

EU REFERENDUM

Fisheries

The EU has a significant influence over the fishing industry through the Common Fisheries Policy. It is a set of rules for managing fishing fleets and fish stocks and gives all European fishing fleets equal access to EU waters.

The policy focuses on four main areas:

- Fisheries management
- International policy
- Market and trade policy
- Funding

This year new rules have been implemented which requires all fish caught to landed, even if it is unwanted.

Should the UK remain a member of the European Union?

Yes

No

The Prime Minister has renegotiated the UK's terms of membership. The following themes of the renegotiation will be of relevance to the food and drink sector if the UK remains in the EU.

Economic Competitiveness

The settlement commits to further reductions in red tape and beauracracy in the EU. Further clarity is required about whether reforms will take place to CFP to make the fishing industry more competitive.

It is unlikely that any change would take place to the CFP prior to the next review period, which would be in 2020.

Fishing is a devolved issue in Scotland, meaning that any legislation from EU has to be implemented via the Scottish Government. In the event of a Brexit it is unclear whether the UK Government would assume powers, previously the EU's responsibility, for legislating in this area or whether powers would fall to the devolved parliament.

Exports to the EU

Much of the fish landed in the North-east is exported to the EU and distributors will have to continue to abide by EU laws in relation to packaging and safety if they wish to sell their product in the European market.

Further clarity is required about the rules that would be put in place for exports; for example if export documentation would be required or if tariffs would be introduced.

Employment

The fishing industry has a high proportion of workers from outside of the UK. More information is required about whether EU citizens would be allowed to work freely in the UK.