



Dear customer,

The UK is leaving the EU on 31 January 2020: what it means for your business

We are writing to you because you're a VAT registered business and have told us that you trade between the UK and the EU. We have written to you previously about how to prepare your business for customs and border arrangements when we leave the EU. We'd like to thank you for the preparations you've made over the last year, and tell you about what will happen next.

What will happen after 31 January 2020?

From 1 February the UK will no longer be a member of the EU, and we'll enter an implementation period that lasts until 31 December 2020. During this time there will be no changes to the terms for trading with the EU or the rest of the world, unless the rules change for the whole of the EU. This means EU rules for customs, VAT and excise will continue to apply to the movement of goods and trade for this limited time. There will be no new customs procedures at present.

What will happen after 31 December 2020?

From 1 January 2021, the way you trade with the EU will change, and you'll need to prepare for life outside the EU, including new customs arrangements. For example, for trade between Great Britain (GB) and the EU, you will need to make customs declarations to import and export goods once the UK is outside of the EU's customs territory.

We'll provide more information and guidance during the implementation period, and as the negotiations progress.

What you need to do now

- **Keep up to date**

As you've already registered for us to provide you with updates by email, we'll use that to contact you rather than sending a letter in future.

If you still want to receive paper letters, you can let us know by updating your registration.

Go to www.gov.uk/hmrc/business-support and select 'Sign up to help and support emails from HMRC'.

- **Make sure you have your Economic Operator Registration and Identification (EORI) number**

You'll need a UK EORI number that starts with the letters 'GB' to be able to submit customs declarations to move goods between GB and the EU after the implementation period ends.

If you already have a UK EORI number starting with 'GB', keep it safe as you will need it when the implementation period ends.

If you do not have a UK EORI number starting with 'GB' you should register for one at www.gov.uk/eori. It's quick and easy to register.

- **Decide how to make customs declarations**

You'll need to make customs declarations to import and export goods between GB and EU countries once we are outside of the EU's customs territory.

If you've only ever traded with the EU, or if you already trade with non-EU countries but need to expand or change your processes to cover your GB-EU imports and exports, you should start to prepare now to make customs declarations, by deciding if you want to use a third party such as a customs agent or make declarations yourself.

If you decide to use a customs agent, you should start contacting agents now, to find out about the services they provide. You can find guidance by going to www.gov.uk/guidance/appoint-someone-to-deal-with-customs-on-your-behalf. If you want to make declarations yourself, we'll soon be providing more information and guidance about what will be required. We will be providing more information about customs processes for Northern Ireland soon.

Further service updates

Registration and use of Transitional Simplified Procedures (TSP) for imports from the EU is currently suspended. You will not need to use TSP between February and December 2020. If you applied for this service, please keep your paperwork safe. In addition, postponed VAT Accounting is currently not available during the implementation period.

If you trade between Northern Ireland and the EU

The guidance that we previously shared with you about the UK government's approach for moving goods between Northern Ireland and Ireland if the UK had left the EU without a deal no longer applies.

New arrangements will replace this and ensure that there is no hard border on the island of Ireland and that Northern Ireland remains in the UK's customs territory.

We'll provide more information and updated guidance on this throughout the implementation period.

We appreciate you may have more queries about what you need to do next. We will provide more information as soon as we can about the future processes for importing and exporting and what you'll need to do.

Yours faithfully

Katherine Green and Sophie Dean
Directors General, EU Exit and Borders, HMRC