

Introduction

1. Unite is one of the biggest unions in Wales with members in both the public and private sector. Unite is the biggest union in the UK and Ireland with over 1.4 million members.
2. Our members work across all sectors of the economy including manufacturing, financial services, transport, food and agriculture, construction, energy and utilities, information technology, services industries, health, local government and not for profit sector. Unite also organises in the community, enabling those who are not in employment to be part of our union's activities.
3. Unite welcomes the opportunity to respond to the consultation 'Wales' future relationship with the European Union'.
4. Unite is surveying 22,000 of our network of front line workplace representatives and shop stewards to monitor the industrial impact of Brexit and will publish our findings in March 2018.
5. The position for Unite on Brexit is for a just, final settlement in the interests of workers in both the UK and in Europe. The settlement should include:
 - Barrier free access to the Single Market and a customs arrangement with the EU.
 - Regulatory parity, including the retention of employment rights. The retention of employment rights must be achieved through primary legislation, rather than unaccountable statutory instruments.
 - Continued membership of mutually beneficial agencies and treaties, including European Aviation Safety Association (EASA).
 - Unequivocal support from the UK Government for the right to remain for European workers in the UK and secure reciprocity for UK workers across the European Union.
 - Labour market regulation which prevents pitting workers against each other to drive down pay and conditions.

Terms of Reference

6. To identify the most essential aspects of the UK's future relationship with the EU from a Welsh perspective.



7. It is the view of Unite that barrier free access to the single market and a customs arrangement with the EU are essential to the future prosperity of Wales following our exit from the European Union. After more than four decades of integrated tariff-free access to the Single Market it is clear that many sectors in Wales have benefited from the lack of cross border tariffs which has been important to the employment of thousands of our members in Wales.
8. Some of the largest employers of our members in Wales, Airbus, GE and Ford Bridgend Engine Plant, see their presence in Wales as a 'European Hub'.
9. For example: Airbus at Broughton makes nearly all Airbus wings, including the massive A380. Once completed the wings are shipped, flown and driven to sites in Spain and Germany, and then onto France for final assembly. Multiple border crossings make the threat of tariffs very real for Airbus. Border checks, inspection and other barriers to the frictionless supply chain may put the factory at risk.
10. The automotive sector is an important part of the Welsh economy. In South Wales Ford Bridgend Engine Plant is a vital source of decent jobs. Engines are manufactured for Jaguar Land Rover and then exported to sites in the EU for assembly. A 'Hard Brexit' or a 'no deal Brexit', would revert to World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules.
11. Under WTO rules trading tariffs could be imposed between UK and the EU. For example, for cars this could mean a 10% charge on exports to the EU and a 4% charge on imports to the UK.
12. The Welsh economy is intrinsically linked to the single market with 61% of Welsh goods, worth £14.6 billion, exported to the area. A report by the Cardiff Business School claims that leaving the EU on to WTO rules would cause the Welsh economy to shrink by between 8 and 10%, equivalent to £1,500-£2,000 per person in Wales.¹
13. Carwyn Jones AM First Minister of Wales has warned that the Welsh steel industry would be "wiped out" if Britain left the European single market and signed a free trade agreement with China.² Regarding Welsh steel Unite has proposed a series of 'trade defence mechanisms' which are vital to preventing a repeat of the 2015 Steel Crisis in the event of Brexit. These have been worked on in partnership with other unions and trade federations including UK Steel. The aim is to make sure the UK government replicates

¹ First Minister sets out vision for trade post-Brexit. [URL](#)

² Hard Brexit and China deal would wipe out Welsh steel industry [URL](#)

the trade defences of the EU, currently used to help shield Welsh steel from Chinese dumping. There is a concern that the UK Government will abandon all such defences in order to secure a new free trade deal with China. Unite has challenged the recent Trade and Customs Bill to ensure the Secretary of State must give consideration to manufacturers and workers, not just consumers, when considering the impact of any new trade deal.

14. To ensure that the issues of most importance to Wales are being adequately represented in the negotiations.
15. Unite has consistently argued that the UK Government's closed door approach to the Brexit negotiations is flawed.
16. We have a model of social partnership in Wales whereby government, trade unions and other parties are involved in a constructive and meaningful relationship. If the UK Government adopted this approach, it would have added more clarity to the negotiations and increased the prospect of consensus.
17. Working people must have their voice heard. Unites elected workplace representatives sit on over 150 European Works Councils, a level of interaction and collaboration which is without parallel in the trade union movement. This experience, along with relationships with trade unions across Europe gives Unite a unique insight to the negotiations.
18. To identify opportunities for continued engagement with the European Union and its institutions after Brexit.
19. Unite welcomed the Cardiff Declaration signed by political representatives from 20 regions from the North Sea, Atlantic and Channel Sea basins at a conference 'European co-operation beyond Brexit' on 16 November 2017. It calls for cooperation between Europe's regions post Brexit to address its impact on fisheries, marine renewable energies and offshore wind, connectivity across the Atlantic and North Sea ports, scientific research and maritime territories.³
20. There are a range of agreements, treaties and regulatory bodies which the UK is a member of via the European Union. The UK should remain a member of mutually beneficial bodies during the transition and this should remain the case in following the final settlement if such institutions have not been replicated in the UK.
21. Unite calls for permanent membership of Euratom, the umbrella body for civil nuclear safeguards across Europe. Euratom controls the movement of

³ CPMR's 'Cardiff Declaration' calls for stronger regional cooperation post-Brexit [URL](#)

nuclear materials across the EU. Nuclear energy supplies 21% of the UK's power needs.⁴

22. Unite would support replicating the role of the European Banking Authority and the European Medicines Agency when these two bodies relocate from the UK.

23. Below is the list of EU-UK Agreements, Agencies and Regulatory Bodies which Unite believes membership should be retained or replicated.

⁴ Nuclear power contributes 21% of low carbon power generation in 2016 [URL](#)

Agency	Unite Sector	Unite Proposal*
Euratom	Energy	Retain membership
Open Skies Agreement	Civil Aviation	Retain membership
European Medicines Agency	Chemical Processing, Pharmaceutical and Textiles/ Health	Retain membership
Horizon 2020	Education/Manufacturing	Retain or replicate
Eramus	Education	Retain membership
European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA)	Civil Aviation	Retain membership
EuroControl	Civil Aviation	Retain membership
REACH Regulations	Chemical Processing, Pharmaceuticals and Textiles	Retain or replicate
European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control	Health	Retain membership
European Environmental Agency	Food, Drink and Agriculture	Retain or replicate
European Common Aviation Area	Civil Aviation	Retain access
European Banking Authority	Finance Sector	Replicate
European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)	Docks, Rail, Ferries & Waterways	Retain or replicate
European Agency for Safety and Health at Work	All sectors	Retain or replicate
European Voluntary Services	Community Youth Work and Not for Profit	Retain or replicate
European Common Aviation ARE	Civil Aviation	Retain membership

International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973 as modified by the Protocol of 1978. (MARPOL 73/78)	Docks, Rail, Ferries & Waterways	Retain membership
International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW)	Docks, Rail, Ferries & Waterways	Retain membership
International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS)	Docks, Rail, Ferries & Waterways	Retain membership

Key: Retain: If possible the UK should seek to retain full membership of the existing body, despite no longer being a full member of the European Union.

Replicate: The UK should seek to develop a comparable domestic body to the same, or higher standard.