

17 July Brexit update: Building a lorry park in Kent

*Businesses now have a better idea of what exporting and importing goods from the EU will be like, write **Ros Taylor** and **Roch Dunin-Wąsowicz** (LSE) – and they don't like it much.*

Suddenly, it's all about the customs declarations. UK firms face substantial costs — exceeding £13 billion [in customs fees alone](#), according to Bloomberg. Four years of uncertainty about what Brexit means for UK-EU trade are coming to an end as bulldozers move into Kent.

“Contractors moved in on the 27-acre spot close to Junction 10a of the M20 today as ministers prepare for the end of the transition period in December,” [reported Kent Online](#). Locals were [annoyed](#) that the first they heard of it was through the press. The site will function as both a customs clearance centre and a lorry park. It is just the first of [10-12 planned customs facilities](#), five of them in Kent.



Lorries queue at Dover after ‘Operation Stack’, when trucks are forced to queue on the M20, was implemented due to bad weather in 2013. Photo: [Paul Smith](#) via a [CC-BY-NC-SA 2.0 licence](#)

The government has now published a 260-page document, [The Border with the European Union: Importing and Exporting Goods](#), which explains that full customs declarations will be needed from July 2021. Products of animal origin require checks and pre-notification from April. “About half the food consumed in the UK is imported, with four-fifths of food imported from the EU alone,” [notes the FT](#). “The Food and Drink Federation warned the lists of different processes set out in the document would be ‘bewildering’ for many operators. The lack of customs agents is the single biggest cause for concern.”

At some point I hope that there will be some recognition that all of the people who said that leaving the EU would mean additional cost and bureaucracy for businesses were right and those who spent the past years peddling fantastical solutions that don't exist were not.

— Sam Lowe (@SamuelMarcLowe) [July 13, 2020](#)

A mobile app designed to ease the process will [begin testing in November](#). Comparisons have inevitably been made with the NHS Test and Trace app.

The document doesn't cover the Northern Ireland Protocol, which will be covered in a later publication. The Northern Ireland Affairs Committee [questioned this week](#) whether the unfettered trade promised by the PM would be possible, given the need for an exit summary declaration. This was the ‘piece of paper’ the PM said NI businesses could throw in the bin.

Meanwhile, details of the UK's new fast-track immigration scheme have been [announced by the Home Office](#) – and it still [excludes care workers](#), despite a shortfall of around 120,000 posts. A spokesman said: “We want employers to invest more in training and development for care workers in this country.”

Scotland and Wales will [lose their devolved powers over state aid](#) under a bill expected this autumn.

Make no mistake, this would be a full scale assault on devolution – a blatant move to erode the powers of the Scottish Parliament in key areas. If the Tories want to further boost support for independence, this is the way to do it. <https://t.co/Gt2b3W7X05>

— Nicola Sturgeon (@NicolaSturgeon) [July 13, 2020](#)

On LSE Brexit

What would Joe Biden's election mean for the North Atlantic Trade Triangle? Experts gathered on Zoom through the LSE to discuss the future of UK-EU-US trade.

[LSE Continental Breakfast 17: The North Atlantic Trade Triangle](#)

“The rise of anti-system politics reflects the exhaustion of neoliberal democracy: an economic model that ultimately only worked for a minority, and a political system that closed off alternatives to it,” writes the LSE's Jonathan Hopkin.

[The rise of anti-system politics reflects the exhaustion of neoliberal democracy](#)

Finally...

A reminder that anyone who wants to go to a business meeting or conference in the EU after 1 January will have to [meet that country's requirements](#) in order to do so. In some cases you can already start applying for a visa.