

Annual Review

2018 – 2019

The Scottish Centre on European Relations (SCER) is an independent EU think tank, based in Edinburgh, that informs, debates and provides up-to-the-minute, high-quality research and analysis of European Union developments and challenges, with a particular focus on Scotland's EU interests and policies.



Independent analysis. European perspective.

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Overview

The Scottish Centre on European Relations has had a busy second year. We have been contributing to the continuing debates and stalemate over Brexit and to the big questions and challenges around the future of Europe – and Scotland’s contribution to that.

In the last 15 months, we have published nearly 60 articles, papers and reports and held 16 events. The focus of the Brexit debate a year ago was on whether the UK and EU would get to a deal and what it would look like. A year later, with the Withdrawal Agreement agreed in November 2018, only to be rejected three times in the Commons in the subsequent months, and now a Conservative leadership election under way, Brexit looks as uncertain as ever as the new deadline of 31st October looms.

The European Parliament elections in May introduced more political diversity and complexity into the EU’s politics – mostly in a welcome way, with the increased strength of the Greens and Liberals. Far-right populism remains a serious concern but the much-predicted ‘surge’ didn’t happen. The EU must now step up and move beyond its fragmented lack of solidarity of recent years, finding the strategy and vision to tackle challenges within the EU and beyond its borders. SCER’s major, new report on the Future of Europe, published in May 2019, is an in-depth contribution to that vital discussion and debate around the EU’s future strategy – with 20 leading authors providing high-level analysis and insight into the key challenges ahead, and looking at Scotland’s contribution to that debate.

On Brexit, SCER has continued to analyse the political dynamics within the UK – which remain in a state of chronic crisis and failure – and UK-EU political interactions. With a range of expert authors, we have assessed and challenged the claims made for different types of Brexit, including that implied by the Withdrawal Agreement, with its indefinite customs union in the form of the backstop for Northern Ireland. SCER has also focused on Scotland’s very different Brexit politics – exemplified in the 62% vote for clearly remain parties in the recent European elections. The deep Brexit divides in England and Wales stand in stark contrast to the clear pro-European majority in Scotland.

Looking to the year ahead, SCER will continue to research and debate key European challenges and the continuing dysfunctional politics of Brexit. In the last year, we held events across Scotland and in Dublin and London, with a range of partners and speakers. We will continue to lead European debates at public events and off-the-record policy roundtables in the coming year.

For regular updates on our work, please do [sign up to our newsletter](#).

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Director, SCER

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Publications

SCER has produced a wide range of papers and comment pieces in the last 15 months - with in-depth reports as well as shorter analysis on the unfolding politics of Brexit. With our major future of Europe report in May 2019, we have also made a timely contribution to the current European debate on the strategic challenges ahead, and Scotland's interests in and contributions to that strategy.

Policy Papers, Notes and Reports

May 2019 | Kirsty Hughes (ed)

The Future of Europe: Disruption, Continuity and Change

February 2019 | Kirsty Hughes

Brexit, Scottish Independence and Leaving a Union: Lessons to Learn?

July 2018 | Kirsty Hughes

Brexit: Heading to a Deal or No Deal While UK Politics Implodes?

April 2018 | Kirsty Hughes and Katy Hayward

Brexit, Northern Ireland and Scotland: Comparing Political Dynamics and Prospects in the Two 'Remain' Areas

April 2018 | Kirsty Hughes and Anthony Salamone (eds)

Brexit Roundup: Where Are We Heading?

Comment

April 2019 | Kirsty Hughes

An Independent Scotland in the EU: Timing and Challenges

April 2019 | Kirsty Hughes

Brexit and the Politics of Extending Article 50

March 2019 | Kirsty Hughes

Brexit Showdown: Deal, No Deal, No Brexit

March 2019 | David Bell

GM Foods, the US-UK Trade Negotiations and Scottish Food Production

March 2019 | Kirsty Hughes

The Endless Uncertainties of Brexit

February 2019 | Tobias Lock

What Comes after 'No Deal'?

February 2019 | Kirsty Hughes

Brexit and Scottish Independence: Two Sides of the Same Coin?

