

Research Briefing
Number 9314
By Dominic Webb
14 March 2023

Progress on UK free trade agreement negotiations

1

Summary

This briefing summarises the UK's progress in its negotiations for free trade agreements (FTAs). It looks at signed agreements, negotiations which have already started and countries where the UK Government is making preparations before negotiations start. It does not go into detail on the content of the negotiations. It focusses on 'new' trade agreements – not those which rolled over previous EU agreements.

Signed agreements

The UK has signed three new trade agreements since leaving the EU. The [agreement with Australia](#) was signed in December 2021 and [that with New Zealand](#) in February 2022. These agreements are not yet in force.

The [digital trade agreement with Singapore](#) was signed in February 2022 and [entered into force on 14 June 2022](#).

An Agreement in Principle for a [digital trade agreement with Ukraine](#) was announced on 30 November 2022.

Current free trade agreement negotiations

The UK Government has started negotiations for a trade agreement with the countries listed below.

- Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP): The CPTPP is a trade agreement between 11 countries: Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam. The UK applied to join in February 2021. Negotiations started in September 2021.
- US: There is no current trade agreement between the UK and the US. Negotiations started in May 2020. The latest round of negotiations concluded in October 2020. An agreement is not expected soon.
- India: There is no current trade agreement between the UK and India. Negotiations started on 17 January 2022. The Government had hoped that these negotiations would be completed by October 2022 but this deadline has been missed.
- Canada: there is an existing trade agreement with Canada which largely replicates that which Canada has with the EU. Negotiations for a new UK-Canada trade agreement were launched in March 2022.
- Mexico: Negotiations were launched in May 2022 to update the existing UK-Mexico trade agreement. This largely replicates the agreement Mexico has with the EU.
- Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC): The GCC represents six states (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE). The UK currently does not have a free trade agreement with any of these countries. Negotiations started in June 2022.
- Israel: Negotiations were launched on 20 July 2022 to update the existing UK-Israel agreement which largely replicates the agreement Israel has with the EU.

Where the UK is preparing for free trade agreement negotiations

In April 2022, the Government launched a consultation on a new trade agreement with Switzerland, to update the existing FTA which largely replicates the EU-Switzerland agreement. The consultation closed on 22 June 2022.

In December 2022, a consultation on an enhanced FTA with South Korea was launched. This aims to upgrade the existing UK-South Korea agreement which replicates the EU's agreement with South Korea. The consultation runs until 2 February 2023.

2 Signed agreements

2.1 Australia

The first round of negotiations for a trade agreement with Australia took place between 29 June and 10 July 2020.¹ There were several further rounds of negotiations in 2020 and 2021.

On 15 June 2021, the Government announced that 'Agreement in Principle' (AIP) had been reached with Australia.² This meant that agreement had been reached on most areas but this had not been converted into legal text.

The agreement was signed and the legal text published in December 2021. It was laid before Parliament on 15 June 2022.³ This triggered a period of 21 sitting days, ending on 20 July, under the Constitutional Reform and Governance (CRAG) Act 2010 during which the Government could not ratify the agreement.⁴ For more information on Parliament's scrutiny of the agreement, see the [Treaties section of the Parliament website](#).

¹ [HCWS361 \[Negotiations on the UK's future trading relationship with Australia: Update\] 14 July 2020](#).

² Prime Minister's Office, [UK agrees historic trade deal with Australia](#), 15 June 2021

³ UK Parliament, [Treaties: Free Trade Agreement, done at London on 16 December 2021 and Adelaide on 17 December 2021, between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Australia](#)

⁴ For more information on the treaty ratification process, please see Commons Library briefing CBP-9247, [How Parliament treats treaties](#) (section 3.3 in particular)

The UK and Australia must complete various domestic procedures before the agreement can come into force.⁵ In particular, the [Trade \(Australia and New Zealand\) Bill](#) must be passed.

For more information, see [Commons Library, UK-Australia Free Trade Agreement](#).

