

Report shows progress in boosting investment in UK's women entrepreneurs

- 160 lenders and investors are now signed up to a government-industry code helping women entrepreneurs access the finance they need to succeed
- code signatories have been backing women-led businesses, including significantly more venture capital deals in firms with female founders
- government encourages even more lenders and investors to sign up to the code to further support women-led businesses

A new [report published today](#) (Tuesday 28 June) reveals the strength of investment in the UK's women entrepreneurs by lenders and investors signed up to the Investing in Women Code, a world-leading commitment to improve access to finance for women-led businesses.

The Investing in Women Code is an initiative recommended by the government-commissioned [Rose Review](#), led by NatWest CEO Alison Rose, into how best to boost female entrepreneurship. The code sets out commitments to support the advancement of women entrepreneurs in the United Kingdom by improving their access to the tools, resources and finance they need to achieve their goals.

Signatories to the code include Angel investment groups, venture and growth investors and High Street banks including Barclays, NatWest and Santander.

The report is the second-ever annual report on the code and key findings include:

- in 2021, 34% of venture capital deals made by code signatories were in companies with at least one female founder, compared to an industry average of 24%
- in 2021, the average amount of Angel (early-stage) investment being sought by all-female teams (£791k) was very similar to all-male teams (£823k). This is a significant and encouraging change from 2020, when all-female teams requested less than 50% of the amounts requested by male-only teams
- the number of code signatories has now reached 160, with a notable increase in the number of venture and growth capital firms joining, accounting for 34 of the 53 new signatories in the year to 31 March 2022

While there is more work to be done, the code is gaining recognition worldwide. A partnership between 14 countries including Australia, Canada and China, the World Bank and 6 regional development banks is planning to draw on the UK's experience to create a 'Women Entrepreneurs Finance Code' to help the 400 million businesses owned by women around the world.

Small Business Minister Paul Scully said:

Growing the economy is the long-term way of addressing the cost of

living and up to £250 billion could be added to the economy if we break the barriers to women starting and scaling new businesses at the same rate as men.

Significant progress is being made but there will be more to do in the time ahead, so I'm looking forward to working with businesses to ensure all entrepreneurs are able to make the most of their talents and I encourage more lenders and investors to sign up to the code.

British Business Bank CEO Catherine Lewis La Torre said:

There are structural factors at play that hold women back when they are looking for finance. However, we also know that diversity is good for business and that's why, as the UK's economic development bank, the British Business Bank aims to break down barriers by improving access to finance for all entrepreneurs.

As a founding signatory of the Investing in Women Code, we have focused our efforts on increasing the number of venture capital firms becoming signatories as access to venture capital can be particularly challenging for female founders. While I'm particularly proud of the 105 venture capital firms that have signed the code alongside other finance providers, there is more to do to drive action and I look forward to continuing this vital work to promote and support female talent.

Stephen Pegge, Managing Director, Commercial Finance, UK Finance, said:

The banking and finance industry is committed to supporting women entrepreneurs through the provision of finance, guidance and services to address the untapped potential in the UK. Women-led businesses have been driving vital innovation and growth up and down the country and this report demonstrates that progress is being made through the collective effort of the sector with investors, business networks and the government.

It is important that all customers feel confident in applying for finance and so it is encouraging that the report shows 9 in 10 women-led businesses are successful in their applications.

Jenny Tooth OBE, Executive Chair of the UK Business Angels Association, said:

Addressing the barriers for women-led businesses in accessing Angel and early stage investment is a key priority for our work at UKBAA. As one of the partners for the code, it has been encouraging to see an increasing number of our Angel community signing up to this

important commitment and taking actions to create change.

Significantly, we are also seeing the impact of Angel groups with an increased proportion of women investors on the number of female founders seeking and achieving investment. We know there is more to be done and we will be working to attract many more Angel investors to sign the code in the year ahead.

