

7th Meeting of the
EU DAG under the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA)
21 June 2023, 14:30-17:30

Short note after meeting for EU DAG members

Main takeaways of meeting

1. The 7th meeting of the EU DAG set up under the EU-UK TCA was dedicated to updates, exchange of views on the annual TCA Implementation Report, members' presentations and structured dialogue with the Commission, followed by a discussion with members.
2. The Chair of the EU DAG, Ms Tanja Buzek, provided an overview of her recent engagements as chair and their outcomes. This included her presentation to the UK Delegation to the PPA in London on 22 May 2023, participation in the Joint Public Hearing organized by EP AFET and INTA Committees on the TCA Implementation on 25 May 2023, meeting with EU Ambassador to UK, as well as the some EU Delegation Counsellors, in London, meeting with the UK DAG Vice-Chairs on 12 June 2023, meeting with the UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office on 12 June 2023 to prepare for the Civil Society Forum) scheduled for 7 November 2023, and meeting with Ms Laura Ericson to discuss the preparation of the CSF hosted by the UK in London.
3. Stefan Fuehring, Head of Unit responsible for the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement at Secretariat General at the European Commission briefly presented the work of his unit, He then gave updates on the TCA:
 - The governance framework of the TCA is complete;
 - The implementation for the TCA works generally very well; where it does not, it is largely linked with the UK's non-compliance with requirements in 2021;
 - 2022 was a year of announcements rather than actions in the UK. 2022 was a politically complex year with the UK government still spreading messages in support of Brexit;
 - Two years after the transition period, the UK sees the "costs of non-Europe", as trade in goods and services has returned to 2019 levels, though EU-UK trade is much less dynamic and develops less dynamically than with other countries;
 - Figures on migration and visa free travel: in 2021 show that 34 000 work visas were granted by the UK for EU nationals (excluding Ireland).
4. Ms Elena Crasta presented the developments of both the Retained EU Law Bill and Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill, as they are both close to becoming laws. She then presented the state of play of working time and holiday pay, as well as collective redundancies. On the Retained EU law Bill, Ms Crasta reminded that the Bill originally intended to scrap EU-derived employment rights at the end of 2023 via a 'sunset clause'. This clause is now on hold thanks to pressure, especially but not exclusively from trade unions, working together.

5. Ignacio Iruarrizaga Diez, Head of Unit responsible for Europe and Eastern Neighbourhood (TRADE.E.1) at the European Commission Diez gave an update of the upcoming timing of the various Trade Specialised Committee meetings.
6. Laura Pastor, Policy Officer in the Europe and Eastern Neighbourhood (TRADE.E.1) at the European Commission presented the latest developments on the Retained EU Law Bill. She communicated that the bill is now in a "ping-pong" phase in the UK Parliament. The aim of the Bill is to remove from UK legal framework the retained EU law to avoid regulatory gaps in the UK. The Bill covers nearly 4000 retained EU legal acts still applicable in the UK.
7. Members followed up with questions and concerns over data privacy in the Retained EU Law Bill, climate, food and drinks market, fair competition, customs reform in the EU, CBAM, services and data protection, deforestation, labour standards, and the balance between natural divergence and necessary cooperation. Ms Pastor reassured that the Commission's priority is the full and proper implementation of the TCA, and a continued and constructive cooperation with the UK. She thanked the DAG for the contribution and encouraged to keep up with the monitoring and sharing effort.
8. Mr Iruarrizaga Diez responded by highlighting that the UK is having a public consultation on a "UK CBAM", that the TCA implementation is running relatively smoothly, also requesting more info on the data question. He added that he would be available to reply to any subsequently received additional questions.