the length of any implementation period. Many collaborative research grant applications can take more than 18 months to complete; with the current scheduled withdrawal date of March 2019, some researchers are now drafting applications that may not be eligible for the government's currently offered guarantee. This could have a detrimental impact on the development or further building of research collaborations with European partners as UK partner's eligibility will be in doubt, and thus our inclusion in any application could be seen as a risk. In addition, many will apply to Horizon 2020 in order to build long-term collaborations of which an application that is made now will be one part. Ensuring the UK is involved in collaborations with our partners elsewhere in the EU is critical to the UK's future research excellence and a vision of to how to achieve this is necessary soon so that the UK's attractiveness as a partner is not reduced.



The British Academy believes that the UK should negotiate the closest achievable association to the EU's next Framework Programme 9 (FP9) for Research and Innovation following Horizon 2020.

The British Academy believes that the UK should negotiate the closest achievable association to the EU's next Framework Programme 9 (FP9) for Research and Innovation following Horizon 2020. The intention to achieve such an agreement with the EU as set out in the Government's science future partnership paper is welcome. The British Academy's preferred outcome for the UK's future relationship with the EU is one that has the characteristics of the European Economic Area and finds a way for the UK to exert an influence on the content and direction of FP9 comparable to that which it has achieved for previous Framework Programmes. The All European Academies' recent Framework Programme 9 Vision Paper⁷ is one that the Government could endorse and build on.

⁷ All European Academies, *Developing a Vision for Framework Programme 9*, July 2017, www.allea.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/ALLEA_Statement_FP9.pdf

UK-based humanities and social sciences have been successful in leading large pan-EU research infrastructures. The European Social Survey (ESS) is a European Research Infrastructure Consortia based at City University of London.⁸ The ESS was one of the first European Research Infrastructure Consortia and the only one based in the UK until earlier this year when a second (INSTRUCT-ERIC) was established. The location of this pan-EU research infrastructure is a recognition of UK excellence in this field. The ESS is widely considered to be the gold standard for cross-national survey methodology and it won the Descartes Research Prize in 2005 for “radical innovations in cross-national surveys”. The esteem it is held was further underlined by its being listed as a ‘Landmark’ Research Infrastructure in the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures Roadmap in 2016.



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For the UK, hosting the ESS HQ brings a range of benefits that could be at risk when the UK leaves the EU. One aspect is the prestige and international recognition that comes with hosting a major element of international infrastructure. Financially, the UK benefits as a large proportion of ESS funding goes to the UK-based headquarters. This includes EU grants as well as contributions from other European Research Infrastructure Consortia members to the central functions of the ESS. In addition, UK researchers have played leading roles in the development of methodologies and survey modules, providing both influence and learning opportunities for the UK. More broadly, ESS has helped reinforce the status of the UK as a leading centre for comparative social surveys able to attract top international researchers in the field.

Ideally, in any future relationship between the UK and the EU, the UK would retain the ability to influence policies and practices concerning

⁸ Technopolis, ‘The role of EU funding in UK research and innovation – Appendix: Case Studies, 10 May 2017, p.12–14, www.britac.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2017-05-22%20TG%20Role%20of%20EU%20funding%20-%20CASES%20FINAL.PDF. This paragraph and the next significantly use text from the European Social Survey case study in this report.

EU research and innovation and those which UK research and innovation could be affected by. Currently, however, no non-EU Member State has such influence. Influencing EU research funding and collaboration policies and practices is likely to be a major concern for the UK for many years to come whatever arrangement the UK and EU settle both for the interim and finally. The UK will have to think creatively and artfully about how it can gain influence on EU policies and practices when it is no longer a Member State.

Action Points

- Committing to contributing fully to the EU's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon 2020, for the entirety of the timespan of the funding it will provide, and to any EU Framework Programme for the length of the implementation period;
- Aiming for the closest achievable association to the EU's next Framework Programme 9 (FP9) for Research and Innovation following Horizon 2020;
- Finding a way for the UK to sustain influence on the content and direction of EU research programmes comparable to the influence the UK has exercised hitherto;
- Continuing the UK's valuable leadership of the European Social Survey based at City University London.

