



Library Note

Leaving the European Union: Machinery of Government Changes

On 18 July 2016, the Prime Minister, Theresa May, outlined machinery of government changes in the wake of the United Kingdom's referendum vote in favour of leaving the European Union. The changes included the creation of two new departments: the Department for Exiting the European Union and the Department for International Trade.

The Government has also made changes at a committee level, with the establishment of the new European Union Exit and Trade Cabinet Committee, which comprises of government ministers. In addition, a joint ministerial committee dedicated to discussing the UK's negotiations with the EU has been created, formed of UK government ministers and representatives from the UK's devolved administrations.

Parliament has also responded to the machinery of government changes. In the House of Commons, two committees have been formed to mirror the recently established government departments, tasked with scrutinising the departments' actions. In the House of Lords, the Liaison Committee has formed an informal group to assist Parliament in its scrutiny of the UK's withdrawal from the EU. In addition, the European Union Committee has begun conducting a number of inquiries into the potential impact that leaving the EU will have on the UK, such as UK-Irish relations and the implications for Gibraltar.

This briefing explores the machinery of government changes, the introduction of new committees and Parliament's response in further detail. The first section on government departments provides background as to their responsibilities and tasks, staffing and budgets. It also discusses how the new departments interact with existing government departments. The second section examines the creation of new cabinet and joint ministerial committees, including their structure and roles. The third section considers Parliament's response to such changes, including the establishment of new select committees and how they intend on scrutinising both the UK's negotiation process and the withdrawal from the EU.

This briefing does not cover the issue of Parliament's role in the process of triggering Article 50, which is currently the subject of an appeal to the Supreme Court.

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Table of Contents

- I. Government Departments 1
 - 1.1 Department for Exiting the European Union 1
 - 1.2 Department for International Trade..... 3
- 2. Government Structures 5
 - 2.1 European Union Exit and Trade Cabinet Committee 5
 - 2.2 Joint Ministerial Committee on EU Negotiations 6
- 3. Response by Parliament 7
 - 3.1 House of Commons Committees 7
 - 3.2 House of Lords Committees 9

I. Government Departments

On 18 July 2016, the Prime Minister, Theresa May, made a written ministerial statement outlining machinery of government changes.¹ This included the creation of two new government departments: the Department for Exiting the European Union and the Department for International Trade.

I.1 Department for Exiting the European Union

Responsibilities and Tasks

The Department is responsible for overseeing negotiations to leave the EU and establishing the future relationship between the UK and the EU.² In addition to overseeing negotiations, the Department is also tasked with:

- The policy work to support the UK's negotiations to leave the European Union and to establish the future relationship between the EU and the UK.
- Working very closely with the UK's devolved administrations, Parliament, and a wide range of other interested parties on what the approach to those negotiations should be.
- Conducting the negotiations in support of the Prime Minister including supporting bilateral discussions on EU exit with other European countries.
- Leading and coordinating cross-government work to seize the opportunities and ensure a smooth process of exit on the best possible terms.³

On 13 September 2016, the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, David Davis, gave evidence to the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee regarding the implications of leaving the EU for the UK's role in the world. When asked about the tasks staff at his Department were undertaking, Mr Davis stated that they were conducting sectoral analysis, working through approximately "50 cross-cutting sectors", examining "what is going to happen to them, what the problems of those industrial groups are, and so on".⁴ He noted that this analysis would be conducted "in liaison with other departments", with "some of them [...] setting up an engagement strategy".⁵ In addition, Mr Davis told the Committee that the staff in his Department were also working on:

Legal issues [...] the question of the legislation—has taken some time, and that is ongoing. There is, of course, work on the international legislation—the WTO legislation—as well [...]

Similarly, there is the article 50 process itself. There are reviews of other trade agreements—the Canadian trade agreement and why that went or did not go, and those

¹ House of Commons, '[Written Statement: Machinery of Government Changes](#)', 18 July 2016, HCWS94.

² Department for Exiting the European Union, '[About Us](#)', accessed 7 December 2016.

³ *ibid.*

⁴ House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, '[Oral Evidence: Implications of Leaving the EU for the UK's Role in the World](#)', 13 September 2016, HC 431 of session 2016–17, Q236.

