



## **Debate on the Queen's Speech: Day 1 Foreign Affairs, Defence, International Development, Trade, Climate Change and the Environment 7 January 2020**

### **Summary**

This Lords Library Briefing is one of three prepared ahead of the three days of debate in the House of Lords on the Queen's Speech, scheduled to take place between 7 and 9 January 2020. The briefings detail the legislative and policy announcements made by the Government, in the Queen's Speech and in the associated documents, and provide links to further reading.

This briefing looks at foreign affairs, leaving the European Union, defence, international development, trade, energy, environment and agriculture. This includes information on the legislation being introduced to facilitate the UK's exit from the European Union, such as the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill, and announcements about the UK's future relationship with the EU. The briefing also lists other expected Brexit-related legislation, with each of these covered in further detail under the relevant subject heading; for example, the proposed Immigration Bill is covered in the Library's briefing for day two of the Queen's Speech debates, under the home affairs heading.

This briefing also details the following legislation:

- Trade Bill
- Private International Law (Implementation of Agreements) Bill
- Agriculture Bill
- Fisheries Bill
- Environment Bill
- Animal Welfare Bill

In addition, it covers policy announcements regarding climate change and the Integrated Security, Defence and Foreign Policy Review.

Charley Coleman, Sally Dray, Nicola Newson and Edward Scott | 3 January 2020

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## I. Foreign Affairs

The Government announced in the Queen's Speech that it will "promote the United Kingdom's interests" and will "stand firm against those who threaten the values" of the country. It stated that the UK will continue to play a "leading role" in institutions such as NATO, the G7, the G20 and the Commonwealth.<sup>1</sup> The Queen's Speech and the Conservative Party manifesto contained the following commitments.

- The development of an independent sanctions regime, which builds on "existing Magnitsky-style measures" to "tackle human rights abusers around the world head on".<sup>2</sup>
- A ban on public bodies from "imposing their own direct or indirect boycotts, divestment or sanctions campaigns against foreign countries".<sup>3</sup>

### I.1 Further Information

- Cabinet Office, '[Government Confirms Commitment to Preventing Public Institutions Setting Up Their Own International Boycotts](#)', 19 December 2019
- Benjamin Kentish, '[Boris Johnson Government to Ban Public Bodies From Boycotting Israel and Other Countries, in Crackdown on BDS Movement](#)', *Independent*, 19 December 2019
- Ben Brandon and Alex Bailin, '[The Time Has Come for Britain's Long-Overdue Magnitsky Law](#)', *Times (£)*, 24 October 2019
- John Binns, '[Magnitsky Legacy and Curbing Financial Crime](#)', *Law Society Gazette*, 18 November 2019

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<sup>1</sup> Prime Minister's Office, [Queen's Speech December 2019: Background Briefing Notes](#), 19 December 2019, p 143.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, p 145.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*, p 133.

## 2. Leaving the European Union

The Conservative Party's manifesto said that:<sup>4</sup>

- Boris Johnson guaranteed to get his Brexit deal through Parliament and “get Brexit done” in January 2020.
- The UK's future relationship with the EU would be based on “free trade and friendly cooperation”, not on the EU treaties, EU law or political alignment with the EU.
- A Conservative government would negotiate a trade agreement with the EU in 2020 and would not extend the implementation (or transition) period beyond December 2020.
- The future relationship with the EU would allow the UK to control its own laws, money, trade policy, immigration policy and fishing waters.
- The UK would stay out of the single market or any form of customs union with the EU.
- The European Court of Justice would no longer have a role in the UK.
- The future relationship with the EU would allow the UK to raise standards in areas like workers' rights, animal welfare, agriculture and the environment. New legislation would ensure high standards of workers' rights, environmental protection and consumer rights.

The Queen's Speech outlined the following legislation and policy commitments relating to Brexit.

### 2.1 European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill

The Queen's Speech described delivering Brexit on 31 January 2020 as the Government's priority.<sup>5</sup> It said the Government would bring forward legislation to ensure the UK's exit on that date.<sup>6</sup>

The Government set out the main elements of the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill as follows:<sup>7</sup>

- Implementing the withdrawal agreement, Swiss citizens' rights agreement and EEA EFTA separation agreement in UK law.<sup>8</sup>
- Implementing the new protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland.
- Protecting the rights of EU, EEA and Swiss citizens in UK law.

<sup>4</sup> Conservative Party, [Conservative Party Manifesto 2019](#), November 2019, unnumbered 'My Guarantee' page at front of the manifesto and p 5.

<sup>5</sup> [HL Hansard, 19 December 2019, col 7](#).

<sup>6</sup> The default legal position is that the UK will leave the EU on that date whether or not domestic legislation is passed. However, passing legislation to implement the withdrawal agreement the Prime Minister agreed with the EU in October 2019 would allow the UK to ratify the agreement and leave with a deal. The EU also needs to complete its own process to ratify the agreement.

<sup>7</sup> Prime Minister's Office, [Queen's Speech December 2019: Background Briefing Notes](#), 19 December 2019, p 15.

<sup>8</sup> The EEA EFTA Separation Agreement is an agreement between the UK and Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. These three countries are the non-EU members of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) that also belong to the European Economic Area (EEA). The agreement covers citizens' rights and other separation issues arising from Brexit. The Swiss Citizens' Rights Agreement is an agreement between the UK and Switzerland covering citizens' rights issues arising from Brexit. Switzerland belongs to EFTA but not the EEA.

- Providing for the implementation period until 31 December 2020.