Excellence in the Humanities and Social Sciences

Research excellence in the humanities and social sciences is a national asset that is central to the UK's economic, social and cultural well-being. This excellence has been proven in the success which the humanities and social sciences have had in competitive EU research programmes. From 2007–15 UK-based researchers in the humanities and social sciences won some €626 million from Starting, Consolidator and Advanced Grants from the European Research Council, the premier fundamental science mechanism in Europe, if not the world.

This sum won by UK-based researchers in the humanities and social sciences through the European Research Council represents 33.2% of all the funding that was available in the humanities and social sciences. This is a far higher proportion than UK-based academics won in the life sciences (19.7%) or the physical and engineering sciences (19.8%), and is well above the

UK-based average of 22.1%.⁹ The average UK performance in winning European Research Council grants illustrates the strength of the UK in research and innovation, and the success of the humanities and social sciences must be recognised for what it is: an area of UK-based excellence that must be preserved and enhanced by the Government.



This sum (€626 million) won by UK-based researchers in the humanities and social sciences through the European Research Council represents 33.2% of all the funding that was available in the humanities and social sciences.

This success has helped to offset declining funding from the Government in recent years for the humanities and social sciences. Divided per annum, the €626 million secured by UK-based academics in the humanities and social sciences amounts on average to €69.556 million per year over the time the European Research Council has been in place. As a rough comparison, the Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) budget from 2011–16 in average per annum terms was almost £257.5 million.¹⁰ Thus the funding secured by UK-based researchers in the humanities and social sciences from the European Research Council (just one part of Horizon 2020) was equivalent to 24% of the average annual ESRC and AHRC budget combined. This additional resource secured by UK-based researchers in the humanities and social sciences both was extremely welcome and illustrates their excellence in gaining competitive grants compared to their peers. This excellence should be supported and nurtured.

The equivalent figures for the life sciences and the physical and engineering sciences (the other two disciplinary categories which the European Research Council uses) in comparison with the Medical Research Council (MRC) and the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) as the equivalent life science funders in the UK, and the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and the Engineering and

⁹ Aggregate data regarding ERC-funded projects provided by the ERC Executive Agency.

¹⁰ Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, 'The Allocation of Science and Research Funding 2011–12 to 2014–15', December 2010, p.17, www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/422477/bis-10-1356-allocation-of-science-and-research-funding-2011-2015.pdf; Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, 'The Allocation of Science and Research Funding 2016–17 to 2019–20', March 2016, p.6, www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/505308/bis-16-160-allocation-science-research-funding-2016-17-2019-20.pdf

Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) as the equivalent physical science and engineering funders come to around 8.5%.¹¹

European Research Council grants are not replicated here in the UK and it would be difficult to do so in view of their features: multilateral funding across all career stages; allowing awardholders and their teams and networks to collaborate and move across the EU and internationally; a focus on individual excellence internationally rather than projects and themes; and funding for fundamental research, training or career development at a scale across borders that is unparalleled. The loss of this funding would be exceptionally damaging for the excellence of the humanities and social sciences in the UK.

In just the latest rounds of the European Research Council's main three schemes (Starting Grants, Consolidator Grants, Advanced Grants), UK-based researchers' excellence in the humanities and social sciences is evident. In the 2016 Starting Grants round, 34.1% of the awards went to UK-based researchers in the humanities and social sciences. Overall across all disciplines the UK won 17.3%. In the 2016 Consolidator Grants round UK-based researchers in the humanities and social sciences won 24.3% of all the awards. Overall across all the disciplines the UK won 18.5%. In the 2016 Advanced Grants round, 26.8% of the awards went to UK-based researchers in the humanities and social sciences. Overall across all disciplines the UK won 17.8%.

Through the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, a number of programmes are offered including its Innovative Individual European Fellowships. These Fellowships support promising individual researchers from anywhere in the world to move between countries, with the option to work outside academia. Since the start of Horizon 2020, UK-based researchers in the humanities and social sciences account for 22.14% of all funding won through this highly competitive and flagship scheme.

This analysis illustrates a picture of excellence in UK-based humanities and social sciences that should be a priority both in the current negotiations and more widely.

