

Summary of academic engagement activities (2023)

The Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) manages a [range of activities](#) for individual academics and higher education institutions. Through these activities, academics can get involved in the work of Parliament.

January – March 2023

SPICe published the second in a series of blogs from **Dr Stephen Knox**, who worked with SPICe as an Academic Fellow. His blog: [‘Supporting creative enterprises – exploring the impact of finance initiatives’](#) investigated the impact of various policies that aim to develop the creative industries, a key sector in Scotland.

SPICe published a guest blog: [‘What can we learn from the COVID-19 response in supporting migrant and minority ethnic populations?’](#) This blog summarised the findings from an expert review for the Scottish Government Coronavirus (COVID-19) Learning and Evaluation Oversight Group. The study was led by **Dr Paulina Trevena**, with **Dr Anna Gawlewicz** and **Professor Sharon Wright** of the University of Glasgow in collaboration with the charities Feniks, Black and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure in Scotland (BEMIS) and the Scottish Refugee Council (SRC).

SPICe hosted a seminar* on ‘Scottish Fiscal Commission: the latest economic and fiscal outlook for Scotland’. In this seminar, held in January 2023, the Scottish Fiscal Commission, led by SFC Chair and Professor in Economics at the University of Glasgow, **Professor Graeme Roy**, presented their latest economic and fiscal forecasts.

April – June 2023

During the second week of May, SPICe hosted **Dr Tamsin Edwards**, Reader in Climate Change, King's College London. Dr Edwards is one of the new UK Parliament Thematic Research Lead (TRL) on Climate and Environment. TRLs are part of a new pilot thematic policy hub approach being taken at the UK Parliament to allow parliamentary staff to share and develop expertise to inform scrutiny, legislation and debate that addresses key economic and societal challenges.

Retained EU law and the UK Government’s Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill were both hitting the headlines in May of 2023. SPICe hosted a seminar* where **Dr Christopher McCorkindale** of Strathclyde University explained retained EU law to Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs), their staff and parliament staff.

SPICe welcomed **Natasha Lee** from the University of Northumbria via the UKRI Policy Internships Scheme. Natasha worked with our Financial Scrutiny research unit on a three-month placement working in the area of the charitable sector in Scotland.

Professor Graeme Roy, Professor in Economics at the University of Glasgow, and **Professor David Ulph**, Professor Emeritus in the School of Economics and Finance at the University of St Andrews, presented the findings of the [Scottish Fiscal Commission's first Fiscal Sustainability Report](#) at one of our SPICe Seminars*.

September – December 2023

Dr Tom Caygill, Senior Lecturer in Politics, Nottingham Trent University, worked with the SPICe on an Academic Fellowship. Tom's fellowship on [Institutionalising Post-Legislative Scrutiny](#) looked at past and current practices to assess the impact they have on institutionalising post-legislative scrutiny.

The Scottish Parliament's Citizen Participation and Public Participation Committee published a report from an inquiry into [Public Participation in the work of the Scottish Parliament](#). The Committee made recommendations about helping citizens to better understand how they can get involved in the work of the Parliament, and on reducing barriers to people participating. SPICe hosted a seminar* where **Professor Sabina Siebert**, University of Glasgow, and **Dr Andy Williamson** explored the Committee's findings and the implications of its recommendations.

SPICe hosted a seminar* on 'Zero emissions heating: what are the key challenges?'. In this breakfast seminar, three speakers including **Dr Jamie Speirs**, Research Fellow Centre for Environmental Policy at Imperial College London, considered the main heating technology options for zero carbon heat in Scotland.

*About SPICe Seminars

SPICe Seminars are designed to enable Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs), their staff and parliament staff access to external expertise, including academics, to improve parliamentary scrutiny by developing understanding and awareness of issues and encouraging engagement and debate among parliamentarians.