



**Department for
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C/o Gill Morris
Campaign Coordinator
Carry on Touring

1 April 2021

Dear All,

Thank you for your and your co-signatories letter dated 12 March, asking the Government to agree a visa-waiver agreement and touring exemption in the EU. I am grateful to you for taking the time to write to me on this matter.

The Government recognises the important contribution our cultural industries make to the UK's soft power and economic prosperity. We have always acknowledged that the end of freedom of movement between the UK and the EU would have implications for UK industry. In negotiations with the EU, we fought for a good deal for our world-leading creative sectors.

The Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) is now the basis of our trading relations with the EU. The sector's visa-waiver proposals would effectively require the TCA to be re-negotiated. The European Commission is extremely likely to argue that any EU-wide visa waiver agreement can only be part of a wider package, including a binding non-discrimination clause and a reciprocal visa waiver agreement covering all current and future Member States. This was proposed in the 2020 negotiations and this is incompatible with our manifesto commitment to retain control of our borders.

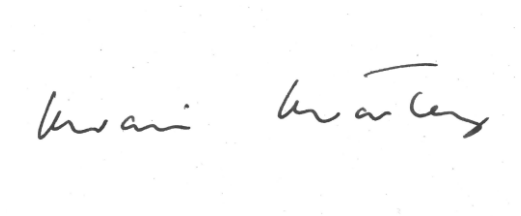
Now that the TCA has been signed, our focus is on implementation, and we are working with businesses to help them adjust to our new relationship with the EU. As you know, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has established a Ministerially chaired working group with industry representatives and officials from Departments across Whitehall. I understand that the industry's interest in a co-funded UK export office is being discussed there and I look forward to hearing more about this from my colleague, Secretary of State, Oliver Dowden MP. Similarly, the Department for Transport is looking at possible steps to support UK specialist hauliers to help mitigate the impact of the new rules on cabotage.

We are also focused on ensuring UK professionals have the information they need to travel to the EU. We have already published guidance on GOV.UK, signposting to official information provided by EU countries about their business travel routes. We are working on enhancing this guidance in order to better support businesses and UK professionals under our new trading relationship with the EU. We will be engaging with Member States to improve their guidance around their entry and work requirements. Furthermore, the UK's rules for touring creative professionals are very generous. If Member States are willing to change their rules to more closely reflect ours, we will have those discussions and encourage them to do so.

Thank you for your offer of a meeting to discuss these issues. Given the active and leading policy role of my colleagues in the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, it would not be appropriate to accept your invitation.

Thank you again for taking the time to write. I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kwasi Kwarteng', is centered on the page. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

RT HON KWASI KWARTENG MP
Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy