

Minutes of the fifth Trade Specialised Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade, London, 22 October 2025

Opening remarks and adoption of the agenda

The UK co-chair welcomed participants to the meeting. The provisional agenda, as published in advance, was adopted.

In their opening statements, both co-chairs emphasised the strong UK-EU working relationship. The UK-EU Summit in May and the Common Understanding were both recognised as demonstrating commitment on both sides to support economic growth and jobs and to facilitate trade.

The UK co-chair reaffirmed willingness to continue this positive trajectory with joint technical engagement on priority areas throughout the year, under the auspices of the committee. The EU co-chair echoed the commitment to cooperation between the two sides and confirmed that technical discussions would help resolve any outstanding points and help minimise technical barriers to trade.

Item 2: Product Safety

The UK co-chair reflected on the recent discussions on Annex 16 regarding the exchange of data through the UK and EU market surveillance databases. Both the UK and EU reflected positively on the cooperation so far and welcomed further developments in this space.

The EU updated on General Product Safety Regulation (GPSR) introduced in December 2024, including an outline of the GPSR secondary legislation package. The EU also gave an update on the upcoming review of the New Legislative Framework (NLF), which will cover digitalisation, circularity and conformity assessment including strengthening the oversight of Notified Bodies.

The UK updated on the Product Regulation and Metrology (PRAM) Act, which received Royal Assent on 21 July 2025. The UK also highlighted the publication of the recent annual delivery report of the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS), noting in particular the actions taken in respect of online marketplaces.

The EU updated on their targeted evaluation of the Medical Device Regulations and In Vitro Diagnostic Regulations 2017. The EU covered the upcoming roll-out of further modules of the EUDAMED database in 2026 and suggested a separate discussion on MHRA's access to EUDAMED, as the competent authority for Northern Ireland. Both parties took an action to provide relevant contacts for further discussion on this matter.

The UK updated on the plan to reform the Medical Devices Regulation 2002 with draft regulations scheduled for 2026.

Item 3: Marking and Labelling

The EU presented its approach on Digital Product Passports (DPP), including its plan for implementing acts and potential for future cross-border interoperability. The EU offered a further technical exchange on DPPs, which the UK accepted.

The UK updated on its work towards digitalisation, including the potential of voluntary digital labelling and digitisation of market surveillance information.

Item 4: Standardisation

The UK provided an update on the public policy paper on standardisation, published in January 2025, emphasising the role of standards in advancing policy objectives. The UK outlined the importance of

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the British Standards Institution's (BSI) continued active role in CEN/CENELEC. This ensures standards remain relevant across markets and pools relevant expertise across Europe.

The EU provided an update following its 2022 standardisation strategy, and its approach to common specifications. The EU's consultation on the revision of the EU Standardisation Regulation, launched in September and is live until December, and the EU welcomed input from the UK and other third countries.

In response to a UK query, the EU explained that the thinking on the approach, with regards to a small number of recent CEN and CENELEC standardisation requests on Cyber Resilience and Space. Participation is limited to EU/EEA national standards bodies, and is still at a very initial stage.

Item 5: TBT Regulation and Strategy

The EU updated on their approach to digitalisation under the Omnibus IV legislative proposal, which proposed digitalisation of information, such as that relating to declaration of conformity, hence eliminating paper-based requirements in this area. The UK indicated an interest in understanding the EU's approach to digitalisation under Omnibus IV.

The UK provided an overview of the TBT aspects of the Industrial Strategy (IS) and Trade Strategy (TS) that were launched in summer 2025. The UK covered international regulatory cooperation initiatives and the commitment to explore new Mutual Recognition Agreements or expand existing ones, whilst upholding the UK's product regulation framework and commitment to international standards. Both sides noted that MRAs are an important tool to reduce regulatory barriers and costs for businesses where relevant.

Item 6: Chemicals (Annex 13)

The UK updated on the latest developments, including progress of the legislative proposals to reform the biocidal products, classification, labelling and packaging (CLP) of chemicals, and prior informed consent (PIC) for export and import of hazardous substances regimes in Great Britain. Also mentioned was the separate proposal to extend the data protection deadline in Article 95(5) of the Biocidal Products Regulation. The UK also noted the consultation on restricting PFAS in firefighting foams, which EU experts expressed an interest in, and the consultation on ATRM registrations.

The UK also updated on the UK REACH work programme and the UK's new public commitment to draw from regulatory decision-making in other jurisdictions, particularly the EU. This is in order to inform its approach to apply regulatory measures on chemicals more quickly and efficiently and in a way which is more aligned with the EU as the UK's closest trading partner. The UK stressed the importance of further technical cooperation with the EU to support this approach, in particular on areas such as the Candidate List, Authorisation List and especially the Restriction List. The UK also welcomed agreement at the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Stockholm Convention on medium chain chlorinated paraffins for global elimination as a Persistent Organic Pollutant (POP) and highlighted the positive cooperation EU and UK officials have had on respective approaches to implementing POPs restrictions and called for this cooperation to continue.

