



# Europe Direct Information Centre Outer Hebrides

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## €urozone

€1= £0.86

€1= \$1.13

Source:

The European Central Bank, as of 18 August 2016.



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 [EDIC on Facebook](#)

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EDIC Outer Hebrides opening hours are 0900 to 1300 from Monday to Friday.

## EDIC EVENT AT EUROPEAN CONTINENTAL MARKET



The EDIC hosted an Information Stand alongside the European Continental Market recently in Stornoway Town Centre. We had a busy day answering questions and providing information and resources to citizens' of all ages on the EU.

Topics of Interest were ERASMUS+ opportunities, the Creative Europe Programme, Northern Periphery and Arctic programme, EU citizens' travel rights, children's EU resources as well as our EU generic information and promotional items.

<http://europa.eu/youreurope/>

## WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS FOLLOWING THE BREXIT VOTE?

The nation voted by referendum on 23 June to leave the European Union. The next step is for the UK to notify the European Council of its intention to leave by invoking Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union in accordance with the UK's constitutional requirements.

Negotiation and conclusion of an agreement between the EU and the UK must take place within two years (whether an agreement is concluded or not), unless the other Member States agree to an extension of the negotiating period.

EU Laws continue to apply in full until the UK's exit comes into effect. The UK Parliament will have to repeal the 1972 European Communities Act and then ratify the withdrawal agreement.

The agreement will be concluded on behalf of the Union by the Council of the EU acting by a qualified majority, after obtaining the consent of the European Parliament.

Former European Commissioner Michel Barnier has been appointed as the Commission's chief negotiator for Brexit, with responsibility for the political decisions expected to be made by the European Council representing the Member States.

Secretary of State for Scotland David Mundell has stated that his focus is now on "ensuring Scotland gets the best possible deal out of the EU negotiations" and "to work with Scottish Government to get the best deal for Scotland and the United Kingdom as we leave the EU."

A '[Standing Council on Europe](#)' in Scotland has been established by Scottish Government with the aim of protecting Scottish interests throughout the negotiations by continuously advising the Scottish Government. For more information please see [here](#).

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## THE UK AND EUROPEAN UNION WITHDRAWAL AND ACCESSION

Following the referendum result to leave the European Union the terms of the [UK settlement](#) agreed at the February European Council have ceased to exist.

After the UK's formal withdrawal, if the UK then later decided that we want to re-join the EU, Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union sets out that the UK would have to follow the regular, lengthy accession process. Entry would require agreement from all existing EU Member States.

Renewed membership would be highly unlikely to replicate the UK's current special status. This special status includes the rebate on payments to the EU budget, opt-outs from the Euro and the Schengen border-free area and the UK's right to choose which Justice and Home Affairs arrangements to join.

EU policy is to require all new Member States to commit to joining all of these. For more information please see: "The process for withdrawing from the European Union" HMG, February 2016, which can be downloaded [here](#).



Image © Times Higher Education

## INTERREG PROJECT APPLICATION

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar has been invited to participate in an ambitious INTERREG 2014-2020 ATLANTIC AREA project related to Energy Planning on Islands.

The total project value is €2 million and seven partners have been invited to participate, led by Instituto Tecnológico de Canarias (Las Palmas, Canary Islands), and including the Outer Hebrides, a French island group, the Scilly Isles and Madeira.

Assuming the proposal passes this first gate, the Comhairle will decide whether to formally commit to the 36 month project and detailed discussions will take place with the other prospective Hebridean partners Lews Castle College, and Community Energy Scotland.

The project will build on work already done by the Comhairle and Instituto Tecnológico de Canarias through the ISLEPACT project.

A refined Island Sustainable Energy Action Plan will be developed, cataloguing baseline energy usage and exploring better integration of Renewable Energy generation into the island electricity network.

Promotion of energy saving measures such as SMART meters, ultra-low energy buildings and super-efficient appliances will be supported and Lews Castle College, in particular, will lead on mapping the Marine Energy resource accessible to project partners.

The project aligns well with the Comhairle's ongoing work in the area of community owned generation of electricity and the development of 'Hebrides Energy' – a local Energy Supply Company which will generate and retail renewable electricity to island consumers at a competitive tariff.

It also supports local efforts to maximise domestic energy efficiency through demand side management of electricity supply, enabled by SMART meters and similar measures.

Please see the [new website](#) for more information on the Atlantic Area Transnational Programme.



Image © European Union

## STATUS OF EU FUNDS POST BREXIT VOTE

The official statement from the Scottish Government regarding Structural Funds is: "The Scottish Government has legally committed European funds to existing projects up to the end of 2018 and, in some cases, the middle of 2019. The projects funded support important economic, employment and social priorities and the Scottish Government, as Managing Authority, and Local Authorities, as Delivery Bodies, have a duty to manage the funds responsibly. These projects should continue on a 'business as usual' basis. Further updates will be supplied as they become available."

Funding from other EU programmes largely follows 'business as usual' but the specific website should be checked for more detailed information.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

The EDIC hopes to celebrate '[European Day of Languages](#)' next month at a local school.

## COR ECONOMIC SEMINAR IN SHETLAND

Members of the Committee of the Regions [Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy and EU Budget](#) (COTER) [meet on 9 September in Shetland](#).