

Boost for UK economy and rail industry through new Israel partnership

- UK to secure new business opportunities as Transport Secretary signs partnership with Israel, offering potential jobs for nation's rail industry
- new UK-Israel Memorandum of Understanding to extend the benefits of Crossrail expertise overseas, promoting global Britain and enabling British engineers to team up with companies abroad
- move follows successful launch of the Elizabeth Line bringing an estimated £42 billion to UK economy

Fresh business opportunities and potential new jobs will be unlocked for the UK's rail industry thanks to a new partnership signed by the Transport Secretary with Israel today (24 August 2022).

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be signed by the two countries to share expertise on large scale rail projects, following the successful launch of the UK's Elizabeth Line earlier this year.

The benefits of the state-of-the-art line will be extended overseas, through the Department for Transport's [Crossrail International](#) advisory company. This follows the introduction of the Elizabeth Line, which slashed fares by over a third for commuters across London and massively reduced journey times. The project is also estimated to pump £42 billion into the UK economy and has created more than 55,000 jobs and 1,000 apprenticeships while expanding central London's rail capacity by 10%.

It is now hoped business opportunities with Israel, the UK's third biggest transport goods trading partner, will not only enable firms to share valuable expertise, but boost economic growth and could lead to more jobs being created.

In July, the UK launched negotiations with Israel to upgrade the current trade deal, currently worth £5 billion and supports 6,600 UK businesses. The upgraded agreement would establish a modern, revamped trading relationship between two of the world's services superpowers. This includes seeking improved access to major public sector contracts for UK businesses and boosting opportunities for the services sector.

In 2021 alone, the UK imported £144 million of transportation services from Israel, highlighting the close relationship between our two nations.

As part of the Transport Secretary's visit to Israel this week, he has visited the building site of Tel Aviv's new light rail line and will meet with the Israeli Transport Minister Merav Michaeli.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

Today's partnership further ingrains our commitment to a global Britain, helping our world-leading rail industry to extend its expertise to friends overseas, while unlocking fresh business opportunities to boost the UK economy.

Following the successful launch of our iconic Elizabeth Line earlier this year, this memorandum is a fantastic opportunity for our British engineers and advisors to share their ingenuity with Israel as they undertake their largest ever rail project in Tel Aviv.

It was a pleasure to visit the project site this week to see first-hand the ongoing work to build such a revolutionary transport hub which will help millions of passengers get from A to B quicker, easier and more sustainably.

Minister of Transport and Road Safety, Merav Michaeli:

Transport is a national security issue. This is accepted and understood around the world, and I am happy to strengthen ties and enter into agreements with other countries that make Israel stronger.

I would like to thank my colleague Secretary of State for Transport Grant Shapps for his visit to Israel and for the ground-breaking cooperation we have created together. I am confident that the know-how we have shared and the agreements we have signed will result in better transportation in both countries, and particularly greener, shared transport that the world needs so much as we face the climate crisis. These steps contribute to strengthening the relations between Israel and the United Kingdom and are a cornerstone of our important bilateral ties.

This is how we are moving Israeli transport several steps forward.

The UK-Israel MOU comes as Israel undertakes a multi-billion-pound mass transit project in Tel Aviv – the country's largest and most complicated infrastructure project to ever exist.

The scheme is being supported by the Department for Transport owned Crossrail International, a specialist advisory company which offers its expertise across the globe to deliver complex rail projects. The project will see the build of 3 light rail and metro lines to serve 27 local authorities and 3 million passengers daily.

The new memorandum will allow both countries to share experience and best practice in relation to large-scale transport projects.

For example, the UK's Crossrail International will offer advice to Israel on

design, safety and standards of new train lines across the country. Expertise will also be shared on ensuring the build of transport projects is as green and sustainable as possible.

Chief Executive Officer of Crossrail International Paul Dyson said:

Our aim is to share good practice, lessons learned and innovation to provide better outcomes and wider benefits for our respective societies.

Crossrail International is extremely proud to be a partner of this MoU and to act as a conduit of UK knowledge, skills and expertise that will support the Israeli Ministry of Transport in the delivery of its transformational rail transit portfolio.

The memorandum between the Department for Transport and the Israeli Ministry of Transport and Road Safety is set to boost the UK economy by offering British engineers the chance to provide bespoke advice in relation to Tel Aviv's new metro line.

[Devon electric quad bike business growth accelerates with government and HSBC UK support](#)

Press release

The world's first all-electric quad bike business has secured additional funding from HSBC UK with the support of UK Export Finance to invest in its supply chain and fund expansion in North America.



Eco Charger, based in Ilfracombe, North Devon, has doubled its working capital facility from HSBC UK to £350k thanks to the UK Export Finance's

[General Export Facility \(GEF\)](#). This flexible funding allows the business to import bike frames in much larger and regular quantities, speeding up production.

Russell Crisp, Executive Chairman of Eco Charger, said:

We're extremely grateful for UKEF's support in allowing HSBC UK to double our facility, ensuring we are maintaining our current growth strategy. Our business revenue is doubling year-on-year, so the funding will massively help us broaden our supply chain to meet the increasing global demand for our innovative bikes.

This deal demonstrates the government's commitment to Green Trade which International Trade Secretary, Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP set out in [her speech](#) in May. Boosting green exports is key to not only achieving net zero but also stimulating green growth to create jobs and boost productivity.

During a visit to the Eco Charger factory Minister for Exports, Andrew Griffith MP, added:

The General Export Facility was launched to provide financial support that is quick and simple to access for ambitious small businesses looking to grow their exporting capacity.

Eco Charger is exactly the sort of company UK Export Finance had in mind when launching this product. This support has enabled them to sell more high-quality eco-friendly quad bikes to the world and I hope others will follow the trail Eco Charger has blazed.

Eco Charger was set up in 2011 when founder Fred Chugg recognised a gap in the market for electric powered all-terrain vehicles (ATVs). Since this support the business has been able to expand into America, Europe and Australasia, more than tripling its exports in the last year.

This has enabled Eco Charger to double its workforce, creating high skill environmentally friendly jobs across the UK.

Built to high specifications and to meet green credentials, Eco Charger's cutting-edge vehicles operate in numerous global sectors, including eco-tourism, farming, policing and public services.

David Butler, Area Director for Business Banking South West at HSBC UK, added:

We're delighted to be supporting Eco Charger's ongoing expansion as a leader in British and global, sustainable automation development and manufacturing. We look forward to continuing our relationship during an exciting time for Eco Charger as the business recently

opened its first office in South Carolina.

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Public urged to 'represent the very best of British community spirit' and sponsor people from Ukraine

- Today marks the 31st Anniversary of Ukraine Independence Day and 6 months since the start of the war
- More than 115,000 people from Ukraine have arrived in the UK under the government's Ukraine visa schemes
- As war rages on the government is calling on more people to volunteer at home as sponsors

As the people of Ukraine celebrate their Independence Day, the UK government is calling for more people to come forward to help house Ukrainians fleeing the war.

Thanks to the good will and generosity of tens of thousands of people, more than 115,000 Ukrainians have been given safety in the UK so far through both the family and sponsorship schemes. This huge collective and community effort represents the UK's biggest offer to shelter for people fleeing war since 1946. But with the Putin's barbaric invasion continuing, many Ukrainians are still looking for a place of safety in homes right across the UK.

Those interested in becoming sponsors for the Homes for Ukraine scheme can find out more information and [record their interest online](#).

Those interested in finding somebody to host can contact [recognised providers listed online](#) who help provide support and guidance on becoming a sponsor, and can help people safely find a match. A record of interest will also be shared with the local authority who may make contact to discuss where there is a need for sponsors in the area.

Alison Edwards, host said:

We are delighted to have met our lovely Ukrainian guest, even though the opportunity arose for the worst reasons. We feel so grateful that our guest has joined us; by chance we share many interests and our children have so enjoyed spending time with our guest. We feel we have a new honorary family member from Ukraine.

Our lovely guest has brought warmth and humour. Our thoughts are with her relatives in Ukraine and we have so many hopes for our guest's future.

