

26th April 2021

Civil Society call for democratic control of EU-UK trade relations

Dear members of the European Parliament,

As civil society organisations from the UK and the EU, we want to express our concerns regarding the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement which is currently provisionally applied and is to be ratified by the European Parliament at the end of April.

We are observing the **ratification process** with concern and scepticism. We believe it is being rushed through without sufficient public and, above all, parliamentary debate. In particular, the UK Parliament had insufficient time to properly scrutinise the deal and was not properly involved in negotiations. It is therefore even more important that the European Parliament resists the pressure to ratify within the short, two-month time-frame. The deal needs significant improvement and the Parliament must be able to play a part in this. A clear opportunity to improve the deal and increase the role of both parliaments is the negotiation of the financial services chapter which is yet to be agreed: corporate lobbying threatens to undermine public interest, making it essential that elected representatives are fully engaged.

Like many members of the Parliaments in the EU and the UK, we are also concerned about the lack of democratic control **within the agreement**. In particular, the UK government has outlined no role for its own parliament in the deal. Similarly, the EU-Commission is still hesitant to give the European Parliament a stronger voice: In a “living agreement” such as the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement, it is crucial to make sure that Parliaments – i.e the European Parliament and the House of Commons – have a strong role and exercise democratic control over the evolution of the agreement.

For that purpose, the EU-Commission and the UK-government should make sure that the role of Parliaments on both sides is strengthened with respect to the decisions of the Partnership Council (PC) – which is allowed to form new committees and can also adapt the trade and cooperation agreement itself. The European Parliament and the House of Commons should be able to make their own proposals in respect of both committees and changes to the deal. They should also be involved in all initiatives of the Partnership Council or other specialised committees within the agreement.

Ahead of the ratification, we call on the European Parliament to increase pressure for future EU-UK trade relations to remain under democratic control by Parliaments on both sides of the channel.

Signatories

Aitec	France
Allianz gerechtes Handeln	Austria
Amis de la Terre France	France
Anders Handeln	Austria
Another Europe Is Possible	UK
Attac Austria	Austria
ATTAC ESPAÑA	España
Attac Germany	Germany
Attac Liège	Belgium
Berliner Wassertisch	Germany
Campaña No a los Tratados de Comercio e Inversión	Span
Center for Encounter and Active Nonviolence	Austria
Compassion in World Farming	International
Confédération paysanne	France
Corporate Europe Observatory	Europe
Deutscher Naturschutzring (DNR)	Germany
Ecologistas en Acción	Spain
European Alternatives	Europe wide (including offices in UK, France, Italy, Germany)
Fairwatch	Italia
FNV	Netherlands
Forum Umwelt und Entwicklung	Germany
Friends of the Earth England, Wales & Northern Ireland	England, Wales & Northern Ireland
Friends of the Earth Europe	Belgium
Global Justice Now	UK
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy Europe	International
KULU-Women and Development	Danmark
LobbyControl	Germany
Mehr Demokratie e.V.	Germany
Naturefriends	Greece
NaturFreunde Deutschlands	Deutschland
NaturFreunde e.V.	Germany
Netzwerk Gerechter Welthandel	Germany
OMAL-Paz con Dignidad	España
Platform Aarde Boer Consument	The Netherlands
PowerShift e.V.	Deutschland
Reseau Roosevelt-IDF	france
Solidaridad Internacional Andalucia	España

Stop TTIP/CETA Italia Campaign	Italia
SumOfUs	United Kingdom
Trade Justice Movement	United Kingdom
Transnational Institute	Netherlands
TROCA- Plataforma por um Comércio Internacional Justo	Portugal
Védegylet Egyesület	Hungary
War on Want	United Kingdom