



Glass and Glazing Federation

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Get ready for Brexit

The GGF Business Readiness Guide for the
UK's withdrawal from the European Union



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Introduction

As the Government and parliamentarians continue to debate and refine the full details of the UK's departure from the European Union, companies like yours, may need guidance and information from changes in legislation and policy to importing and exporting rules and tariffs to technical standards changes through to employing skilled labour from overseas.

The Glass and Glazing Federation as the leading industry's leading trade organisation has been commissioned by the Government to inform and help guide companies who manufacture, supply and install glass and glazing products.



This guide is the authoritative guide for the glass, glazing and fenestration industry and though not exhaustive covers many of the areas that could affect your business.

In particular;

- Technical standards
- Current changes from EU directives such as the Construction Products Regulation / CE Marking
- Implications on importing and exporting
- The potential increases in the shortage of skilled labour

No matter when Brexit happens, it will very likely affect your company's operations, whether its products, services and/or employees. The GGF advises that you prepare for Brexit to help your company cope.

The GGF expects that in the future and through the Brexit process, that more regulatory, legislative and policy changes affecting the glass and glazing industry are inevitable. However, companies can be assured that the GGF will provide updates to the industry when any changes occur.



Technical Standards

The GGF Technical department contributes to the development of National, European and International Standards to the benefit of GGF Members and the industry as a whole.

GGF Technical officers represent the views of the GGF Membership to standardisation bodies at National, European and International levels. These include:

- British Standards Institution (BSI)
- The European Committee for Standardization (CEN, French: Comité Européen de Normalisation)
- International Organisation for Standardization (ISO)



The GGF holds a comprehensive library of British, European and International Standards, monitors changes to standards, and keeps GGF Members and the industry informed of any significant developments. For more information please visit www.ggf.org.uk

Technical standards of the glass, glazing and fenestration industries could be affected if they are aligned to EU legislation in particular the Construction Products Regulation (2103) and related hENs (harmonised European Norms/standards).

The GGF will continue to work closely with the various Standards authorities to influence and shape industry standards.



Legislative and Policy Changes

If and more likely when the UK leaves the European Union, EU legislation and policies in isolation, will no longer be applicable. However, there are many parts of UK law that has incorporated European legislation and this UK legislation may continue or may change following Brexit.

An example of this is the Construction Product Regulation (CPR) which came into force in 2013. This EU directive requires companies placing products (under harmonised European Norms) on the market to comply with the CPR. This has required companies to CE mark their products and to ensure they have a Declaration of Performance to prove their product complies.



The GGF is currently working with Government departments and sits on several sub-committees to help shape or influence policy, legislation and regulations.

As well as expected changes in Building Regulations following the Hackitt Report (following the Grenfell Fire Inquiry), the GGF anticipates that there could be significant changes in policy and legislation that will affect the glass and glazing industry in the UK following and during Brexit.

It's important to note that the changes will differ depending on whether the UK leaves the EU with or without a deal.

As the GGF receives information and news of any potential changes it will cascade to the industry via its online platforms and channels. All changes to policy, regulations and legislation affecting the industry will be published on the GGF's new Brexit Hub.

Our advice to all companies operating in the glass, glazing and fenestration industries is to keep up to date with the changes to help your company cope through this transitional period.

Importing and Exporting

When the UK leaves the EU, there may be tax and customs changes

Exporters

If you are an exporter of goods to the EU and the UK leaves the EU without a deal, then it is advised that you:

- Get an Economic Operator Registration and Identification (EORI) number starting with GB to continue exporting goods.
- Check your importer has an EU EORI number.
- Decide who will make the export declarations (you can hire someone to deal with customs for you, or you can do it yourself.)
- Decide if you want to export your goods using transit (you may be able to use the Common Transit Convention (CTC) to simplify how your goods pass through customs and when your importer pays customs duties.
- Check the rate of tax and duty for your goods (your importer will need to pay tax and duty on your goods after Brexit. This will depend on the classification of the goods.)
- Check what else you may need to do for the type of goods you want to export (you may for example need to apply for an export licence.)
- Find out if any changes in VAT will affect you.
- Decide who will transport your goods outside the UK (you can hire someone to transport your goods, or you can do it yourself.)

The above is just some advice for exporters should the UK leave the EU without a deal.



