

# UK signs partnership in Central America to boost trade

- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will enable closer economic collaboration between the UK and Central America.
- Countries that can benefit from the joint financing agreement include the Dominican Republic, Panama, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Costa Rica.
- The partnership will predominantly focus on supporting major infrastructure, clean energy and construction projects.

UK Export Finance (UKEF) has today (12 August) signed a historic partnership with the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), Central America's leading development bank and the highest rated borrower in Latin America. The agreement will encourage joint financing of major clean energy, infrastructure and construction projects in the region that need expertise from the UK.

This cooperation agreement guarantees a closer relationship between both institutions and will help finance major projects in Central America that involve UK exports, supporting businesses and jobs in the UK: a condition of UKEF's involvement overseas.

Governments and businesses in Central America looking to raise funds to develop larger projects can benefit from working with CABEI while also accessing UKEF's support, aimed at reducing and spreading the cost of financing for buyers of UK exports.

Last year, a number of countries in Central America benefitted from significant increases to UKEF's country limits as the department has established a greater presence in the region. This means that at least £2.5 billion is available for new business in each of Guatemala, Honduras and Panama and £1.5 billion for Costa Rica, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

Central America is home to some of the fastest growing economies in the world and trade between the UK and Central America was worth over £1.7 billion in 2020. This MoU will boost those trade links and builds on the [UK-Central America trade association agreement signed in August 2019](#).

## **Louis Taylor, Chief Executive of UKEF said:**

I am delighted today to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with CABEI. In doing so we have agreed a robust channel of cooperation between our two organisations in order to find and finance projects in Central America involving UK exports.

Elsewhere in the world, we have transformed lives, supporting healthcare projects in Ghana, clean energy in Taiwan and transportation projects in Egypt. Working with CABEI we can bring

this expertise to Central America.

**Dante Mossi, Executive President of CABEI said:**

Working together we can bring more UK expertise to Central America. CABEI is committed to supporting the UK's ambition for a Global Britain and this MoU is a demonstration of our desire to strengthen social and economic ties between both markets.

**About UKEF**

[UK Export Finance](#) is the UK's export credit agency. It exists to ensure that no viable UK export lacks for finance or insurance from the private market, providing finance and insurance to help exporters win, fulfil and get paid for export contracts.

UKEF has a global network of 15 "International Export Finance Executives" (IEFEs) based in strategic trading markets across Latin America, South Asia, the Middle East, Asia Pacific and Africa.

The IEFE network is a key driver of business development activity and local UKEF representatives in the region are [Diego Folino based in Mexico City](#) and [Camilo Neira in Bogota](#).

**About CABEI**

CABEI was created in 1960 as the region's financial arm for integration and development. Its resources are continuously invested in projects with an impact on development to reduce poverty and inequalities, strengthen regional integration and the competitive insertion of its partners in world economy, paying special attention to environmental sustainability. CABEI is based in Tegucigalpa with offices throughout Central America.

CABEI's financial strength as the best credit in Latin America is supported by its high credit rating granted by the different international agencies: Standard & Poor's with a rating of AA, Moody's with a rating of Aa3, and Japan Credit Rating with AA.

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**[Government announces £4 million boost towards opportunities for young people](#)**

Minister for Civil Society and Youth Baroness Barran has today announced that the Government will invest an additional £2 million into the #iwill Fund,

which will be matched by The National Lottery Community Fund to create thousands of new volunteering, social action and community activities for young people.

Since its launch in 2016, the #iwill Fund has used a £54 million joint investment between the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and The National Lottery Community Fund, in collaboration with over thirty funders, to create more than 650,000 engaging opportunities for young people led by hundreds of programmes across the country, with a particular focus on benefiting those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

For example, thanks to the #iwill Fund:

- UK Youth, British Red Cross and Young Women's Trust are delivering a programme called EmpowHER, which is enabling girls and young women to change their communities, increase their self-esteem and supporting their wellbeing by providing inclusive and meaningful social action opportunities. For example, students from a small rural primary school near Stroud sold cards and cakes to support the British Red Cross' Independent Living 'First Call' service.
- Young Minds in Haringey, London are delivering a new and contemporary approach to increasing social action amongst boys aged 10-14 from black and minority ethnic communities, with 'Action to Achieve'. Year 7 pupils across five school 'hubs' are being trained and supported by teachers to deliver after-school and lunchtime social action projects within the local community.
- Leonard Cheshire Disability is empowering young disabled people with their 'Can Do Sport' project, enabling them to be a catalyst for change in their local community by harnessing the potential sport has to make positive changes through physical activity, upskilling, and social action. The project specifically targets a younger age group, under-represented in social action, where they've identified a need for earlier intervention.

The announcement was made by Baroness Barran during a series of visits to mark International Youth Day, underlining the Government's continued support for young people.

The Minister visited Urban Foxes, a project by Leicester City's charitable arm Leicester City in the Community, which engages young people through a range of urban sports such as skateboarding, parkour and BMX, and has seen strong interest so far, with the prospect to grow following the successful Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. The project is offered by Premier League, who have match-funded £1.5 million into the #iwill Fund.

Minister for Civil Society and Youth Baroness Barran said:

I'm acutely aware of how the pandemic has impacted the lives of young people, and I can reassure them that it's a Government priority to ensure they are supported and given access to opportunities that can help them develop and grow.

I'm delighted that an additional £4 million will now be added to the £50 million we have provided to this important fund, which means even more young people can make a positive difference in their communities whilst developing their own unique skills and knowledge.

It was also fantastic to see the work the Premier League and Leicester City in the Community are carrying out with the Urban Foxes programme to help young people get into sport this summer. I encourage everyone to explore the opportunities on offer to rediscover summer safely with their families.

This additional funding forms part of the Government's dedicated support for young people. Over £100 million from an unprecedented Covid-19 support package for the charity sector has been provided to organisations supporting children and young people during the pandemic, including the £16.5 million Youth Covid Support Fund which provided emergency funding specifically for youth services. In addition, the National Citizen Service is providing thousands of young people opportunities to develop skills for life and work outside of school across the summer.

The Youth Investment Fund also remains a manifesto commitment for this Parliament, of which £30 million has already been committed to provide capital investment in safe spaces for young people this year, so that they can access support from youth workers, and enjoy beneficial activities including sports and culture.

The Minister's visit to Urban Foxes highlighted the Government's Rediscover Summer campaign to help inspire families to get out and about safely and make the most out of the school holidays.

The Minister also spent the week visiting The Skill Mill in Birmingham Targeted Young Women's Programme in Sandwell, Leicester New Parks and Sands United Football Club in Northampton.

David Knott, Interim Chief Executive at The National Lottery Community Fund, said:

The work of the #iwill Fund has had an incredible impact on young people, empowering them to design and deliver projects that will benefit their peers, their communities and young people of the future. Thanks to National Lottery players and Government funding,

this additional £4 million investment will provide even more opportunities and enable young people to help their communities build back from COVID, prosper and thrive.

Allison Tripney, Head of Community at Leicester City in the Community, said:

It is very encouraging to see more funding allocated to creating opportunities for young people after what has been a very challenging time.

We're proud to host the launch of this fund with our PL Kicks funded 'Urban Foxes' programme as a fitting backdrop; aiming to provide further positive opportunities for young people too.

James Hope-Gill, CEO at Skateboard GB, said:

It is great to see the activation of the Urban Foxes project which allows youngsters to try other sports such as skateboarding. Leicester City in the Community do a great job of promoting alternative sports and this will play a part in strong growth of the skateboarding community in Leicester, which recently got a boost with the opening of Skate Parlour Skatepark in the city.

ENDS

Notes to editors

The #iwill Fund

- The #iwill Fund is made possible thanks to £54 million joint investment from The National Lottery Community Fund and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to support young people to access high quality social action opportunities.
- The #iwill Fund brings together a group of organisations who all contribute funding to embed meaningful social action into the lives of young people.
- The #iwill Fund supports the aims of the #iwill campaign – to make involvement in social action a part of life for young people, by recognising the benefit for both young people and their communities.
- By bringing together funders from across different sectors and by making sure that young people have a say in where the funding goes – the #iwill Fund is taking a collaborative approach.

The #iwill movement

- The #iwill movement is a collaboration of over 1000 organisations and 300 young #iwill Ambassadors from across the UK. They are united by a

shared belief that all children and young people should be supported and empowered to make a positive difference on the issues that affect their lives, their communities, and broader society.

- The #iwill movement is supported by an independent coordination hub, hosted by Volunteering Matters & UK Youth.
- Take the lead by signing up to the Power of Youth Charter at [www.iwill.org.uk](http://www.iwill.org.uk) or follow us @iwill\_campaign on twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

#### The National Lottery Community Fund

- The National Lottery Community Fund is the largest funder of community activity in the UK – they are proud to award money raised by National Lottery players to communities across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. National Lottery players raise £36 million each week for good causes throughout the UK. Since June 2004, they have made over 200,000 grants and awarded over £9 billion to projects that have benefited millions of people. They are passionate about funding great ideas that matter to communities and make a difference to people's lives. At the heart of everything they do is the belief that when people are in the lead, communities thrive. Thanks to the support of National Lottery players, their funding is open to everyone. They are privileged to be able to work with the smallest of local groups right up to UK-wide charities, enabling people and communities to bring their ambitions to life.

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## [Education Secretary congratulates GCSE students on results day](#)

The Education Secretary has praised GCSE students receiving their results tomorrow (Thursday 12 August) and championed the range of high-quality post-16 choices available to young people.

While exams remain the fairest and best form of assessment, recognising the unprecedented disruption the pandemic has caused to education, the Government and Ofqual decided it would not be fair for exams to go ahead this year.

Grades instead have been determined by those who know students best – their teachers.

Students were assessed only on what they had been taught and were assessed on multiple pieces of work, giving them their best possible chance to show what they can do.

Students receiving results will have the opportunity to move on to a range of high-quality options. This is the second year that young people can move on

to study T Levels, with seven new subject choices available from September, including Healthcare, Science and Onsite Construction.

Today's GCSE results follow results for AS, A level and vocational technical qualifications on Tuesday, which enabled more than 190,000 18-year-olds in England to take up their first choice university place. The results showed an increase in grades for students from all backgrounds, and Ofqual report that the assessment approach this year is likely to have helped prevent previous gaps from widening as much as they would have done without this year's grading process.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Students should feel proud of their achievements and will now be looking forward to taking their next steps.

I am also hugely grateful to teachers and school leaders for their hard work to ensure students get the grades they deserve and need to progress to the next stage of their lives.

There have never been so many great options available for young people, whether that's going on to study A levels, our pioneering T Levels, starting an apprenticeship or a traineeship. Whatever option young people choose, they can do so with the confidence it will give them the skills and knowledge to get on in life.

Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills Gillian Keegan said:

If you want to get really valuable experience in the workplace while continuing your studies, we have seven new pioneering T Level qualifications, including science, health, and more digital routes, launching from September.

There are also a huge number of fantastic apprenticeship opportunities on offer right up to master's degree level, from engineering and software development to dental nursing and electric vehicle technician, to help you reach your goals.

Teachers received guidance and support on grading and making objective decisions, and grades were subject to checks by schools with further checks of samples by exam boards – helping to give students, parents, colleges, universities and employers confidence in grades.

There was also a quality assurance process in place, with all grades being checked by exam centres – and one in five having a sample of their grades checked by exam boards – helping to give students, parents, colleges, universities and employers confidence in grades.

The National Careers Service's Exam Results Helpline is available to help

young people and their parents think about their next steps and explore the best pathway for them.

The website provides free and impartial information and advice, with professional career advisers also available to speak to via the webchat. And from 9 August, ahead of Results Days, advice will also be available over the phone on the Exam Results Helpline on 0800 100 900, open weekdays 8am-8pm Sat 10am-5pm.

There are also record numbers of vacancies being advertised on the Find An Apprenticeship service including exciting opportunities in sectors such as construction, social care, digital, health and many more.

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## **Self-isolation removed for double jabbed close contacts from 16 August**

- Instead of self-isolating, those who are double jabbed and under 18s identified as close contacts of positive COVID-19 cases are advised to get a free PCR test as soon as possible
- Protection from remarkable vaccine rollout allows more freedoms, with over three quarters of adults now double jabbed

From Monday 16 August, people who are double jabbed or aged under 18 will no longer be legally required to self-isolate if they are identified as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. The change was announced last month, as part of step 4 of the Government's COVID-19 roadmap. With 75% of people having received both doses of the vaccine, the majority of adults will no longer need to self-isolate if they are contacts.

These changes can be made next week as a result of the remarkable success of the UK's vaccine programme, with over three quarters of UK adults now double jabbed. The latest data from Public Health England and Cambridge University shows that around 60,000 deaths, 22 million infections and 66,900 hospitalisations have been prevented by the vaccines.

As of Monday, double jabbed individuals and under 18s who are identified as close contacts by NHS Test and Trace will be advised to take a PCR test as soon as possible to check if they have the virus and for variants of concern. People can order a PCR home test online or by calling 119, or going to a test site.

As double jabbed people identified as close contacts are still at risk of being infected, people are advised to consider other precautions such as wearing a face covering in enclosed spaces, and limit contact with other people, especially with anyone who is clinically extremely vulnerable. They will not be required to self-isolate while they wait for the results of the



PCR test.

Double vaccinated adults will no longer be required to self-isolate from Monday, as long as they received their final dose of an MHRA-approved vaccine in the UK vaccination programme at least 14 days prior to contact with a positive case.

Anyone who tests positive following the PCR test will still be legally required to self-isolate, irrespective of their vaccination status or age in order to break onwards chains of transmission. Meanwhile anyone who develops COVID-19 symptoms should self-isolate and get a PCR test, and remain in isolation until the result comes back.

**Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:**

Asking the close contacts of people with COVID-19 to self-isolate has played a critical role in helping us get this virus under control, and millions of people across the UK have made enormous sacrifices by doing this. Every single one of these sacrifices has helped us protect the NHS and save lives.

Getting two doses of a vaccine has tipped the odds in our favour and allowed us to safely reclaim our lost freedoms, and from Monday we can take another huge step back towards our normal lives by removing self-isolation requirements for double jabbed people who are contacts of people with COVID-19. Double jabbed people who test positive will still need to self-isolate.

Vaccines are what will bring this pandemic to an end – the wall of defence provided by the rollout is allowing us to get even closer to normal life. If you haven't already, please make sure you come forward for your jab at the earliest opportunity.

The vaccine previously allowed critical workers to leave self-isolation to ensure vital services continued. The changes introduced on 16 August will mean that, with some additional precautions for health and care settings, fully vaccinated contacts will routinely be able to attend work if they do not have symptoms.

Regular testing remains critical to controlling the virus as restrictions ease. Anyone with symptoms should take a PCR test to find out if they have the virus and to allow new variants to be detected. Alongside PCR testing for anyone with symptoms or who is a close contact, everyone in England is encouraged to take up the government's offer of free, twice weekly rapid testing to find additional cases among people who do not have symptoms.

**UK Health Security Agency Chief Executive (UKHSA), Dr Jenny Harries said:**

Thanks to the huge success of the vaccine programme, we are able to ease self-isolation requirements for double jabbed people and under 18s. It is important that close contacts continue to come forward for a PCR test, in order to detect the virus and variants of concern.

Although two doses of vaccine will greatly reduce your own risk of becoming unwell with Covid-19, it is still possible to contract the virus and pass it to others. So if you develop symptoms at any time – vaccinated or not – you should get a test and be very careful in your contact with others until you have received a negative test result

Removing self-isolation for under 18s comes ahead of thousands of pupils and students returning to school and college for the autumn term, and is crucial step to reduce disruption to education and keep children in the classroom.

In line with Step 4, ‘bubbles’ will end for all children under 18, social distancing will no longer be necessary, and schools will not need to stagger start and finish times. Two onsite tests should be taken by each secondary school and college student on return, followed by twice weekly testing at home. The Government will review testing requirements by the end of September.

## **Health and care workers**

From Monday, most double vaccinated health and social care staff who are close contacts of cases will be able to routinely return to work, provided they have had a negative PCR test. Daily LFD tests will need to be taken for 10 days as a precaution.

Staff working with clinically extremely vulnerable patients or service users will need a risk assessment to be carried out by a designated person in the workplace before they return to work.

## **Workplace daily contact testing scheme**

The Workplace Daily Contact Testing scheme will continue, with testing sites offering daily testing as an alternative to self-isolation for close contacts who are not double jabbed. Over 700 sites are now in operation across critical sectors, and over 1 million test kits have been distributed.

## **NHS COVID-19 app**

Updates will be made to the COVID-19 app to align with the changing requirements to self-isolation. App users identified as a close contact who confirm that they are double vaccinated or under 18 not need to self-isolate and will be given advice to book a PCR test.

If someone is called by NHS Test and Trace and told they are a contact, they will be asked their age and their vaccination status. If using the NHS

COVID-19 app, people will be asked to self-declare if they are under 18 or double vaccinated.

## Notes to editors

- The following groups of people identified as close contacts will no longer be required to self-isolate. If their self-isolation period began before 16 August and was due to end after 16 August, they will be able to leave self-isolation on 16 August.
- Double vaccinated adults: those who received their final dose of an MHRA-approved vaccine in the UK vaccination programme, at least 14 days prior to contact with a positive case
- Children and young people: those under the age of 18 years. Those turning 18 will be treated in the same way as children until the age of 18 years and 6 months, to allow them time to get vaccinated.
- Clinical trial participants: those who have taken part in – or are currently taking part in – an MHRA approved Covid-19 vaccine clinical trial. Those who received their final dose of an MHRA-approved vaccine in the UK vaccination programme, at least 14 days prior to contact with a positive case.
- Medical exemptions: those who can evidence that they cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons.
- As with double vaccinated adults, children under 5 who are close contacts of a positive case will instead be advised to take a PCR test. If the PCR test is positive they will need to self-isolate, as any other positive case.
- Children who are aged under 5 years old who are identified as close contacts would only be advised to take a PCR test if the positive case is in their own household.

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## [Letter from Andrea Coscelli acknowledging request from the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to look into PCR travel tests](#)

The CMA has published a brief response to the letter from the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, the Right Honourable Sajid Javid MP, asking the CMA to look into issues in connection with PCR travel tests.