



**MINISTÈRE
DE L'ÉCONOMIE
DES FINANCES
ET DE LA RELANCE**

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PRESS RELEASE

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Olivier Dussopt, Minister Delegate for Public Accounts, attached to the Minister of the Economy, Finance and the Recovery, and French customs have provided an initial update, one week after Brexit: an effective smart border and hauliers who must plan ahead more for their customs formalities in order not to be held up at the border.

On 1 January 2021, the United Kingdom left the European [Union] Customs Union, leading to the restoration of the border and customs formalities.

Given the distinctive features of the cross-Channel border, the restoration of the border was organized according to specific, innovative methods based on extensive automation (the “smart border”). The method of organization envisaged became operational on 1 January and enabled flows to be handled satisfactorily.

Lorry traffic was concentrated in Hauts-de-France and is gradually returning to its normal level, which it could reach within about 10 days.

To maintain reasonably fluid trade, it is essential for economic operators (importers, exporters, hauliers) **to prepare their customs and health formalities before goods arrive at the border, otherwise lorries will be held up pending their completion.**

We remind you that since 1 January **it has been compulsory for businesses to submit an import or export declaration** in advance (according to the direction of travel) for all trade in goods. To facilitate transit across the border at Calais, the use of a transit permit is very highly recommended.

Without a declaration, it is not possible to cross the border

French customs will be especially vigilant in the coming weeks with regard to the completion of formalities.

In some cases (depending inter alia on the nature of the goods), these formalities are accompanied by customs or health checks. These checks are necessary to protect the territory, consumers and economic and financial interests of France and the European Union.

To help businesses plan ahead for their formalities, information, guides and FAQs are available in French and English on the website [douane.gouv.fr](https://www.douane.gouv.fr), together with useful contact details.

French customs' 40 regional economic action hubs are at their disposal, as are customs services at the border, some of which are open 24/7.

Olivier Dussopt says that “more than a week after the UK left the internal market and customs union, we can see that the smart border established by French customs is proving effective. With the gradual return to a normal level of traffic, it’s now important for all lorries to turn up at the border with customs and veterinary formalities carried out in advance. Maintaining a smooth flow depends on this forward planning.”

The French Customs WebSite : <https://www.douane.gouv.fr/le-brexit-cest-le-1er-janvier-2021-entreprises-preparez-vous-des-maintenant>

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