2.2

New Zealand

Negotiations for a trade agreement with New Zealand began in July 2020. An ‘Agreement in Principle’ (AIP) was announced on 20 October 2021.⁶

The agreement was signed and the legal text published in February 2022.⁷ The agreement was formally laid before Parliament under the Constitutional Reform and Governance (CRA) Act 2010 on 27 October 2022.⁸ This triggered an initial period of 21 sitting days – ending on 1 December – which must elapse before the government can ratify the agreement.

The UK and New Zealand must complete various domestic procedures before the agreement can come into force.⁹ In particular, the [Trade \(Australia and New Zealand\) Bill](#) must be passed.

For more information on the signed agreement, see [Commons Library, UK-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement](#) and the [Treaties section of the Parliament website](#).

⁵ DIT, [New Bill to enable implementation of Australia and New Zealand trade deals](#), 11 May 2022, DFAT, [Australia-United Kingdom Free Trade Agreement: Next steps following signature](#)

⁶ DIT, [UK agrees historic trade deal with New Zealand](#), 20 October 2021

⁷ DIT, [UK and New Zealand sign comprehensive trade deal](#), 28 February 2022

⁸ UK Parliament, Treaties: [Free Trade Agreement, done at London on 28 February 2022, between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and New Zealand](#)

⁹ DIT, [New Bill to enable implementation of Australia and New Zealand trade deals](#), 11 May 2022, MFAT, [NZ-UK FTA: Timeline to completion](#) [pdf]

2.3 Digital Economy Agreement with Singapore

On 28 June 2021, the UK and Singapore began negotiations on a digital trade agreement.¹⁰ The two governments issued a joint statement at the launch of the negotiations.¹¹

The agreement was signed on 25 February 2022¹² and laid before Parliament under the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 on 11 March 2022.¹³ The agreement came into force on 14 June 2022.¹⁴ For more information, see the [Treaties section of the Parliament website](#).

The UK and Singapore had previously announced an ‘Agreement in Principle’ in December 2021.¹⁵

The Government said that the agreement would reduce bureaucracy for goods exporters, make border processes more efficient and replace paperwork with electronic documents.¹⁶ The provisions of the agreement are summarised in an Explainer published by the Department for International Trade.¹⁷

The UK already has a [trade agreement with Singapore](#), rolled over from the EU. Singapore is in CPTPP and the Government believes this agreement will help the UK’s accession to CPTPP.

The House of Commons International Trade Committee looked at general issues relating to digital trade and data in a report published in June 2021.¹⁸ The Government’s response was published in November 2021.¹⁹

¹⁰ DIT, [UK and Singapore kickstart negotiations on cutting-edge digital trade agreement](#), 27 June 2021

¹¹ DIT, [UK Singapore joint statement on the launch of negotiations on a Digital Economy Agreement](#), 29 June 2021

¹² DIT, [UK and Singapore sign new innovative digital trade deal](#), 25 February 2022

¹³ UK Parliament, [Treaties](#)

¹⁴ [HCWS100 \[Singapore Digital Economy Agreement Update\]](#) 14 June 2022; DIT (@tradegovuk). Twitter 14 June 2022 [accessed 16 June 2022]. Available from: <https://twitter.com/tradegovuk/status/1536626927628435456>

¹⁵ DIT, [UK agrees world's most comprehensive digital trade deal with Singapore](#), 9 December 2021

¹⁶ DIT, [UK and Singapore sign new innovative digital trade deal](#), 25 February 2022

¹⁷ DIT, [UK-Singapore Digital Economy Agreement: agreement in principle explainer](#), 9 December 2021

¹⁸ International Trade Committee, [Digital trade and data](#), 28 June 2021, HC 123, 2021-22

¹⁹ International Trade Committee, [Digital trade and data: Government Response to the Committee's First Report](#), 2 November 2021, HC 831, 2021-22

2.4 Digital Trade Agreement with Ukraine

On 24 August 2022, the UK launched negotiations for a digital trade agreement with Ukraine.²⁰ On 30 November 2022, the Government announced that an Agreement in Principle had been reached.²¹ The legal text will be finalised before it is signed and laid before Parliament for scrutiny.

