



## Department for International Trade

### Consultation on Future Free Trade Agreement with the Gulf Cooperation Council

#### Overview

The United Kingdom has agreed with the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (hereafter referred to as the Gulf Cooperation Council, GCC) that we will begin negotiations towards a new Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in 2022. The GCC is a political and economic alliance between the Kingdom of Bahrain, the State of Kuwait, the Sultanate of Oman, the State of Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

The Government's ambition is to secure FTAs with countries covering 80% of United Kingdom trade by the end of 2022. The Department for International Trade (DIT) aims to secure an ambitious programme of FTAs to benefit the whole of the United Kingdom and support businesses of all sizes across different sectors of the economy. The department is conducting consultation, seeking views from a wide range of stakeholders, to inform our negotiation objectives and understanding of the economic, environmental and social impacts of an FTA with the GCC.

The UK has a strong bilateral relationship with the GCC, with a significant trading partnership that amounted to £41.4 billion in 2019. Following the conclusion of the UK-GCC Joint Trade and Investment Review, published in June 2021, both parties are seeking a deeper trade and investment

relationship. FTAs are expected to enhance economic growth and prosperity by:

- increasing import and export flows;
- increasing investment flows (both outward and inward);
- enhancing productivity through a more efficient allocation of resources and greater openness to international competition.

For further information on our current trading relationship with the GCC, please refer to the [information note](#).

DIT is committed to negotiating an agreement that delivers benefits to stakeholders across the whole of the UK. The responses to this consultation will inform our policy making and negotiating positions for engaging with the GCC, and so it is important to us that you respond and set out your priorities for the shape of a future FTA. The consultation will be open from 8th October until 11:45pm on 14th January 2022. Following which the Government will publish a response based the consultation's findings.

If you have further accessibility needs, please email [uk.gccconsultation@trade.gov.uk](mailto:uk.gccconsultation@trade.gov.uk).

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