

Minutes of the Second EU-New Zealand FTA Committee on Trade in Goods Meeting

21 April 2026, virtual meeting

The second meeting of the European Union-New Zealand FTA (EU-NZ FTA) Committee on Trade in Goods was hosted by New Zealand on 21 April 2026, in an online format. The Committee on Trade in Goods was established under the provisions of the European Union-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (Chapter 24 Article 24.4 (1)(a)).

The meeting was co-chaired by David Allen from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade for New Zealand and Marianna Molnar from the Directorate General of Trade and Economic Security of the European Commission from the European Union.

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Opening Remarks

Both sides welcomed each other and their delegations to the second EU-NZ FTA Committee on Trade in Goods meeting. The view was shared that this meeting had a very positive agenda comprising forward looking items, information exchange, and implementation matters. Both sides approached discussions in a spirit of collaboration, symbolic of how EU-NZ FTA implementation is progressing generally through a wide variety of open and constructive channels of engagement. Both sides also acknowledged the broader context of our meeting taking place in a pivotal moment in the global trade policy environment. In this context, both sides stressed the importance of deepening our trade and economic cooperation and recalled the EU and NZ's commitment to upholding the international rules-based system beyond the EU-NZ FTA.

Agenda Item 2: Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted and can be found in Annex 1.

Agenda Item 3: Issues for Discussion

Discussions covered the following items:

3.1. Preference utilisation rates

Discussion covered the exchange of preference utilisation data, which took place prior to this Committee on Trade in Goods meeting. Both sides noted the data that has been shared meets the requirements and further analysis is required. Data experts are currently in communication working through some questions and clarifications.

It was agreed that both sides will aim to compare findings in mid-May 2026 and complete further analysis by early-June 2026. This timing is to allow reporting ahead of the next EU-NZ Trade Ministers engagement.

3.2. Energy and raw materials: critical raw materials policy developments in the EU and NZ

NZ provided an overview of NZ's Minerals Strategy, including an outline of NZ's critical minerals production and potential. NZ highlighted critical minerals opportunities in NZ (e.g. materials to extract from geothermal waters, from biomass, recovering via recycling), while noting the relatively small scale of NZ companies and in terms of international engagement the importance of finding the appropriate scale and level of ambition for business matching.

EU provided an outline of the Resource EU Action Plan, and its role in accelerating the goals of the EU Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA), including diversification of EU supply chains.

This was a useful update on developments. Both EU and NZ recognised the opportunity for further engagement and potential collaboration.

3.3 Tariff Rate Quotas (TRQs)– paperless certification

NZ reported that in recent months, the New Zealand Meat Board and the DG AGRI have held useful discussions to support the phased implementation of the ELAN system (Electronic system for Agricultural Non-customs formalities) between 2026 and 2028. These discussions are ongoing.

NZ referred to outstanding questions about the implementation of ELAN, including how ELAN will reflect net weight and carcass weight equivalent on certificates for FTA beef and sheep & goat meat quotas. NZ stressed the importance of developing the current version of ELAN to support the practice on paper certificates of recording mixed consignments of sheep & goat meat eligible for access under different EU quotas (order) numbers; and to support different net weight/carcass weight equivalent conversion factors on a single electronic certificate. Without these features the ELAN system will result in increased administrative fees, which ultimately are passed on to NZ exporters. NZ noted this went against the objective of paperless trade to reduce costs.

DG AGRI confirmed that the current setting of ELAN does not allow to issue one single certificate of eligibility for multiple sheep & goat meat in the development of this functionality ELAN is unlikely to start before late 2027 or early 2028. The EU confirmed 17 January 2028 is the date when third country issuing authorities, including NZ authorities, shall be required to use ELAN. NZ stressed its view that resolution of the outstanding questions about the implementation of ELAN is required before NZ issuing authorities are required to use ELAN.

The EU confirmed that requirements of the ELAN user interface are substantively identical to the existing documentation requirements for the completion of certificates of eligibility. The substance of the electronic documents is intended to remain unchanged and to achieve the same purpose as the existing paper certificates. The EU also confirmed it is not unilaterally modifying the requirements provided for in the EU-NZ FTA. The documentation requirements of Section B of Annex 2-A of the NZ-EU FTA will prevail in the event of any uncertainty in the use of this documentation.

