



# BRIEFING PAPER

## Brexit – White Paper

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## What is the Brexit White Paper?

The Brexit White Paper, formally titled 'The United Kingdom's exit from and a new partnership with the European Union (EU)' was published on 2<sup>nd</sup> February. This paper presents Parliament and country with the vision the Government is seeking to achieve in negotiating its exit from the EU, as well as setting out what the UK's future relationship with the EU will be following its exit.

In advance of the publication of the Governments White paper, Theresa May announced during her speech at Lancaster House on 17<sup>th</sup> January 12 core principles which will guide the Government negotiations. These negotiations with UK's 27 EU counterparts will begin immediately after Parliament triggers Article 50 – expected to be by March 31<sup>st</sup>. The negotiations are expected to last 2 years as cited in Article 50 of the Treaty of the European Union signed in Lisbon on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2007.

## What are the 12 core principles?

1. Providing certainty and clarity
  - Provide certainty wherever we can as we approach the negotiations.
2. Taking control of our own laws
  - Take control of our own statute book and bring an end to the jurisdiction of the Court of Justice of the European Union in the UK.
3. Strengthening the Union
  - Secure a deal that works for the entire UK – for Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and all parts of England. We remain fully committed to the Belfast Agreement and its successors.
4. Protecting our strong and historic ties with Ireland and maintaining the Common Travel Area
  - Work to deliver a practical solution that allows for the maintenance of the Common Travel Area, whilst protecting the integrity of our immigration system and which protects our strong ties with Ireland.
5. Controlling immigration
  - Control over the number of EU nationals coming to the UK.
6. Securing rights for EU nationals in the UK, and UK nationals in the EU
  - Secure the status of EU citizens who are already living in the UK, and that of UK nationals in other Member States, as early as we can.
7. Protecting workers' rights
  - Protect and enhance existing workers' rights.
8. Ensuring free trade with European markets
  - Forge a new strategic partnership with the EU, including a wide reaching, bold and ambitious free trade agreement, and seek a mutually beneficial new customs agreement with the EU.
9. Securing new trade agreements with other countries
  - Forge ambitious free trade relationships across the world.
10. Ensuring the UK remains the best place for science and innovation
  - Remain at the vanguard of science and innovation and seek continued close collaboration with our European partners.
11. Cooperating in the fight against crime and terrorism
  - Continue to work with the EU to preserve European security, to fight terrorism, and to uphold justice across Europe. The United Kingdom's exit from and new partnership with the European Union.



## **12. Delivering a smooth, orderly exit from the EU**

- Seek a phased process of implementation, in which both the UK and the EU institutions and the remaining EU Member States prepare for the new arrangements that will exist between us.

### **What is The Chamber Group's position?**

In business, what you achieve in a negotiation - not what you bid for - is what really matters.

The Brexit process is no different. While businesses now have a clearer sense of the Prime Minister's top-line priorities, they will come away from her speech knowing little more about the likely outcome of the Brexit negotiations than they did prior to her announcement.

The simple fact is that businesses all across Northamptonshire are carrying on. Directly-affected companies are being pragmatic, and are preparing for a range of possible outcomes.

Away from Westminster, many businesses are ignoring the Brexit 'noise' completely, and say there needs to be a far bigger focus on getting the basics right here at home. Their message is that Brexit must not become all-consuming, and that having the right skills, infrastructure and business environment across the UK will play a far bigger part in our future success than any eventual Brexit deal.

### **On the Single Market and Customs Union:**

Many businesses facing immediate post-Brexit impacts have been preparing for the eventuality that the UK would leave both the Single Market and the Customs Union, with some sort of free trade deal to follow. The Prime Minister's remarks largely confirm this, and will lead other firms to think about making similar plans.

### **On proposals for a transitional period after Brexit:**

Agreeing a reasonable transitional period that gives directly-affected businesses the breathing space they need to adapt to new realities would simply be common sense.

### **On immigration:**

If, as the Prime Minister suggested, citizens of the EU-27 are subject to future restrictions, a simple and light-touch system is required. Bringing EU nationals into the costly and bureaucratic Home Office work permit process would be a huge regulatory burden for many businesses, especially when their immediate skills shortages at every level remain acute.

### **How The Chamber Group represents you?**

We're here to help support and develop our member businesses. This means making sure that the conditions are right for growth and development. We're well connected locally, regionally and nationally through our network of contacts which encompasses local authorities in Northamptonshire and Milton Keynes, key regional organisations such as the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership, members of parliament in Westminster, and national government. Finally, by being accredited to the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) we are also part of a powerful network of 52 Accredited Chambers throughout the UK which combined represents over 70,000 businesses employing some 5,000,000 people.



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The BCC acts as the authentic voice for British business and is a leading commentator on the UK Economy.

### **How is the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) addressing the concerns of member businesses?**

The BCC have published their Brexit principle on 28<sup>th</sup> February to coincide with their Annual Conference, taking place in London. These Brexit principles are based on an intensive series of roundtable discussions/focus groups and surveys conducted across the Accredited Chamber Network, of which, The Chamber Group has been involved. This has provided the BCC with evidence to lobby Government on what the core views of member businesses are.

The BCC have identified six core areas that collectively form the Brexit principles, which are:

1. Trade with EU-27 countries
2. Customs and taxation
3. EU funding
4. Employment and skills
5. Regulation
6. Border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

The Chamber Group will continue to work with its members and will continue to monitor negotiations closely and ensure the views of its members are represented at a national level via our colleagues at the (BCC) and also through local MPs and central Government.

### **Get involved:**

In November 2016 The Chamber Group launched a Business Forum enabling businesses to share their views on issues ranging from skills and infrastructure to business taxation and Brexit.

The forum's findings will lead to the publication of a Business Manifesto which the Chamber will use to help it successfully lobby local authorities and MPs on behalf of member businesses.

The manifesto will also be used by the (BCC) to help it lobby central Government on behalf of local Chambers and their members.

This forum will meet on a quarterly basis, coinciding with the release of the Quarterly Economic Survey results. For further information please see the contact us section below.



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