The fifth **Trade Specialised Committee on Services, Investment and Digital Trade**

under the EU–UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA)

London, Thursday 23 October 2025

10:30 to 16:00 (BST) / 11:30 to 17:00 (CEST)

(in London and via videoconference)

Joint Minutes

Exchange of information on SID-relevant aspects of EU Single Market Strategy/ UK Trade and Industrial Strategies

The EU presented the services elements of the Single Market Strategy, emphasising its aims of reducing internal barriers; fewer bureaucratic obligations; better implementation and enforcement of existing rules; and improving joint ownership of the single market with EU Member States. The UK presented the Trade Strategy and Modern Industrial Strategy, which covered plans to increase business investment and grow the industries of the future; and plans to maximise trade opportunities, with a particular focus on services.

Recognition of Professional Qualifications (RPQ)/ regulatory environment for skills and professionals

The UK provided an update on its current priorities, including RPQ commitments in the UK Trade Strategy and Modern Industrial Strategy, and the Ricardo Fund, which provides funding to help UK regulators work with international partners to remove trade barriers and shape markets. The UK noted that it remains keen to strengthen RPQ arrangements between the UK and the EU, and looks forward to establishing the dedicated dialogues on the implementation of the TCA's RPQ commitments.

The EU presented the Skills Portability Initiative, announced in the Union of Skills, which was adopted in June 2025. The Skills Portability initiative builds on three pillars: one to facilitate the mobility of workers in unregulated professions, another to facilitate recognition processes for regulated professions, with particular attention to the potential for digitalisation, and finally one to improve the recognition of third country professional qualifications.

Implementation of the TCA services, investment and digital trade provisions

The UK welcomed progress on the issue concerning the conditions under which UK lawyers can provide designated legal services in one EU Member State but noted ongoing implementation concerns. The EU responded with an update on work towards clarity and addressing outstanding issues. Both Parties agreed to continue to liaise on the topic.

The EU raised the application of the UK's visa sponsorship system to EU service suppliers providing services in the UK under the TCA's Mode IV commitments, highlighting the difficulties in obtaining a sponsor, as well as the long process and cost concerns, in line with

reports by EU stakeholders. The EU requested the UK to exempt EU TCA service suppliers from the sponsorship requirement. The EU also raised the low number of visas granted to EU nationals under the service supplier route each year – fewer than to international sportspersons and religious workers – and mentioned that no alternative route exists for Contractual Service Suppliers and Independent Professionals that does not require a sponsored visa of some kind.

The UK responded that sponsorship of workers and students has been a core element of the UK's immigration system since 2008 and that the UK implements its TCA commitments through multiple visa routes. The UK welcomed a more in-depth discussion on sponsorship and other business mobility topics, including the operation of the UK and EU Member States' systems and guidance, through the dedicated dialogues on the implementation of the TCA's business mobility commitments, agreed at the UK-EU summit, under the Common Understanding.

Both Parties presented the implementation of the transparency obligations in Article 145 of the TCA. The EU updated on the Immigration Portal, which provides practical information on entering the EU for study, work, or family reunification purposes in the EU for more than 90 days. The UK presented an overview of mobility routes available for businesspersons, intra-company transferees and service suppliers; and how these routes implement the UK's Mode IV commitments.

Digital Trade

Both Parties exchanged information on regulatory matters in the context of digital trade.

The EU gave an overview of its International Digital Strategy, focusing on two main pillars: Digital Partnerships across the world, and the EU Tech Business Offer. The UK presented the Digital and Technologies sector plan of its Industrial Strategy.

The UK and EU also discussed the potential EU-UK Digital Dialogue.

The Parties provided an update on activity conducted under the administrative arrangement on online safety between OFCOM (the UK's Office of Communications) and DG CNECT (the European Commission's Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology). The arrangement has facilitated technical dialogue between the regulators on the UK Online Safety Act and the EU Digital Services Act implementation and mainly on the area of protection of minors. Both Parties agreed that the arrangement continues to be fruitful for information exchanges.

On Artificial Intelligence, the UK presented on AI Policy in the UK, and the EU presented its progress on the AI Factories Initiative.

Any Other Business

The UK requested an update from the EU about the EU Cybersecurity Certification Scheme for Cloud Services (EUCS) and its interaction with the upcoming Cloud and AI Development Act. The EU noted that the work is not yet finalised and they could therefore not engage with a third country on the topic.

The EU raised the UK's guidance on creating and hosting a cloud host strategy and on NHS and social care data. The EU asked for clarity on which type of data must be stored within the UK. The UK clarified that no restrictions applied and that data related to patient safety required extra precautions, but agreed to follow up after the Committee.

The UK expressed concerns regarding the proposed reporting thresholds for the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (Directive 2022/2464) in the Council's position for the Omnibus I Simplification Package on sustainability legislation. The EU responded that there are ongoing discussions between the co-legislators.

The EU raised the UK's approach to Specialty Air Services and expressed concerns with potential establishment requirements in respect of certain long-term specialty air services operations. Both Parties agreed to discuss this topic further.

Attachment 1:

Final agenda

1	Opening remarks and adoption of the agenda
2	Exchange of information on Services, Investment and Digital Trade (SID)-relevant aspects of EU Single Market Strategy/ UK Trade and Industrial Strategies
3	Recognition of professional qualifications/ Regulatory environment for skills and professionals
4	Implementation of the TCA SID provisions
5	Regulatory developments relevant to digital trade
6	Any other business
7	Closing remarks

Attachment 2:

List of participants of the fifth Trade Specialised Committee on Services, Investment and Digital Trade under the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement

UK delegation

- UK co-chair of the Trade Specialised Committee on Services, Investment and Digital Trade
- UK Government Officials (Department for Business and Trade; Department for Science, Innovation and Technology; Department for Culture, Media and Sport; Department for Transport; Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office; Cabinet Office; Home Office; Ministry of Justice)
- Representatives of the Scottish Government, Northern Ireland Executive and Welsh Government

EU delegation

- EU co-chair of the Trade Specialised Committee on Services, Investment and Digital Trade
- European Commission Officials (DG TRADE; DG HOME; DG CNECT; DG FISMA; DG GROW; DG EMPL; SG)
- EU Officials from the Delegation of the European Union to the UK
- Representatives of the EU Member States