The Government said the agreement would provide much-needed support for Ukraine's economy.²² The Government argued that digital trade was particularly important for Ukraine as damage to its infrastructure made it more difficult to trade physically. Areas covered by the agreement include: open and inclusive digital markets; data flows; consumer and business safeguards; and digital trading systems.²³

The UK and Ukraine already have a trade agreement.

3 Negotiations in progress

3.1 Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)

The CPTPP is a free trade agreement between 11 countries around the Pacific Rim. It emerged from negotiations for a Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) which included the US. There were originally 12 countries in the agreement but, following the election of President Trump, the US withdrew. The remaining 11 countries agreed the CPTPP which is similar to the TPP.

The following countries are in the CPTPP:

- Australia
- Brunei Darussalam
- Canada
- Chile
- Japan
- Malaysia
- Mexico
- New Zealand

²⁰ HCWS 289 [The UK-Ukraine Digital Trade Agreement], 5 September 2022; DIT, [UK and Ukraine launch talks on digital trade deal to support Ukrainian businesses](#), 23 August 2022

²¹ HCWS 400 [UK-Ukraine Digital Trade Agreement in Principle], 30 November 2022

²² DIT, [UK and Ukraine agree ground-breaking digital trade deal](#), 30 November 2022

²³ DIT, [UK-Ukraine DTA: agreement in principle explainer](#), 30 November 2022

- Peru
- Singapore
- Vietnam

The agreement came into force in six countries (Australia, Canada, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand and Singapore) in December 2018, in Vietnam in January 2019, in Peru in September 2021, in Malaysia in November 2022 and in Chile in February 2023.²⁴ The Agreement is not yet in force in Brunei Darussalam.

The UK is not the only country seeking to join. In September 2021, China and Taiwan applied to join the CPTPP.²⁵ Ecuador applied in December 2021.²⁶ In December 2021, South Korea announced that it would begin the application process to join CPTPP.²⁷

The UK's CPTPP application

The UK Government formally applied to join the CPTPP on 1 February 2021.²⁸ In June 2021, the Government published its [strategic case for joining](#), including negotiating objectives, consultation response and preliminary impact assessment.²⁹

The Government argues that joining the CPTPP will give the UK better access to important markets in the future and that the agreement contains high environmental and labour standards.

Joining the CPTPP is also part of the Government policy, announced in the [March 2021 Integrated Review](#), of pursuing deeper engagement with the Indo-Pacific region.³⁰

²⁴ Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, [Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership](#)

²⁵ Financial Times, [China seeks to join transpacific trade pact](#), 16 September 2021; Financial Times, [Taiwan follows China with bid to join transpacific trade pact](#), 23 September 2021

²⁶ Peterson Institute for International Economics, [Which countries are in the CPTPP and RCEP trade agreements and which want in?](#), 3 January 2022

²⁷ Financial Times, [South Korea applies to join CPTPP in wake of China's bid](#), 13 December 2021

²⁸ DIT, [UK applies to join huge Pacific free trade area CPTPP](#), 30 January 2021. DIT, [Formal Request to Commence UK Accession Negotiations to CPTPP](#), 1 February 2021. See also [HCWS747 \[UK Trade Update\] 1 February 2021](#)

²⁹ DIT, [UK approach to joining the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership \(CPTPP\)](#), 22 June 2021

³⁰ [The Integrated Review 2021](#), HM Government, 16 March 2021. See also HM Government, [Integrated Review Refresh 2023](#), 13 March 2023

Commentators have observed that agricultural standards, digital trade and investment protection (ISDS) provisions may be issues in the negotiations.³¹

The first negotiations with all 11 CPTPP members [started in September 2021](#). In February 2022, [negotiations moved to the “market access” phase](#). This is the second and final phase of the negotiations.

The Government had hoped that negotiations could be concluded by the end of 2022.³² However, as the UK is the first country to seek to join the CPTPP, it is difficult to make predictions about how the accession process will operate in practice. Existing CPTPP members may want to ensure that the process is rigorous, especially as other countries are interested in joining.³³ A PQ answer in November 2022 said “[n]egotiations will continue over the coming months; the UK will take the time needed to ensure that accession takes place on terms that are right for British business and interests.”³⁴

The UK already has trade agreements in effect with seven CPTPP members: Canada, Chile, Japan, Mexico, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam. The UK has signed agreements with Australia (see section 2.1) and New Zealand (section 2.2) but these are not yet in force.

