

# UK signs Trade Partnership Agreement with Ghana

The UK has today signed a trade partnership agreement with Ghana that secures tariff-free trade and provides a platform for greater economic and cultural cooperation.

The deal supports a trading relationship worth £1.2bn and reinstates the terms of the economic partnership agreement between the two sides when the UK was part of the EU.

It means Ghanaian products including bananas, tinned tuna and cocoa will benefit from tariff-free access to the United Kingdom. UK exports are also in line to benefit from tariff liberalisation from 2023, including machinery, electronics and chemical products.

The agreement was signed by Secretary of State for International Trade Liz Truss and Ghana's Acting High Commissioner to the UK, Peprah Ampratwum, at the Department for International Trade in central London.

Secretary Truss was joined on a video call by Ghana's Minister Designate for Trade and Industry, Alan Kyerematen, to mark the signing.

International Trade Secretary Truss said: "I am delighted to be able to sign this deal with our friends and partners in Ghana. It provides certainty for businesses that provide vital jobs and livelihoods in Ghana, and it strengthens the ties between our two countries.

"We can now look forward to deepening and furthering our relationship in future, and working together to secure a broader agreement with the West Africa Region."

Minister for International Trade Ranil Jayawardena said: "This deal secures tariff-free access for products that British shoppers love – and supports jobs in Ghana – paving the way for further economic growth as we build back better from Covid-19.

"It is further evidence of the UK's determination to champion free trade around the world, which fosters growth, creates jobs and raises living standards for all."

UK Minister for Africa James Duddridge said: "The UK and Ghana have a strong partnership and the signing of today's agreement marks an important moment for boosting trade, worth £1.2 billion, between our two nations.

"With tariff-free access for Ghana to the UK, it will enable businesses to scale up their operations, support innovation in markets and create jobs as we recover together from the coronavirus pandemic."

Ghana's largest exports to the UK include mineral fuels and oil, preparations

of fish, fruit, cocoa and cocoa preparations. Its top imports include clothing/textiles, machinery and mechanical appliances, and chemical products from the UK.

The deal means the UK has now secured trade agreements with 65 non-EU countries, representing trade worth £217 billion in 2019.

This accounts for 97% of the value of trade with non-EU countries that we set out to secure agreements with at the start of the trade continuity programme.

Total UK trade with Ghana was £1.2 billion in 2019, of which UK exports were £652 million

The UK government has secured trade agreements with 65 countries plus the EU. Total trade with these countries was worth £890bn in 2019. This is equivalent to 63% of UK total trade

Sources: ONS UK Trade: All countries, non-seasonally adjusted, Q3 2020; HMRC UK Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics, December 2020

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## **UK businesses embark on roadshow to discover new trading opportunities in Latin America and Caribbean**

The Department for International Trade is hosting a virtual roadshow to help businesses across the UK identify new export and investment opportunities in the Latin America and Caribbean (LATAC) region. The LATAC Roadshow is being held between 1-4 March.

Her Majesty's recently appointed Trade Commissioner for LATAC, Jonathan Knott, and DIT's team of experts will join businesses from the region for virtual workshops, panels and one-to-one meetings throughout the day.

These events will provide businesses with insight into the latest exporting opportunities in vibrant markets such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru.

Sessions will cover a range of topics including clean growth and renewable energy, healthcare, agriculture and financial services. Businesses will also hear first-hand about the experiences of companies already successfully exporting to LATAC, including Weston's Cider and AB Europe.

Total trade between the UK and LATAC was £26.3 billion in the year to Q3 2020, with exports totalling £15.7 billion. Brazil was the largest trading partner accounting for over 20% of all trade. With the UK also seeking

membership to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), these ties are expected to grow as it looks to deepen trading links with markets including Mexico, Chile and Peru.

Minister for Exports Graham Stuart will be joining a panel session on Clean Growth to discuss the UK's ambitions on tackling climate change and the opportunities for UK businesses to export more green goods and services to the region.

**Minister for Exports Graham Stuart said:**

I'm delighted to join this year's virtual trade mission to discuss the wealth of opportunity available to UK businesses to export more environmental goods and services to the Latin America and Caribbean region.

Tackling climate change is a top priority for the UK. As world leaders in areas including offshore wind, green finance, and sustainable construction, and as hosts of the upcoming COP26 summit, we are uniquely placed to work with partners across the region to help businesses build back better and greener from the impacts of the pandemic.

