



Securing your
supply chain



Introduction

The UK left the European single market and customs union at the end of 2020.

This has obvious implications for any company shipping goods across the newly drawn EU border, but the business impacts will be far more wide-ranging.

Any firm with a supply chain that relies on products that pass in or out of the customs union could be affected to a certain degree, regardless of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) sealed by Britain and the EU.

With a new era in UK-EU trade beginning, it's essential that businesses understand the steps to take to help ensure their supply chain continues to operate smoothly.

The essential steps to take

A Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) is now in place between the UK and EU, but there are still new customs requirements and formalities for businesses to understand. We can help. Our expertise and experience in global trade means we are well-placed to ensure your supply and distribution networks continue to operate optimally. But there are a number of things you can do too. The following steps will help improve resilience and flexibility as you do business in 2021.

Enhance your supply chain data

Understanding where your goods are at any one time will improve your ability to spot delays before they happen and improve efficiency. FedEx offers sophisticated [online reporting](#) and up to two years of shipping data to help you dig into the details of your supply chain. It's important to also look beyond your immediate partners. Finding out who supplies your suppliers will allow you to examine any difficulties they might face – and identify the implications for your orders.

Understand the impact of taxes and tariffs

Examining where these might need to be paid throughout your supply chain will help predict possible effects on cash flow and profitability and allow you to plan for all scenarios. [Click here](#) to check what tariffs will apply to goods imported to the UK that aren't eligible for tariff-free treatment under the TCA.

Review licence and permission requirements

Find out in advance about any new requirements that may apply to goods you import. Some products will require import licences or certificates - [click here](#) to find out more. There may also be [changes to labelling and marketing standards](#) and [new rules](#) for excise goods.





Consider changes to sourcing and distribution locations

Changing suppliers, warehouse locations or shipping practices might help to mitigate the impact of new tariffs or border controls, by improving the speed at which you can service customers or production facilities. Of course, these kinds of measures will require careful consideration as part of your broader [supply chain strategy](#).

Understand new documentation requirements

There are new customs requirements now the transition period has ended. FedEx will perform [customs clearance](#) on your behalf but businesses should understand key documentation – such as commercial invoices, Incoterms® and UK and EU EORI numbers. It's also important to capture all the information you need – including country of origin and product composition details – at every stage of your supply chain and to understand how to claim EU or UK origin.

FedEx Electronic Trade Documents (ETD) allows customers to submit their trade documents – including commercial invoices and associated information – electronically, saving time, reducing paperwork and helping to reduce customs delays.

Decide who will make import declarations

Consider how to ensure your imports clear customs efficiently. You may have the capabilities you need within your business or you might benefit from external help provided by a partner such as FedEx. Export and import clearance is part of our standard service for goods moving across borders, unless customers advise otherwise.

Increase communication

Make sure you are communicating effectively throughout your supply chain. It's vital that everyone involved in the shipping process understands the new processes they may have to implement and the new rules they may be subject to.

How FedEx can help you

FedEx is known for its long-standing expertise in cross-border trade. We have the solutions, expertise and network strength to help businesses ensure their supply chains continue to operate efficiently.

We already clear thousands of shipments a day, and our Authorised Economic Operator (w) status means we have simplified clearance procedures. These – combined with our 45+ years of experience – help us to keep goods moving quickly.

Find out more about moving goods across borders smoothly at our [Brexit hub](#) or [contact us](#) with any questions about shipping to and from the EU in 2021.