The Government introduced a new European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill on the same day as the Queen's Speech. The Commons voted by 358 to 234, a majority of 124, to give the bill its second reading on 20 December 2019.<sup>9</sup> The Commons voted by 353 to 243, a majority of 110, in favour of the Government's programme motion for the bill.<sup>10</sup> The bill will have two days in committee of the whole House in the Commons, and one day for the remaining stages. Second reading is scheduled to take place on 13 January 2020 in the House of Lords, with committee stage over three days on 14–16 January, report stage on 20 and 21 January 2020 and third reading on 21 January 2020.<sup>11</sup>

The Government had previously introduced a European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill in the parliamentary session that ran from October–November 2019. The House of Commons voted by 329 to 299, a majority of 30, to give that bill its second reading on 22 October 2019.<sup>12</sup> However, the Commons then defeated the Government's programme motion for the bill by 322 votes to 308, a majority of 14.<sup>13</sup> The bill made no further progress and was lost when Parliament was dissolved for the general election.

The present bill is not identical to the one introduced in the previous session. Key differences include:<sup>14</sup>

- **Extending the implementation period:** The new bill prevents ministers agreeing to an extension of the implementation (transition) period beyond 31 December 2020. The withdrawal agreement itself allows for the implementation period to be extended for one or two years, if a decision to extend is taken before 1 July 2020. Under the previous bill, ministers could have agreed to extend the implementation period if the House of Commons approved this.
- **Parliamentary oversight:** The previous bill contained provisions about parliamentary oversight of the negotiations for the future relationship. The Commons would have had to approve the Government's negotiating objectives before negotiations could begin. The Government would have had to report to Parliament every three months on the progress of negotiations. The Government would not have been able to ratify a future relationship agreement without explicit Commons approval. These provisions do not appear in the new bill.
- **Workers' rights:** The previous bill contained provisions on the protection of workers' rights. The Government would have been required to make a statement of 'non-regression' on workers' retained EU rights when introducing new primary legislation. The Government would also have been required to make regular statements about whether the EU had published any new workers' rights, whether domestic law conferred similar rights, and, if not, whether the Government intended to take steps to implement the new EU rights. These provisions do not appear in the new bill. However, the Government has

<sup>9</sup> [HC Hansard, 20 December 2019, cols 217–221.](#)

<sup>10</sup> *ibid*, cols 223–6.

<sup>11</sup> House of Lords Government Whips' Office, [Forthcoming Business](#), 20 December 2019.

<sup>12</sup> [HC Hansard, 22 October 2019, cols 917–20.](#)

<sup>13</sup> *ibid*, cols 923–6.

<sup>14</sup> This list is not exhaustive.

said that a new Employment Bill will, among other things, “protect and enhance workers’ rights as the UK leaves the EU”.<sup>15</sup>

- **Retained EU case law:** The new bill would allow ministers to make regulations setting out when courts and tribunals could depart from ‘retained EU case law’. Retained EU case law refers to principles laid down by and decisions made by the Court of Justice of the European Union. Such regulations could only be made after consultation with specified senior members of the judiciary. The Government has said this would “restore power to UK courts”.<sup>16</sup> This provision did not appear in the previous bill. Under current legislation, only the Supreme Court and, in some cases, the Scottish High Court of Justiciary could depart from retained EU case law after Brexit.<sup>17</sup>
- **Family reunion rights:** Under current legislation, the Government must seek to negotiate an agreement with the EU under which unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in the EU would be able to join relatives lawfully resident in the UK and vice versa.<sup>18</sup> Under the new bill, the Government would no longer be obliged to try to negotiate such an arrangement. Instead, it would have to lay before Parliament a statement of policy in relation to future arrangements between the UK and the EU about unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. This provision was not in the previous bill.
- **Reporting on dispute resolution:** The new bill requires the Government to report to Parliament on the use of certain formal dispute procedures between the UK and the EU after the end of the implementation period. This provision was not in the previous bill. The Government has stated that this requirement will give Parliament greater oversight.<sup>19</sup>

## 2.2 Future Relationship with the European Union

The Queen’s Speech stated that the Government would “seek a future relationship with the European Union based on a free trade agreement that benefits the whole of the United Kingdom”.<sup>20</sup>

The European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill effectively sets an 11-month period for negotiating and ratifying the free trade agreement, from the date of the UK’s departure from the EU on 31 January 2020 to the end of the implementation (or transition) period on 31 December 2020.

The Government has stated it will bring forward this session any legislation needed to implement any agreement it reaches with the EU on future relations.<sup>21</sup> Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) guidance on treaties says that if domestic legislation is needed to enable the UK to give effect to its obligations under a treaty, the legislation should be in place before the treaty comes into force, so that the two can come into operation at the same time.<sup>22</sup> The FCO therefore usually insists that any necessary UK legislation is in place before a treaty is ratified or acceded to.

<sup>15</sup> Prime Minister’s Office, [Queen’s Speech December 2019: Background Briefing Notes](#), 19 December 2019, p 43.

<sup>16</sup> Prime Minister’s Office, ‘[PM: ‘Brexit Vote Wrapped Up for Christmas’](#)’, 20 December 2019.

<sup>17</sup> European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018, section 6(4).

<sup>18</sup> European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018, section 17.

<sup>19</sup> Prime Minister’s Office, ‘[PM: ‘Brexit Vote Wrapped Up for Christmas’](#)’, 20 December 2019.

<sup>20</sup> [HL Hansard, 19 December 2019, col 7](#).

