

# More talk about Brexit promised by The Scottish Government



The Scottish Government has announced that there will be a series of debates on Brexit held in the next few months. The First Minister explained to Holyrood earlier today that parliament will look at specific topics such as education and the economy.

Since the EU Referendum on 23 June 2016 the Scottish Government has undertaken work on the matter of Brexit and we are told they will continue to demand clarification from the UK Government on the involvement of Scotland in the process around Article 50 and negotiations with the EU.

Addressing parliament, the First Minister said : “Before the summer recess, parliament gave the Scottish Government a mandate to explore all options to protect Scotland’s relationship with the EU. Since the referendum, our first priority has been reassurance. In particular, we have sought to do everything we can to reassure non-UK EU citizens who live in Scotland and we have also taken targeted steps to support and promote economic stability.

“Last month, I set out a £100 million economic stimulus plan. Yesterday I announced that a £500m Scottish Growth Scheme will form a central part of our Programme for Government. In taking these steps, we are acting on our obligation to mitigate the immediate effects of the referendum result and we will continue to do so.

“But we also have to be realistic about the long term consequences of leaving the EU. There is no doubt that leaving the EU will be an extraordinary self-inflicted blow to the UK’s competitiveness and it will be compounded if the decision is to leave the single market as well. That is why it is so essential that we work to retain the benefits of our EU membership.

“We have been working hard over the summer in discussions with UK government officials and we continue to press for urgent clarification of how the UK will deliver on the PM’s commitment to full involvement for Scotland. The Parliament’s approval of the appointment of Michael Russell yesterday ensures that we will have a dedicated Minister leading for Scotland in this process.

“We also intend to propose a series of parliamentary debates over the next few weeks on the implications of Brexit in key areas such as the economy, rural affairs, education and the environment. These debates will give all members the opportunity to have their say on the issues the Scottish Government should be prioritising as our discussions with the UK government develop.

“As we continue to consider the best way forward, my assurance is this: our guiding principle will continue to be – at all times – the best interests of the people of Scotland.”

In her response to the programme of government laid before Holyrood on Tuesday , leader Ruth Davidson urged the SNP to work harder on the economy, and follow the lead of UK politicians who – while not supporting Brexit at the time – are now seeking to make the most of it.

The Scottish Greens are asking the Scottish Government for clarification on the effect of Brexit in Scotland. Ross Greer MSP addressed the Education and Skills committee on the matter of the funding for Scotland’s universities following the UK’s

decision to leave the EU, and he also asked what the government is doing to allay the fears of Japanese businesses considering relocating from the UK.

Scottish Labour leader Kezia Dugdale wrote on the party's website : "The Tories keep saying that 'Brexit means Brexit' but as we have seen in the last few weeks, they haven't a clue what Brexit actually means.

"Plans to drag us out of Europe and then drag us from the UK are both bad news for Scotland's economy, which is desperately in need of stability and a degree of certainty."