



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

Trade Policy Advisory Group meeting: 15 November 2021

Summary of the Trade Policy Advisory Group meeting via video conference on 15 November 2021.

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Attendees

Meeting chair: Minister for Economy, Vaughan Gething MS

TPAG members and stakeholders:

- Aileen Burmeister, FairTrade Wales
- Andy Richardson, Food and Drink Industry Board Wales
- Catherine Fookes, Women's Equality Network Wales
- Catherine Smith, Hybu Cig Cymru
- Henry Clarke, Acuity Law
- Nick Pearce, Object Matrix
- Prof. Nick Pidgeon, Cardiff University
- Paul O'Donnell, Institute of Export and International Trade
- Rachael Blackburn, Aerospace Wales
- Richard Newton-Jones, Snowdonia Cheese
- Richard Rumbelow, Make UK
- Robert O'Neil, Welsh Automotive Forum

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- Robin Davies, Magstim
- Sarah Williams-Gardener, FinTech Wales
- Simon Hall, Nodor International

Welcome and introductions

Vaughan Gething MS, Minister for Economy, opened the meeting by thanking the group members and outlining their role in helping to shape Welsh Government trade policy by providing expert input on how we can maximise the opportunities, and minimise the threats, that free trade agreements could bring to Wales and the Welsh economy.

The minister outlined the case for international trade and recognised the benefits that new free trade agreements can bring to Wales whilst also noting that it is vital to ensure that UK government understands that new free trade agreements should not undermine the Welsh Government's ability to pursue its own ambitions or to regulate domestically, and deals must not lead to gains for other parts of the UK at the expense of Wales.

The minister outlined that any trade negotiations with the rest of the world must be fully compatible with the deal we now have with the EU and must not harm the UK/EU trading relationship. Any new trade deal must not cause an un-level playing field in areas such as animal welfare and the environment by giving food importers, who meet lower animal welfare standards, an economic advantage in our market compared to our own producers.

Update on trade deals under negotiation by the UK government

WG Director provided an overview of the work to date regarding the UK government's free trade agreements, including the negotiations that have concluded, those that have started and those about to commence. It was highlighted that the Welsh Government is engaging with the UK government and

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inputting into discussions on international trade policy and trade negotiations.

Round table discussion on the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

A round table discussion followed focusing on the UK government's Call for Input on the GCC split into 3 topics:

- Exporting and importing: opportunities and barriers
- Climate change and the environment: opportunities and barriers
- Equality and human rights

The discussions covered:

Exporting and importing: opportunities and barriers

- Reduction of tariffs
- The simplification of custom procedures across the separate countries in GCC
- Importance of a level playing field for Welsh businesses and sectors
- Existing technical challenges faced such as Rules of Origin and clarity on payment terms & regulation licensing.
- Opportunities in the GCC for Welsh businesses
- Recognition and acceptance of professional qualifications
- Impact and opportunities for the Higher Education sector in Wales
- Welsh Government to work with stakeholders to identify areas of competitive advantage and ensure companies are ready to trade with the GCC.

Climate change and the environment: opportunities and barriers

- Opportunities for exports discussed, including exports of expertise and

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technology.

Equality and human rights

- It was highlighted that the International Strategy for Wales states that the voices of women should always be included.
- Suggestions were put forward including a full gender impact assessment of the proposed GCC deal and consideration of ratification of the United Nations' Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Closing remarks

The minister closed the meeting by thanking attendees for their wide-ranging contributions to discussions. The group will next meet in March 2022.

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