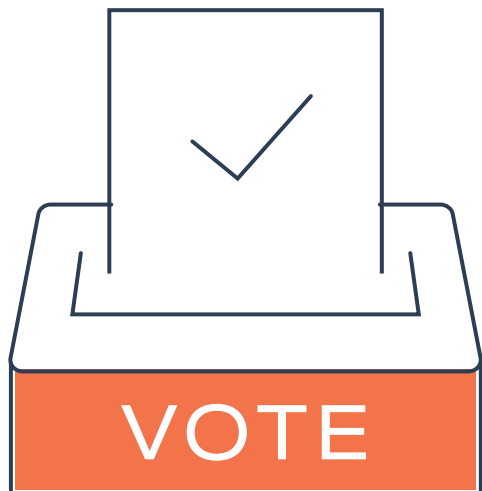




A Trade Model That Works for Everyone



A Trade Governance Model That Works for Everyone



Context

In today's world, trade policy influences all areas of public policy, regardless of the form Brexit takes. It means we need the United Kingdom to establish a robust modern, inclusive and democratic governance model to oversee trade policy that has broad legitimacy in society and produces policy priorities that are also a balance of socioeconomic priorities.

A modern governance model needs to put a stronger emphasis on consensus building and accountability, to develop trust, and enable decisions to be made in a more inclusive and transparent manner. This does not mean there will not be compromises during the negotiation process itself but it does mean these compromises are made with full knowledge of stakeholders and with them feeling their contributions are really heard and fully considered to ensure more buy-in to the results. Trust built early on will deliver faster results later in the process.

This governance framework is intended to act as a practical tool for national and international policy makers – to guide best practice and help governments deliver on global commitments to ensure trade policy is truly inclusive and fully benefits from the active participation and expertise of all stakeholders. The framework incorporates the following principles:

Consensus Building

- **All stakeholder groups must be consulted at all stages of the process** – this includes large and small business, unions, NGOs, devolved administrations and civil society.
- **Multi-stakeholder forums** – dialogue between representative constituencies is an essential step to building trust, problem solving and decision making. Active effort is needed to include the voices of marginalised groups.
- **Stakeholder representatives working alongside trade negotiators** – to enable decision making that maximises benefits and minimises unintended consequences including business, unions, NGOs, devolved administrations and civil society.
- **A mandate agreed by parliament in advance of negotiations** – setting out the guidelines and red lines for trade talks, which are publicly available and which require amendment by parliament to materially change.

Transparency

- **Evidence-based decision making** — consultations, surveys, evidence based impact assessments, and policy papers looking at all aspects of a trade deal including social, economic, environmental, gender, human rights, labour, development and regional aspects. These should be produced and published in good time to be useful to stakeholders and decision makers as consultative processes proceed and, as appropriate, produced and published in advance of key milestones like mandate preparation and consent by Parliament. Materials produced must fully incorporate the impacts and benefits for devolved administrations.
- **Accessible information** — a single source for all information that is public to make it easier for stakeholders to engage constructively and to help ensure all voices can feel included and to work from a common baseline.
- **A presumption of transparency for all negotiating texts** — with clear and detailed explanation for anything that's been withheld. All texts to be open to MPs. One element should be the publication of offers made to counterparties, with explanatory memoranda to give relevant context, as soon as possible after they are tabled, understanding that it may be necessary to preserve negotiating room to wait to publish until after the negotiating round where the offer is made.

Democratic Oversight

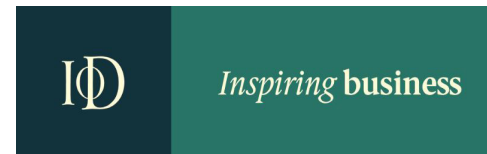
- **A parliamentary committee which will follow the negotiations** — take evidence and scrutinise progress, and which negotiators have a duty to keep informed at all stages, in sufficient time for their views to be taken into account in each stage of the negotiations.
- **A guaranteed debate and vote to ratify the deal** — in both UK parliamentary chambers after the agreement is finalised and without which it may not enter into force.
- **Involvement of the devolved administrations and legislatures** — throughout the process including their full involvement in the processes of mandate preparation, oversight and approval.
- **Fair, transparent dispute resolution** — government should apply dispute resolution mechanisms that are transparent, fair and balanced, so far as the interests of the UK, its public policy, workers, taxpayers and investors are concerned.

Net Benefit to All

- **A holistic approach** — evaluation of agreements cannot be measured on the net benefit of each agreement in economic terms alone. While the perceived economic benefits are usually the main driver of trade agreements, evaluation should also be made of broader socioeconomic priorities including promoting decently paid jobs, labour and environmental standards, protecting public services, addressing inequality, including gender and regional inequality and international obligations on human rights norms and priorities of society, including International Labour Standards and Sustainable Development Goals. Ensuring trade policy does not undermine the government's ability to fulfil its existing obligations in these areas or to undertake new commitments and action should itself be the object of a consultative process involving stakeholders and the Parliament.
- **Credible mitigation plans in place** — we need to acknowledge that sometimes costs will outweigh benefits and not everything can be mitigated against but for trade to benefit everyone, citizens and employees negatively impacted should always have a clear path, relevant support and adequate resources to migrate to decent employment that is fairly paid. Where necessary, active mitigation plans should be considered by Parliament.

Supporters

A 'Trade Governance Model That Works for Everyone' is supported by an informal alliance of the following organisations.



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