# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Trade Policy: the Issues for Wales**  |
| **DATE**  | **02 February 2018** |
| **BY** | **Carwyn Jones AM, First Minister**  |

Today we are publishing *Trade Policy: The Issues for Wales* (<https://beta.gov.wales/brexit>) the latest in our series of Brexit-related policy position papers. Leaving the EU represents the greatest change in our international trade status for generations. This paper demonstrates that whatever the challenges, as a Government we are clear that we will do all that we can to ensure an outcome to the negotiations with the EU-27 that is rational, evidence-based and serves the interests of businesses and citizens across Wales.

Wales is an outward-looking, globally trading nation. Our businesses trade across the world and in 2016 exports from Wales were worth £14.6 billion. Our economy is closely integrated into the Single Market and 61% of our identifiable goods exports and just under half of our imports are to and from the EU. We believe that full and unfettered access to Europe’s Single Market is vital to Wales’ forward economic interests. We also remain to be convinced that leaving a customs union with the EU is in our interests, at least for the foreseeable future. That said, we accept that there are significant trading opportunities outside of Europe and we are very committed to promoting Wales’ trade around the world.

The significant intersection between the development of the UK’s trade policy and devolved powers means that decisions on new trading relationships with both the EU and wider world must therefore be taken on the basis of real consultation between the UK Government and Devolved Administrations in order to reflect fully the interests of the whole of the United Kingdom. We have called for the establishment of a UK Council of Ministers, with remit to include consultation on trade issues between the four administrations. In the meantime, a new Joint Ministerial Committee on International Trade should be established to agree joint approaches on trade. For our part, the Welsh Government will be a constructive partner in such an approach.