

The Rt Hon Liam Byrne MP
Chair, Business and Trade Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

T: +44 (0) 020 4551 0011

E: Alexander.Correspondence@businessandtrade.gov.uk

W: www.gov.uk/dbt

25 June 2025

Dear Liam,

**Update following round 7 of negotiations on an enhanced Free Trade Agreement
with Switzerland**

The seventh round of negotiations on an enhanced Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Switzerland took place in London between 5 and 13 June 2025.

Economic growth is our first mission in government and FTAs have an important role to play in achieving this. An enhanced trade agreement with Switzerland will support British businesses, back British jobs, and put more money in people's pockets.

Switzerland is the UK's 10th biggest trading partner and the UK-Swiss trade relationship was worth more than £45 billion in 2024. Services exports account for more than £18 billion of this, making Switzerland the UK's 6th largest services export partner. This included over £700 million from Scotland and £1 billion from the North West in 2022. The trading relationship supported 130,000 services jobs across the UK in 2020.

An enhanced FTA with Switzerland aims to deliver long-term certainty for UK services firms, by locking in access to the Swiss market, guaranteeing the free flow of data and cementing business travel arrangements.

This round saw momentum in a number of areas:

Services and Investment

Constructive discussions were held across services. The UK and Switzerland agreed to exchange services market access offers before the next round. This is where the key benefits to businesses on both sides will be found by locking in certainty and potential new market access opportunities.

Outside of market access, negotiators made good progress and agreed several key commitments in Cross Border Trade in Services and Domestic Regulation. Progress was also made on Financial Services, with both sides confirming our shared ambition in this area.

On mobility, talks focused on long-term certainty for UK businesspersons travelling to and delivering services in Switzerland.

Innovation

Both sides discussed how the FTA can support trade in innovative goods and services. This could include mechanisms to bring together businesses, academia and government to discuss ways to address any trade barriers and opportunities that arise from innovation in the future. This is an important request from businesses in the UK and Switzerland.

Intellectual Property

During this round, the UK and Switzerland focussed on Geographical Indications (GIs), with the aim of retaining the GIs already protected by the UK and Switzerland as well as establishing a streamlined process for the protection of new GIs. Negotiations will continue with the aim of agreeing a comprehensive framework for the protection of Intellectual Property.

Goods

Progress was made on Goods Market Access as we continue the process of modernising the existing agreement. 99% of UK goods exports to Switzerland by value are already tariff free. We reached provisional agreement on Rules of Origin which will make it easier for UK businesses to use imported materials in their exports to Switzerland through a new cumulation article and provide continuity by preserving the existing product specific rules.

Constructive discussions were also held on SPS and TBT. Both sides agreed ambitious animal welfare provisions that will support enhanced cooperation and reinforce our existing high animal welfare standards.

Anti-Corruption

The UK and Switzerland made progress on how to reflect shared resolve to eliminate bribery and corruption in international trade and recognise existing UK-Swiss cooperation on anti-corruption in the FTA.

Consumer Protection

Provisional agreement was reached on the protection of consumer rights. This will ensure UK and Swiss consumers have a greater understanding of their rights when buying goods abroad or online including their opportunities for redress.

Dispute Settlement

The approach to Dispute Settlement was provisionally agreed. This will ensure any state-to-state disputes can be dealt with consistently and fairly in a cost-effective, transparent, and timely manner. It will provide certainty for businesses and stakeholders.

Procurement

The UK continues to strive for outcomes which build upon the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA), of which we are both members, with the intention of seeking economically and commercially meaningful market access.

Trade and Development

Provisional agreement was reached on Trade and Development. The approach reflects the instrumental role that trade and sustainable development plays in contributing to prosperity and a resilient global economy. The UK and Switzerland committed to promote developing country participation in trade, including through sharing best practice on policy and joint advocacy in multilateral fora.

Next steps

Round 8 of negotiations is set to take place in Switzerland in Autumn 2025. A number of intersessionals will take place in advance.

The government is focussed on securing outcomes in an enhanced FTA that boost economic growth for the UK and I will continue to update Parliament on the progress of negotiations.

The government will only ever sign a trade agreement which aligns with the UK's national interests, upholding our high standards across a range of sectors, alongside protections for the National Health Service.

I value the important role that the Committee plays in the scrutiny of the government's ambitious trade agenda. We are committed to being as transparent as possible during live negotiations and ensuring Parliament is appropriately updated whilst also ensuring we protect our negotiating position.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Douglas Alexander', with a stylized, cursive script.

THE RT HON DOUGLAS ALEXANDER MP
Minister of State for Trade Policy and Economic Security
Department for Business and Trade