⁵ *ibid.*

sorts of things. There is a whole series of legal, political and economic operations [...] Just as an aside, I don't know whether we made it clear to everyone that we have taken over our operation of the General Affairs Council⁶—the normal, day-to-day work.⁷

Mr Davis also confirmed that as Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, he now had “primary responsibility” for the United Kingdom’s Representation to the European Union (UKRep).⁸ The role of UKRep is to represent the UK in negotiations with the EU. It comprises of civil servants sourced from over 20 government departments, tasked with “working to ensure that UK policies are explained to other EU member states, the European Commission and members of the European Parliament”.⁹

Staff

The ministerial team at the Department for Exiting the European Union is as follows:

- David Davis MP: Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union
- David Jones MP: Minister of State
- Robin Walker MP: Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
- Lord Bridges of Headley: Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

As of 4 December 2016, the Department had over 300 staff members.¹⁰ According to the Prime Minister, the Department would be formed by “combining staff from the Cabinet Office’s Europe Unit, the Europe Directorate of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the UK’s Permanent Representation to the EU”,¹¹ and in time would take on staff from other government departments “as is needed”.¹²

In November 2016, Sir Simon McDonald, Permanent Under Secretary at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), confirmed that his Department had “loaned 42 slots to the Department for Exiting the European Union under machinery of government changes and lent the Department two private office staff”.¹³

In addition, the Institute for Government has reported that the Department for Exiting the European Union’s Permanent Secretary, Oliver Robbins, is the Prime Minister’s “adviser and representative in negotiations with EU counterparts”.¹⁴ Further, the head of UKRep and most

⁶ The General Affairs Council comprises of European affairs ministers from all 28 EU member states. The General Affairs Council coordinates preparations for European Council meetings and is responsible for a number of policy areas, including “EU enlargement and accession negotiations, the adoption of the multiannual financial framework (the EU’s 7 year budget plan), cohesion policy, matters relating to the EU’s institutional set-up and any dossier entrusted to it by the European Council”. For further information see: European Council, ‘[General Affairs Council Configuration \(GAC\)](#)’, accessed 8 December 2016.

⁷ House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, [Oral Evidence: Implications of Leaving the EU for the UK’s Role in the World](#), 13 September 2016, HC 431 of session 2016–17, Q236.

⁸ *ibid*, Q245.

⁹ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, ‘[UK Representation to the EU Brussels](#)’, accessed 10 December 2016.

¹⁰ House of Commons, ‘[Written Question: Department for Exiting the European Union: Recruitment](#)’, 5 December 2016, 55266.

¹¹ House of Commons, ‘[Written Statement: Machinery of Government Changes](#)’, 18 July 2016, HCWS94.

¹² *ibid*.

¹³ Sir Simon McDonald, ‘[How FCO is Supporting the Government on Brexit](#)’, Civil Service Quarterly Blog, 1 November 2016.

¹⁴ Institute for Government, [Planning Brexit: Silence is Not a Strategy](#), 29 September 2016.

senior UK official in Brussels, Sir Ivan Rogers, has a dual reporting line to both David Davis and the Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson.¹⁵

Budget

In the Autumn Statement, it was reported that there would be additional funding of up to £51 million in 2016/17 for the Department for Exiting the European Union “to support the renegotiation of the UK’s relationship with the European Union”.¹⁶ The Statement also announced that from 2017/18, up to £94 million a year would be allocated to the Department, until the UK’s exit from the European Union is complete.¹⁷

1.2 Department for International Trade

Responsibilities and Tasks

The Department for International Trade is responsible for promoting British trade across the world.¹⁸ It is also tasked with:

- Developing, coordinating and delivering a new trade and investment policy to promote UK business across the globe.
- Developing and negotiating free trade agreements and market access deals with non-EU countries.
- Negotiating plurilateral trade deals (focused on specific sectors or products).
- Providing operational support for exports and facilitating inward and outward investment.¹⁹

The Government also noted that the Department would “support the UK’s World Trade Organisation membership and representation”, in addition to covering inward and outward investment which would enable the Government to “take a more strategic approach to how both can contribute to UK prosperity and serve the nation’s long-term economic aims”.²⁰

Giving evidence to the House of Lords Internal Market Sub-Committee and External Affairs Sub-Committee in October 2016, the Minister of State for Trade Policy at the Department for International Trade, Lord Price, stated that there were a number of ways in which his Department was looking to improve the trading relationships between the UK and other countries. This included the Department visiting a number of countries to examine their trade relationships. He noted that:

We have been to Switzerland, Australia, New Zealand, the USA, Canada and South Korea to understand how those countries, which are very good at this and have been doing it for a long time, have structured themselves so that we clearly understand

¹⁵ Jill Rutter and Hannah White, *Planning Brexit: Silence is Not a Strategy*, Institute for Government, September 2016.