The EU shared an overview of new restrictions and authorisations under EU REACH. Details are published in the Comitology Register.

The EU also presented the simplification package for the chemicals industry adopted on 8 July 2025, which consists of two legislative proposals and the European Chemicals Industry Action Plan that aim to support the chemical industry, strengthen resilience and support for critical production. The Commission also intends to establish a Critical Chemicals Alliance, which will act as a strategic unit to address key challenges affecting the chemical sector and will bring together key stakeholders, including public authorities and industry.

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The legislative proposals presented in the simplification package are currently under discussion by co-legislators, with one of the regulation proposals being set for adoption by the end of 2025.

EU also updated on the preparation of the delegated acts under CLP regulation, including the delegated act implementing Revisions 8-10 of UN GHS into EU legislation.

The EU updated on progress made on phasing out animal testing, with a roadmap due for publication in first quarter of 2026.

The Parties agreed to facilitate technical discussions on antifoulants in the coming months. The UK also indicated further areas of potential mutual interest, in particular lead in ammunition, PFAS and animal testing, noting the high degree of industry support for chemicals related topics to be discussed by EU and UK technical experts. The EU noted that is open to technical discussions on antifoulants.

Item 7: Trade in Wine (Annex 15)

The EU indicated that the wine reform proposal, which also cover aromatised wines, was currently being discussed by the Council and the European Parliament. The Council adopted its negotiating mandate in June, and the European Parliament vote was due in November 2025. The first triologue was planned for December 2025.

The EU informed that its Electronic system for Agricultural Non-customs formalities (ELAN) is planned for testing in January 2027 with mandatory use expected as of January 2031. The system is being introduced in phases and wine certification will be included in the second phase. The EU has sought technical input from the UK on this, which the UK committed to providing shortly.

The UK indicated that it was considering next steps on assimilated wine law.

Item 8: Technical Barriers to Trade sectoral Working Groups

The UK updated on the second Motor Vehicles and Parts Working Group, where parties exchanged information on regulatory developments and updates on the EU's automotive plan, and the UK's amendments to the GB type approval scheme. The UK has adopted an explicit presumption in favour of alignment with EU regulations; it has aligned with updated EU regulation on e-Call, and is accepting EU type approvals. The UK has also implemented UN regulations on cybersecurity and software updates. Both parties emphasised the importance of continued cooperation within the UN framework (UNECE WP 29). Plans for a third working group meeting in 2026 were confirmed.

The UK updated on the discussions at the second Medicinal Products Working Group meeting held in June 2025, where the parties covered regulatory developments.

The EU provided additional information on Critical Medicines Act (CMA), including on the opportunities for international cooperation and strategic international partnerships. The UK updated on its Medicines for Human Use (Clinical Trials) (Amendment) Regulations 2025, which will come into force on 28 April 2026. The EU indicated it was closely monitoring UK developments, in the context of its own future approach under the EU Biotech Act.

The UK updated on the discussions at the second Organic Products Working Group meeting held in June 2025, including on continued cooperation on compliance and on addressing fraud in the organics supply chain. The Parties committed to ongoing technical engagement.

Item 9: AOB

None

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Conclusion and forward look

Both UK and EU co-chairs thanked their respective experts for covering a wide range of cross-cutting and sectoral matters. Both parties look forward to the 2026 working groups, and thanked EU Member States and UK Devolved Governments delegates who attended virtually.

They reiterated the UK and EU's joint interest in tackling technical barriers to trade. The EU co-chair said that global market conditions remained challenging and both sides remained open to collaborate in bilateral exchanges, mindful there were over 200,000 EU companies, mainly SMEs, across a range of Member States that export to the UK. Both sides committed to follow up on specific agreed activities.

Participation List**EU delegation**

- EU Co-chair of the Trade Specialised Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade
- European Commission Officials (TRADE, GROW, AGRI, JUST, SANTE, ENV)
- EU Officials from Delegation of the European Union to the UK
- Representatives of EU Member States

UK Delegation

- UK Co-chair of the Trade Specialised Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade
- UK Government Officials from DBT, DHSC, FCDO, DEFRA, Cabinet Office, Department for Transport
- UK Government Official from the UK Mission to the European Union
- Scottish Government Officials
- Northern Ireland Executive Official
- Welsh Government Officials
- Crown dependencies
- UK officials from regulatory bodies - Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and Health and Safety Executive