

## **Government launches resources to prepare the UK for life beyond Brexit**

The Government has launched a series of new resources to support businesses and individuals with preparedness for life beyond January 2021, when the EU Exit Transition period ends and new trading terms begin.

The resources include a dedicated [website](#) which contains information on actions you can take now that do not depend on negotiations. It includes a [short questionnaire](#) enabling you to get a personalised list of actions for you, your family, and your business and invites you to sign up for emails to get updates when things change.

## **Trade bodies united in plea for clarity and time**

The BVRLA was joined by other automotive trade bodies at a meeting with the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy last week to discuss the industry's preparedness for EU Exit.

Industry voices all echoed the same concerns around the need for clarity and the desired avoidance of an eleventh-hour announcement as we approach the end of the transition period.

The SMMT shared a recent survey showing 94% of their members felt a lack of clarity had hampered their ability to prepare, while 60% said that they had diverted resources away from EU-Exit preparedness to Covid crisis management.

The BVRLA also raised concerns about vehicles ordered now that may be delivered post 1 January, and therefore be subject to unknown tariffs. The association is recommending that Government considers a temporary waiving of tariffs for a set period.

## Update on progress of trade negotiations

Government officials have met with the BVRLA to provide an update on the progress of the UK's trade negotiations with the EU, USA, Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

### EU

- 5th round negotiations continue following 6 weeks of intense discussions
- Negotiations may continue well into Autumn
- Still significant differences between what the two sides want, particularly around 'level playing field' and fisheries
- Businesses are being advised to prepare now as it is looking unlikely that a deal will be reached.

### USA

- 3rd round negotiations continue with the USA, the second largest negotiation market
- USA has said it will apply tariffs to the EU and officials are trying to remove the threat of punitive tariffs being applied to the UK
- Time isn't as much a pressure as with EU negotiations because the UK is not losing market access at the end of the year.

### Japan

- The objective has been to replicate the Japanese / EU Free Trade Agreement, and it is going well with the Government hoping to finalise the deal in the next few weeks and share details in August / early September.

### Australia and New Zealand

- 1st round of negotiations have taken place. Nothing yet to report as it was mainly introductory, outlining what each party hopes to achieve.

## Phased approach to new border controls for trade

As of 1 January 2021, the UK will operate a full, external border as a sovereign nation. This means that controls will be placed on the movement of goods between Great Britain and the EU. To afford industry extra time to make necessary arrangements, the UK Government has taken the decision to introduce the new border controls in three stages up until 1 July 2021.

The [Border Operating Model](#) provides clarity and certainty for the border industry and businesses, including technical detail on how the border with the EU will work after the transition period and the actions that traders, hauliers, ports and carriers need to take.

## Support for businesses trading in or via Northern Ireland

New guidance has been published to provide support for UK businesses moving goods into, out of, or through Northern Ireland. Businesses will need to engage in new processes under the [Northern Ireland Protocol](#), which takes effect on 1 January 2021.

The Government states that changes for goods moving from Great Britain to Northern Ireland will be kept to an absolute minimum with a new [Trader Support Service](#), available to all traders at no cost to provide wraparound support, alongside the published guidance.

## UK businesses will not be eligible for .EU domain names

From 1 January 2021, you'll no longer be able to register or renew an [.eu domain name](#) if your organisation, business or undertaking is established in the UK but not in the EU/European Economic Area (EEA), or you live outside of the EU/EEA and are not an EU/EEA citizen.

Businesses with an .eu domain name should check eligibility and, if necessary, discuss with your local domain name registrar whether to transfer your internet presence to another top-level domain.

## Changes to international trademark registrations

[International trademark registrations](#) protected in the EU under the Madrid Protocol will no longer enjoy protection when the transition period ends. To address this, on 1 January 2021, the UK Government will create a comparable trademark (IR) in relation to each international (EU) trademark designation which has protected status immediately before 1 January 2021.

## Government launches Customs Grant Scheme

The UK Government is offering three [customs declaration grants](#) to help businesses with funding for recruitment, training and IT improvements to enable their business to complete customs declarations.

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) is administering the scheme on behalf of the HMRC and applications should be made [online through PwC](#).

## Rules relating to online activities

As of 1 January 2021, the [eCommerce Directive](#) will no longer apply to the UK and businesses are being asked to prepare for these changes now. Rules relating to online activities in European Economic Area (EEA) countries may newly apply to UK online service providers.

Businesses should consider whether their services are currently in scope of the Directive, and if so, ensure compliance with relevant requirements in each EEA country they operate in.

## Applying for EU funding

Businesses are being reminded that they can still apply for EU funding under the current spending framework and a full list of funds available is published on the [Gov.UK website](#). The deadline for applications will depend on which fund is being applied for.