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EU-UK SUMMIT

BritCham Briefings Summary

2025

Strategic Context and High-Level Messaging

The EU-UK Summit on May 19th provided the platform to announce closer strategic alignment and renewed political intent between the EU and the UK.

A notable shift in tone is marked by the joint statement committing to work as strategic partners sending a strong political signal. This creates momentum for expanded cooperation across sectors, supported by this first EU-UK Summit and future annual summits. The sequencing of deals with the US, India, and the EU showcases balanced diplomacy and sectoral benefits for the UK.



Three key outcomes shape the future partnership:

1

Joint Statement: Shared values and priorities, Ukraine, defence, climate, and sustainability.

2

Common Understanding: An agreement on the areas that can be negotiated now through future treaties and legal instruments.

3

Security & Defence Partnership: Negotiations concluded ahead of the Summit, enabling UK participation in the EU's SAFE initiative, strengthening industrial cooperation and access to joint procurement opportunities.

Four Priority Areas for Collaboration:

1. Security and Defence

- UK gains access to the EU's SAFE initiative on joint procurement and defence resilience.
- Establishes formal cooperation on industrial defence capabilities, including supply chains and joint investment.
- Signals mutual interest in addressing shared threats through structured, project-based collaboration.

2. Justice and Home Affairs Cooperation

- Justice and home affairs cooperation focuses on irregular migration, organised crime, drugs, border management, and health security (e.g., pandemic preparedness), with mechanisms still to be developed.

3. Economic and Regulatory Cooperation

- **Fisheries:** 12-year reciprocal access deal.
- **SPS and TBTs:** Reduced product checks between EU-UK and GB-NI in exchange for dynamic alignment; future scope and text to be negotiated.
- **Sustainability:** Strong joint commitment on climate and sustainability goals.
- **Energy:** Agreement to link ETS; electricity trading under single market rules with level playing field conditions. CBAM to be discussed further.
- **Steel:** Removal of EU safeguard tariffs on UK exports.

4. Mobility and People-to-People Links

Progress made, but many areas remain unresolved. Under discussion:

- Youth mobility, Erasmus+, touring artists, business mobility, and MRPs.
- Proposal to expand e-gate access and reduce travel friction.
- A common understanding exists, but detailed mechanisms are pending.

Next Steps:

- UK coordination through the Cabinet Office and departments; EU via Secretary General, European Commissioner for Trade Maroš Šefčovič, and relevant Directorates-General.
- Existing TCA structures remain in place, including specialised committees (e.g., on circular economy).
- Both parties aim to build on existing agreements and continue discussions on key relationship issues.
- Industry plays a vital role in expanding dialogue on next steps.
- Mutual interest, supported by clear evidence and business consensus, will guide negotiations.

Summary Points of the Three Key Outcomes:

Joint Statement

- A new Strategic Partnership between the UK and EU.
- EU-UK Security and Defence Partnership.
- Calling for a full unconditional ceasefire in Ukraine.
- Maintaining global economic stability and mutual commitment to free, sustainable, fair and open trade with the World Trade Organisation as paramount.
- Shared challenges in irregular migration.
- Regular meetings in joint strategic interests, in particular in the areas of economy and trade, and justice and home affairs.
- UK Foreign and Defence Secretaries and EU High Representative have agreed to foreign and security policy dialogues every six months.

Security and Defence Partnership

- UK has also applied to join the Permanent Structured Cooperation.
- Based on dialogue and consultation mechanisms to facilitate the exchange of information, as well as steering and oversight of its implementation.
- Areas of cooperation: Exchanges on regional security issues, peace building and crisis management (UK will consider CSDP), maritime security, security and defence initiatives, policies and instruments (PESCO, EDA), space security, emerging disruptive technologies, cyber issues, among other issues.
- EU and UK will explore opportunities for cooperation in the external dimension of irregular migration.
- Climate exchange and on peace, security and defence nexus.
- UK and EU will enhance cooperation and information exchange on global health security issues and on preparedness and response to global public-health security emergencies.

Common Understanding

- Security, defence, and development cooperation: Exploring routes to UK SAFE access.
- People at centre of EU-UK relationship: youth experience scheme to be explored, Erasmus+ association for the UK within MFF, value of travel and cultural & artistic exchanges (touring artists). Smoothing of UK travellers through EU eGates even after introduction of EES.
- Strengthening our economies while protecting our planet and its resources: Energy cooperation of UK exploring possible participation in EU internal electricity market, working towards common SPS area on food goods, working towards linking EU-UK ETS, dialogues on business mobility, competition cooperation.

- Internal security and judicial cooperation: greater cooperation and enforcement of TCA provisions and explore ways to reinforce mutual and reciprocal exchanges of data on fingerprints, DNA, and criminal records of third country nationals. Hague Convention on Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Judgments in Civil or Commercial Matters will enter into force for the United Kingdom on 1 July 2025.
- Irregular migration: action to tackle people smuggling and to deepen information sharing to control and manage migration at our respective external borders. Bolster operational and strategic cooperation to tackle the challenges posed by irregular migration along key routes and at external borders, including through their agencies, law enforcement and judicial cooperation, and information sharing capabilities.

