



Engineering Professors' Council

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Engineering Professors' Council and CaSE Press Release: 'Role of EU membership in UK science and engineering research'

CaSE and the EPC are launching a new report today seeking to inform the current debate around the question of UK membership of the EU, by examining the role of EU membership in UK science and engineering research. The full report can be found here:

<http://epc.ac.uk/eu-contribution-to-science-and-engineering-research/>

The report contains evidence and insight gained from analysis of available data and interactions with the science and engineering community. In addition to investigating the scale and scope of EU research funding, the report includes the results of a survey conducted by CaSE and the EPC to capture the views and experiences of over 400 researchers. Their responses were overwhelmingly positive, with 93% agreeing that EU membership is a major benefit to UK science and engineering.

CaSE Acting Director, Naomi Weir said:

"A healthy science and engineering sector brings economic, social and health benefits to the UK and its citizens. It is, therefore, only right that the public and those leading public debate are informed as to the role of EU membership in UK research success.

The UK is a world-leading nation in science and engineering research but research is an international endeavour and the question is whether being a member of the EU is a help or a hindrance to UK research. Those best able to answer that question, researchers themselves, report enormous benefits to UK research from membership of the EU.

Certainly, this research is one piece in a very large and complex puzzle, but we are delighted to contribute to the growing body of work concerning the critical question of the UK's membership of the EU."

EPC Executive Director: Susan Kay commented:

"There is a growing conversation around the potential implications of the UK leaving the EU and it is critical to consider the impact that this would have on UK engineering research. Access to specialist facilities and skills through free movement of skilled labour and international collaboration are particularly important to maintain the world-class reach and impact of UK engineering and the unique contribution this makes to the health and resilience of UK industry. As our researchers have told us, EU membership gives us access to those skills and collaboration. Together we are stronger, and so is the UK research base."

ENDS

For immediate release

Contact Susan Kay (079016 70897) at the Engineering Professors' Council or Naomi Weir at the Campaign for Science and Engineering (020 7679 4995) for further details.

Notes to editors:

1. CaSE is the leading independent pressure group for the science and engineering sectors in the UK. Find out more at sciencecampaign.org.uk

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2. The Engineering Professors' Council (EPC) has as its mission the promotion of excellence in engineering higher education research and teaching in the UK. Find out more at epc.ac.uk
3. The UK receives substantial funding for research from the EU: €8.8bn between 2007 and 2013. The UK is a net contributor to the EU overall, but it is a net receiver of EU funding for research.

Key Findings:

- 93% of researchers asked in the CaSE and EPC survey agreed that EU membership is a major benefit to UK.
- Some regions of the UK are more dependent than others on EU funding in maintaining research capacity and infrastructure, and as a result could suffer disproportionate adverse impacts if this source was withdrawn.
- The ability to attract academic staff to the UK through free movement of labour is important, particularly in science and engineering.
- The role and benefits of EU membership to UK research is considered by researchers to be broader than just the funding for research that EU projects bring to the UK. The improvement in quality, reach and impact, facilitated by EU collaboration and coordination, helps to solve “Grand Challenge” problems in a way that would be much harder for any one country to achieve alone.