

Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce BREXIT UPDATE

CURRENT POSITION

Since the referendum, the Chamber of Commerce Network has been working, together with members, to identify areas where companies have concerns and calling for government to answer those practical and pragmatic questions. It is important to us that we adapt our offer to fit the changing needs of business as decisions are taken. We will react with changes in our processes as soon as decisions are taken. We are pre-empting those changes where we can and have already begun to invest in training our staff in preparation for the introduction of the new Customs Declarations Service.

We are committed to keeping our members informed, focusing on sharing information and helping you to respond to the opportunities and challenges that Brexit will bring. Connect to us to receive our weekly newsletter and invitations to our Global Network events to ensure you hear about developments as soon as we do.



The British Chamber of Commerce has developed a Brexit Hub which provides up-to-date information for businesses and some key resources to help your business to prepare for Brexit, <https://www.britishchambers.org.uk/page/brexit-hub>.

On the Brexit hub there is:

- A checklist to assist businesses to review the impact of Brexit on their business
- A risk register identifying the areas that collectively Chambers have identified through engagement with members as being the most critical
- Information on the Withdrawal Agreement with frequently asked questions and analysis
- A list of 20 critical questions that in the event of a no deal as of 15 February 2019 we still do not have answers to.

Many of the unanswered questions reflect fundamental aspects of how companies operate. For instance, the terms of trade agreements can affect pricing decisions, margins, even choice of business location and the geography of supply chains.

The absence of clarity and precision has already stifled investment and growth, and is resulting in unnecessary costs, inability to plan and, increasingly, loss of business as customers look elsewhere.

Business has been clear that it does not want a messy and disorderly exit from the EU on 29 March. While firms understand that negotiations are still ongoing, they are hugely concerned that the UK is not prepared for all eventualities – and that the sluggish and patchy nature of government planning for ‘no deal’ would become all too apparent in the economy if it is allowed to happen by default.



John Bridge OBE DL, Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce, said:

“There is great frustration in the businesses I speak to that shortly their businesses could face the biggest change to their terms of trade in over a generation, without the information and clarity they need to navigate their way forward. There has been much focus on 29 March as the date by which all things change, and this will now shift to 30 October, but the reality is, as the Business Secretary Greg Clark identified, the 15 February is the ‘real’ Brexit deadline for British companies exporting to countries such as Japan to know the terms on which they are trading before they send goods on a six-week transfer. Businesses are already feeling the impact of uncertainty.

“There is a very real risk that a lack of clear, actionable information from government will leave firms, their people and their communities hung out to dry.

“Even those companies trying their hardest to get ready are still in the dark on important matters from contracts through to customs. Many others, who took the decision to wait for the political process to conclude before acting, would face sudden and costly adjustments if a deal is not reached.

“It is little wonder that many firms have been holding back on investment, stockpiling, and even opening offices and moving operations and jobs elsewhere. The imperative remains to avoid a messy and disorderly exit, but businesses need answers they can base decisions on, no matter the outcome. The lack of clear, precise answers is now causing real damage to many businesses, and to the wider economy.

“Politicians need to get their act together now to ensure no further damage is done to our Local Area and UK economies.”

A No Deal Scenario

We believe that business want uninterrupted trade and that is the position we are championing. Brexit will have an impact irrespective of how it is managed but a ‘No Deal’ scenario is not one that we would support; it will be catastrophic for businesses. In a recent interview on 6 February 2019, commenting on reports that the Cabinet is considering options around making imports tariff-free across the board if we leave the EU next month without a deal.

Adam Marshall, Director General of British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), said:

“Businesses across the UK will be deeply concerned by reports that ministers are considering setting UK import tariffs to zero in the case of no-deal.

“Ministers have not consulted with business on removing tariffs. They have shown no clear understanding of the damage that such a move could cause to key parts of the economy, including manufacturing and agricultural firms across the UK. They have no plan to support the industries, places and people who would be affected overnight by these proposed changes, and no time left to prepare.

“A snap decision to move to zero tariffs speedily and unilaterally would harm domestic producers and exporters, and create a huge new source of extra uncertainty for business communities at an already difficult time. Some UK businesses would lose market share very quickly, and find themselves facing imminent threats to their survival.

“In addition to the real-life impacts of such a move, businesses will also be anxious at the thought of the UK government ceding one of its levers for trade negotiations with other countries, before it even gets started.

“Decisions of this scale and consequence should only be taken after deep engagement with those most likely to be affected, and must take into account the potential long-term impacts on both trade and inward investment. None of this has happened.”



The British Chambers of Commerce has issued a guide in the event of No Deal. In addition, we are working with The British Chamber of Commerce to ensure we are prepared for changes to our exporting services in the event of a no deal.

CUSTOM PREPARATIONS FOR NO DEAL BREXIT



As 29th March approaches, businesses should be preparing for all eventualities. To prepare for the possibility of no deal, UK traders should take these four steps now to protect continuity of trade with the EU.

REGISTER FOR AN EORI NUMBER

Businesses trading with the EU will need an EORI number to continue selling and buying in the event of no deal.

Register at www.gov.uk/hmrc/get-eori

IDENTIFY IF YOU NEED A CUSTOMS AGENT

HMRC is advising businesses to appoint a customs broker, if you don't already have one.

TRAIN STAFF MEMBER IF NO CUSTOMS AGENT APPOINTED

If you do not want to appoint a customs agent, make sure someone in your business is trained to make customs declarations.

IDENTIFY WHAT SOFTWARE CHANGES MAY APPLY

Check compatibility of software to HMRC's customs systems, and upgrade if necessary.

