

Support service for Northern Ireland trade goes live

The new Trader Support Service is now live for business, providing education and guidance for traders moving goods under the Northern Ireland Protocol, including between Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Tens of thousands of traders will start to receive emails and letters from today (28 September 2020), with details on the launch of the Trader Support Service and its benefits for UK businesses.

The free-to-use digital service will help businesses and traders of all sizes to navigate the changes to the way goods move once the Northern Ireland Protocol comes into effect on 1 January 2021.

Traders who [sign up to the Trader Support Service](#) will be guided through the new processes under the Northern Ireland Protocol and can also use it to complete digital declarations.

The service will:

- provide a free end-to-end support package to manage import and safety and security declarations on behalf of traders.
- educate businesses on what the protocol means for them, and the steps they need to take to comply with it. This will include online training sessions and webinars, with information being continually updated as we move closer to 1 January 2021
- be available to businesses moving goods into Northern Ireland under new processes in the Northern Ireland Protocol that start from 1 January 2021

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Michael Gove MP, said:

The new free-to-use Trader Support Service, launching today, will provide crucial support and guidance to businesses moving goods under the Northern Ireland Protocol.

Backed by up to £200 million of UK government funding, it reflects our deep commitment to support the Northern Ireland economy and protect the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement.

With little over 3 months to go until the end of the transition period, it is vital that traders sign up and take advantage of the scheme, so that they can continue to trade seamlessly and seize new opportunities on 1 January 2021.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Brandon Lewis MP, said:

Today's launch of the Trader Support Service underlines the UK government's continued commitment to ensuring Northern Ireland's businesses get the support they need as we approach the end of the Transition period.

I urge traders to sign up to this free service to take advantage of import processes being dealt with on their behalf, to seek advice on what the Northern Ireland Protocol means for their business and to understand what steps they need to take.

Seamus Leheny, Policy Manager, Logistics UK, said:

We are delighted to see the launch of the Trader Support Service, which should help Northern Ireland business transition to new trading arrangements, protect continuity of trade and help ensure EU Exit is a success for the Northern Ireland economy.

The Trader Support Service will be delivered by a consortium led by Fujitsu, which was selected as the supplier following an open and transparent procurement process.

Traders choosing to [sign up for Trader Support Service](#) can do so at GOV.UK. They will receive full guidance and support on the next steps to take ahead of January 1, 2021.

The consortium delivering the Trader Support Service has expertise across the range of services needed to make it an effective and successful service. This includes the Institute of Export & International Trade, an existing provider of customs education, and the Customs Clearance Consortium, an established customs intermediary.

Recruitment is now commencing for a range of positions to deliver the Trader Support Service, creating employment and training opportunities across the UK.

Educational material will also be available via the Trader Support Service to those importing goods into Northern Ireland from the rest of the world.

Under the Northern Ireland Protocol, all Northern Ireland businesses will continue to have unfettered access to the whole UK market.