In November 2021, the House of Lords International Agreements Committee published a [report on the UK’s CPTPP negotiating objectives](#).³⁵ The Committee found that while the Government’s negotiating objectives provided some information about what it hoped to achieve, they were lacking in detail. The report raised concerns in a number of areas, including intellectual property (and consequent implications for the cost of drugs to the NHS) and food standards. The [Government’s response to this report](#) was published in January 2022.³⁶ The House of Lords [debated the Committee’s report on 1 February 2022](#).

³¹ Lydgate, E and Gasiorek, M, [CPTPP and agri-food regulation: Crossing the EU-exit rubicon](#), UK Trade Policy Observatory Briefing Paper 60, July 2021; Morita-Jaeger, M, [Accessing CPTPP without a national digital regulatory strategy? Hard policy challenges for the UK](#), UK Trade Policy Observatory Briefing Paper 61, July 2021; Morita-Jaeger, M, [Challenges ahead for the UK to join CPTPP](#), UK Trade Policy Observatory blog, 16 April 2021

³² Financial Times, [UK aims to conclude Pacific trade group talks by end of 2022](#), 28 August 2022

³³ David Henig, Perspectives: New Zealanders give UK a CPTPP reality check, Borderlex, 8 September 2021

³⁴ PQ 71055 [[Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership](#)], 7 November 2022

³⁵ International Agreements Committee, [UK accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership \(CPTPP\): Scrutiny of the Government’s Negotiating Objectives](#), 17 November 2021, HL Paper 94, 2021-22

³⁶ [Response to IAC Report ‘UK Accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership 2021’](#), 19 January 2022 [pdf]

3.2

United States

There is no current free trade agreement between the UK and the US.

In March 2020, the Government set out its negotiating objectives for a free trade agreement with the US, its preliminary economic impact assessment and its response to an earlier consultation.³⁷

The UK and US governments have held several rounds of negotiations:

- First round: 5-15 May 2020³⁸
- Second round: 15-26 June 2020³⁹
- Third round: 27 July – 7 August 2020⁴⁰
- Fourth round: 8-18 September 2020⁴¹
- Fifth round: 19-30 October 2020⁴²

No further negotiating rounds have been held since October 2020. The Government has said that a “significant proportion of legal text has been agreed”⁴³ and that it is continuing to pursue a trade agreement with the US.⁴⁴ In September 2022, however, the then Prime Minister, Liz Truss, conceded that a trade agreement was unlikely in the short to medium term.⁴⁵

Lack of progress

Several reasons for a lack of recent progress have been put forward. For example, the Biden administration is believed to be prioritising domestic policy over new trade agreements.⁴⁶ The US’s Trade Promotion Authority, which allows trade agreements to be fast-tracked through the US Congress, has expired.⁴⁷

³⁷ [The UK’s approach to trade negotiations with the US](#), DIT, 2 March 2020

³⁸ [HCWS238 \[Negotiations on the UK’s future trading relationship with the US: Update\] 18 May 2020](#).

³⁹ [HCWS324 \[Negotiations on the UK’s Future Trading Relationship with the US: Update\] 30 June 2020](#).

⁴⁰ DIT, [Negotiations on the UK’s Future Trading Relationship with the US: Update](#), 12 August 2020

⁴¹ [HCWS461 \[Negotiations on the UK’s Future Trading Relationship with the US: Update\] 22 September 2020](#).

⁴² [HCWS545 \[Negotiations on the UK’s Future Trading Relationship with the US: Update\] 2 November 2020](#).

⁴³ [PQ 24885 \[Trade Agreements: USA\], 5 July 2021](#).

⁴⁴ [PQ 27066 \[Trade Agreements\], 8 July 2021](#).

