Department for
Business & Trade

Information Note on Deepening the UK's Trade Relationship with Uruguay

July 2026

Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 Consultation on UK Trade Relationships

This consultation is to inform UK priorities in potential trade negotiations with

- Indonesia
- The Philippines
- United Arab Emirates (UAE)
- Uruguay

The UK is exploring how its trading relationships with these economies could be deepened.

CPTPP Parties, including the UK, established an Accession Working Group with Uruguay in 2025, and on 26 June 2026, CPTPP Parties announced the start of preparatory discussions on accession with Indonesia, The Philippines and the UAE. Uruguay's Accession Working Group is now well underway, with meetings scheduled throughout 2026.

The Government therefore wants to hear respondents' views on the opportunities, priorities and considerations associated with deepening the UK's trading relationships with these economies. CPTPP accession represents the most likely route to deepening trading relationships with the majority of them, but the consultation does not assume a single route and also invites views on other appropriate trade policy mechanisms, including bilateral free trade agreements where applicable and relevant.

1.2 Trade with Uruguay

The purpose of this Information Note is to provide information and data related to **the UK's trade relationship with Uruguay**. It is intended to be used by the public to help inform any consultation responses that they may have to the questions posed as part of the upcoming call for input on the future of the UK's trade relationships, which will open on 14th July 2026.

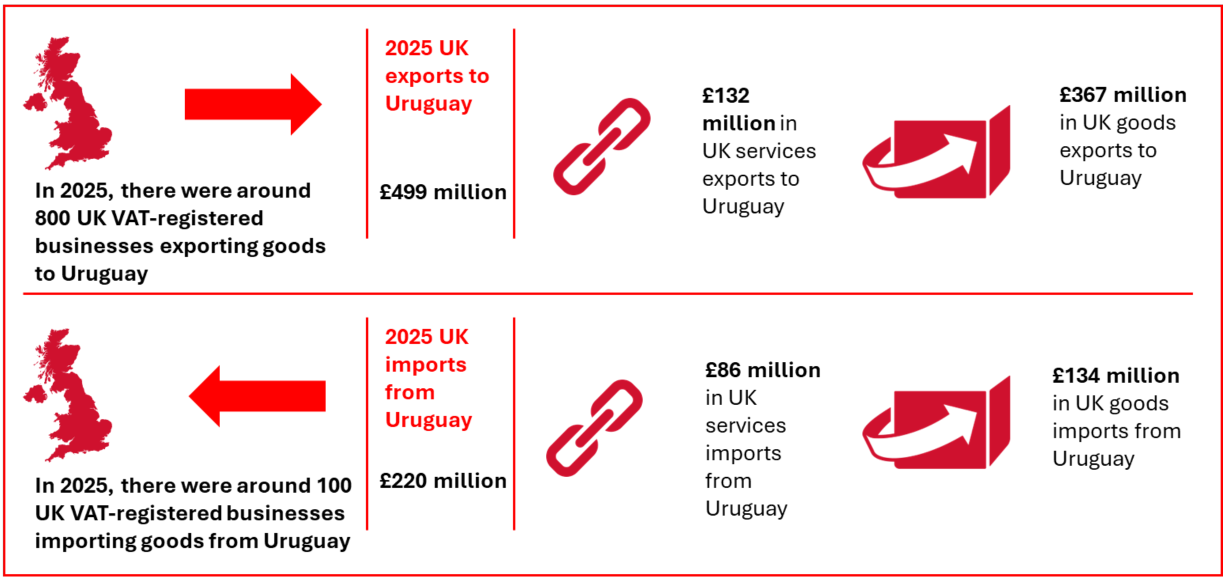
Uruguay is a member of Mercosur, the Southern Common Market - a South American trade bloc established in 1991. The other members of Mercosur are Argentina, Bolivia (as of July 2024), Brazil, and Paraguay. Venezuela is a full member of Mercosur but has been suspended from the bloc since 1st December 2016.

On 21st November 2025, CPTPP Parties announced they would commence an accession process with Uruguay.

The UK is party to CPTPP alongside Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam.

