

DBS ranked highest-rated public service organisation for customer satisfaction

The UK Customer Satisfaction Index (UKCSI), which was published in January 2022, has shown that the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is the highest-rated public sector organisation in the UK, for customer satisfaction.

The index is published twice a year by the Institute of Customer Service, and details an increase in DBS' customer satisfaction score from January 2021, to January 2022.

Within the report, DBS was benchmarked against 10 other public sector organisations including HM Passport Office, the Environment Agency, and the Driving and Vehicle Licensing Agency. DBS received a customer satisfaction score of 81.4 out of 100, with the average score for public sector organisations sitting at 76.9.

DBS was also ranked highly by customers in areas such as reputation and trust, and whether they would recommend using DBS services in future.

The independent index is calculated using feedback from around 10,000 consumers in an online survey covering 13 different sectors, and over 260 public and private organisations.

Eric Robinson, CEO of DBS, said:

We are incredibly very proud that DBS has been recognised as the highest-rated public sector organisation for customer satisfaction in the UK. The result demonstrates the organisation's strong commitment to providing high quality services and the dedication and hard work of DBS staff which has been even more important during the pandemic for the customers we serve.

We welcome feedback from the survey and we will use the findings alongside responses from our own DBS customer survey to ensure we continue to further improve services for our customers.

Jo Causon, CEO of The Institute of Customer Service, added:

Through this challenging period, some businesses have adapted well and responded to changes in their customers' circumstances and needs. DBS' strong showing in the UKCSI is encouraging and shows that public sector organisations – much like those in the private sector – who build trust and deliver on their promises will be rewarded with customer loyalty.

The latest UKCSI results incorporate data collected between 8 March to 6 April 2021, and 13 September to 8 October 2021. More information about the index and the main UKCSI report can be found on the [Institute of Customer Service website](#).

[CMA provisionally clears Sony's acquisition of AWAL](#)

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) referred the merger to an in-depth Phase 2 inquiry, after identifying competition concerns during its initial, Phase 1, investigation.

Having examined the merger, the CMA has provisionally concluded that the deal does not substantially reduce competition in the UK and may not be expected to do so in the future.

Sony is one of the 3 major record labels active in the UK today, along with Warner and Universal Music Group. In addition to its main label offering, Sony Music Entertainment, Sony also owns The Orchard, an A&L services provider. A&L services typically cover promotion, marketing and distribution and allow artists to retain full ownership of their copyrights and a greater percentage of royalties. A&L contracts also tend to provide a narrower set of services with less financial support and shorter-term contracts than traditional record contracts.

AWAL is an emerging music distributor offering an alternative to traditional music deals by providing both A&L services and a 'DIY platform' that allows artists to upload their own music for distribution.

The CMA's inquiry focussed on the two main areas in which the firms' businesses overlap. It assessed the extent to which The Orchard and AWAL may be expected to compete to provide A&L services. It also looked at how closely Sony and AWAL may be expected to compete to sign successful artists, and those with the potential to become successful, where higher levels of support and investment are provided.

The CMA has provisionally found that, while not currently competing closely due to their different areas of focus, The Orchard may have become a stronger rival to AWAL in the supply of artist services in future. However, there are many other providers who will continue to compete effectively with both firms – including independent A&L companies, the A&L branches of the other major labels (like Warner's ADA and Universal Music Group's Virgin) and independent labels.

In terms of its rivalry with Sony, AWAL is still a relatively small player when it comes to signing artists who require higher levels of support and

investment. Despite trying to expand its offering, AWAL was expected to continue to compete with Sony only on a limited basis. In the course of its investigation, the CMA also found that many other firms have begun providing similar services which can be expected to make up for the limited loss of competition from AWAL.

As part of its assessment, the CMA considered a wide range of evidence, including thousands of internal documents from both firms, evidence submitted by their competitors and customers, and its own analysis of market conditions. The CMA will reach a final decision after it has considered all responses to its provisional findings and any additional evidence they contain.

Margot Daly, Chair of the independent CMA Inquiry Group, said:

Through our inquiry, we have developed a detailed understanding of how Sony and AWAL compete.

We have carefully assessed whether this merger will lead to negative outcomes for the market, artists and, ultimately, music fans, now and in the future.

Our provisional finding is that the deal is not likely to affect competition in a way that will reduce the choice or quality of recorded music available, or increase prices.

We think that a combination of other major labels and independent providers will continue to closely rival Sony, so our provisional decision is to clear the merger.

The CMA is now asking for views on these provisional findings by 4 March 2022 and will assess all evidence provided before making a final decision. The statutory deadline for the CMA's final report is 17 March 2022.

For more information, visit the [Sony / AWAL merger inquiry page](#).

The CMA is committed to making sure markets are working well for music fans and [recently launched](#) a separate probe into music streaming, paying particular attention to the roles played by record labels and music streaming services.

1. On 16 September 2021, [the CMA referred Sony Music's acquisition of AWAL for a Phase 2 investigation](#).
2. All the CMA's functions in Phase 2 merger inquiries are performed by inquiry groups chosen from the CMA's panel members. The members of this inquiry group are Margot Daly (Chair), Paul Hughes, John Thanassoulis and Ashleye Gunn. The CMA's panel members come from a variety of backgrounds, including economics, law, accountancy and/or business; the membership of an inquiry group usually reflects a mix of expertise and experience.
3. There is now a 3-week consultation period on the provisional findings,

during which time anyone can make submissions to the CMA. Submissions should be made to Sony.AWAL@cma.gov.uk and received by 4 March 2022.

4. The CMA is the UK's primary competition and consumer authority. It is an independent non-ministerial government department with responsibility for carrying out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries and enforcing competition and consumer law.
5. The CMA launched a separate [market study into music and streaming services](#) on 27 January 2022.
6. For media queries, please contact the press office via press@cma.gov.uk or on 020 3738 6460.

[The UK's International Development Committee visits Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)

The UK International Development Committee (IDC) delegation visited Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), from 8 to 11 February, as part of their [Promoting dialogue and preventing atrocities: the UK government approach](#) inquiry.

The IDC oversees the spending of UK government official development assistance on behalf of Parliament, including its work in promoting dialogue and reconciliation between communities. During the visit, they were able to see first-hand how UK development assistance and political engagement is supporting dialogue between communities, combatting hate speech and supporting reconciliation across the country.

The IDC delegation met Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Zoran Tegeltija, and members of both Collegiums of BiH's Parliamentary Assembly. They discussed the current situation in BiH and how UK engagement can support a fairer, more inclusive society for all.

In Sarajevo and Mostar, the IDC delegation spoke with civil society from across BiH, including those delivering UK-funded projects that aim to strengthen dialogue and to overcome past legacies.

The IDC will continue their wider inquiry on return to the UK, with a report expected in the coming months.

British Ambassador to BiH, Matt Field, said:

This week's parliamentary visit was a further demonstration of UK interest in, and commitment to, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Meeting a wide range of civil society voices, female entrepreneurs,

and politicians, our parliamentarians listened carefully to their concerns, and their plans for the future.

The UK will continue to support those fighting for an inclusive, safe and prosperous BiH, and a country where all can succeed.

The Chair of the IDC and leader of the delegation in BiH, Sarah Champion MP, said:

As a cross-party delegation from the UK Parliament International Development Committee, we wanted to see first-hand the challenges currently facing Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the drivers of tension today.

We were heartened by the passion and commitment of many, especially young people, to build stronger and more cohesive communities, while tackling the legacy of past violence.

What happens in this country matters.

During the trip we scrutinised UK policy and investments, identified lessons to learn, and underlined the need for the UK to play an active role in supporting positive change.

[Home Secretary Priti Patel on Dame Cressida Dick resignation](#)

On 10 February 2022 Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Dame Cressida Dick, resigned from her role.

Yesterday I expressed my thanks to Dame Cressida Dick for her service as she announced her resignation as Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police.

She was the first woman to hold the post and has exemplified the increasingly diverse nature of our police, demonstrating that all can aspire to hold leadership roles in policing in this country today.

Today, as I prepare to begin the process of choosing her successor, I want to reassure Londoners and people across the country of my commitment to selecting the right leader for the largest police force in the country.

Leading the Met is a privilege with enormous and unique responsibilities. The first duty is to protect the public, the people and the streets of our

capital, making London a safer place to live, work and visit.

The Commissioner is a national leader, with a critical national role in respect of overseeing our counter terrorism capability when there remain a variety of threats out there from people and groups who wish this country harm.

This is the biggest leadership role in policing. However, at this particular time, the challenges facing the new Commissioner are stark and could not be more sobering.