⁴⁵ BBC News, [Liz Truss admits no US trade deal in 'short to medium term'](#), 20 September 2022

⁴⁶ Independent, [We’ll fix US economy before signing trade deals, says Biden’s Treasury pick Janet Yellen](#), 22 January 2021

⁴⁷ Financial Times, [Truss’s US trip shows UK’s scaled back ambitions](#), 14 July 2021

Individual states

The UK is seeking Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) with individual US states. These are not full free trade agreements and do not reduce tariffs. MoUs have been signed with Indiana, North Carolina and South Carolina.⁴⁸

3.3

India

There is no current free trade agreement between the UK and India.

In May 2021, the then UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Prime Minister Modi of India agreed deeper trade co-operation between the UK and India. This “[Enhanced Trade Partnership](#)” removes a number of trade barriers and sets out the two countries’ intention to work towards a free trade agreement.⁴⁹

The Government ran a consultation from 24 May to 31 August 2021 to prepare for negotiations for a trade agreement with India. Details of the consultation were set out in a [Department for International Trade press release](#).⁵⁰

Negotiations were launched in January 2022.⁵¹ The Government has said that the UK and India will “consider the option of an interim agreement that generates early benefits for both countries.”⁵² It has also published a document setting out the strategic case for the agreement, its objectives for the negotiations, its response to the consultation and its initial assessment of the potential economic impact of an FTA with India.⁵³

In April 2022, the then Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, said that negotiators had been told to “to get it done by Diwali in October.”⁵⁴ This deadline was reiterated by the then trade minister, Lord Grimstone in June 2022.⁵⁵

However, in October 2022, the Secretary of State for International Trade, Kemi Badenoch, said that the Government was no longer working to this deadline. She added that the Government wanted “to focus on the quality of the deal rather than the speed of the deal”.⁵⁶ The Government was asked about progress on the trade agreement with India in an Urgent Question on 26

⁴⁸ DIT, [UK signs first US state-level agreement with Indiana](#), 27 May 2022, DIT, [UK signs second state-level agreement with North Carolina](#), 20 July 2022, DIT, [Trade Minister kicks off multi-state US tour to boost state-level trade ties](#), 7 December 2022

⁴⁹ Prime Minister’s Office, [Prime Minister announces £1 billion of new UK-India trade](#), 4 May 2021

⁵⁰ DIT, [UK kick starts preparation for trade negotiations with India](#), 25 May 2021

⁵¹ [HCWS533 \[UK-India Free Trade Agreement Negotiations\] 13 January 2022](#)

⁵² [HCWS533 \[UK-India Free Trade Agreement Negotiations\] 13 January 2022](#)

⁵³ DIT, [UK approach to negotiating a free trade agreement with India](#), 13 January 2022

⁵⁴ [PM statement in India: 22 April 2022](#)

⁵⁵ [Letter from Lord Grimstone to the International Agreements Committee](#), 28 June 2022

⁵⁶ BBC News, [Scotching the trade deal with India?](#), 14 October 2022

October 2022. The trade minister, Greg Hands, said that the Government had “already closed the majority of chapters” of the agreement.⁵⁷ He said that the Government was:

... working towards the best deal for both sides and will not sign until we have a deal that is fair, reciprocal and, ultimately, in the best interests of the British people and the UK economy.⁵⁸

Mr Hands would did not set a deadline for the conclusion of negotiations.⁵⁹ There has been speculation that an agreement may not be reached until 2023.⁶⁰

The House of Lords International Agreements Committee published [a report on the Government’s negotiating objectives](#) for the agreement with India in July 2022. The report welcomed the Government’s aim of reaching a trade agreement with India, noting that such an agreement had larger potential economic benefits than the agreements reached to date.⁶¹

The Committee questioned the Government’s objective of concluding negotiations by the end of October, describing the deadlines as “arbitrary” and saying that this risked “giving up a good deal for a fast one”.⁶²

The negotiating objectives were described as “vague and high-level” with some characterised as “particularly unattainable”.⁶³ The Committee criticised the Government for the lack of information about “the importance it will give to human, environmental and other rights and protections”, and about its red lines.”⁶⁴