This country has committed to providing Ukrainians with a home while they are here in the UK. Some guests may need a new place to stay after 6 months and new sponsors who step forward will help local authorities ensure people have somewhere to plant roots in the community.

The government is providing £10,500 per person under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme to councils to enable them to provide support to families to rebuild their lives and plant roots in the community. Within the £10,500 is a one-off £200 payment that councils will provide to each Ukraine guest upon arrival plus the £350 'thank you' monthly payment for sponsors for costs associated with helping out.

Around 3 out of 4 existing hosts say they want to continue supporting their Ukrainian guests but where people cannot continue hosting new offers of places to live are needed for Ukrainians already in the UK. In these cases councils are offering a rematching service to find a new sponsor in cases under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Refugees Minister Lord Harrington said:

Today marks two sombre and important chapters in Ukraine's rich history – 31 years since the proud nation declared independence and 6 months since Russian tanks rolled across the border.

The United Kingdom has been unwavering in its support and we continue to stand shoulder to shoulder as more than 115,000 people arrive from Ukraine, our biggest offer of sanctuary to people fleeing war since 1946.

Those who have chosen to sponsor Ukrainians represent the very best of British community spirit and generosity and I would urge anyone who has the room to come forward and join thousands of others in providing a safe haven for people forced to leave their country.

The ONS recently surveyed sponsors about their experiences with the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and the results show the vast majority of people want to provide support for longer than 6 months, which is a testament to the goodwill and generosity of the British people. They will of course continue to receive £350 'thank you' payments up to 6 months and the Ukrainians they sponsor have the right to work and to access benefits and public services, including education and healthcare, from day one.

Devolved governments, charities, faith groups, businesses, councils and communities have all worked in lock step to provide much needed support to those arriving from Ukraine.

- If you want to get started immediately on finding someone to host, you can contact one of our [Recognised Providers](#).
- A record of your interest will also be shared with your local authority who may contact you to discuss where there is a need for sponsors in your area.
- The government has established 3 new visa schemes to support those fleeing Putin's war: the [Ukraine Family Scheme](#), the [Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme](#) and the [Ukraine Extension Scheme](#).
- Ukrainians who have arrived in the UK and were given 6 months leave should ensure they take action to extend their stay to up to 3 years if they have not already done so. They can do this on GOV.UK, though Ukrainians who have already enrolled their biometrics, and collected their biometric residence permit (BRP) do not need to take any further action.

[Drivers to benefit from £20 million EV chargepoint boost](#)

- more than 1,000 new electric vehicle chargepoints to be installed in a new pilot, as part of a wider £450 million scheme
- chargepoints will be built across 9 local authorities across England, including Durham, Nottinghamshire, and Suffolk
- nearly £20 million from government and industry funding for pilot winners and further £10 million for existing chargepoint scheme

Drivers will have better access to electric vehicle chargepoints across the country, through a new pilot backed by £20 million of government and industry funding announced today (24 August 2022).

Through the innovative Local EV Infrastructure (LEVI) pilot scheme, local authorities and industry will work together to create new, commercial EV charging infrastructure for residents, from faster on-street chargepoints to larger petrol station-style charging hubs.

The rollout supports the government's drive to encourage more motorists to go electric, which can save drivers money on fuel and running costs, and improve air quality as the country moves towards net zero.

The winners of the pilot fund are:

- Barnet
- Dorset
- Durham
- Kent
- Midlands Connect (with Lincolnshire as a lead authority)
- North Yorkshire
- Nottinghamshire
- Suffolk
- Warrington

The funding is expected to deliver over 1,000 public chargepoints across the areas.

The scheme will help residents without private driveways to have better access to EV chargers, as well as growing the charging network across the country, supporting the nation's uptake of zero emission vehicles and enabling more people to drive and charge without fear of being caught short, no matter where they are.

The pilot is backed by £10 million of government funding shared among the 9 winning local authorities in the first tranche of the planned £450 million scheme, with winning pilot bids supported by an additional £9 million in private funding. A further £1.9 million will come from public funds across local authorities.