<sup>21</sup> Prime Minister’s Office, [Queen’s Speech December 2019: Background Briefing Notes](#), 19 December 2019, p 16.

<sup>22</sup> Foreign and Commonwealth Office, [Treaties and Memoranda of Understanding: Guidance on Practice and Procedures](#), March 2014, p 6.

If there is no trade agreement in place by the end of the implementation period, then UK-EU trade would take place on World Trade Organisation terms from January 2021.

### 2.3 Other Brexit-Related Bills

Other bills related to Brexit concern the UK's post-exit legal framework for different policy areas. These bills are all covered in more detail, alongside suggestions for further reading, under the relevant policy heading in this briefing and the briefings the Library is producing for the other days of the Queen's Speech debates.

- **“Making the Most of Opportunities”**: The Queen's Speech announced, in addition to the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill, the Government would bring forward other legislation to “make the most of the opportunities that [Brexit] brings for all the people of the United Kingdom”.<sup>23</sup> The Government's background briefing identified the following bills under that description:<sup>24</sup>
  - Agriculture Bill (covered later in this briefing)
  - Fisheries Bill (covered later in this briefing)
  - Trade Bill (covered later in this briefing)
  - Financial Services Bill (covered in the Library's briefing for day 3 of the debate on the Queen's Speech, which deals with economic affairs and business)
  - Private International Law (Implementation of Agreements) Bill (covered later in this briefing)
- **Immigration**: The Queen's Speech also announced that the Government would introduce a “modern, fair, points-based immigration system”.<sup>25</sup> The Government's background briefing said the Immigration and Social Security Coordination (EU Withdrawal) Bill would pave the way for this new system, bringing an end to free movement in UK law.<sup>26</sup> It would make EU citizens arriving in the UK from 2021 subject to the same UK immigration controls as non-EU citizens. This bill is covered further in the Library's briefing for day 2 of the debate on the Queen's Speech, which deals with home affairs.
- **Workers' Rights**: The Government's background briefing on the Queen's Speech said there would be an Employment Bill that would, among other things, “protect and enhance workers' rights as the UK leaves the EU”.<sup>27</sup> The Employment Bill is covered in the Library's briefing for day 3 of the debate on the Queen's Speech, which deals with business.

<sup>23</sup> [HL Hansard, 19 December 2019, col 7.](#)

<sup>24</sup> Prime Minister's Office, [Queen's Speech December 2019: Background Briefing Notes](#), 19 December 2019, p 23.

<sup>25</sup> [HL Hansard, 19 December 2019, col 7.](#)

<sup>26</sup> Prime Minister's Office, [Queen's Speech December 2019: Background Briefing Notes](#), 19 December 2019, p 23.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid*, p 43.

- **Environmental Standards:** The manifesto said Brexit would allow the UK to raise environmental and animal welfare standards.<sup>28</sup> The Environment Bill and animal welfare legislation are covered later in this briefing.

The Government's background briefing for the Queen's Speech said there would be further EU-exit legislation required in this parliamentary session in addition to the legislation set out in the briefing.<sup>29</sup> It said this would be needed to deliver on the Government's Brexit-related priorities by the end of the implementation period.

## 2.4 Further Reading

### *European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill*

- House of Commons Library, [The October 2019 EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement](#), 17 October 2019
- House of Commons Library, [‘The New EU \(Withdrawal Agreement\) Bill: What’s Changed?’](#), 19 December 2019
- House of Commons Library, [‘Removal of Workers’ Rights in the New EU \(Withdrawal Agreement\) Bill’](#), 20 December 2019
- House of Commons Library, [‘Family Reunion Rights and the EU \(Withdrawal Agreement\) Bill’](#), 23 December 2019
- House of Commons Library, [‘European Union \(Withdrawal Agreement\) Bill 2019–20’](#), 23 October 2019\*
- House of Lords Constitution Committee, [European Union \(Withdrawal Agreement\) Bill: Interim Report](#), 5 November 2019, HL Paper 21 of session 2019\*
- FullFact, [‘What Do Leaked Treasury Documents Tell Us About Checks on Goods Crossing the Irish Sea?’](#), 6 December 2019
- Maddy Thimont Jack, [‘Parliament Still Has Responsibility to Scrutinise the Withdrawal Agreement Bill Properly’](#), Institute for Government, 18 December 2019

\*These documents refer to the previous version of the bill introduced in the short 2019 session.

### *Future Relationship with the European Union*

- HM Government, [Political Declaration Setting Out the Framework for the Future Relationship between the European Union and the United Kingdom](#), 19 October 2019
- European Council, [European Council \(Article 50\) Conclusions](#), 13 December 2019
- George Parker, [‘Boris Johnson’s Vow to Implement Brexit Deal by December 2020 in Doubt’](#), *Financial Times*, 9 December 2019
- Sam Fleming, Alan Beattie, Jim Brunsten and George Parker, [‘Boris Johnson Throws Down Gauntlet to Brussels as Trade Talks Loom’](#), *Financial Times* (£), 17 December 2019

<sup>28</sup> Conservative Party, [Conservative Party Manifesto 2019](#), November 2019, p 5.

<sup>29</sup> Prime Minister's Office, [Queen's Speech December 2019: Background Briefing Notes](#), 19 December 2019, p 16.

