



Securing Wales' Future

WCVA briefing for the third sector in Wales.

1. Introduction

A white paper '[Securing Wales' Future](#)' was issued on 23 January 2017 by the Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru.

This briefing provides:

- A summary of the paper
- WCVA's response to each area

2. Securing Wales' Future - a summary

The paper sets out the main issues that the Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru believe are vital for Wales as the UK moves to leave the EU.

The paper was developed by Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru through an official Liaison Committee with the views of the [European Advisory Group](#), appointed by the First Minister in summer 2016, playing a helpful role in developing its content.

The purpose of the paper is to assist the Welsh Government in working constructively with the UK Government as the UK prepares to exit the EU and transition towards a different relationship with our European Neighbours.

The paper highlights six key areas that Welsh Government believes need to be addressed through the negotiation process, believed to be beneficial to the UK as a whole as well as for Wales.

In February 2017 Des Clifford, Director of the Office of the First Minister came to talk to the Third Sector Partnership Council (TSPC) about the Welsh Governments priorities for the EU transition, this was summarised in a blog which can be found [here](#).

3. The Single Market and International Trade

The importance of **full and unfettered access to the Single Market** to support businesses, and secure jobs and the future prosperity of Wales.

What does this mean for the third sector?

1. In a [poll](#) conducted by WCVA amongst third sector organisations 27% of respondents felt that the economy and jobs should be a top priority for Wales. In the poll 9% of respondents indicated 'Other' concerns which included membership of the Single Market and free movement.
2. In the [Brexit snapshot survey](#) conducted by WCVA, members indicated that a 'Soft Brexit' was the favoured option but almost a quarter of respondents were unable to take a position suggesting they may not understand the difference between 'Hard Brexit' or 'Soft Brexit' and that more information needs to be provided for people to make an informed decision.
3. WCVA supports any recommendation that would ensure no rolling back of the rights of Welsh citizens or the benefits which they receive.
4. Whilst WCVA recognises the importance of the economy to the Third Sector in Wales our work over the coming months will not specifically focus on the Single Market and international trade.

4. Migration

A balanced approach to immigration linking migration to jobs and good properly-enforced employment practice which protects all workers whatever their country of origin.

What does this mean for the third sector?

1. In the [Brexit snapshot survey](#) conducted by WCVA, three quarters members indicated that they believe the EU referendum result has exposed deep rooted problems in our community and led to an increase in hate crime. Over a quarter of the respondents indicated that they had seen for themselves community problems and an increase in hate crime.
2. WCVA echoes the condemnation of Welsh Government around the rise in xenophobia and racism exacerbated by the immoderate tone of the debate in some parts of the political community.
3. Respondents to a WCVA [poll](#) expressed a view that migration should not be further limited; we need the skills, and capacity, that migrants bring to ensure continued growth: "Wales still needs skilled EU citizens to help keep businesses in business and competitive".
4. WCVA fully supports the call for UK Government to guarantee the rights of both those EU citizens living in Wales and elsewhere in the UK and those Welsh and UK citizens living within the EU after we leave the EU.
5. WCVA will continue to provide information to the sector on this subject as things become clear through the negotiation process to ensure the sector is informed.

5. Finance and Investment

On **finance and investment**, the need for the UK Government to make good on promises made during the referendum campaign that Wales would not lose funding as a result of the UK leaving the EU.

What does this mean for the third sector?

1. The third sector in Wales has received a substantial level of European funding and has delivered significant results and benefits in the communities which they work. In the current programme of funding almost £44 million has been allocated to third sector lead projects with additional funding being awarded through regional frameworks and contracts.
2. WCVA urges the Welsh Government to ensure the UK Government make good the promises made during the referendum campaign that Wales would not lose a penny in funding as a result of leaving the EU.
3. WCVA recommends that all future regional policy continues to have the partnership principle at its heart to ensure true collaboration between all areas of public, private and third sector.
4. WCVA recommends Welsh Government lobbies the UK government for continued engagement in programmes such as the European Territorial Programme and Horizon 2020.
5. WCVA recommends Welsh Government lobbies the UK government for a fairer funding settlement for any repatriation of funding clearly linked to the needs of the identified regional policy.
6. WCVA will lead a discussion across communities in Wales to identify the key priorities for any future funding commitments.
7. WCVA will take a lead role in working across the third sector to demonstrate the impact of the funding which is currently being received in Wales in order to make the case for continued funding to meet the needs of our communities.

6. Constitutional and Devolution issues

A fundamentally different **constitutional relationship between the devolved governments** and the UK Government - based on mutual respect, reaching agreement through consent

What does this mean for the third sector?

1. Three quarters of the respondents to the [WCVA Brexit snapshot survey](#) believe that the UK Government will not safeguard the interests of Wales during its Brexit negotiations with the EU.

2. WCVA recommends any future changes to the legislation adopted into UK law under the Great Repeals Act should be made subject to scrutiny by the UK Parliament and the devolved Parliaments/Assemblies.
3. This should be a transparent process engaging people from across our communities and seek to involve civil society organisations.
4. WCVA will highlight opportunities for the sector to feed in and comment on any changes to policy and legislation through updates and events over the coming years.

7. Social and Environmental Protections and Values

Maintaining the **social and environmental protections and values** that we prize in Wales, in particular workers' rights, once these are no longer guaranteed through the UK's membership of the EU

What does this mean for the third sector?

1. In the [Brexit snapshot survey](#) conducted by WCVA, 'protecting existing social, economic, environmental and human rights' and 'building community cohesion and minimising hate crime' were listed as the most important by professionals working in WCVA member organisations and came ahead of 'safeguarding funding opportunities'.
2. WCVA recommends the outcome of the UK's Brexit negotiations should ensure no regression of rights currently enjoyed by our citizens and leave no-one behind.
3. WCVA will continue to engage with the sector to highlight specific areas of concern and interest and provide support to lobby as required.

8. Transitional arrangements

Proper consideration of **transitional arrangements** to ensure the UK does not fall off a cliff edge in its economic and wider relationship with the EU if longer-term arrangements have not been agreed at the point of exit.

What does this mean for the third sector?

1. WCVA recommends that Brexit should not undermine the long-standing Common Travel Area between the UK and Ireland, whose removal would have profound implications for the lives of thousands of UK and Irish citizens, as well as potentially discriminatory impacts on non-Irish EU citizens living in Ireland. Additionally, the avoidance of a hard trade border with between Northern Ireland/Ireland is crucial

2. WCVA will continue to provide information to the sector on this subject as things become clear through the negotiation process to ensure the sector is informed.

The importance of the third sectors involvement in discussions on Wales' future post-Brexit cannot be understated. To stay up to date on the work being undertaken by WCVA and find out how you can get involved please visit the [EU referendum section of our website](#). You can also sign up to the fortnightly WCVA Policy and Public Affairs Digest, which includes #BrexitWatchCymru updates, by becoming a member of WCVA. You can sign up for membership [here](#).