¹⁶ HM Treasury, *Autumn Statement 2016*, November 2016, Cm 9362, p 37.

¹⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁸ Department for International Trade, ‘*About Us*’, accessed 7 December 2016.

¹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰ HM Government, *Machinery of Government: Creation of a New Department for International Trade*, 14 July 2016.

where we need to be optimal in our negotiating arrangements over the next few years.²¹

Lord Price also said that the trade policy team in his Department was supporting the Department for Exiting the European Union by providing “specialist knowledge to fulfil their responsibilities”.²² In addition, the Department for International Trade would work alongside the Treasury, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, the Department for International Development, and the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to “ensure that businesses in the UK are best able to compete internationally”.²³

Further, the Department for International Trade also works with non-departmental public bodies, such as the Export Guarantees Advisory Council, which advises the Secretary of State for International Trade on UK Export Finance operations.²⁴

Staff

The ministerial team at the Department for International Trade is as follows:

- Liam Fox MP: Secretary of State for International Trade and President of the Board of Trade
- Greg Hands MP: Minister of State for Trade and Investment
- Lord Price: Minister of State for Trade Policy
- Mark Garnier MP: Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

The Department comprises of staff from UK Trade and Investment, UK Export and Finance, and Trade Policy Units from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.²⁵ In November 2016, the Department for International Trade reported that it had 2,709 people working on its agenda, which included staff deployed overseas.²⁶ As of September 2016, the Department was looking to fill 25 trade analysts and policy posts.²⁷ It was also looking to employ a Permanent Secretary for the Department, which has since been filled by Sir Martin Donnelly.²⁸

Budget

In the Autumn Statement, it was announced that “additional resource will be provided to strengthen trade policy capability” in both the Department for International Trade and the FCO, which would total £26 million a year by 2019/20.²⁹ According to the Lords Spokesperson for the Cabinet Office, Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen, the Department for International

²¹ House of Lords European Union Committee, [Oral Evidence: Brexit: Future Trade between the UK and the EU](#), 13 October 2016.

²² *ibid.*

²³ HM Government, [Machinery of Government: Creation of a New Department for International Trade](#), 14 July 2016.

²⁴ Export Guarantees Advisory Council, [‘About Us’](#), accessed 10 December 2016.

²⁵ House of Commons, [‘Written Question: Department for International Trade: Migrant Workers’](#), 13 October 2016, 47396.

²⁶ House of Commons, [‘Written Question: Department for International Trade: Staff’](#), 29 November 2016, 54794.

²⁷ Civil Service World, [‘Deadline Looms for Would-be Civil Service Brexit Trade Analysts’](#), 16 September 2016.

²⁸ Department for International Trade, [‘Our Management’](#), accessed 10 December 2016.

²⁹ HM Treasury, [Autumn Statement 2016](#), November 2016, Cm 9362, p 37.

Trade's budget, including staffing costs, would be presented to the House of Commons and approved as part of the supplementary estimates "in the New Year, as is standard practice".³⁰

In its report examining changes to the machinery of government, the think tank, the Institute for Government, looked at international examples of how civil services were organised to support trade negotiations. Its findings revealed that if the Department for International Trade was to model itself on the trade department of a country such as the United States, it would need to hire at least 200 extra staff, which would add up to £17–25 million to the Department's administration budget for every year that it operates.³¹

2. Government Structures

In addition to the creation of government departments ahead of the UK's withdrawal of the EU, the Government has created two committees, one ministerial and one joint with the devolved administrations, to discuss the UK leaving the EU.

2.1 European Union Exit and Trade Cabinet Committee

In response to the changes to the machinery of government, the European Union Exit and Trade Cabinet Committee was established. Members of the Committee are as follows:

- Theresa May MP: Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service (Chair)
- Philip Hammond MP: Chancellor of the Exchequer
- Amber Rudd MP: Secretary of State for the Home Department
- Boris Johnson MP: Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
- David Davis MP: Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union
- Liam Fox MP: Secretary of State for International Trade
- Greg Clark MP: Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
- Damian Green MP: Secretary of State for Work and Pensions
- Chris Grayling MP: Secretary of State for Transport
- Andrea Leadsom MP: Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Priti Patel MP: Secretary of State for International Development
- Patrick McLoughlin MP: Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
- David Mundell MP (as required): Secretary of State for Scotland
- Alun Cairns MP (as required): Secretary of State for Wales
- James Brokenshire MP (as required): Secretary of State for Northern Ireland³²

The role of the European Union Exit and Trade Cabinet Committee is to "oversee the negotiations on the withdrawal from the European Union and formation of a new relationship between the United Kingdom and the European Union; and policy on international trade".³³ It should be noted that information relating to the proceedings of cabinet committees, including who attends them and when they meet, is not usually published.³⁴

³⁰ House of Lords, '[Written Question: Government Departments: Pay](#)', 31 October 2016, HL2529.