- Daniel Boffey, '[Boris Johnson's Brexit Extension Block 'Will Limit UK Options'](#)', Guardian, 17 December 2019
- Jim Brunson, '[Brussels Warns UK Will Suffer More from Lack of EU Trade Deal](#)', *Financial Times* (£), 18 December 2019
- Amy Jones, '[Ursula Von Der Leyen Warns New Trade Deal Might Not Be 'Feasible' by the End of 2020](#)', *Telegraph* (£), 27 December 2019
- David Henig, '[No, a Trade Deal with Europe Won't Be Easy Just Because We Start from Alignment](#)', *Prospect*, 19 November 2019



### 3. Private International Law (Implementation of Agreements) Bill

The Private International Law (Implementation of Agreements) Bill was announced in the Government's December 2019 Queen's Speech *Background Briefing Note*.<sup>30</sup>

The bill would include provisions related to access to justice in cases where UK individuals become involved in legal disputes that crossed international boundaries. The Government has explained that the bill would aim to provide UK citizens greater confidence to live, work and trade internationally. Its provisions would include:

- Assisting families and businesses to access “efficient, predictable solutions” to legal disputes, such as those arising when business trade abroad or when families breakdown and parents move abroad.<sup>31</sup>
- Implementing international agreements to “ensure that after Brexit we continue to have clear and effective legal rules agreed between the UK and other countries”.<sup>32</sup>

The Government has stated that main elements of the bill would include clarifying the implementation of the following three international conventions in UK domestic law:<sup>33</sup>

- The 1996 Hague Convention. This relates to the protection of children in cross-border disputes and custody cases where the parents of children live in different countries.
- The 2005 Hague Convention. This relates to cross-border contracts. It aims to ensure there is no confusion over where cases should be heard and that decisions can be recognised and enforced in other countries.
- The 2007 Hague Convention. This relates to the recovering of child support and other forms of family maintenance across borders.

The Private International Law (Implementation of Agreements) Bill would also provide the Government with powers to implement further agreements on private international law. All EU member states currently participate in these three conventions, except Denmark, which does not participate in the 2007 convention.<sup>34</sup>

Speaking for the Government during a debate on the Queen's Speech in October 2019, Baroness Williams of Trafford, Minister of State at the Home Office, said that the Government wanted to continue to work with the EU in civil and family cases that crossed borders:

We are committed to continued co-operation with the EU in cross-border, civil and family cases after Brexit. In particular, we are keen to ensure that there are clear rules on which court should hear a cross-border case and that UK legal decisions can be recognised and enforced in

<sup>30</sup> Prime Minister's Office, [Queen's Speech December 2019: Background Briefing Notes](#), 19 December 2019, pp 28–9. A bill of the same name had been announced in the October 2019 Queen's Speech *Background Briefing Notes*.

<sup>31</sup> *ibid*, p 28.

<sup>32</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>33</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>34</sup> *ibid*, p 29.

the EU. We will work with our European partners to establish the exact nature of a future agreement.<sup>35</sup>

### 3.1 Hague Conventions: Further Details

The three Hague conventions referred to above were agreed by Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH). This is a global inter-governmental organisation with 83 members (82 states and the EU).<sup>36</sup> Some non-member states are also parties to the conventions which the HCCH oversees; as such, its work encompasses 150 countries. The HCCH has agreed a total of 40 conventions and protocols.<sup>37</sup> The statutory mission of the HCCH is to work for the “progressive unification” of private international law rules.

Further details about the three Hague conventions that the Government has said will be covered by the bill are set out below:

#### ***Hague Child Protection Convention (1996)***

The Hague Convention on Jurisdiction, Applicable Law, Recognition, Enforcement and Co-operation in Respect of Parental Responsibility and Measures for the Protection of Children (1996) covers areas including:

- Civil measures of protection concerning children (including orders concerning parental responsibility and contact and public measures of protection or care).
- Matters of representation.
- Protection of children’s property.<sup>38</sup>

It provides a structure for the resolution of custody and contact disputes arising when parents live in different countries.

#### ***Hague Convention on Choice of Court Agreements (2005)***

The convention seeks to allow business to agree that a particular court should have jurisdiction in certain disputes and that any judgments of that court are recognised and enforced by other courts. The convention applies to choice-of-court-agreements “concluded in civil or commercial matters”; consumer and employment contracts and certain specified subject matters are excluded.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> [HL Hansard, 21 October 2019, col 477.](#)

<sup>36</sup> Hague Conference on Private International Law, ‘[About HCCH: A World Organisation](#)’, accessed 20 December 2019.

<sup>37</sup> Hague Conference on Private International Law, ‘[Conventions, Protocols and Principles](#)’, accessed 20 December 2019.

<sup>38</sup> Hague Conference on Private International Law, [Outline: 1996 Hague Child Protection Convention](#), June 2018.

<sup>39</sup> Hague Conference on Private International Law, [The Hague Convention of 30 June 2005 on Choice of Court Agreements: Outline of the Convention](#), May 2013.

### ***The Hague Convention on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance (2007) and Protocol on the Law Applicable to Maintenance Obligations***

The object of the convention is to “to ensure the effective international recovery of child support and other forms of family maintenance”.<sup>40</sup> Its aim is to do this through:

- a) establishing a comprehensive system of co-operation between the authorities of the Contracting States;
- b) making available applications for the establishment of maintenance decisions;
- c) providing for the recognition and enforcement of maintenance decisions; and
- d) requiring effective measures for the prompt enforcement of maintenance decisions.<sup>41</sup>

### **3.2 Further Reading**

- Hague Conference on Private International Law, [Outline: 1996 Hague Child Protection Convention](#), June 2018
- Hague Conference on Private International Law, [The Hague Convention of 30 June 2005 on Choice of Court Agreements: Outline of the Convention](#), May 2013
- Hague Conference on Private International Law, [Outline: Hague Child Support Convention](#), June 2012
- House of Lords European Union Committee, [Brexit: Justice for Families, Individuals and Businesses?](#), 20 March 2017, HL Paper 134 of session 2016–17 (the 1996 and 2005 Hague Conventions are discussed in several places in the report, but in particular on p 28 and pp 35–39); and [Government Response](#), 1 December 2017.

