

[Government announces closure of Office of Tax Simplification](#)

News story

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The Chancellor's statement is part of [The Growth Plan 2022](#). As the Office of Tax Simplification is a statutory body, this closure will take effect when the next Finance Bill receives Royal Assent.

The Office expects to publish its report on the taxation of [Property Income](#) in October. The Office will continue to gather evidence on its [Hybrid and distance working review](#).

Please direct press enquiries to the Treasury Press Office 020 7270 5238.

Published 23 September 2022

[Statement for the Interactive Dialogue with the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi](#)

World news story

The UK delivered a statement on the findings of the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi.



Thank you, Mr President.

The United Kingdom thanks the Special Rapporteur for the first full report since his appointment. We welcome the government of Burundi's stated commitment to improving the human rights situation. However, we are concerned by the Special Rapporteur's assessment that the human rights situation in Burundi has not changed substantively.

We also regret that many of the recommendations Burundi accepted at its third Universal Periodic Review in 2018, particularly establishing an independent judiciary, are yet to be implemented fully. We call on the Government to make progress urgently in this regard ahead of Burundi's fourth Review next year.

Mr President,

The findings of this report make clear that ongoing scrutiny by this Council remains absolutely necessary. We respectfully urge the Government to reconsider its stance of not engaging with the mandates established by the Council or allowing the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights to operate in Burundi. Accepting scrutiny and taking advantage of the opportunities this re-engagement would offer can help Burundi deliver on its commitment to ensure its people benefit from the full enjoyment of all human rights.

Mr Zongo,

We would welcome your advice on how the international community can best make

clear the benefits of a decision by the Burundian Government to re-engage with this Council.

Thank you

Published 23 September 2022

[Fertility clinics' compliance with consumer law: findings published](#)

- CMA secures changes from fertility clinics to improve consumer law compliance, following guidance and a review of practices
- CMA and ASA send open letter to all UK clinics to promote compliance across the sector and ensure patients are not misled
- CMA will work with the sector to explore a standard approach for what is included in the headline package price for a single cycle of IVF

In February 2020, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) [raised concerns about some practices by fertility clinics](#), such as providing unclear price information and advertising misleading success rates. It also identified a general lack of awareness that consumer law applies in the sector. To help combat this, the CMA published guidance in June 2021 to make clear clinics' legal obligations to treat patients fairly, and a video and guide to help IVF patients understand their consumer rights.

Following publication of guidance, the CMA committed to review compliance, and the findings of this review – which looked at clinics providing around 40% of self-funded IVF cycles in the UK – have been published today.

The report sets out that:

- compliance issues were found with the majority of clinics reviewed, albeit in some cases the concerns were relatively minor
- the provision of accurate, clear and transparent information upfront is critical for patients, particularly regarding prices and success rates
- the way in which patients fund their treatment varies widely, from using their savings, gifts from parents, loans from siblings, personal loans, credit cards, inheritance, or redundancy pay-outs to re-mortgaging their house – or often a combination of these
- most patients buying fertility treatment for the first time carry out a shortlisting process, primarily online using clinic websites, and mainly factoring in clinics' location, prices and success rates
- significant differences exist between what clinics include in their package for a single cycle of IVF making it very difficult for patients to compare prices when shortlisting clinics

The CMA has written to certain clinics to highlight specific issues such as failing to provide key price information, advertising misleading success rate claims (including making unsubstantiated superiority claims) and failing to provide important information about treatment add-ons.

All clinics contacted by the CMA following the review have now made changes to their practices to benefit patients. The CMA welcomes their constructive response and calls on all clinics to review their practices and ensure they comply with the law.

As part of its next steps, the CMA plans to hold roundtable discussions with clinics and the sector – including the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) – to explore the feasibility of developing a standard approach for what is included in the headline package price for a single cycle of IVF so patients can meaningfully compare clinics.

In addition, the CMA and the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) have published a [joint open letter](#) to ensure clinics comply with consumer law. If they fail to comply the CMA could take enforcement action.

Louise Strong, Director, Consumer Protection at the CMA, said:

Buying fertility treatment can be stressful and is very expensive, with each cycle costing several thousand pounds. It's crucial that people have all the information they need upfront when they are comparing options so they can make decisions that are right for them, so it's encouraging to see positive changes from clinics as a result of our work.

But clinics cannot be complacent. All clinics must get up to speed now to ensure they are on the right side of the law or risk action from the CMA.

Further information on the CMA's IVF work is available on the [Self-funded IVF consumer law guidance case page](#), including the findings report with recommendations.

1. Media queries should be directed to: press@cma.gov.uk or 020 3738 6460.
 2. The [Advertising Standards Authority's enforcement notice](#) issued in June 2021 relates to the way information is displayed on clinics' own websites. The enforcement notice instructs clinics to review their advertising to ensure compliance with the Advertising Code or face enforcement action.
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Foreign Secretary statement to the UN Security Council on Ukraine

Madame President, Mr Secretary General, Mr Khan, Thank you.

77 years ago, UN members agreed solemn principles in the UN Charter, vital for international peace and security.

They undertook to refrain from the threat or the use of force against the territorial integrity, or political independence, of any state.

Yet seven months ago, President Putin invaded Ukraine illegally and without justification he ignored the resounding pleas for peace that I heard in this Council on the 17th February.

Since then, Ukrainians' spirit of defiance, in defence of the protection of their country, continues to inspire free peoples and nations.