Figure 1: Goods and services trade between the UK and Uruguay, 2025

2025 Total UK trade in goods and services with Uruguay £719 million



Sources: [ONS, UK total trade: all countries seasonally adjusted data](#) (Apr 2026). HMRC data source for Regional Trade Statistics business counts data: [UK trade in goods statistics](#) (Mar 2026). Note: Number of VAT registered business exports/imports only relates to businesses trading in goods and therefore excludes any businesses that only trade in services. Trade figures have been rounded to the nearest £5 million.

1.3 Executive Summary

This Information Note brings together data to support informed and evidence–based submissions to the call for input regarding the future of the UK's trade relationship with Uruguay.

The information presented summarises the current trade and investment relationship between the UK and Uruguay. It outlines economic profiles and trade flows between the UK and Uruguay detailing goods, services, imports and exports. It includes analysis about trade and investment restrictions alongside a high-level breakdown of goods tariffs from the UK's Most-Favoured-Nation (MFN) schedule.

Feedback submitted will inform the UK's approach to trade with Uruguay and it is the aim of this call for input to encourage as wide a range of participants as possible.

A response can be submitted here: [Call for Input on Deepening the UK's Trade Relationships](#) and the questionnaire closes on 14th September 2026.

2. UK-Uruguay Trade Relationship

2.1 Overview of Economic Profiles

In 2025, Uruguay had a gross domestic product (GDP) of £64.9 bn.[1] Total trade with the world (imports plus exports) is equal to 42% of GDP for Uruguay and 59% of GDP for the UK.[2]

Table 1: Headline economic indicators for the UK, Uruguay and CPTPP, 2025

Economic indicator	GDP (£billion)	GDP per capita (£)	Population (millions)	Trade (% of GDP)
Uruguay	65	18,618	3	42
UK	3,036	43,692	69	59
CPTPP plus Uruguay	12,937	21,510	601	63

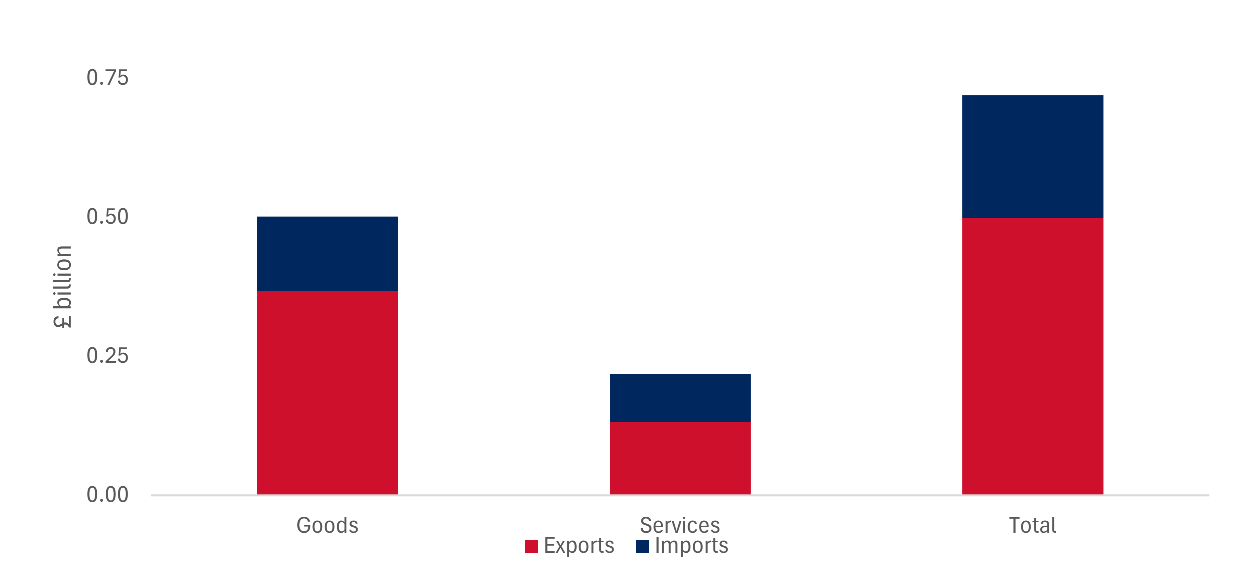
Source: IMF World Economic Outlook Database, (April 2026). UNCTAD, Goods and Services (BPM6): Exports and imports of goods and services (April 2026).