In the event of no deal, businesses will be able to apply for a range of customs easements. You will need an EORI number. Your Chamber can sign-post you to the information and may be able to recommend consultants to help you apply for and decide on the simplifications that will be right for you.

For further information on preparing for no deal, visit gov.uk/hmrc/trade-with-the-eu

Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce Top Tips for Business ensure you are up-to-date on Brexit and what it means for your business

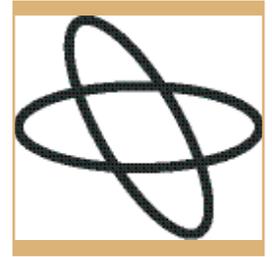
1 Stay connected and take advantage of the expertise in the Chambers International Committee

Sign up to our newsletter to receive regular news updates. We will send out updates as and when we have them and publish these on our website.

Email s.parr@cambscci.co.uk if you are not already receiving our newsletter.

Join our Global Business Network and have the opportunity to ask questions of local experts, feedback to us the challenges you are experiencing on the ground in a post Brexit world, network with other businesses and help shape our support and training programme.

You don't have to be a Global trader to join. Many topics will be relevant to all businesses. To join, and attend future meetings, please email h.bosett@cambscci.co.uk



2 Keep up to date by reviewing The British Chamber of Commerce's Brexit Hub

- Checklist
- Risk register
- Guidance and analysis on the Withdrawal agreement
- In the event of a No Deal there are 20 critical questions still not answered (as of 15 February 2019)

www.britishchambers.org.uk/page/brexit-hub



3 Understand the impact on your business by using the Government guides and toolkit

Government have issued a really helpful Partnership Pack with a series of guides relevant to all business.

This has been created to attempt to answer some of the questions. Whilst this information is primarily aimed at those who currently trade with the EU, it is still helpful to those who already import and export from third countries (i.e. outside the EU). For those new to 'external' trade, this provides links to obtaining an EORI.

www.gov.uk

Access government's toolkit, a simple seven-step question guide

This toolkit leads the trader to the relevant technical papers out of the 100+ published. These technical papers do not just cover trade, they are wide-reaching including personal travel with the EU, together with how to manage an UK person working in EU and vice-versa.

www.gov.uk/business-uk-leaving-eu

Prepare your business for leaving the UK - use this tool to find out:

- What your business may need to do to prepare for the UK leaving the EU
- What's changing in your industry
- Information on specific rules and regulations

You'll need to answer seven simple questions to get guidance relevant to your business.

www.gov.uk/prepare-business-uk-leaving-eu



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Make sure you are compliant with HMRC's VAT requirements

HMRC has written to 145,000 UK VAT-registered businesses trading with the EU about the transitional simplified procedures (TSP) for customs, in the event of a no deal scenario.

For those new to 'external' trade, this provides links to obtaining an EORI. **Do not delay, register today.**

www.gov.uk/eori



HM Revenue
& Customs

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Stay alert to changes in the exchange rate and what this means for your business

Chamber members can access a free health check to ensure you are getting the very best exchange rates.

You can also purchase currency for the future and fix the rate to protect you from fluctuations in the exchange rate. For a referral to Moneycorp services at preferential Chamber rates contact b.coleman@cambssci.co.uk

www.moneycorp.com/en-gb/

moneycorp

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Get your staff trained on the fundamentals with Chamber Training in partnership with Chadwick Export Services

The Chamber runs a rolling programme of training courses that culminate in the nationally-recognised Foundation Award in International Trade.

The International Trade Skills Training Programme has been designed to complement the government's 'Get Britain Exporting' agenda and focuses on improving the skills and competencies of employees who complete export documentation within their role.

The regular training courses provide the knowledge to assist with your international trade activities and you will receive detailed notes to take away to build up a toolkit of reference information.

To find out more about any of the training courses listed below, contact Chadwick Export Services, the Chamber's provider of export and import training. They offer courses such as **'Brexit and Beyond - Be Prepared'** where they explore how traders can prepare, even with the present uncertainty, and attempt to demystify some of the myths. For example, regarding export licence controls, a new Open General Export Licence was published last week, which will come into force at 11.00pm on 29 March in case of no deal Brexit.

A single day course **'Customs Declaration Service - Be Prepared'** where we discuss the timelines for the phased roll-out of this service. In short, no, CDS will not be up and running for the 'masses' on 29 March. It is still in test phase with the CSPs, with the tranche of CFSP only traders at present.

[See this list of FAQ produced by Chadwick Export Services >](#)



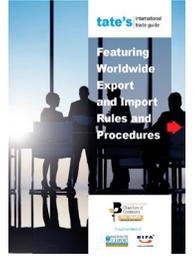
CHADWICK Export Services

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If you are trading overseas, stay up to date with the tariffs.

Global Members of the Chamber have free access to Tate's library of tariffs. This makes it easier for you to complete export paperwork. This is a rich source of information for experienced and new exporters. If you have been trading with Europe and post Brexit have to engage with exporting and Customs Declarations this on line library will be extremely helpful in completing export documents.

www.tatefreightforms.co.uk/tates-export-guide



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Talk to us

Keep us informed of what impact Brexit is having on your business and what further support you need. Come along to meetings, telephone us, send us an email, respond to the economic surveys when we send them and ensure we know how it feels on the ground.

Complete our Brexit survey, so that we can plan our training programme and utilise real stories to influence the dialogue with Government. What are you worried about or need more support with?

Complete the survey at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/8HP36FK



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