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**Abstract**

The UK Government's decision to leave the European Union – Brexit – is an unprecedented act with large-scale but unpredictable consequences in geopolitical, economic and cultural terms. Therefore it is hardly surprising that its implications for higher education, both in the UK and across Europe, are difficult to predict. However, there are some obvious areas of concern including the UK's future involvement, if any, in mobility programmes and in future research programmes. In both the UK has been a significant participant, as one of the most popular destinations for students and as the largest single beneficiary of Horizon 2020 (and earlier framework) projects. After Switzerland the UK also has the highest percentage of non-native academic staff, with the rest of the EU being the largest single source, so its scholarly and scientific excellence could be at risk after Brexit. More difficult to assess, but potentially more significant, still, will be whether Brexit is seen as evidence of a wider so-called populist, anti-immigrant and even xenophobic movement, which would diminish the UK in the eyes of the rest of Europe and the wider world. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)