Gurpreet Manku, BVCA Deputy Director General and Director of Policy, said:

The venture and growth capital community recognises that it needs to work together to improve the levels of funding going to diverse founders. Increasing transparency and access to venture and growth capital investors is key to this and it was great to see more firms sign up to the code this year.

Our ambition is to increase the number of signatories further and continue to highlight best practices and actions that work.

The government and the Investing in Women Code partners have agreed 3 priorities for the future:

- further increasing the number of code signatories, including by expanding the information available online for prospective signatories
- showcasing the actions being adopted by signatories and promoting best practices to support women entrepreneurs, including by holding forums to share best practices and engage with women-led businesses
- refining data collection and analysis, including assessing what additional metrics to collect. This includes working with the Rose Review board to further improve our understanding of the finance market more widely and the challenges faced by women-led businesses

The report builds on the announcement last month that a new 'Taskforce on Women-Led High-Growth Enterprises' will support women entrepreneurs, tackle investing barriers, and increase the number of women-led fast-growing businesses. The taskforce will influence high growth investors, the wider business community, and raise the aspirations of the next generation of female entrepreneurs. The first meeting of the taskforce is expected to be this week.

A diverse and inclusive business ecosystem is good for customers, entrepreneurs, businesses, investors, and society. BEIS, together with the Investing in Women Code partners and signatory firms share a commitment to work in partnership to make the UK one of the most attractive countries in the world to start and grow a business by advancing female entrepreneurship.

The government is continuing to back UK businesses and livelihoods, including through the Help to Grow Management and Digital schemes, increasing the Employment Allowance and slashing fuel duty.

Organisations are eligible to become code signatories if they provide debt or equity finance to businesses. Examples include banks and non-bank lenders, venture capital funds, private equity firms, Angel consortia, crowdfunding platforms, and public sector providers.

BEIS welcomes interest in the Investing in Women Code from all eligible organisations. Further information about the code and an online sign up form is available on the [British Business Bank's website](#).

Public safety boost as major justice reforms come into force

- Overhaul of sentencing laws to make streets safer
- Serious violent and sexual offenders to spend longer behind bars
- Measures to help cut crime and better protect the public
- New powers to manage serious disruption caused by protests

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act equips police with the powers and tools they need to combat crime while overhauling sentencing laws to protect the public and keep serious sexual and violent offenders behind bars for longer.

These include making whole-life orders the starting point for pre-meditated child murder, introducing mandatory life sentences for those who unlawfully kill emergency workers in the line of duty, and ending the automatic early release of offenders deemed to be a danger to the public.

Crucially, the Act delivers on the Government's pledge to boost protection for women and girls.

Domestic abuse victims will now have more time to report incidents of common assault or battery, and taking non-consensual photographs or video recordings of breastfeeding mothers will be punishable by up to two years in prison. The most violent and sexual offenders, including rapists, will also be forced to spend longer in prison to keep the public safer.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

This Government is delivering on its commitment to make our streets safer.

We have changed the law so that dangerous criminals are given the sentences they deserve and kept behind bars, and we are backing the

police with the powers they need to keep us safe.

We are well on our way to getting 20,000 more police officers, and we will continue to support victims seeking justice and bear down on crime so that everyone, in every town, village and city, has the security and confidence they deserve.

Deputy Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, Dominic Raab said:

From today our new laws will mean serious offenders spend longer in jail, including sex offenders, child abusers and those who kill emergency workers in the course of their duties.

We are also protecting breastfeeding women from being photographed without their consent and giving the victims of domestic abuse longer to report the crime to the police to help ensure they get justice.

Other sentencing reforms coming into force today include higher maximum penalties for a range of child cruelty offences, known as Tony's Law. In addition, judges will now be able to hand down life sentences to dangerous drivers who kill on our roads, and can impose whole life orders on 18-20-year-olds who commit the worst offences – for example, acts of terrorism which cause mass loss of life.

