

Ceemet statement on EU UK negotiations

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Manufacturers across Europe are calling on the EU Council of ministers and UK negotiators to focus on agreeing an early, time limited, transitional arrangement for business in the on-going negotiations between the EU and the UK. Companies across the continent want decision-makers to ensure a clear and meaningful transition agreement is achieved before the end of the year, to avoid damaging complex and integrated supply chains and export activity. We must ensure that negotiations on UK exit deliver a “*reasonable deal in reasonable time*” for all European manufacturers.

Ceemet’s key messages for a smooth Brexit

- A time limited transitional period, reducing the risk of economic shocks;
- Maintain free and frictionless trade, avoiding tariff and non-tariff barriers to the movement of goods and ensuring the integrity of the single market;
- Enable people to move freely across borders to support complex supply chains and address the sectors skills gap;
- A single regulatory environment, supported by mutual recognition and regulatory cooperation;
- Consultation of industry is essential in ensuring negotiations deliver a deal which works for manufacturers across Europe and in the UK.

Ceemet which represents, European Technology and Industry Employers, has warned that industry faces a lose-lose situation if a transition, effectively maintaining existing trade and customs regimes and avoiding regulatory divergence, is not agreed within months.

During this period Ceemet believes that the EU and UK should continue to maintain the mutual economic benefits of the single market and remain in an effective customs union. In order to ensure the integrity of the single market, single market membership and the commitment to agreed freedoms should be considered as an optimal model for the time limited period. This transitional

About Ceemet

Ceemet represents the metal, engineering and technology-based industry employers in Europe, covering sectors such as metal goods, mechanical engineering, electronics, ICT, vehicle and transport manufacturing.

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.

“EU and UK negotiators have a responsibility to ensure minimal disruption for businesses, for employers and employees.”

Uwe Combüchen,
Ceemet Director General

arrangement should provide businesses across Europe with the certainty needed, and maintain confidence to trade and create jobs. The transition should be seen as avoiding a two-stage process which risks competitiveness and could hinder investment and not as postponing the process of the UK exiting the EU.

Ahead of the October European Council, Ceemet is setting out its key priorities for the negotiation of a future comprehensive partnership between the EU and the UK. In doing so, manufacturers are calling on the EU and UK negotiators to agree the need for a time limited transitional arrangement which significantly reduces the risk of economic shocks and allows time for the negotiation of this comprehensive partnership.

European manufacturers agree that the future partnership between the EU and the UK should ensure that trade continues to flow as unimpeded as possible, preserving as much as possible the often complex and delicate trading relationships that are in place. They agree that companies in both the UK and the EU [footnote also EEA] should have access to a wide labour market at all levels of skills, with minimum restrictions. Finally, manufacturers wish to operate in a single legislative environment and agree that significant regulatory parity should be maintained and mechanisms introduced to avoid regulatory disparity between the EU and the UK.

Manufacturers in Europe form critical parts of complex European and Global supply chains. The ability to import and export manufactured goods and related services seamlessly across borders is critical to business models. Any sudden changes at borders could have a dramatic impact on operations, costs, profitability and viability going forward. This complexity needs to be understood by the negotiators to truly appreciate the impact of introducing any form of barrier to trade, either tariff or non-tariff. Negotiators must deliver a future partnership which allows for free and frictionless trade between the EU and the UK.

Regulatory equivalence, mutual recognition of standards, and an agreed process to eliminate or prevent non-tariff barriers behind the border on an ongoing basis are essential components of a future partnership. Manufacturers want to produce one product for multiple markets rather than multiple products for diverging markets.

Finally, business involvement and engagement in these talks on a long-term future relationship proposal is essential to achieving a good deal economically. Negotiators must work with industry to build mechanisms to feed directly into the negotiation of a new comprehensive partnership. Manufacturers across Europe have an important role in identifying key choices and priorities when pursuing trade policies, programs and services that assist businesses compete in the global economy. This consultation will avoid a downturn in trade and investment caused by creating unnecessary friction at the border for either goods or people; this is the last thing manufacturers want.

As manufacturers we will continue to press for a smooth and orderly Brexit, one that will deliver continued prosperity and investment in jobs and economic growth both across Europe and in the UK, it is in our mutual interest.

“Companies across the continent want to see swift progress on transitional arrangements to avoid unintended consequences and economic collateral damage arising from a failure to agree an orderly exit.”

**Uwe Combüchen,
Ceemet Director General**

“A flexible system for the movement of labour and skills between the EU and the UK is essential. Manufacturers need the ability to employ and deploy staff across border with ease and simplicity.”

**Uwe Combüchen,
Ceemet Director General**

More info

[‘Brexit: a lose-lose situation for EU manufacturers’](#)

[Joint Brexit statement with industriAll European Trade Union](#)

[Ceemet Art.50 statement](#)