The Committee said it was questionable whether a comprehensive trade agreement was achievable in the short term, given India’s reputation as a challenging negotiating partner and its history of relatively thin trade agreements. The Committee reiterated its call for the Government to publish a comprehensive trade strategy.⁶⁵

⁵⁷ [HC Deb 26 October 2022 c308](#)

⁵⁸ As above

⁵⁹ [HC Deb 26 October 2022 c314](#)

⁶⁰ @g_lanktree. “A UK-India free trade deal won’t come until 2023, insiders say.” (Twitter). 18 October 2022 [accessed on 18 October 2022]. Available from:

https://twitter.com/g_lanktree/status/1582298085069582337

⁶¹ International Agreements Committee, [UK-India free trade agreement: Scrutiny of the Government’s Negotiating Objectives](#), 22 July 2022, HL Paper 53, 2022-23, p2

⁶² As above, p2

⁶³ As above, p2

⁶⁴ International Agreements Committee, [UK-India free trade agreement: Scrutiny of the Government’s Negotiating Objectives](#), 22 July 2022, HL Paper 53, 2022-23, p2

⁶⁵ International Agreements Committee, [UK-India free trade agreement: Scrutiny of the Government’s Negotiating Objectives](#), 22 July 2022, HL Paper 53, 2022-23, p3

The Government wrote to the IAC on 18 October 2022 with its response to the report.⁶⁶

The Committee's report was debated in the House of Lords on 6 September 2022.⁶⁷

3.4

Canada

The UK and Canada already have a trade agreement, [the UK-Canada Trade Continuity Agreement](#), signed in December 2020. This essentially replicated the EU's trade agreement with Canada. Canada is a member of the CPTPP.

The Government has said it wants to negotiate a new and ambitious trade agreement. To prepare for these negotiations, the Government ran a consultation asking for views on [how the trade agreement with Canada could be improved or amended](#). This consultation ran from 18 May to 12 July 2021.⁶⁸

Negotiations were launched on 24 March 2022.⁶⁹ The Government has published the UK's objectives for these negotiations.⁷⁰

3.5

Mexico

The UK and Mexico already have a [trade agreement](#) which replicates the EU-Mexico agreement. Mexico is a member of the CPTPP.

Like for Canada, the UK Government has said it wants to negotiate a new trade agreement with Mexico. The Government ran a consultation from 18 May to 12 July 2021, asking for views on [how the trade agreement with Mexico could be improved or amended](#).⁷¹

Negotiations were launched in May 2022.⁷² The Government has published the UK's objectives for these negotiations.⁷³

⁶⁶ [Letter from Secretary of State for International Trade to International Agreements Committee](#), 18 October 2022 [pdf]

⁶⁷ [HL Deb 6 September 2022 cc13-58GC](#)

⁶⁸ DIT, [Trade with Canada and Mexico: call for input](#), 18 May 2021

⁶⁹ DIT, [UK launches negotiations with Canada on a new, modernised trade deal](#), 24 March 2022. See also [Written Statement HCWS718 \[Canada Trade Policy Update\] 24 March 2022](#)

⁷⁰ DIT, [UK approach to negotiating a free trade agreement with Canada](#), 24 March 2022

⁷¹ DIT, [Trade with Canada and Mexico: call for input](#), 18 May 2021

⁷² DIT, [UK kicks off talks on modern trade deal with Mexico](#), 20 May 2022

⁷³ DIT, [UK approach to negotiating a free trade agreement with Mexico](#), 20 May 2022

3.6 Gulf Co-operation Council

In October 2021, the Government launched a consultation on trade with the Gulf Co-operation Council.⁷⁴ This represents six countries: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The consultation ran until 14 January 2022.

Negotiations for a free trade agreement started in June 2022.⁷⁵ The Government has published its negotiating objectives and set out an initial impact assessment.⁷⁶

3.7 Israel

The UK and Israel already have a [continuity trade agreement](#) which essentially replicates the EU's agreement with Israel.

On 2 February 2022, DIT announced a [consultation on a new trade agreement with Israel](#). The consultation closed on 30 March.