The PCSC Act also doubles the maximum penalty from 12 months to two years for those who assault police or other emergency workers, such as prison officers, fire service personnel or frontline health workers – helping to protect those who put their lives on the line to keep communities safe. It will also bring 'Harper's Law' onto the statute book, introducing mandatory life sentences for anyone convicted of killing an emergency worker whilst committing a crime.

From today, it will be a statutory offence to intentionally or recklessly cause public nuisance – ensuring that the penalties for these crimes reflect the severity of the rise in guerrilla protest tactics we have seen in recent years. The police will also be supported with new powers to tackle non-violent protests that have a significant disruptive effect on the public or on access to Parliament.

Home Secretary, Priti Patel, said:

The laws coming into force today show the Government's Beating Crime Plan in action and will help drive down crime, better protect victims and make streets safer up and down the country.

We are delivering on the people's priorities. Whether it's tackling knife crime, violence against women and girls or anti-social guerilla protest tactics, these measures are all about backing the police and standing up for the law-abiding majority of the British public.

Also from today, police will be able to obtain a search warrant for evidence related to the location of human remains where it is not possible to bring about a prosecution.

The Government is also investing £477m to deliver speedier justice for victims and reduce the backlog of court cases from the pandemic. This includes lifting the cap on Crown Court sitting days for another year to ensure courts can continue working at full capacity to minimise delays.

In May, ministers published a draft Victims' Bill to amplify their voices and make justice agencies more accountable for the service they deliver.

Notes to editors:

Measures coming into force today include:

- Mandatory life sentences for those who unlawfully kill an emergency worker in the course of their duty, known as Harper's Law.
- Increasing the maximum penalties for child cruelty offences, including up to life imprisonment for those who cause or allow the death of a child or vulnerable adult in their household, known as Tony's Law.
- Creation of new offences of breastfeeding voyeurism punishable with up to 2 years in custody.
- Extending the prosecution time limit for domestic abuse-related common assault and battery charges from 6 months of the offence to 6 months of it being formally reported to the police, up to a maximum of 2 years.
- Whole life orders will be the starting point for the premeditated murder of a child as well as enabling judges to hand out this maximum punishment to 18-20-year-olds in exceptional cases to reflect the gravity of a crime. For example, acts of terrorism which lead to mass loss of life.
- New powers to halt the automatic early release of offenders who pose a danger to the public.
- For children who commit murder, introducing new starting points for deciding the minimum amount of time in custody based on age and seriousness of offence, and reducing the opportunities for over 18s who committed murder as a child to have their minimum term reviewed.
- Ending the halfway release of offenders sentenced to between 4 and 7 years in prison for serious violent and sexual offences such as rape, manslaughter and GBH with intent. Instead, they will have to spend two-thirds of their time behind bars.
- Ensuring the courts pass at least the minimum sentence for certain offences, including repeat knife possession and third strike burglary, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Increasing the maximum penalty to life for the offences of causing death

by dangerous driving and causing death by careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs.

- Creating a new offence of causing serious injury by careless driving.
- Tougher community sentences which double the amount of time offenders can be subject to curfew restrictions to 2 years.
- Extended 'positions of trusts' laws to protect teenagers from abuse by making it illegal for sports coaches and religious leaders to engage in sexual activity with 16 and 17-year-olds.
- New rules to end the need for participants to travel unnecessarily to court by allowing criminal courts to maximise the use of video and audio technology as it develops.
- For the first time enabling profoundly deaf people who need a BSL interpreter to sit on juries. Current laws ban the presence of a 'stranger' being in the jury deliberation room – this will be scrapped and instead allow a British Sign Language interpreter into the room.
- Removing the consideration of monetary value with respect to criminal damage to memorials and ensuring that even 'low value' claims can be heard by the Crown Court, with the result that the full range of sentencing powers will be available – including the ten-year maximum
- Doubling the maximum penalty for assaulting an emergency worker from 12 months to 2 years.

