

Government focuses on recovery from Covid with new timeline for border control processes on import of goods

Press release

A new timetable for introducing import border control processes has been set out by the government to enable UK businesses to focus on their recovery.



- Government putting COVID recovery first with new time scale for implementing border controls.
- Full processes for some imports will not be required until January 2022.
- Overall freight volumes between the UK and the EU have been back to their normal levels since the start of February.

A new timetable for introducing import border control processes has been [set out by the government](#) today (Thursday 11 March) to enable UK businesses to focus on their recovery.

The government has listened to businesses who have faced an unprecedented challenge during the pandemic and will now introduce full border control processes on 1 January 2022, six months later than originally planned.

This will provide businesses with further time to prepare for changes at the border and minimise disruption as the economy gradually reopens, as the government recognises the scale and significance of the challenges businesses have been facing in adjusting to the new requirements, at the same time as dealing with the impacts of COVID.

Cabinet Office Minister Lord Frost of Allenton said:

As a sovereign trading nation outside the EU, we have freedom to take decisions in our national interest – and in the interest of our businesses.

We will now introduce border controls broadly six months later than planned to give traders time to focus on getting back on their feet as the economy opens up after a difficult year.

We are confident that this new timetable will allow import businesses to re-establish their trading arrangements after a difficult period due to coronavirus, in the most straightforward and lightest touch way possible.

We will continue to give businesses the support they need to trade effectively with the EU, including through export helplines, webinars with experts and support via our network of 300 international trade advisers. This is in addition to the £20m SME Brexit Support Fund we have made available in consultation with the country's biggest trade bodies.

The hard work already put in by traders and hauliers has already seen overall freight volumes between the UK and EU rebound after an expected dip in January as a result of Covid-19 restrictions, pre-January stockpiling, and some initial teething problems as businesses adapted to new rules for trade with the EU. The very latest management information shows that overall freight volumes between the UK and the EU have been back to their normal levels since the start of February.

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