NZ appreciated the openness of DG AGRI colleagues in engaging with NZ in this process. DG-AGRI also appreciated the exemplary cooperation with NZ on testing the ELAN system and the close engagement on enhancing the ELAN system. Both sides committed to keep working together.

3.4. TRQs – administration (return of unused import licences)

NZ reported it has not encountered issues during the 2025 quota year in which an EU importer would need to return an unused import licence, so that the amount could be reissued to NZ's annual quota volume. EU also reported it had not encountered any issues with return of unused import licences.

Should cases arise in future, NZ sought clarity on how the EU intends to implement Annex 2-A, Section B (16) of the EU-NZ FTA: “the importing Party shall provide a mechanism for the

return and reissue, until the end of the quota year, of unused import licences in a timely and transparent manner”.

NZ acknowledged that the ELAN system, under development by DG AGRI, may provide this mechanism. EU agreed that once in place ELAN will provide an automated and traceable system for the return and reissue of unused import licences in a timely and transparent manner. EU will continue development of the ELAN system to ensure implementation of this FTA provision through ELAN.

Both EU and NZ committed to maintaining close engagement, to ensure the ELAN system is responsive on this point.

3.5. Correction to the reference mentioned in Annex 2-A, Section C point 21 (c)

The EU commented that there is a minor need of correction to the reference in Annex 2-A, section C point 21 (c). The current text refers to WTO country-specific beef quota order number 09.4454, proposing the correct text is the EU-NZ FTA beef quota order number 09.4456.

NZ expressed its view that there is no need to correct Annex 2-A, section C point 21 (c) as the current reference in Annex 2-A text referring to 09.4454 (and not 09.4456) is correct.

Noting NZ’s interpretation, the EU will reconsider the need for a correction to the reference in Annex 2-A section C point 20 (c).

3.6. Standards in honey production and marketing

The EU outlined possible lowering of international honey production standards being promoted at ISO, allowing industrial dehumidification and therefore a lower quality standard for honey. The EU noted this procedure is restricted under EU regulations and is currently not permitted.

NZ thanked the EU for sharing this information and asked the EU to please share further details. NZ would then consider and assess the situation and risks.

Both EU and NZ recognised the opportunity for further discussion.

Following the EU’s exchange of further information, relevant EU and NZ agencies including the EU Delegation in Wellington and NZ Embassy in Brussels will proceed accordingly.

3.7. New Zealand’s export control regime: ongoing reform

NZ provided an update on its export control regime, which is one part of a multi-layered security framework to minimise the unwanted proliferation of strategic goods and technology. The permitting regime, currently under the Customs and Excise Act 2018, cannot control Intangible Technology Transfers. The proposed changes are intended to position NZ to benefit from potential reciprocal licensing exemptions and streamlined compliance processes, through achieving comparability with our closest export controls partners. A new stand-alone export controls Bill, incorporating existing export controls in the Customs and Excise Act and any new controls, will be needed to implement changes. The proposal is currently under-going further policy development, prior to decisions by Cabinet and consequential decisions on a new stand-alone exports controls Bill.

3.8. Trade Remedies: EU steel safeguard measures

NZ and EU officials met virtually on Friday 17 April 2026 to discuss the EU's proposed measures imposing quotas and increase tariffs on steel products.

The EU:

- Provided an update on the progression of measures in the European Parliament and Council.
- Updated New Zealand on the GATT Article XXVIII process underway in Geneva to modify the EU's tariff schedules to reflect the introduced measures.
- Outlined its commitment to engage with FTA partners on the proposed measures.

The EU confirmed the intention for the measures to apply to imported products from all countries, except for EEA countries (though EEA countries will be subject to melt and pour requirements, like all countries once it becomes a requirement). NZ expressed concern with the EU proposal to modify steel tariffs and impose quotas. NZ noted that the WTO GATT Article XXVIII process, and the associated rights, were distinct from those that existed under the EU-NZ FTA.

The EU noted it was interested in hearing from NZ and both sides agreed to engage in the coming weeks to hear NZ's concerns.

3.9. Technical Barriers to Trade (TBTs): areas for cooperation on addressing non-tariff barriers / measures for trade facilitation

The meeting acknowledged the inaugural EU-NZ FTA Trade Committee meeting committed both sides to cooperating on addressing non-tariff barriers and recognised that the mutual recognition agreement (MRAs) and the annex on Medicinal Products of the FTA continue to be highly valued by industry and regulators.