³¹ Jill Rutter and Hannah White, *Planning Brexit: Silence is Not a Strategy*, Institute for Government, September 2016.

³² HM Government, [Cabinet Committees](#), accessed 7 December 2016.

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ House of Commons, '[Written Question: Department for Culture, Media and Sport: EU Exit and Trade Committee](#)', 23 November 2016, 53718.

2.2 Joint Ministerial Committee on EU Negotiations

On 24 October 2016, the Prime Minister held the first meeting for over two years of the Joint Ministerial Committee (JMC) at 10 Downing Street. The JMC is chaired by the Prime Minister and brings together the leaders of the devolved administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. At the meeting, it was agreed that a new cross-nations forum on EU negotiations would be established, and was to be chaired by the Secretary of State for Leaving the European Union, David Davis.³⁵

The first JMC on EU Negotiations (JMC (EN)), was held on 9 November 2016. Participants at the Committee meeting included:

- David Davis MP: Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union (Chair)
- James Brokenshire MP: Secretary of State for Northern Ireland
- David Mundell MP: Secretary of State for Scotland
- Alun Cairns MP: Secretary of State for Wales
- David Jones MP: Minister for State for the Department for Exiting the European Union
- Alan Duncan MP: Minister for State for Europe and the Americas in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office
- Arlene Foster MLA: First Minister of Northern Ireland
- Martin McGuinness MLA: Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland
- Mike Russell MSP: Scotland's Minister for UK Negotiations on Scotland's Place in Europe
- Mark Drakeford AM: Wales' Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government³⁶

At the meeting, ministers set out their priorities for discussion, in addition to agreeing to “develop further the proposed work programme to ensure its connection to and involvement with the process of negotiation”.³⁷ The Committee also agreed to meet on a monthly basis, sharing evidence and taking forward joint analysis, in order to inform their work programme.³⁸

In addition, part of JMC (EN)'s remit is to “seek to agree a UK approach to, and objectives for, Article 50 negotiations”.³⁹ However, some members of the devolved governments have expressed their frustration with the Committee. Giving evidence to the House of Lords Constitution Committee, Welsh First Minister, Carwyn Jones, contended that the JMC in its present form was:

Basically a Westminster creation that is designed to allow Westminster to discuss issues with the devolved administrations. It is not jointly owned in that sense; the meetings always take place in London and it is not a proper forum of four administrations coming together to discuss issues of mutual interest in that way.⁴⁰

³⁵ Prime Minister's Office, [‘Joint Ministerial Committee 24 October 2016: Statement’](#), 24 October 2016.

³⁶ Department for Exiting the European Union, [‘Joint Ministerial Committee \(EU Negotiations\) Communiqué’](#), 9 November 2016.

³⁷ *ibid.*

³⁸ *ibid.*

³⁹ Department for Exiting the European Union, [‘Joint Ministerial Committee Communiqué’](#), 24 October 2016.

⁴⁰ House of Lords Constitution Committee, [‘Oral Evidence: Inter-Governmental Relations in the UK’](#), 26 March 2015, Q46.

3. Response by Parliament

The response by Parliament to the machinery of government changes has seen two new committees created, in addition to further scrutiny of the UK's decision to withdraw from the EU. In the House of Commons, two select committees have been established to mirror the new government departments and to examine their tasks in greater detail. In the House of Lords, the Liaison Committee has created an informal group to oversee committee activity in the House relating to the United Kingdom leaving the European Union. In addition, the House of Lords European Union Committee has started a number of inquiries into the potential implications of the UK leaving the EU. The issue of whether Parliament has a role in triggering Article 50 is currently the subject of an appeal in the Supreme Court.⁴¹

3.1 House of Commons Committees

Exiting the European Union Committee

The Exiting the European Union Committee is chaired by Hilary Benn (Labour MP for Leeds Central). The Committee was appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Department for Exiting the European Union and matters falling within the responsibilities of associated public bodies.⁴² At present, the Committee is gathering evidence for its inquiry on the UK's negotiating objectives for withdrawal from the EU.⁴³ This will include examining the following questions:

