In 2021, the EU will propose a Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism to reduce the risk of carbon leakage to the EU and, by the same token, buffer European companies bound by the EU’s higher environmental standards, in full compliance with the rules of the World Trade Organization. This will probably entail levelling up the environmental standards of the products and services imported to the EU Single Market, so that carbon-rich imports pay higher customs duties and/or tariffs (EC, 2020b).

However, given that the EU stands for openness in science and research, it can be expected that Brexit will, ultimately, represent little more than a change in the funding structure of Horizon Europe, with the UK simply joining the list of countries associated with the EU.

Similarly, it can be expected that, although Covid-19 and its aftermath will have far-reaching consequences for research and higher education, it might well further strengthen public commitment to higher education in the EU27 from a funding perspective. In several member states, governments are boosting their investment in universities, partially by increasing funding for Covid-related research and partially by