

1. Opening remarks and adoption of the agenda

The fifth Trade Specialised Committee on Regulatory Cooperation under the UK-EU Trade Cooperation Agreement (TCA) took place in London on 12 November 2025. The UK co-chair welcomed participants to the meeting. Both parties made an opening statement. The provisional agenda, as published, in advance was adopted for the meeting.

2. Overview of respective regulatory programmes

The second agenda item provided the opportunity for both parties to present high level updates on their respective regulatory programmes and initiatives.

The EU updated on and presented an overview of the 2025 and 2026 Commission work programmes. The EU presented the highlights of the 2025 work programme, adopted in February 2025, mentioning that 73% of the planned actions had already been adopted, emphasising simplification through omnibus proposals. The EU also gave a brief overview of the 2026 work programme, adopted in October 2025, explaining its policy focus and the key new legislative initiatives, of which more than half have a strong simplification dimension. **The EU also presented on the EU Single Strategy** adopted in May 2025 which aims to eliminate key barriers. The EU explained that the focus of the Strategy is on the most harmful barriers in the Single Market – the so-called Terrible Ten, as well as on services markets, simplification, SME support, digitalisation, and enforcement. The Single Market Roadmap to 2028 will offer an opportunity to reinforce the actions of the Strategy.

The UK Government presented its Regulatory Action Plan which aims to cut administrative costs by 25%, (£5.6 billion annually), by the end of this Parliament. The UK has established a baseline administrative burden of £22.4 billion per year in 2024 prices, and £1.5 billion in gross annual savings have already been identified. The UK explained that reforms cover planning, corporate reporting, financial services, and AI innovation. Additionally, **the UK presented its Better Regulation Framework.** The UK explained that the 2023 system for understanding the impacts of new regulation introduces independent scrutiny earlier in the policymaking process with options assessments, broader impact reviews, a household impact metric, and stronger focus on regulatory alternatives and post-implementation monitoring.

3. Regulatory support for SMEs and small mid-caps

On the third agenda item, both parties updated and discussed regulatory support for small businesses and small mid-caps.

The EU presented an update on providing regulatory support for small businesses. The EU mentioned that it is aiming to deliver an overall 25% reduction of administrative burden by the end of the current mandate, and at least 35% for SMEs. The EU explained that the Commission has adopted six omnibus proposals and other simplification proposals also introducing a number of measures benefiting SMEs and helping them do business (by the end of 2025, the Commission has put forward ten such omnibus proposals). These measures include for instance reporting exemptions, digitalisation, streamlined rules, and financial support. The EU provided an overview of the new **Small Mid-Caps category** (<750 employees and turnover up to €150M) introduced in May 2025 to support SME growth. The EU finally shared that other actions to simplify the business environment for SMEs in the single market strategy include the SME ID Tool – an online self-declaration for SME status and the SME Check – a mandatory annex in impact assessments to highlight impact of the upcoming legislative proposal on SMEs.

The UK presented the **UK Government Plan for Small and Medium sized businesses and UK's SME growth strategy** which focuses on finance, skills, and regulatory support. The UK provided an overview of the SME plan "Backing Your Business" published this year. The UK explained that the plan addresses key challenges by introducing a comprehensive growth strategy and includes measures such as late payment legislation with a 60-day limit, expanded start-up loans through the British Business Bank, and a new Business Growth Service platform to consolidate support. The UK mentioned that additional initiatives include the "Help to Grow" programme, a Digital Adoption Task Force to promote AI and technology uptake, and local growth hubs offering face-to-face business support.

Both parties echoed priorities for SMEs such as access to finance, reduced administrative burden, growth beyond start-up, digitalisation and innovation.

4. Regulatory and administrative simplification

Regarding the fourth point on the agenda, both parties discussed their respective approaches to administrative and regulatory simplification.

The EU presented its approach to administrative and regulatory simplification and provided an overview of the elements of its simplification approach, indicating that it has adopted an integrated, system-wide approach to legislative simplification, focusing on both the stock and flow of regulations and briefly explained its approach. The EU mentioned that this comprehensive strategy for simplification, based on cutting red tape and thorough stress testing of the EU acquis is also supported by new consultation tools with stakeholder such as implementation dialogues with each Member of the College and reality checks at technical level.

