

## 'There's a misconception that Ireland could negotiate a trade agreement' after Brexit

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The Irish Exporters Association (IEA) has warned of the damaging effects that both a UK exit from the EU, and the uncertainty created by even the prospect of Britain leaving, will have on Irish firms.

"It is very important to note that Ireland has a lot of skin in this game, and how important the UK market is for us," IEA chief executive Simon McKeever told Newstalk's Business Breakfast.

"There is this misconception out there that Ireland could immediately, or even now, negotiate a bilateral trade agreement with the UK. That is absolutely rubbish, they cannot do that," he said. He said that trade agreements with the UK would need to be agreed between the European Commission and Britain and that this would likely be a lengthy process.



Recent research carried out by the IEA found that 90% of its members trade in the UK and that 61% are concerned about the introduction of new tariffs, 73% are worried about border controls while 60% think a Brexit would have a negative impact on job creation in Ireland.

Mr McKeever says that in general his association's members are "very worried" about the prospect of the UK going.

He adds that while "our hands are very much tied" Ireland's limited influence could be significant given the potentially slim margin that will decide June's vote.