

Redefining the UK's Relationship with the EU: Principles for economic success and prosperity

A statement from the UK's Leading Business Organisations

18 June 2017

We, the undersigned, represent hundreds of thousands of businesses across the United Kingdom employing millions of people.

The business community fully accepts the decision of voters last June that the UK will leave the European Union. We have come together to urge the Government to put the economy first as it prepares to start formal negotiations on the UK's departure from the European Union. This is a deal that when finally agreed will matter fundamentally for the UK economy, for UK companies and for citizens of the UK. A deal that supports growth will allow companies to hire more people, raise living standards and improve lives across the country.

We call on the Government to ensure that negotiations take place in an atmosphere of mutual respect, and engage continuously with UK business interests on the many crucial and complex aspects of our future economic relationship with the European Union. If the Government moves forward in real partnership with business, drawing on its expertise, it will be in a strong position to protect and strengthen the UK's economy during this vital period and beyond.

ECONOMIC PRINCIPLES FOR THE UK'S TRANSITION OUT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

- Maintain the economic benefits of the Single Market and the Customs Union until a final settlement between the United Kingdom and the European Union is agreed and implemented
- Prioritise an early agreement on guarantees for EU citizens, providing much needed reassurance for those already resident in the United Kingdom, and for UK citizens already resident in the EU27
- Maintain an open frictionless border between Ireland and Northern Ireland; and between Great Britain and the island of Ireland

ECONOMIC PRINCIPLES FOR A FINAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UK AND THE EU27

- Tariff-free goods trade between the United Kingdom and the European Union
- Minimal customs formalities at the land, sea and air borders between the United Kingdom and the European Union

- Regulatory equivalence and mutual recognition of standards on an ongoing basis to ensure continued mutual access for both goods and services
- A flexible system for the movement of labour and skills between the United Kingdom and the European Union, that enjoys public support
- On-going UK participation in those pan-European programmes, initiatives and agencies which add real economic value to communities, businesses, young people and universities
- Protection of the benefits of free trade agreements currently delivered through the European Union

We recognise these are high-level principles, in an environment of great complexity and detail. We will work closely with each other and with government to explore ways to give effect to these principles.

Adam Marshall, Director General – British Chambers of Commerce

Carolyn Fairbairn, Director General – CBI

Terry Scuoler, Chief Executive – EEF

Mike Cherry, National Chairman – Federation of Small Businesses

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