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ANNEX 2

**ANNEX**

*to the*

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN  
PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL  
COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

**on targeted contingency measures in the absence of an agreement with the United  
Kingdom on a future partnership**

## **Annex II: Overview of stakeholder outreach by the Commission in the context of negotiations with the United Kingdom**

Since the beginning of the negotiation with the United Kingdom in 2017, the Commission has reached out to a variety of stakeholders, representing a balanced set of interests across various economic and policy areas.

### **The Article 50 task Force**

The then “Article 50 task force” encouraged businesses, public interest-oriented associations (such as consumer and environmental organisations), trade unions, university associations, think tanks and other non-governmental organisations, to express their views.

Task force members, including the chief negotiator, only met organisations registered in the Transparency Register. All meetings of the chief negotiator, in Brussels and in the Member States, were published online.

With these meetings, the task force intended to keep stakeholders informed of the progress in the negotiation, listen to their views and areas of concern, and raise awareness on the inevitable changes that will happen at the end of the transition period – changes that would be of an even greater amplitude in the event of no deal.

In its report<sup>1</sup> of 11 February 2019, the European Ombudsman commended this policy of transparency and openness towards stakeholders. The Ombudsman noted that, at the time of the report, “*The Chief Negotiator has had around 100 meetings with organisations and individuals, while other members of the Taskforce have had around 500 such meetings. The Taskforce also worked with delegations in EU Member States to organise stakeholder events. The Commission has also supported events in the United Kingdom for citizens from remaining EU Member States.*”

### **The Brexit Preparedness Group**

In parallel, the Brexit Preparedness Group in the Commission Secretariat-General worked along several strands on preparing the Union for the inevitable effects of the United Kingdom becoming a third country, and on preparing contingency measures for the scenario where the withdrawal would happen without a withdrawal agreement being in place. The Commission adopted six Communications on Preparedness and published over 100 Preparedness notices as well as a large number of fact sheets and checklist for the use of business, stakeholders and administrations in their preparations.

### **The ‘UK Task force’**

Since the entry into force of the Withdrawal Agreement on 1 February 2020, the newly created “UK Task Force” has continued this open, transparent and regular dialogue with a variety of stakeholders. Members of the UK task force have increasingly raised awareness on

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/correspondence/en/109825>

the inevitable changes that will happen on 1 January 2021, when the UK leaves the single market and the customs union. This dialogue has included the following actions in particular:

- Task force members, including the head of the task force, met with non-governmental associations, federations of trade unions, consumer organisations and business federations representing a wide range of economic sectors, such as energy, aviation, automotive, road transport, chemicals, agri-food, digital, financial services, fisheries and pharmaceuticals.
- Task force members took part to a stakeholder dialogue organised by the Commission trade department on 14 July 2020. This online forum gathered participants from a broad diversity of economic sectors, across Europe.
- The Head of the task force used his speeches, press conferences, statements and social media tools to reach out to stakeholders. For instance, in the summer 2020 he initiated a Twitter campaign, in all EU official languages, raising awareness on the need to prepare to inevitable changes at the end of the transition.
- A number of Commission Directorate-generals also proactively reached out to their own European stakeholders. For instance, the Commission department for taxation and customs produced leaflets, factsheets, social media messages and webpages targeting in particular small and medium enterprises and micro-businesses, and raising their attention on the need to prepare from a tax and customs perspective.
- Finally, the Commission helped national authorities in their efforts to reach out to national stakeholders and raise awareness on the need to prepare, through the adoption of the “*Getting ready for changes*” communication<sup>2</sup> on 9 July 2020, the 89 sectorial notices and the publication of a ‘*Brexit readiness checklist*’ for companies doing business with the United Kingdom.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/getting-ready-changes-communication-readiness-end-transition-period-between-european-union-and-united-kingdom\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/getting-ready-changes-communication-readiness-end-transition-period-between-european-union-and-united-kingdom_en)