2.2 Trade Flows between the UK and Uruguay

Uruguay is the UK's 99th largest trading partner, accounting for less than 0.1% of total UK trade in 2025. Total trade in goods and services between the UK and Uruguay was £719 million in 2025. As seen in Figure 2, UK exports to Uruguay were £499 million in 2025, accounting for less than 0.1% of all UK exports. UK imports from Uruguay were £220 million over the same period, accounting for less than 0.1% of all UK imports.[3]

[1] IMF, World Economic Outlook Database (Apr 2026); Bank of England, Average annual spot exchange rates (Dec 2025).
[2] UNCTAD, Goods and Services (BPM6): Exports and imports of goods and services (Aug 2025).
[3] ONS, UK total trade: all countries seasonally adjusted data (Mar 2026)

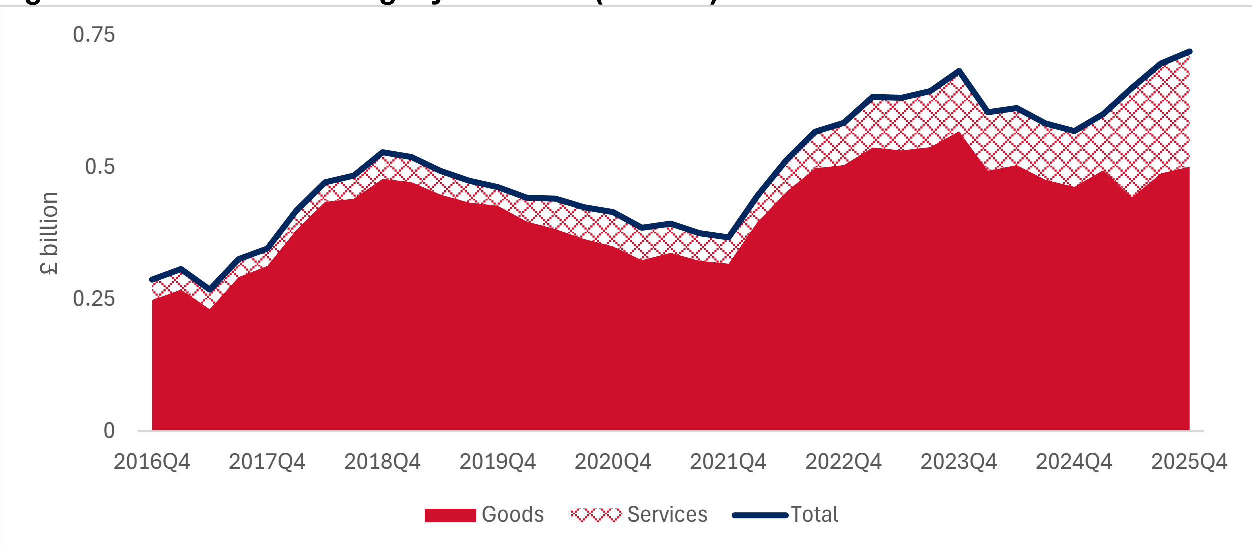
Figure 2: Trade between the UK and Uruguay, 2025 (£ billion)



Source: ONS, [UK total trade: all countries seasonally adjusted data]() (Jan 2026).

Figure 3 shows how UK trade with Uruguay has evolved since 2016, broken down by goods and services. UK trade with Uruguay has more than doubled in current prices from 2016-2025, from around £0.3 billion to around £0.7 billion.

