

# Post-Brexit Trade Policy

Why we need a transparent and democratic procedure for the development of UK trade deals

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**TRADE JUSTICE**  
MOVEMENT

# What Brexit means for UK Trade Policy

- The UK's decision to leave the EU means the UK will regain responsibility for trade policy and the Government will need to develop new trade deals with partner countries.
- Modern trade agreements impact on most aspects of our lives from the way our public services are managed to our wages and working conditions and our access to medicine and healthcare.
- Under current rules, the Government has unchecked powers to negotiate trade agreements in secret and to ratify these deals without a vote in Parliament. Civil society has no formal role and the texts can remain secret until 21 days before they become law.



# UK Procedure for Developing Trade Deals

- The negotiation and ratification of trade agreements is governed by the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010.

Step 1. Under its prerogative powers, the Government negotiates and then signs a trade agreement.

- Parliament does not have any oversight or right of input
- Consultations with the public or civil society are not guaranteed
- Deals can be negotiated in secret and texts do not have to be publicly released

Step 2. The Government lays the signed trade agreement before Parliament, along with an explanatory memorandum. The trade agreement sits before Parliament for 21 days before it can be ratified.

- A parliamentary debate and affirmative vote is not guaranteed



# UK Procedure for Developing Trade Deals

Step 3. If Parliament does not object to the trade agreement the Government can ratify the trade agreement.

- An objection to a trade agreement would have to be put during Opposition Day debate, as the government has no incentive to risk losing a vote, and cannot be raised during Backbench Business debate
- Only 20 Opposition Day debates per session , meaning there may not be a debate scheduled within the 21 day window = ratification by default
- Opposition may prioritise other policy issues

Step 4. If Parliament does object to the trade agreement, the trade agreement can be resubmitted to Parliament for an additional 21 days. This process can be followed an unlimited number of times.



# What can the Government do?

- TTIP campaign led to criticism of the lack of transparency and democracy in trade negotiations in the UK and internationally.
- Without reform we will have less control over trade policy after Brexit than we do in the EU.
- Government plans introduce a Trade Bill that will provide an “international trading framework for the UK outside of the European Union.”
- Trade Bill must outline a new procedure for the negotiation and ratification of trade agreements.



# What would a new procedure include?

1. The right of Parliament to set a thorough mandate to govern each trade negotiation, with a remit for the devolved administrations
2. The right of the public to be consulted as part of setting that mandate
3. A presumption of full transparency in negotiations
4. The right of Parliament to amend and to reject trade deals, with full debates and scrutiny guaranteed and a remit for the devolved administrations, and
5. The right Of Parliament to review trade deals and withdraw from them in a timely manner.

# How can you support the campaign?

- Watch a video produced by Sum of Us about the impacts of Brexit

<https://www.facebook.com/SumOfUsOrg/videos/1298903113529019/>

- Look out for the Fairtrade Foundations upcoming petition at:

[www.fairtrade.org.uk/brexit](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/brexit)

- Follow TJM on twitter – to find out more about campaign activities [TradeJusticeMov](#)

