

Ceemet priorities for the EU-UK Future Relationship

Introduction

European manufacturing employers with their highly integrated supply chains call for a future relationship agreement that lives up to the high levels of ambition set out in the EU-UK Political Declaration. Furthermore, this agreement must reflect the realities of how our sector, supporting 17.4 million direct jobs, works in practice, including in relation to labour mobility, trade of goods and regulation.

Exports account for about 70% of the sales of the European Technology and Industry sector, which have increased by approximately 50% over the past decade and represent around 46% of the total exports of goods in the EU. Manufacturing is a capital intensive sector, meaning that stability of regulation and trade is critical to unlocking the investment needed for growth and improvements in productivity. It is also particularly affected by tariffs, quotas, customs requirements, border delays and technical barriers to trade.

Companies in both the EU and the UK need access to a wide labour market at all levels of skills, with minimum restrictions. A flexible system for the mobility of workers and skills between the EU and the UK is essential. Companies represented by Ceemet members need the ability to employ and deploy staff across borders with ease and simplicity and cannot wait because of lengthy administrative processes when a customer needs urgent support and advice. We must maintain this huge asset to be able to send employees across borders at short notice if and when they are needed.

Ceemet Key messages

As the EU and UK will remain important economic partners, given history, proximity and the degree of existing integration, it is crucial to get the balance right in the upcoming negotiations on the future relationship. In particular Ceemet members want to see:

1. Preferential rules for business trips and cross-border mobility of temporary workers such as service engineers and intra-company transfers. Working across borders for an adequate duration should be possible without administrative burden. In the case of no future relationship agreement by the end of 2020, companies would need a system in place which ensures a smooth future labour mobility between EU and UK.
2. Mutual recognition of professional qualifications.
3. A zero tariff and quota Free Trade Agreement (FTA), with appropriate level playing field commitments, in line with the levels of ambition in the EU-UK Political Declaration.
4. Rules of origin that are streamlined, easy to implement and deliver genuinely preferential market access for affected sectors.

ABOUT Ceemet

Ceemet represents the metal, engineering and technology-based industry employers in Europe.

Member organisations represent 200,000 companies in Europe, providing over 17 million direct and 35 million indirect jobs.

Ceemet is a recognised European social partner at the industrial sector level, promoting global competitiveness for European industry through consultation and social dialogue.

5. The highest possible levels of customs facilitation, maximising the use of technology and minimising unnecessary duplication.
6. Minimise technical barriers to trade, for example through mutual recognition of product standards, regulations, conformity marks and conformity assessment bodies, building on existing precedents, e.g. the EU–Switzerland mutual recognition agreement.
7. Specific arrangements for mutual recognition of regulations in highly regulated sectors such as automotive, aerospace, pharmaceuticals and chemicals based on existing precedents, e.g. the EU–Switzerland aviation agreement.
8. A regulatory co-operation mechanism to discuss future changes in UK and EU regulation and minimise new technical barriers to trade.
9. Robust dispute resolution procedures that can be easily accessed by business.
10. EU manufacturers and their non-EU trading partners which are part of Customs Unions need time to adapt to the arrangements once they are finalised, this period should be driven by the time needed to adjust to a new relationship and not by any political timetable. Companies need long-term certainty to plan business inspired travel and investment decisions.

As the details of the FTA will be critical for determining its effectiveness in promoting labour mobility, trade in goods and ensuring an adequate regulatory environment, it is vital that business groups and social partners are properly and transparently involved in negotiations. Ceemet stands ready to provide the negotiators with information and evidence about the impact of different outcomes on our sector, especially regarding business related activity.

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