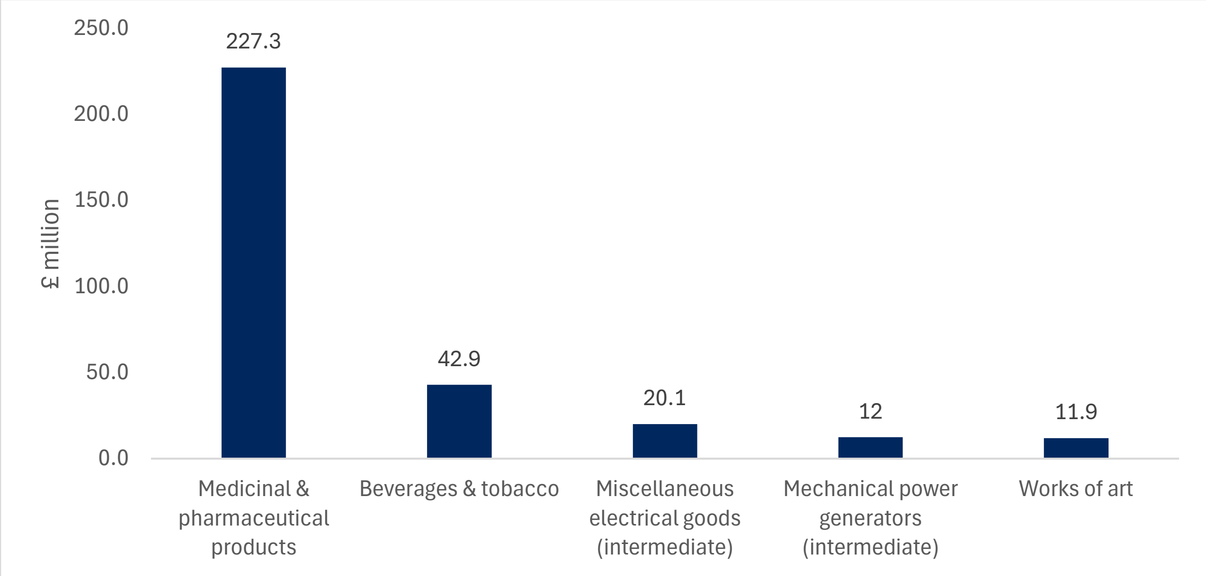
Figure 3: UK trade with Uruguay over time (£ billion)



Source: ONS, [UK total trade: all countries seasonally adjusted data]() (Apr 2026).

The UK's main export to Uruguay in 2025 was medicinal & pharmaceutical products (£227.3 million), followed by beverages & tobacco (£42.9 million), and Miscellaneous electrical goods (intermediate) (£20.1 million). These categories made up 79% of all goods exports to Uruguay. The top five UK goods exported to Uruguay in 2025 are shown in Figure 4.

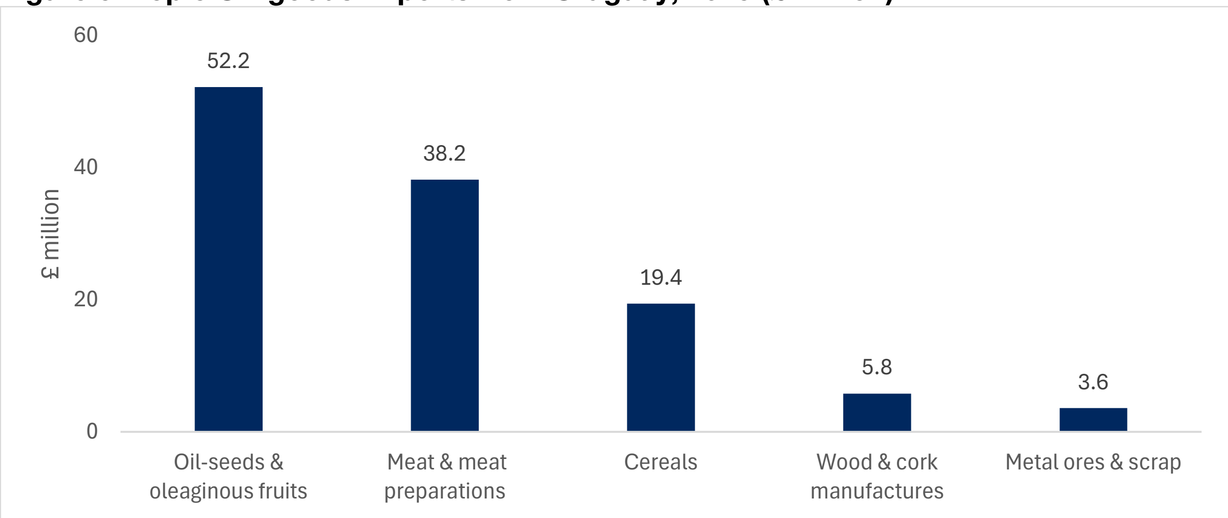
Figure 4: Top 5 UK goods exports to Uruguay, 2025 (£ million)



