

British-Slovenian Chamber of Commerce Charter for Councils

Leading with Trade and Investment, Adapting with Every Step

I. Preamble

With the UK's recent exit from the EU, a new chapter begins, putting an end to past doubts and introducing chances for increased trade and investment. The Trade and Cooperation Agreement, which is the world's biggest deal with no tariffs and no quotas, sets a hopeful base for the UK's future work with EU countries, with Slovenia being a key player. In this changing setup, the British-Slovenian Chamber of Commerce (BSCC) continues to strengthen the business connection between the UK and Slovenia, working hard to improve trade, investment, and overall economic teamwork.

Considering the complex and constantly changing relationship between trade, investment, and many other related areas, the BSCC stands firm in its promise to create a strong platform for real teamwork, informed support, and expert discussions. This Charter explains the main ideas and simple setup for the BSCC's ground-breaking UK Trade Council and Investor's Council — and foresees the creation of more councils in the near future.

II. Purpose and Objectives

The creation of the UK Trade Council and Investor's Council is based on several clear goals:

- a. **Knowledge Exchange:** To offer a place for talking about what's happening now and what might happen in trade, investment, and other important topics.
- b. **Economic Cooperation:** To encourage closer economic work between the United Kingdom and Slovenia.
- c. **Sharing Information:** To gather and give out industry news, helping BSCC members understand better.
- d. **Advocacy:** To work closely with both government and other groups, pushing for changes that strengthen the business relationship between the two countries.
- e. **Operational Excellence:** To give ideas that make the BSCC work better and easier for businesses from both countries to work together.

III. Structure and Membership

- a. **Eligibility:** Joining the Councils is reserved for high-level professionals from BSCC member companies in the two highest membership tiers, provided they have at least two years of experience in related fields.
- b. **Composition:** The Councils will include members from a variety of industries, ensuring a comprehensive representation of trade and investment interests.

IV. Leadership and Governance

- a. **Council Chairs:** Every Council will have two Chairs. They'll steer the council's plans and actions, working closely with the BSCC office.



- b. **Election Mechanism:** Chairs will be elected by a vote involving all council members. The election will require a quorum of at least 25% of the total council membership present at the session. The candidate who receives a simple majority of votes from those present will be elected as Chair. Chairs will serve a tenure of two years, after which new elections will be held.
- c. **Roles and Responsibilities:** Chairs will set meeting topics, lead talks, speak for the Council in other settings, and make sure the council's actions match the BSCC's bigger goals. They'll work together with the BSCC office to keep everything coordinated.

V. Voting Process

- a. **Eligibility for Candidacy:** Any Council member is eligible to put themselves forward for the Chair position. Members wishing to be considered for the role should formally notify the BSCC office in advance. Moreover, the BSCC office reserves the right to nominate a member for the Chair position.
- b. **Voting Method:** Voting will take place during a designated Council session. For sessions held in person, voting will be conducted through a confidential ballot system. Each member will be given a ballot paper with the names of all nominated candidates. Members will indicate their chosen candidate, and upon completion, an appointed committee will tally the votes.
- c. **Online Session Voting:** Should the Council session be conducted online, an electronic voting system or a secure online polling tool will be implemented to uphold the integrity and privacy of the votes. Guidance will be provided to members on accessing and using the voting system during the session.
- d. **Counting of Votes:** Once all votes are submitted, a neutral committee will count and verify them. The candidate with the most votes will be declared the Chair. In the case of a tie, a subsequent vote will be conducted among the tied candidates.
- e. **Term Duration:** The tenure of the elected Chair will span two years. Following this term, a new election will be held.
- f. **Announcement:** The election results will be officially declared at the conclusion of the Council session. Subsequently, the newly elected Chair will be introduced to the membership.

VI. Membership and Representation

- a. **Membership Duration:** Membership in the Councils is ongoing. A member maintains their position within a council unless they voluntarily resign, are requested to vacate their position, or cease to be employed by the BSCC member company they represented upon their council induction.
- b. **Representation per Company:** Each BSCC member company is permitted up to two representatives on any single Council. In the event one representative is no longer able to participate, the company is entitled to suggest an alternate member for review.
- c. **Resignation from Membership:**
 - Council Members: Members wishing to resign from the council must submit a formal written notice to both the Council Chairs and the BSCC office. This resignation will be deemed effective immediately upon the notice's receipt, unless otherwise specified within the notice.
 - Council Chairs: Chairs wishing to resign should send a written notice to the BSCC office and council members. The resignation takes effect once the notice is received unless a later date is specified.



d. **Termination of Membership:**

- Council Members: The BSCC office, in consultation with the Council Chairs, reserves the right to request a member to step down if they believe the member's continued participation is not in the best interest of the council or the BSCC.
- Council Chairs: The Chair may be asked to step down if the BSCC office, upon consultation with the council members, determines that the Chair's continuation is not in alignment with the BSCC's values or objectives.

e. **Role of Members:** Council members are expected to actively contribute to discussions, share insights from their industries, uphold the values of the BSCC, and assist the Council Chairs in driving the objectives of the council forward.

VII. Meetings and Deliberations

- a. **Frequency:** Three to five meetings will be held annually, with the option for extraordinary meetings as required.
- b. **Agenda:** A primary topic will guide our discussions, but we also ensure an open platform for other relevant concerns to be discussed.
- c. **Documentation:** A thorough record of meeting discussions, decisions, and action points will be maintained, ensuring transparency and accountability.

