

## News story: Foreign Secretary attends NATO Foreign Ministers summit

The Foreign Secretary stressed NATO's invaluable role in combatting international terrorism as he arrived at the NATO Foreign Ministers meeting in Brussels today (6 December).

Speaking to media ahead of the meeting, Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

We'll be talking about promoting the security and integrity of Georgia in the face of the challenge from Russia and the territorial aggression from Russia.

We're also looking at what NATO can do to tackle terrorism, particularly in the Southern region.

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## News story: Communications boost for business

Communication initiative increases intellectual property awareness and encourages customers to protect their rights.

The IPO has started a communication effort directed towards small and medium-sized business enterprises (SME). The aim is to help business customers understand the financial impact of IP protection.

Intellectual property (IP) is especially important for new business start-ups. These may be unaware of their rights or the financial risks to their products and brands.

There are simple and positive actions IPO are asking you to take, to make sure you secure your work. We strongly recommend you join our social media support and register for [exclusive business updates](#) by email.

Our IPO website also has more information on things that will help your own business strategy:

- view our easy access video series

- linking up to our benefits and IP for business tools
  - sign up for an IPO masterclass or for an IPO event near you
  - detailed information and specialist guidance
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## **News story: New tax consultation timetable published today**

The updated guidance sets out how the consultation process will work when there is just one fiscal event each year – an Autumn Budget.

Updated [guidance on the new tax consultation timetable](#), published today (6 December 2017), will give businesses and tax professionals greater clarity by setting out how the consultation process will work when there is just one fiscal event each year – an Autumn Budget.

This new guidance sets out how the timetable will allow for more opportunities for the government to consult with stakeholders at early stages of policy making, including by launching consultations at the Spring Statement. The plans it sets out mean that businesses and tax professionals will have more time to consider and adapt to upcoming changes ahead of the tax year in which they will take effect. And they will give Parliament more time to scrutinise draft legislation ahead of the introduction of the Finance Bill.

Mel Stride, Financial Secretary to the Treasury and Paymaster General said:

Open and collaborative consultation ensures any policy changes are well targeted and that the likely impacts are better understood. That is why we are giving taxpayers and professionals in the field more time to adapt to new rules and to give us their views on the design of tax policy.

In November 2016, Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond announced the move to a single Autumn Budget, which means businesses and individuals should face less frequent changes to the tax system. This builds on the progress made on tax policy development since [Tax Policy Making: A New Approach](#) was published in 2010, which committed to creating a more predictable, stable and simple tax regime.

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## **News story: DVLA opening hours: Christmas and New Year 2017**

Opening times for DVLA's contact centre over Christmas and the New Year.

Customers will be able to use our [online services](#) throughout the Christmas and New Year period.

Friday 22 December	8am to midday (drivers premium line will be open until 4pm)
Saturday 23 December	8am to 2pm
Christmas Eve	closed
Christmas Day	closed
Boxing Day	closed
Wednesday 27 December	8am to 5.30pm
Thursday 28 December	8am to 5.30pm
Friday 29 December	8am to 5.30pm
Saturday 30 December	8am to 2pm
New Year's Eve	closed
New Year's Day	closed
Tuesday 2 January	8am to 7pm

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## **Press release: UK expresses concern that Ukraine's fight against corruption is being undermined**

Following recent events which appear to threaten the activities of the National Anti-Corruption Bureau, an FCO spokesperson said:

The UK has growing concerns that Ukraine's fight against corruption is being undermined. Corruption remains a major threat to Ukraine's stability and national security and is cited by Ukraine's electorate as the number one issue facing the country. The fight against it is fundamental to Ukraine's European choice and its aspiration to become a modern, prosperous and democratic state.

The National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine (NABU), in which the UK has

invested significant resource, is a critical piece of the anti-corruption machinery in Ukraine, and has made great strides in its development and its investigations. Recent events, including interference in NABU investigations and the exposing of NABU's undercover officers, are a worrying sign that the future of independent anti-corruption investigations is under threat.

We hope that those in positions of authority will show leadership in progressing a joined up reform effort to eradicate corruption.