

11th Meeting of the

EU DAG under the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA)

19 June 2024, 14:30-17:30

Short note after meeting for EU DAG members

Main takeaways of meeting

1. The 11th meeting of the EU DAG set up under the EU-UK TCA was dedicated to updates on recent activities, members' presentations on pressing ongoing issues, structured dialogue with the Commission, followed by an internal discussion on the next steps towards September's joint meetings and beyond.
2. The Chair of the EU DAG, Ms. Luisa Santos, provided an overview of meetings held in the spring between the EU and UK DAG presidencies/secretariats and a dedicated meeting of the EU DAG Chair and Vice chairs with DG Trade, with regards to the preparations for the joint meetings in September. The Chair expressed concerns about the EU-UK CSF 2024 conversation and the need for better communication and engagement with DG Trade and other stakeholders. The Chair also recalled the participation of EU DAG Presidency in the inquiry into the TCA organised by the Scottish Parliament on June 6th.
3. Group I's presentation focused on CBAM and the concerns that the UK's CBAM scheme may potentially not align with the EU's, creating trade barriers. Emphasis was placed on aligning methodologies for emissions calculation and covered sectors, and monitoring the impact of UK elections on policy options. DG Trade shared these concerns and stressed the EU's scheme's transition period.
4. Group II's presentation covered included employment tribunal fees, P&O redundancies, and regulations allowing agency workers to replace strikers. Concerns were shared about UK's plans to weaken Transfer of Undertakings (TUPE) protections and remove the European Works Council Directive. DG Trade noted that the employment tribunal fees issue was not on their radar, and reassured on the ongoing monitoring of the UK's legislative activities.
5. Group III's presentation expressed support for the sand eel proposal and disappointment with the EU's handling of the matter. DG Trade stated that the UK's ban on sand eel fishing is incompatible with the TCA but as this is the first such dispute under the TCA, it needs careful handling. The role of the EU DAG in this and future disputes was highlighted. Group III also advocated for banning live animal exports and improving animal welfare standards. DG Trade pointed out the short distance between EU and UK and suggested raising the issue within domestic legislation frameworks. The DAG referred to its special role in any dispute case as foreseen in the TCA framework.
6. Mr Ignacio Iruarrizaga Diez and Ms Laura Pastor from DG Trade invited members to provide additional input for their work in the Trade Specialised Committees on various topics, including VAT Protocol, Public Procurement, Technical Barriers to Trade, and more. Updates were provided on UK parliamentary activities, data protection bills, and issues such as the Entry and Exit System (EES) and Not-for-EU labelling.
7. Concerning the upcoming DAG to DAG and CSF meetings scheduled for September 19-20, the members agreed with the Chair's proposal to identify priority issues for the joint statement and discussions, as well as to explore the possibility of either establishing a working structure on the model of the UK DAG's one, or identifying volunteers to lead on specific topics and develop the Group's positions. The DAG agreed on a Presidency subgroup focussing on the TCA's 2026 review.