



## Not so fast! Westminster's (continuous) oversight of European affairs post-Brexit

by Agata Gostyńska-Jakubowska

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Brexit has created a golden opportunity for UK Parliament to revamp the way it scrutinizes European Union affairs, a process which could pay dividends when negotiating the future relationship with the bloc. That is the key message in a new Centre for European Reform paper, '[Not so fast! Westminster's \(continued\) oversight of European affairs post-Brexit](#).' The analysis looks at how Westminster could take advantage of the intense focus on EU affairs to improve the way it examines EU legislation.

EU laws will continue to have an influence on the UK after Brexit, whether eurosceptic Members of Parliament like it or not. The increased focus on EU matters since the Brexit referendum means now is an auspicious time for Westminster to overhaul its oversight of EU affairs. Improvements in this area would help deepen MPs' understanding of the EU and help strengthen the UK government's hand when negotiating its future relationship with the bloc.

The CER paper argues that the government should keep MPs informed of the talks on the future relationship with the EU, rather than trying to keep the discussions behind closed doors as it did with the withdrawal agreement. It recommends making one House of Commons' select committee responsible for all EU and Brexit scrutiny to avoid duplication by other committees. The exiting the EU committee should take on the brief in the first instance, before handing over to a new European affairs committee when the Department for exiting the EU is closed. The paper also makes the case for boosting contacts between Westminster and national parliaments and EU institutions.

*"Leaving the EU is just the beginning of a long process of defining the UK's place in Europe. Westminster will find it easier to navigate these uncharted waters if it improves its scrutiny procedures and builds closer ties with the national parliaments of member-states and with the EU institutions. Prime Minister Theresa May needs to understand that parliament is not the enemy: better parliamentary scrutiny will put the government in a stronger position to negotiate the future relationship with the EU,"* said Agata Gostyńska-Jakubowska, a Brussels-based senior research fellow at the CER and author of the report.

### Note for editors:

For further information on the publication and to request an interview with Agata Gostyńska-Jakubowska, please contact Nick Winning in the CER press office on [pressoffice@cer.eu](mailto:pressoffice@cer.eu) or + 44 (0) 20 7233 1199. Follow us on [@CER\\_EU](#) and the author on [@AgataGostynska](#).