¹¹ Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, 'The Allocation of Science and Research Funding 2011–12 to 2014–15', December 2010, p.17, www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/422477/bis-10-1356-allocation-of-science-and-research-funding-2011-2015.pdf; Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, 'The Allocation of Science and Research Funding 2016–17 to 2019–20', March 2016, p.6, www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/505308/bis-16-160-allocation-science-research-funding-2016-17-2019-20.pdf

Action Points

- Sustaining the UK’s full participation in the European Research Council so that researchers based in the UK can continue to apply for and win its large-scale transformative awards and conduct their and their team’s research in the UK;
- Retaining the UK’s full participation in the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, which like the European Research Council, provide a signal of international excellence of the individual awardholder and involve an integral mobility component vital to humanities and social science research;
- If an alternative for the European Research Council is required, which would not be the Academy’s recommendation or preference, it needs to build in comparable international peer review, as well as international collaboration and mobility, to that which exists with the European Research Council;
- Retaining opportunities for leading UK-based academics to contribute to the framing of future EU research and innovation Framework Programmes.

EU Research Funding in the Humanities and Social Sciences

Disciplines within the humanities and social sciences have been amongst the most successful in gaining EU funding. Of the top 15 disciplines with the highest amount of funding from ‘EU government bodies’¹² as a total proportion of that disciplines’ funding, 13 are in the arts, humanities and social sciences (Table A).¹³

An example of the success of a discipline in the humanities and social sciences securing competitive research funding from the EU is archaeology, which has won a higher proportion (38% in 2014–15) of its research income

¹² ‘EU government bodies’ is a HESA income classification category. It includes all research grants and contracts income from all government bodies operating in the EU, including the European Commission as well as bodies outside EU Institutions. It is not possible to fully disentangle funding from the EU from other sources of funding within the geographic area that the EU covers. This data, however, remains as the best proxy available to investigate the importance of EU funding to UK research.

¹³ Technopolis, ‘The role of EU funding in UK research and innovation’, 10 May 2017, p.16, www.britac.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2017-05-22%20TG%20Role%20of%20EU%20funding%20-%20MAIN%20FINAL.pdf

from ‘EU government bodies’ than any other discipline.¹⁴ This proportion is also a tenfold increase in the volume of funding received since 2006–07. This achievement illustrates the adaptability and excellence of researchers in archaeology to successfully compete for funding from the EU whilst UK funding has declined. In fact, since 2013–2014 archaeology has been receiving more funding from ‘EU government bodies’ sources than from UK government sources.

Table A: The HESA Cost Centres that received the most income from ‘EU Government Bodies’ as a proportion of total research income in 2014–15

Discipline (by HESA Cost Centre)	‘EU government bodies’ income as a proportion of total research income in 2014–15
Archaeology	38%
Classics	33%
IT, systems sciences & computer software engineering	30%
Media studies	27%
Law	26%
Philosophy	25%
Modern languages	24%
Anthropology & development studies	23%
Business & management studies	23%
Chemistry	23%
Area studies	23%
Politics & international studies	21%
Architecture, built environment & planning	21%
Art & design	21%
Sociology	20%

This success has led to certain departments attracting and winning large amounts of funding from the EU. As an example, in archaeology, more than 70% (£7.5 million of nearly £10.5 million) of externally-generated research funding at the Department of Archaeology at the University of Cambridge is from the EU. The department was involved under Framework Programme

¹⁴ Technopolis, ‘The role of EU funding in UK research and innovation – Appendix: Case Studies’, 10 May 2017, p.7–11, www.britac.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2017-05-22%20TG%20Role%20of%20EU%20funding%20-%20CASES%20FINAL.PDF. This paragraph and the next significantly use text from the archaeology case study in this report.

7 in 13 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Intra-European Fellowships, eight European Research Council grants, one Innovative Training Network, and one collaborative project. In 2017–18, six new Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellows will begin in the department and six to seven European Research Council grant applications are expected to be submitted to the 2017 calls.

The range of humanities and social sciences disciplines which attract substantial EU funding is wide. As can be seen in Table B the top 15 disciplines in the humanities and social sciences receiving funding from the EU in absolute terms differ from Table A above (which shows the proportion of EU funding).

Table B: The top 15 disciplines in the humanities and social sciences that received the most income from ‘EU Government Bodies’ in absolute terms in 2014–15¹⁵

Discipline (by HESA Cost Centre)	Total EU funding in 2014–15 (£,’000)
Business & management studies	14,765
Geography & environmental studies	10,857
Archaeology	8,736
Sociology	8,289
Politics & international studies	8,011
Economics & econometrics	6,142
Anthropology & development studies	5,997
Education	5,575
History	5,482
Law	5,289
Modern languages	5,187
Social work & social policy	4,504
Media studies	3,143
English language & literature	2,942
Philosophy	2,491

In addition, the spread of funding around the UK requires attention. A recent report commissioned by the UK National Academies illustrates the importance of EU funding across the devolved nations.¹⁶ Universities

¹⁵ For the purposes of this paper, as psychology & behavioural sciences are considered under REF Panel A, we have not included data related to it. Psychology, however is a social science and would appear in this table under the HESA cost centre ‘psychology & behavioural sciences’ as the discipline with the second most funding from the EU (14,731).

¹⁶ Technopolis, ‘The role of EU funding in UK research and innovation’, 10 May 2017, p.28–32; Technopolis, ‘The role of EU funding in UK research and innovation – Appendix: Case Studies’, 10 May 2017, p.31–40, www.britac.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2017-05-22%20TG%20Role%20of%20EU%20funding%20-%20CASES%20FINAL.PDF

in Northern Ireland have benefited from structural funding through some of the INTERREG programmes (one of which – INTERREG VA – is a regional structural funding programme for Northern Ireland, the border region of the island of Ireland, and western Scotland) and the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland (PEACE Programme).

The current PEACE IV programme focuses on cross-community and cross-border societal actions in Northern Ireland and the Border Region across four areas: shared education, children and young people, shared spaces and services, and building positive relations. The current INTERREG VA programme supports cross-border cooperation in three areas of importance for job creation and growth: research and innovation, environment, sustainable transport, and health. Up to April 2017, Irish and Northern Irish projects have secured €50.1m through PEACE IV and €152.1m through INTERREG VA.

Structural funding has been an important catalyst for research and innovation in Northern Ireland, especially in terms of investing in buildings and capital equipment that has subsequently attracted researchers, leveraged further investment, and sparked innovation activities. One example of the impact of such investments is the Nanotechnology and Integrated BioEngineering Centre (NIBEC) at the University of Ulster. The NIBEC building was supported through structural funding grants totalling £6m. Economic appraisals estimate the centre has attracted over 90 researchers, and leveraged approximately £50m in research funding from the EU Framework Programmes, INTERREG Programmes, the US-Ireland Research Partnership, Invest Northern Ireland, the UK Research Councils and industry. The Centre has generated 35 patents, and high value spinout companies valued collectively at £100m.

Action Points

- Government to ensure that the same level of funding is available to researchers in the humanities and social sciences based in the UK following withdrawal from the EU;
- Guaranteeing full funding for those projects and grants begun before the date of withdrawal under the EU’s Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon 2020, the Erasmus+ programme,

and EU Structural Funds for the entirety of the remainder of the UK's membership of the EU, and setting out how such a guarantee will work in practice;

- Confirming that the guarantee provided would draw upon additional funds, not funds already set aside for research and thus reducing overall funding;
- Paying close attention to impacts of UK withdrawal on the devolved nations and in particular the situation in Northern Ireland, taking into account its wider context and history;
- Ensuring that the UK retains involvement in the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) Research and Training Programme, which includes archaeological research.

EU Staff in the Humanities and Social Sciences

UK universities score highly in international rankings, more so than universities in other EU Member States. This is in large part because UK universities have been able to attract an international talent pool. Our attractiveness to that talent pool of researchers is aided by being embedded in the EU. The ability to sustain the presence of European scholars at UK universities is essential for our future excellence in the humanities and social sciences.

This is ever more important due to the growth of non-UK EU staff in UK universities in recent years. In 2015–16, the proportion of non-UK EU nationals was higher across all regions of the UK than non-EU nationals. In 2006–07 these proportions had been the reverse in every region except Northern Ireland.¹⁷ Since 2006–07, the UK higher education system has seen its staff body, including both academic and non-academic, increase by 18%, going from 289,995 FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) staff in 2006–07 to 342,085 in 2015–16. UK FTE HEI (Higher Education Institution) staff increased by 11% in that period, from 247,120 to 274,310. Non-UK EU FTE HEI staff increased by 92%, from 20,805 in 2006–07 to 39,915 in 2015–16. This is compared to an increase in non-EU FTE HEI staff by 26%, from 22,070 in 2006–07 to 27,860 in 2015–16.