On 20 July 2022, DIT launched negotiations for a trade agreement with Israel.⁷⁷ The Government said that the new trade agreement would “seek to establish a modern, revamped trading relationship between two of the world's services superpowers” and would “put innovation at its heart”.⁷⁸ The Government noted that the current agreement with Israel does not contain any specific provisions on services.

The Government has published its negotiating objectives, response to the consultation and initial impact assessment.⁷⁹

Trade with Israel was the subject of a [debate in Westminster Hall](#) on 20 January 2022.⁸⁰

⁷⁴ DIT, [UK prepares for trade deal with Gulf Cooperation Council](#), 8 October 2021

⁷⁵ DIT, [UK launches ambitious trade deal with Gulf nations](#), 22 June 2022

⁷⁶ DIT, [UK approach to negotiating a free trade agreement with the Gulf Cooperation Council \(GCC\)](#), 22 June 2022

⁷⁷ DIT, [UK launches Israel talks to boost trade between services superpowers](#), 20 July 2022

⁷⁸ DIT, [UK launches Israel talks to boost trade between services superpowers](#), 20 July 2022

⁷⁹ DIT, [UK approach to negotiating a free trade agreement with Israel](#), 20 July 2022

⁸⁰ [HC Deb 20 January 2022 cc189-212WH](#)

4 Future negotiations

4.1 Switzerland

The UK and Switzerland already have a continuity trade agreement based on the 1972 EU-Switzerland agreement.⁸¹

On 28 April 2022, the Government launched a [consultation on updating the trade agreement with Switzerland](#). This consultation closed on 22 June. The Government said the current agreement did “not contain any agreements for services or digital trade, which account for half of our economic relationship with Switzerland ...”⁸² The Government described the UK and Swiss economies as “two services powerhouses” and said that negotiations would provide a “significant opportunity to build on our current trade agreement and negotiate an ambitious, unprecedented deal ...”⁸³

4.2 South Korea

The UK and South Korea already have a trade agreement in force which essentially replicates the EU’s FTA with South Korea.⁸⁴

The Government is consulting on an upgrade to this agreement and hopes it will be more tailored to the UK’s needs. The Government says it will “include important areas such as digital trade, enhanced climate provisions and further support for small and medium sized businesses.”⁸⁵

The consultation closed on 2 February 2023.

⁸¹ [HCWS805 \[Switzerland Trade Policy Update\] 28 April 2022](#)

⁸² As above

⁸³ As above

⁸⁴ DIT, [UK-South Korea trade agreement](#), 1 November 2021

⁸⁵ DIT, [UK kicks off process to negotiate new trade deal with South Korea](#), 9 December 2022

Disclaimer

The Commons Library does not intend the information in our research publications and briefings to address the specific circumstances of any particular individual. We have published it to support the work of MPs. You should not rely upon it as legal or professional advice, or as a substitute for it. We do not accept any liability whatsoever for any errors, omissions or misstatements contained herein. You should consult a suitably qualified professional if you require specific advice or information. Read our briefing '[Legal help: where to go and how to pay](#)' for further information about sources of legal advice and help. This information is provided subject to the conditions of the Open Parliament Licence.

Feedback

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in these publicly available briefings is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware however that briefings are not necessarily updated to reflect subsequent changes.

If you have any comments on our briefings please email papers@parliament.uk. Please note that authors are not always able to engage in discussions with members of the public who express opinions about the content of our research, although we will carefully consider and correct any factual errors.

You can read our feedback and complaints policy and our editorial policy at commonslibrary.parliament.uk. If you have general questions about the work of the House of Commons email hcenquiries@parliament.uk.

The House of Commons Library is a research and information service based in the UK Parliament. Our impartial analysis, statistical research and resources help MPs and their staff scrutinise legislation, develop policy, and support constituents.

Our published material is available to everyone on commonslibrary.parliament.uk.

Get our latest research delivered straight to your inbox. Subscribe at commonslibrary.parliament.uk/subscribe or scan the code below:



 commonslibrary.parliament.uk

 [@commonslibrary](https://twitter.com/commonslibrary)