Noting earlier interest between NZ and EU in joint efforts on mechanisms for trade facilitation in the TBTs area, NZ shared information on a research project it has commissioned on TBTs. The research is focussed on the industrial sectors, to help reveal mechanisms that will best support industry to overcome TBTs and where there is space for improvement in existing mechanisms.

The EU expressed interest in the research, the research outcomes, and an openness to discuss sectors, new mechanisms or improvements to existing mechanisms that help reduce compliance costs and facilitate trade.

When the research report is finalised NZ will share the research with the EU. Both sides will arrange a time to discuss the research and consider developing a forward work programme if there are areas of shared interest.

Agenda Item 4: Confirmation of contact points

Both countries shared information on contact points. New Zealand noted the contact point is David Allen; and the European Union contact point is Marianna Molnar.

Agenda Item 5: Other Business

EU-Australia Free Trade Agreement: NZ congratulated the EU and Australia on concluding FTA negotiations on 24 March 2026, noting this was a positive development for the international rules-based system and strengthened ties between two of New Zealand's most important partners. NZ understood the outcome is broadly similar to the EU's FTA with NZ and that details on what has been agreed is of keen interest. NZ considered there should be an early review of the EU-NZ FTA, to reflect these new developments.

The EU welcomed recognition of conclusion of the EU-Australia FTA negotiations, remarking on the careful balance of sensitivities and interests on both sides. The EU noted there are provisions in relevant sections of the EU-NZ FTA relating to review and emphasised the high-quality EU-NZ FTA provisions on sustainability.

Agenda Item 6: Meeting Report

New Zealand as the host, would provide a first draft of the meeting report within 15 days and send the first draft to the EU contact point for the EU-side's review. The report will be made publicly available once both sides have agreed to it.

Agenda Item 7: Closing Remarks and next meeting

Both sides agreed that the meeting was held in a smooth and constructive manner. Both Chairs acknowledged the positive exchange of views and information even on the more complicated and technical topics, such as TRQ administration and steel safeguard measures. Both sides appreciated the shared commitment to full implementation of the EU-NZ FTA and establishing a basis for an even stronger trade and economic relationship. As next year's host, the EU agreed to provide NZ with details for the next meeting through the Trade in Goods Committee contact point when possible.

Chairs:

Mr David Allen

Senior Adviser, Trade & Economic Group

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
New Zealand

Ms Marianna Molnar

Policy officer – Trade relations with New Zealand

European Commission, Directorate-General for Trade and Economic Security
European Union

Annex 1

**Agenda for the 2nd EU-New Zealand FTA
Committee on Trade in Goods
21 April 2025
Virtual meeting – Host: NZ**

Time		Agenda Item	Lead
EU	NZ		
08.00-08.05	18.00-18.05	1. Opening Remarks	NZ/EU
08.05-08.10	18.05-18.10	2. Adoption of Agenda	EU/NZ
		3. Topics for discussion	
08.10-08.25	18.10-18.25	3.1 Preference utilisation rates	EU/NZ
08.25-08.40	18.25-18.40	3.2 Energy and raw materials: critical raw materials policy developments in the EU and NZ	EU/NZ
08.40-08.55	18.40-18.55	3.3 Tariff Rate Quotas: paperless certification	NZ
08.55-09.05	18.55-19.05	3.4 Tariff Rate Quotas: administration (return of unused import licences)	NZ
09.05-09.15	19.05-19.15	3.5 Correction to the reference mentioned in Annex 2-A, section C point 21 (c)	EU
09.15-09.20	19.15-19.20	3.6 Standards in honey production and marketing	EU
09.20-09.30	19.20-19.30	3.7 NZ's export control regime: ongoing reform	NZ
09.30-09.45	19.30-19.45	3.8 Trade Remedies: EU steel safeguard measures	NZ
09.45-10.00	19.45-20.00	3.9 Technical Barriers to Trade: areas for cooperation on addressing non-tariff barriers / measures for trade facilitation	NZ
10.00-10.05	20.00-20.05	4. Confirmation of contact points	EU/NZ
10.05-10.15	20.05-20.15	5. Any other Business	EU/NZ
		6. Next steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meeting report (process) • reporting to the Trade Committee • next Committee on Trade in Goods meeting 	EU/NZ
		7. Closing Remarks	EU/NZ