

Future Relationship: No to no-deal, we need time to adapt

With less than 3 months to go until the end of the transition period, manufacturing heavyweights from across Europe call on all parties involved to break the current impasse, avoid a no-deal exit, and ensure our industrial sector has the necessary time to adapt.

Brussels, 12 October 2020 – Ceemet members, representing the companies which make up Europe’s Tech & Industry sector, are calling for all sides to find a solution which is in the best interests of our industries.

The sense of urgency among the business community is palpable, and this urgency has intensified as the time originally set aside to prepare for change, the transition period, is rapidly coming to an end. As Ceemet has stressed since the beginning of this process, this should be a time for businesses to adapt to the contents of a new deal and prepare for any new reality.

While it is well understood that even in the event of a deal there will be inevitable changes in the relationship between the EU and the UK, many uncertainties remain. Any new deal will see changes to mobility, the need for border/customs formalities and regulatory market access issues (e.g. CE marking), highlighting the fact that manufacturers need adequate time to prepare.

The backdrop of COVID-19

This will all happen in the middle of a digital and green transformation and against the current backdrop of COVID-19, adding another layer of complexity to an already extremely difficult situation. Manufacturers are experiencing the biggest industrial crisis in living memory, with lockdowns both national and regional, and schemes such as temporary short-time work which are often inadequate to deal with the symmetric shock to the industrial base we represent.

With the real possibility of a second wave, and the looming pronounced economic slowdown and major political uncertainties, we must, more than ever, ensure that we avoid a no-deal exit of the UK from the EU and allow the time needed for companies to adjust.

Nearing the Endgame: Political responsibility to get a deal

Notwithstanding the fact that the infamous clock has nearly ticked all the way to midnight, manufacturing employers believe the road to a deal is still available, however it is essential that this opportunity is grasped by both sides. The crucial days in these negotiations are upon us, now is the time for a meaningful deal that preserves the complex and delicate relationships developed between manufacturers in the EU, their non-EU trading partners which are part of a Customs Union, and the UK.

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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.