



STATEMENT

29 March 2017

FoodDrinkEurope statement on Brexit

Today the United Kingdom's Prime Minister Theresa May has formally launched the Brexit process by triggering Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty. FoodDrinkEurope and its members underline the need to minimise the business impact of the UK's departure on European food and drink companies and the necessity to establish a new and sustainable working relationship as quickly as possible.

"EU-27 food and drink trade with the UK is worth some €45 billionⁱ, making it our largest trading partner. Exchanges both ways will be greatly affected by this decision, with economic consequences which still remain to be fully understood", declared Mella Frewen, Director General of FoodDrinkEurope. "The time has come for both parties to engage in meaningful negotiations, to create certainty for citizens and business. We encourage negotiators to work for the best deal, one that keeps barriers to an absolute minimum."

As the EU's largest manufacturing industry, the food and drink sector must be a priority in the upcoming negotiations. Minimising uncertainty is essential for ongoing business, for growth and investment. Ensuring the least possible disruption of trade in raw materials, ingredients and finished food and drink products, and minimising regulatory divergence, will be crucial elements in the negotiations for our industry. It will be vital to ensure there is adequate time for transition to new arrangements for the highly integrated and sophisticated supply chains that exist in the EU food industry.

~ENDS~

Note to the editors:

FoodDrinkEurope is the organization of Europe's food and drink industry, the largest manufacturing sector and leading employer in the EU and a key contributor to its economy (286 000 companies, 99% SMEs, 4.2 million employees).

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ⁱ In 2015