Importers

If you are an importer of goods from the EU and the UK leaves the EU without a deal, then it is advised that you:

- Get an Economic Operator Registration and Identification (EORI) number starting with GB to continue importing goods.
- Decide who will make the import declarations (you can hire someone to deal with customs for you, or you can do it yourself.)
- Apply to make importing easier (You can apply to use 'transitional simplified procedures' to reduce the amount of information you need to give at the border.
- Set up a duty deferment account if you import regularly (create a duty deferment account if you want to be able to make one payment of customs duties a month instead of paying for individual shipments. Note: You must set one up if you plan to use transitional simplified procedures.
- Check the rate of tax and duty for your goods (You'll need to pay customs duties and VAT on all imports.)
- Check what else you may need to do for the type of goods you want to export (you may for example need to apply for an export licence.)

The above is just some advice for importers should the UK leave the EU without a deal.

Skilled Labour

The Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) recent research indicates that approximately 168,000 skilled workers will be needed by 2022 to meet current construction requirements and with migrant workers playing such an important role in sustaining our industry, the end to free movement from Europe to the UK and the potential shortage of skilled labour is a real concern for many companies.

So far there is no substantial evidence to show that migrant construction workers are leaving the UK, but if and when Brexit happens, then there will be new immigration laws that will certainly tighten the restrictions for overseas workers wanting to pursue their careers in the UK.



Existing Overseas Workers

The UK government has reached an agreement in principle with the EU that will protect the rights of EU citizens and their family members currently living in the UK. It has also reached an agreement with Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, and a separate agreement with Switzerland.

These agreements mean that most citizens from the EU, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland will need to apply to stay in the UK via the UK Settlement Scheme by 31st December 2020. They can then continue living their lives here as they do now.

New Overseas Workers

Citizens of those states moving to the UK after the UK has left the EU and up until the end of 2020, will be able to obtain a temporary immigration status lasting 3 years. This will give businesses certainty that they will be able to recruit and retain staff after Brexit.

Other Immigration Changes

After the UK leaves the EU, there are plans to introduce a new points-based immigration system built around the skills and talent people have – not where they are from. The Government have yet to release full details of the system, but it is anticipated that construction skills will be seen as essential and be considered high on the system. Further measures to be introduced after Brexit include:

- removing the blue EU customs channel, requiring all travellers to make customs declarations by choosing the red or green channel
- introducing blue UK passports later this year
- removing the rights to permanent residence under retained EU law for those who arrive after Brexit

After Brexit, EU citizens will still be able to come to the UK for visits or short trips. They will be able to apply for Euro TLR (Temporary Leave to Remain) if they wish to stay beyond 31 December 2020.

Beyond Brexit

The GGF as the industry's leading trade body has been funded by Government to offer guidance on the changes when the UK leaves the EU, to companies in the glass, glazing and fenestration industries.

The GGF has set up a new "Brexit Hub" on its trade website www.ggf.org.uk. The Brexit Hub consists of key information, documents and news on the Brexit issues that may affect your business as and when the UK exits the European Union.

The GGF will also continue to represent the industry on the main Standards Committees, on Government committees and at industry meetings with related construction trade bodies.



As the GGF receives relevant information from those meetings and via various Government departments, it will cascade information in the following ways:

- Breaking news via the GGF Members First newsletter
- Via content updates uploaded onto the GGF Brexit Hub
- Information and discussions at GGF Regional meetings (over 30 per year across the UK) and at Specialist Technical Group meetings (approximately 60 per year) and at industry events and summits
- Via social media and links back to the new content on the GGF Brexit Hub
- Via the trade media with regular press releases on any changes

The GGF will also continue working with leading experts regarding technical standards, political activity, legislation and policy.

In addition will continue to attend All Party Parliamentary Groups and other designated political groups and working parties to be the voice of the industry.

Though Brexit may happen fairly quickly, the implications of the withdrawal from the EU and further changes, may continue for a long period of time with some experts saying between 18 months and 5 years. The GGF therefore suggests, all companies prepare themselves for a significant period of change in the trading environment.

How your company can stay ahead?

- Access to the GGF Brexit Hub is free and does not require any log in details
- Downloads are also free from the Brexit Hub
- GGF regional or technical meetings are open to all GGF Members to attend free and non-Members can attend at the discretion of the Chairperson of the respective group
- GGF Members can use our technical hotline and consultancy services
- The GGF technical library of over 90 publications is fully accessible with free downloads for all GGF Members. Non-members can obtain this information via the GGF shop
- Follow the GGF on social media in particular LinkedIn and Twitter (@GGF_News)
- Subscribe free to trade media publications

The latest Brexit information is now available on
GGF Brexit Hub on www.ggf.org.uk



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