[Reaffirming our readiness to build a more peaceful, stable future for the Libyan people](#)

Thank you, President

Thank you Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for your briefing. I also thank Ms Al Hodiri for reminding us of the importance of womens' participation in matters of peace and security. And, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General's Special Adviser, Stephanie Williams, for all her work on Libya over the last few years, and to welcome the Secretary-General's efforts to appoint a Special Representative. We look forward to a prompt appointment.

I will make four points today.

First, the UN has been clear that, as the December elections did not go ahead, the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum roadmap has not expired. We acknowledge the focus by some stakeholders on the perceived deadline of the roadmap, but parallel governments and parallel institutions are not in the interests of the Libyan people, and neither is unconstrained spending. We urge all parties to recognise that Libya's resources must be managed in a transparent, responsible and accountable manner throughout the country, for

the benefit of the Libyan people.

Second, we welcome the progress made during the talks in Cairo between the Joint Committee of the House of Representatives and High State Council, facilitated by Special Adviser Williams. The onus is now on the leaders of the two chambers to finalise urgently the legal basis for elections and to deliver on the Libyan people's desire to choose their leaders. We therefore welcome plans for a meeting in Geneva in the coming days. Both leaders must now put the interests of Libya first. Stability in Libya can only be achieved through an inclusive political process that includes credible, transparent and inclusive parliamentary and presidential elections as soon as possible.

Third, it is more important than ever that we secure the withdrawal of all foreign forces and mercenaries from Libya, including the Wagner Group. Their continued presence is detrimental to peace and security in Libya and the broader region. All foreign forces and mercenaries should leave Libya without delay. We support the work of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission to implement the October 2020 Ceasefire Agreement and urge further progress on implementation. All parties involved should engage with the UN and 5+5 to honour the commitments made.

Finally, President, the UK reaffirms its readiness to work with Libya and all international partners to build a more peaceful, stable future for the country and for the Libyan people. We will be in touch with Council members in the coming days on the upcoming renewals of the Panel of Experts and UNSMIL mandates. As you all know, we have faced difficulties over the past nine months in agreeing a substantive mandate – I hope all Council members are now ready to engage in a constructive discussion on the future of the Mission, and agree a longer mandate to provide UNSMIL with the stability it needs.

Thank you.

PM meeting with Argentinian President Fernández: 27 June 2022

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson met Argentinian President Fernández at the G7 Summit in Germany today.



The Prime Minister met Argentinian President Fernández at the G7 Summit in Germany today.

The leaders discussed the conflict in Ukraine. The Prime Minister stressed the importance of the international community upholding Ukraine's sovereignty by backing President Zelenskyy's appeal for international support. The Ukrainians would not stop fighting whatever we said. They were seeing their loved ones killed and were fighting for their lives.

The Prime Minister and President Fernández agreed to work together on a number of issues of interest to both the UK and Argentina, including sustainable energy and helping to get grain out of Ukraine.

President Fernández raised the Falkland Islands. The Prime Minister was firm that their sovereignty is not in question. The Prime Minister stressed that the Falkland Islanders, like all people, have a right to self-determination.

Both leaders agreed on the enduring value of the friendship between the British and Argentinian people and that finding ways to strengthen the relationship between our countries would benefit both the UK and Argentina.

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[UK Government extends appointment of Special Envoy to the US on Northern Ireland](#)

Press release

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Rt. Hon. Brandon Lewis CBE MP, has today announced the extension of Trevor Ringland's appointment as Special Envoy to the United States on Northern Ireland. Mr Ringland's

appointment has been extended to 31 October 2022.



The appointment of the Special Envoy to the United States on Northern Ireland was [announced in June 2021](#). Due to the global pandemic, Mr Ringland's work in the US was unable to formally commence until October 2021.

The Secretary of State has therefore decided to extend the position for a short period, until the end of October 2022.

Mr Ringland will continue to be responsible for promoting Northern Ireland interests across the US, supporting the Government's vision for Northern Ireland as an excellent place to live, work and do business.

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