Comment | Continued

February 2019 | David Gow

The Costs of Brexit for Scotland

February 2019 | Kirsty Hughes

Failing UK Politics Must be Called to Account

February 2019 | Anthony Salamone

What Future for May's Brexit 'Renegotiation'?

January 2019 | Kirsty Hughes

The UK's Brexit Breakdown

January 2019 | Jim Gallagher

A Route Out of the Brexit Crisis?

January 2019 | David Gow

The EU Must Reform the Eurozone

January 2019 | Kirsty Hughes

The Politics of Halting Brexit

December 2018 | Kirsty Hughes and Anthony Salamone

Europe and Brexit: 10 Things to Watch in 2019 from SCER

December 2018 | Kirsty Hughes

Commons' Brexit Choices Narrowing as Clock Ticks Down

November 2018 | Kirsty Hughes

Political Declaration: 'Canada Dry' or 'Turkey Plus'?

November 2018 | Rebecca Zahn

Brexit Deal Series: The Draft Withdrawal Agreement and Citizens' Rights

November 2018 | Kirsty Hughes

Brexit and Scotland – The Row over the Backstop

November 2018 | Anton Muscatelli

Brexit Deal Series: Which Brexit Deal: Mad, Implausible, Plausible or Desirable?

November 2018 | Quentin Peel

Brexit Deal Series: The EU27 Remain United on Brexit

November 2018 | Kirsty Hughes

Brexit Deal Series: The Brexit Crossroads: Will the Deal Go Through?

November 2018 | Anthony Salamone

Brexit Deal Series: The Westminster Politics Could Be Unpredictable to the End

Comment | Continued

November 2018 | Paul McGrade

Brexit Deal Series: Ireland's Great Brexit Achievement – and Challenges Ahead

November 2018 | David Gow

Brexit Deal Series: EU Capitals Want Shot of Brexit

October 2018 | Giles Merritt

Merkel's Toxic Legacy

October 2018 | Kirsty Hughes

Backstops, UK Politics and Getting to a Brexit Deal

October 2018 | Eve Hepburn

Post-Brexit Immigration Policy: The Implications of Sajid Javid's Proposals

September 2018 | Kirsty Hughes

The UK's Chronic Brexit Crisis

September 2018 | Danuta Hübner

After Salzburg: Time for Realistic UK Proposals on the Irish Border and Future Relations

September 2018 | Kirsty Hughes

Time for the SNP to Get on the Front Foot on Brexit

September 2018 | Stuart Crawford and Richard Marsh

Defending an Independent Scotland Post-Brexit

September 2018 | Anton Muscatelli

Blind Deal Brexit Beckons

August 2018 | Danuta Hübner

Stalled Progress on Brexit and Talk of No Deal Are Causes for Concern

August 2018 | Fabian Zuleeg

Brexit: Debunking the Myths about the EU Position

July 2018 | Kirsty Hughes

Labour, the SNP, a People's Vote and a Brexit Deal

July 2018 | Danuta Hübner

The UK's White Paper Raises Many Questions and Crosses EU Red Lines

July 2018 | Brendan Donnelly

Theresa May Has No Choice but to Obey Jacob Rees-Mogg

July 2018 | Kirsty Hughes

Chequers: 'Soft' Brexit or Just Any Brexit?

Comment | Continued

July 2018 | Alison Anderson

Migration and Populism: The EU Needs a Progressive, Values-Based Approach

July 2018 | Anton Muscatelli

British Fudge: Where Now for the Future UK-EU Framework?

July 2018 | Giles Merritt

Time the EU Took a Rational, Strategic Approach to Migration

June 2018 | Paul Gillespie

In the Face of Brexit, Relations between Ireland and Scotland Are Only Strengthening

June 2018 | Danuta Hübner

The UK Must Accept Consequences of Becoming a Third Country

June 2018 | Kirsty Hughes

Scotland and Brexit: Is Damage Limitation a Good Strategy?

June 2018 | David Gow

EU's Mounting Challenges: Pan-EU Solutions Vital but Absent

June 2018 | Kirsty Hughes

Cyprus Problem: Running Out of Time?

