



## **TRADE FOR ALL**

A Principles-Based  
Framework for UK Trade



## THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO TRADE DIFFERENTLY

**The UK has an opportunity to design a trade policy that creates a UK economy that is prosperous, fair, and green, and which is guided by the long-term interests of UK citizens and future generations, rather than short-term imperatives.**

The UK is a sizeable economy on the global stage and has an opportunity to help shape the future of the global trading system to ensure it rises to the opportunities and challenges that confront us. The UK's trade policy can help harness the opportunities of the digital economy, tackle climate change and achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals including building back better in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. As G7 and COP26 hosts, and attending its first WTO Ministerial Conference as an independent member at the end of 2021, the UK has a rare opportunity to help set a path forward for the global community. It can work with other countries to advance a values-led agenda, raise standards, promote a more equitable and greener global trading system, ensure developing countries are prioritised, and foster constructive dialogue between countries.

With a carefully developed, clearly articulated and joined-up trade framework, the UK government can improve the international trading environment. This framework should strive to create trade deals that generate shared prosperity, both at home and around the world, as well as promote climate security. The UK needs a clear, consistent and transparent trade framework which sets out an overall vision and explains how this will be achieved. It should articulate the positives and negatives for each sector and clearly communicate this to the public. Trade can generate both winners and losers and therefore can demand difficult policy choices. It is important that we discuss policy options and trade-offs openly and frankly and take steps to avoid and mitigate negative effects to ensure there is always a long term, net overall benefit to the country.

As the government develops its strategy for trade, we hope that this framework will provide a useful reference.

## OUR VISION

UK trade should help deliver a prosperous, more equitable and sustainable economy including good quality jobs in the UK and globally. It should promote trade and an outward-looking UK economy in a manner that actively promotes high labour, consumer, and environmental standards, human rights and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It should reflect the priorities of small and large businesses, farmers, workers, consumers, and the interests of future generations.

## OBJECTIVES

We have identified a package of objectives to guide UK trade policy and realise the vision set out above:

**Objective 1:** UK trade policy should promote an open, fair and sustainable multilateral rules-based trading system, supported by plurilateral, regional and bilateral trade agreements.

**Objective 2:** UK trade policy should promote economic opportunities and high-quality jobs in all parts of the UK and overseas. It should play to the UK's strengths in areas like services and high-value goods, and support businesses of all sizes and their workers to seize and adapt to new opportunities, overcome challenges of fast transitions, and adjust to trade shocks.

**Objective 3:** UK trade policy should enhance the UK's competitiveness in a way that addresses regional inequalities and helps deliver the levelling up agenda.

**Objective 4:** UK trade policy should be green, both in the UK and abroad, and support climate, biodiversity, sustainable agriculture, and waste reduction. It should be high ambition, supporting the race to net zero emissions, and providing effective mechanisms to transition the labour market towards good green jobs.

**Objective 5:** UK trade policy should pursue a race to the top on standards, rights and protections. This should build on and advance UK standards, including for consumers and workers. It should promote and enforce consistently high labour and environmental standards across global supply chains, including International Labour Organisation core conventions.

**Objective 6:** UK trade policy should capitalise on the opportunities of the digital economy and promote effective regulation of data and new digital technologies in the public interest. It should actively promote the digital rights of citizens and digital inclusion.

**Objective 7:** UK trade policy should promote sustainable investment and finance to help address the global gap in trade finance and ensure SMEs are at the heart of trade.

**Objective 8:** UK trade policy should ensure protection for high quality public services and enable all countries access to affordable medicines including Covid-19 vaccines. Trade policy should enable governments to provide, support and regulate services including health care, education, and social services.

**Objective 9:** UK trade policy should support the building of skills, productive capacity and good jobs in developing countries, including in the areas of climate resilience and the digital economy, and should support the right to regulate. The UK should provide effective market access for developing countries, actively working with firms in developing countries so they can export to the UK.

## EFFECTIVE TRADE GOVERNANCE

Trade policy should be developed on the basis of inclusive, meaningful consultation, transparency and democratic oversight. This should allow for open consideration of potential trade-offs and building consensus, in line with A Trade Governance Model That Works for Everyone (2018). It should actively consult with all stakeholders at each stage of the negotiating process, including businesses, unions, civil society and consumer groups. Policymaking should be transparent and evidence-based, working from a presumption of transparency for all negotiating texts and publishing impact assessments that examine all aspects of trade deals including social, economic, environmental, gender, human rights, labour, development and regional impacts. Parliament should be extensively involved to provide democratic oversight, agreeing to a mandate ahead of negotiations and a debate and vote prior to ratification, with the devolved administrations formally involved at every stage. Trade agreements should aim to provide a net benefit for all and where this isn't possible, citizens and employees negatively impacted should always have a clear path forward, relevant support and adequate resources.

Effective trade governance will help ensure that decision-making is informed and robust, and that the UK's trade policy has the trust and confidence of stakeholders and the wider public. Trade policy also needs to be joined-up, working to support policy agendas in other areas from agriculture, climate and the environment, to innovation, industrial, finance and digital strategy, to foreign affairs and international development.



## SUPPORTERS

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