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<sup>40</sup> [Hague Convention on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance](#), article 1.

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.*

## 4. Defence

The Conservative Party manifesto pledged that a Conservative government would “protect the British people at home and abroad”.<sup>42</sup> The manifesto and the Government’s programme outlined in the Queen’s Speech set out the following policy commitments.

### 4.1 Veterans Affairs

Policies to help armed forces veterans, mentioned in the Government’s Queen Speech briefing, included:<sup>43</sup>

- Introducing the Armed Forces (Legal Protections) Bill, which will “tackle vexatious claims that undermine our armed forces”.
- Further incorporation of the armed forces covenant into law.
- Implementing the Stormont House agreement, to provide “reconciliation for victims and greater certainty for veterans”.
- Introducing a veteran’s railcard.
- Guaranteeing an interview for any public sector job veterans apply for if they have the minimum job requirements.
- A reduction in employer’s national insurance contributions for those employing veterans.
- Additional childcare provision for those serving in the armed forces.
- Protection against tax rises for armed forces personnel in Scotland.

### 4.2 Defence Funding

- Spending at least 2% of national income on defence, in line with the UK’s NATO commitments.<sup>44</sup>

### 4.3 Integrated Security, Defence and Foreign Policy Review

The Queen’s Speech stated that the Prime Minister will lead an Integrated Security, Defence and Foreign Policy Review, which will cover “all aspects of international policy from defence to diplomacy and development”.<sup>45</sup> The review will examine:<sup>46</sup>

- How to strengthen and prioritise the UK’s alliances, diplomacy and development.
- How to improve cross-departmental working in Whitehall.
- The UK’s current deterrence strategy and the ways in which a “technological surprise” could threaten the UK’s security.

<sup>42</sup> Conservative Party, [Conservative Party Manifesto 2019](#), November 2019, p 53.

<sup>43</sup> Prime Minister’s Office, [Queen’s Speech December 2019: Background Briefing Notes](#), 19 December 2019, pp 128–30.

<sup>44</sup> *ibid*, p 128.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid*, p 5.

<sup>46</sup> *ibid*, pp 141–2.

- The procurement process used by the armed forces, intelligent services and other security forces.
- How to improve the UK's collaboration with scientists and technology companies.

#### 4.4 Further Information

- Ministry of Defence, '[Public Consultation on New Laws Launches to Protect Armed Forces From Historical Allegations](#)', 22 July 2019
- Dominic Nicholls, '[Defence Spending Fell Below NATO Minimum Four Years Ago Says New Report](#)', *Telegraph* (£), 16 July 2019
- Edna McClafferty, '[Colum Eastwood: PM's Veteran Pledge Could "Damage Political Progress"](#)', BBC News, 19 December 2019
- Francis Elliott, '[Boris Johnson to Take Aim at MoD Over Wasted Cash](#)', *Times* (£), 16 December 2019
- Peter Roberts, '[The Upcoming Defence and Security Review: Questions That Must Be Answered](#)', Royal United Services Institute, 17 December 2019

## 5. International Development

The Conservative Party manifesto said that a Conservative government would “continue to support international initiatives to achieve reconciliation, stability and justice across the world”.<sup>47</sup> The manifesto and the Queen’s Speech included commitments to:<sup>48</sup>

- Spend 0.7% of gross national income (GNI) on international development.
- Work towards an end to “all preventable deaths of mothers, new born babies and children by 2030” and the eradication of Ebola and malaria.
- Lead global action to help provide 12 years of quality education for all girls by 2030.
- Increase efforts to support countries in receipt of international aid to become “self-sufficient” through “private investment and their own tax revenues”.
- Uphold peace-building and humanitarian initiatives to assist “war-torn and divided societies”.

The Conservative Party manifesto said that the Government had already “doubled international climate finance”. This supports developing countries to respond to the challenges and opportunities of climate change.<sup>49</sup> The Prime Minister made this commitment in September 2019 at the UN General Assembly.<sup>50</sup> The Queen’s Speech further explained that climate finance support would increase from “£5.8 billion” to “at least £11.6 billion over the next five years, between 2021/22 and 2025/26”.<sup>51</sup>

### 5.1 Further Information

- Department for International Development, [‘UK Aid to Double Efforts to Tackle Climate Change’](#), 23 September 2019
- Alok Sharma, [‘Ebola Devastates Lives—and the World Cannot Afford to Ignore It’](#), *Huffington Post*, 19 August 2019
- Angela Smith, [‘The UK Needs a Deeper, and More Ambitious, Approach to Development’](#), *Prospect*, 5 November 2019
- Prime Minister’s Office, [‘PM Steps Up UK Effort to Get Every Girl in the World into School’](#), 24 September 2019

<sup>47</sup> Conservative Party, [Conservative Party Manifesto 2019](#), November 2019, p 53.

<sup>48</sup> Prime Minister’s Office, [Queen’s Speech December 2019: Background Briefing Notes](#), 19 December 2019, pp 143–5.

<sup>49</sup> Conservative Party, [Conservative Party Manifesto 2019](#), November 2019, p 55.

