

British and Finnish Chambers in joint call to minimise potential Brexit trade barriers

On the occasion of the visit of a high-level Finnish business delegation to London, the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), and the Finnish Chambers of Commerce (Kauppakamari) are today (14 September 2017) jointly calling for UK and EU negotiators to minimise trade barriers – and prioritise shared economic ties beyond Brexit.

There are strong commercial links between the UK and Finland: the UK imports £2.6bn of goods and services from Finland, and exports £2.7bn of goods and services to the country.

Science and Innovation are areas of very active cooperation between the two countries, with the UK and Finland working closely together on life sciences, digital, and low carbon technologies. There are a number of partnerships between the two countries, many of which are facilitated by the EU Horizon 2020 strategy.

The future of these projects, the long-term ease of trading between the UK and Finland, as well as the future status of Finnish nationals in Britain and British nationals in Finland, are all questions where British and Finnish businesses want negotiators to deliver clarity as soon as possible.

Dr Adam Marshall, Director General of the British Chambers of Commerce, said:

“As we welcome our Finnish colleagues to London, the vibrant trade links between our countries are yet another reminder of the importance of reducing any possible future trade barriers between the UK and the EU.

“Businesses want to minimise the risk to free-flowing trade with partners like Finland, and to avoid the creation of artificial new barriers that stop companies collaborating across boundaries. The on-going Brexit negotiations must seek to provide businesses with clear answers on practical issues including customs procedures, health and safety checks, and tax rules – and guarantee the status of nationals resident on either side.

“The links between innovative British and Finnish businesses are an important reminder that the Brexit negotiations must also deliver a framework for future collaboration between the UK and the EU on science and innovation.”

Dr Risto Penttilä, CEO of Finland Chamber of Commerce, said:

“The UK has been one of Finland’s strongest allies in promoting free trade and pragmatic reforms in the EU. The objective of the Brexit negotiations must be a European wide market that includes the UK, Switzerland and the EEA countries.

“Brexit must not lead to new obstacles or increased costs for companies from the UK, Finland or other EU countries. The UK is one of our most important trading partners, and a strong British economy will benefit both Europe and Finland.

“The Brexit process has reached a point where committed political leadership is needed both in the UK and the EU. Businesses, as well as citizens, need a clear roadmap for the years to come to ensure a smooth transition.”

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The **British Chambers of Commerce** (BCC) sits at the heart of a powerful network of 52 Accredited Chambers of Commerce across the UK, representing 75,000 businesses of all sizes and within all sectors, who employ 5 million people around the UK. Our Global Business Network connects exporters with nearly 40 markets around the world. For more information, visit:

www.britishchambers.org.uk

The **Finland Chamber of Commerce** promotes the interests of businesses at a national level and coordinates the operations of the 19 independent regional Chambers of Commerce in Finland. The Chambers of Commerce bring together over 20,000 companies from across the country. For more information, visit:

www.chamber.fi

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