May 2018 | Kirsty Hughes

Banquo's Ghost: The Growth Commission, the EU and Scottish Independence

May 2018 | Kirsty Hughes

Brexit Endgame: Uncertainty Mounts in Face of Deep Tory Divides

April 2018 | Kirsty Hughes and Katy Hayward

Deepening Political Divisions and Exacerbating Peripherality: Scotland, Northern Ireland and Brexit

March 2018 | Kirsty Hughes

Scotland and Brexit: Why is the 'Remain' Voice So Muted?

March 2018 | Kirsty Hughes

The EU's Draft Trade Guidelines: Heading to Canada Dry

March 2018 | Richard Marsh and Fabian Zuleeg

EU Citizens' Votes: Lost in Transition?

March 2018 | Kirsty Hughes

'Norway Minus Minus' or 'Heath Robinson' Brexit: May's Speech

Events

SCER has held a series of events across Scotland in the last 15 months - both public events and off-the-record high-level policy roundtables. We held events in Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Oban. We also held major events in Dublin and London.

May 2019 | Public Event | Glasgow

Future of Europe: Scottish and German Strategies and Interests

Partners | Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung · University of Glasgow

May 2019 | Roundtable | Glasgow

Future of Europe: Disruption, Continuity and Change

Partners | Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung · University of Glasgow

March 2019 | Roundtable | Edinburgh

Brexit: The Challenges Ahead

March 2019 | Half-Day Event | London

The Future of the EU and the Scottish Dimension

Partner | The Federal Trust

February 2019 | Roundtable | Edinburgh

What Future for the EU – and Where Does Scotland Fit In?

Partner | Royal Society of Edinburgh

December 2018 | Roundtable | Edinburgh

Brexit Crossroads: What Now?

Partner | Royal Society of Edinburgh

November 2018 | Public Event | Edinburgh

The UK, EU and Brexit: Where and What Next?

Partners | European Commission Office in Scotland · Edinburgh Europa Institute

October 2018 | Public Event | Edinburgh

Brexit and the Countdown to Deal or No-Deal: German and Scottish Views

Partner | Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

October 2018 | Roundtable | Edinburgh

Brexit as the Deadline Looms: German and Scottish Views

Partner | Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

October 2018 | Conference Event | Glasgow

SNP Conference Fringe: Scotland, Ireland and Brexit

Partner | Alyn Smith MEP

Events

Events | Continued

October 2018 | Half-Day Event | Dublin

The Brexit Endgame: Key Challenges Ahead – Perspectives from Germany, Ireland and Scotland

Partners | Institute for International and European Affairs · Scottish Government Innovation and Investment Hub, Dublin

June 2018 | Roundtable | Edinburgh

Surveying the Brexitscape: The Politics of the Next Ten Months

Partner | Centre on Constitutional Change

May 2018 | Public Event | Aberdeen

Brexit – Scotland, the UK and EU27: Key Issues

Partner | European Commission Office in Scotland / Host | Aberdeen Central Library

May 2018 | Public Event | Oban

Brexit – Scotland, the UK and EU27: Key Issues

Partners | European Commission Office in Scotland · Scottish Association for Marine Science

March 2018 | Public Event | Dundee

Brexit and Scotland: What Happens Next?

Partners | European Commission Office in Scotland · University of Dundee

March 2018 | Roundtable | Edinburgh

Brexit Transition and the Future Trade Deal: Implications for Citizens' Rights

Partners | Equality and Human Rights Commission · Scottish Universities Legal Network on Europe

Media

SCER has contributed to or been quoted in the following media outlets this year. SCER staff have also frequently written for other think tanks and institutes, spoken at a wide range of events and given evidence to committees at the UK and Scottish parliaments.

BBC

Clyde Radio

El Confidencial

El Diario

Euronews

Financial Times

Holyrood Magazine

La Vanguardia

Politico Europe

Radio FM4

STV News

Sunday National

Sunday Post

The Courier

The Guardian

The Herald

The National

The Oban Times

The Scotsman

The Times

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