



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

The Rt Hon Gavin Williamson MP
Secretary of State for Education

The Scottish Parliament
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20 January 2020

Dear Secretary of State

Erasmus +

At its meeting on 9 January 2020, the Culture, Tourism Europe and External Affairs Committee considered a number of bi-annual reports on EU issues prepared by the Scottish Government (please find attached). One of the reports covers Scotland's participation in the Erasmus+ programme.

As you will see on page 15 of the letter from the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, the Scottish Government is actively considering the impact of possible EU-Exit outcomes and in particular of potential withdrawal from the Erasmus+ programme. As the letter notes, Scottish Government officials have raised these issues with your department in frequent discussions and have expressed a preference that Scotland continue to have full participation in the Erasmus+ programme because of its broad educational, cultural and economic benefits.

In November 2017, the Committee undertook an inquiry into Scotland's participation in the Erasmus+ programme. I attach a link to the Committee's inquiry report for reference:

https://www.parliament.scot/S5_European/Reports/CTEERS052018R1.pdf

The purpose of the inquiry was to learn more about the opportunities currently available under Erasmus+ and to consider the implications were Scotland not to be a

participant after the UK withdraws from the EU. The Committee heard a great deal of compelling evidence from participants and representative organisations regarding the value of these programmes and the transformational impact the programme can have, particularly for those in deprived areas.

While the Committee understands that the UK's future participation in the Erasmus+ programme is a reserved matter, we would appreciate an update as to the UK Government's intention with regards to the UK and Scotland's continued involvement in the programme. Furthermore, given the Scottish Government's preference to continue to fully participate in the Erasmus+ programme whether consideration has been given to Scotland's continued involvement as a non-EU programme country in the event the UK Government decides not to continue participating in the programme post 2020.

Yours Sincerely,

Joan McAlpine MSP, Convener,
Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee