

From: Chris Hodgkins <[chrishodgkins3@gmail.com](mailto:chrishodgkins3@gmail.com)>  
Date: Sun, 22 May 2022 at 22:49  
Subject: Re: BREXIT Red Tape - Sun 9th February 2022  
To: Public Correspondence <[publiccorrespondence@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:publiccorrespondence@cabinetoffice.gov.uk)>

Dear Megan

Many thanks for your reply. Forgive me if I correct a couple of misunderstandings.

I did not outline opportunities I gave two examples of problems arising as a result of Brexit that will have a deleterious impact on a musician as a sole trader.

If I had a guinea for every time someone responded to me with the words that my contributions have been noted, I would be "rich beyond the dreams of avarice". I am sure you understand that I would prefer to note what the Government is going to do about these two matters. I would appreciate therefore a concrete memo of what the Government is proposing to do to address these problems.

Thank you for your time

Yours sincerely

Chris

Chris Hodgkins  
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<https://twitter.com/HodgkinsChris>

On Wed, 18 May 2022 at 14:40, Public Correspondence  
<[publiccorrespondence@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:publiccorrespondence@cabinetoffice.gov.uk)> wrote:

Dear Chris Hodgkins,

Thank you for your email outlining your ideas for opportunities that could be realised as a result of Brexit. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to you.

Many thanks for taking the time to write in and share your suggestions. Your contribution has been noted.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Yours sincerely,



Correspondence Officer



**Public Correspondence**

[publiccorrespondence@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:publiccorrespondence@cabinetoffice.gov.uk)  
Follow us on Twitter [@cabinetofficeuk](https://twitter.com/cabinetofficeuk)

**From:** Chris Hodgkins <[chrishodgkins3@gmail.com](mailto:chrishodgkins3@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** 02 April 2022 01:32  
**To:** REES-MOGG, Jacob <[jacob.reesmogg.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:jacob.reesmogg.mp@parliament.uk)>  
**Subject:** Re: BREXIT Red Tape - Sun 9th February 2022

Dear Mr Rees-Mogg

I wrote to on the 26th March 2022. I hope you received my email as I have not received an out of office reply or an acknowledgement from you.

Yours sincerely

Chris Hodgkins  
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0750 764 9077

On Sat, 26 Mar 2022, 23:03 Chris Hodgkins, <[chrishodgkins3@gmail.com](mailto:chrishodgkins3@gmail.com)> wrote:

Dear Mr Rees-Mogg

I read a report in the Sun newspaper that you were asking for people to write to you about petty EU regulation that should be abolished. Whether my recent experiences of red tape emanate from the EU or as a result of BREXIT I am not sure but they are in any event prima facie examples of pettifogging red tape I can do without.

In November 2021 I tried to advertise on Spotify for my Salute to Humphrey Lyttelton Tour. I had worked out a price, researched my target market on Spotify came to post the advert and I was informed that I would need a valid VAT number to submit an advert due to tax regulations in my particular market. As a musician and sole trader, I fall under the VAT threshold. The regulation discriminates against sole traders not registered for VAT. I attach my response to Spotify.

My second example is the Arts Council has had to introduce a section to their grant application that is nonsensical. This particular rule has only just come in and is another burden on people grappling with an application form. The amount of time having to spend reading EU State Aid rules is time-wasting. These rules did not appear in my previous applications before the advent of BREXIT so why are they appearing now? I end up wading through a sea of red tape as a musician and sole trader.

Set out below is the section from the Arts Council form dealing with this matter. This is not a reflection on the Arts Council as they are having to pass on the additional burden they have been lumbered with.

**Subsidy Control**

The [Subsidy Control rules](#) are the new legal requirements that apply to the award of subsidies in the United Kingdom with effect from 11pm 31 December 2020. They have largely replaced [EU State aid rules](#).

Where a "Subsidy" is present then it is necessary for the award to comply with requirements set out in the [Trade and Cooperation Agreement](#) with the EU.

A "Subsidy" only exists when the following **cumulative characteristics** are present (only tick those that apply):

â€¢ financial assistance which arises from the resources of the UK or EU; and

â€¢ confers an economic advantage on "economic factors"; and

â€¢ is specific insofar as it benefits, as a matter of law or fact, certain "economic factors" over others, in relation to the production of certain goods or services; and

â€¢ has, or could have, an effect on trade or investment.

\*Â If awarded, do you believe that your request for public funding meets all the necessary criteria to be classed as a "Subsidy"?

*Where a "Subsidy" is declared you will be required to provide further information to establish whether the "Subsidy" would be considered lawful.*

Â

.Your help in this matter is greatlyÂ appreciated.

Yours faithfully

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Chris Hodgkins

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<https://twitter.com/HodgkinsChris>

This is my response to a request to Spotify for help in advertising on their platformÂ for a forthcomingÂ tour.Â Their responseÂ is below:

"Many thanks for yourÂ prompt reply. This is clearlyÂ a joke. I have heard some twaddle in my time but this nonsense will win prizes.

Why was this not registered upfront when I emailed you originally whenÂ trying to place an advert on Spotify? I have my emails as evidence.

I wish I could copy the recipients of this email my request for advice and help but it is not in your email string. I fervently trust you will supply it to the people on this list

However, the gist of it is that I had lost the will to live in trying to place an ad for my tour through your egregious online sales form.

It would appear you are not running a business for small and sole enterprises, who naturally fall beneath the VAT threshold - your business model is clearly geared towards the organisations with a turnover that puts them in the VAT threshold.

This fact drives a coach and horses through your PR nonsense of being the good people in the music business.

You have finally and irrevocably been rumbled and if you want a day in Court I shall be happy to oblige. I suggest you kick this upstairs as fast as you can go. The Select Committee for Media Culture and Sport were clearly not informed on your real business model, which is the disempowerment of the sole trader - the musician or the composer.

On my forthcoming tour, I will not be recommending that people use Spotify. I am canceling anything I have on your website with immediate effect -

but what a surprise, there is no way, it would appear, I can cancel my presence on your appalling site.

Finally, I did not "reach out to you", I sent you an email".

Yours sincerely

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On Wed, 17 Nov 2021 at 22:58, Ad Studio Support <[adstudio@spotify.com](mailto:adstudio@spotify.com)> wrote:  
Hello Chris,

Thanks for reaching out.

Currently, you need a valid VAT number to submit an ad due to tax regulations in your market.

I

We will keep you posted if we are able to accept non-VAT registered advertisers in the future.

Thanks,

The Ad Studio Team

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