



Department for
Business & Trade



Foreign, Commonwealth
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Sir William Cash CH MP
Chair, European Scrutiny Committee
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Lord Ricketts GCMG GCVO
Chair, European Affairs Committee
House of Lords
London SW1A 0PW

19 April 2024

Dear Sir William, Dear Lord Ricketts,

Launch of UK-EU Competition Cooperation Agreement negotiations

We are writing to update you on the launch of negotiations between the UK and EU on a Competition Cooperation Agreement.

The UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement provides for a separate agreement to be reached to facilitate cooperation on competition matters between the UK's and EU's competition authorities. This agreement will benefit the UK by creating a formal framework to cooperate and strengthen cross-border enforcement of competition law. It will create a forum for dialogue between the UK's and EU's competition authorities to discuss how best to face emerging and rapidly changing markets, and how to tackle anticompetitive business conduct within them.

This agreement complements the reforms included in the Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Bill, which is currently progressing through Parliament. Part 5 of the Bill includes provisions to enhance cooperation between the UK's competition and consumer authorities and their overseas counterparts through the refinement of the UK's information sharing laws applying to those UK authorities, and the introduction of investigative assistance powers.

Officials in the Department for Business and Trade and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office have contacted EU counterparts and are due to commence formal negotiations at the end of April. The Competition and Markets Authority will be involved with the negotiations by providing technical insights on how cooperation will work in practice.

We are committed to keeping Parliament updated on the progress of these negotiations. We will write again at the conclusion of talks to provide more detail on the negotiated terms of the agreement. Our officials are also available to provide a briefing to the clerks of your Committees during the course of negotiations, should that be helpful.

We have written in similar terms to Rt Hon. Liam Byrne MP, Chair of the Business and Trade Committee and Dame Meg Hillier MP, Chair of the Public Accounts Committee. We have also copied this letter to Lord Goldsmith KC, Chair of the House of Lords International Agreements Committee.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin', written in a cursive style.

MINISTER HOLLINRAKE

Minister of State at the Department for Business and Trade

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'N Ghani', written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

MINISTER GHANI

Minister for Europe at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office