Decarbonisation Minister Trudy Harrison said:

We want to expand and grow our world-leading network of EV chargepoints, working closely with industry and local government, making it even easier for those without driveways to charge their electric vehicles and support the switch to cleaner travel.

This scheme will help to level up electric vehicle infrastructure across the country, so that everyone can benefit from healthier neighbourhoods and cleaner air.

Edmund King OBE, AA president, said:

It is essential that more on-street chargers are delivered to boost the transition to zero emission vehicles for those without home charging.

This injection of an extra £20 million funding will help bring power to electric drivers across England from Durham to Dorset. This is one further positive step on the road to electrification.

The scheme will allow local authorities to provide feedback on how to grow the network and the role the private sector can play.

The new LEVI fund builds on the success of the On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) which has seen nearly 2,900 chargepoints installed so far with funding provided for approaching 10,000 additional chargepoints in the future.

Following growing demand from local authorities, we're also announcing a further £10 million in funding which has been brought forward for this year, bringing this year's ORCS funding to £30 million to help maintain ongoing installations.

[UK and Ukraine launch talks on digital trade deal to support Ukrainian businesses](#)

- New agreement will remove barriers to digital trade, providing much needed support for Ukrainian jobs and livelihoods following Russia's invasion
- Announcement follows a direct request from Ukraine's government and comes on Ukrainian Independence Day [Wednesday 24 August]
- Move follows UK's decision to cut tariffs on all goods from Ukraine to zero under existing UK-Ukraine free trade agreement

The UK and Ukraine have announced their intention to pursue a new digital trade agreement to help Ukraine rebuild its economy and protect livelihoods following Russia's invasion.

International Trade Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan met with First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy of Ukraine Yuliia Svyrydenko and Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Digital Transformation of Ukraine Mykhailo Fedorov virtually and Ukrainian Ambassador to the UK Vadym Prystaiko in person in London [on Tuesday 23 August] to reiterate the UK's unwavering support for Ukraine and begin talks.

The digital trade agreement will aim to support Ukrainian businesses by cutting red tape and helping them to trade with the UK more efficiently through technology such as electronic transactions, e-signatures, and e-contracts.

It will also make it easier for UK companies to work with Ukrainian businesses and support with their economic recovery. Total trade between the UK and Ukraine was worth £1.9 billion in 2021 and UK exports of digitally delivered services accounted for 73% of all UK services exports to Ukraine in 2020.

International Trade Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

Putin's brutal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine has had devastating human consequences. The UK stands shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine and will use trade as a force for good to help the country rebuild its modern economy after this barbaric war.

Our partnership with Ukraine will help them seize the brighter days ahead, and we will continue to do everything in our power to protect Ukrainian jobs, livelihoods and families.

Vadym Prystaiko, Ambassador of Ukraine to the United Kingdom said:

The United Kingdom has shown unwavering support throughout this illegal invasion and the ties between our governments have never been closer.

While we fight fearlessly for the freedom of our nation, many Ukrainians also look ahead to how we will rebuild our country. Strengthening our economic ties through this landmark digital trade agreement will support our IT industry, which is set to become a major driver of economic growth for our businesses and cities.

Today's announcement comes following a direct request from President Zelenskyy's government. The Ukrainian government has identified supporting the digital economy as one of its areas of focus for the recovery and reconstruction of the country. The UK, as a global leader in digital trade, is well placed to help with that.

It follows the UK's removal of all tariffs under the existing UK-Ukraine free trade agreement in May, supporting Ukrainian businesses and producers to export goods and rebuild their economy. A new digital trade agreement would further strengthen our trading relationship, providing additional and much-needed economic support for businesses in Ukraine.

In July the Trade Secretary also launched a new UK-Ukraine Infrastructure Taskforce, which is building partnerships between UK and Ukrainian businesses to help repair damaged and destroyed infrastructure including bridges and homes in and around Kyiv.

The UK has also introduced one of the largest and most severe packages of economic sanctions against Russia. Measures cover over £18 billion worth of products that were traded with Russia in 2021, as well as over 1,000 individuals and over 100 entities in key sectors such as defence.