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[UK Government hosts a reception for Edinburgh's festivals](#)

Combined, Edinburgh's festivals are estimated to attract over 4.7 million people to Edinburgh, create over 6000 full time jobs and contribute £313 million to the Scottish economy.

Speaking at the event, UK Government Minister Lord Duncan said:

The UK is a creative nation, rich in heritage and culture. We have a wealth of world-class artists, cultural events, collections, organisations and festivals that we are extremely proud of. Culture makes a valuable contribution to our lives and brings real benefits to our people and communities.

Edinburgh's festivals provide a strong cultural mix and wonderful energy to the city. Every year we all look forward with anticipation to an incredible August celebrating all art forms. My heartfelt thanks goes to everyone involved who have helped make this continuing success story possible.

Throughout the year Edinburgh hosts a number of annual festivals, five of which take place in August. These include:

- Edinburgh Art Festival
- Edinburgh International Festival
- The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo

- Edinburgh Festival Fringe
- Edinburgh International Book Festival
- Scottish International Storytelling Festival
- Edinburgh's Hogmanay
- Edinburgh Science Festival
- Edinburgh International Children's Festival
- Edinburgh International Film Festival
- Edinburgh Jazz and Blues Festival

Guests at the reception enjoyed a performance from the Edinburgh-based aerial dance company All or Nothing who are performing in the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

Ministers visit Dover to ensure UK ports are ready for Brexit

- Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Home Secretary and Transport Secretary visit port to see Brexit preparations
- Vital work will make sure freight continues to cross the channel smoothly

Three senior Cabinet Ministers have today visited Dover to meet business leaders and see how border officials at Europe's busiest ferry port are preparing for Britain leaving the EU on October 31.

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Michael Gove, Home Secretary, Priti Patel, and Secretary of State for Transport, Grant Shapps, visited the port today (Aug 7).

During the visit, the Ministers met with representatives from the haulage, freight and port industries to discuss plans for October 31 and looked at the work being done to ensure the UK is ready to leave the EU. This includes vital work to make sure traffic continues to flow smoothly at both the port and the surrounding roads after Brexit.

They also met Border Force officers to talk about the steps they have already taken to maintain both security and the flow of goods and people at ports across the UK, including training more than 5,500 officers for Brexit.

Michael Gove said:

Making sure we are ready to leave the European Union on October 31 is my top priority. That is why we have stepped up our preparations across government.

The work being carried out at our ports is a great example of the vital preparations that are being carried out across the UK as we prepare to take back control and seize the opportunities of Brexit.

As part of its preparations for the UK's departure from the EU, the Border Force is currently recruiting up to 1,000 new officers to help maintain security and support flows at the border.

That is on top of a further 900 officers who were recruited in 2018/19 to prepare for Brexit. And across the Border Force, more than 5,500 officers have been trained to ensure the border runs smoothly after we leave.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

It is crucial that our borders continue to flow freely and remain secure after Brexit.

That's why Border Force is recruiting up to 1,000 new officers to keep our country safe and ensure that Britain continues to be a hub for international trade.

The work being done by Border Force is vital to ensure that the UK border remains one of the safest and most efficient in the world.

As Europe's busiest ferry port, the Port of Dover is used by 120 ferries and 90,000 passengers each day. It also handles more lorries than all other UK ports combined.

The Department for Transport has well-developed plans to make sure the area around the port keeps running effectively after October 31 and is working closely with key stakeholders across Kent, including the Kent Resilience Forum, to make sure key routes such as the M20 continue to run smoothly.

The department is also consulting on new powers for traffic officers to reduce congestion in and around ports and has set aside £300m to ensure vital medicines continue to enter the country after we leave the EU.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

The UK will be leaving the EU on October 31, and we will be prepared whatever the circumstances. From port infrastructure works to the people working within them, we have set aside millions of pounds so that goods and transport will continue to move in a no-deal scenario.

This government is backing Britain, ensuring the country gets the support it needs to grow and grasp the golden opportunities in front of us as we leave the European Union.

As well as meeting business leaders and port officials during their visit, the Ministers also met representatives from local government to discuss measures being put in place to make sure the area is ready for October 31.

PM meeting with His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan: 7 August 2019

The Prime Minister met with His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan in Downing Street today for talks and a working lunch.

The leaders reflected on the close bilateral relationship and longstanding friendship between our countries.

They noted the positive impact of the Jordan Growth and Opportunity Conference earlier this year. The Prime Minister welcomed the King's progress in delivering economic reforms and urged continued momentum.

The leaders also acknowledged Jordan's important role in maintaining regional stability and the Prime Minister thanked the King for the part Jordan continues to play in hosting Syrian refugees.

International Trade minister visits Washington DC and New York City

During her four day visit between Tuesday 6 and Friday 9 August Liz Truss will meet United States Trade Representative in charge of trade negotiations Robert Lighthizer, United States Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross and other senior officials and figures from Congress.

She will meet with businesses as well as the U.K.-US Business Council to discuss the opportunities presented by a US-UK Free Trade Agreement for businesses on both sides of the Atlantic.

On Thursday she will give a speech to an audience at the Heritage Foundation in Washington DC.

On Friday in New York City, she will meet UK-US businesses and to visit the New York and New Jersey Port Authority, one of the largest contiguous foreign-trade zones in the United States.

Recent stats show that the US is now the UK's biggest export and import partner.

Speaking about her visit the International Trade Secretary said:

Negotiating and signing an exciting new free trade agreement with the US is one of my top priorities. Having already laid the groundwork, we are working at pace to make sure our businesses are able to take advantage of the golden opportunity to increase trade with the US as soon as possible.

The US is our biggest trading partner and we have more than \$1 trillion invested in each other's economies. We want to get formal talks moving quickly.

Both governments are committed to negotiating and securing a free trade agreement as soon as possible.

Both countries have more than \$1 trillion invested in each other's economies. Every day a million Americans go to work for British companies and a million Britons work for US companies.

The UK has already made great progress on UK-US FTA preparations. The 6th UK-US Trade and Investment Working Group concluded in London on Thursday 11 July and involved more than 100 officials from both sides. The UK and US negotiation teams held exploratory discussions on all the major policy areas typically found in free trade agreements. DIT also recently published a summary of the public consultation – one of the largest consultation exercises the UK Government has ever undertaken.

In parallel, work between our governments has ensured continuity for businesses after the UK leaves the EU, notably through Wines and Spirits Agreements, the UK-US 'Open Skies' Air Services Arrangement, and a Mutual Recognition Agreement on Conformity Assessment which covers trade in sectors worth up to £12.8bn.

- Recent stats show that the US was our largest import source for the year ending 2019 Q1, at £78,271 million (11.4% of total imports), whereas we imported £78,263 million from Germany (11.4% of total imports) over the same period
- The US was the UK's largest single export market, accounting for 18.4% of all UK exports. The US was the UK's second largest single source of imports (10.8% of total imports).
- Total trade in goods and services between the UK and the US in 2018 was £190.5bn, up 4% on the previous 12 months.
- In 2018 the UK exported £54.9bn of goods to the US, and £63.2bn of services
- The United States was the top destination for UK FDI in 2017, accounting for 19.6% of total UK outward FDI stock
- The United States was the top investor in the UK in 2017, accounting for 26.3% of total UK inward FDI stock.

- The UK is a top five export market in 33 states, supporting jobs across the country.