Source: ONS, [Trade in goods: country-by-commodity, non-seasonally adjusted,](#) (Apr 2026). The commodities are categorised based on SITC codes using level 2 and 3 codes.

The UK's top three goods imported from Uruguay in 1 2025 were oil-seeds & oleaginous fruits (£52.2 million), meat & meat preparations (£38.2 million), and cereals (£19.4 million). These categories account for 82% of all UK goods imports from Uruguay.[4]

Figure 5: Top 5 UK goods imports from Uruguay, 2025 (£ million)



Source: ONS, [Trade in goods: country-by-commodity, non-seasonally adjusted](#) (Apr 2026). The commodities are categorised based on SITC codes using level 2 and 3 codes.

[4] ONS, [Trade in goods: country-by-commodity, non-seasonally adjusted](#) (Jan 2026). The commodities are categorised based on SITC codes using level 2 and 3 codes.

Figure 6: UK regional trade in goods with Uruguay, 2025 (£ million)

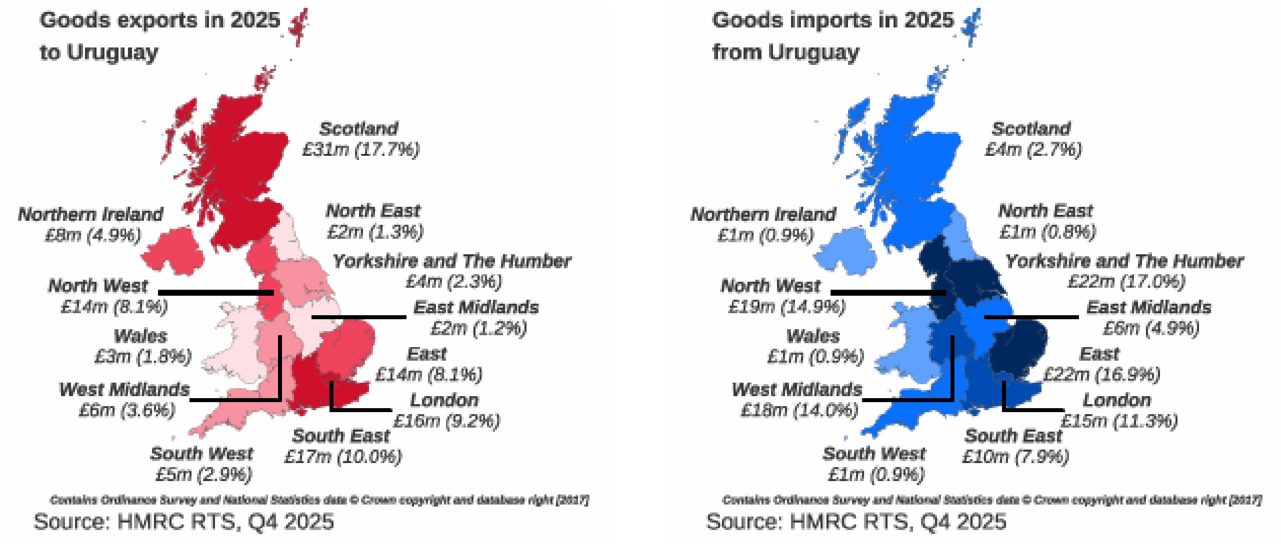


Figure 6 shows the value of UK goods exports and imports between each UK region and Uruguay in 2025. Scotland (£31m or 17.7%), the South East of England (£17 million or 10%) and London (£16 million or 9.2%) accounted for the largest shares of goods exports destined for Uruguay. For goods imported from Uruguay, Yorkshire and The Humber (£22m or 17.0%), the East of England (£22 million or 16.9%) and London (£10 million or 9.7%) accounted for the largest shares.[5]

2.3 Basis of the Current Trade Relationship

2.3.1 Goods Market Access Between the UK and Uruguay

In 2025, Uruguay was the UK's 87th largest goods trading partner and the 73rd largest goods export market.[6]

The UK and Uruguay currently trade under MFN terms. A simple average applied tariff is a numerical average of all tariff rates applied by a partner country. A trade weighted average tariff accounts for the proportion of trade on those tariff lines.