Following a series of appalling and sickening incidents and too many historical cases involving serving Met Police officers, it is clear that strong and decisive and new leadership will be required to restore public confidence in the largest police force in the country.

The public in London and across the entire country must once again have the confidence to trust the integrity and professionalism of the police officers who serve them.

Policing culture, conduct, attitudes and behaviours have rightly all come under scrutiny and be in no doubt that a new leader must tackle these institutional issues that have brought great shame on elements of policing.

I will appoint a Commissioner who will deliver for the public whom our police serve and represent. Beating crime, preventing crime, protecting our citizens, our streets and communities at a time when this government is investing record sums into the police, is paramount.

And above all that's what I – and the public across the country – will want from the country's most senior police officer: someone focused on the basics of reducing violence in the city, tackling the abuse of women and girls, ridding our streets of drugs, knives and weapons, saving lives and protecting the public from the those who wish to do them harm.

[Levelling Up Fund helping bring Clydesdale horses back to Glasgow's largest park](#)

(Thursday 10 Feb) Scotland Office Minister Iain Stewart has visited the Pollok Country Park Stables and Sawmill project in Glasgow which will be regenerated as a state-of-the-art visitor attraction with more than £13m from the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund.

The cash, announced at the Spending Review last October, will transform the

dilapidated A-listed building into a world-class heritage centre celebrating the Clydesdale horses which were once a big attraction at the park. The courtyard's disrepair has meant the horses have had to be stabled elsewhere, but improvements will see them brought back.

The development will also house a café, flexible event spaces for community groups and schools and provide training and employment opportunities for local people. On-site traditional power generation combined with other renewable technologies will establish the Stables and Sawmill as a net zero site.

Minister Stewart's visit comes a week after the UK government launched the [Levelling Up White Paper](#), which sets out an ambitious blueprint to improve lives and expand opportunities across the whole of the United Kingdom.

The UK Government is funding projects right across the UK. Eight large-scale projects in Scotland, including the Pollok Stables, are already benefiting from the Levelling Up Fund alone, with more investment to come. All will bring benefits right to the heart of communities that will boost economic growth, encourage innovation, create high-quality jobs and celebrate our rich culture.

Minister Stewart said:

In Scotland we are investing £1.7billion to Level Up communities so that projects like this can flourish. It will see the stables restored to their former glory and futureproof the site while bringing important economic and educational benefits.

Levelling Up is all about improving lives in every part of the UK. It's an ambitious vision that will invest right at the heart of towns and cities, unlocking private investment along the way to make our high streets great again, ensure equal opportunities for all, improve job and training prospects and celebrate our rich culture.

Councillor Susan Aitken, Leader of Glasgow City Council, said:

Following on from the refurbishment of the Burrell Collection, the restoration of the Pollok Country Park stables and sawmill continues the renaissance of one of Glasgow's finest green spaces.

The remarkable A-listed Stables and Old Courtyard will not only create a tremendous standalone attraction for Glaswegians and our visitors – but will be yet another venue showcasing the cultural and heritage treasures to be found in this park.

The innovative approach taken by this project will secure real economic, environmental and social benefits for the city.

Last year the UK Government announced more than [£191 million investment for projects in Scotland](#) supported by its Levelling Up Fund, Community Renewal Fund and Community Ownership Fund.

The Stables and Sawmill plan is one of dozens of projects across Scotland from Inverness to Edinburgh to benefit from the funds which will regenerate town centres and high streets, upgrade local transport and invest in culture.

Glasgow's Burrell Collection, right next to the Sawmill project in Pollok Park, benefited from £3m to aid its refurbishment. The city got a further boost when it was announced in last week's Levelling Up White Paper that there will be a share of £100m to mould Glasgow into a new Silicon Valley-style 'Innovation Accelerator', creating jobs, boosting the economy and keeping Scotland and the forefront of global science and research.

Minister Stewart also visited Glasgow and Strathclyde Universities today to discuss plans announced in last week's White Paper for Glasgow to be one of three 'Innovation Accelerators' in the UK, pulling in a share of £100m for research, science and technology.

On a tour of the University of Glasgow's soon to be opened Advanced Research Centre (ARC), the minister heard about work on quantum technology and life sciences as well as a bid to see a Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP) plant built in North Ayrshire, which will create jobs and develop renewable energy technology. The proposal is one of five currently shortlisted by the UK Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) – which carries out fusion energy research on behalf of the UK government.