



EUROPEAN MOVEMENT IN SCOTLAND: HOLYROOD 2021 ELECTIONS

RESEARCH

Manifesto commitments recommended by EMiS

- Press UK Government to expedite the outstanding discussions required to finalise the details of the UK's participation in the Horizon Europe Programme before the first calls for proposals are launched.
- Contest the lack of access to the European Innovation Council Equity Fund
- Lobby UK Government to ensure Scotland's interests are represented in the programme committees and other fora, eg the European Research and Innovation Area Committee
- Demand all information and support provided to the UK Government on programme participation, including results data-bases, is fully disseminated to the devolved administrations
- Press for EU researchers, and researchers from all parts of the UK, to be given fast-track access to visas they will require to participate in projects that fall under these programmes

Background

Under the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA), the UK will still be able to participate in three EU programmes which are open to third countries in return for their financial contribution, namely: Horizon Europe, (*the EU funding programme for research and innovation*), Euratom Research and Training (*including ITER – International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor*) and Copernicus (*the EU's earth monitoring system*). It will also have access to the EU satellite surveillance and tracking (SST) system.

Although this sounds as if nothing has changed, that is not the case. The UK will now be excluded from all calls for proposals, and from all aspects of these programmes which relate to sensitive projects or material. It will no longer have access to the European Innovation Council Equity Fund, which supports high-risk, high-potential, innovative enterprises in bringing new products and services to market – something which is particularly important for

innovative SMEs and start-ups. The full details of which programme committees and working groups the UK will take part in, with no voting rights, have still to be determined.

EU policy is to keep its Member States at the cutting edge of scientific research. This will benefit its citizens by finding solutions to many social problems and correspondingly improving their quality of life. EU policy also aims to find sustainable solutions for key global challenges, on issues such as energy, transportation, food security and health. The UK, which historically played a lead role in shaping that agenda, now no longer has a part in determining the priorities; it has a seat on the Joint Research Council, but no longer any voting rights.

There are clear advantages to Scotland in being involved in EU programmes and policy development. Maintaining strong links with scientists across the EU and the rest of the world is vital for Scottish science; as is Scotland's ability to attract world-class scientists. Scotland has many leading centres for research where cutting-edge projects are being undertaken and must continue. This research has been widely shared with EU partners throughout the UK's membership. It is vital that the UK Government participate in these research programmes in good faith; both sides have an emergency brake enabling participation to be terminated at short-notice, an outcome that would be hugely damaging to the research community.

NB: The legal instruments creating those research programmes due to begin in 2021 had not been finalised when the TCA was signed, and more work is required on the detail of the UK's participation. The UK government must commit to expediting these discussions. Failure to finalise the details before the first calls for proposals are launched could jeopardize the capacity of UK-based researchers to lead or coordinate projects.

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