Under Uruguay's MFN tariff schedule, 27% of tariff lines are already subject to a zero MFN tariff. The simple average applied MFN tariff rate across all goods in Uruguay was 9% in 2024. UK exports faced a trade-weighted average tariff of

[5]HMRC data source for regional UK trade data: HMRC Regional Trade Statistics – 2025 annual (Mar 2026, data extracted from the spreadsheet download using the HMRC interactive tables). Totals presented will differ from overall HMRC trade figures due to the exclusion of trade in non-monetary gold and non-response estimates and the exclusion of data not allocated to a UK country or region. Figures from HMRC were reported on a physical movement basis and are not directly comparable to trade data from ONS which are reported on a change of ownership basis. Percentages will not total 100% as data not allocated to a single UK country or English region are not presented.
[6] DBT, Trade and Investment Factsheet: Uruguay (May 2026).

9.1%.[7] Examples of key UK exports facing high MFN tariffs with Uruguay include whiskies (18%), and engines (18%).

In 2025, under the current UK Global Tariff (UKGT) schedule, 47% of tariff lines are already subjected to zero MFN tariff. The simple average applied tariff rate of the UKGT was 5.1% across all goods in 2025. UK imports from Uruguay faced a trade-weighted average tariff of 15.2% in 2025.[8] Top UK imports from Uruguay subjected to UKGT tariffs include beef (12% + £254/100kg), rice (£2.50 / 100kg), and wood (6%).

2.3.2 Services Relationship between UK and Uruguay

The OECD's Services Trade Restrictiveness Index (STRI) is not available for Uruguay, so the World Bank's STRI has been used instead to gauge Uruguay's level of services trade restrictiveness. The STRI measures regulatory barriers to services trade, with higher scores indicating greater restrictiveness. While the STRI does not provide an economy-wide score for Uruguay, it does offer a sector-by-sector breakdown for 2022, which helps illustrate how restrictions vary across different service industries.

Across all major services sector categories[9], Uruguay's STRI scores were lower than the global average, with the exception of the distribution sector, where its restrictiveness exceeded the world average (of the countries analysed in the World Bank database). Computer and related services, construction and related engineering services, and professional services are Uruguay's services sectors with the lowest scores, meaning they are the least restrictive sectors compared to the world average.

In the 2025, Uruguay was the UK's 113th largest services trading partner and the 109th largest services export market. In this period, UK services exports to Uruguay were led by other business services, which was valued at £90 million. This was followed by telecommunications, computer and information services (£13 million) and intellectual property (£7 million).

Trade in services between the UK and Uruguay is governed by their respective commitments under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), which sets out the baseline level of access and treatment guaranteed to all members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

[7] WTO, WTO Tariff & Trade Data (2024 data, accessed July 2026).
[8] DBT calculations using 2025 HMRC annual imports by preference (accessed July 2026) and DBT tariff estimates. This does not account for TRQs and may therefore differ from tariffs faced where reduced in-quota MFN rates apply.
[9] The STRI breakdown covers a wide set of service industries, including professional, computer, communications, construction, distribution, financial, health, tourism, and transport services.

UK services imports from Uruguay were led by Other Business Services (£37 million) in 2025, alongside intellectual property (£24 million) and by telecommunications, computer and information services (£22 million).

Temporary Entry between the UK and Uruguay

Currently, the UK and Uruguay's trade relationship for Temporary Entry is governed by respective commitments in GATS. Uruguay's commitments on Temporary Entry within GATS covers managers, specialists, and executives under the category of Intra-Corporate Transferees.

