

Attention: news desks/science and education correspondents

For immediate release

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Theresa May's Brexit speech: EUA applauds focus on science, research and innovation

Despite its regret about the UK leaving the EU, the European University Association (EUA) is pleased that UK Prime Minister Theresa May explicitly highlighted science, research and innovation in a much-anticipated speech on Brexit given from London on 17 January 2017.

Among the key issues in her 12-point plan for the UK's exit, May showed appreciation for the UK's academic and scientific communities. She welcomed agreement to continue collaborating with European partners on major initiatives in science, research and technology and did not exclude paying into European programmes. EUA stands behind this viewpoint and sincerely hopes this will translate into the UK's continued association to the EU's Framework Programmes for research. The Association also hopes this focus will carry a promise for continued UK association to Erasmus+, the EU's highly-successful student mobility programme.

"Collaboration between UK and European universities demonstrably increases the quality of research, science and innovation," explains Thomas Jorgensen, EUA's Senior Policy Coordinator and main staff expert on Brexit. "May's attention to this topic proves that the UK is aware that these collaborations cannot be replaced and gives hope that Brexit will not damage ties long established through generations of exchange and hard work."

EUA is also pleased that May's speech included guarantees for the rights of EU citizens already in the UK. This covers large numbers of researchers, academics and students. The Association warns, however, that this issue should in no way become a bargaining chip in future negotiations. Goodwill on both sides will be crucial in protecting all ties between Europe's universities and those in the UK.

EUA has been working actively long before the Brexit vote to keep universities in the UK as close as possible to the rest of Europe in the event of an exit from the Union. The Association will continue its efforts in the months and years to come to support these close links. For a better understanding of the potential impact of Brexit on the university sector, please see:

["EUA Brexit Factsheet: UK-European Research Collaboration and Student Mobility"](#)

["After the Brexit Referendum: Possible outcomes for Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+"](#)

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The European University Association (EUA) is the representative organisation of more than 800 universities in 47 European countries and 33 national rectors' conferences (NRCs). The EUA Council is made up of the president, the members of the Board, and of the presidents of all of Europe's NRCs. EUA works closely with its members to ensure that the voice of European universities is heard.