¹⁷ Data from HESA on evolution of FTE non-UK EU relative staff numbers across NUTS1 regions (2006–07 to 2015–16).

Furthermore, Northern Ireland is a distinctive situation that requires special attention from the Government with 24.6% of staff at Northern Ireland HEIs non-UK EU nationals (the highest proportion anywhere in the UK). These staff are vital to sustaining higher education and research there. At the University of Ulster 29.4% of staff are non-UK EU nationals and at Queen's University Belfast it is 21%.¹⁸



More than 50% of all Principal Investigators who were awarded an ERC grant and who work in UK Host Institutions are non-UK nationals.

Within the EU and with EU instruments such as the European Research Council (ERC), the UK has been able to attract the best talent. H el ene Rey, named by *The Economist* in 2016 as ‘the one to watch’, a Professor of Economics at the London Business School and a Fellow of the British Academy, received one of the first ERC Starting Grants in 2008. Professor Rey came to the UK from the USA because she received this ERC award, despite other job offers in the USA. More than 50% of all Principal Investigators who were awarded an ERC grant and who work in UK Host Institutions are non-UK nationals. Non-UK EU nationals are essential in receiving funding from the ERC, a prestigious mechanism on which careers can be built and which contribute to the liveliness, excellence and global renown of UK research.

In addition, the British Academy’s own flagship postdoctoral fellowship scheme has proven in recent years attractive to a range of researchers in the humanities and social sciences from within the EU. Since 2010, at least 23% of successful awardholders every year have been non-UK EU or EFTA nationals. In 2015, 40% of the successful awardholders were non-UK EU or EFTA nationals.

These developments illustrate the diverse workforce of the humanities and social sciences in the UK and how these disciplines have been able to attract a range of academics internationally including, most vitally, from the EU. Six out of the top 10 academic disciplines in the UK with the highest proportions of non-UK EU staff are in the humanities and social sciences (Table C).

¹⁸ For more background see Royal Irish Academy Brexit taskforce Survey Results: Impacts and Opportunities for Higher Education and Research on the Island of Ireland post Brexit, June 2017, www.ria.ie/sites/default/files/ria_brexit_taskforce_survey_results_report_final.pdf

Table C: HESA data on FTE non-UK EU relative staff proportion figures in 2015–16

Discipline (by HESA Cost Centre)	Non-UK EU relative FTE staff proportion
Economics & econometrics	36.39%
Modern languages	34.93%
Mathematics	28.54%
Physics	27.66%
Chemical engineering	26.31%
Classics	26.30%
Politics & international studies	25.42%
Area studies	24.70%
Biosciences	23.99%
Anthropology & development studies	23.19%

The diversity of researchers in the humanities and social sciences is also expressed in the location of non-UK EU researchers across the whole of the UK. Looking at the top two disciplines in relative numbers of non-UK EU staff (modern languages and economics & econometrics), it is possible to see the broad spread of non-UK EU staff throughout all the regions of the UK (Table D).

Table D: HESA data on FTE non-UK EU relative staff numbers working in modern languages and economics & econometrics across NUTS1 regions (2015–16)

NUTS1 Region	Modern Languages non-UK EU staff	Economics & econometrics non-UK EU staff
East Midlands	36.01%	32.69%
East of England	33.35%	38%
London	32.19%	46.17%
North East	35.74%	27.19%
North West	38.37%	23.64%
Northern Ireland	45.59%	24.88%
Scotland	37.12%	35.26%
South East	33.71%	37.31%
South West	41.26%	45.04%
Wales	27.83%	18.21%
West Midlands	49.03%	35.08%
Yorkshire	28.94%	26.95%

These figures demonstrate the importance of non-UK EU nationals to the humanities and social sciences in the UK. They show how embedded a diverse academic workforce is in the UK and they exemplify the attractiveness of UK humanities and social sciences to researchers from all over the world and particularly the EU. Disruption to this appeal and to the ability of the UK to retain and attract scholars in the humanities and social sciences is a threat to the continued excellence of the UK in these disciplines as competitors look to offer opportunities to world-leading academics of this generation and the next who are currently based in the UK.