The UK presented the UK Government approach to administrative and regulatory simplification. The UK explained that it had established a baseline administrative burden of £22.4 billion per year and this target builds on a methodology that includes a Business Perception Survey and adjustments to historical baselines for inflation and GDP. The UK mentioned that the aim will be to reduce administrative burden by £5.6 billion by the end of this Parliament. The UK shared that the government has already identified and announced £1.5 billion in gross annual savings for UK businesses which will be achieved through measures such as modernising corporate reporting requirements reforming the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA) data processes, and modernising charity law. The UK explained that similar to the EU stress testing, each UK Government Department will review its stock of regulation. The UK provided an overview on other priorities and focus areas which will include Competition reform, strengthening Growth Duty for regulators, Retail sector regulatory review and Roadmap for commercial drones. The commercial drone sector is expected to contribute up to £66 billion to UK Growth by 2027.

Both parties acknowledged progress in reducing administrative burdens and aligned on scope for future collaboration.

5. UK Government Modern Industrial Strategy and new Trade Strategy

On agenda item five, the UK presented key highlights and an overview of the **UK Government's Modern Industrial Strategy and new Trade Strategy**. The UK set out that the Industrial Strategy published in June 2025 is targeting eight growth-driving sectors which are in Advanced Manufacturing, Clean Energy industries, Creative Industries, Defence, Digital and Technologies, Financial Services, Life Sciences, Professional and Business services. The UK explained that the

Industrial Strategy features more than 30 regulatory changes planned to cut administrative costs by 25% and which will ensure regulation supports fast-growing sectors like AI.

The UK also presented on the UK Government's Trade Strategy which marks a reset in the UK Government's approach to international trade, and which is focused on partnership and targeted business benefits. The UK explained that with trade making up about 60% of the UK GDP, the trade strategy targets government actions that support business growth abroad and security in the UK. As part of the Trade Strategy, the UK presented an overview of its International Regulatory Cooperation (IRC) programme in India, Indonesia, Brazil and the Ricardo Fund which is empowering UK regulators and overseas teams to tackle complex regulatory issues, shape international standards, and remove obstacles for British businesses selling abroad.

6. Approaches to regulating emerging technologies

On the last point of the agenda, both parties discussed their respective regulatory approaches to regulating emerging technologies.

On emerging technologies, **the EU presented the Startup and Scaleup Strategy** which sets out 26 legislative, regulatory and financial measures across priority areas such as fostering innovation friendly regulation, boosting funding, attracting and retaining talent, commercialisation and ensuring access to infrastructures and services. The EU has adopted a comprehensive EU wide approach to the strategy to steer the initiative and ensure consistency and coherence. **The EU informed that the EU Innovation Act** is currently under development and is expected to be adopted in Q1/2026 as a sector-agnostic legislative proposal aiming to simplify the framework conditions for startups, scaleups and innovative companies to make Europe the place where innovation can grow without barriers.

Finally, the UK presented the Regulation Innovation Office (RIO) and provided updates since its establishment in October 2024. The UK shared the key actions which have included scaling Innovation, undertaking impact assessment and leadership to drive innovation-friendly regulation. Priority areas for the UK were further discussed e.g Space, Drones, AI in Health, and Engineering Biology. **The UK indicated that the Regulatory Horizons Council (RHC)** plays an advisory role providing expert advice on technology regulation. In addition, the UK mentioned the funding mechanisms in place to support emerging technology projects such as the Regulators' Pioneer Fund (RPF) and the AI Capability Fund.

7. Wrap up and conclusions

The Co-Chairs acknowledged the productive exchange and commonalities on a number of issues and re-affirmed their shared objective of reducing regulatory burdens. In light of this constructive engagement, the UK indicated openness for technical discussions where of mutual interests, with outcomes to be reported to this committee.

Participation list

UK Delegation

- UK Co-chair of the Trade Specialised Committee on Regulatory Cooperation
- UK Government Officials (Department for Business and Trade, Department for Science Innovation and Technology, Cabinet Office)
- UK Government Officials from the UK Mission to the European Union
- Scottish Government Officials
- Northern Ireland Executive Officials
- Welsh Government Officials

EU delegation

- EU Co-chair of the Trade Specialised Committee on Goods
- European Commission Officials (TRADE, SecGen, GROW, RTD)
- EU Officials from Delegation of the European Union to the UK
- Representatives of EU Member States

The 5th Trade Specialised Committee on Regulatory Cooperation under the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement

Agenda

London, Wednesday 12 November

09:30am to 2:10pm (GMT), 10:30am to 3:10pm (CET).

1. Introduction/opening session
2. Overview of respective regulatory programmes
3. Regulatory support for small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) and small mid-caps
4. Regulatory and administrative simplification
5. UK's modern Industrial Strategy and new Trade Strategy
6. Approaches to regulating emerging technologies
7. Any other business/closing remarks