

# EU-NZ FREE TRADE AGREEMENT



## **EU-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement Negotiations: report on the sixth round of negotiations in Wellington, 9-13 December 2019**

New Zealand hosted EU negotiators in Wellington for the sixth round of negotiations from 9 to 13 December.

Further text was agreed and the round was used to help agree a forward plan for the negotiations in 2020. We are aiming to hold three negotiating rounds in the first half of 2020.

### **What happens next?**

Negotiators will meet again for round seven in Brussels in March 2020. Work in between rounds will continue via videoconference where possible.

### **Where can I find out more?**

Find out more about our overall objectives for this agreement, including brief information on each area being negotiated, at the [European Union-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement section](#) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade website.

You can also view the EU's initial text proposals [here](#).

### **Public consultation**

We are currently holding public consultation on proposed changes to New Zealand legislation to provide extended protection for **geographical indications (GIs)** in New Zealand. We will also be holding a series of workshops around the country in late January and February to discuss the details and answer questions about the proposals. More information on the consultation, and how to make a submission is available [here](#). Information about workshop dates and how to register will be available soon. This consultation closes on 27 March 2020.

### **Working group progress in brief**

The **Customs and Trade Facilitation** working group discussed the outstanding provisions in the chapter and agreed further text, including an article of review and appeal.

There was detailed discussion of the **Energy and Raw Materials** chapter during the round. Negotiators are focusing on how to promote our mutual interests, including sustainability objectives, within the text.

Negotiators were also able to meet and discuss **State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs)** prior to the formal round. Engagement was constructive on new alternative text proposals. Chapter leads were also able

to clarify the extent of the remaining issues, and agree a way to move forward at the same time as negotiating the chapter text.

The parties discussed **Geographical Indications (GI)**. This included detailed discussion of the consultation paper on the EU's proposed framework for GI protection released by New Zealand on 5 December 2019. New Zealand sought clarification from the EU on a number of aspects of its proposed regulatory framework to assist officials for the consultation process. The parties also discussed concerns and objections previously raised by New Zealand stakeholders in relation to the EU's proposed framework and the parties exchanged comments on the names each party had put forward for GI protection.

Discussions on **services and investment** issues made further progress on resolving outstanding issues. The list of substantive issues under discussion was narrowed and potential paths to address the remaining issues were discussed. Market access offers, and the path forward, will be discussed in further detail at the next round.

We had a good discussion on **SMEs (Small and medium enterprises)** at this round and made significant progress on outstanding technical issues in the text.

New Zealand and the EU continued negotiations for a **wine and spirits annex** on the basis of a joint working document. Both Parties undertook to further reflect on a number of provisions and continue to explore possible ways forward, with the aim of being able to make progress towards a trade facilitating annex at the next round.

Negotiators continued to work through the design of effective and efficient **Dispute Settlement** procedures, to enable the parties to resolve any future disagreement concerning the interpretation and application of the free trade agreement. Negotiators further narrowed the number of outstanding issues, and undertook to consult internally ahead of the next round. Most of the text across the Dispute Settlement Chapter, Rules of Procedure and Code of Conduct is now agreed.

Negotiators continued discussions on **General Exceptions**, which will apply across the free trade agreement and operate to protect the parties' ability to pursue important public policy objectives.