<sup>50</sup> Department for International Development, [‘UK Aid to Double Efforts to Tackle Climate Change’](#), 23 September 2019.

<sup>51</sup> Prime Minister’s Office, [Queen’s Speech December 2019: Background Briefing Notes](#), 19 December 2019, p 118.

## 6. International Trade

### 6.1 Trade Bill

In the Queen's Speech the Government said that it would bring forward legislation to "ensure the United Kingdom's exit [on 31 January 2020] and to make the most of the opportunities that this brings for all the people of the United Kingdom". This included the introduction of a Trade Bill.<sup>52</sup> The Government has said that it is seeking "ambitious new trade deals with our international partners across the world".<sup>53</sup>

The provisions would include:

- The creation of powers for transitioning trade agreements that the UK is party to through its membership of the EU.
- The establishment of a new trade remedies body (the Trade Remedies Authority) to protect UK businesses from injury caused by unfair trading practices.
- Provisions to allow the UK to implement the World Trade Organisation Agreement on Government Procurement.
- The creation of powers to allow the UK government to gather and share trade information to support UK businesses against unfair trading practices.

[A previous Trade Bill](#) had been introduced in the 2017–19 session. It completed its stages in the House of Commons and was passed by the House of Lords with amendments. However, the Commons never considered the Lords amendments and the bill did not receive royal assent.

### 6.2 Other Announcements

The Conservative Party said in its manifesto that a Conservative government:<sup>54</sup>

- Aimed to have 80 percent of UK trade covered by free trade agreements within the next three years, starting with the USA, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. It said these deals would be negotiated in parallel with a trade agreement with the EU.
- Would "forge stronger links with the Commonwealth", including engaging diaspora communities in the UK.
- Wanted to open up trade in services.
- Would create up to ten freeports around the UK.
- Would "redouble efforts" to promote British business and UK exports and dismantle barriers to trade.
- Would not compromise the UK's environmental protection, animal welfare and food standards in trade negotiations.

<sup>52</sup> Prime Minister's Office, [Queen's Speech December 2019: Background Briefing Notes](#), 19 December 2019, pp 21–2.

<sup>53</sup> *ibid*, p 14.

<sup>54</sup> Conservative Party, [Conservative Party Manifesto 2019](#), November 2019, p 57.

It also stated that Northern Ireland would “enjoy the full economic benefits of Brexit including new free trade agreements”.<sup>55</sup>

Some have asserted, including the Labour Party, that a trade deal with the US could result in further privatisation of the NHS and higher drug prices.<sup>56</sup> The Conservative Party manifesto stated that the NHS, and the price it pays for drugs and the services it provides, would “not [be] on the table” in trade talks.<sup>57</sup> This was restated in the Government’s background briefing notes on the Queen’s Speech.<sup>58</sup> The Government also stated that the UK’s future trade deals.<sup>59</sup>

- Would be fair to developing nations.
- Would not compromise on the UK’s environmental protections and food standards.

The Government said it would promote animal welfare standards “at every opportunity in trade negotiations”. It would also “help protect and reform the World Trade Organisation”.<sup>60</sup>

### 6.3 Further Reading

- House of Commons Library, [Trade Bill: 2017–19](#), 2 July 2018, pp 3–20; and House of Lords Library, [Trade Bill: Briefing for Lords Stages](#), 31 August 2018
- House of Commons Library, [UK Progress in Rolling Over International Trade Agreements](#), 13 December 2019
- House of Commons Library, [Geographical Pattern of UK Trade](#), 5 November 2019
- House of Lords Library, [NHS and Future Trade Deals](#), 27 June 2019
- Department for International Trade, [‘UK Trade with Trade Agreement Continuity \(TAC\) Countries: Statistical Ad Hoc Release’](#), 4 December 2019

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<sup>55</sup> Conservative Party, [Conservative Party Manifesto 2019](#), November 2019, p 43.

<sup>56</sup> Labour Party, [‘Corbyn Demands Trump Remove Drug Prices and NHS from UK-US Trade Deal’](#), 2 December 2019.

<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> Prime Minister’s Office, [Queen’s Speech December 2019: Background Briefing Notes](#), 19 December 2019, p 31.

<sup>59</sup> *ibid.*, p 144.

<sup>60</sup> *ibid.*



## 7. Environment, Agriculture and Animal Welfare

The Queen's Speech included a number of bills concerning agriculture, fisheries and the environment. It also included legislation to protect animal welfare and outlined measures the Government would take to combat climate change.

### 7.1 Agriculture Bill and Fisheries Bill

The Agriculture Bill and the Fisheries Bill are part of the group of bills described in the Queen's Speech as enabling the UK to "make the most of the opportunities" after the UK's withdrawal from the EU.<sup>61</sup> They would implement commitments in the Conservative Party manifesto to reform the UK's farming and fisheries industries following the UK's departure from the EU's common agricultural policy and the common fisheries policy.<sup>62</sup>

Details on the bills were provided in the background briefing accompanying the Queen's Speech.<sup>63</sup> This stated the Agriculture Bill would:

- Replace the common agricultural policy with a new system of payments based on the principle of "public money for public goods". These public goods would include: environmental protection; animal welfare; improving food quality; and sustainability. The Government also said that farmers and land managers would be rewarded for improving water quality, biodiversity and public access to the countryside.
- Set out the framework for a new environmental land management scheme underpinned by these 'public money for public goods' principles.
- Establish a seven-year transition period in England during which direct payments would be phased out. The Government stated that, during this period, transitional schemes would enable farmers to invest in new equipment, technology and infrastructure.
- Grant the Government powers to reform the supply chain and the information provided to consumers on how food is produced.

