UK EU SUMMIT OUTCOMES EXPLAINER

Today the United Kingdom and European Union have agreed to strengthen their cooperation across a number of areas and have concluded negotiations on new legal agreements which will reduce barriers to trade and create opportunities for young people. The outcomes are set out in the Joint Statement and cover the following areas:

SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY (SPS)

Since the UK left the EU, GB-EU trade has been subject to additional checks, paperwork, and other requirements. UK agrifood exports to the EU have fallen by 32.5% since 2019.

The UK-EU Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement sets out new arrangements for trade in food, agricultural goods, animals and plants. It will create a Common SPS Area, applying the same rules, which will make it easier and cheaper to move many products between Great Britain and the EU, supporting British exporters and helping to ease pressure on food prices. The interplay of the Agreement and the Windsor Framework will also make it easier and less costly to move these goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland. The agreement will apply from 1 March 2028 subject to UK and EU procedures, with targeted transition arrangements in limited areas.

The Agreement upholds our high food and feed safety standards and will reduce costs and red tape for exporters by:

- Removing the requirement for Export Health Certificates for goods moving between the GB and the EU, saving UK businesses up to £200 per certificate, as well as removing these certification requirements for GB-NI movements;
- Removing the requirement for phytosanitary certificates, saving businesses around £25 per certificate and at least £127.60 per load in inspection fees;
- Eliminating time consuming SPS border checks on goods such as dairy, fish and meat;
- Reopening the EU market for British products including fresh sausages, burgers, seed potatoes and molluscs.
- Removing certain other requirements under the rules in scope, including Certificates of Inspection (CoIs) for organic products.

The Agreement also allows British pet owners to obtain a multi-use pet passport valid for travel to the EU, making taking pets on holiday easier and cheaper.

EMISSIONS TRADING SYSTEMS (ETS)

Emissions Trading Schemes are market-based systems that cap total greenhouse gas emissions and allow participants to buy and sell emissions allowances, creating a financial incentive to reduce emissions by investing in decarbonisation. The UK has been a consistent champion of carbon pricing as it is a proven and effective way to cut emissions, giving businesses a choice over how they decarbonise and therefore helping deliver the transition to net zero cost-effectively.

The UK and EU have reached an agreement to link our carbon markets, the UK Emission Trading Scheme and the EU Emission Trading System. We are aiming to operationalise the link by 1 January 2028.

This agreement is a direct response to consistent calls from UK businesses to provide industry with access to a larger, more liquid carbon market and remove barriers to UK-EU trade through exemptions from the UK and EU Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanisms (CBAM), which would otherwise apply to

nearly £6.5bn of UK exports to the EU. The agreement will also streamline regulatory processes for aviation and maritime operators who operate under both schemes.

Analysis shows this agreement could add nearly £3.8bn to the economy each year by 2040.

YOUTH EXPERIENCE SCHEME

The UK and the EU have concluded negotiations on a new Youth Experience Scheme, strengthening opportunities for our young people. The scheme will enable young people from the UK, and the EU, aged between 18 and 31 to work, study, au pair, volunteer or travel in each other's territories for up to three years. The scheme will be open to 100,000 EU and 100,000 UK young people every year. This will give our young people the opportunity to broaden their horizons, experience new cultures, learn languages, and gain new personal and professional experiences.

Under the scheme, UK citizens will apply to a particular Member State and subsequently will be able to switch to a different Member State, staying in up to three Member States over a 3-year period. The scheme will not provide UK or EU citizens with access to benefits in each other's territories, nor will they be able to bring dependants. We expect the first young people to travel under the scheme no later than January 2030.

SECURITY, DEFENCE, DEVELOPMENT

The UK and the EU have agreed to enhance our cooperation on security and defence in recognition of the exceptional breadth and depth of the UK-EU partnership. This will better enable us to support Ukraine, tackle hybrid threats, respond to crises, and boost European defence industrial and capability development.

Standing together in the face of increasing hybrid threats to Europe, we will increase action to prepare for and respond to threats and work to impose costs on hostile actors, strengthen vulnerable partners, and reinforce our cooperation on democratic resilience. We are boosting our collaboration on defence industry and capability, and expanding our crisis management cooperation through an arrangement for UK participation in EU civilian missions, meaning we can help our partners strengthen their security and resilience. We look forward to signing a new Memorandum of Understanding on Health Security, strengthening our joint ability to prevent and respond to serious health threats.

This new package builds on the strong foundation provided by the Security and Defence Partnership agreed in 2025, which enables closer UK-EU cooperation across a wide range of areas. Since then, we have strengthened our coordination across foreign and security policy issues, including through our recent agreement on UK participation in the EU's Ukraine Support Loan.

ILLEGAL MIGRATION, LAW ENFORCEMENT AND JUDICIAL COOPERATION

The UK and the EU are taking forward new measures to strengthen our efforts to tackle illegal migration and migrant criminality, addressing gaps in our post-Brexit cooperation. We have agreed to enhance our reciprocal information exchange capabilities so that law enforcement and border security authorities are better able to detect, apprehend and prosecute criminals, and to strengthen our exchange of biometrics, criminal records and electronic evidence.

We have also agreed to take forward joint activities which build on the Action Plan for the Channel Route adopted by the European Commission earlier this year, to strengthen cooperation against organised immigration crime and further reduce dangerous Channel crossings, which are down 40% on last year. A new UK-EU Structured Dialogue on migration to progress joint work, coordinate delivery and take forward future cooperation will underpin this.

A Working Arrangement with the EU Agency for Asylum is in development and will improve access to operational expertise and best practice. This complements our new relationships with the European Migration Network, the Khartoum and Rabat Processes, and the EU Drugs Agency, alongside our strengthened work with Europol and Frontex to tackle and prevent cross-border criminality and small boat crossings.

DIGITAL PARTNERSHIP

The UK and the EU have agreed to work towards a new Digital Partnership to deepen our cooperation on digital technology to support our shared growth, competitiveness, security and resilience.

The Partnership will provide a framework for closer practical cooperation on AI, critical technologies such as quantum, digital infrastructure, digital credentials, and online safety. We will set out further detail in due course about the Partnership, which we aim to conclude early next year.

PARTNERSHIP FOR ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

The UK and EU have launched work to strengthen European economic security and supply chains through a new **partnership for economic resilience**, with the principle of trust at its core and based on mutual reciprocal market openness and co-ordination.

As part of this partnership, we've agreed to establish a Dialogue on Economic Security, so we can respond more effectively to common economic security challenges.

We've also committed to work together to limit negative effects in specific supply chains, on the basis of reciprocity. We will take this work forward as a matter of priority, in particular for steel, electric vehicles and emerging technologies, and review progress every four months.

TUITION FEES

The UK and EU have agreed to enter negotiations on an agreement on tuition fees for UK and EU students, with a shared aim of increasing opportunities for our students to study in each other's territories. We will conclude the negotiations within six months.

TRADE IN SERVICES AND TOURING ARTISTS

The UK and EU have agreed to continue working together to support trade in services. This includes a commitment to expedite an agreement on the recognition of professional qualifications for architects, and to work together to facilitate other professional bodies to propose agreements. We will also continue discussing business mobility with a view to improvements.

The UK and the EU have agreed to continue regular exchanges on culture, and agreed that we should explore further mutually beneficial solutions to support cultural and artistic exchanges, including to support the activities of touring artists.