This uncertainty is corrosive for maintaining the UK's attractiveness to researchers in the humanities and social sciences.

The uncertainty for non-UK EU nationals here and UK researchers overseas has to be resolved quickly. In particular, those who have not accrued five years of residency face more uncertainty and insecurity. Many are in short-term postdoctoral research positions, and those near the end of their contracts will be looking at the job market for their next position. This uncertainty is corrosive for maintaining the UK's attractiveness to researchers in the humanities and social sciences who wish to continue or begin their research in the UK. Certainty as to their status today and the years ahead is fundamental. In the UK's negotiations, the Government should bear in mind that the service, professions and crafts sectors represent about 80% of the UK's economy, sectors which are underpinned by the humanities and social sciences as well as the people from around the world working in those disciplines.¹⁹

Freedom of movement within the EU for researchers offers a competitive advantage to the humanities and social sciences in the UK and, through that, to the UK's economy – and, the Academy believes, to our society and culture as a whole. Outside the EU and without an agreement on mobility as a third country, the UK would not be able to participate fully in mechanisms such as the European Research Council. This would mean that UK-based researchers could not access the premier European frontier research mechanism. At the

¹⁹ UK National Academies, *Open for Business: A nation of global researchers and innovators*, November 2016, www.britac.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Open%20for%20business%20-%20a%20nation%20of%20global%20researchers%20and%20innovators_0.pdf

same time, the UK would have on its door step this very instrument which would be an unparalleled attraction for UK-based researchers to bid for – and, if successful to leave the UK for – somewhere within the EU or an associated country. The loss of the possibility to compete against the very best in the EU would be damaging, but the attraction for the best researchers in the UK to compete would still be there, and it would lead to an outflow of research talent that would be unavoidable in the view of the success UK-based researchers in gaining European Research Council awards.

Outward mobility is fundamental to the humanities and social sciences. All research in these disciplines will require in one form or another the ability to travel, visit and reside either temporarily or on a more permanent basis in another country. For example, the Academy's Small Research Grants scheme, which is a domestically-focused scheme is regularly used for travel overseas to conduct research such as archival research, hold research workshops, conduct field research and so on. In recent rounds, more than half of all the awards provided have included an outward mobility component. This is for a scheme where outward mobility is not a prerequisite: the pattern simply shows the fundamental importance of such mobility to modern humanities and social science research.

Action Points

- Providing an indefinite right to remain and continuation of their current rights for all EU staff employed in the UK, and their dependents, at the time of the UK's withdrawal from the EU, in order to preserve the competitive environment for recruiting researchers in the humanities and social sciences;
- Guaranteeing that there will be no additional barriers introduced, bureaucracy created or costs charged for non-UK EU staff migration routes through any transitional period, including their dependants;
- Maintaining the opportunities for UK nationals to work in the EU/EEA because the UK benefits from their being able to work overseas, develop expertise and networks, and bring these back to the UK;
- Encouraging and welcoming staff from the EU to the UK, as well as those already in the UK, as a prerequisite for any future UK immigration policy;

- Safeguarding the concerns of staff and their dependants at stake on the island of Ireland, given the character of the border;
- Creating targeted arrangements to facilitate the recruitment and retention of professional services staff such as language assistants who are unlikely to meet the current Tier 2 salary requirements as applied to non-UK or EU nationals. Any failure here would have a severe negative impact on the UK's language provision, as well as the UK's research base and the quality of our student experience more generally.

EU Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students in the Humanities and Social Sciences

Non-UK EU nationals make up 5.5% of the entire UK student body, but the percentage is far higher in certain universities and on certain courses.²⁰ Six out of the top seven disciplines with the highest proportion of non-UK EU undergraduates are in the humanities and social sciences (Table E).

Table E: HESA data on FTE non-UK EU relative undergraduate students figures 2015-16

Discipline (by HESA Cost Centre)	Non-UK EU FTE relative undergraduate students proportion
Politics & international studies	11.69%
Modern languages	10.62%
Catering & hospitality management	10.52%
Anthropology & development studies	9.73%
Area studies	9.20%
Economics & econometrics	9%
Business & management studies	7.85%
IT, systems sciences & computer software engineering	7.15%
Electronical, electronic & computer engineering	7.09%
Mechanical, aero & production engineering	6.88%

In addition, five out of the top 10 disciplines with the highest proportion of non-UK EU postgraduates are in the humanities and social sciences (Table F).