VIII. Communication Strategy

- a. **Internal Communications:** Regular updates will be shared with BSCC members through different channels, keeping everyone informed about the Councils' activities.
- b. **Engagement with External Entities:** Councils will actively connect with relevant government and non-government groups, strengthening the BSCC's advocacy. Informing the BSCC office before any external meetings is required.
- c. **Reporting Mechanism:** Biannual reports may be prepared, outlining activities, insights, and recommendations. These will be submitted to the BSCC office and will serve as a foundation for strategic decision-making.

IX. Confidentiality and Ethical Conduct

Council talks follow the Chatham House Rules, highlighting the BSCC's dedication to information integrity and ethical behaviour. All sensitive information discussed must stay confidential and not be linked to any participant outside the meeting.

X. Conflict Management

Diverse views may arise in the Councils, but the BSCC office aims to promote unity. If opinions differ, the BSCC office will offer guidance and make decisions for the collective good, making sure everyone is heard and valued.

XI. Formation of New Councils

- a. **Proposal Initiation:** Any member of the BSCC may put forth a proposal for the establishment of a new Council. To progress, this proposal must gain the endorsement of at least three (3) other members from the top two membership tiers within the BSCC. Upon meeting this criterion, the BSCC office will begin evaluating the feasibility of implementing the new council. It's imperative that the proposed council aims to bolster cooperation between the



UK and Slovenia. Additionally, the BSCC office holds the discretion to initiate and establish a new Council independently.

- b. **Proposal Structure:** The proposal, directed towards the BSCC office, should lucidly detail:
 - The rationale for the establishment of the new Council.
 - The challenges or opportunities it aims to address.
 - How the business community can contribute to or benefit from addressing these challenges or opportunities.
- c. **Approval Process:** After receiving the proposal, the BSCC office will review it thoroughly. Setting up a new Council requires BSCC office approval to ensure it matches the BSCC's main goals and plans.

XII. Council Meetings and Member Participation

- a. **Attendance at Council Meetings:** Regular Council meetings are reserved for council members. Other BSCC members and external guests may attend upon invitation from the council Chairs or the BSCC office.
- b. **Participation Accountability:** At year-end, council members who have been absent and unresponsive will be approached by the BSCC office to reaffirm their interest in continued active participation. Members expressing disinterest or remaining unresponsive will cease to receive invitations and be removed from the council roster. Any member may request reintegration into a council by submitting written communication to the BSCC office.
- c. **Intellectual Property:** All materials, documents, and initiatives devised for council purposes, as well as those curated by council members, the BSCC office, or associates for council projects, are considered the intellectual property of the BSCC.

XIII. Council Topics and Agendas

Council Topics: The subjects for each Executive Council's discussions are primarily outlined in an annual plan of work, which is framed by the BSCC office, ensuring alignment with overarching organizational objectives. Council members are valued contributors and can suggest topics for consideration. Such proposals should be directed to the Council Chairs, elucidating the topic's relevance, proposed approach, and potential business community implications. While these topics are reviewed and often integrated into the council's agenda, the BSCC office, based on broader insights and strategic priorities, has the final discretion in setting the agenda for discussions.

XIV. Role and Responsibilities of Council Chairs

- a. **Responsibilities of Council Chairs:** Council Chairs are pivotal in ensuring the effective functioning of the councils in alignment with the BSCC's vision. They are expected to:
 - **Coordination & Alignment:** Collaborate with the BSCC office, ensuring activities and initiatives resonate with the interests of the broader membership.
 - **Vision & Direction:** At the onset of each year, articulate the council's objectives and, in collaboration with council members, shape its action plan.
 - **Meeting Facilitation:** Organize and lead council meetings, including those focused on specific topics or events related to the council's domain.
 - **Inter-council Collaboration:** Engage with other Council Chairs to synergize on shared subjects.
 - **Leadership & Engagement:** Foster active participation amongst members, embed a vision for the council, and facilitate the onboarding of new members.
 - **Representation:** Advocate the perspectives and recommendations of the council to the wider BSCC community.

- **Commitment to Transparency:** Uphold transparency and adhere to BSCC's established protocols.
- b. Document Preparation & Management:**
 - **Transparency & Efficiency:** Oversee the development of key documents, ensuring an open, transparent, and efficient process.
 - **Consensus Building:** Ensure documents reflect the majority consensus of council members and meet stipulated timelines.
- c. Public Positioning of BSCC:**
 - **Media Engagement:** Before any public representation, liaise with the BSCC office. Represent and comment on relevant topics, showcasing BSCC's stance in media outlets, round-table discussions, and debates.
 - **Content Creation:** Assist in shaping publications and statements connected to the council's activities and BSCC's broader goals.

XV. Concluding Provisions:

Through this Charter, the British-Slovenian Chamber of Commerce outlines a clear framework for the Councils, aligning them with the BSCC's broader goals. As we strengthen UK-Slovenia trade and investment ties, it's essential to follow the principles and procedures set here with care and professionalism. This Charter represents the BSCC's dedication to top-tier standards and teamwork. All members are trusted to uphold this Charter's principles in all council activities.