- What should be the UK's objectives in negotiating its future economic and political relationship with the EU, looking at both risks and opportunities?
- What will have to be included in the negotiations to leave the EU under Article 50 and to what extent will this include provisions relating to the UK's future relationship with the EU?
- Is there a case for the UK seeking to negotiate transitional arrangements in the event that it is unable satisfactorily to reach agreement on its future political and economic relationship before it has left the EU under Article 50?
- Does the Government have the capacity and the appropriate structures to meet its objectives?⁴⁴

Launching the inquiry on 3 November 2016, Mr Benn stated that:

Our first inquiry will look at the UK's negotiating objectives for our withdrawal from the EU. This will allow us to explore what areas need to be negotiated, where the

⁴¹ For further information see: Supreme Court, '[Article 50 \(Brexit\) Case](#)', 8 November 2016.

⁴² House of Commons Exiting the European Union Committee, '[Role—Exiting the EU Committee](#)', accessed 7 December 2016.

⁴³ House of Commons Exiting the European Union Committee, '[UK's Negotiating Objectives for Withdrawal from EU Inquiry](#)', accessed 7 December 2016.

⁴⁴ House of Commons Exiting the European Union Committee, '[Exiting the EU Committee to Scrutinise UK's Negotiating Objectives](#)', 3 November 2016.

Government aims to be by the end of the Article 50 process, and the capacity of the new Department for Exiting the EU to deliver this.⁴⁵

International Trade Committee

Similar to the Exiting the European Union Committee, the International Trade Committee was also appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Department for International Trade and its associated public bodies.⁴⁶ Chaired by Angus Brendan MacNeil (Scottish National Party MP for Na h-Eileanan an Iar), the Committee is currently gathering evidence for its inquiry on the United Kingdom's trade options beyond 2019. As part of the inquiry, the Committee will examine various trade models that might be available for the UK once it withdraws from the EU, considering their strengths and weaknesses. The Committee will also evaluate the UK's future trading relationships with the wider world, in addition to those with the EU.⁴⁷

On 4 November 2016, the Committee met for the first time. Following the meeting, Mr MacNeil outlined that the Committee intended to “provide high-quality, evidence-based scrutiny as the process begins of working out how to untangle our trade agreements from those of the European Union—and how to negotiate new arrangements”.⁴⁸

Mr MacNeil also contended that a key priority for the newly established Committee was to:

Look at the quality and quantity of the trade expertise that is available to the United Kingdom government. Is the new Department for International Trade fit for purpose and ready for the tasks ahead? Are the staff in place? Are the boundaries between departments clear, with effective coordination and co-operation mechanisms too? Is there a comprehensive understanding of the global trade environment, as well as the relevant law and institutions? If not—where are the gaps and what is the plan?⁴⁹

Other Committees

Other departmental committees in the House of Commons are also conducting inquiries into the potential implications of the UK's withdrawal of the EU on their policy areas. This includes the Health Committee, which is currently examining the priorities for health and social care in the negotiations on the UK's withdrawal from the EU,⁵⁰ and the Culture, Media and Sport Committee, which is investigating the impact of the UK leaving the EU on employment in the creative and tourism industries and on the Digital Single Market.⁵¹

⁴⁵ House of Commons Exiting the European Union Committee, ‘[Exiting the EU Committee to Scrutinise UK's Negotiating Objectives](#)’, 3 November 2016.

⁴⁶ House of Commons International Trade Committee, ‘[Role—International Trade Committee](#)’, accessed 7 December 2016.

⁴⁷ House of Commons International Trade Committee, ‘[UK Trade Options Beyond 2019 Inquiry](#)’, accessed 7 December 2016.

⁴⁸ House of Commons International Trade Committee, ‘[International Trade Committee Sets Forward Plan](#)’, 4 November 2016.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*

⁵⁰ House of Commons Health Committee, ‘[Brexit and Health and Social Care Inquiry](#)’, accessed 13 December 2016.

⁵¹ House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee, ‘[The Impact of Brexit on the Creative Industries, Tourism and the Digital Single Market Inquiry](#)’, accessed 13 December 2016.

In addition, other committees in the House of Commons are undertaking a number of inquiries examining the impact of the UK's withdrawal from the EU. For example, the House of Commons European Scrutiny Committee is investigating how the referendum result has affected the way in which the UK now negotiates with the EU and how, for the time being, any new EU legislation will be scrutinised and debated in the run up to the UK formally withdrawing from the EU.⁵² Under Standing Orders, the Committee has also been tasked with examining European Union documents and reporting those it considers of legal or political importance to the House.⁵³ Furthermore, the House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee is currently conducting an inquiry into the future of the natural environment following the EU referendum, examining issues such as the prospect of funding for biodiversity schemes and conservation.⁵⁴

3.2 House of Lords Committees

Liaison Committee

On 2 November 2016, following discussions between the chairman of the Liaison Committee, Lord McFall of Alcluith (Non-affiliated), and chairs of other committees in the House of Lords, the Liaison Committee agreed to establish an informal group to assist with Parliament's scrutiny of the UK leaving the EU. As with the Liaison Committee, Lord McFall is tasked with chairing the group.⁵⁵

According to the Liaison Committee, the informal group's role is to "help to coordinate and oversee committee activity in the House relating to Brexit and to keep in touch with Brexit scrutiny being carried out in House of Commons committees".⁵⁶ The group will not have any decision making powers and will report regularly to the Liaison Committee about its work.⁵⁷

On 21 November 2016, the group held its first meeting. This involved each committee's chair outlining what their committee was currently working on and whether it had any planned inquiries in the future. The group also discussed the role of both its chairman and secretary in "facilitating evidence" from the Department for Exiting the European Union ministers and officials.⁵⁸ It also noted that the House of Lords had agreed that there was to be a full review of investigative committee activity by the Liaison Committee in the next parliamentary session, which would be the first review for 25 years. In addition, the House would "decide if there was a need for a House of Lords Brexit Committee".⁵⁹

⁵² House of Commons European Scrutiny Committee, '[EU-UK Relations in Preparation for Brexit Inquiry](#)', accessed 13 December 2016.

⁵³ House of Commons European Scrutiny Committee, '[Brexit: European Scrutiny Committee Response and Consultation](#)', 8 July 2016.

⁵⁴ House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee, '[Future of the Natural Environment after the EU Referendum Inquiry Launched](#)', 21 July 2016.

⁵⁵ House of Lords Liaison Committee, '[Liaison Committee Sets Up Informal Group on Brexit Committee Activity](#)', 3 November 2016.

⁵⁶ *ibid.*

⁵⁷ *ibid.*

⁵⁸ House of Lords Liaison Committee, '[First Informal Brexit Liaison Group Meeting Held](#)', 22 November 2016.

⁵⁹ *ibid.*

European Union Committee

In response to the United Kingdom's decision to withdraw from the European Union, the House of Lords European Union Committee has begun conducting a series of short inquiries looking at the key issues that will arise in the forthcoming negotiations on the matter. As part of these inquiries, the Committee has, and will in future, publish reports identifying key issues across a broad range of policy areas, such as financial services, trade and UK-Irish relations. The Committee has also noted that the reports will make a number of recommendations that the Committee believes the Government should prioritise in negotiations before the UK leaves the EU.⁶⁰

According to Lord Boswell (Non-affiliated), chair of the House of Lords European Union Committee:

Our work will provide a comprehensive analysis of the key issues raised by Brexit. We'll spell out risks and opportunities, and identify some of the key areas where choices and trade-offs will have to be made. As a society we need an informed public debate on what will probably be the most important peacetime negotiations in our history.⁶¹

Other Committees

Similar to in the House of Commons, both committees and sub-committees in the House of Lords have also conducted a number of inquiries examining the impact of the UK's withdrawal from the EU. For example, the House of Lords European Union Justice Sub-Committee published a report in May 2016 examining the potential impact of repealing the Human Rights Act on EU law,⁶² whilst the House of Lords European Union Home Affairs Sub-Committee is currently preparing a report into the findings of its inquiry on police and security cooperation between the UK and EU following a UK exit from the EU.⁶³

In addition, the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee has published a report following its inquiry into the relationship between EU membership and the effectiveness of UK science.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ House of Lords European Union Committee, '[EU Committees Brexit Inquiries Update](#)', 25 November 2016.

⁶¹ House of Lords, '[Lords Brexit Week Starts 12 December](#)', 2 December 2016.

⁶² House of Lords European Union Justice Sub-Committee, '[Potential Impact of Repealing the Human Rights Act on EU Law Inquiry](#)', accessed 14 December 2016.

⁶³ House of Lords European Union Home Affairs Sub-Committee, '[Brexit: Future EU-UK Security and Police Co-operation Inquiry](#)', accessed 14 December 2016.

⁶⁴ House of Lords Science and Technology Committee, '[Relationship Between EU Membership and UK Science Inquiry](#)', accessed 14 December 2016.

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