**Her Majesty's Trade Commissioner for Latin America and the Caribbean Jonathan Knott said:**

Our Latin America and Caribbean Business Roadshow will demonstrate the breadth of opportunities available to UK businesses, large and small, and encourage them to take full advantage of the business potential in this exciting and dynamic part of the world.

We are determined to do all we can to support our brilliant UK businesses and grow UK exports to the region, particularly as we look to recover from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. From life sciences to food and drink, there is a wealth of opportunity for businesses across the LATAC region, and I'd urge any business interested in beginning their exporting journey to get in touch with us. We can help you win contracts and grow.

One business attending the Roadshow is Weston's Cider, a 4th generation, family run cider maker from Herefordshire, England. Established in 1880, the company presses its own local fruit and has one of the largest collection of cider vats in the UK.

**Luke Padgett, Export Country Manager, Weston's Cider said:**

Focussed on innovation, organic and traditional techniques we take pride in every drop. Our desire is to continue that vision and

introduce our award winning, premium, category leading ciders across the emerging LATAC region, expanding on our growing Export portfolio.

Home to over 650 million people, LATAC covers 48 countries and territories with a growing middle-class population, meaning there is increased opportunity for British businesses to provide high-quality goods and services across the region. The UK has so far secured 5 trade continuity agreements with 24 countries in the region.

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## [Bill introduced to create high risk, high reward research agency ARIA](#)

- New Bill introduced to set up UK's Advanced Research and Invention Agency, an independent research body which will fund high-risk, high-reward scientific research
- legislation will provide ARIA with the powers to have an innovative and flexible approach to programme funding, as well as giving ARIA the ability to pursue ground-breaking discoveries
- the Bill equips ARIA with unique powers and freedoms to invest in ambitious research at unprecedented speeds

A new Bill to create the Advanced Research and Invention Agency (ARIA), an independent UK scientific research agency that will fund cutting-edge science and technology, was introduced to Parliament today (Tuesday 2 March 2021).

The Advanced Research and Invention Agency Bill sets out the legislative framework and governance for the new agency, which was announced by the Business Secretary last month. The agency will empower some of the world's most exceptional scientists and researchers to identify and fund transformational areas of research to turn incredible ideas into new technologies, discoveries, products and services – helping to maintain the UK's position as a global science superpower.

The design of the agency allows this work to take place at greater speed, with flexibility and minimised bureaucracy.

The Bill equips ARIA with unique powers and freedoms that it needs to succeed, explicitly allowing the agency a much higher tolerance for failure than other UK funding agencies. This flexibility is necessary to enable the agency to develop technologies at speed that could create profound positive change for the UK and the rest of the world, recognising that failure is an essential part of scientific discovery.

As part of this, the Bill provides the agency with the powers to have an

innovative and flexible approach to programme funding, including seed grants and prize incentives, as well as being able to start and stop projects according to their success. This innovative approach to funding will give its leadership the tools and autonomy to push boundaries in search of new discoveries.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

This Bill marks a momentous step forward for UK R&D – creating a bold, new scientific agency with invention at its core, putting the UK in a formidable position to respond to the most pressing global challenges of our time.

The success of our Vaccine Taskforce has shown the value of putting power in the hands of our best scientists to make swift, high-risk funding decisions – free from unnecessary bureaucracy. With this Bill, I am determined to ensure ARIA upholds this winning formula.

ARIA will be equipped with all the tools and freedoms it needs to succeed – placing our world leading scientists at the heart of decision making, stripping back red tape and giving our best minds license to invest in the most transformative research at speeds like never before.

ARIA will be based on models that have proved successful in other countries, in particular the influential US Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) model. This was instrumental in creating transformational technologies such as the internet and GPS, changing the way people live and work, while increasing productivity and growth. More recently, ARPA's successor, DARPA, was a vital pre-pandemic funder of mRNA vaccines and antibody therapies, leading to critical COVID therapies.

In the US, DARPA benefits from autonomy and flexibility outside the standard government contracting and granting standards. The ARIA Bill will provide the agency with exemption from the existing Public Contract Regulations, enabling ARIA to procure vital services and equipment with maximum flexibility so that it can carry out ground-breaking research at speeds rivalling a private investment firm.

The Bill will also purposefully streamline the agency's operating structure and minimise bureaucratic processes so it can focus all its efforts and resources on transformational research.

The government's intention, therefore, is for ARIA not to be subject to the Freedom of Information Act to reduce the administrative time required to process FOI requests and protect Britain's competitive advantage, while allowing the agency to run an extremely lean and agile operating mode – which is essential to its design and ultimate success.