The background briefing also stated the Fisheries Bill would:

- Establish a new legal framework enabling the UK to operate as an independent coastal state. This would come into effect at the end of the transitional period following the UK's withdrawal from the EU. It would enable the UK to set the total allowable catches in its waters.
- Provide powers to the devolved administrations to manage their own fisheries.
- Require the UK Government and devolved administrations to develop a plan to ensure fish stocks are maintained at sustainable levels, as committed to in the Conservative Party manifesto.<sup>64</sup>
- Ensure English, Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish boats have access to all UK waters.

<sup>61</sup> [HL Hansard, 19 December 2019, cols 7–9.](#)

<sup>62</sup> Conservative Party, [Conservative Party Manifesto 2019](#), 24 November 2019, p 42.

<sup>63</sup> Prime Minister's Office, [Queen's Speech December 2019: Background Briefing Notes](#), 19 December 2019, pp 17–20.

<sup>64</sup> Conservative Party, [Conservative Party Manifesto 2019](#), 24 November 2019, p 42.

- Enable the Government to give grants to fishermen to improve and protect the marine environment.
- Grant the Government the power to make regulations about the marine environment.

The Fisheries Bill would also give the Government the power to amend primary legislation and retained EU law. The background briefing stated these powers would be used:

[...] to allow the UK to respond to scientific advice (for example, on fish stock levels); to maintain high standards of fish health, protecting our aquaculture industry and export markets; and to meet our international commitments relating to fisheries.<sup>65</sup>

Bills to establish new regimes for the farming and fisheries industries following the UK's withdrawal from the EU were previously introduced during the 2017–19 session.<sup>66</sup> These bills both fell due to prorogation. They were included in the subsequent Queen's Speech in October 2019.<sup>67</sup> However, neither bill was introduced prior to the end of the 2019 session on 5 November 2019.

## 7.2 Environment Bill

The Queen's Speech announced that the Government would introduce an Environment Bill.<sup>68</sup> The provisions outlined both in the speech and the background briefing included a number of Conservative Party manifesto commitments.<sup>69</sup> The background briefing states the Environment Bill would:

- Establish environmental principles in domestic law following the UK's withdrawal from the EU.
- Introduce statutory targets for improving the environment, including air quality.
- Create a new regulator called the Office for Environmental Protection.
- Ban the export of plastic waste to non-OECD countries.
- Introduce measures to tackle non-recyclable plastic waste. These measures would include: establishing an extended producer responsibility for the disposal of non-recyclable waste; introducing deposit return schemes; introducing charges for specified single-use plastic items; and measures intended to improve the consistency in the way waste is recycled.
- Grant powers to local bodies to address sources of air pollution.
- Enable the Government to recall vehicles that do not meet emissions standards.
- Require house builders to support biodiversity and the creation of natural spaces as part of any new development. This is described as ensuring a 'biodiversity net gain' for new developments.
- Require local nature recovery strategies to be published, setting out the biodiversity

<sup>65</sup> Prime Minister's Office, [Queen's Speech December 2019: Background Briefing Notes](#), 19 December 2019, p 20.

<sup>66</sup> [HC Hansard, 12 September 2018, col 771](#); and [HC Hansard, 25 October 2018, col 481](#).

<sup>67</sup> [HL Hansard, 14 October 2019, cols 2–4](#).

<sup>68</sup> [HL Hansard, 19 December 2019, cols 7–9](#).

<sup>69</sup> *ibid*; Prime Minister's Office, [Queen's Speech December 2019: Background Briefing Notes](#), 19 December 2019, pp 112–14; and Conservative Party, [Conservative Party Manifesto 2019](#), 24 November 2019, p 43.

- priorities for a particular area. These are intended to support the protection of natural habitats.
- Reform existing legislation on water management, including granting government powers to require water companies to work more closely together to meet current and future demand.

Theresa May's Government published a draft Environment (Principles and Governance) Bill in December 2018.<sup>70</sup> The draft bill included the establishment of environmental principles in UK law and the creation of an Office for Environmental Protection.<sup>71</sup> An Environment Bill was included in the Queen's Speech in October 2019 but was not introduced prior to the end of that session.<sup>72</sup>

The 2019 Conservative manifesto included commitments to establish new environmental targets, combat plastic waste and create the Office for Environmental Protection.<sup>73</sup>

### 7.3 Animal Welfare Bill

The Animal Welfare Bill was not included in the Queen's Speech itself. However, it was included in the list of bills in the background briefing for the Queen's Speech.<sup>74</sup> The bill includes commitments on animal welfare made in the Conservative Party manifesto.<sup>75</sup> The Animal Welfare Bill would:

- Establish animal sentience in domestic UK law.
- Require the Government to take account of animal sentience in its policy decisions and the implementation of policy.
- Increase the maximum sentence in England for those found guilty of an animal cruelty offence to five years in prison. Currently, the maximum sentence in England is a six-month sentence and/or an unlimited fine.

The bill would also enable the Government to:

- Ban excessively long journeys for live animals being transported for slaughter.
- Ban the trade, import and/or sale of primates as pets.
- Require pet cats to be microchipped.

Theresa May's Government introduced the Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Bill during the 2017–19 session.<sup>76</sup> This bill included provisions to increase the maximum sentence in England for an animal

<sup>70</sup> Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, [Draft Environment \(Principles and Governance\) Bill](#), 19 December 2018, Cm 9751.