2.3.3 Investment between the UK and Uruguay

Commitments on commercial presence (mode 3 services) with Uruguay are governed by GATS, which sets out the baseline level of access and treatment guaranteed to all WTO members.

The UK has a Bilateral Investment Treaty in force with Uruguay, which helps ensure fair treatment for investors, including rules to prevent unlawful expropriation.

In 2024 the stock of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from the UK in Uruguay was £217 million. This accounted for less than 0.01% of the UK's total outward FDI stock.[10]

The OECD FDI Restrictiveness Index highlights that Uruguay's investment environment has remained unchanged between 2018 and 2023. 'Foreign equity limits' continues to be the most restrictive area for UK investors, which are limitations on the level of foreign ownership allowed in a company within a particular sector. This is followed by 'restrictions on key foreign personnel'. The 'water transport and related auxiliary activities' sector is most restrictive to FDI, followed by the 'air transport and related auxiliary activities' and 'programming and broadcasting activities' sectors.[11]

2.3.4 Government Procurement in Uruguay

Uruguay is not a member of the WTO Agreement on Government Procurement, and the UK has no existing international trade commitments on government procurement with Uruguay.

According to the WTO Secretariat's 2018 report, Uruguay's government procurement market was valued at £2.9bn in 2017. Over the same period, the number of contracts was more than 66,000. Open tendering remained the most commonly used procurement method, and services represented the largest

[10] ONS, Data related to Foreign direct investment involving UK companies (Jan 2026).
[11] OECD, FDI Regulatory Restrictiveness Index (Oct 2025).

spending category.[12] In 2024, Uruguay's government expenditure accounted for 31.1% of national GDP.[13]

2.3.5 Labour Commitments in the UK and Uruguay

There are currently no bilateral arrangements in place between the UK and Uruguay relating to labour standards.

Through their membership of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the UK and Uruguay have committed to uphold internationally recognised labour rights in their domestic laws. These include rights relating to freedom of association, the elimination of forced and child labour, the elimination of discrimination in employment, and a safe and healthy working environment. The UK has ratified eight of the ten ILO Fundamental Conventions; Uruguay has ratified ten.

2.3.6 Environmental Commitments in the UK and Uruguay

There are currently no bilateral arrangements between the UK and Uruguay on environmental protections and standards.

The UK and Uruguay both participate in the WTO's environment-related plurilaterals including the Trade and Environmental Sustainability Structured Discussions, the Dialogue on Plastics Pollution and the Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform Initiative. The UK and Uruguay are both party to core Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs) including the Paris Agreement on climate change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Flora and Fauna, the Basel Convention on hazardous waste and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, and the Montreal Protocol on ozone-depleting substances.

[12] WTO, Trade Policy Review: Uruguay (May 2018). GBP figures calculated by DBT using Bank of England annual average spot exchange rate and GDP deflators at market prices (Dec 2025).
[13] IMF, Government Expenditure, Percent of GDP – 2024 annual (Dec 2025).

3. Questions for Stakeholders

This call for input forms part of the Department for Business and Trade’s work to consider its approach to future trade policy. It asks for views on deepening the UK’s trade relationships with Uruguay plus three other economies – Indonesia, the Philippines and the United Arab Emirates.

Respondents will have the option to choose which economies from the above list they would like to submit views on.

For each economy the respondent chooses to submit views on, the survey asks two main questions:

1. What issues would you like us to consider regarding deepening the UK's trade relationship with this economy?

2. Based on your selection(s) in the previous question, please provide further detail on why you think the UK Government should consider these issues, regarding deepening the UK’s trade relationship with this economy?

With this in mind, responses to this call for input could highlight:

- Challenges or constraints when trading or investing in Uruguay, and if so, what are these challenges and constraints, and how significant is the impact on your business activity?

- How would you expect your business to respond if restrictions were removed on trade or investment with Uruguay? For example, might you look to increase trade and investment or attract increased trade and investment from Uruguay?

- Are there any areas where you see opportunities from increased liberalisation of trade between the UK and Uruguay?

- Are there any areas where you would have concerns about increased liberalisation of trade between the UK and Uruguay?