²⁰ UK Council for International Student Affairs, 'International Student Statistics: UK Higher Education', [http://institutions.ukcisa.org.uk/Info-for-universities-colleges--schools/Policy-research-statistics/Research--statistics/International-students-in-UK-HE/#International-students-in-UK-HE-by-domicile,-level-and-mode,%3Cbr%3E-European-Union-\(EU\)-\(excluding-UK\)-and-non-EU,-2014-15](http://institutions.ukcisa.org.uk/Info-for-universities-colleges--schools/Policy-research-statistics/Research--statistics/International-students-in-UK-HE/#International-students-in-UK-HE-by-domicile,-level-and-mode,%3Cbr%3E-European-Union-(EU)-(excluding-UK)-and-non-EU,-2014-15)

Table F: HESA data on FTE non-UK EU relative postgraduate students figures 2015–16

Discipline (by HESA Cost Centre)	Non-UK EU FTE relative postgraduate students proportion
Classics	21.09%
Mechanical, aero & production engineering	20.26%
Politics & international studies	19%
Physics	18.97%
Modern languages	18.86%
Mathematics	18.44%
Philosophy	18.24%
Area studies	17.22%
Music, dance, drama & performing arts	15.18%
Chemistry	14.69%

The UK higher education and research community relies upon the excellence, talent and goodwill of many colleagues from other EU Member States. This openness enriches and drives excellence in the humanities and the social sciences in the UK, and provides a formative experience for our students to study alongside, or abroad, with students of other nationalities and cultures. International students make a significant contribution to the academic, intellectual and cultural vibrancy of UK universities and UK students benefit from such a cosmopolitan atmosphere.²¹ However, the rhetoric on international students has become increasingly divisive and self-defeating. This damages the UK's position in the world, its ability to maximise opportunities for students and staff, and for the UK's universities to retain their reputation as sites of creative learning, groundbreaking study and a welcoming and cosmopolitan atmosphere attractive to overseas students from within the rest of the EU and wider afield.



The rhetoric on international students has become increasingly divisive and self-defeating.

²¹ Higher Education Policy Institute and Kaplan International, 'What do prospective students think about international students?', HEPI Report 74, March 2015, www.hepi.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/What-do-prospective-students-think-about-international-students.pdf

Action Points

- Extending the commitments currently made²² to cover all non-UK EU and EEA students who enrol at UK universities in the 2019–20 academic year and a commitment that these arrangements will stay in place throughout any implementation phase;
- Guaranteeing the UK’s participation in Erasmus+ during any transitional period. This requires urgent attention because students enrolling in autumn 2017 onto degrees with a mandatory year abroad, such as some in the humanities and social sciences – for example, modern language or international business students – are likely to be planning to do so in 2019–2020 after the current government guarantee of Erasmus+;
- Continuing full participation in the Erasmus+ programme in any future relationship on the basis of an arrangement that would enable the UK to fulfil all the obligations of the Erasmus+ programme as a non-EU Programme Country;
- Encouraging EU students to come to the UK, as well as UK students to study abroad, in the knowledge of the benefits this brings to the UK, by removing students from the Government’s migration figures. An important signal in this regard would be to provide time after the award of degrees for students to find employment here in the UK and apply for work visas (i.e. Tier 2 visas) whilst in the UK rather than having to leave the UK and apply from overseas;
- Safeguarding the concerns of students on the island of Ireland, given the character of the border.

²² Department for Education, ‘Funding Support for EU Students’, www.gov.uk/government/news/funding-support-for-eu-students; Universities Wales, ‘EU Student Funding Guarantee for Welsh universities extended’, www.uniswales.ac.uk/eu-student-funding-guarantee-for-welsh-universities-extended/; Scottish Government, ‘Swinney demands student immigration guarantee’, <http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/Swinney-demands-student-immigration-guarantee-2d27.aspx>; ‘British Academy welcomes Government announcement on funding support for EU students’, 11 October 2016, www.britac.ac.uk/news/british-academy-welcomes-government-announcement-funding-support-eu-students

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