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

Today is another milestone moment for the UK's world class R&D community, as we introduce to Parliament the legislation needed to create ARIA.

By facilitating fast and flexible funding, removing bureaucracy and accepting failure as an essential part of scientific discovery, this new agency will empower our scientists and innovators to go where they haven't been before – accelerating the development of future products and technologies that could change all our lives for the better.

While the Bill will prioritise the formation of an agile research agency by stripping back red tape, it will also ensure this is balanced with necessary accountability and oversight.

Administrative exemptions will sit alongside legal obligations for ARIA to proactively share information about its activities. The agency will be subject to scrutiny by the National Audit Office, as is usual for a public body, and will be required to submit an annual report of its functions and statement of accounts, which will be laid before Parliament for scrutiny.

The Business Secretary will also have robust powers to intervene in the interests of national security if required, for example, directing the agency to cease collaboration with certain hostile actors or closing specific programmes.

Recognising that pursuing ambitious, high risk research requires patience, the government's intention is to provide ARIA with the necessary long-term security: the Bill sets a 10-year grace period before any potential dissolution of the agency can be triggered.

The Bill's introduction to Parliament today follows the Business Secretary's [announcement of the new agency](#) on Friday 19 February 2021. The aim is for the agency to be fully operational by 2022.

A recruitment campaign will begin over the coming weeks to identify a world class interim Chief Executive and Chair to shape the vision, direction and research priorities for the agency.

ARIA will be backed by £800 million of government funding over the course of this Parliament, as set out by the Chancellor Rishi Sunak in the March 2020 Budget.

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## **[Ministerial appointments: 2 March 2021](#)**

The Queen has been pleased to approve the following ministerial appointments.



The Queen has been pleased to approve the following ministerial appointments following Royal Assent of the Ministerial and other Maternity Allowances Act 2021.

- Rt Hon Suella Braverman QC MP to be designated as a Minister on Leave (Attorney General)
- Rt Hon Michael Ellis QC MP to be Attorney General
- Lucy Frazer QC MP to be Solicitor General

The Queen has also been pleased to approve that Lucy Frazer be sworn of Her Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council.

The Prime Minister gives the Attorney General his very best wishes for her maternity leave and looks forward to welcoming her back in the autumn.

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## [\*\*Movement Assistance Scheme expanded to support organic produce\*\*](#)

Traders moving organic products to Northern Ireland are now eligible for support following the expansion of a scheme designed to ease the flow of agri-food goods from Great Britain, Defra has announced today.

The Movement Assistance Scheme means traders do not need to pay certain certification costs for moving agri-food goods, with the costs incurred by those certifying the products – now including organic control bodies – reimbursed by government up to a set amount.

The scheme also includes a dedicated helpline for general enquiries and together these measures are making it easier to move agri-food goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland. During January, over 100 organisations

signed to up to the scheme, with the costs of over 4,000 export health certificates covered.

Farming, Fisheries and Food Minister Victoria Prentis said:

We want to ensure that people in Northern Ireland can continue to enjoy a wide range of organic products and that the process of getting these goods to them is as smooth as possible for traders.

Including the cost of certification for organic agri-food goods in the Movement Assistance Scheme minimises the impact of the new requirements for traders and means there will still be a variety of choice for consumers.

Since 1 January 2021, there have been new requirements for inspection and certification when moving agri-food and similar goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland.

This includes meeting new sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) requirements given that the island of Ireland is treated as a single epidemiological unit. These SPS requirements include Export Health Certificates and Phytosanitary certificates for specific agri-food goods.

Authorised traders, such as supermarkets and their trusted suppliers, currently benefit from a grace period from certification requirements for products of animal origin, composite products, food and feed of non-animal origin and plants and plant products as well as organic products.

The Movement Assistance Scheme will cover the cost of Organic Certificate of Inspections. It does not currently cover the costs for getting certified as an organic exporter, though the Government is continuing to monitor the performance of the scheme to determine what further support may be required.

[Guidance on the new scheme](#) and moving agri-food goods to and from Northern Ireland is available.

If you would like further information on moving agri-food goods from GB to NI, please contact the Movement Assistance Scheme (MAS) helpline on 0330 0416 580. MAS can help you by offering support and advice, and information around GB to NI processes and policy. The helpline is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm (excluding bank holidays).

Traders who have queries relating to moving organic products from GB to NI can also contact their control body for advice.