4. Drafting a Response to the Questions

The Department for Business and Trade (DBT) is committed to delivering benefits across the UK.

The responses to this call for input will help inform the UK's strategy and positions for engaging with Uruguay and so it is important that you set out your priorities in your response.

Prior to submitting your response, we encourage you to talk to a range of experts in your organisation to understand the full picture of current trading priorities.

Where it is relevant, we welcome the inclusion of figures, data and evidence to illustrate the examples you give in your response. More detailed answers will help the UK to best understand your needs. Further, we are keen to ensure consideration is given to those with characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 as part of this questionnaire.

Once you have answered several questions to tell us who you represent, this call for input provides the opportunity to provide information in three ways:

1. You will be able to answer the questionnaire
2. You may submit your own evidence directly.
3. You will also have the option to complete both the questionnaire and submit your own evidence.

Please follow the link to see the questions: [Call for Input on Deepening the UK's Trade Relationships]

The questionnaire should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete and closes on 14th September 2026.

5. Conclusion

This Information Note has presented data about the UK and Uruguay's trade relationship. It does not interpret the data and is available for respondents to the call for input to use this in their analysis if they wish to do so.

Respondents can also refer to experiences and insights from other sources to support their submission. The more detail that can be provided the better as this enables a more informed UK approach to trade with Uruguay. Ideas for what to include in a response have been provided in Section 4 of this document.

The UK Government encourages feedback from as wide a range of stakeholders as possible.

A response to the call for input can be submitted here: Call for Input on Deepening the UK's Trade Relationships and the questionnaire closes on 14th September 2026.

6. Glossary

Accession: Becoming party to CPTPP, signing on to its agreements.

Bilateral: Agreement between two parties.

CPTPP: Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership. A trade agreement spanning 12 economies including the UK, which the UK officially acceded to on 15 December 2024. The other 11 Parties to the agreement are Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI): Investment by an entity in a foreign operation, or establishment of a new operation in another country.

GATS: The WTO's General Agreement on Trade in Services.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP): the standard measure of the value added created through the production of goods and services in a country during a certain period.

ILO: International Labour Organization. United Nations agency for promoting labour rights.

Market Access: Conditions set by governments to control which goods or services can or cannot enter their domestic market.

Mercosur: The Southern Common Market. A South American trade bloc established in 1991. The bloc's membership is made up of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. Venezuela is a full member of Mercosur but has been suspended from the bloc since 1 December 2016.

Most-Favoured-Nation (MFN): A non-discrimination principle enshrined in many WTO rules that prohibits a WTO member from treating some WTO members more favourably than others. The MFN obligation requires each WTO member, in its trade with all other WTO members, to give the best ("most-favoured") treatment that it accords in trade with any other WTO member. If, for example, a country lowers tariffs on goods from the GCC, it must also do so on similar goods from Argentina. Exceptions to the MFN principle exist under WTO law, such as in the form of Customs Unions, Free Trade Agreements, Generalized System of Preferences and certain trade remedies. Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) often contain their own MFN commitments between the treaty partners.

Multilateral: Agreement at global or near-global level.

Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA): Binding international agreements for promoting cooperation on environmental issues.

National Treatment: A non-discrimination principle enshrined in many WTO rules that prohibits a WTO member from treating imported goods or foreign services and services suppliers less favourably than domestic goods or services and services suppliers in its domestic market. The national treatment obligation helps ensure imported goods and services are not unfairly disadvantaged compared with their domestic counterparts. Such obligations may also be included in FTAs between the country parties.

OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. An intergovernmental organisation which provides a forum for the promotion of policies which improve economic outcomes.

Party (plural Parties): An economy that has entered into a legally binding agreement.

Plurilateral: Agreement between more than two member states of the World Trade Organization.

Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ): The application of a higher tariff or tax on certain goods once an agreed quota (amount) of imports is reached.

Tariffs: Refers to customs duties on imports of goods, levied either as a percentage of value or on the basis of a formula (e.g. 10 per cent or £7 per 100 kg).

Trade liberalisation: The removal or reduction of restrictions or barriers to trade.

WTO: World Trade Organization. International organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations.

Department for Business and Trade

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