Every day, the devastating consequences of Russia's invasion become more clear.

UN agencies have confirmed more than 14,000 civilian casualties so far – and the actual total likely to be much higher more than 17 million Ukrainians in humanitarian need; 7 million displaced within Ukraine and more than 7 million Ukrainian refugees in Europe.

We see the mounting evidence of Russian atrocities against civilians.

Including indiscriminate shelling and targeted attacks on over 200 medical facilities, and 40 educational institutions and horrific acts of sexual violence.

We see from the reports of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights that in parts of Ukraine currently under Russian control civilians are subjected to torture, arbitrary detention, and forced deportation to Russia.

And we have seen more grisly discoveries in Izyum.

It is not just Ukrainians who are the victims.

President Putin's war has spread hardship and food insecurity across the globe plunging millions of the world's most vulnerable into hunger and famine.

And once again, as we've seen here today, Russia has sought to deny responsibility.

It has tried to lay the blame on those who have rightly imposed sanctions on President Putin's regime in response to his illegal actions.

To be clear we are not sanctioning food. It is Russia's actions that are preventing food and fertiliser getting to developing countries.

It is Russia's tactics and bombs that are to blame for destroying Ukraine's farms, infrastructure, and delaying its exports.

I sat here in February, listening to the Russian representative assuring this Council that Russia had no intention of invading its neighbour. We now know that was a lie.

And today I have listened to further instalments of Russia's catalogues of distortions, dishonesty, and disinformation. He has left the Chamber. I am not surprised, I don't think Mr Lavrov wants to hear the collective condemnation of this Council but we saw through him then and we saw through him today.

We have information which means that we know that Russia is about to hold sham referenda on sovereign Ukrainian territory with no basis in law, under the threat of violence, after mass displacements of people in areas that voted overwhelmingly for Ukrainian independence. We know what Vladimir Putin is doing. He is planning to fabricate the outcome of those referenda. He is planning to use that to annex sovereign Ukrainian territory. And he is planning to use it as a further pretext to escalate his aggression. That is what he plans to do.

And we call on all countries to reject this charade and refuse to recognise any results. We are used to seeing Russia's lies and distortions.

But let us listen to the testimony of Ukrainians who tell us about the reality of President Putin's war.

Dr Olena Yuzvak, her husband Oleh and their 22-year-old son Dmytro, were abducted by Russian forces from their home in Gostomel, near Bucha, in March.

The soldiers shot Oleh twice in the legs, before they were all blindfolded and bundled into an armoured personnel carrier.

I want you to hear Olena's story in her own words:

"First, they took us to a bombed-out house. The Russian soldiers kept saying they were going to kill us. My husband was left for hours lying on the floor in a pool of blood. I don't know why. We'd done nothing wrong. Then they took my son away from us. I don't know where. I don't know if we'll ever see him again. I just want my boy back."

Olena's story, and those of many others, tell us the truth, the real truth.

This is a war of annexation. A war of conquest.

To which President Putin now wants to send even more of Russia's young men and women, making peace even less likely.

Mr Putin must understand the world the world is watching and we will not give

up.

As members of the Security Council, we must unequivocally reject Russia's attempts to annex Ukraine's territory. We must make clear to President Putin that his attack on the Ukrainian people must stop, that there can be no impunity for those perpetrating atrocities and that he must withdraw from Ukraine and restore regional and global stability.

If he chose to, he could stop this war, a war which has done untold damage to the Ukrainian and the Russian peoples.

His war is an assault on Ukraine, an assault on the UN Charter, and an assault on the international norms that protect us all.

So we stand with our Ukrainian friends for as long as it takes.

Because Ukraine's fight for freedom, is the world's fight for freedom. It is our fight for freedom.

And if Ukraine's sovereignty and territory are not respected, then no country is truly secure.

These are the reasons why Ukraine can, and must win.

Thank you.

UK-EU Specialised Committee on Participation in Union Programmes consultations meeting, September 2022: UK statement

Press release

Following the UK government's request for consultations, the second meeting of the Specialised Committee was co-chaired in Brussels by the UK government and European Commission.



UK statement following the UK-EU Specialised Committee on Participation in Union Programmes consultations meeting on 22 September 2022:

The second meeting of the Specialised Committee on Participation in Union Programmes was held today in Brussels, co-chaired by officials from the UK Government and European Commission. Representatives from the devolved administrations and EU member states also attended.

The meeting followed the UK's [formal request for consultations](#) on 16 August 2022. Consultations are a mechanism in the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) to resolve issues between the UK and the EU.

The UK is seeking to implement the mutually beneficial TCA agreement to participate in EU programmes (Horizon Europe, Euratom Research and Training, Copernicus, and access to services from the Space Surveillance and Tracking programme) to the benefit of researchers and businesses across the UK and the EU.

At today's meeting, the UK once again requested that the EU fulfil its obligation to finalise the UK's association to EU Programmes after 16 months of delays. It is regrettable that the EU continues to decline this request.

The UK has been clear that our preference remains association to EU programmes and that the EU's persistent delays to finalising UK association amount to a breach of the TCA. We have set out that delays are causing considerable uncertainty for our research and business community and undermining scientific cooperation in both the UK and EU member states.

The UK government is now urgently considering next steps. Our priority is to support the UK's world leading R&D sector and we have already outlined potential options for doing so.

Published 22 September 2022