<sup>71</sup> Further Information on the Draft Environment (Principles and Governance) Bill 2018 is provided in the House of Commons Library briefing, [Environmental Principles and Governance: The Draft Bill](#), 30 January 2019.

<sup>72</sup> [HL Hansard, 14 October 2019, cols 2–4](#).

<sup>73</sup> Conservative Party, [Conservative Party Manifesto 2019](#), 24 November 2019, p 43.

<sup>74</sup> Prime Minister's Office, [Queen's Speech December 2019: Background Briefing Notes](#), 19 December 2019, pp 119–20.

<sup>75</sup> Conservative Party, [Conservative Party Manifesto 2019](#), 24 November 2019, p 53.

<sup>76</sup> [HC Hansard, 26 June 2019, col 668](#). Further information on the bill during the 2017–19 session is provided on the UK parliament website: [Animal Welfare \(Sentencing\) Bill 2017–19](#), accessed 2 October 2019.

cruelty offence to five years. The Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Bill reached the end of committee stage in the House of Commons. However, it did not reach report stage before the end of the 2017–19 session and therefore fell.

## 7.4 Climate Change

The Queen's Speech stated the Government would take steps to achieve the target of reducing the UK's greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050.<sup>77</sup>

The Queen's Speech also said the UK would "continue to lead the way in tackling global climate change" and would host the 2020 Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) Summit.<sup>78</sup> The summit will take place in Glasgow in November 2020.<sup>79</sup> The Government has said it would ask countries attending this summit to match the UK's 2050 net-zero target.<sup>80</sup>

The background briefing to the Queen's Speech set out policies on preventing climate change, including commitments made in the Conservative Party manifesto. According to the briefing, the Government would:

- Ensure the first budget of the new parliament prioritised the environment.<sup>81</sup> The briefing stated this budget would outline investment in "carbon capture, offshore wind, nuclear energy, and electric vehicle infrastructure".<sup>82</sup>
- Invest £9.2 billion to improve energy efficiency of homes, schools and hospitals.
- Support the development of clean energy in developing countries through the £1 billion Ayrton fund.
- Increase the Government's commitment to plant new trees in the UK. The manifesto stated it would increase the number of trees to an additional 75,000 acres a year and restore UK peatlands.<sup>83</sup>
- Establish a new £640 million nature for climate fund and also a new £500 million blue planet fund to support protection of the ocean environment.
- Commit to maintain the UK's current standards on environmental protection as part of any new trade deal.
- Invest £4 billion in flood defences.
- Increase the target for offshore wind energy production to 40GW by 2030. The Government would also enable new off-shore floating wind turbines to be built.

<sup>77</sup> [HL Hansard, 19 December 2019, cols 7–9.](#)

<sup>78</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development, '[UK Gets International Backing to Host Global Climate Summit](#)', 10 September 2019.

<sup>80</sup> Prime Minister's Office, [Queen's Speech December 2019: Background Briefing Notes](#), 19 December 2019, p 116.

<sup>81</sup> *ibid.*, p 115.

<sup>82</sup> *ibid.*, p 116.

<sup>83</sup> Conservative Party, [Conservative Party Manifesto 2019](#), 24 November 2019, p 43.

- Support the decarbonisation of industry through investing £800 million in carbon capture storage facilities and £500 million to support energy-intensive industries transition to lower-carbon techniques.

In its manifesto, the Conservative Party committed to capital spending through an industrial energy transformation fund.<sup>84</sup> The manifesto stated that over the course of 8 years, a total of £500 million of capital spending would be provided.<sup>85</sup>

## 7.5 Other Announcements

The Conservative Party manifesto stated a Conservative government would also:

- Encourage the public sector to “buy British” to support UK farmers and reduce environmental costs.<sup>86</sup>
- Increase the annual quota for season agricultural workers coming to the UK from 2,500 to 10,000.<sup>87</sup>
- Create new national parks and areas of outstanding natural beauty.<sup>88</sup>
- Establish the coast to coast path from Cumbria to Yorkshire as a national trail.
- Maintain the water rebate that currently exists for people living in the South West of England.<sup>89</sup> The Conservative Party manifesto stated that £30 million would be provided to support this in 2020/21, although no further funding was outlined beyond 2020/21.

## 7.6 Further Reading

- HM Government, [A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment](#), 2018
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, [Draft Environment \(Principles and Governance\) Bill](#), 19 December 2018, Cm 9751
- Country Land and Business Association, ‘[Agriculture Bill: Everything You Need to Know](#)’, accessed 20 December 2019
- House of Lords Library, [House of Lords Rural Economy Committee Report: Time for a Strategy for the Rural Economy](#), 30 August 2019
- House of Commons Library, [Agriculture Bill](#), 25 October 2018
- House of Commons Library, [Fisheries Bill 2017–19](#), 11 April 2019
- House of Commons Library, [Environmental Principles and Governance: The Draft Bill](#), 30 January 2019
- House of Commons Library, [Live Animal Exports](#), 3 September 2019

<sup>84</sup> Conservative Party, [Conservative Party Manifesto 2019: Costings Document](#), 24 November 2019, p 8.

<sup>85</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> Conservative Party, [Conservative Party Manifesto 2019](#), 24 November 2019, p 42.

<sup>87</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> *ibid.*, p 43.

<sup>89</sup> *ibid.*, p 15. According to the Conservative’s manifesto costings, £30 million would be provided to support this in 2020–21 but funding would be provided subsequently: Conservative Party, [Conservative Party Manifesto 2019: Costings Document](#), 24 November 2019, p 8.