

P-05-712 A Welsh Government Department for Europe Would Ensure a Clear, Strategic and Accountable Voice for Wales in Ongoing Negotiations.

This petition was submitted by Tegid Roberts, having collected 22 online.

Text of the Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to create a Department for Europe as a matter of urgency, tasked with understanding and developing a strategy for Wales' continued engagement with the EU and our future relationship with the European partners.

Since the Brexit referendum the UK Government's response has been slow and ambiguous – A Cabinet office unit for Brexit was initially proposed then abandoned to be replaced with the new post of “Minister for Brexit”, a role seemingly bereft of clear objectives, and led by an MP who has spent the last 20 years on the back benches.

In Wales the Welsh Government response has been muted to say the least and it is time now that Wales itself took action so that negotiations between the UK and the rest of the EU work smoothly and that Wales – a net beneficiary of EU membership – has a decisive role in shaping our future relationship with the EU. As things currently stand, England and Scotland dominate all negotiations with the wider EU and without a concerted strategic plan of action from the Welsh government, this situation is likely to continue.

This Department should have a strong Cabinet Secretary with experience of working in Europe who can work across all departments. The Secretary should be supported by a cross-party committee to scrutinise all areas of current engagement and to help devise what our future relationship with the EU should look like. This committee should in turn be advised by a group of external expert advisors brought in from legal, economic, business, agricultural, cultural, and academic sectors.

A Welsh Government Department for Europe would ensure a clear, strategic and accountable voice for Wales in ongoing negotiations. We also need a strong voice in Europe to make sure that we continue to benefit and contribute to the areas we are already involved in and to develop relationships with the EU in sectors that we are not currently fully engaged with post Brexit.